Interreg

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MANUAL FOR BENEFICIARIES FOR SMALL–SCALE PROJECTS

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Manual for Beneficiaries for Small–scale projects

Manual for Beneficiaries for Small-scale projects of the Interreg programme Slovenia-Croatia for the period 2021-2027, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

Prepared and published by the Programme's Managing Authority and Joint Secretariat in cooperation with the representatives of Slovenia and Croatia (National Authority). The Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat is hosted within the official structure of the Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development of the Republic of Slovenia.

ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Audit Authority
AB	Audit Body
AF	Application Form
CBC Programme	Cross-border Cooperation Programme
CPR	Common Provision Regulation
EC	European Commission
ECP	European Cohesion Policy
EGTC	European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF+	European Social Fund Plus
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
MCRD	Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development
IP	Interreg Programme
IP SI-HR	Interreg Programme Slovenia-Croatia
JS	Joint Secretariat
LP	Lead Partner
MA	Managing Authority
MC	Monitoring Committee
NA	National Authority
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
PP	Project Partner
SCO	Simplified Cost Option
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SO	Specific Objective
SSP	Small-scale project/s
SSP Partnership Agreement	Partnership Agreement for Small-scale projects

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Manual for Beneficiaries for Small-scale projects (hereinafter Manual for SSP) is to assist potential applicants in project development and preparation of the application of Small-scale projects (hereinafter SSP) for funding in the Interreg programme Slovenia-Croatia for the period 2021-2027 (hereinafter IP SI-HR). Furthermore, it provides information on application, selection, implementation and closure of the projects.

The Manual for SSP[1] provides relevant and useful information on project imlementation. It is **a part of the Application Pack** and consists of different thematical parts:

- Chapter 1: information on the Smalll-scale projects
- Chapter 2: information on how to participate and on the development of a Small-scale project
- Chapter 3: information on the submission of the application and assessment process
- Chapter 4: information on eligibility of expenditure
- Chapter 5: information on the procedures and requirements for reporting
- Chapter 6: information on the communication and visibility
- Chapter 7: information on the archiving and closure
- Chapter 8: information on management structure and support provided by the programme
- Chapter 9: information on legal framework and programme related documents

Applicants should therefore read the entire Manual carefully before submitting the application to the programme authorities. The information in this Manual is essential for the preparation of a good project application, as well as for the implementation of already approved projects.

The information provided in this Manual will be, if necessary, further developed and updated during the programme implementation. The programme will also provide (potential) Project Partners with training and exchange opportunities in the form of workshops.

Additional information and documents related to the Open Call for Proposals for Small-scale projects (hereinafter Open Call for SSP) are available for download on the programme website www.si-hr.eu.

[1] *The IP SI-HR uses the term Lead Partner and Project Partner for all project phases (e.g. application, implementation).*

1 ABOUT THE SMALL-SCALE PROJECTS

SSP are considered as an important new tool in the IP SI-HR, they present a new form of cross-border cooperation. With such projects the programme wants to reach certain beneficiaries more intensely, allow newcomers to experience a cross-border cooperation project and to make greater use of synergies and complementarities with standard projects. The programme encourages the participation of smaller institutions that usually do not participate in standard projects in order to connect people across borders.

SSP are projects with a smaller financial volume, shorter duration and involve less partners compared to standard projects. These characteristics allow the beneficiary to address innovative subjects from a thematic and/or territorial perspective.

SSP, representing people-to-people activities, are supported under Priority 3 – Specific Objective 6.3 Build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions[2].

By implementing SSP, the programme aims to offer the cross-border area the possibility to deepen mutual trust and understanding among the people living in the cross-border area, and to strengthen the ties between them.

1.1 PROGRAMME AREA

The programme area comprises 17 NUTS 3 regions - statistical regions in Slovenia and counties in Croatia:

Pomurska region, Podravska region, Savinjska region, Zasavska region, Posavska region, Jugovzhodna Slovenija region, Osrednjeslovenska region, Primorsko-notranjska region, Obalno-kraška region.

Primorsko-goranska County, Istarska County, City of Zagreb, Zagrebačka County, Krapinsko-zagorska County, Varaždinska County, Međimurska County and Karlovačka County.

The IP SI-HR programme area covers 17 NUTS 3 regions, nine Slovenian NUTS 3 regions (Podravska, Pomurska, Savinjska, Zasavska, Posavska, Jugovzhodna Slovenija, Obalno-kraška, Osrednjeslovenska, and Primorsko-notranjska statistical regions), and eight Croatian NUTS 3 regions (Primorsko-goranska, Istarska, Zagrebačka, Krapinsko-zagorska, Varaždinska, Međimurska, and Karlovačka counties and the City of Zagreb). Not all regions are directly on the border (Osrednjeslovenska and Zasavska regions, the City of Zagreb), but all regions form part of the programme area.

[2] *Information on other priorities are available in the Interreg Programme Slovenia-Croatia 2021-2027 on programme website: http://www.si-hr.eu.*

Figure 1: Map of the programme area3

[3] *Map of the programme area is without prejudice to the border between the Republic of Slovenia and the Republic of Croatia. (Nothing in this document could prejudice the final delimitation between Croatia and Slovenia and the graphics and depictions of the border are exclusively for the purpose of this document).*

1.2 TYPES OF ACTIONS, TYPE OF BENEFICIARIES, GUIDING PRINCIPLES, TYPES OF SMALL-SCALE PROJECTS AND PROJECT DURATION

Types of actions (indicative)

- ✓ **Cross-border awareness-raising actions** (e.g., on solidarity, community support, climate and environmental responsible lifestyle, and healthy living);
- ✓ **Cross-border people-to-people learning actions** (e.g., educational programmes for children, youth and students for active citizenship, educational programmes for the elderly (e.g., digital skills), cross-border intergenerational learning actions, platform for sharing climate-friendly households solutions, cross-border healthy living actions, cross-border learning about cultural and national heritage (e.g., traditional food and music));
- ✓ **Cross-border joint events** to increase connectivity, networking, and intergenerational support (e.g., cultural events, sports events; summer camps, recreational activities in nature, experience-based learning events, joint nature cleanup actions, greening of public spaces).

Infrastructure and works are not eligible under this specific objective.

Types of beneficiaries

All legal entities (except for political parties) are eligible to participate provided they are not acting as **external service providers** and have the **financial, administrative and operational capacity** to participate in the programme. The programme encourages the participation of smaller institutions that usually do not participate in standard projects (e.g. smaller municipalities, nongovernmental organizations (hereinafter NGOs) and associations) in order to connect people across borders.

Please note that natural persons and political parties are not eligible.

Guiding principles

- ✓ Inclusion
- ✓ Active involvement
- ✓ Environmental and climate responsibility.

Types of Small-scale projects

In the IP SI-HR, the following two types of SSP will be supported:

- ✓ Type 1 – Cross-border cooperation projects
- ✓ Type 2 - Mutual trust building projects

Cross-border cooperation projects

projects supporting smaller events for specific target groups as defined by the project and its objectives

Mutual trust building projects

projects supporting bigger events that will have an impact on the people living in the cross-border area

The intention of a SSP is not to attract tourist or general public but to deepen mutual trust and understanding among the people living in the cross-border area, and to strengthen the ties between them.

Detailed description of the two types of SSP projects can be found in Chapter 4 of this Manual.

Project duration

The duration of small-scale projects is limited up to 12 months.

The start and end date will be set up in the ERDF Subsidy Contract for Small-scale project (hereinafter SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract). However, the start date shall not be earlier than the date of the approval of the project by the Monitoring Committee (hereinafter MC) and the end date shall not be later than **30 November 2028**.

For small-scale projects the reporting period equals the project duration.

1.3 AVAILABLE FUNDING, PROJECT SIZE AND CO-FINANCING

1.3.1 AVAILABLE FUNDING

A total of **EUR 1,440,000 of ERDF** funding shall be made available for co-financing SSP in the frame of the current Open Call for SSP.

Priority	Specific objective	ERDF funding in EUR
3 Accesible and connected region	6.3 Build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions	1,440,000.00

1.3.2 PROJECT SIZE

The maximum project budget for small-scale projects is up to:

TYPE	MAX ERDF (EUR)
Type 1 – Cross-border cooperation projects	16,000
Type 2 - Mutual trust building projects	24,800

1.3.3 CO-FINANCING

The ERDF co-financing rate is **max. 80%,** while **min. 20%** shall be contributed by own contribution or other sources.

Only eligible expenditure shall be co-financed by the programme. Co-financing from the ERDF shall amount to a maximum of 80% of the total eligible costs, and at least 20% shall be provided by the Project Partners' own contribution and/or other sources. The maximum ceiling of project public co-financing must be observed if the project or part of its activities is subject to State aid rules.

1.4 LANGUAGE OF THE OPEN CALL FOR SMALL-SCALE PROJECTS

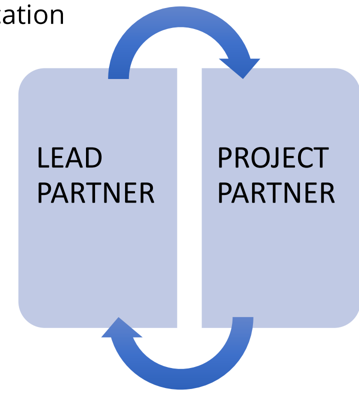
The official languages of the Open Call for SSP are Slovene, Croatian and English, whereby in case of discrepancies between different language versions, the English version prevails. The official written communication with the JS or MA is in principle to be carried out bilingually in Slovene and Croatian. All JS members have the understanding of Slovene and Croatian, therefore the communication with Project Partners in both languages is ensured.

2 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

2.1 HOW TO PARTICIPATE?

2.1.1 PARTNERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Project partners are organisations that are directly participating in the development and implementation of the IP SI-HR SSP and are officially listed in the Application Form (hereinafter AF).



The minimum requirement is to have at least **one Project Partner from Slovenia and one from Croatia** or an EGTC registered in the participating country consisting of members from both Member States. **The maximum upper number of Project Partners (including Lead Partner) is 4.**

Natural persons and political parties shall be excluded from participation. All other legal entities can participate provided they are not acting as external service providers and **have financial, administrative and operational capacity to participate in the programme. All Partners (including Lead Partner) shall be located within the programme area.** In Slovenia the impact of the project should be focused in regions (NUTS 3) that are directly bordering Croatia.

Partners should bear in mind that the absence of advance payments and the time gap between incurring the expenditure and having it reimbursed may lead to cash-flow problems.

2.1.2 LEAD PARTNER PRINCIPLE AND REQUIREMENTS

The partners appoint a Lead Partner (hereinafter LP) for each project among themselves. When applying for the co-financing the LP assumes the following responsibilities:

- ✓ It shall lay down the arrangements for its relations with the Project Partners participating in the project in an agreement comprising, inter alia, provisions guaranteeing the sound financial management of the funds allocated to the project, including the arrangements for recovering amounts unduly paid;
- ✓ It shall be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the entire project;
- ✓ It shall be responsible for transferring the ERDF contribution to the Project Partners participating in the project;

Beside these responsibilities, the LP is also responsible for:

- ✓ Signing the Subsidy Contract;
- ✓ Collecting the information from the Project Partners, cross-checking the implemented activities with the progress of the project and submitting the reports to the Joint Secretariat (hereinafter JS);
- ✓ Harmonizing the project changes with the JS and other Project Partners.

Responsibilities of the LP are laid down in detail in the SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract signed with the Managing Authority (hereinafter MA). In turn, the LP concludes the Partnership Agreement for Small-scale projects (hereinafter SSP Partnership agreement) with all Project Partners. Samples of the SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract and the SSP Partnership Agreement are available on the programme website www.si-hr.eu.

2.1.3 CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION CRITERIA

The cooperation has to be at the heart of each project. All Project Partners must actively work together to produc the project outputs and results and achieve their planned use.
At least three of the following cross-border criteria must be fulfilled to have the project eligible for funding.

- ✓ **Joint development (compulsory)** – i.e. partners have to be involved in an integrated way in developing ideas, priorities and actions in the project development process.
- ✓ **Joint implementation (compulsory)** – i.e. project activities must be carried out by partners in a cooperative way that ensures clear content-based links and be coordinated by the Lead Partner.
- ✓ **Joint financing (compulsory)** – i.e. the joint project budget shall be organised in line with activities carried out by each Project Partner. The Lead Partner is responsible for the administration and reporting towards the programme bodies as well as the distribution of the funds to the partners.
- ✓ **Joint staffing** – i.e. the project should not duplicate functions within the partnership. Staff members coordinate their activities with others involved in the activities and exchange information regularly.

Project Partners shall cooperate in the project development, project implementation and project financing. In addition, they may cooperate in joint staffing.

2.1.4 STATE AID AND DE MINIMIS AID

2.1.4.1 General about State aid and De minimis aid

Public support granted by the IP SI-HR must comply with State aid rules. 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 favouring certain undertakings or the production of certain goods insofar as it affects trade between Member States, which is incompatible with the internal market[4].

The support applies not only to EU structural funds but also to all public grants (including national, regional and local levels).

The following five criteria define whether the support received is State aid or not. The State aid rules apply only to measures that satisfy all of the criteria listed in Article 107(1) of the TFEU[5]:

[4] *Article 107(1) of TFEU (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union).*
[5] *Official Journal 115, 09/05/2008, P.: 91-92.*

Undertaking: The recipient of the aid is an "undertaking", which is carrying out an economic activity in the context of the project.

Transfer of state resources: The aid comes from the State, which is always the case for any Interreg programme.

Economic advantage: The aid gives an economic advantage (a benefit), which an undertaking would not have obtained under normal market conditions.

Selectivity: Aid favours certain undertakings or the production of certain goods. A scheme is considered "selective", if the authorities administering the scheme enjoy a decree of discretionary power. The selectivity criterion is also satisfied if the scheme applies to only part of the territory of a Member State (this is the case for all regional and sectorial aid scheme).

Effect on competition and trade: Aid affects trade between Member States because concerned activities are open to competition in various Member States. Such aid (directly or indirectly) distorts or threatens to distort competition and trade within the European Union.

It is important to mention that the concept of an undertaking covers any entity engaged in an economic activity, regardless of its legal status and the way in which it is financed. Therefore, the nature of activities of the undertaking in question is relevant to define if State aid rules will be applied.

Economic activity is broadly defined as offering goods or services on a given market. The key question is whether, in principle, an undertaking could carry out the activity in order to make profit.

Submitted project Application Forms will be assessed on State aid relevance by the programme bodies.

2.1.4.2 State aid/de minimis aid measures

When activities are considered as State aid relevant, direct or indirect State aid will be granted. The direct state aid concerns Project Partners directly involved in the project. Indirect state aid concerns third parties involved in the project.

Direct aid will be granted under the General Block Exemptions regulation (GBER)[6] preferably or under *de minimis*[7] regime. In this case the entire budget of the concerned project partner will be regarded as State aid granted.

Under GBER the programme will open schemes under Article 20 (direct state aid) and 20a (direct and indirect state aid). The maximum aid intensity granted under GBER Article 20 is 80%, which is also the maximal co-financing rate of the programme. The maximum amount under GBER article 20a is 22.000 EUR per undertaking per project. This **indirect aid** (e.g. free of charge services, consultancy to companies) is to be determined by the concerned Project Partners prior to the implementation of project activities.

[6] *Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 as further amended*
[7] *Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 as further amended*

The usage of following State Aid schemes is planned for the IP SI-HR 2021-2027, GBER Article 20, Article 20a and de minimis.

The Commission has taken the view that small amounts of aid (de minimis aid of less than 200.000 EUR of total public advantages over a 3-budgetary year period per Project Partner) do not have a potential effect on competition and trade between Member States. Therefore, funds can also be granted under *de minimis* regime.

Besides EU and programme rules, the national rules have to be respected.

2.1.5 AUDIT TRAIL

In general, an audit trail is to be understood as a chronological set of accounting records that provide documentary evidence of the sequence of steps undertaken by the beneficiaries and programme bodies for implementing an approved project. According to this definition, the proper keeping of accounting records and supporting documents held by the beneficiary and the joint secretariat plays a key role in ensuring an adequate audit trail. At the level of each beneficiary, an adequate audit trail is composed at least of the following elements:

- ✓ The SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract (and its amendments), only valid for LPs;
- ✓ The SSP Partnership Agreement (and its amendments);
- ✓ The latest valid version of the approved AF in the Joint electronic monitoring system (hereinafter Jems);
- ✓ Adequate evidence and documentation of all outputs produced during the project lifetime;
- ✓ Reports submitted in Jems to the JS with the purpose of confirming project outputs;
- ✓ Documents issued by the JS.

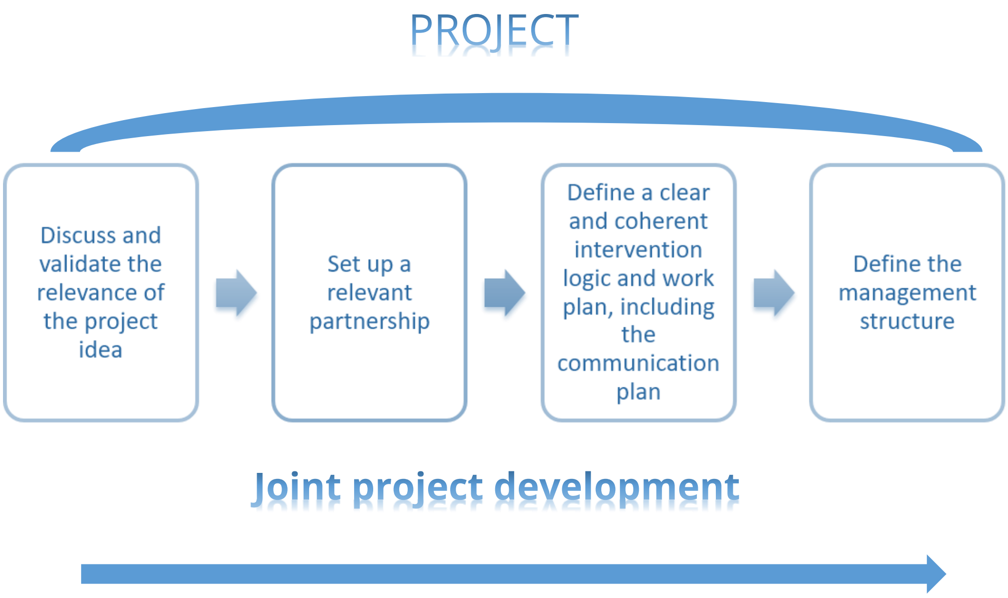
One important element to be taken into account when setting up the audit trail is the need to avoid double funding from different co-financing sources for the same expenditure item.

2.2 HOW TO DEVELOP A GOOD SMALL-SCALE PROJECT?

In contrast to standard projects, small-scale projects have a shorter application form, smaller budget and partner size, and shorter project lifetime.

This subchapter aims at helping you in preparing your AF. There are practical hints for advancing from the initial project idea to a successful application. The subsequent chapters guide you through the workflow from the project idea to the application ready for submission (as illustrated in figure 2).

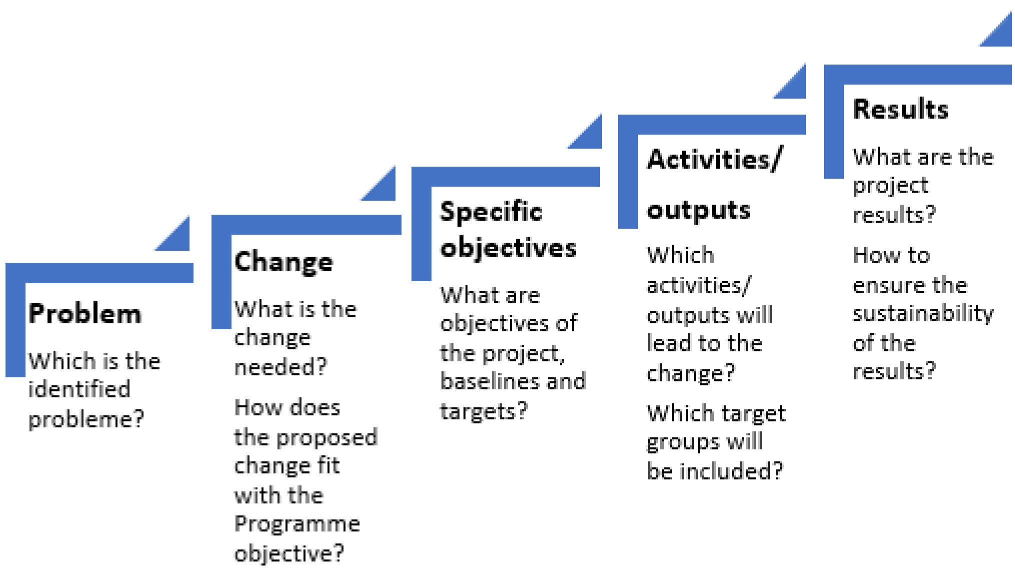
Figure 2 – Project development: from a project idea to the application



2.2.1 DEVELOPING THE PROJECT CONCEPT AND INTERVENTION LOGIC INCLUDING THE RESULT AND OUTPUT INDICATORS

As the programme, also the projects have to follow a clear intervention logic that reflects the current context. It needs to indicate the activities needed to result in the change in the behaviour of people. The following figure illustrates different components of the project development and basic questions to be addressed during the development of the project.

Figure 3: How to develop the project intervention logic



When establishing the intervention logic for a SSP the long-term effect of the cooperation and trust building should be considered and pointed out.

Each project needs to clearly indicate **why** it is needed, **what** cross-border common issues or challenges it will address and what change (project result) will result out of the project activities. These envisaged results have to reflect in the desired change and need to be translated into specific project objective.

Figure 4: Links between the programme and project intervention logic

PROJECT	PROGRAMME (see IP SI-HR)
Specific territorial challenges and needs addressed by the project	Territorial challenges and needs of the programme area
Project objectives	Programme specific objective (SO 6.3)
Activities	Types of actions
Outputs	Programme output indicators
Project results	Programme result indicator

The **outputs** are the tangible deliverables of the project which contribute to the results. They are directly deriving from the activities carried out in the project. They do not lead to a qualitative judgment on the project's results. In other words, it is not because the project organises e.g. a high number of workshops (output) that it will necessarily be successful. Outputs are typically measured in physical units such as the number of seminars, conferences and workshops.

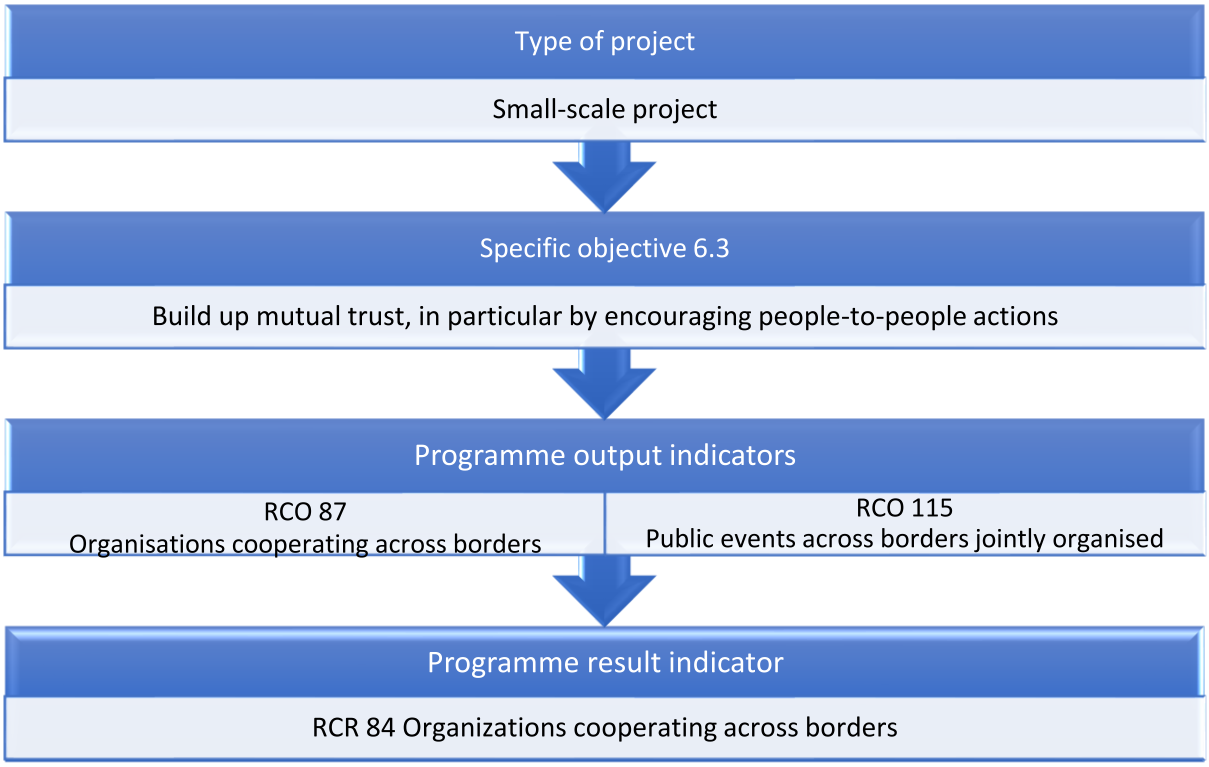
The **results** are direct and immediate effects resulting from the project and from the production of the outputs. They represent what is intended to be changed by the project. The production of outputs such as organisation of events, seminars, conferences are only means to achieve the results of the project. Compared to the outputs, they imply a qualitative value, an improvement compared with an initial situation. They have to be measured in physical units.

After the intervention logic is set in place (starting from the initial situation and ending with the envisaged change), activities and outputs necessary to reach the objectives and results need to be defined.

The project intervention logic must be coherent with the targeted specific objective 6.3 of the IP SI-HR.

The SSP are required to contribute directly to the objective of the programme and apply the relevant indicators.

Figure 5: Programme specific output and result indicators for Small-scale projects[8]



Please note that the programme output indicator RCO 87 Organisations cooperating across borders and programme result indicator RCR 84 Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion **are obligatory**.

[8] *The detailed description of indicators is available in the Methodological Paper on Indicators*

2.2.2 SETTING UP A RELEVANT PROJECT PARTNERSHIP

The quality of a project depends largely on the composition of its partnership. A good partnership should pool all skills and competences of relevant institutions necessary to address the issues tackled by the project in order to achieve the set objectives.

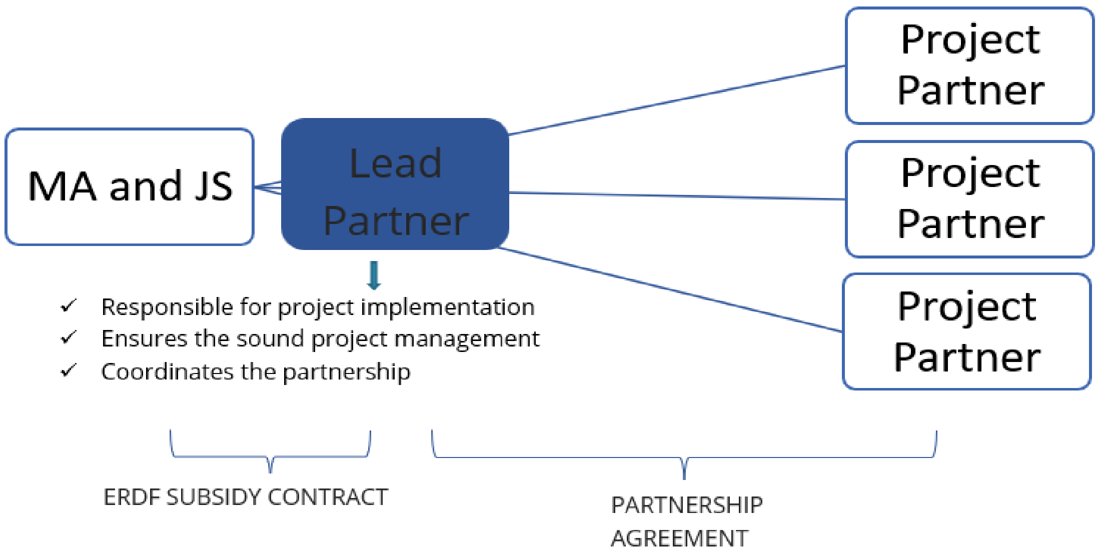
When building a partnership, the following general aspects should be taken into account:

- ✓ Involve as Project Partner/s only institutions whose **interests are closely linked to the project objectives** and planned interventions. They should also have the capacity to create strong links to target groups addressed by the project.
- ✓ Distribution of project activities, responsibilities and results should be adequately balanced.
- ✓ Ensure the **commitment of partner from the very beginning.**
- ✓ Only **Project partners from the programme area can be involved.**

The Lead Partner takes over the role of the "engine" of the partnership, coordinating the work of the partners and also being the link between the project and the programme bodies.

The following figure illustrates the relations between the Programme, Lead Partner and the Project Partners.

Figure 6: Project management structure



2.2.3 SETTING UP RELEVANT PROJECT COMMUNICATION

Communication plays an important role in the small-scale project implementation and requires careful planning as well as the adequate resources (human and financial). The communication activities raise awareness and provide information on thematic activities and help to change the attitude of relevant stakeholders towards the activities of the project.

Already in their AF, projects have to lay down what they aim for with communication activities and through which activities the partnership wants to achieve these targets. **There is no dedicated communication work package in the AF, therefore communication activities have to be integrated throughout the project work plan (see also chapter 3 C.4 Project work plan).**

Communication objectives for projects need to be dedicated to:

- ✓ raising awareness,
- ✓ changing behaviour or mind-set,
- ✓ changing attitude,
- ✓ spreading knowledge.

> Communication must be understood as a strategic project tool, which contributes to achieving the project objectives. It cannot simply be an 'add-on' at the end of the project.

More information on communication requirements concerning the information and communication rules is provided in chapter 6 of this Manual.

2.2.4 DESIGNING A SOUND PROJECT BUDGET

The budget of the project must be drafted **using the Simplified cost options (hereinafter SCO)**. Accordingly, the project budget shall reflect the work plan, i.e. activities and outputs planned by each Project Partner in order to achieve the intended results.

When designing the project budget, it is important to plan at the level of each partner.

Only one reporting period is envisaged for the Small-scale projects. The budget should be planned realistically and not inflated (especially relevant for Type 1 projects).

2.2.5 INTERREG SI-HR KEY PRINCIPLES APPLICABLE TO SMALL-SCALE PROJECTS

- CROSS BORDER COOPERATION

The cross border cooperation is the key principle of the Programme. Projects should set up and foster cross border cooperation between Project Partners that should possibly continue beyond the project lifetime and provide benefits for a wider group of stakeholders (e.g. cooperation networks in the border area).

- RESULT ORIENTATION

A strong focus is given to the result orientation of a project with the demand for visible outputs and concrete results. The result-oriented approach is reflected in the programme, as well as project intervention logic.

SSP shall aply a result-oriented approach. **The coherence of the project intervention logic** (i.e. the project specific objectives, activities, outputs and expected results) **with the targeted specific objective 6.3 of the programme is a pre-condition for a project to be funded.** Projects not showing a clear link to a programme specific objective and/or not contributing to the respective expected programme result will not be supported by the IP SI-HR .

A clear result-oriented approach contributing to a specific objective of the IP SI-HR is required by the projects.

- Project objectives have to clearly target the respective programme specific objective 6.3.
- The contribution of the project to the respective programme result (and the related indicator) has to be clearly demonstrated.
- Project activities and outputs have to be logically linked to the target specific objective.

- TERRITORIAL RELEVANCE

Territorial relevance is one of the key quality requirements for a project to be funded. Project should follow place-based approach[9] responding to certain territory specific needs.

- PARTNERSHIP RELEVANCE

In order to achieve tangible project results it is essential to involve partners who are most relevant and competent for the development, implementation, communication as well as capitalization of the planned project outputs and results. In this respect, for designing a relevant partnership the thematic competence and expertise, geographical and institutional relevance have to be considered.

All partners have to be involved in a way that demonstrates the joint implementation and the cross-border added value of the project.

[9] *In Slovenia the impact of the project should be focused in regions (NUTS 3) that are directly bordering Croatia.*

- DURABILITY

The durability of the project's outputs should result in the sense that they bring people together and create favourable cooperation conditions.

The cooperation and trust building activities are crucial for ensuring territorial impact and long-term benefits which continue after the project end in order to reach the programme`s overall objective.

- HORIZONTAL PRINCIPLES

In all phases of the programme cycle, the horizontal principles of **equal opportunities**, **non-discrimination**, **gender equality**, **accessibility for persons with disabilities** and **sustainable development** will be respected. The programme authorities have and will through the entire life cycle of the programme (preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation) ensure that the horizontal principles are respected.

No project that could potentially harm the environment will be supported without relevant mitigation measures. The project applicants will have to meet the requirements related to protection of the environment and/or health. Moreover, they will be encouraged to promote climate neutrality and sustainable development.

2.2.6 PROJECT MODIFICATIONS

During the project implementation, partners might face the need to modify the AF in order to adapt it to the actual needs, complete the project successfully and achieve the set objectives. Depending on the focus the following types of project modifications may occur:

- ✓ Change of the work plan (e.g. minor adaptations of the work plan, such as modifications which do not change the nature and use of the planned outputs, minor modifications of outputs)
- ✓ Change of the project duration (final project duration does not exceed 12 months except in well justified cases)

All project modifications must be justified and agreed between the Project Partners before they are communicated to the JS. Changes have to be approved by the programme bodies.

In case of SSP, **in general the above mentioned modifications are allowed in exceptional, well justified cases**.

The LP should always inform the JS as soon as they become aware that a change of the project might be needed.

In case of changes of administrative elements (e.g. change of contact data, bank account, legal representatives, name of the PPs institution) the LP shall **inform the JS as soon as possible**. The JS will then analyse the LP request and, if applicable, open the respective section in the Jems. The LP will then be able to update the information in the Jems.

Modifications can be approved by the JS, that may also decide to put the decision on the level of the MC.

2.2.6.1 The request process for project modifications

Once the project partnership agrees on the project modification, the LP should inform the JS about the upcoming project modifications.

The LP needs to fill in **a modification request** and submit it through the Jems. The requested project change needs to be clearly described and justified, including also the cause and effects of the proposed project modifications. Technical support concerning the project modification process will be provided by the JS.

Once the project modification is submitted by the LP, the JS screens the provided request and depending on the type of the project change decides on the relevant modification procedures. In case of minor changes, the decision can be taken by the JS.

Obligations deriving from the SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract and the SSP Partnership Agreement in terms of audits, retention of supporting documents and durability of outputs remain applicable after any type of the project modification.

If the outcome of the proceedings is positive, the JS grants to the LP the possibility to revise the AF in the Jems. The LP then updates the relevant parts of the AF (partnership work plan) in line with the approved project change request. In case the requested project change requires additional supporting documents (e.g. partner declaration, etc.), they have to be uploaded in the Jems as annexes of the revised AF.

The JS examines the revisions done in the AF. The LP can be asked to provide further clarifications and/or amendments of the AF, in case the changes done in the Jems and related explanatory information is not sufficient.

Based on the final submission of the revised AF in the Jems, the JS informs the LP on the final decision on the requested project change.

3 APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT

3.1 HOW TO APPLY?

3.1.1 APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Submission of applications is running on an "open basis", which means that applications can be submitted ongoing during the Open Call until all the funds are committed. Nevertheless, the dates for submission of the applications to be discussed at the following MC meeting will be published on the website www.si-hr.eu.
In general, applications shall be submitted via Jems to the JS at latest by noon (CET) of the set deadline. Applications submitted by the set deadline will be assessed and, if eligible, proposed to the MC for decision. The deadline for submission of projects is published on the programme webpage and the upcoming Jems submission deadline is configured accordingly.

The applications submitted after the set deadline will not be rejected but will stay in Jems waiting for the next assessment round (considered to be submitted within the next deadline).

It is recommended to make use of individual consultations offered by the JS and National Authorities before the submission of the Application.

3.1.2 APPLICATION PACK

The Application Pack for the Open Call for SSP can be downloaded from the programme website (www.si-hr.eu) and consists of the following documents:

- ✓ Open Call for Proposals for Small-scale projects
- ✓ Manual for Beneficiaries for Small-scale projects
- ✓ Sample of the Partnership Agreement for Small-scale project
- ✓ Sample of the ERDF Subsidy Contract for Small-scale project
- ✓ Template of the Project Partner Statement for Small-scale project
- ✓ Template of the Project Statement for Small-scale project
- ✓ Interreg Programme Interreg Slovenia-Croatia approved by EC as of 22 June 2023.
- ✓ Methodological Paper on Indicators

The offline template of the AF can be downloaded from the website www.si-hr.eu (this document is not part of the official Application Pack for Small-scale projects (hereinafter SSP Application Pack)).

The application **must be submitted by the LP solely through Jems**. The submitted project application must contain all the required data and the required accompanying documents, which are considered as annexes to the AF and have to be uploaded as scanned documents (signed by the legal representative of the Lead or Project Partner's organisation) in Jems (see subchapter 3.1.3 of this Manual).

The project application shall be bilingual, written in both the **Slovene and Croatian language**, except for **the project summary, which shall be written in the Slovene, Croatian and English language.** In case of discrepancies, the language of the LP shall prevail. The applicants are asked to ensure appropriate quality of translation in order to avoid a lower scoring in the quality assessment due to insufficient, incomprehensible or unclear information in individual fields of the application. Eventual shortcomings in the translation will be, for the approved projects, dealt with in the frame of the clarifications before signing the SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract (face-to-face meetings).

3.1.3 ONLINE SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATION

This part of the Manual contains key technical information on the use of the monitoring system Jems for the IP SI-HR.

The applicants are requested to complete and submit their AF via Jems. It is therefore highly recommended to read this chapter carefully before starting to use Jems.

When filling in the Application Form:
- ✓ focus on answering the questions precisely,
- ✓ write clearly and simply,
- ✓ respect the maximum length of text, when so requested,
- ✓ provide answers to all of the questions (before submitting the application).

- **Technical information and system requirement**

The IP SI-HR Jems is an online system conceived to cover the full project and programme life cycle in one monitoring tool that allows to reduce the need for additional paper processes to a minimum.

Upon registration in Jems, the users have access to the system as applicant users. Once a project is approved and contracted, the LP user will be assigned to the project, who in turn assigns the partner users to the Project Partners.

> When importing files into Jems, please note that their size must not exceed 15 MB.

A helpdesk for technical support specifically dedicated to Jems can be reached via email (si-hr.mkrr@gov.si). In addition, also workshops/trainings on how to use the Jems will be organised by JS.

- **Access and registration**

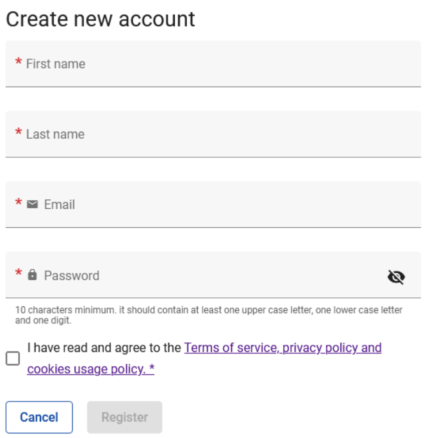
The IP SI-HR Jems is available at https://jems.si-hr.eu/. It can be accessed via standard web browsers like Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge or Mozilla Firefox (recent versions). For working in Jems, it is recommended to use a PC or notebook rather than mobile devices.

To use Jems each applicant must first register by clicking on “Create account” on the homepage and provide a set of credentials.

In the registration form, enter the following information (all fields marked with "*" are mandatory):

✓

- **First name / Last name:** personal information of the applicant's contact person.
- **Email:** the email address of the applicant – it will be used to log in and notifications will be sent to it.
- **Password:** password used to access Jems.



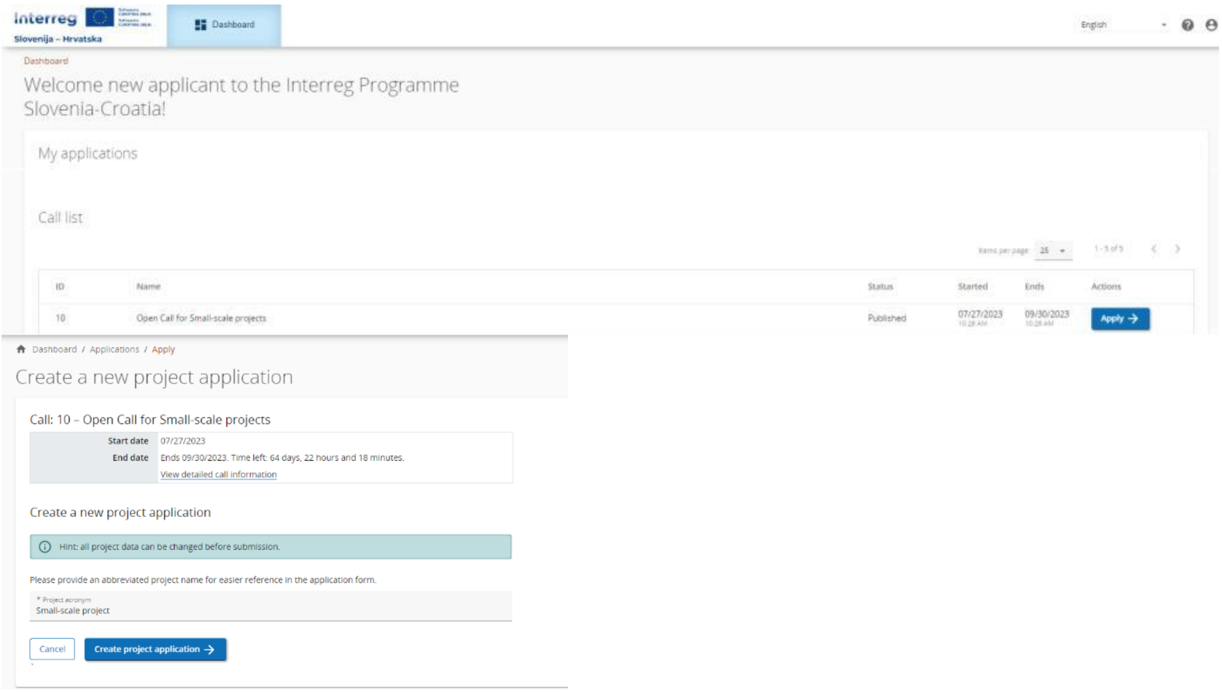
The minimum length of the password is 10 characters. It should contain at least one upper case letter, one lower case letter and one digit.

The "Register" button turns active only once all mandatory information are entered (including ticking the box "I have read and agree to the Terms of service and privacy policy"). Following the registration, a conformation email is automatically sent to the email address provided in the "Create new account" form. Only after confirmation, the applicant will be able to log into the system and create an AF. In case you do not receive an email confirmation, please check your spam folder and, if needed, get in touch with the programme Helpdesk for assistance. Contacts are available on the programme website www.si-hr.eu under section "About us".

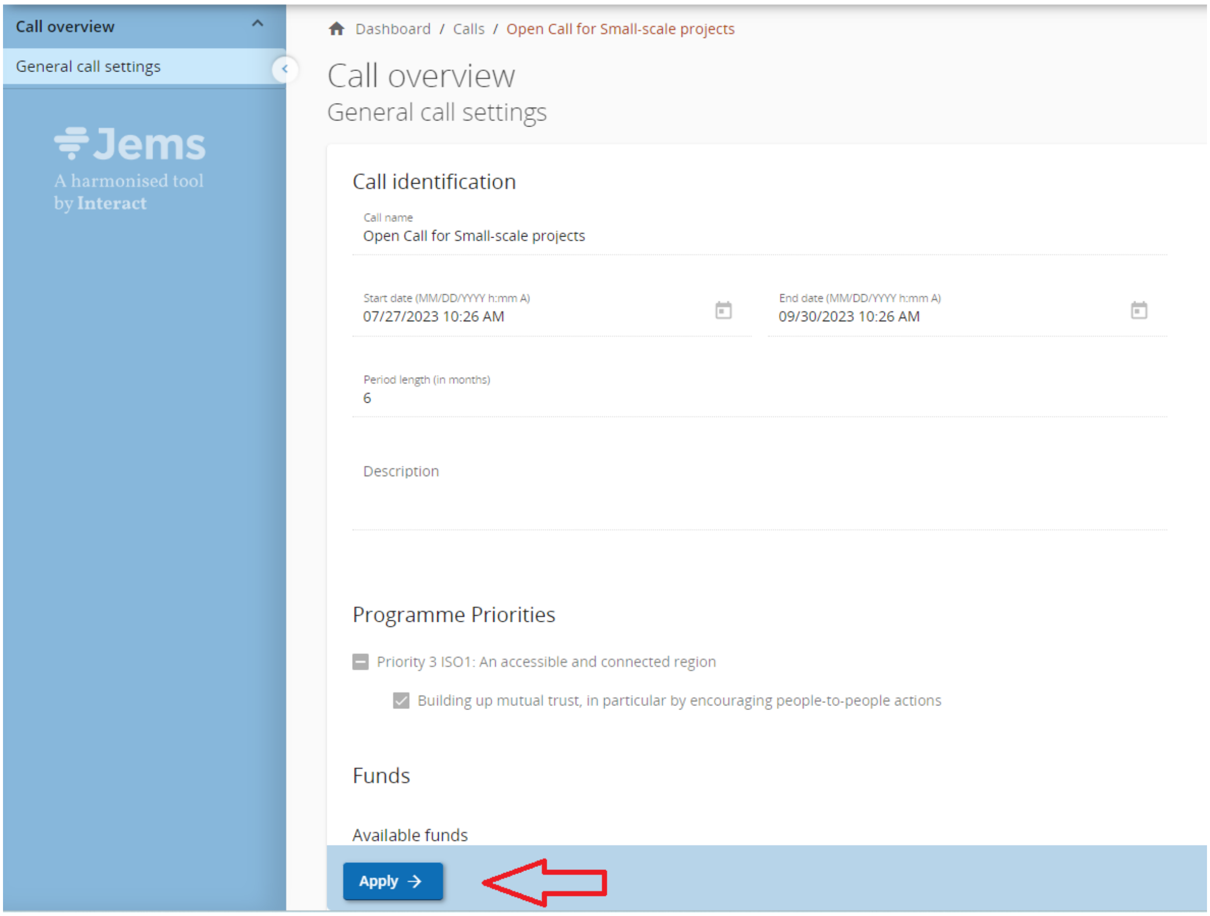
In case you forget your password, contact the Programme Helpdesk by stating the email address used during the registration.

- **Applying for a call**

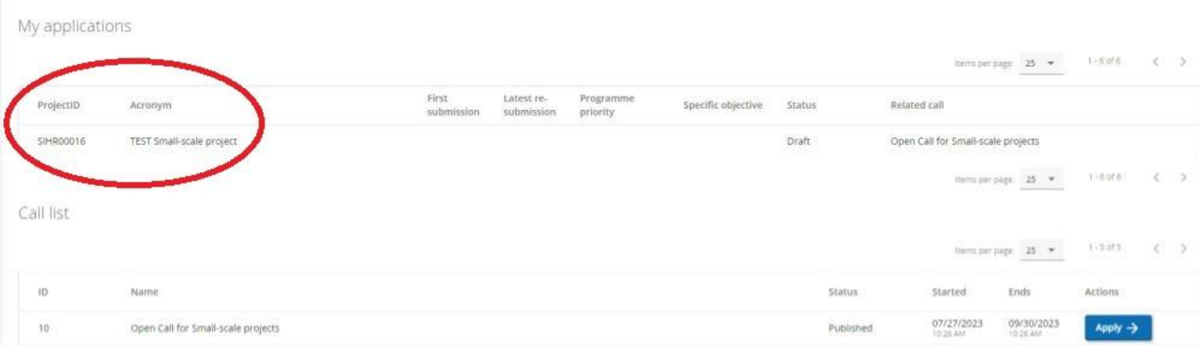
To create your AF, click on "Apply" at the Open Call for SSP under the section "Call list" of your dashboard. At this point, insert the acronym of your project (which can always be modified afterwards) and click "Create project application".



Alternatively, it is possible to click on the call row itself under the same section "Open calls" and see general call information through a read-only window. The "Apply" button will appear at the bottom of this page.



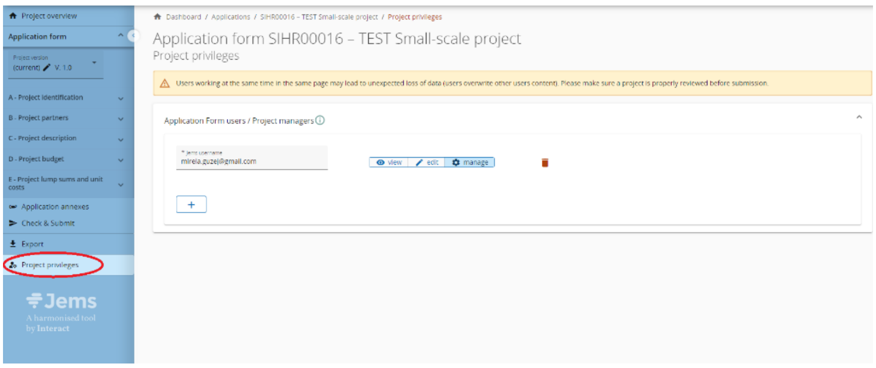
The newly created project application will be automatically listed under the section “My applications”. The project ID is an automatically generated number given by the system – this number is unique and allows the programme to easily recognise a project.

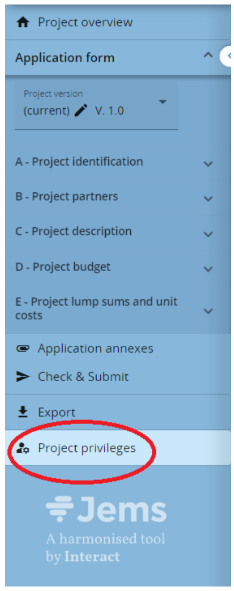


All applications created by the user are listed at this level – the user can select a project and open it by clicking on the name.

- **User management**

The LP can grant access rights to an open AF to Project Partners. They first have to register in Jems and then provide the LP with their email address. The LP can then enable new users in the “Project privileges” section by entering a full valid email address.





User can be granted either:

- Read-only rights (“view”) – a user can access all the Application Form sections without being able to make any change
- Edit rights (“edit”) – a user can modify/fill in all the Application Form sections
- Lead applicant rights (“manage”) – a user has both edit rights, but also access to the management of the “Project privileges” section.

Please note that only users with the “edit” and “manage” privileges can submit the application proposal. Therefore, we strongly recommend to identify and designate the user responsible for the submission of the AF beforehand (it should be the contact person of the LP institution).

Special attention shall be given to the risk of data overwriting.

To a certain extent, it is possible for different users to work simultaneously (at the same time) on the same AF. When working in parallel, users have to make sure that they are not working simultaneously in the same section or sub-section, as there is the risk of overwriting the data.

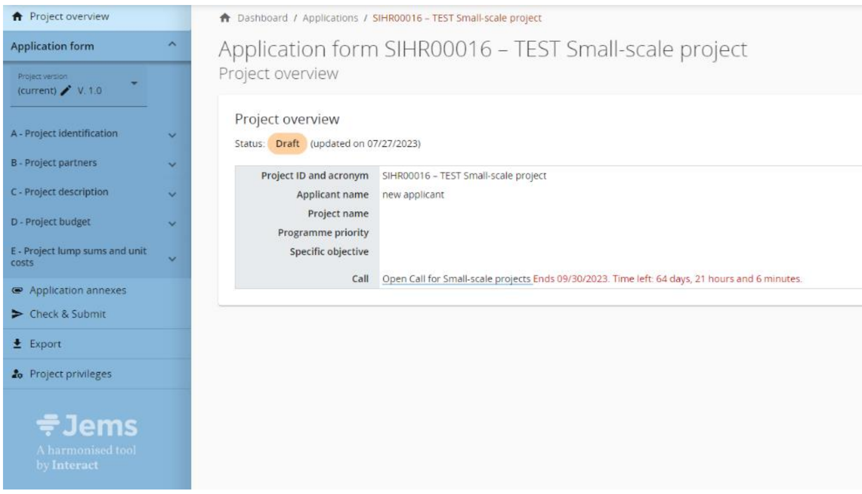
Users can be assigned to an unlimited number of application proposals with different user privileges.

- **Filling in the Application Form**

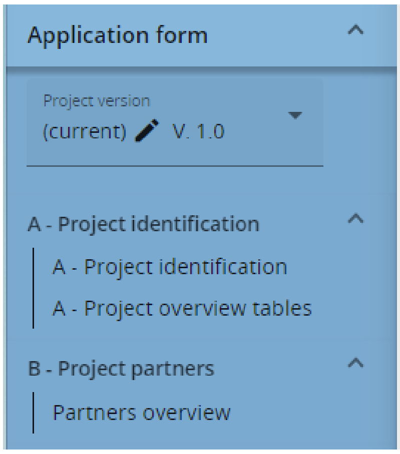
Please note that since you are applying for a small-scale project, there is no need to fill in all the questions in the application form. The questions, which do not have to be filled in are under each point marked with red.

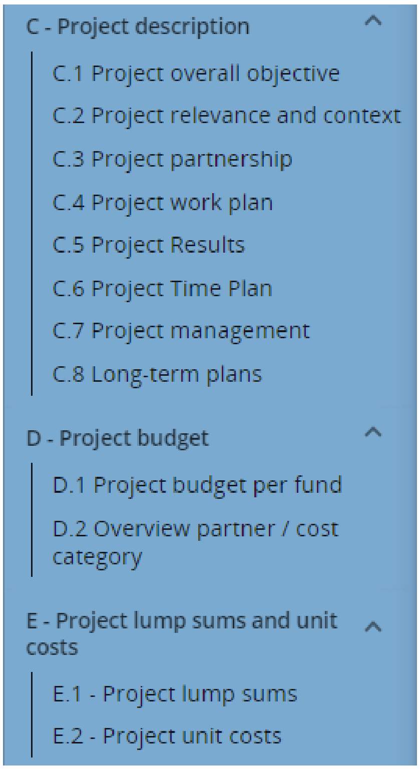
The "Project overview" page offers general information on the project proposal, its application status and the ongoing call. Every application has a version number.

Upon creation the project version number is set to "V.1.0" by default – the latter will remain unchanged until the submission of your proposal. The same logic applies to the status "Draft", which changes to "Submitted" right after the submission.



Applicants are invited to fill in the relevant section and sub-sections listed on the left menu, which corresponds to the Application Form template.

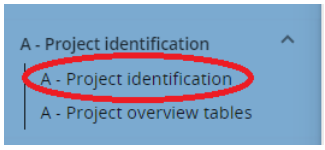


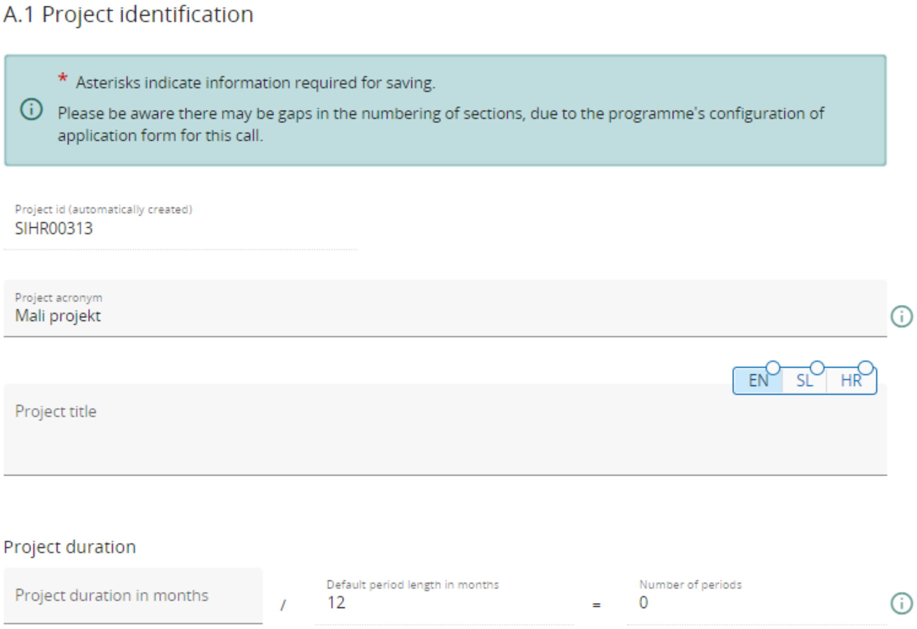


The Application Form shall be filled in bilingual (in Slovene and Croatian language), except for the project summary which shall be written in the Slovene, Croatian and English language by clicking on the language code:

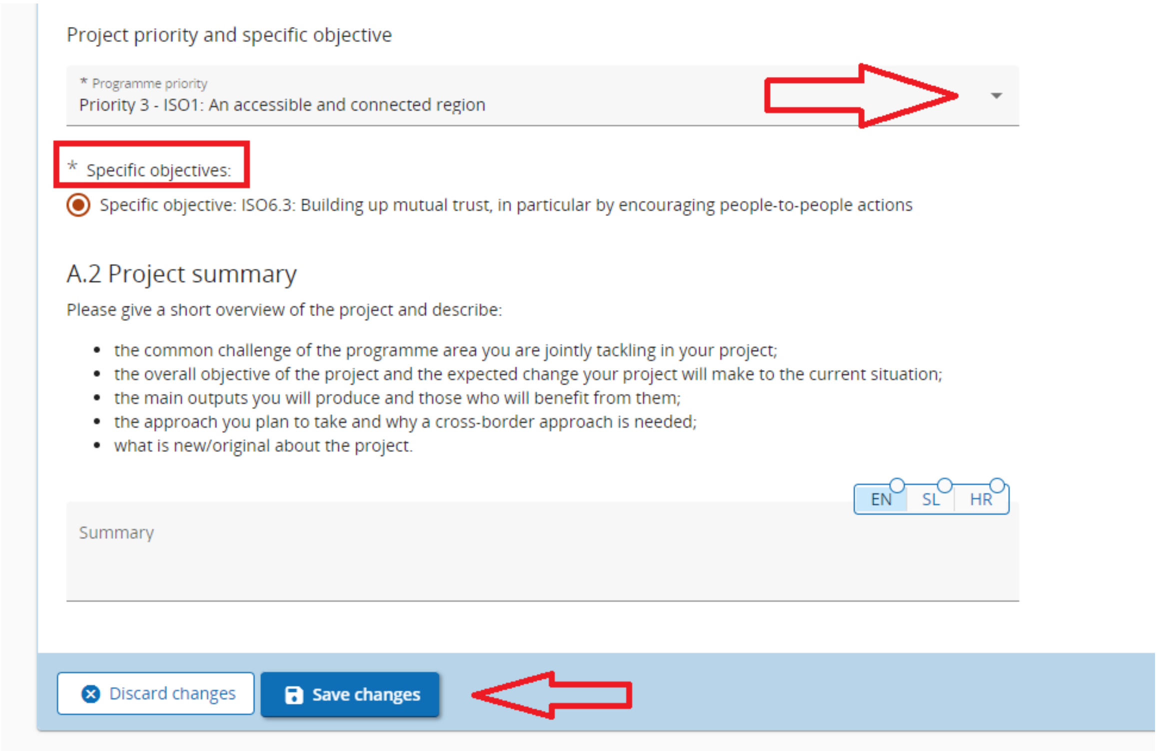
PART A – Project identification

By clicking on "A - Project identification" the following screen will appear. The user will enter information for project identification purposes, such as the project title, acronym, project duration, relevant programme priority, specific objective and project summary:



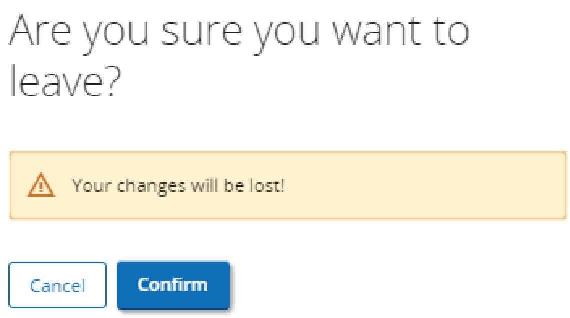


The "Project acronym" and "Project title" should be short and straightforward since, if selected for co-funding, this will be the official name of the project during its entire implementation. For the project duration, enter the relevant number of months (the default period length in months is set to 12 and could be less than 12 months).



Select the "Programme priority" from the drop-down menu. After the "Programme priority" is selected, the relevant "Specific objectives" will appear. It is mandatory to select this specific objective (SO 6.3).

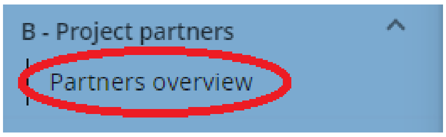
In the field **"Project summary"** provide a short overview of the project (in Slovene, Croatian and **also in English**) by following the instructions. The "Save changes" button turns active only once all mandatory fields in the section are filled in. Jems provides warnings or requests of confirmation before leaving any section of the AF. Always remember to save the data before leaving a section or sub-section in the AF, otherwise changes will be discarded.

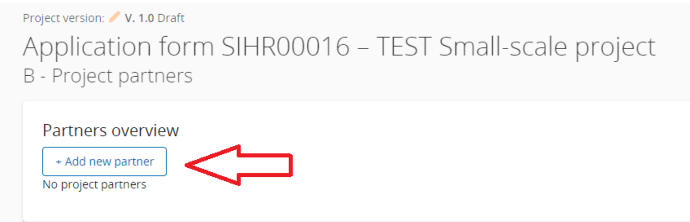


The Project overview tables will be generated automatically by filling in the whole Application Form.

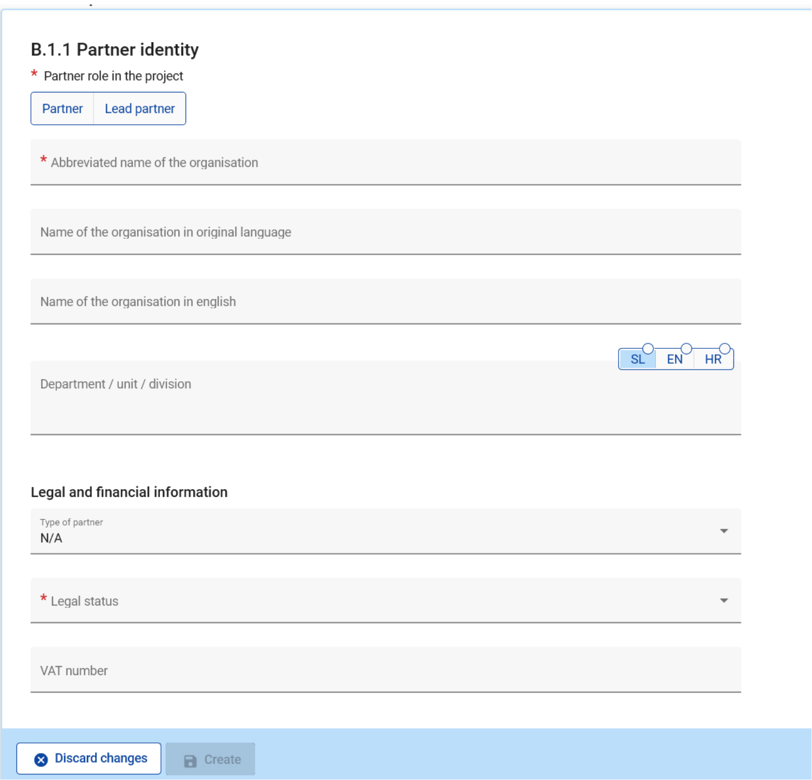
PART B – Project partners

By clicking on "Partners overview" the following screen will appear:





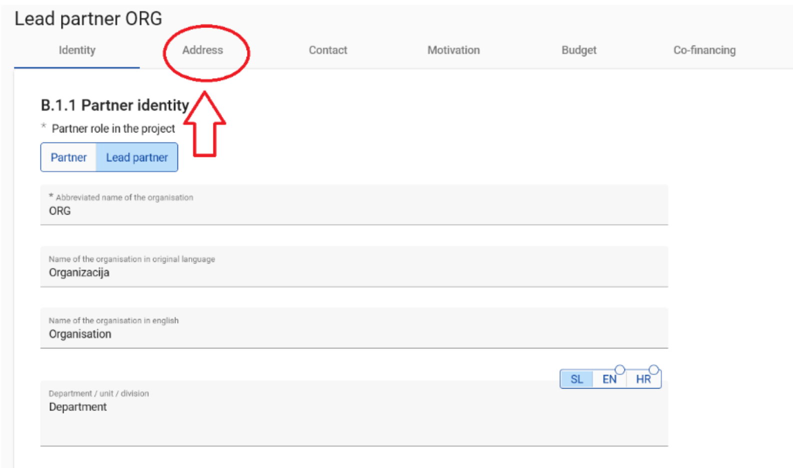
To add a new project partner, click on "+ Add new partner" and the following screen will appear:



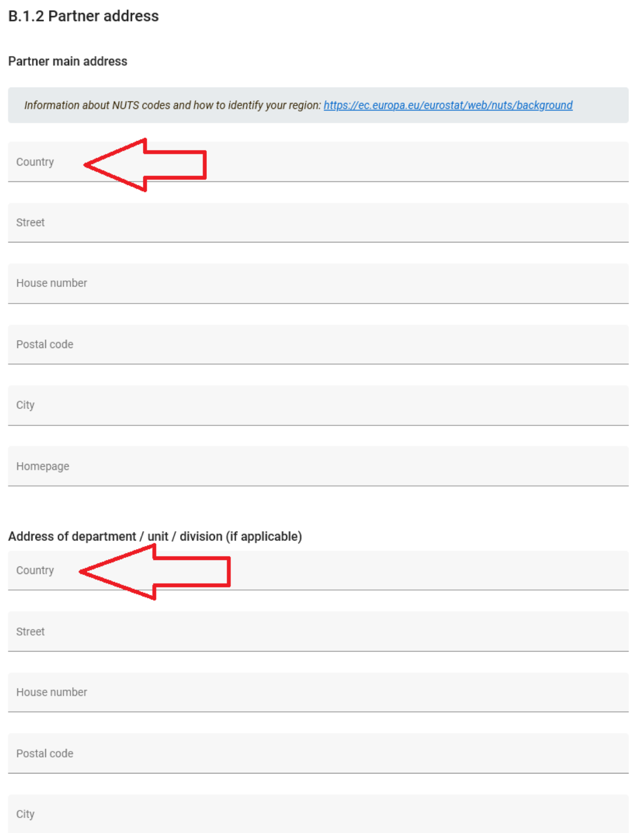
For each Project Partner the role in the project has to be defined (either LP or Partner). It is mandatory to provide an abbreviation of the organisation, the name of the organisation in the original language as well as its name in English. The field "Department / unit / division" has to be filled in only if applicable. The data needed for the fields "Type of partner" and "Legal status" can be selected from the drop-down list. For all other fields input has to be provided. The fields "Other identifier number" and "Other identifier description" have to be filled in only if no VAT number exists.

The VAT number and the name of the organisation in original language have to be consistent.

Once the "B.1.1 Partner identity" is filled in, continue with the address section by clicking on "Address" (see screenshot on the right). In the "Address section", the applicant is asked to provide the partner main address and address of the department / unit / division (if applicable).

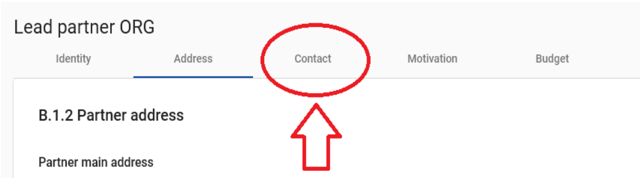


The following screen will appear:

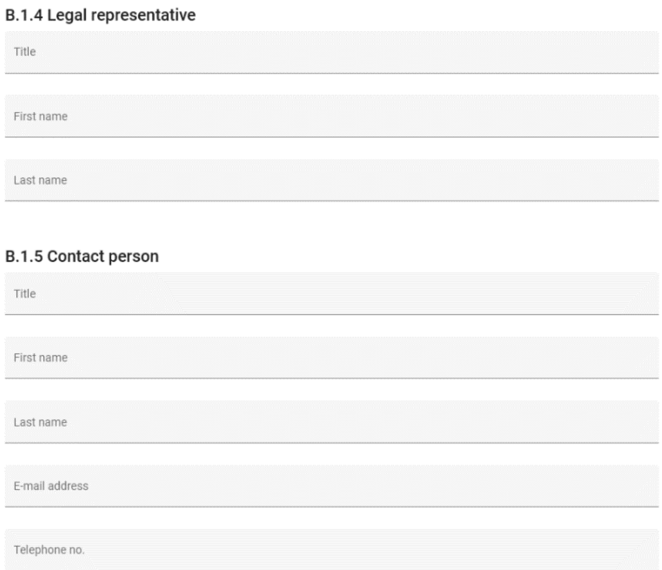


By clicking on the field "Country", a drop-down menu will appear where you can select a country. After the country selection additional fields will appear, first "NUTS 2" and then "NUTS 3". Select from the drop-down menu. For all other fields input has to be provided.

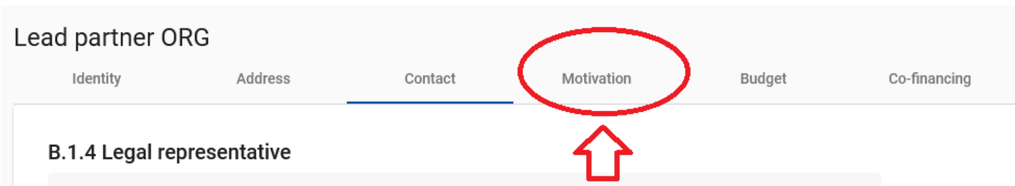
Once the "B.1.2 Partner address" is filled in, continue with the contact section by clicking on "Contact". In this section, the legal representative and the contact person details are required.



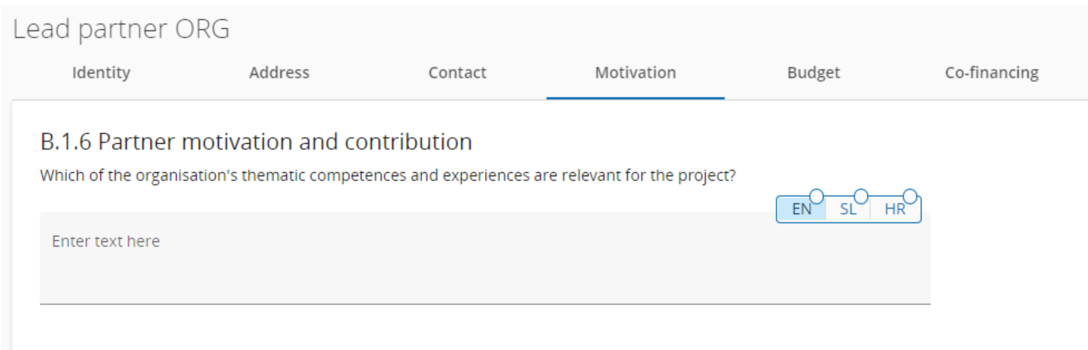
The following screen will appear:



Once this section is filled in, continue with the motivation section by clicking on "Motivation":

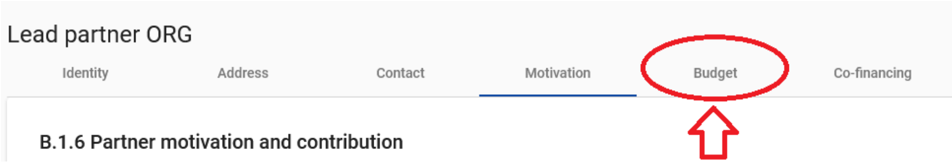


The following screen will appear:

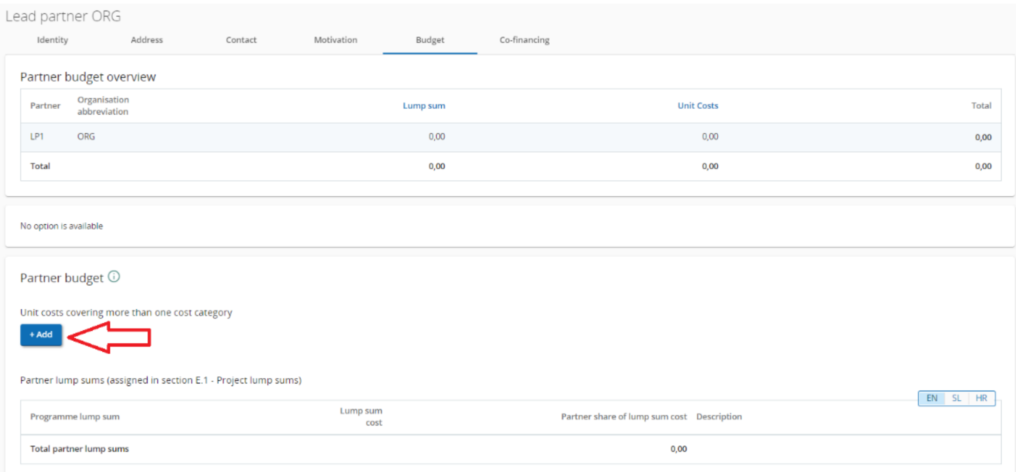


In this section, the partner needs to provide motivation as to why they are participating in the project . The text field is bilingual and has a limit of 3000 characters in both languages.

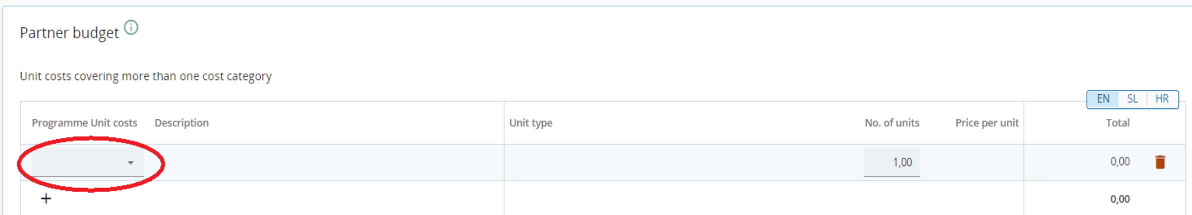
Once the section "Motivation" is filled in, continue with the budget section by clicking on "Budget" (see screenshot below). **This step is relevant only for Type 1 SSP.** The sum total of the partners' budgets defines the overall project budget. Based on the financial data entered at the partner level, the overview tables foreseen in section "D – Project budget" are automatically updated. Each partner budget has to be defined in this section, except the lump sum for events (defined in section "E.1 Project lump sums"), that is suitable for Type 2 SSP.



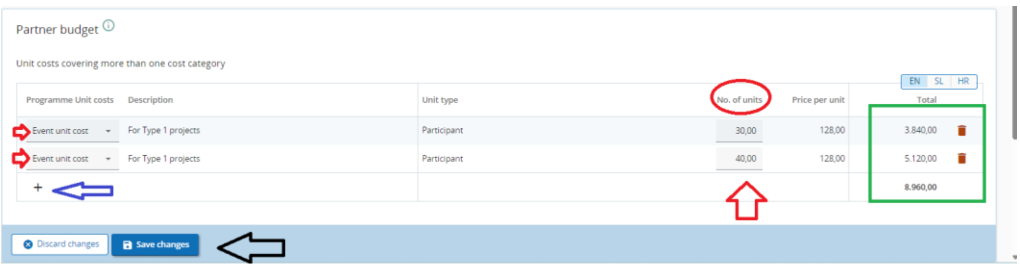
The following screen will appear:



To enter a cost item as unit cost, click on the "+ Add" button and following screen will appear:



Choose from the drop-down menu the Programme Unit cost – "Type 1 project – Participant per event" and all sections will be filled in automatically, except the "no. of units" (red arrow), where the planned number of participants has to be provided. Do not forget to save the changes by clicking on "Save changes" (black arrow).



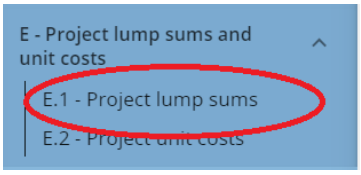
To add a new event click on the "+" button (blue arrow).

The system will calculate the amount automatically (green box). To delete an item use the trash symbol.

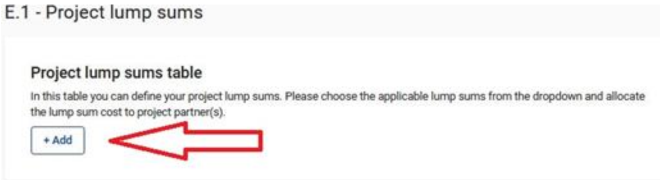
The explained budget input is only for Type 1 SSP. For Type 2 SSP the explanation of budget input is provided under PART E.1 – Project lump sums (see instructions below).

PART E.1 – Project lump sums

In this section, the description of the budget input for Type 2 SSP is explained.



To access this section click on E.1 and the following screen will appear:



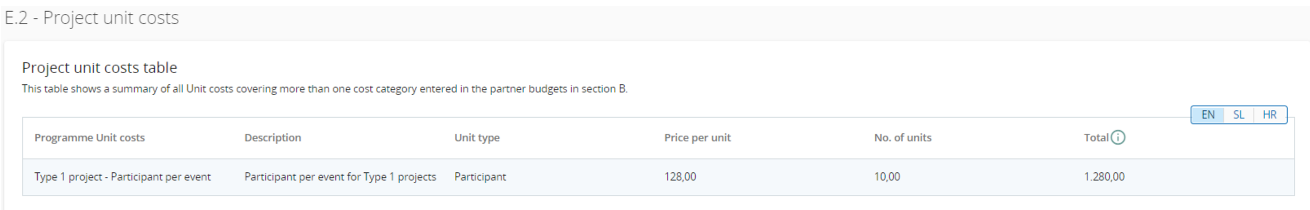
The next step is to click on the "+ Add" button (red arrow) and the following screen will appear:

Choose from the drop-down menu the Programme lump sum – "Type 2 project – Lump sum for 2 events" and all sections will be filled in automatically, except the "shared costs between the project partners" (green box), where the cost sharing between the project partners needs to be entered. Do not forget to save the changes by clicking on "Save changes" (black arrow).

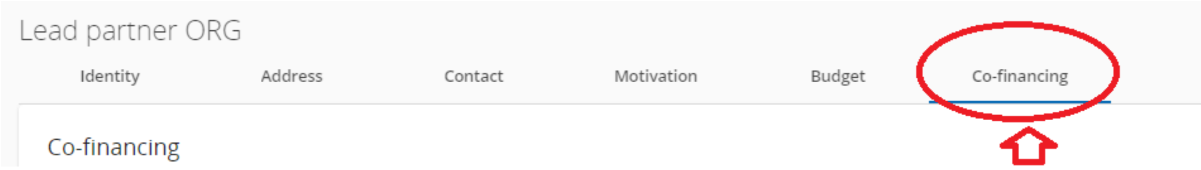
To delete an item use the trash symbol.

PART E.2 – Project unit cost

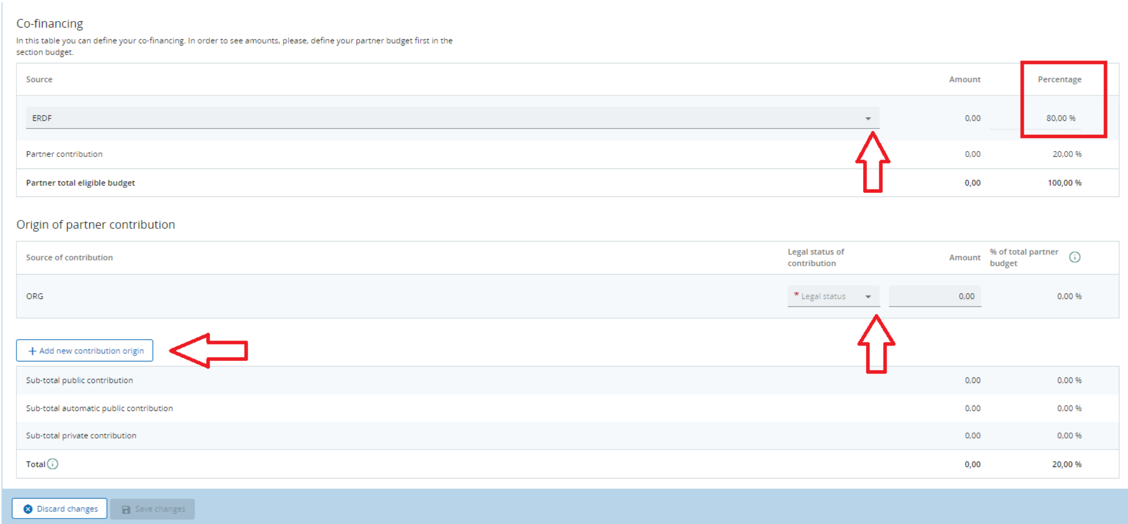
In case of Type 1 SSP in this table you can monitor the total unit costs for events, entered by all project partners. Based on the financial data entered at the partner level, this overview table is automatically updated



Once the budget is entered, continue with the partner contribution under section B. Project Partners. You can fill in this section by clicking on “Co-financing”:



The following screen will appear:



First, the co-financing source has to be selected from a drop-down menu. “ERDF” is the only source available in the programme. Normally the rate of ERDF co-financing is 80% (set by default), in some cases, it could be less and it is editable. The partner contribution entry (amount and percentage columns) is automatically calculated. The origin of the partner contribution, its legal status (private or public) and its amount must be filled in. Different sources of contribution are allowed; a new source can be added by clicking on the “+ Add new contribution origin”. The total of contribution must match the total partner contribution.

If changes to the budget are made after the “partner contribution” has been filled in, it is necessary to update the “co-financing” section afterwards.

To create an additional partner, press the “+ Add new partner” button and repeat the procedure explained in “PART B – Project partners”.

PART C – Project description

This part consists of:

C - Project description
- C.1 Project overall objective
- C.2 Project relevance and context
- C.3 Project partnership
- C.4 Project work plan
- C.5 Project Results
- C.6 Project Time Plan
- C.7 Project management
- C.8 Long-term plans

C.1 Project overall objective

C.1 Project overall objective

Below, you can see the Programme priority specific objective your project will contribute to (chosen in section A.1.).

Programme priority specific objective

Specific objective: ISO6.3: Building up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions

Project overall objective

Now think about your main objective – what do you aim to achieve by the end of your project? Remember your project needs to contribute to the programme's objective.

Your objective should:

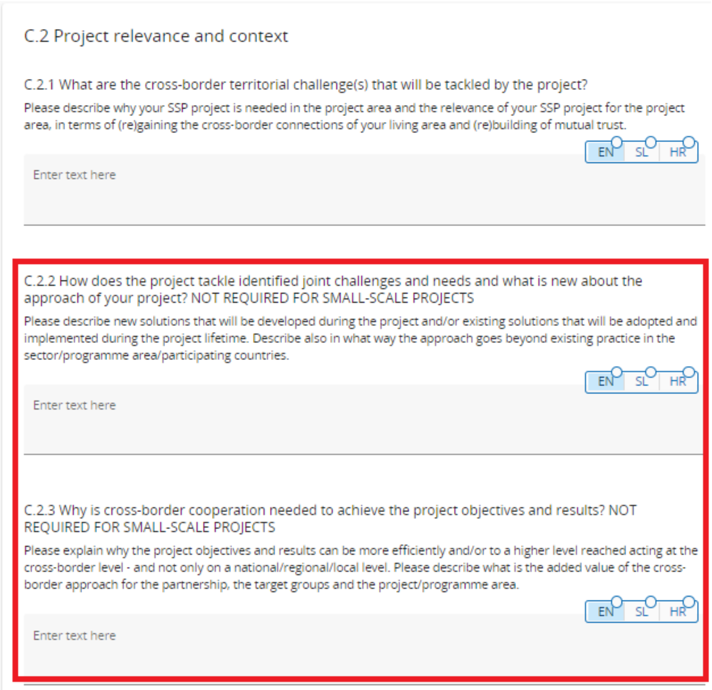
- be realistic and achievable by the end of the project, or shortly after;
- specify who needs project results and in which territory;
- be measurable and durable – indicate the change you are aiming for.

EN SL HR

Project overall objective

In this section, the Programme specific objective chosen in the section "A - Project identification" is shown. The applicant is requested to describe the "Project overall objective". This field should contain information in both languages and has a limit of 500 characters.

C.2 Project relevance and context



C.2 Project relevance and context

C.2.1 What are the cross-border territorial challenge(s) that will be tackled by the project?
Please describe why your SSP project is needed in the project area and the relevance of your SSP project for the project area, in terms of (re)gaining the cross-border connections of your living area and (re)building of mutual trust.

EN SL HR

Enter text here

C.2.2 How does the project tackle identified joint challenges and needs and what is new about the approach of your project? NOT REQUIRED FOR SMALL-SCALE PROJECTS
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. Describe also in what way the approach goes beyond existing practice in the sector/programme area/participating countries.

EN SL HR

Enter text here

C.2.3 Why is cross-border cooperation needed to achieve the project objectives and results? NOT REQUIRED FOR SMALL-SCALE PROJECTS
Please explain why the project objectives and results can be more efficiently and/or to a higher level reached acting at the cross-border level - and not only on a national/regional/local level. Please describe what is the added value of the cross-border approach for the partnership, the target groups and the project/programme area.

EN SL HR

Enter text here

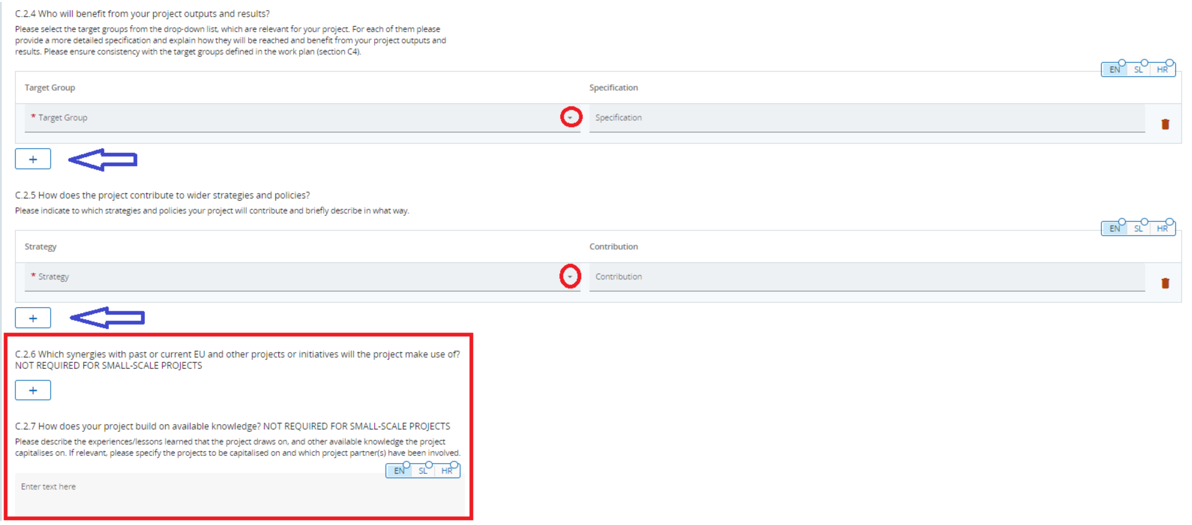
This section consists of a question (C.2.1) that should be answered by the applicant in both languages and has a limit of 5000 characters.

Regarding question C.2.1 the applicants should describe why their SSP project is needed in the project area and the relevance of their SSP project for the project area, in terms of (re)gaining the cross-border connections of their living area and (re)building of mutual trust.

Questions C.2.2 and C.2.3 are not required for Small-scale projects (marked with red square in picture above).

For the section "C.2.4 – Who will benefit from your outputs and results?" the applicant should list their target groups from a pre-defined drop-down menu (marked red in the screenshot below) and specify the target group further. The field "Specification" has a limit of 2000 characters and has to be filled in in both languages.

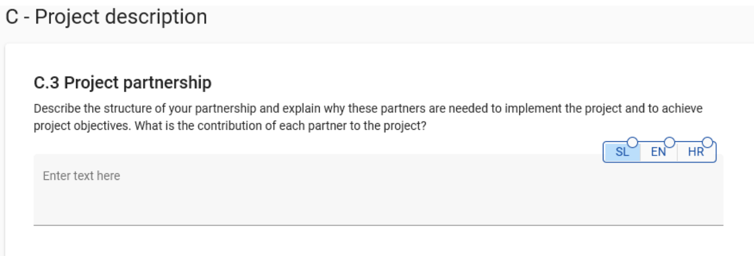
In the section "C.2.5 – How does the project contribute to wider strategies and policies?" the drop-down menu (marked red in the screenshot below) consists of the strategies selected by the programme (EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region and EU Strategy for the Danube Region). The field "Contribution" has a limit of 2000 characters and has to be filled in in both languages.



To add an additional “Target group” and “Strategy” please click on the “+” icon (blue arrow). To delete a “Target group” and “Strategy”, please click on the “trash” icon (black arrow).

Questions C.2.6 and C.2.7 are not required for Small-scale projects (marked with red square in picture above).

C.3 Project partnership

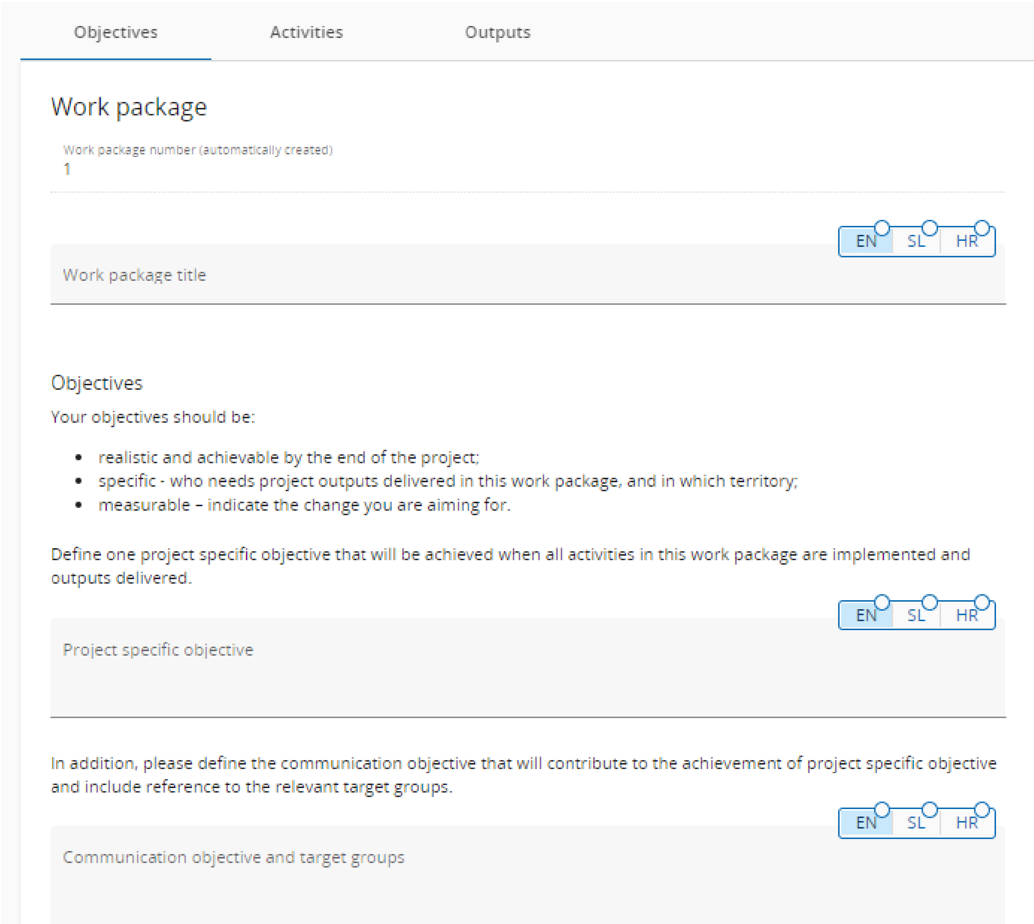


In this section, the applicant furthers describe the structure of the partnership. This field is a multi-language one and should be filled in in both languages; the limit is 5000 characters.

C.4 Project work plan

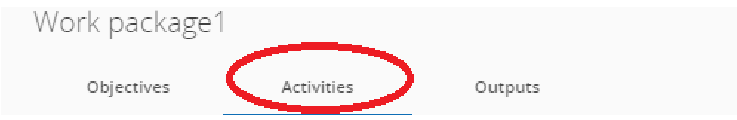
The work packages describe the thematic activities carried out within the project and the related outputs. **A small-scale project needs only one work package.** To open a work package, click on “+ Add new work package”:

The following screen will appear:

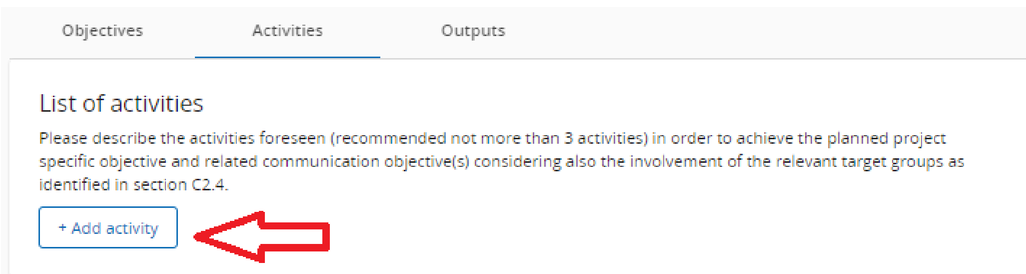


Work package is numbered automatically. The tab “Objectives” of a work package contains fields for the explanation of the “Project specific objective” and the “Communication objective and target groups” in both languages. The work package title should reflect the strategic cross-border focus and the intended results of the work package rather than the planned activities.

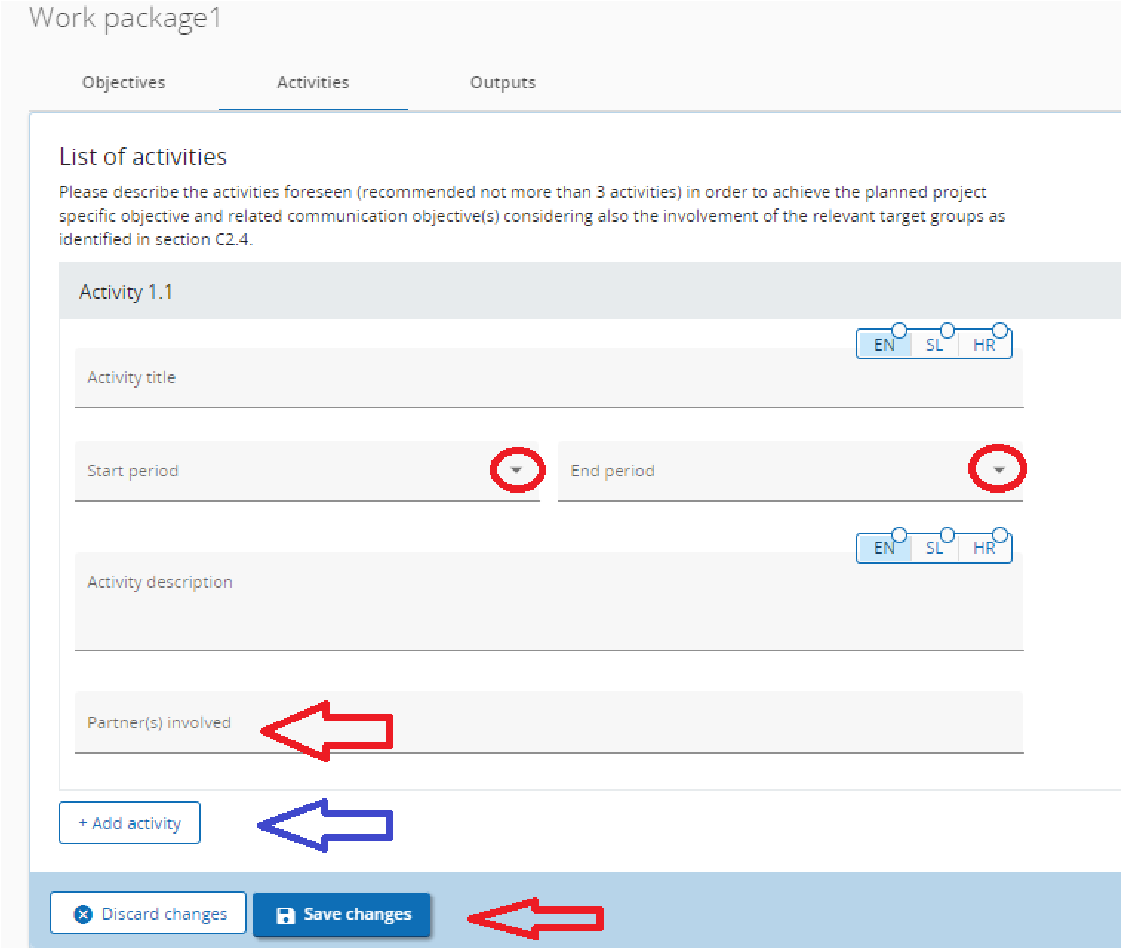
Once the Objectives section is filled in, continue with the activity section by clicking on “Activities”:



Following screen will appear:



The work package is divided into activities (**no more than 3 activities** are recommended). Each event is one activity. Activities have to lead to the development of one or more project outputs. To open a new activity, click on "+ Add activity". The following screen will appear:

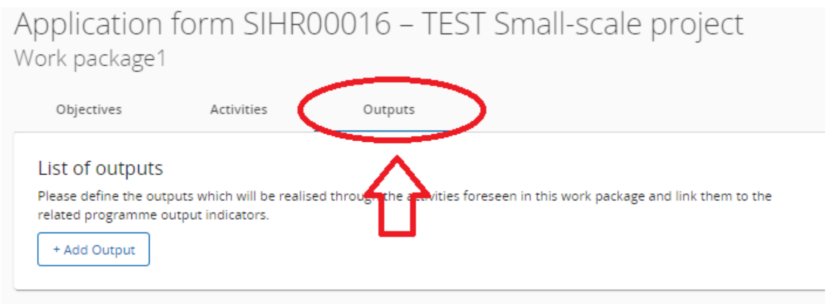


Description of the fields in the activity section:

The "Activity title" field is filled in both languages and has a limit of 100 characters. From the drop-down menu "Start period" and "End period" select the period in which the activity starts and ends. The "Activity description" field is filled in in both languages and has a limit of 3000 characters. In this field please also describe what is the role (contribution and main activities) of each project partner organisation in the project. From the drop-down menu "Partner(s) involved" select partners involved in this activity. To save all changes press the button "Save changes".

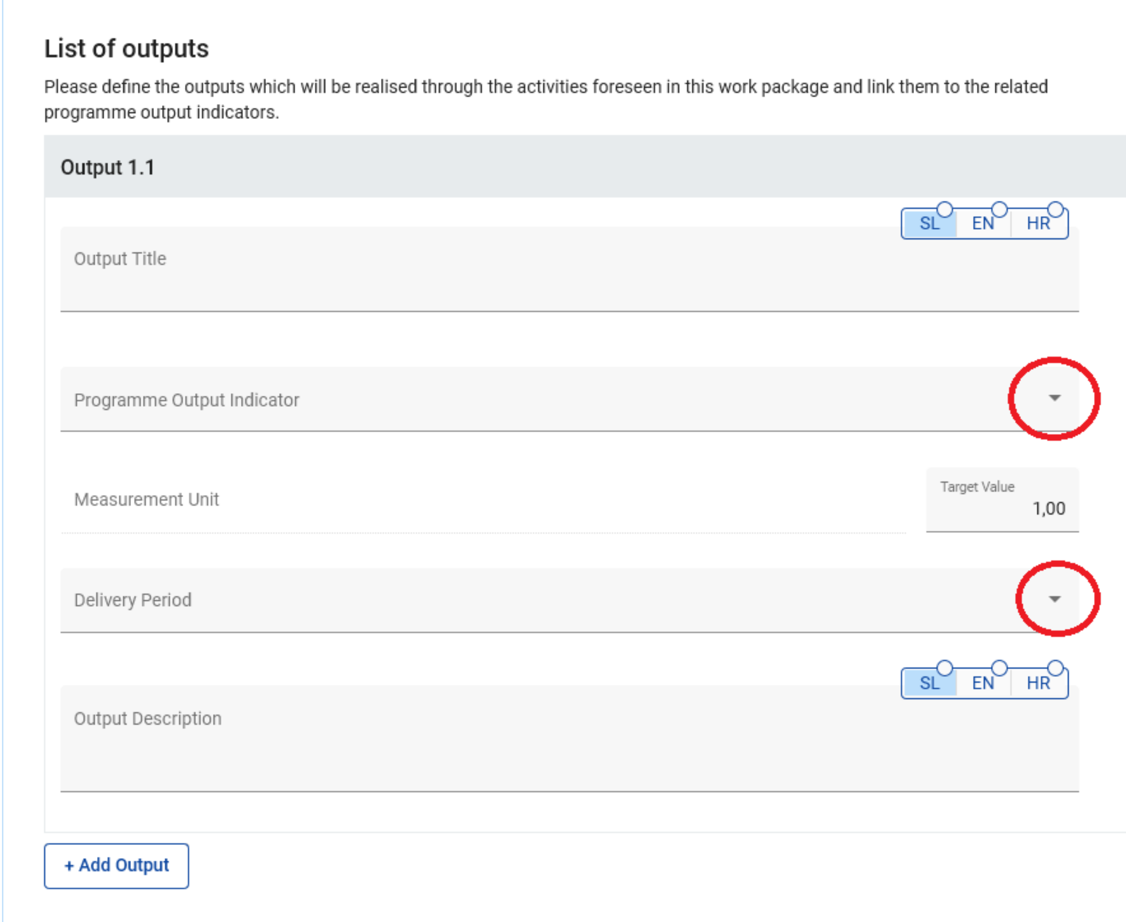
To create an additional activity, press the button "+ Add activity" (blue arrow).

Once the activity section is filled in, continue with the output section by clicking on "Outputs":



Following screen will appear:

To add an Output click on the button "+Add Output" and following screen will appear:



Description of the fields in the output section:

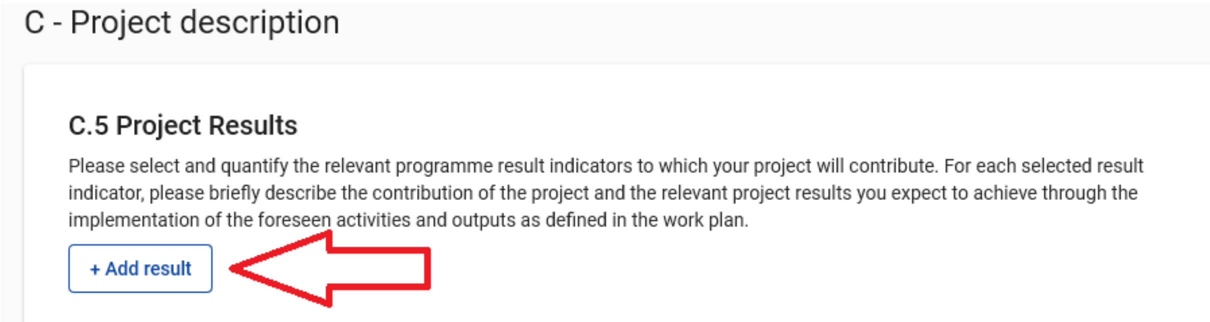
Project outputs are tangible deliverables of the project, which contribute to the results. They are directly deriving from activities carried out in the project. They do not lead to a qualitative judgment on the projects' results. Outputs are typically measured in physical units such as the number of seminars, conferences and workshops. In other words, it is not because the project organises a high number of workshops (output) that it will necessarily be successful. The "Output title" is filled in in both languages and has a limit of 200 characters. From the drop-down menu "Programme Output Indicator" select one of the pre-defined Programme Output Indicators and the "Measurement Unit" will be filled in automatically. The default value for "Target value" is 1,00 and editable. From the drop-down menu "Delivery period" select the period when an output will be finished. The "Output description" field is filled in in both languages and has a limit of 500 characters. To create an additional output, press the button "+ Add Output".

Make sure to include Programme Output Indicator *RCO 87 Organisations cooperating across borders* that is obligatory under relevant specific objective 6.3.

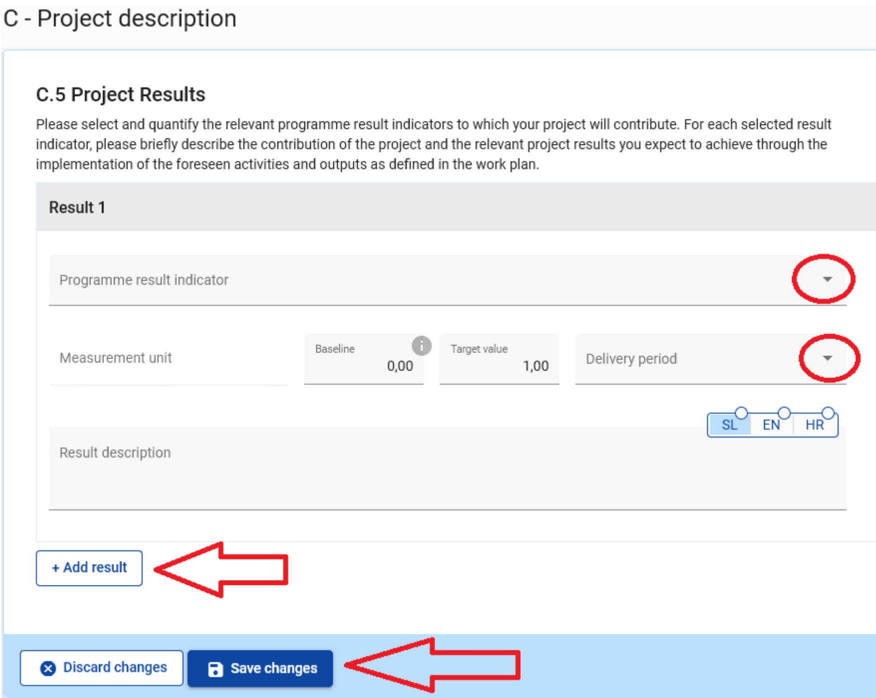
C.5 Project Results

The **results** are direct and immediate effects resulting from the project and from the production of the outputs. They represent what is intended to be changed by the project. The production of outputs such as organisation of events, workshops, conferences are only means to achieve the results of the project. Compared to the outputs, they imply a qualitative value, an improvement compared with the initial situation. They have to be measured in physical units expressed in number of organisations cooperating across borders after project completion.

In this section, the applicant can add Project Results to a list by clicking on "+ Add result":



The following screen will appear:

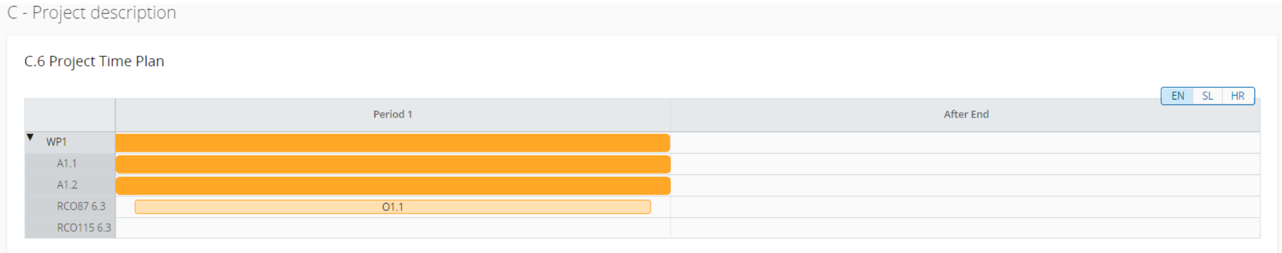


A Programme Result Indicator has to be selected from the drop-down menu for a Project Result. Once the Programme Result Indicator is selected, the measurement unit and baseline are automatically filled in. Please provide the delivery period of the result (select from the drop-down menu). The default value for "Target value" is 1,00 and it is editable. The field "Result description" is filled in in both languages and has a limit of 1000 characters. In this field describe how the project will contribute to the Programme result indicator. Please remember to click the "Save changes" button.

Make sure to include Programme Result Indicator RCR 84 Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion that is **obligatory under relevant specific objective 6.3.**

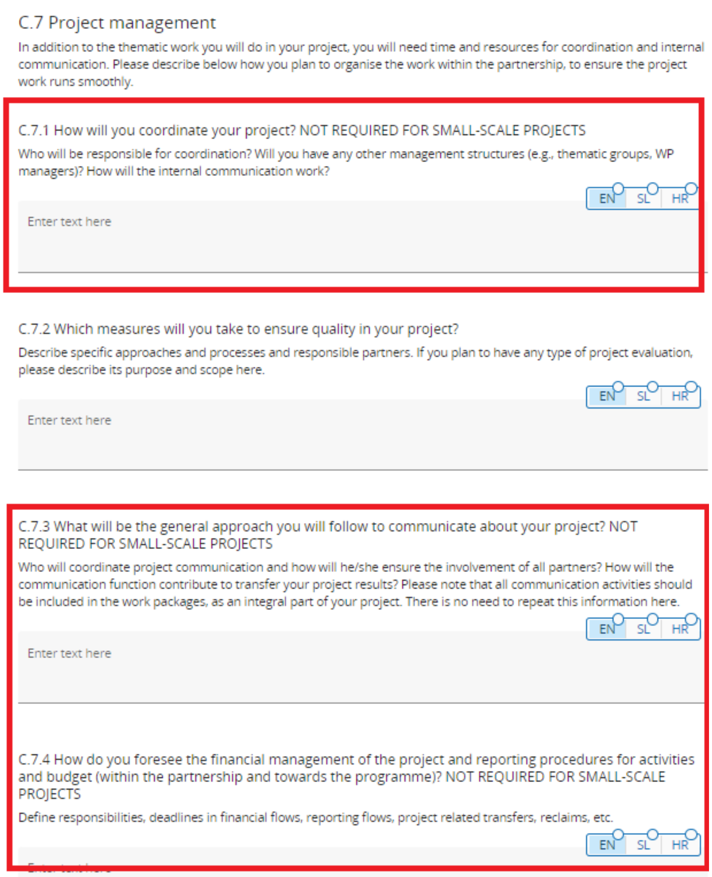
C.6 Project Time Plan

The project time plan is automatically generated using data from the AF.



Project duration (defined in Section A1) has to be filled in and each item has to be assigned to a period in order to have expected project outputs and results displayed on the timeline accordingly.

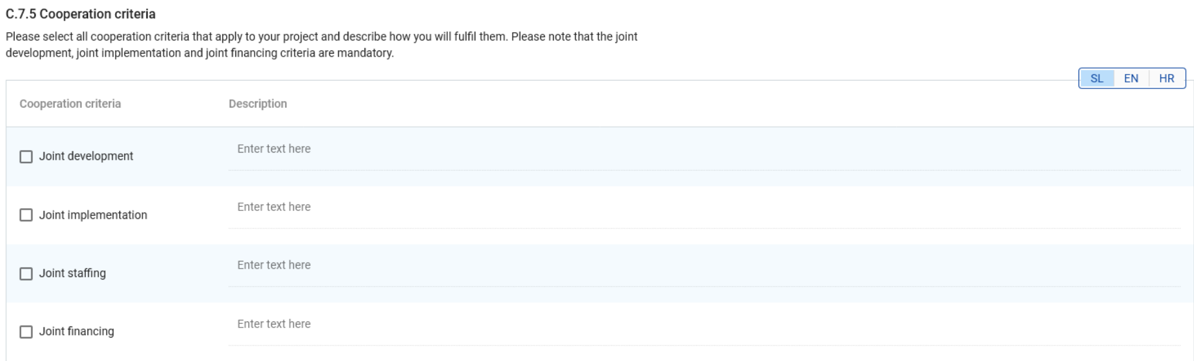
C.7 Project management



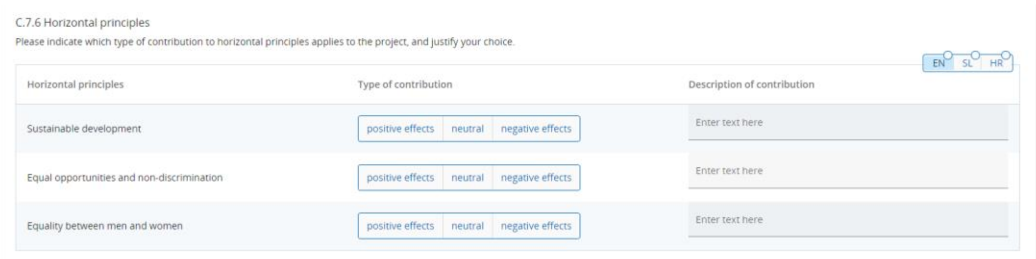
This section consists of a question (C.7.2) where an answer should be provided by the applicant in both languages; the character limit is 5,000 characters.

Questions C.7.1, C.7.3 and C.7.4 are not required for Small-scale projects (marked with red square in picture above).

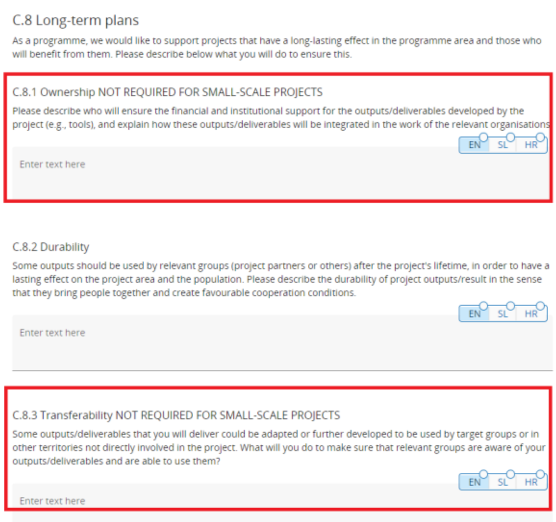
In the section **"C.7.5 Cooperation criteria",** tick the criteria and enter the description how the criteria will be met (see the screenshot below). The mandatory criteria are "Joint development", "Joint implementation" and "Joint financing".



In section **"C.7.6 Horizontal principles"** indicate which type of contribution to horizontal principles applies to the project. This section contains pre-defined horizontal principles; the type of contribution is a pre-defined toggle button as well. The description is a free text input that has to be entered in both languages and has a limit of 2000 characters.



C.8 Long-term plans



This section consists of a question (C.8.2) that shall be answered by the applicant in both languages and has a limit of 5000 characters. The applicants should describe the durability of project outputs/result in the sense that they bring people together and create favourable cooperation conditions.

Questions C.8.1 and C.8.3 are not required for Small-scale projects (marked with red square in picture above).

PART D – Project budget

In this section you can monitor the total budget per partner. Based on the financial data entered at partner level, these overview tables are automatically updated.

D - Project budget

D.1 Project budget per fund

D.2 Overview partner / simplified cost option

Table D.1 includes data on the funds, which shows the share of the funds per partner compared.

D.1 Project budget per co-financing source (fund) - breakdown per partner

Partner	Organisation abbreviation	Country	ERDF	ERDF % Rate	Public Contribution	Private Contribution	Total partner contribution	Total eligible budget	% of Total eligible budget
LP1	ORG		3.072,00 46.15 % of total	80,00 %	768,00	0,00	768,00	3.840,00	46,15 %
PP2	MED		3.584,00 53.85 % of total	80,00 %	896,00	0,00	896,00	4.480,00	53,85 %
	Total		**6.656,00**	**80,00 %**	**1.664,00**	**0,00**	**1.664,00**	**8.320,00**	**100,00 %**

Table D.2 provides an automatically calculated overview of the total partner budget broken down per selected simplified cost option .

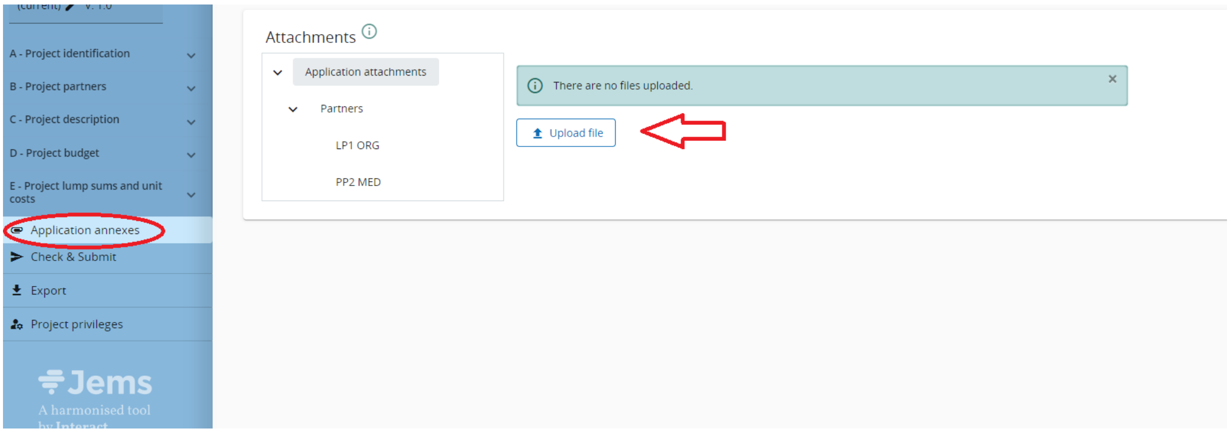
D.2 Project budget - overview per partner / per simplified cost option

Partner	Organisation abbreviation	Country	Lump sum	Unit Costs	Total
LP1	ORG		0,00	0,00	**0,00**
PP2	PP2		0,00	0,00	**0,00**
Total			**0,00**	**0,00**	**0,00**

Application annexes

For each project the Lead Partner has to upload the following annexes to the Application Form:

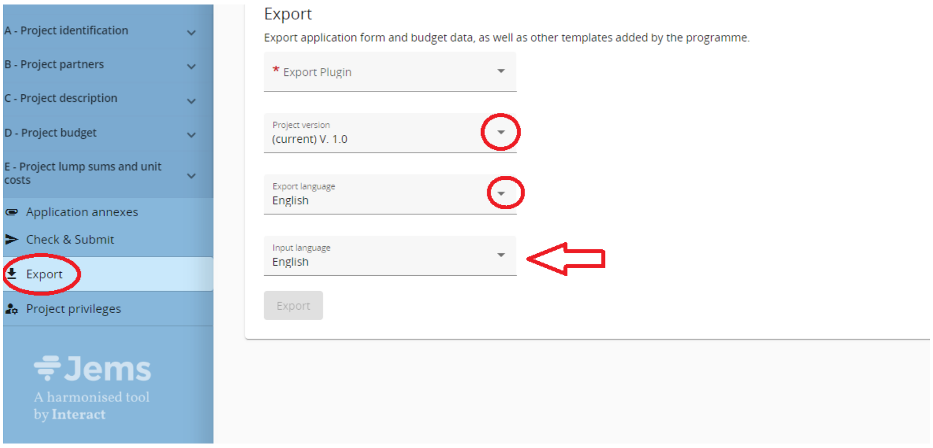
- Project Statement for Small-scale project,
- Partner Statements for Small-scale project and
- Partnership Agreement for Small-scale project.



The respective annexes must be uploaded before pressing the "Submit project application" button. To do so, the LP must click on "Upload file" (red arrow) and wait until the document appears in the overview table automatically created on the same page.

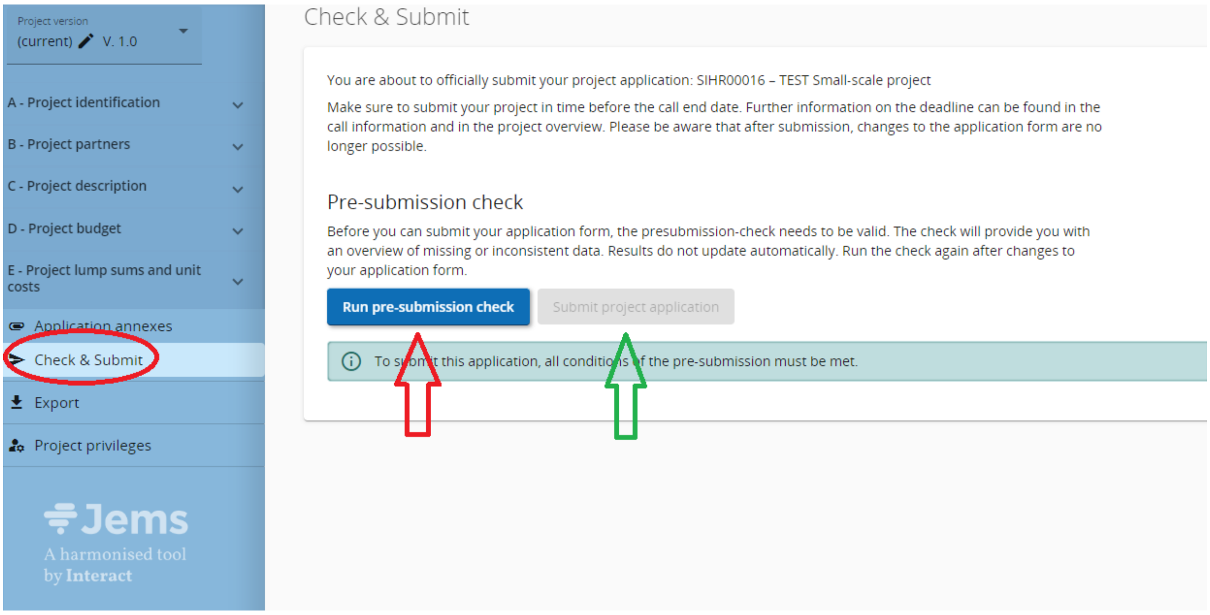
The export function

This section allows the user to create a pdf file of the AF at any time of its development as well as to export partner budgets. The export language can be selected from the drop-down menu:



Submission of the Application Form

The submission of the AF is following a two-step process. Each AF requires a successful pre-submission check of content before it can be submitted.



Under the section "Check & Submit", users with "edit" or "manage" privileges (see subchapter 3.1.3 ONLINE SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATION – User management) can perform the following actions:

- Run pre-submission check (red arrow)
- Submit project application (green arrow)

The pre-submission check warns applicants only if the pre-defined mandatory fields of the Application Form are not filled in (it does not check the quality of information provided and if all fields have a bilingual text entered). The button "Submit project application" is accessible only after all pre-submission checks are successfully passed.

After submission, the status of the application is changed to "Submitted" (see on your dashboard, under "My applications" or at the level of the project overview page)**.**

3.2 PROJECT ASSESSMENT AND CONTRACTING

The assessment of received applications consists of several steps following a standardised procedure safeguarding the principles of equal treatment and transparency.

In the tables below, you will find the conditions and criteria under which the project will be checked and assessed.

3.2.1 ADMINISTRATIVE AND ELIGIBILITY CHECK

In line with the e-cohesion requirements, **applications** under the IP SI-HR 2021-2027 **can be submitted only via the programme's electronic monitoring system Jems**. Jems applies certain pre-submission verifications that prevent applicants from submitting applications with obvious formal errors. In addition to pre-submission checks targeted at technical details (such as mandatory fields must not remain empty) formal/administrative criteria by the programme are also checked – where this is technically possible – via pre-submission verifications or are included in requirements such as submission by the set deadline.

Other administrative and eligibility criteria are subject to human check by the programme's JS and/or external assessors following the submission of the application for funding.

If there are discrepancies or if certain documents are missing according to the administrative check, the LP shall be asked to provide supplements. **The supplements may refer to compliance with the criteria A.2 and B.1. LP can supplement the AF within seven (7) calendar days** after the request for supplements was sent. In case the project, after submission of the requested supplements, fully complies with the administrative and eligibility criteria and is approved by the MC, all supplements shall be entered in the AF (in Jems) before signing the SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract.

If the project, after receipt of the supplements or passed seven (7) calendar days, still does not fulfil the administrative and eligibility criteria, the project shall be rejected in Jems.

Only if all administrative and eligibility criteria are fulfilled, a project shall undergo quality assessment and be submitted to the MC for decision.

All administrative and eligibility criteria shall be answered with **YES** or **NA** (not applicable), that is fulfilled by every project proposal by the end of the administrative and eligibility check. They do not measure the quality of the project or its content. **If only one field is answered with NO, the project shall be rejected.**

The revised application can be submitted by one of the next deadlines.

Table 1: Administrative criteria

	Administrative criteria	Description of Jems criteria or pre-submission verification	YES or NO	Supplements possible
A.1	The application is submitted by the **set deadline**.	*Ongoing submission.* *In general, applications are submitted via Jems to the JS at the latest by noon of the set deadline. Applications submitted by the set deadline shall be assessed and, if eligible, proposed to the MC for decision. The deadline for submission of projects is published on the programme webpage, and the upcoming Jems submission deadline is configured accordingly.* *The applications submitted after the set deadline will not be rejected but will remain in Jems waiting for the next assessment round (considered to be submitted within the next deadline).*	Yes or No *Automatically checked by Jems*	No

A.2	Obligatory annexes are attached to the application form.	*Obligatory annexes shall be correctly filled in (e.g. co-financing amounts, information on state aid, etc.) signed, scanned and attached to the electronic AF and submitted by the deadline. Obligatory annexes to be attached to all project applications:* - *Project statement (signed by the Lead Partner on behalf of all partners)* - *Project Partner statement (signed by each Project Partner and Lead Partner separately)* - *Partnership agreement (signed by Lead Partner and all Project Partners)*	Yes or No	Yes
A.3	The project fulfils requirements for partnership.	*The following partnership-related requirements are to be fulfilled:* 1. *One of the partners is Lead Partner.* 2. *All Project Partners including Lead Partner are located in the programme area.*	Yes or No	No

Table 2: Eligibility criteria

N°.	Eligibility criteria	Description for the human check	YES or NO	Supplements possible
B.1	The project fulfils minimum requirements for content.	*The following content-related requirements have to be fulfilled.* 1. *The project work plan includes at least one output with a positive target value, related to one of the programme output indicators.* 2. *Outputs are delivered at the latest by the end of the project.* 3. *The AF shall include one result with a positive target value, linked to the programme result indicator.*	Yes or No	Yes
B.2	Minimum and maximum partnership requirements are respected.	1. *At least one Slovene and one Croatian partner is involved, or an EGTC registered in one of the participating country consisting of members from both Member States.* 2. *Maximum of four Project Partners are involved in the project.* 3. *The Lead/Project Partner is not a natural person or political party.*	Yes or No	No

B.3	Minimum and maximum budget requirements are respected, including the percentage of co-financing.	1. *ERDF does not exceed 80% of the partner's total budget.* 2. *Min. 20% of partner total budget is secured by national contribution(s) in the form of own resources (public or private) of the partner and/or as third party financial contribution (public or private).* 3. *The type 1 project applies for maximum 16,000 EUR of ERDF funds. The type 2 project applies for maximum 24,800 EUR ERDF funds.*	Yes or No	No
B.4	Minimum requirements for cooperation are fulfilled.	*At least three (3) cooperation criteria should be selected, "Joint development", "Joint financing" and "Joint implementation" are mandatory.*	Yes or No	No

The information on all beneficial owners of the beneficiary also needs to be checked before signing the ERDF Subsidy Contract (Annex XVII to CPR). This check shall be performed on the basis of the MC condition before the Contract is signed (before the F2F meeting and only for approved projects).

3.2.2 QUALITY ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The quality assessment criteria measure the relevance and the feasibility of the project. It helps to establish a common understanding for decision-making.

Quality assessment criteria are divided into two categories:

- **Strategic assessment criteria** - The main aim is to determine the extent of the project's contribution to the achievement of programme objectives (including contribution to programme indicators) by addressing the joint or common needs of the target group.

- **Operational assessment criteria** - The main aim is to assess the viability and feasibility of the proposed project, as well as its value for money in terms of resources used versus results delivered.

The assessment criteria are divided into questions and guiding principles for an assessment covering **four main thematic groups**, namely **project relevance, partnership relevance, work plan and budget**.
Based on the submitted AF (and its annexes) every project will be assessed and a recommendation (including the proposal for conditions) for the MC will be prepared. Each project shall be **assessed by at least two assessors (JS members and/or external assessors).** The purpose of the assessment is to support the MC in its decision-making. **The right and responsibility to decide on project approval is the sole responsibility of the MC**.

Projects shall be assessed according to the criteria in the tables below.

Scores between 0 and 5 are allocated to each assessment criteria as follows:

Table 3: Quality assessment scores

insufficient	0	The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
poor	1	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
fair	2	The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
good	3	The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are identified.
very good	4	The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are identified.
excellent	5	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

Each thematic group is assessed with a **score, which is supported by written comments**. The comments should reflect the strengths and weaknesses fairly and give reasons for the scores. The assessment of one criterion should NOT influence the assessment of another criterion. In particular, the same weakness/shortcoming should not be referred to under different criteria (no double penalisation). If assessors give 0 points in any of the thematic groups, justification should be provided. Giving 0 points in one of the thematic groups is a strong signal to the MC, meaning that there are serious problems with the project.

If a project does not include output indicator ***RCO 87 Organisations cooperating across borders and*** programme result indicator ***RCR 84 Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion*** **that are obligatory under SO 6.3** (included under thematic group C1 Project relevance, Criterion C1.2; subquestion RCO indicator and RCR indicator that are obligatory under SO 6.3 are included), **it will be automatically rejected**.

A total of 100 (100%) points within the quality assessment is possible. Each thematic group is assessed from 0 to 5 points and weighted. Individual ponders are listed for each thematic group separately.

Each project has to score **at least 60% or 60 points**. **Projects not reaching 60 points shall be rejected.** Projects reaching 60 points or more shall be discussed at the MC meeting with the possibility of being **approved for funding, approved under conditions, not approved for funding, or put on the reserve list.**

MS representatives may contribute to certain criteria as unofficial opinion, if needed, in certain cases to support the assessors with country specific requirements, which are not publicly available.

Applicants should ensure appropriate quality of translation to avoid insufficient, incomprehensible or unclear information, provided in individual fields of the application – resulting in a lower score of the quality assessment. Eventual shortcomings in the translation will be, for the approved projects, dealt with in the frame of the clarifications before signing the SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract (Face-to-Face meetings).

The quality assessment is performed according to the following **selection criteria**:

Table 4: Strategic assessment criteria/project relevance

Nº.	Assessment question	Sub-questions for assessment	Score	Section in Application Form
C1	**Project relevance**		0-1-2-3-4-5/ponder 9	
C1.1	How well is the need for the project justified?	• The project addresses common territorial needs of the programme or a joint asset of the programme area – there is a real need for the project (well justified, reasonable, well explained). In Slovenia the impact of the project is focused in regions (NUTS 3) that are directly bordering Croatia.		C.2.1
C1.2	To what extent will the project contribute to the achievement of programme's objectives and indicators?	• The project's overall objective clearly contributes to the achievement of the programme priority specific objective.		C.1
		• The project's outputs clearly link to programme output indicators and contribution to programme targets.		C.4
		• RCO indicator and RCR indicator that are obligatory under SO 6.3 are included.[10]		C.4 and C.5
		• The project's outputs enable or improve cooperation between institutions and target groups and/or strengthen mutual trust building.		C.5
C1.3	To what extent will project outputs have an	• The project's outputs have potential to become durable (in the sense that they bring people together and		C.8.2

[10] *If the RCO i RCR indicators, which are obligatory under SO 6.3 are not inserted, the project will be rejected.*

	impact beyond the project's lifetime?	create favourable cooperation conditions) – if not, it is justified.		
C1.4	To what extent is the project intervention logic plausible?	• The project specific objective is specific, realistic and achievable.		C.4 Specific objective
		• Proposed project outputs are needed to achieve project specific objective.		C.4 Output
		• Project outputs and results that contribute to the programme indicators are realistic (it is possible to achieve them with given resources – i.e., time, partners, budget – and they are realistic based on the quantification provided).		C.4, C.5, D
C1.5	What added value does the cooperation bring?	• The importance of cooperation beyond borders for the topic addressed is clearly demonstrated.		C.2.1
		• The results cannot/can only to some extent be achieved without cooperation.		C.2.1
		• There is a clear benefit from cooperating for the project partners/target groups/project area/programme area.		C.2.4

Maximum score is 45 points, ponder 9 (C1.1 – C1.5), 45%

Table 5: Strategic assessment criteria/partnership relevance

Nº.	Assessment question	Sub-questions for assessment	Scores	Section in Application Form
C 2	**Partnership relevance**		**0-1-2-3-4-5/ponder 6**	
C2.1	To what extent is the partnership composition relevant for the proposed project?	• The project involves the relevant actors needed to address the territorial challenge/joint asset and the objectives specified.		C.3 and B.1.6
		• With respect to the project's objectives, the project partnership: o is balanced with respect to the territory o consists of partners that complement each other.		C.3

		• All partners play a defined role in the partnership and the territory benefits from this cooperation.		C.3
		• Distribution of tasks among partners is appropriate (e.g., sharing of tasks is clear, logical, in line with partners' role in the project, etc.).		C.4 Activities

Maximum score is 30 points, ponder 6 (C2.1) 30%

Table 6 – Operational assessment criteria/work plan

Nº.	Assessment question	Sub-questions for assessment	Scores	Section in Application Form
C 3	Workplan		0-1-2-3-4-5/ponder 4	
C3.1	To what extent is the work plan realistic, consistent and coherent?	• Proposed activities are relevant and lead to planned outputs and result.		C.4 and C.5
		• How well are the selected target groups addressed by planned outputs and result?		C.4
C3.2	To what extent are communication activities appropriate to reach the relevant target groups and stakeholders?	• Communication objective is relevant and is expected to contribute to project specific objective.		C.4 Objectives
		• Communication activities are appropriate to reach the relevant target groups and stakeholders.		C.4 Activities

Maximum score is 20 points, ponder 4 (C3.1 – C3.2) 20%

Table 7 – Operational assessment criteria/budget

Nº.	Assessment question	Sub-questions for assessment	Scores	Section in Application Form
C4	Budget		0-1-2-3-4-5/ponder 1	
C4.1	To what extent is the project budget proportionate to the project results?	The project budget is proportionate to the proposed work plan, project outputs and project's contribution to programme indicators.		

Maximum score is 5 points, ponder 1 (C4.1) 5%

Besides the strategic and operational criteria **horizontal principles** shall also be assessed, resulting in a written justification. For those criteria no scores shall be given because neither the projects nor the criteria in the different specific objectives are comparable.

The Project Partners shall indicate the contribution of the project to horizontal principles as positive, neutral or negative and provide a short justification. **Negative assessment in one of the horizontal principles will lead to rejection of the project.**

For IP SI-HR, it is crucial that **horizontal principles** are integrated in the planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the project activities. During the whole life cycle of the projects, partners should take into account the horizontal principles of the EU[11]. More precisely, actions should be planned, implemented and reported considering the horizontal principles of **equal opportunity, non-discrimination, gender equality and sustainable development.**

Table 8: Horizontal principles

Reference	Nr.	Horizontal principles	
Sustainable development	C5	The project makes a positive contribution to programme horizontal principle sustainable development as set out in Article 11 TFEU, taking into account the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.	POSITIVE or NEUTRAL or NEGATIVE
Equal opportunities and non-discrimination	C6	The project makes a positive contribution to programme horizontal principle equal opportunities and non-discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.	POSITIVE or NEUTRAL or NEGATIVE
Equality between men and women	C7	The project makes a positive contribution to programme horizontal principal equality between men and women, gender mainstreaming and the integration of a gender perspective.	POSITIVE or NEUTRAL or NEGATIVE

3.2.3 EXPLANATION OF THE MONITORING COMMITTEE DECISIONS

The final decision on the projects is taken by MC with the possibility of SSP being **approved for funding, approved under condition, not approved for funding, or put on the reserve list.**

The Applications that shall be put on the **reserve list** are in principle welcomed by the MC, but cannot be approved due to a temporary lack of the programme funds. The approval of the Application depends on the availability of funds. Projects on the reserve list are not assessed again. Upon availability of funds, the MA contracts them according to their ranking. When more projects

[11] *Horizontal Principles as per Article 9 of the Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European parliament and of the council of 24 June 2021*

have the same score the MA may contract projects with smaller budget first, depending on the amount of available funds.

3.2.4 CONTRACTING

Upon decision taken by the MC, the LP will be notified by the MA about the approval/rejection/reserve list of the proposed project. Provisional time-frame to inform the LP about the decision of the MC is within 30 days from the MC meeting. Prior signing the SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract the Face-to-Face meetings will be organised in order to clarify eventual conditions resulting from the quality check or MC decision. The LP of an approved project shall sign a contract for the total ERDF funds with the MA (see the sample of the SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract in the Application Pack).

3.2.5 RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS

Assessment and selection procedures set in this Manual offer a fair and transparent consideration of all received proposals. The rules set in this section are aimed at providing a transparent complaint procedure against decisions taken by Programme authorities during the project assessment and selection process.

The LP is the only one entitled to file a complaint. The right to complain against a decision regarding the project selection applies to the LP whose project application was not selected for the Programme co-financing during the project assessment and selection process.

The complaint is to be lodged against the communication issued by the MA/JS based on the decision by the MC as the MA/JS's communication is the only legally binding act towards the LP during the project assessment and selection process. **The complaint can be lodged only against the outcomes of the administrative and eligibility assessment.** For the quality assessment, the applicants can request further information and justification from the MA/JS and can ask for face-to-face consultations. However, a complaint against the quality assessment is not possible since the assessment of the proposals and the MC decision cannot be reviewed.

Prior to filing a complaint, the LP is strongly recommended to request additional technical or legal information from the JS within the timeframe available for submitting a complaint. The information requested may apply only to the application submitted by the respective LP. If, following the answer submitted by the JS, the LP is not satisfied with the received additional information, it may decide to submit a formal complaint. The complaint shall be submitted in Slovenian and Croatian language in written form via e-mail to the MA/JS of the Programme within 14 calendar days after the LP had been officially notified by the MA about the results of the project selection process.

The complaint shall include:

a. Name and address of the LP;
b. Reference number and acronym of the application, which is a subject of the complaint;
c. Clearly indicated reasons for the complaint, clearly specify what failures or mistakes have happened during the assessment of the proposal and include a clear reference to the relevant documents within the Application pack;
d. Any supporting documents.

The relevant documentation shall be provided for the sole purpose of supporting the complaint and may not alter the quality or content of the assessed application. No other grounds for the complaint than indicated above in point c will be taken into account during the complaint procedure.

A complaint will be rejected without further examination, if submitted after the set deadline or if the formal requirements are not observed.

The decision if the complaint is justified or to be rejected is taken by the Complaint Panel by consensus. In case it is justified, the case will be sent back to the MC to review the project application and its assessment. The Complaint Panel has to provide the MC with a written justification with explicit reference to the criteria established in the Complaint Procedure.

The complaint procedure, from the receipt of the complaint to the communication of the Complaint Panel's decision to the LP, should be resolved within maximum 30 calendar days.

The decision of the Complaint Panel is final, binding to all parties and not subject to any further complaint proceedings within the Programme based on the same grounds.

The complaints are differentiated according to the object of the complaint.

- ✓ Complaints related to selection process

Project LPs will be informed in written form about the reasons why an application was not eligible or approved. Any complaint against the communication issued by the MA or JS, based on the decision of the MC, regarding the selection process shall be submitted by the LP to the MA. The MA assisted by the JS will examine and prepare the answer regarding the merit of the complaint. The decision if a complaint is justified or to be rejected is to be taken by the Complaint Panel. The Complaint Panel will only examine (if needed) the cases related to formal/administrative aspects of the selection process. In all other cases it will be dealt with by the MA.

- ✓ Complaints related to decisions made by the MA or JS regarding the project implementation

Any complaints in relation to decisions made by the MA or JS regarding the project implementation and corresponding procedures (based on the SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract or MC decisions) shall be submitted by the LP to the MA/JS, following the provisions laid down in the SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract.

- ✓ Complaints related to the Second level control (Auditors)

Complaints related to the Second level control have to be lodged to the responsible national Audit Authority (hereinafter AA) in each Member State, according to the applicable national rules.

The complaints received within the programme, including the content and the solutions proposed or already implemented, will be reported to the MC. The complaint procedures set out above are without prejudice to any mechanism or process for legal redress at national level, in particular with regard to unsuccessful applicants. Where courts, public prosecution offices or other national institutions are competent in relation to the object of the complaint, the Project Partner has the right to turn also to the relevant authorities.

The Programme Authorities shall, upon request by the Commission, examine complaints submitted to the Commission falling within the scope of their arrangements. The MA shall inform the Commission, upon request, of the results of those examinations.

4 ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURE

4.1 GENERAL PROVISIONS ON ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURE

This chapter of the Manual is intended to provide Project Partners in SSP with information and guidance in the phase of application and reporting to ensure that project costs are incurred by Project Partners in compliance with the legal framework for the eligibility of expenditure applicable to the IP SI-HR.

4.1.1 LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND HIERARCHY OF ELIGIBLITY RULES

A clear hierarchy of eligibility rules applicable to projects funded within the European Territorial Cooperation goal (Interreg) is defined in article 37 of Regulation (EU) No 2021/1059 as follows:

1. EU rules on eligibility:
   - Regulation (EU) No 2021/1060 or Common Provisions Regulation (CPR), Articles 63 to 68 set out specific provisions on eligibility of expenditure;
   - Regulation (EU) No 2021/1058 or ERDF Regulation, Articles 5 and 7 set out specific provisions on the eligibility of activities under the ERDF;
   - Regulation (EU) No 2021/1059 or Interreg Regulation, Articles 37 to 44 set out specific provisions on eligibility of expenditure applicable to programmes of the European Territorial Cooperation goal (Interreg).
2. Programme eligibility rules: i.e. additional rules on eligibility of expenditure for the Interreg programme as a whole, as outlined in this part of the programme eligibility rules.
3. National (including institutional) eligibility rules: which apply to public procurement and to matters not covered by eligibility rules laid down in the abovementioned EU and programme rules.

4.1.2 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Expenditure in the form of the SCO shall be eligible for funding provided that it fulfils all general eligibility requirements listed below:

- It relates to the costs of implementing a project in the last valid AF;
- It relates to project relevant activities that did not receive support from other EU Funds or other contributions from third parties;
- It is essential for the achievement of the project objectives/outputs and it would not be incurred if the project was not carried out;
- It has been validated by JS.

Please note that the costs have to comply with the principles of **sound financial management** (principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness)12.

[12] *Within the meaning of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.*

4.1.3 PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURE

The costs of an approved project shall be eligible from its start date until its end date as set in the SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract. The start date shall not be earlier than the date of the approval of the project by the MC and the end date shall not be later than **30 November 2028**.

4.2 ELIGIBILITY PROVISIONS FOR SMALL-SCALE PROJECTS

To better respond to the objectives of the new programme and to offer a new form of cooperation a new possibility of projects with shorter duration and smaller budget is offered to the programme area. SSP involve less project partners compared to standard projects. This typology allows the project partners to address people-to-people activities from a thematic and/or territorial perspective.

In the frame o IP SI-HR following types of small-scale projects are supported:

- **Cross-border cooperation projects (Type 1)**
- **Mutual trust building projects (Type 2)**

Project applicants have to consider the characteristics and reference values of SSP as outlined below:

- the total maximum budget size of a **Type 1** project is **16,000 EUR ERDF** (20,000 EUR total costs) taking into consideration the unit cost of 128 EUR/participant total cost

- the total maximum budget size of a **Type 2** project is **24,800 EUR ERDF** (31,000 EUR total costs) taking into consideration lump sum 31,000 EUR of total cost
- eligible expenses are co-financed and reimbursed **up to 80 %,**
- the duration of the small-scale projects shall range **up to 12 months**, which means there is only 1 reporting period,
- SSP shall involve **at least 2 project partners (one from each partner country) and max 4 project partners or an EGTC** registered in one of the participating countries consisting of members from both member states.

4.2.1 CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROJECTS (TYPE 1)

a) Description of the project type:

- physical cross-border events that build up mutual trust, and enable or improve cooperation of project partners,
- the maximum project duration is 12 months with 1 reporting period,
- at least 2 physical bilateral events (at least one per member state and with participants from both countries) per project are required,
- a minimum of 30 involved participants (participants that are necessary to contribute to the content of the event - project target group) per project are required, more than 2 events are possible, but the budget of the project must not surpass total maximum budget size,
- examples of types events: workshops, conferences, seminars, trainings, tournaments, camps, etc.

b) Indicator triggering reimbursement:

- completed project (with at least 2 bilateral events and at least 30 participants per project)

Interpretation tips:

In case the required number of participants (at least 30) is not reached, no ERDF subsidy will be paid even if two events are implemented.

Examples of calculation:

- 2 implemented events with 40 participants = 40 x 128 EUR = 5.120 EUR
- 3 implemented events with 40 participants = 40 x 128 EUR = 5.120 EUR
- 2 implemented events with 29 participants = 0 EUR
- 1 implemented event with 31 participants = 0 EUR

In case more participants are reached than foreseen in the application form, only the amount for the foreseen participants will be paid.

c) Simplified cost option (SCO):

- standard scale of unit costs

d) Unit of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement:

- participant per event

e) Amount per unit of measurement of the SCO:

Total cost of 128 EUR per participant per event

f) Costs covered by the SCO:

- the unit costs cover **all costs** occurring in the phase of preparation and implementation of the event.

g) Obligatory documents to verify the achievements of the units of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement to be delivered are:

- signed SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract,
- list of participants (name of the event, date and time, place, ordinal number of participants, name, surname, country, e-mail address and signature),
- event report for each completed event with clear description of the event implementation: date, location, duration, which target groups attended, content of the event etc.,
- invitations and photos of the implemented events.

h) Collection and storage of relevant data/documents:

- original obligatory documents are stored by the Lead/Project Partners and shall be made available in case of on the spot checks and other controls,
- obligatory documentation shall be uploaded in the Jems by the LP in the reporting process.

4.2.2 MUTUAL TRUST BUILDING PROJECTS (TYPE 2)

a) Description of the project type:

- open public bilateral physical events that strengthen mutual trust building,
- the maximum project duration is 12 months with 1 reporting period,
- at least 2 bilateral physical events for the local population (at least one per member state),
- up to 200 participants per physical event are expected,
- examples of types of events: concerts, markets, fairs and other thematic events (e.g. culture events, sport events, recreational activities in nature, joint nature clean up actions, greening of public spaces, etc).

In case of sports events no professional events for competitive purposes are supported, but only for recreational, socialisation and cooperation purposes.

The existing events (fairs, concerts etc.) **are not supported**.

b) Indicator triggering reimbursement:

- completed event

c) Simplified cost option (SCO):
- lump sum

d) Unit of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement:
- at least 2 completed events

If more than 2 events are implemented, only the amount for the forseen 2 events will be paid.

e) Amount per unit of measurement of the SCO:

Total cost of 31,000 EUR

f) Costs covered by the SCO:

- the lump sum covers **all costs** occurring in the phase of preparation and implementation of the event.

g) Obligatory documents to verify the achievements of the units of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement to be delivered are:

- signed SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract,

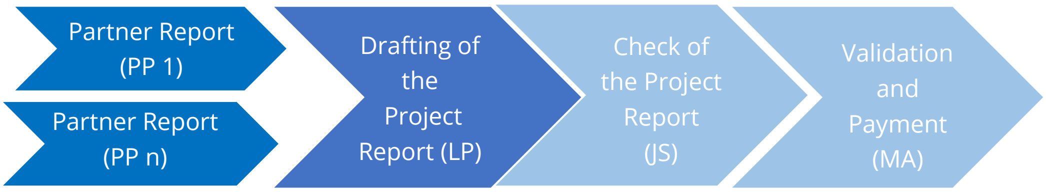
- event report for each completed event with clear description of the event implementation: date, location, duration, which target groups attended, content of the event, the list of content providers (e.g. for cultural events a list of program providers, for markets and fairs a list of goods and services providers), etc.,
- invitations and photos of the implemented events.

h) Collection and storage of relevant data/documents:

- original obligatory documents are stored by the Lead/Project Partners and shall be made available in case of site visits and other controls,
- obligatory documentation shall be uploaded in Jems by the LP in the reporting process.

5 REPORTING

All projects will report on the implementation o project activities. A joint **Project Report** has to be prepared in the Jems by the LP and submitted to the JS. Prior to the submission of a project report, each Project Partner will have to prepare a **Partner Report** in the Jems and submit it, within 30 days after the end of the project.



The LP is responsible for monitoring the timely submission of all partner and project report throughout the project implementation.

It is also recommended to make sure that the used terminology is consistent throughout the report(s) and in line with the AF.

For small-scale projects the reporting period equals the project duration.

5.1 PREPARATION OF THE PARTNER REPORT

Within one month after the end of the reporting period/project, each Project Partner (including the LP in the role of the Project Partner) must complete a partner report in which it provides the necessary information on performed activities achieved in the reporting period. The report with all supporting documents needs to be sent via Jems. The partner report also serves as a reporting tool for Project Partners towards the LP.

Expenditures reported in the form of SCOs are not required to be supported by specific costs based documentation. The certificate is visible for the relevant Project Partner, the LP and all relevant programme authorities.

5.2 PREPARATION OF THE PROJECT REPORT

In order to follow the project implementation and as a basis for the reimbursement of the ERDF funds to the project, a project report has to be submitted by the LP to the JS. The information reported by the projects should be as clear and coherent as possible.

Each Project Report is checked by JS. The verification for the reimbursement will be based on the obligatory documents[13], that are setting out the conditions for support (signed subsidy contract) including all conditions for the implementation and reporting on the event(s).

In case the information in the submitted report is not sufficient for properly checking the progress and reimbursing the funds, the JS requests the LP to provide clarifications and to amend the

[13] *For more details see Chapter 4 of this Manual.*

Project Report within a given deadline. Once the check by the JS is positively concluded, the JS notifies the MA on the completion of the check. The MA carries out additional control steps and if no additional issues are raised the report is submitted to the body performing the accounting function for the payment of ERDF funds.

The **content part** of the Project Report provides a description of project activities, outputs and result achieved during project implementation.

The **financial part** of the Project Report presents the expenditure in the reporting period and consist only of SCOs expenditures, for which a request for reimbursement is submitted to the JS/MA together with the report.

The partnership is expected to implement the activities and cover the costs according to the AF and should always keep in mind that the project is monitored against the last valid AF.

The content part of the reports should summarise the implementation of the activities and their results. A brief, relevant and informative description is better than a profuse and detailed account of activities without a clear relation to the project and its action plan. In this respect, project report should focus on the implementation of the project itself, rather than on each partner's activities.

Accompanying the Project Report, LPs should provide relevant supporting material such as press articles, social media activities etc. These should be uploaded in the report in Jems in electronic format.

5.3 REPORTING IN THE JOINT ELECTRONIC MONITORING SYSTEM (JEMS)

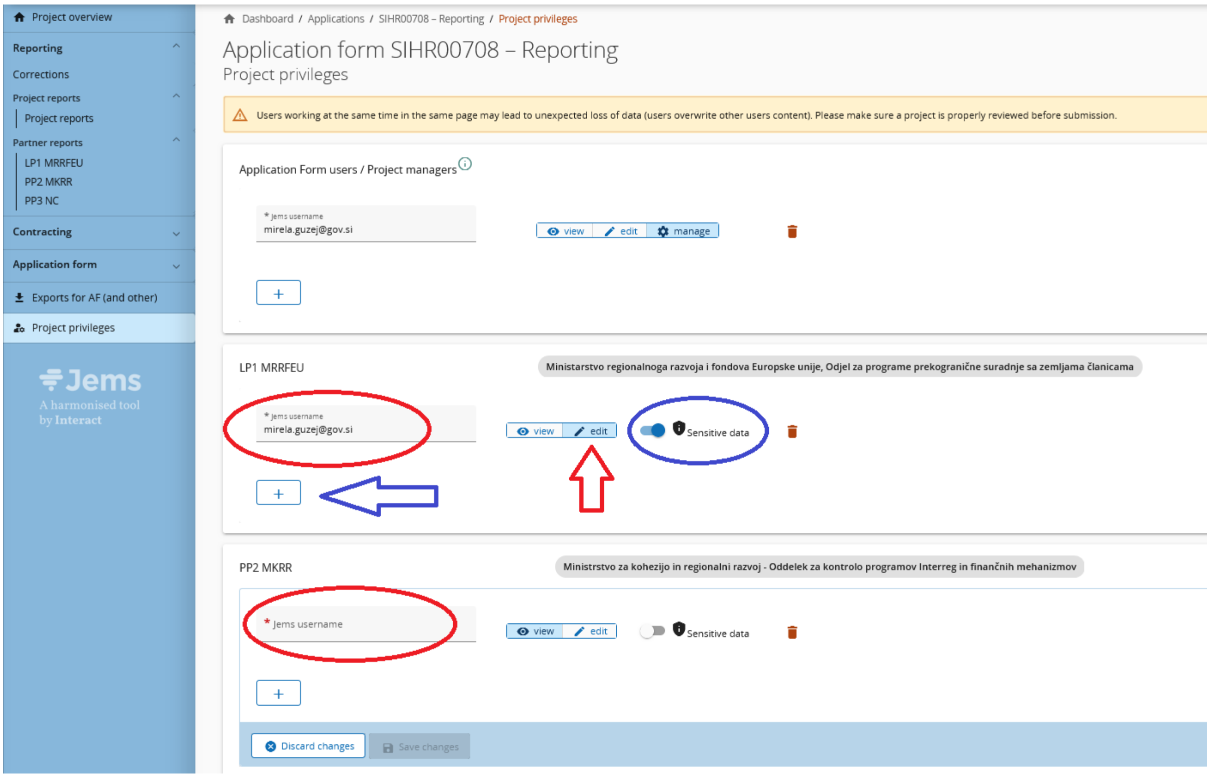
To access the reporting you have to log in to the Jems system, which can be accessed at the following link https://jems.si-hr.eu/. If you are not registered in the Jems yet, see Chapter 3: Application and assessment (subchapter 3.1.3.) of the Manual for Beneficiaries for Small-scale projects on how to register in the Jems.

5.3.1 PARTNER REPORT IN JEMS

The Partner Report has to be in the national language of the Project Partner. When a project has been set into contracted in the system Jems, the Reporting section is available. Each project partner has to submit a partner report.

The Project Partners can access the reporting section in the Jems only after the Lead Partner enters all Project Partners into the system. Users do not need any special privilege to create and/or submit a Partner Progress Report. The access to a Partner Progress Report is granted via assigning users as partners by the Lead Partner in the "Project privileges" section (see print screen below).

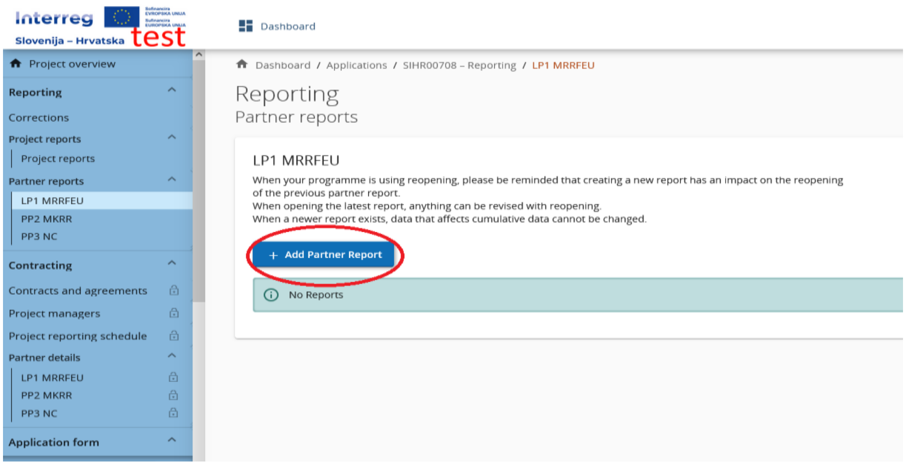
By clicking on “Project privileges” the following screen will appear.



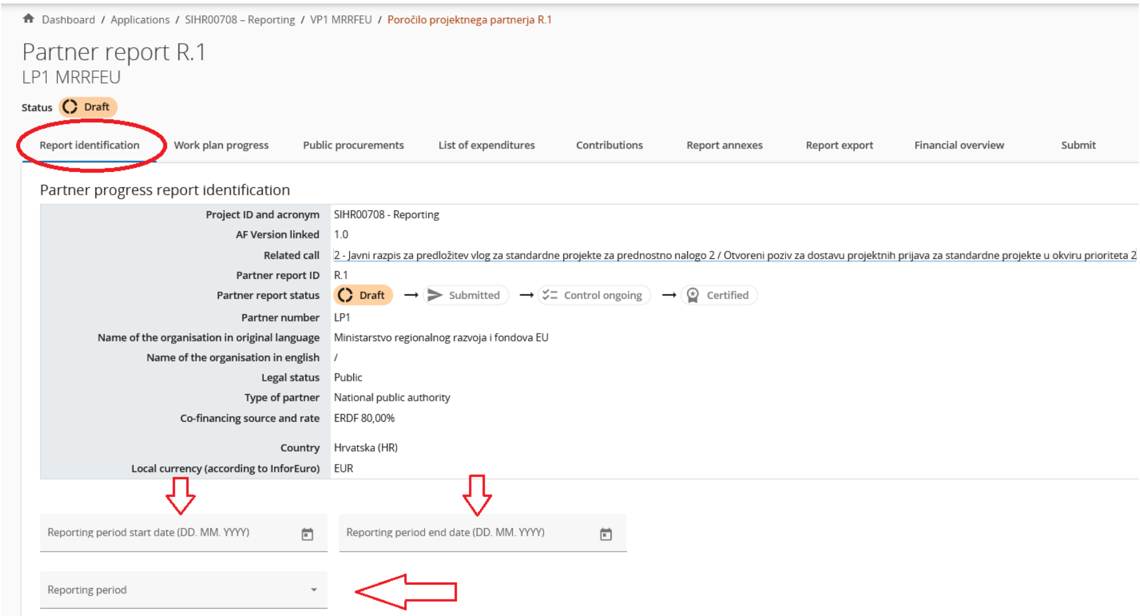
The Lead partner has to enter the Jems username in the field “Jems username” (marked with the red circle) and add an additional user for this project partner with the “+” button. Only users with edit privileges can create and submit a partner report (red arrow). Sensitive data enables protection of person related data according to GDPR. Users with active flag are able to mark (and view) sensitive data in List of expenditures in partner reports.

The user can start with the partner report by clicking on the partners abbreviation (red arrow in following screen).

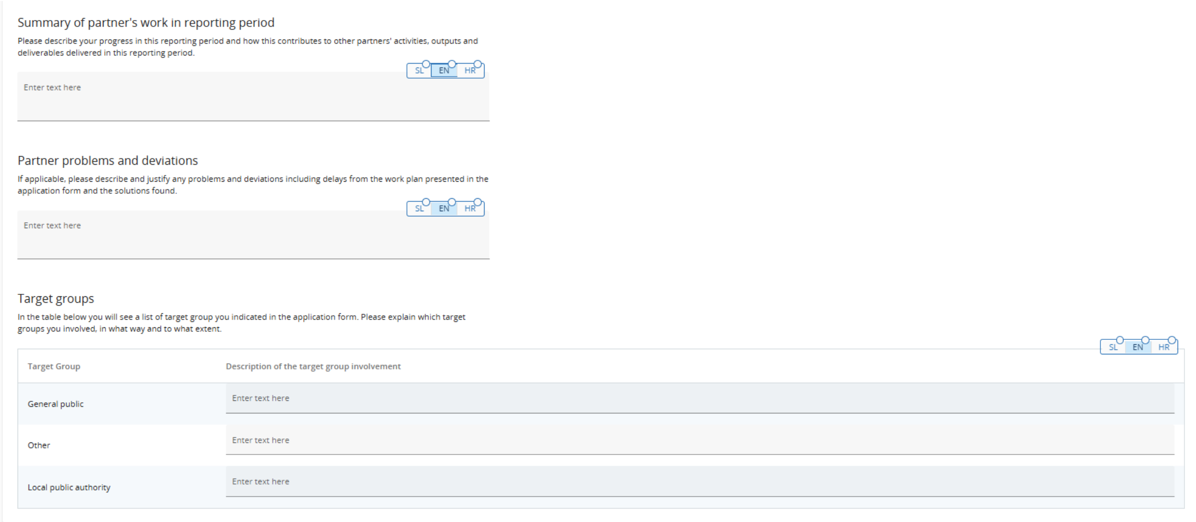
Following screen will appear:



After clicking on **"+ Add Partner Report",** the following screen will appear:

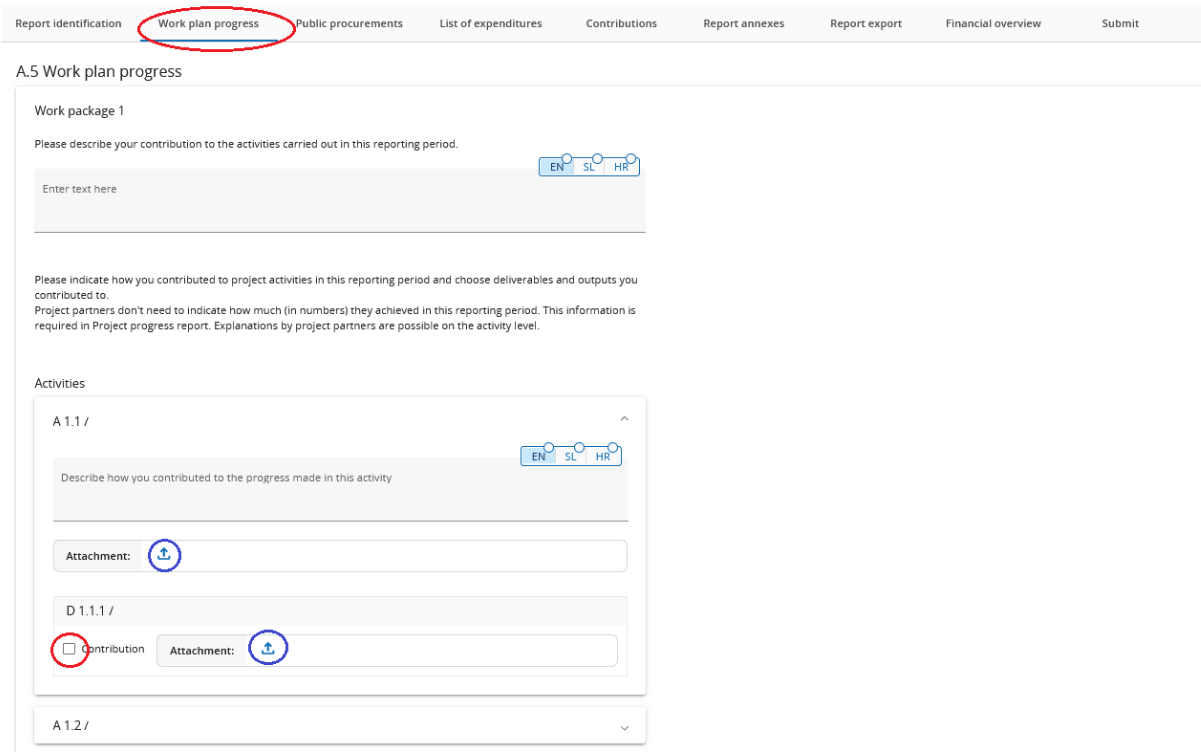


The user starts the work with the **"Report identification",** where first the reporting period from the drop-down menu (red arrow) has to be selected and then the start and the end date of the period has to be inserted. Also following text input fields have to be filled in "Summary of partner's work in reporting period", "Partner problems and deviations" and "Target groups" (see next print screen) that were selected in the Application form.



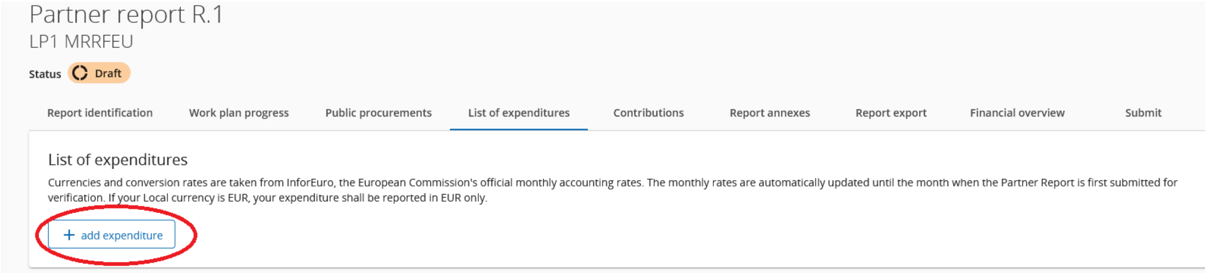
The user can continue with the tab **"Work plan progress",** that shows the work plan related data from the last approved application form, organised per work package:

Partners have to describe the progress on certain work package, objectives, activities and outputs and indicate if they contributed (by ticking the box – marked with red circles). Partner users can also upload an attachment (marked with blue circles) per item which will show up again in the partner report Annexes. In case multiple files are to be uploaded per item, it is recommended to upload a zip file.

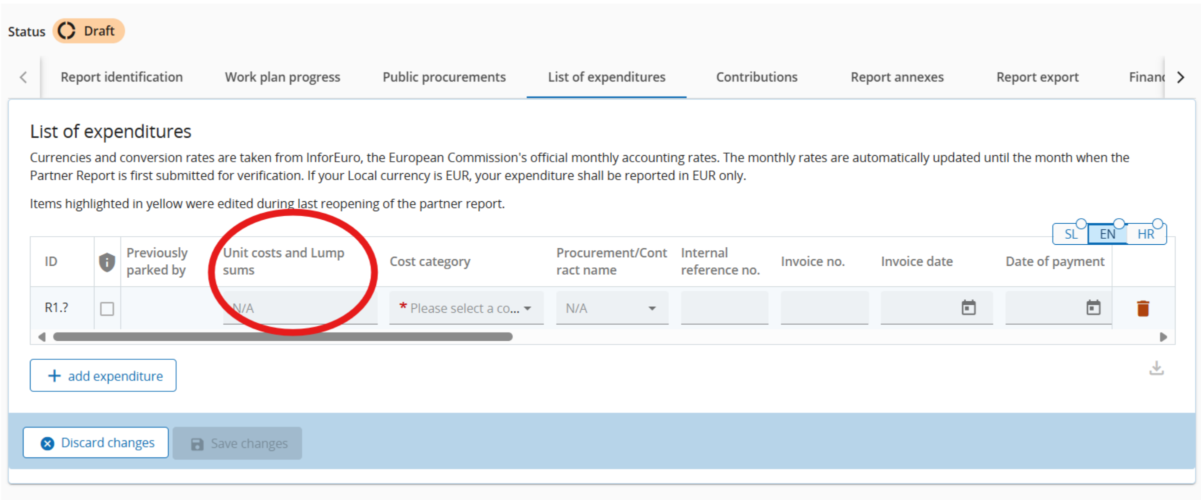


When reporting on small-scale projects, it is **not needed** to fill in the **"Public procurement" section**.

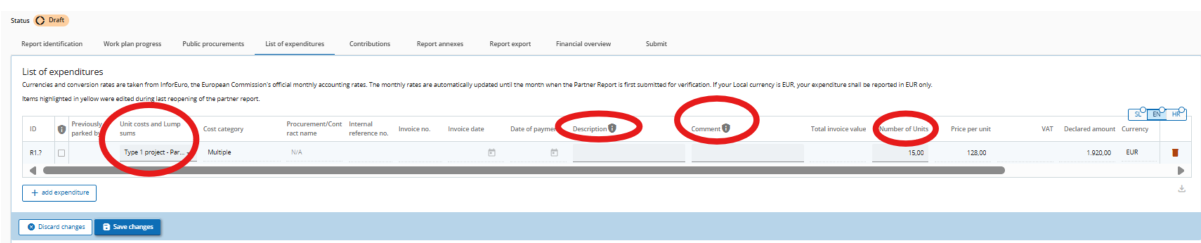
Partners continue their work with the **"List of expenditures"** section, where partners list incurred costs. By clicking the "+ add expenditure button" (red circle) the partner can add expenditure items, one by one.



When adding an expenditure item, the options columns available in the Form are showing up. For small-scale projects, it is important first to select the **"Unit costs or Lump sums"** (red circle) from the drop-down menu.

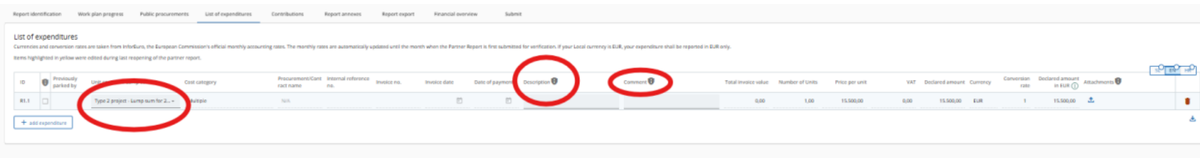


For **Type 1 small-scale projects**, you have to select the **"Type 1 project – Participant per event"** from the drop-down menu and most fields in the table will be automatically filled in except Description, Comment and Number of Units (see print screen below).



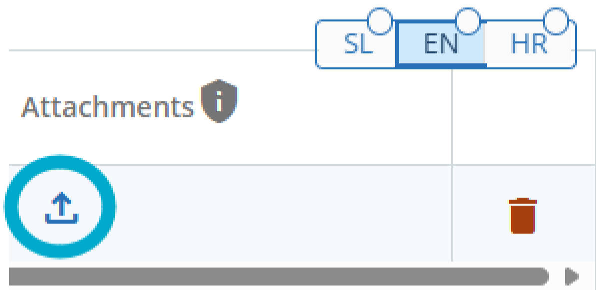
Project partners shall enter the name of the event in the **"Description"** field and a short description of the event in the **"Comment"** field. It is very important to enter the correct **"Number of Units"** as this will be compared with uploaded participant lists and will also serve as the basis for the disbursement. When you enter the number of units, the declared amount in EUR is automatically calculated.

For **Type 2 small-scale projects**, you must select from the drop-down menu the option **"Type 2 project – Lump sum for 2 events".** Most fields in the table are filled in automatically, except "Description" and "Comment" (see print screen below).

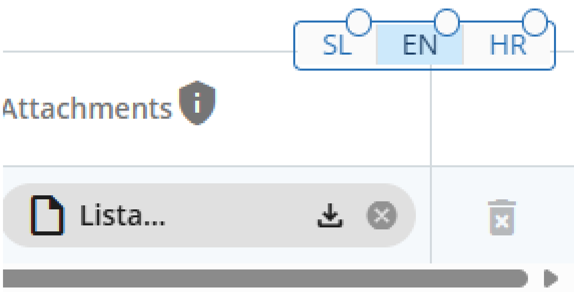


Project partners shall enter the name of the event in the **"Description"** field and a short description of the event in the **"Comment"** field. The declared amount in EUR is automatically calculated, according the planned costs in the Application Form.

The project partners can now upload the necessary project documentation (e.g. reports of the events, participant lists, photos, etc.) under attachments. It is not possible to add attachments upon creation of an expenditure item. Only after the item has been saved for the first time, one file can be uploaded to each item (marked with a blue circle in the print screen below).

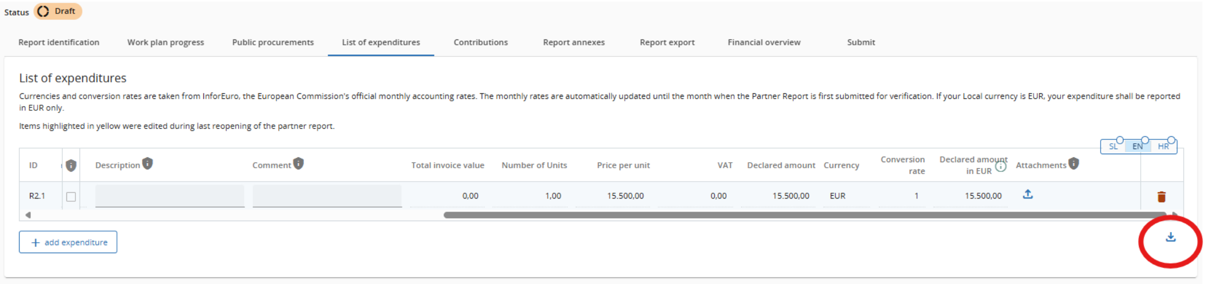


Uploaded file will show up in a chip style form (see below):

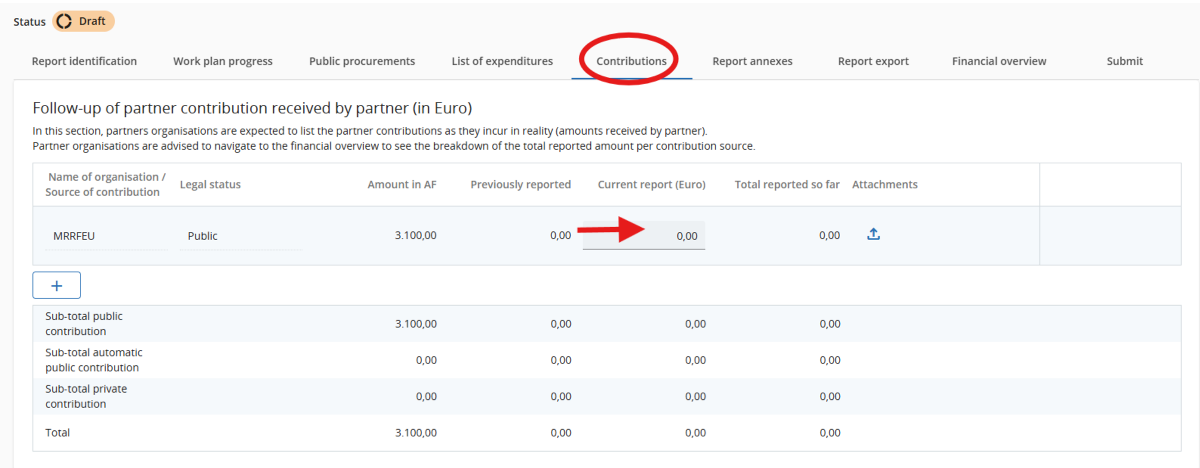


When a file is uploaded, the related expenditure item can't be deleted. Only after the attachment has been deleted can.the expenditure be deleted again. If a user needs to upload multiple files to 1 cost item, it is recommended to upload a zip file.

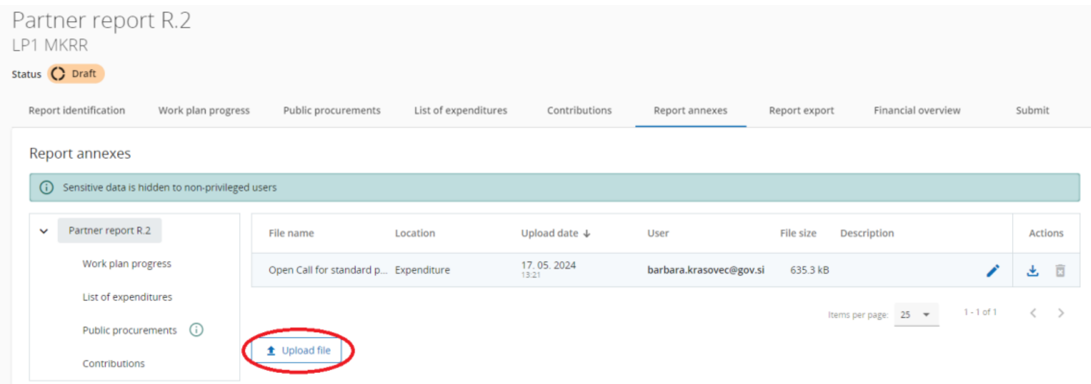
Project partners can download the list of expenditures in the form of an Excel table by clicking on (marked with a red circle):



Now the project partners have to fill in the section **"Contributions"**. Here partners should provide the information on the partner contributions (the amounts are calculated in the section "Financial overview" under "Partner contribution"). The partners have to fill in the empty fields in the column "Current report" (marked with the red circle).

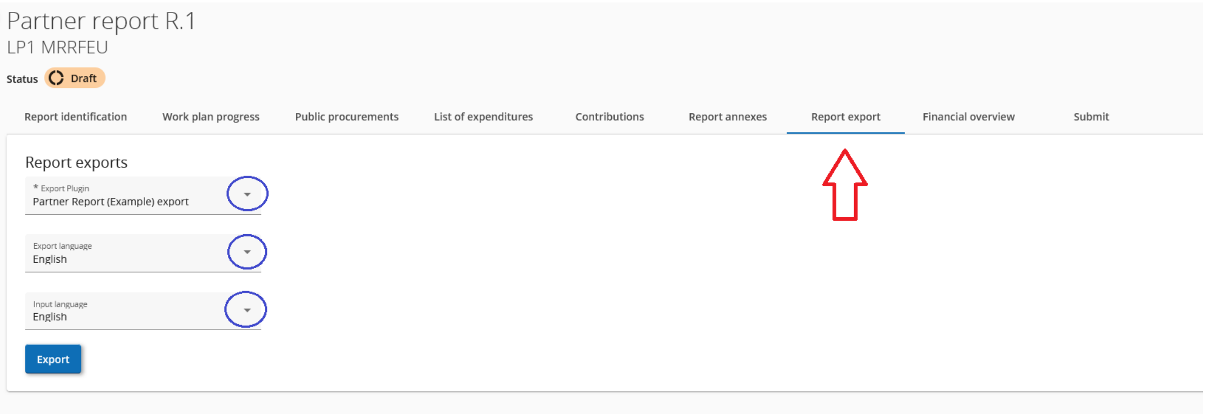


The next section is the **"Report annexes"** section. This section shows all files uploaded in the partner report.



The tree structure represents the locations within the report where files can be uploaded. All uploads from all sections are shown in this list. Partner organisations have the possibility to upload additional files linked to the Partner report here (by clicking the Upload file button – red circle). As it is not always possible to add descriptions to files in the dedicated sections (due to the chip style upload), users with edit right are also allowed to add descriptions to all files in this section. Files uploaded in this section can be deleted here, other files can only be deleted in the section where they were uploaded.

If Project Partners consider it useful, they can export their reports or list of expenditures in the **"Report export"** section.



The Project Partners have to select the plug-in, the export language and the input language from the drop-down menus (marked with blue circles).

In the **"Financial overview"** section there are 3 different financial overview tables (all filled in automatically).

The first table is the **"Partner Expenditure – summary (in Euro)"**:

Financial overview

The amounts included in tables below represent the aggregation of data from all partner reports submitted, by the date when the current partner report was created.
Beware that only the last partner report created has the most up-to-date aggregated data (in case partner reports were not submitted in the same order they were created)!

Partner Expenditure - summary (in Euro)

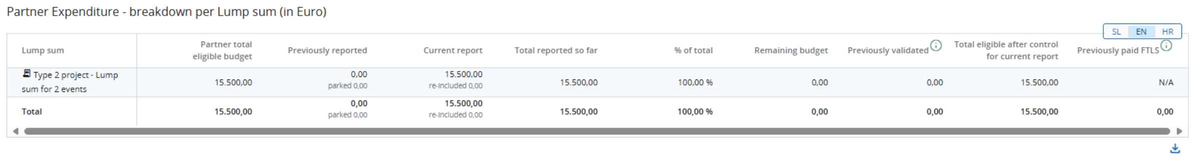
	Partner total eligible budget	Previously reported	Current report	Total reported so far	% of total	Remaining budget	Previously validated	Total eligible after control for current report	Previously paid
ERDF	12.400,00	0,00 parked 0,00	12.400,00 re-Included 0,00	12.400,00	100,00 %	0,00	0,00	12.400,00	0,00
Partner contribution	3.100,00	0,00 parked 0,00	3.100,00 re-Included 0,00	3.100,00	100,00 %	0,00	0,00	3.100,00	N/A
↳ of which Public contribution	3.100,00	0,00 parked 0,00	3.100,00 re-Included 0,00	3.100,00	100,00 %	0,00	0,00	3.100,00	N/A
↳ of which Automatic public contribution	0,00	0,00 parked 0,00	0,00 re-Included 0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00	0,00	N/A
↳ of which Private contribution	0,00	0,00 parked 0,00	0,00 re-Included 0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00	0,00	N/A
Total	**15.500,00**	**0,00** parked 0,00	**15.500,00** re-Included 0,00	**15.500,00**	**100,00 %**	**0,00**	**0,00**	**15.500,00**	**0,00**

The second table is the **"Partner Expenditure – breakdown per cost category (in Euro)"**:

Partner Expenditure - breakdown per cost category (in Euro)

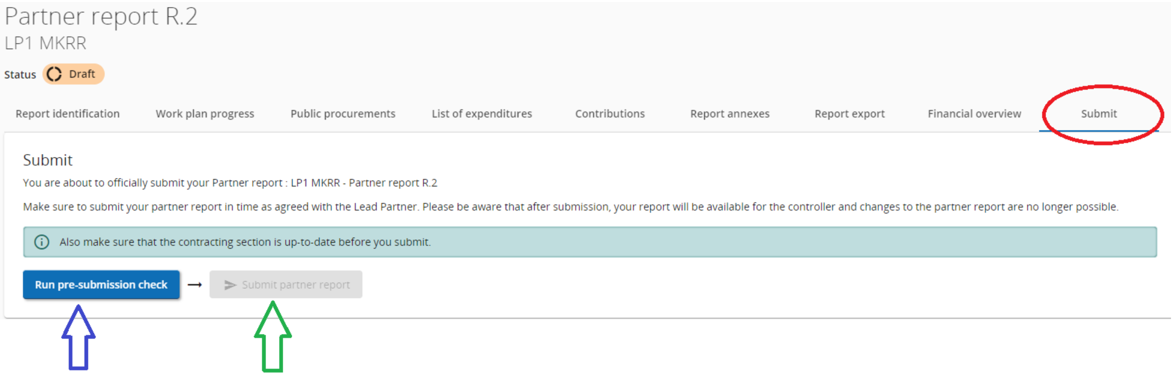
Cost category	Flat rate	Partner total eligible budget	Previously reported	Current report	Total reported so far	% of total	Remaining budget	Previously validated	Total eligible after control for current report
Lump sum		15.500,00	0,00 parked 0,00	15.500,00 re-Included 0,00	15.500,00	100,00 %	0,00	0,00	15.500,00
Total		**15.500,00**	**0,00** parked 0,00	**15.500,00** re-Included 0,00	**15.500,00**	**100,00 %**	**0,00**	**0,00**	**15.500,00**

The third table is the **"Partner Expenditure – breakdown per Unit cost/Lump sum (in Euro)"**:

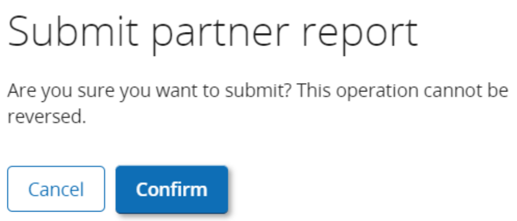

Partner Expenditure - breakdown per Lump sum (in Euro)

Lump sum	Partner total eligible budget	Previously reported	Current report	Total reported so far	% of total	Remaining budget	Previously validated	Total eligible after control for current report	Previously paid FTLS
Type 2 project - Lump sum for 2 events	15.500,00	0,00 parked 0,00	15.500,00 re-included 0,00	15.500,00	100,00 %	0,00	0,00	15.500,00	N/A
Total	15.500,00	0,00 parked 0,00	15.500,00 re-included 0,00	15.500,00	100,00 %	0,00	0,00	15.500,00	0,00

The last step is the submission of the partner report, The partners have to click on the **"Submit"** tab (marked with red circle) and following screen will appear:



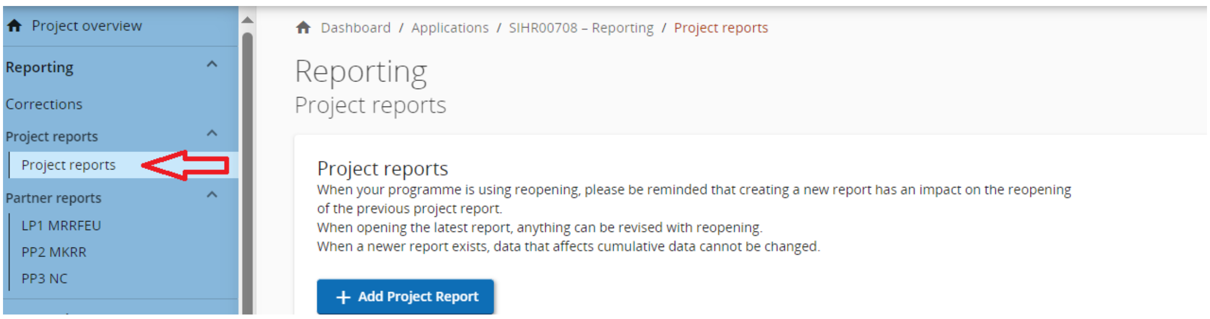
First the user has to click the button **"Run pre-submission check"** (blue arrow). If the control is successful, the button **"Submit partner report"** will be available and the user has to click on it. Following screen will appear:



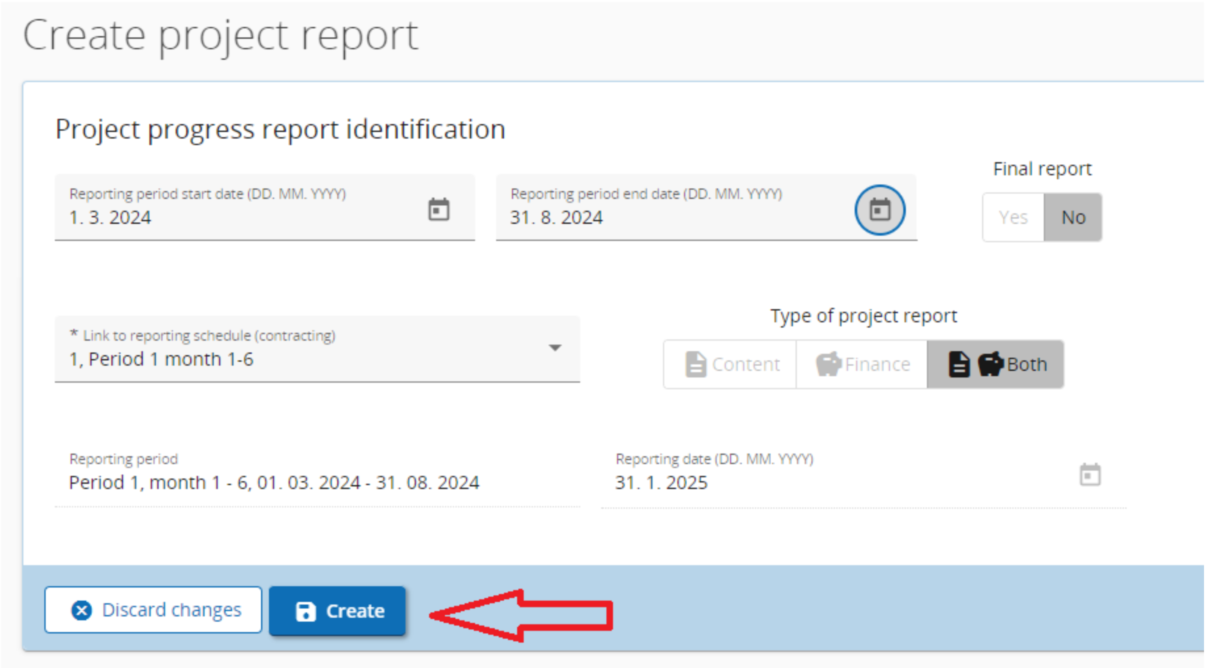
To submit the Partner Report, the Project Partner has to click on **"Confirm".**

5.3.2 PROJECT REPORT IN THE JEMS

The Project Report has to be provided bilingually (in Slovene and Croatian language). Once all partner reports are submitted, the Lead Partner (the user has to have Project manager privileges assigned) can start with the preparation of the Project Report. The user can start with the Project Report by clicking on "Project reports" (red arrow in following screen):

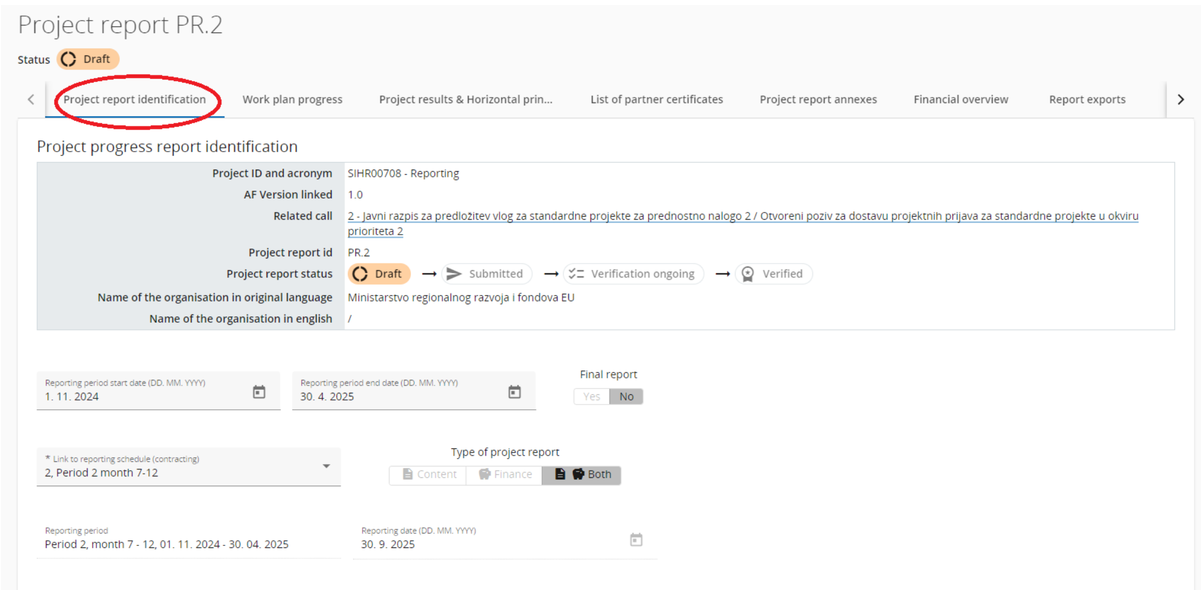


After clicking on **"+ Add Partner Report"**, following screen will appear:



The user has to fill in following fields “Reporting period start dare”, “Reporting period end date” and select from the drop-down menu “Link to reporting schedule” the reporting period. All other filed will be filled in automatically. In the end the user has to click on the button **“Create”** (red arrow).

The Lead partner continues with **“Project report identification”** section:



The fields “Highlights of main achievements”, “Partner problems and deviations” and “Target groups” have to be filled in, while the “Overview of the outputs and result overview” and “Partner spending and profile (in Euro)« are filled in automatically.

Highlights of main achievements

Please describe project progress up to now including specific objectives reached and main outputs delivered by highlighting also the added-value of the cooperation. The summary should highlight main achievements, be interesting and understandable for non-specialists.

SL EN HR

Overview of the outputs and results achievement

Programme Result Indicator RCR84 6.3: Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion

SL EN HR

Programme Result Indicator: RCR84 6.3: Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	Measurement Unit	Baseline	Target Value	Previously Reported	Current Report	Total Reported So Far
	organisations	0,00	2,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
Programme Output I… Output RCO87 6.3: Or…	organisations		2,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
Output 1.1:	organisations		2,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
Programme Output I… Output RCO115 6.3: P…	events		2,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
Output 1.2:	events		2,00	0,00	0,00	0,00

Partner problems and deviations

If applicable, please describe and justify any problems and deviations including delays from the work plan presented in the application form and the solution found.

SL EN HR

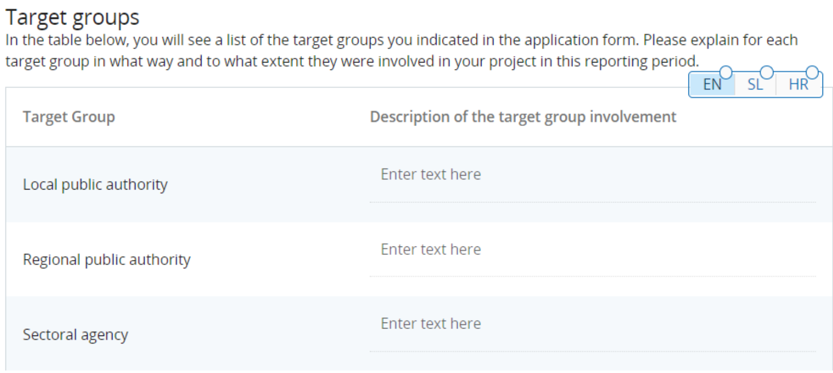
If applicable, please describe any deviations in the spending profile compared to the amounts indicated in the application form.

SL EN HR

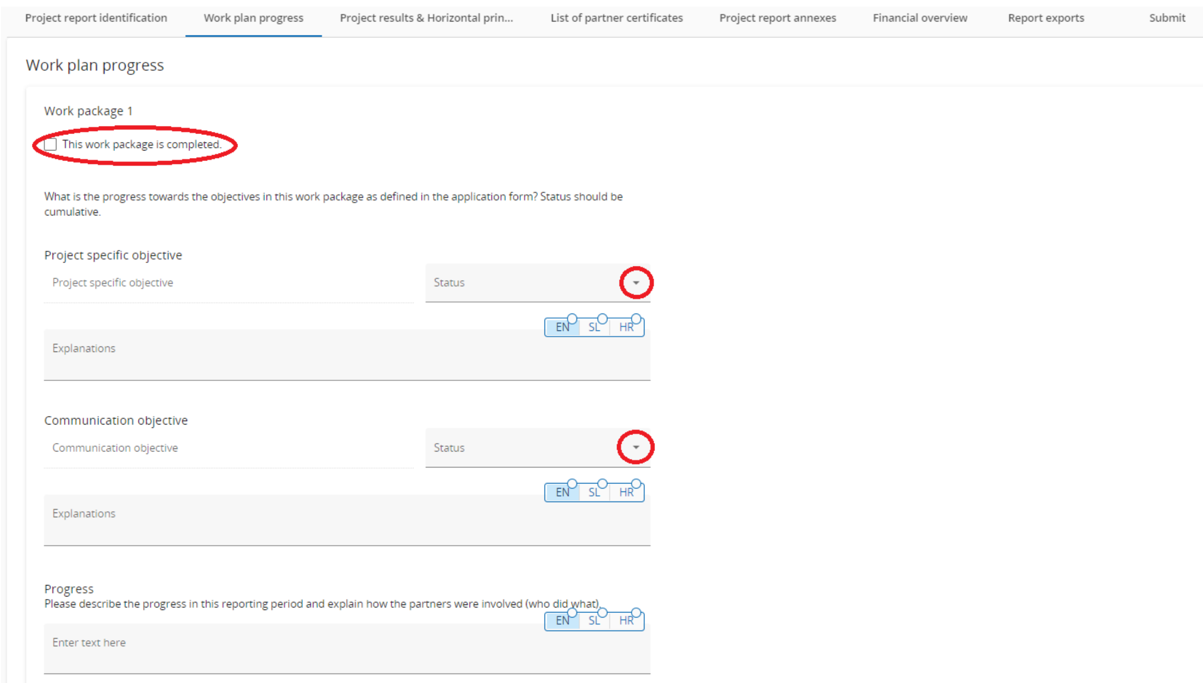
Partner spending profile (in Euro)

The calculated amounts in the overview table below are certified amounts, coming from the included partner certificates in this project report. The forecast amount is an input field coming from the partner report.

Partner number	Organisation abbreviation	Country	Total eligible budget	Previously Reported	Current report	Total reported so far	% of Total eligible budget	Remaining budget
LP1	MRRFEU	Slovenija (SI)	15.500,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00 %	15.500,00
PP2	MKRR	Hrvatska (HR)	15.500,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00 %	15.500,00
Total			**31.000,00**	**0,00**	**0,00**	**0,00**	**0,00 %**	**31.000,00**

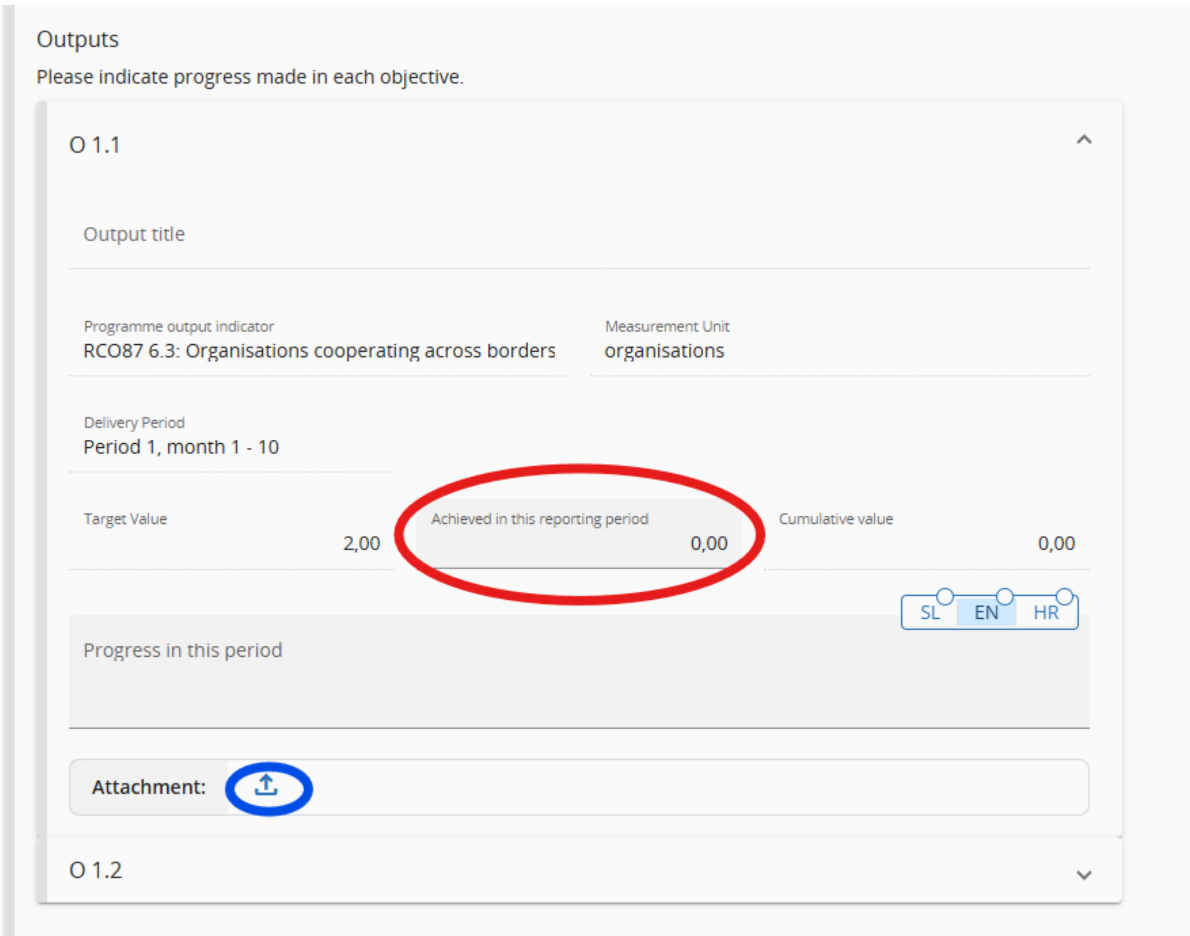


The next step is the description of the **"Work plan progress"**, where the Lead Partner has to provide the status of the work package, project specific objective and communication objective (red circles) and some explanations of them. Additionally the Lead Partner has to provide the information how the partners were involved (field "Progress").



The user continues with the description of activities.

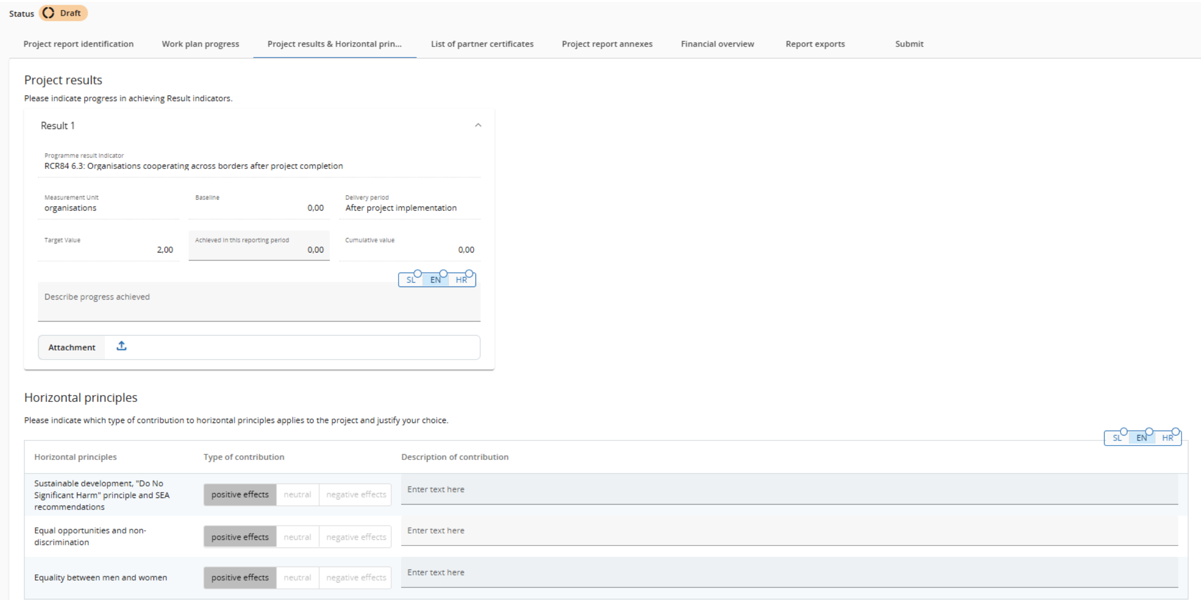
Where the user has to select the status of the activity (red circle) and provide the description of the activities. The user can upload attachments in this section (blue circles) for evidence. The last part in each work package is the description of the achieved project outputs.



The user provides the information of the achieved value (red circle) of the project output indicator and describes the progress in this period. If there is an evidence the user can upload an attachment (blue circle).

The Lead partner has to repeat the previously described steps in all other work packages.

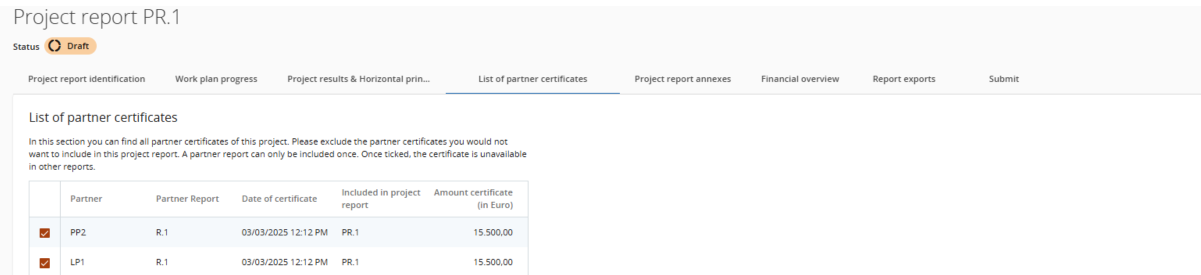
Next is the **"Project results & Horizontal principles" section**, where the users shall describe the progress on results and horizontal principles.



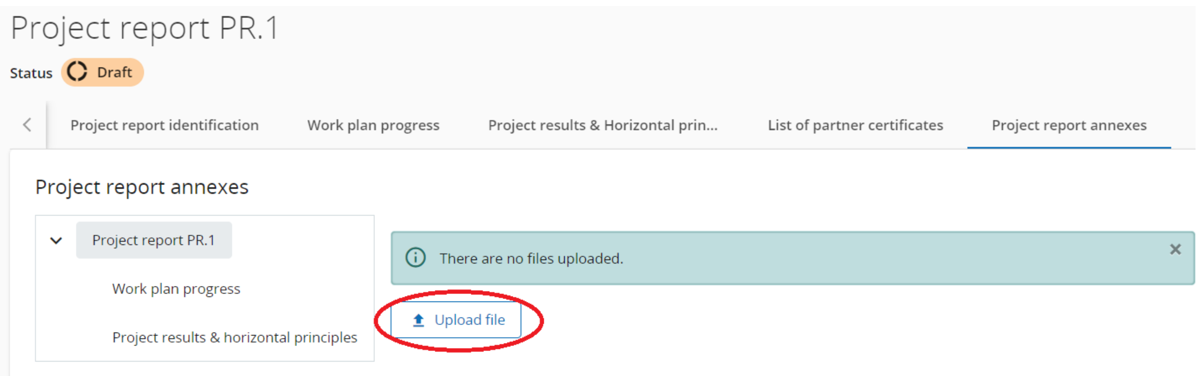
The users shall describe the progress on planned results by inserting how much was achieved in the current reporting period. The Lead partner can also upload an attachment per item which will show up again in the Project report annexes.

For Horizontal principles there is a table to report on the contribution for each of the three cooperation criteria. The Type of contribution is pre-defined from the latest approved application form and cannot be changed. There is a text field to describe the contribution made in the respective reporting period/project.

The next step is to include the partner certificates. This shall be done in the **"List of partner certificates"** section. In this tab, all partner certificates of the project are listed.



The next section is the **"Project report annexes"** section. In this section, upload the document **"Appendix to the project report"**. A sample document is published on the website (see Appendix 1 to these guidelines). This section shows all files uploaded in the project report.



The tree structure represents the places within that report where files can be uploaded. All uploads from all sections are shown in this list. Users have the possibility to upload additional files linked to the Project report here (by clicking the Upload file button – red circle). Since it is not always possible to add descriptions to files in the dedicated sections (due to the chip style upload), users with edit right are also allowed to add descriptions to all files in this section. Files uploaded in this section can be deleted here, other files can only be deleted in the section where they were uploaded.

In the **"Financial overview"** section there are 5 different financial overview tables (all filled in automatically). The first table is the **"Project Expenditure – summary (in Euro)":**

Status Draft

Project report identification | Work plan progress | Project results & Horizontal prin... | List of partner certificates | Project report annexes | Financial overview | Report exports | Submit

Financial overview

Amounts in tables below are always in Euro and include Fast track lump sums (if applicable for this project).

Project expenditure - summary (in Euro)

	Project total eligible budget	Previously reported	Current report	Total reported so far	% of total	Remaining budget	Previously verified	Previously paid
ERDF	24.800,00	0,00	24.800,00	24.800,00	100,00 %	0,00	0,00	0,00
Partner contribution	6.200,00	0,00	6.200,00	6.200,00	100,00 %	0,00	0,00	N/A
↳ of which Public contribution	6.200,00	0,00	6.200,00	6.200,00	100,00 %	0,00	0,00	N/A
↳ of which Automatic public contribution	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00	N/A
↳ of which Private contribution	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00	N/A
Total	**31.000,00**	**0,00**	**31.000,00**	**31.000,00**	**100,00 %**	**0,00**	**0,00**	**0,00**

The second table is the **"Project expenditure – breakdown per cost category (in Euro)":**

Project expenditure - breakdown per cost category (in Euro)

Cost category	Project total eligible budget	Previously reported	Current report	Total reported so far	% of total	Remaining budget	Previously verified
Lump sum	31.000,00	0,00	31.000,00	31.000,00	100,00 %	0,00	0,00
Unit Costs	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00
Total	**31.000,00**	**0,00**	**31.000,00**	**31.000,00**	**100,00 %**	**0,00**	**0,00**

The third table is the **"Project Expenditure – breakdown per Unit cost/Lump sum (in Euro)":**

Project expenditure - breakdown per Lump sum (in Euro)

SL EN HR

Lump sum	Project total eligible budget	Previously reported	Current report	Total reported so far	% of total	Remaining budget	Previously verified	Previously paid FTLS
Type 2 project - Lump sum for 2 events	31.000,00	0,00	31.000,00	31.000,00	100,00 %	0,00	0,00	N/A
Total	**31.000,00**	**0,00**	**31.000,00**	**31.000,00**	**100,00 %**	**0,00**	**0,00**	**0,00**

The fourth table is the **"Project expenditure – overview per partner/per cost category – Current report":**

Project expenditure - overview per partner/per cost category - Current report

Partner	Organisation abbreviation	Country	Lump sum	Unit costs	Total current report
LP1	MRRFEU	Slovenija (SI)	15.500,00	0,00	15.500,00
PP2	MKRR	Hrvatska (HR)	15.500,00	0,00	15.500,00
Total			**31.000,00**	**0,00**	**31.000,00**

And the last table is the **"Project expenditure – Summary of deducted items by control – Current report":**

Project expenditure - Summary of deducted items by control - Current report

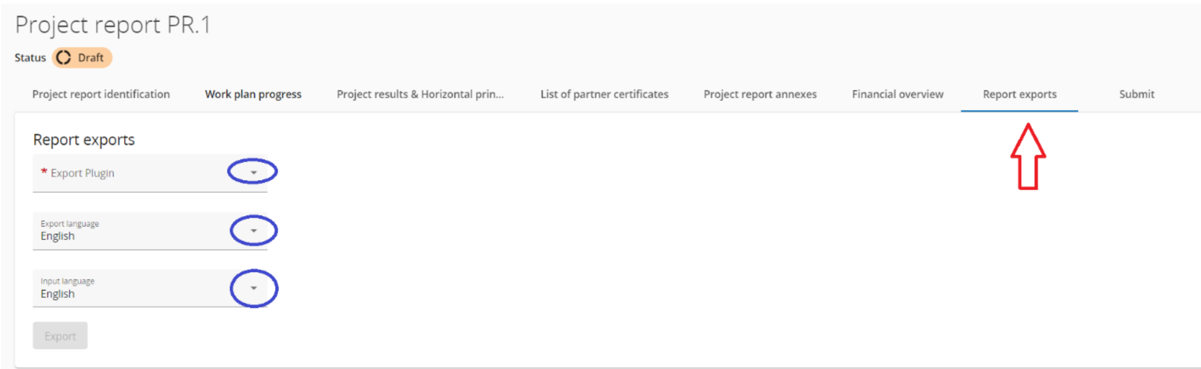
Partner	Organisation abbreviation	Country	Lump sum	Unit costs	Total deduction
LP1	MRRFEU	Slovenija (SI)	0,00	0,00	0,00
PP2	MKRR	Hrvatska (HR)	0,00	0,00	0,00
Total			**0,00**	**0,00**	**0,00**

Project partners can download each of the tables shown above in the form of an Excel table by clicking on the icon in the bottom right corner below the table (marked with a red circle).

Project expenditure - Summary of deducted items by control - Current report

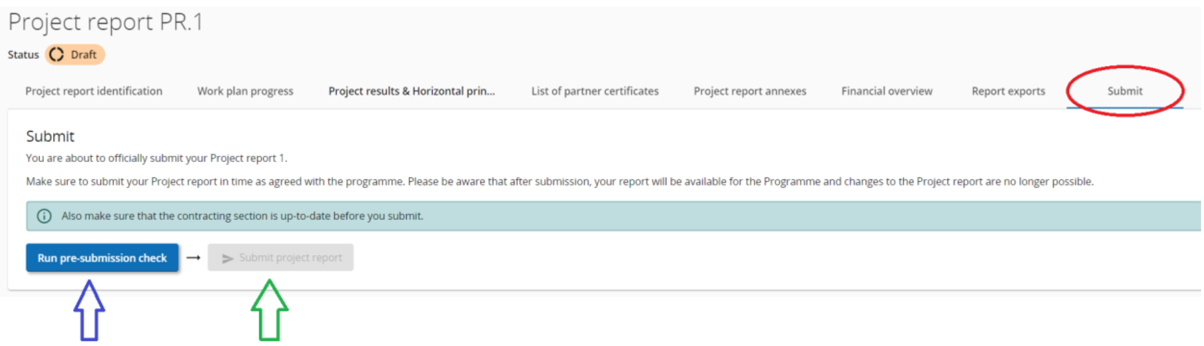
Partner	Organisation abbreviation	Country	Lump sum	Unit costs	Total deduction
LP1	MRRFEU	Slovenija (SI)	0,00	0,00	0,00
PP2	MKRR	Hrvatska (HR)	0,00	0,00	0,00
Total			0,00	0,00	0,00

If Lead Partners consider it useful they can export their reports in the **"Report exports"** section.

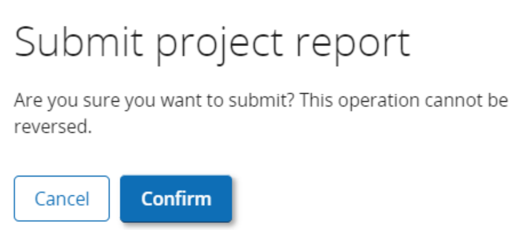


The Lead Partner needs to choose from the drop-down menus (marked with blue circles) the plug-in, the export language and the input language.

The last step is the submission of the Project Report. The users have to click on the "Submit" tab (marked with red circle) and following screen will appear:



First the user has to click the button **"Run pre-submission check"** (blue arrow). If the control is successful, the button "Submit project report" (green arrow) will be available and the user has to click this button. The following screen will appear:



To submit the Project Report the Lead Partner has to click on "Confirm".

6 COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

In the programming of the IP SI-HR the participating countries decided to support projects of limited financial value (small-scale projects) within the Priority 3 (SO 6.3) of the programme in order to increase visibility and trust among people living in the programme area.

The purpose of the Communication and Visibility part of the Manual is to inform (potential) beneficiaries about the formal requirements of the EU and the IP SI-HR concerning the information, communication and visibility measures to be carried out. These guidelines present a basis for each applicant and beneficiary (Lead/Project partner). The tasks of the beneficiary are to inform the public about the ERDF support received by the programme as well as about the results and impacts of the co-financing in the frame of the project in order to ensure the transparency of the use of EU funds.

6.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The legal requirements related to communication and visibility for 2021-2027 are laid down in the EU Common Provisions Regulation (CPR)[14] and the Interreg Regulation[15].

Responsibilities of the beneficiaries concerning visibility, transparency and communication activities are laid down in Articles 47 and 50 of the CPR. The responsibilities of Project Partners with regard to transparency and communication are laid down in Article 36 of the Interreg Regulation. The use and technical characteristics of the emblem of the European Union are laid down in Annex IX of the CPR.

6.1.1 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Upon request, all Project Partners are obliged to provide the IP SI-HR as well as EU institutions, bodies, offices or agencies with any communication materials produced in the project. All Project Partners are obliged to offer them under a royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable licence and without significant additional costs or administrative burden. This license on intellectual property rights grants to the EU and the IP SI-HR the following rights:

- Internal use (right to reproduce, copy and make available the communication and visibility materials to EU and EU Member States' institutions and agencies and their employees);
- Reproduction of the communication and visibility materials by any means and in any form, in whole or in part;

[14] *Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy.*

[15] *Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments.*

• Distribution to the public of the communication and visibility materials (or copies thereof) in any and all forms and

• Storage and archiving of the communication and visibility materials.

6.2 PROGRAMME REQUIREMENTS

6.2.1 CONTENT RELATED REQUIREMENTS

Communication is a part of all project activities, and it requires careful planning and implementation to make the project succeed. Therefore, it is important to define the approach to communication and visibility of the project, based on what is expected to be achieved to ensure the project's success.

The project communication plan/activities are part of the project work plan. When preparing the project communication plan, communication activities should be planned, that are adapted to the thematic content and activities of the project and that contribute to the achievement of the project's main goal/specific objectives.

In the AF applicants shall define one project-specific objective connected to the single work package. The work package should also have one relevant communication objective and should define the target audiences in order to achieve the project main goal/specific objective. This means that communication objective and activities are embedded in the thematic work package. Please refer to the relevant chapters (chapter 2: Project development, and chapter 3: Application and assessment) of this Manual for more information on how to prepare the project work plan.

Please note: Small scale projects need to include only one work package, with one project specific objective and one communication objective.

One Project Partner should be **appointed as the main responsible partner for coordinating the communication work** in the project. Communication is a common responsibility of all Project Partners, who together must ensure that active and effective communication will be maintained throughout the whole project life cycle. It is crucial that the Project Partners stay in close contact with each other for spreading information about project events, activities and achievements. **Please note that project communication should be about the project as a whole, not just about the activities carried out and results achieved by individual Project Partners**.

As per the Article 47 of CPR, Project Partners are required to use the EU emblem and the statement "Co-funded by the European union" in their communication to acknowledge the support received under EU programmes and contribute to the visibility of the EU on the ground.

The Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat (MA/JS) supports projects in fulfilling the visibility requirements by providing **trainings, templates, guidance and feedback**. Besides the Interreg project logo (programme logo with added project acronym), the template for project poster is provided (see Point 6.3.6.1 of this chapter).

6.2.2 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

The Lead and Project Partners of the IP SI-HR shall follow the programme's communication and visibility requirements for all co-funded visibility, transparency and communication activities. In this way, the Project Partners properly acknowledge the support from Interreg[16], and communicate the role and achievements of Interreg.

Project Partners shall acknowledge support from the IP SI-HR fund by using the term „Interreg" next to the emblem of the European Union[17] and fulfil these requirements:

a) **Include the project logo**, which consists of four elements:

1. The emblem of the European Union[18];

2. The statement 'Co-funded by the European Union' written in full and placed next to the emblem of the European Union;

3. The programme name 'Interreg Slovenia – Croatia' placed next to the emblem of the European Union;

4. The project acronym (short title of the project) placed beneath the above three elements.

b) **Include a statement** on the Interreg support:

1. Include a statement that highlights the support from Interreg in all documents and communication materials for the general public and for participants;

2. Include on the Project Partner's official website and social media sites, if such exist, a short description of the project, proportionate to the level of support, including its aims and results, and highlighting the financial support from Interreg.

c) **Publicly display at least one poster** of a minimum size A3 or equivalent electronic display (at Project Partner locations) to highlight the support from Interreg.

The compliance with the visibility rules will be checked throughout the project implementation.

The project logo has to be used by Project Partners during the whole project implementation, meaning in all documents, on the website (if applicable), in the communication connected to the project, in public procurement procedures (where possible, in order to ensure a reference to the respective project), at events, on publications, etc.

[16] *In accordance with Article 50 of CPR.*

[17] *In accordance with Article 47 of CPR.*

[18] *Presented in accordance with the technical specifications laid down in Annex IX of the CPR.*

6.2.3 THE PROGRAMME LOGO

The logo is the most important visual identity element of the IP SI-HR. The usage of the programme logo is the basic element that ensures meeting the elementary requirements set out in the CPR.

Since the IP SI-HR is a cross-border cooperation programme, the activities concerning information and communication with the public will, concerning the usage of language, be adapted to the cross-border setting. This means that the language of the information and communication has to be selected according to the language of the target audience, documents should be bilingual (invitation, minutes, PPT, presented materials…).

The programme logo consists of the Interreg logotype with the coloured arch inside, the EU emblem, the co-financing statement (a reference to the EU) and the programme name. The recommended position is on the upper left or upper right. The minimum permitted size of the programme logo for printed materials is connected to the height of the EU emblem, which has to be at least 1 cm.

6.2.3.1 Colour variants of the programme logo

The standard programme logo is the full colour version in the colour codes specified below.

Figure 7: Colour codes of the programme logo – full colour version

Colour: Reflex Blue	Colour: Light Blue	Colour: Yellow
RGB: 0/51/153	RGB: 159/174/229	RGB: 255/204/0
HEX: 003399	HEX: 9FAEE5	HEX: FFCC00
CMYK: 100/80/0/0	CMYK: 41/30/0/0	CMYK: 0/0/100/0

Colour: White	Colour: Light Grey	Colour: Grey	Colour: Black
RGB: 255/255/255	RGB: 216/214/204	RGB: 150/148/140	RGB: 0/0/0
HEX: FFFFF	HEX: D8D6CC	HEX: 96948C	HEX: 000000
CMYK: 0/0/0/0	CMYK: 5/5/10/15	CMYK: 5/5/15/50	CMYK: 0/0/0/100

The programme logo is available in two language variants (the bilingual and English version). In the frame of the programme, bilingual publications, events, etc. are favoured. **Therefore, the basic recommended logo version is the full colour bilingual one** (if applicable, see requirements below).

Figure 8: Full colour programme logo for standard use – bilingual version

Figure 9: Full colour programme logo for standard use – English version

For single colour reproductions or engravings, a black version of the logo should be used. This version should only be used whenever the 4-colour process is not available.

Figure 10: Black and white programme logo, if full colour variant is not possible – bilingual version

Figure 11: Black and white programme logo, if full colour variant is not possible – English version

For single colour reproductions on a very dark background or engravings, the inverted version of the logo should be used. This version should only be used whenever the 4-colour process is not available.

Figure 12: Colour negative-inverted variant – bilingual version

Figure 13: Colour negative-inverted variant – English version

Figure 14: Monochrome version-inverted variant – bilingual version

Figure 15: Monochrome version-inverted variant – English version

6.2.4 THE PROJECT LOGO

6.2.4.1 Components and positioning

Each SSP will receive the respective Interreg project logo from the MA/JS of IP SI-HR, **therefore project developed own logos or stand-alone brands are not eligible.** The project logo was designed on the basis of the programme logo. In the frame of **the project logo**, the project acronyms are annexed to the programme logo.

6.2.4.2 Colours and language variants of the project logo

The colours are derived from the EU main corporate colours and **must not be changed.**

For Interreg project logos, project acronyms will be added in the colour of the priority 3 in accordance to the colour scheme below.

Figure 16: Priority 3 colour scheme

Priority 3

An accessible and connected region

CMYK 87/51/0/0
HEX #0E6EB6
RGB 14/110/182

The standard project logo is the full colour version in the colour codes specified above.

As the language of the information and communication has to be selected according to the language of the target audience, also the project logo exists in two necessary language versions, the bilingual and the English version.

Figure 17: Bilingual version of the project logo for Priority 3

Interreg
Sofinancira EVROPSKA UNIJA
Sufinancira EUROPSKA UNIJA
Slovenija – Hrvatska

Project acronym

Figure 18: English version of the project logo for Priority 3

Interreg
Co-funded by the European Union
Slovenia – Croatia

Project acronym

6.2.5 THE CORRECT USAGE OF THE LOGO

Programme or project logos (Interreg logos) have to be placed on the front cover of all publications and documents. The recommended position is on the upper left or upper right. In videos, the logo has to be integrated in a reasonable size at the beginning or at the end of the video. On websites or their subpages, online and smartphone applications, social media channels and other digital platforms, the Interreg logo has to be positioned in a place which is visible on top without scrolling or clicking. On other communication products such as conference bags or exhibition roll-ups, it also has to be placed in a prominent place.

The Interreg logo should not be distorted and its size should be reasonable and recognizable. The minimum height of the EU emblem has to be 1cm[19]. Please note that the EU emblem – which forms an integral part of the logo - shall not be smaller than the size of the biggest logo displayed, measured either in height or width. Please consult with the JS if in doubt about combining logos.

6.2.6 Examples of logo usage

The communication products shall be clear, easily legible and placed readily visible to the public to fulfil their purpose: to inform the public about the respective activity and the received financial support from the EU thereof.

Table 9: Summary table of obligatory and optional visual elements

	Small-scale projects
Project logo	✓
„Co-funded by the European Union" statement	✓
Public display of one poster	✓
Publications	optional
Promotional materials/items	optional
Events	✓
Projects' subsites at programme website	✓
Social media	optional
Videos, short films	optional

In case Project Partners decide on the preparation of the optional elements listed above, as in case of the compulsory visual elements, these shall be prepared in accordance with the communication guidelines detailed in this chapter.

6.2.6.1 Posters

Each Project Partner **must place at least one poster at the project partners premises** with information about the project (minimum size A3), including the financial support from the European Union, at a location visible to the public, such as the entrance area of a project partners

[19] *Except in case of small promotional items.*

building. The IP SI-HR provides a downloadable template[20] for producing the poster. The poster template can be modified by the Project Partners, however, the necessary data (project name/acronym, project start and end date, total budget/ERDF support received, Interreg logo, contact details of the responsible Project Partner, description of the main project objective and the objective of the supported activity etc.) has to be included. The poster needs to stay visible for the whole duration of the project. It is not possible to substitute the poster with a roll-up banner. However, an equivalent electronic display of the poster is permissible. **The printed or electronic displays should be set up as soon as the project begins.**

Figure 19: Poster template

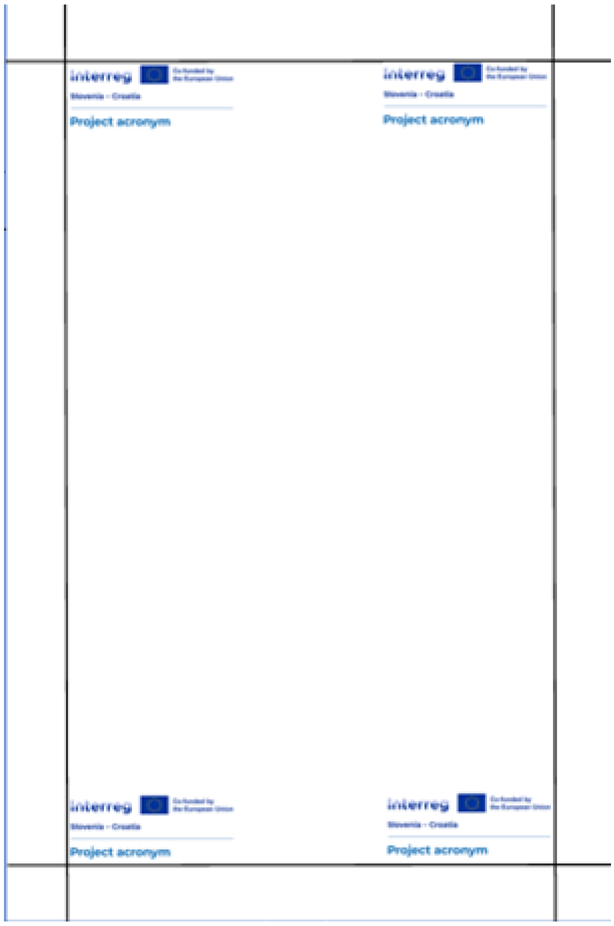
[20] *The template is available at www.si-hr.eu.*

6.2.6.2 Publications

The Interreg logo has to be positioned on the publication's front page in such a size that the EU emblem has a height of at least 1 cm. While top left corner placement is preferred, one can choose to position the project logo on a different corner (upper right, lower left or right) as long as the rules for margins and dimensions are followed.

The width of the project logo together with the EU emblem (without the Co-financing statement) has to be equivalent to a forth (¼A) of the page's entire width (A), except if in this case the EU emblem would not be of sufficient size (this depends on the size of the publication). Concerning the size of the external margins, they are determined on the basis of the width of the EU emblem.

Figure 20: Position of the Interreg logo on publications (external margins)



In case of darker backgrounds, the logo has to be positioned in a white rectangle (exclusion zone) or the black and white or inverted logo variant may be used.

6.2.6.3 Promotional items and smaller promotional items

Awareness-raising on the programme in general and on the respective project is the most common reason for purchasing promotional items (give-aways or gadgets). They can be used at events, such as exhibitions and conferences, or in broader awareness campaigns. Promotional items are by definition produced in larger quantities and come custom-printed with the project logo. **In general, the minimum height of the EU emblem must be 1 cm. For specific items, e.g. pens the EU emblem can be reproduced in a smaller size[21].**

While almost any product can be branded with a project logo and used for promotion, the Interreg SI-HR provides examples of common promotional items:

Figure 21: Example - promotional transparent folder (Monochrome English inverted variant of the programme logo printed on transparent sticker)

In case of small promotional items or small print materials like pens, USB sticks, etc. on which the project logo cannot be displayed, the EU emblem together with the statement "Co-funded by the European Union" has to be used and reproduced in smaller size.

Figure 22: Full colour variant of a small size logo for standard use

Co-funded by
the European Union

Figure 23: One colour (black) variant of a small size logo, if full colour variant is not possible

Co-funded by
the European Union

Figure 24: Example - promotional USB stick (small size logo in one colour)

[21] *See last valid version of Interreg Brand Design Manual 2021-2027:* https://www.interact-eu.net/library/interreg-brand-design-manual-2021-2027/pageflip

Figure 25: Example - promotional pens (small size logo in one colour)

6.2.6.4 Events

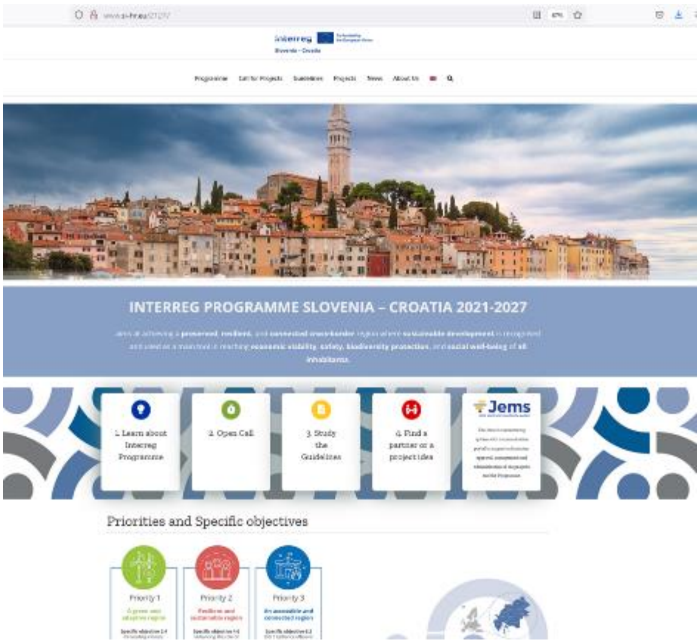
All event related documentation (invitation, list of participants, presentations, procurement documents, etc.) has to be properly labelled with the project logo. At each event the programme/project logo has to be visible.

6.2.6.5 Website and social media

Projects will not receive co-financing for stand-alone project websites outside www.si-hr.eu.

In case there is such a project website or Project Partners provide information on the project on their website(s), a short description of the project, including its aims and results, and highlighting the total financial support from the ERDF, has to be included. In case of a project website, the project logo has to be placed in the upper part of the website and should correspond to the language used on the website.

Figure 26: Example - website

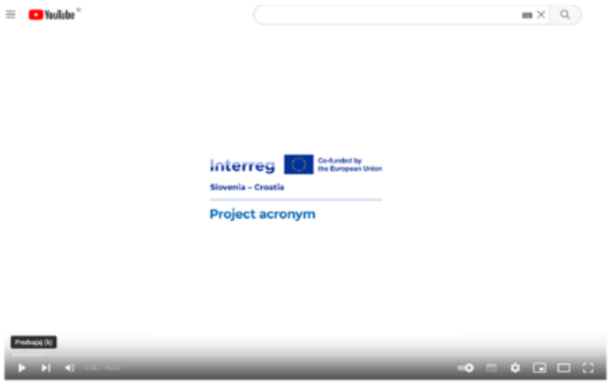


For social media platforms/channels it is obligatory to use the project logo. In case the background is coloured or very dark, a white border shall be put around the rectangle, the width of the border being 1/25th of the height of the rectangle. There is no rule for positioning in social media as long as the clear space area rule is respected. The same rule applies to online and smartphone applications and other digital platforms.

6.2.6.6 Videos and short films

In case projects produce promotional videos, the project logo has to be visible in the beginning or the end of the video in a recognizable size and on suitable background for at least a few seconds.

Figure 27: Example - videos



6.2.7 FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES LINKED TO BREACHES OF COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY RULES

Projects risk financial consequences when they disregard EU and programme branding and visibility requirements. Failure to include the mandatory visibility requirements (project logo, statement, poster, etc.) and therefore to meet the basic requirements outlined in the CPR and Interreg regulation **may lead to cuts in funding**. **Costs might also be considered ineligible** for ERDF funding **in case rules are only partly observed** (e.g. the programme logo is used in an incorrect way - too small in size, distorted, unsuitable position, not visible due to unsuitable background, etc.).

If amendments to violated requirements are not possible, the **MA/JS may cancel up to 2 % of the support[22] from the ERDF granted to the Lead/Project Partner** who fails to comply with their obligations on visibility, transparency and communication. The financial cuts will be applied to the concerned Project Partner(s) and take into account the principle of proportionality.

6.3 SUPPORT FROM THE PROGRAMME

Besides the responsible contract manager in the JS, also JS communication officer cooperates with the projects/Project Partners in communication matters.

The support may serve different purposes, such as info days, trainings, seminars, information materials, and may be used for disseminating project news, outcomes and results. Projects need to be active towards the JS concerning the planning and implementation of efficient project communication.

[22] *Art. 36 (6) of the Interreg regulation*

Each SSP is highly recommended to provide and send the following items to JS to ensure that the IP SI-HR programme will be able to support efficient and successful project/programme communication through its own channels (web page, social media, newsletters, etc.):

a) prior to the event: the invitations to the events,
b) after the event:
   - good quality and big size photos, showing the participants and the activities, preferably 2160x3840 pixels, in jpg or png,
   - if existing short films or any audio-visual materials that have been prepared in the project.

7 ARCHIVING AND CLOSURE

7.1 OBLIGATION AFTER THE PROJECT CLOSURE

Although the project has ended, several duties remain for the partnership. It is the responsibility of the LP to ensure that all partners are aware of the rules in this chapter and follow them.

The essential purpose of the archive is to preserve the contents of the documents (data and information) which must be accessible, understandable and available to all representatives of the institutions in charge of controls foreseen by the Interreg Programme as well as to the bodies authorized to monitor the project. At the same time, the archive must provide long-term stability and credibility of any records for the entire retention period.

7.2 AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

All supporting documents composing the audit trail must remain available at the premises of each Lead and Project Partner **at least for a period of five years**. This period starts from **31 December of the year in which the last payment is made by the MA to the LP**. Furthermore, all documents referring to project activities and expenditure for which **State aid** was granted (the date of signature of the SSP ERDF Subsidy Contract) shall be available for at least **10 years** from the date of granting the last aid issued by the programme. The retention period shall be interrupted either in the case of legal proceedings or by a request of the EC.

At the closure of projects, the MA/JS will inform each LP on the exact start date of the above mentioned retention periods. The LP shall in turn inform the PPs. Other, possibly longer document retention periods according to e.g. national and internal rules, remain unaffected. For the entire retention period, all bodies entitled to perform controls and audits are allowed to access the project and all relevant documentation and accounts of the project. The documents can be kept either in the form of originals or other documents of equivalent probative value.

Documents related to the project application and implementation (AF, Partner report, Project report etc.) are archived in electronic form in the Jems.

7.3 PROJECT ARCHIVING

Concerning the closure of a project, it is to be clear that it is a closure of the project's grant but it does not represent the end of programme requirements for the project. Even though the programme has accepted the final report and made the final payment, the project is still subject to possible controls and checks, e.g. by the programme AA/AB, Commission auditors, Court of Auditors.

The LP/PPs are obliged to store the documentation and keep them clearly traceable in the bookkeeping for the eventual controls and audit purposes.

After the retention date mentioned in subchapter 7.2 of this document, the project is considered finalized and archived in Jems.

7.4 PROJECT CLOSURE

Project closure is the final phase in the project implementation process. The closure involves two parallel activities: finalising project activities and preparing the project report. In practice this involves accumulation of all project finances, documents/materials and achievements.

8 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE AND SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE PROGRAMME

8.1 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The IP SI-HR is a joint programme of the two Member States, Slovenia and Croatia.

The governance and management of the programme is shared between various bodies that are in charge of managing, coordinating, supervising and controlling the implementation of the programme.

- Monitoring Committee

The MC steers the programme, supervises the quality and effectiveness of its implementation and decides on the approval or rejection of the projects for funding. It is composed of representatives of both Member States, Slovenia and Croatia. The list of the MC members is available on the programme website.

- Managing Authority

The MA is responsible for the management and the implementation of the programme in accordance with the principle of sound financial management and in line with EU regulations ruling the European Regional Development Fund.

- Joint Secretariat

The JS assists the MA and the MC in carrying out their respective functions and undertakes the day-to-day implementation of the programme. It also provides information and guidance to project applicants and partners.

- Audit Authority

The AA is assisted by the Group of auditors comprising of representatives of both Member States participating in the Interreg programme. The AA is responsible for carrying out system audits, audits on operations and audits of accounts in order to provide independent assurance to the European Commission (hereinafter EC) that the programme management and control system functions effectively and that expenditure submitted to EC is legal and regular.

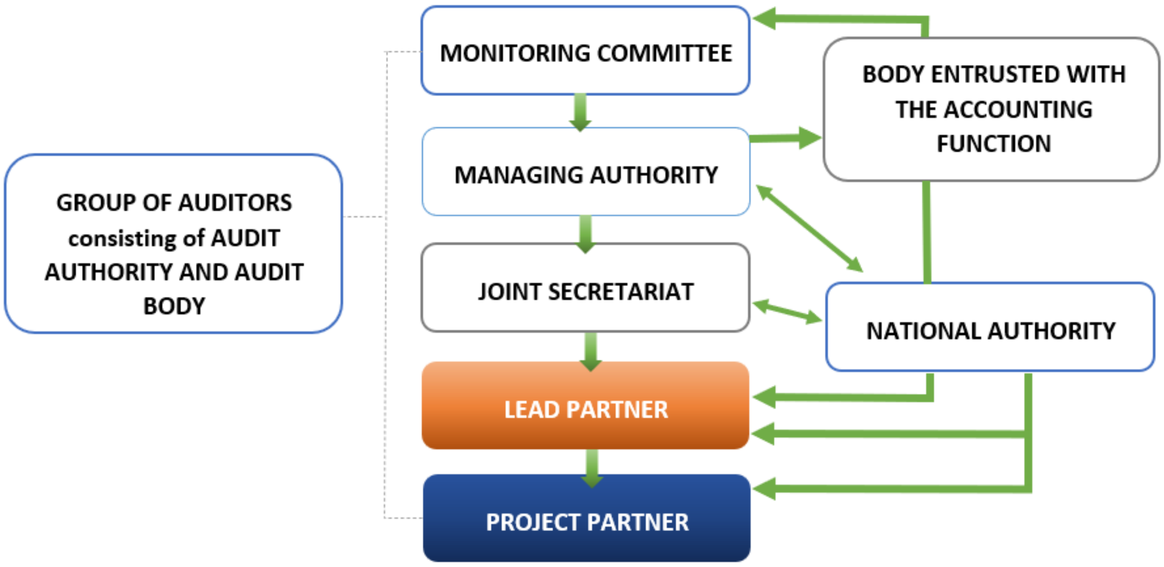
- Body entrusted with the accounting function

The body entrusted with the accounting function submits the payment applications to the Commission and makes payments to the LPs or in exceptional cases to Project Partners *(if applicable).*

- Representatives of the Member States

The representatives of the Member States (National Authorities) are providing information to applicants in order to obtain quality projects that will meet the programme objectives and indicators, as well as assisting the MA and JS in organising the support for potential applicants in finding cross-border Project Partners.

Figure 30 – Programme management structure



8.2 SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE PROGRAMME

The following information and support related to project development and preparing of applications will be provided by the JS:

- ✓ information about the programme and the Open Call for SSP;
- ✓ information concerning preparation and submission of applications;
- ✓ organisation of informative workshops;
- ✓ publication of frequently asked questions and information on approved projects on the programme website.

Support concerning specific project content related topics, including information on State aid and Project Partners, will be provided by the representatives of both Member States (National Authorities).

Joint Secretariat	www.si-hr.eu
Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development Interreg and Financial Mechanisms Office Cross-Border Programme Management Division Joint Secretariat Slovenia-Croatia 2021-2027 Kotnikova 5, 1000 Ljubljana Contact: e-mail: si-hr.mkrr@gov.si or by telephone +386 (0)1 400 3435	
Representatives of Slovenia (National Authority)	

National Authority in Slovenia
Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development
Interreg and Financial Mechanisms Office
Interreg Division
Kotnikova 5, 1000 Ljubljana

Contact person: Vesna Silič
e-mail: vesna.silic@gov.si
or by telephone +386 1 400 3474

or Substitute Contact person: Mojca Krisch
e-mail: mojca.krisch@gov.si
or by telephone: +386 (0)1 400 3215

Representatives of Croatia (National Authority)

National Authority in Croatia
Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds
Directorate for European Territorial Cooperation
Sector for Coordination of European Territorial Cooperation Programmes and Macro-Regional Strategies
Miramarska cesta 22, 10 000 Zagreb

Contact person: Alen Malnar
e-mail: alen.malnar@mrrfeu.hr
or by telephone: +385 (0)1 6471 272

or: Perica Gabrić
e-mail: perica.gabric@mrrfeu.hr
or by telephone: +385 (0)1 6400 689

To take part in a project co-financed within the IP SI-HR programme every Project Partner is advised to get in contact with the competent National Authority before the project application, to obtain the necessary information on the content, State aid etc.

Project partners are advised to devote enough time for preparation and coordination of project within the partnership.

9 LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND PROGRAMME RELATED DOCUMENTS

Projects implemented under the programme must comply with EU rules governing the Structural Funds, the programme rules and national legislation, and must show coherence and complementarities with regional, national and sectoral development strategies/programmes. The documents or web links to the relevant documents listed below (not exhaustive list) are provided on the programme website www.si-hr.eu.

Relevant programme documents

- ✓ Interreg Programme VI-A Slovenia-Croatia (adopted by the European Commission Decision C (2023) 4323 final as of 22 June 2023;
- ✓ Methodological Paper on Indicators IP SI-HR 2021-2027;
- ✓ SEA of the Interreg Programme Slovenia-Croatia 2021-2027, Environmental Report, May 2022.

Key regulations for the period 2021-2027

- ✓ Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy (Common Provisions Regulation) with all amendments;

- ✓ Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund (ERDF Regulation) with all amendments;

- ✓ Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments (Interreg Regulation) with all amendments;

- ✓ Implementing acts and delegated acts adopted in accordance with the aforementioned regulations;

- ✓ Other regulations and directives applicable to the implementation of projects co-funded by the ERDF.

Besides EU rules and rules of the Interreg Programme, all relevant national legislation and internal rules of PPs have to be respected.