

**Interreg**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

**Slovenia – Croatia**



MANUAL FOR BENEFICIARIES FOR STANDARD PROJECTS

# PART 2 – PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Version 1, March 2023

[www.si-hr.eu](http://www.si-hr.eu)



# **Manual for Beneficiaries for Standard Projects**

## **PART 2: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**



## CONTENT OF PART 2:

<b>1</b>	<b>HOW TO PARTICIPATE .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1	PARTNERSHIP REQUIREMENTS.....	5
1.2	LEAD PARTNER PRINCIPLE AND REQUIREMENTS .....	5
1.3	PROJECT SIZE AND PROJECT DURATION .....	6
1.4	CO-FINANCING.....	7
1.5	CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION CRITERIA .....	7
1.6	STATE AID AND DE MINIMIS AID .....	7
1.6.1	General about State Aid and De Minimis Aid .....	7
1.6.2	State aid/de minimis aid measures .....	8
1.7	PROJECT MODIFICATIONS.....	9
1.7.1	Minor modifications.....	9
1.7.2	Major modifications.....	9
1.7.3	Flexibility rule at Project Partner level.....	10
1.7.4	The request process for Project modifications.....	10
1.8	AUDIT TRAIL, DURABILITY OF OWNERSHIP AND DURABILITY OF PROJECT OUTPUTS AND RESULTS.....	11
1.8.1	Durability of Ownership.....	11
1.8.2	Durability of project outputs and results .....	12
<b>2</b>	<b>HOW TO DEVELOP A GOOD PROJECT? .....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1	DEVELOPING THE PROJECT CONCEPT AND INTERVENTION LOGIC .....	13
2.2	SETTING UP A RELEVANT PROJECT PARTNERSHIP.....	14
2.3	DEVELOPING A SOUND PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE.....	15
2.4	SETTING UP RELEVANT PROJECT COMMUNICATION .....	16
2.5	DESIGNING A SOUND PROJECT BUDGET.....	16
2.6	SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE PROGRAMME.....	17



# 1 HOW TO PARTICIPATE

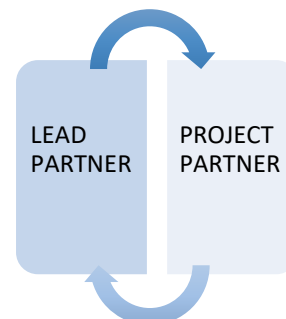
## 1.1 PARTNERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Project partners are organisations that are directly participating in the development and implementation of the Interreg programme SI-HR 2021-2027 (hereinafter IP SI-HR) projects and are officially listed in the Application Form.

The minimum requirement is to have at least **one Project Partner from Slovenia and one from Croatia** or an European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (hereinafter EGTC) registered in the participating country consisting of members from both Member States. The recommended number of Project Partners (including the Lead Partner) is up to six (6).

All partners must have **legal, financial and operational capacity** to participate in the programme.

Types of beneficiaries eligible under each specific objective are defined in the Chapter 2.4 of Part 1 of the Manual for beneficiaries for standard projects (hereinafter Manual for Beneficiaries).



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. This might be particularly relevant for private institutions and associations.

As a general rule, the programme supports cooperation between partners located in the programme area (see Chapter 2. 1 of Part 1 of the Manual for beneficiaries). Considering that the programme area is only partially covering the territory of Slovenia and Croatia, there are exceptions to this rule on the geographical location of the Project Partners. They concern cases where a partner is located outside the programme area but still on the territory of a Member State involved in the programme. Such Project Partners can also participate in the projects if at least the following is met:

- the institution has a competence for covering the whole country or participating region or
- the contribution of the Project Partner brings clear added-value for the project and the cooperation area.

Project Partners located outside the programme area but inside the European Union can become Project Partners only in duly justified cases. Please note that, in case of project approval, the effective participation of partners from European Union regions outside the programme area is subject to the condition that the Member States where they are located accept all of the implementing provisions in relation to management, control and audit.

## 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 must be located within the programme area** and 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 ensure that the expenditure presented by the Project Partners participating in the project was paid for the purpose of implementing the project and corresponds to the activities agreed between those partners.
- ✓ It shall verify that the expenditure presented by the partners participating in the project was validated by the controllers.
- ✓ It shall be responsible for transferring the European regional development fund (hereinafter ERDF) contribution to the Project Partners participating in the project.

Beside these responsibilities, the LP is also responsible for:

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

Responsibilities of the LP are laid down in detail in the ERDF Subsidy Contract for standard projects for Priority 1 and 3 (specific objective 6.2)/the ERDF Subsidy Contract for standard projects for Priority 2 (hereinafter ERDF Subsidy Contract) signed with the Managing Authority. In turn, the LP concludes the Partnership Agreement for standard projects for Priority 1 and 3 (specific objective 6.2)/the Partnership Agreement for standard projects for Priority 2 (hereinafter Partnership Agreement) with all Project Partners. Samples of the ERDF Subsidy Contract and the Partnership Agreement are available on the programme website [www.si-hr.eu](http://www.si-hr.eu).

### 1.3 PROJECT SIZE AND PROJECT DURATION

The projects eligible for participation in the programme are those with the total ERDF amount requested **from EUR 250.000 ERDF funds to EUR 2.5 million ERDF funds** for Priority 1 (Green and adaptive region) and Priority 2 (Resilient and sustainable region) and **from EUR 200.000 ERDF funds to EUR 1 million ERDF funds** for Priority 3 (Accessible and connected region), specific objective 6.2 (Enhance efficient Public administration).

The projects eligible for participation in the programme are those with the duration **up to 30 months for Priority 1 (Green and adaptive region) and Priority 2 (Resilient and sustainable region) and up to 24 months for Priority 3 (Accessible and connected region), specific objective 6.2 (Enhance efficient Public administration)**. The costs for the implementation of an approved project are eligible from its start date until its end date as set in the Subsidy Contract. The start date shall not be earlier than the date of submission of the project application in the Jems and the end date shall not be later than **30 November 2028**.

Table 1. – Project size and duration

Priority	SO	MIN ERDF (EUR)	MAX ERDF (EUR)	MAX DURATION OF PROJECT
1	2.4	250.000	2.500.000	30 months
	2.7			
2	4.6			
3	6.2	200.000	1.000.000	24 months



Eligibility - in general, costs are eligible at the earliest as from the day of the approval of the project by the Monitoring Committee (hereinafter MC). However, the costs for the implementation<sup>1</sup> of an approved project are eligible from its start date until its end date as set in the ERDF Subsidy Contract.

All project activities must be concluded until the project end date. In the last reporting period issuing of invoices<sup>2</sup> and payments of the costs incurred in the last reporting period must take place at the latest within 30 days after the project end date as set in the ERDF Subsidy Contract.

## 1.4 CO-FINANCING

Only eligible expenditure shall be co-financed by the programme, whereas the co-financing from the ERDF shall amount to a maximum of 80% of the total eligible costs. 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.

## 1.5 CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION CRITERIA

The cooperation has to be at the heart of each project. All Project Partners must work together actively for producing the project outputs and results and achieving 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 LP.
- ✓ **Joint financing (compulsory)** – i.e. the joint project budget shall be organised in line with activities carried out by each Project Partner. The LP 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.

## 1.6 STATE AID AND DE MINIMIS AID

### 1.6.1 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<sup>3</sup>.

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

<sup>1</sup> With exemption of preparation costs.

<sup>2</sup> The invoiced activities must be completed by the end of the project duration.

<sup>3</sup> Article 107(1) of TFEU (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union)



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<sup>4</sup>:

**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 degree 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.

### 1.6.2 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 (hereinafter GBER) preferably or under de minimis 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 (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 20.000 EUR per third party involved in the 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.

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

<sup>4</sup> Official Journal 115, 09/05/2008, P.: 91-92.



The Project Partner is obliged to make sure that the upper ceiling is not exceeded during the implementation of the project activities.

European 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 be also granted under *de minimis* regime.

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

## 1.7 PROJECT MODIFICATIONS

During the project implementation, partners might face the need to modify the Application Form in order to adapt it to the actual needs, complete the project successfully and achieve the set objectives. The following types of project modifications may occur during project implementation:

- ✓ Change of the project partnership
- ✓ Budget changes
- ✓ Change of the work plan
- ✓ Extension of the project duration

The LP should always inform the Joint Secretariat (hereinafter JS) as soon as they become aware that a change of the project might be needed. In any case the change must not affect the achievement of the result indicators.

Depending on the impact on the project, it can be distinguished between **minor and major project modifications**. All project modifications must be justified and agreed between the Project Partners before they are communicated to the JS. Changes have to be approved<sup>5</sup> by the programme bodies.

### 1.7.1 Minor modifications

Minor modifications are adjustments of the project, which do not have a significant impact on the project objectives and/or implementation. They may concern administrative/management issues as well as work plan and budget within the limits allowed by the programme. Minor modifications can be approved by the JS, which also may decide to put the decision on the level of the MC.

Examples of minor modifications:

- ✓ minor adaptations of the work plan (modifications which do not change the nature and use of the planned outputs and investments, minor modifications of deliverables or outputs e.g. change of the output values not exceeding 20% of the initially approved ones);
- ✓ extension of the project duration for less than 6 months from the end date defined in the ERDF Subsidy Contract.

### 1.7.2 Major modifications

Major modification is any deviation from the latest version of the approved Application Form going beyond the flexibility limits applicable to minor modifications. They are to be considered as exceptional and may be approved only in duly justified cases. The major modifications shall be approved by the MC.

Examples of major modifications:

<sup>5</sup> Not relevant for cases described in chapter 1.7.3 (Flexibility rule at Project Partner level).





- ✓ extension of the project duration for more than 6 months from the end date defined in the ERDF Subsidy Contract,
- ✓ changes in project partnership (replacement of a partner, withdrawal of a partner, additional partner),
- ✓ modification of the financing plan (influencing the amount of the approved ERDF),
- ✓ reallocation of the funds between budget lines exceeding the sum of 20% of total eligible costs of the project,
- ✓ changes of output values exceeding 20% of the initially approved ones.

The project modifications can be approved only if the project is still reaching the main project and programme indicators.

As a general rule, only two major modifications initiated by the LP are allowed during the project duration.

**In case of changes of administrative elements** (e.g. change of contact data, bank account, legal representatives, type of employment, 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 Joint electronic monitoring system (hereinafter Jems). The LP will then be able to update the information in the Jems.

### 1.7.3 Flexibility rule at Project Partner level

There is flexibility between the cost categories. This flexibility can be used e.g. when planned activities cost more than originally expected. Minor modifications to the individual cost categories are not monitored by the JS: projects are allowed to shift a maximum of 20% of the individual cost categories at Project Partner level, **given that the partner total budget is not exceeded**. Restrictions for flexibility rule:

- ✓ Shifts are cumulative on Project Partner level. Shifts above the 20% threshold need an official modification process.
- ✓ The flexibility rule does not apply to the predefined calculation methods of Simplified Cost Options.
- ✓ Note that due to several simplified cost options can be linked on staff costs, you must carefully consider the flexibility for increasing staff costs. Several other cost categories (e.g. office and administration, travel and accommodation) will increase at the same time.

LP must inform JS of budget changes for the whole partnership within the flexibility rule at the end of each reporting period.

### 1.7.4 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. For major changes, the materials for the MC decision will be prepared by the JS, but the final decision will be taken by the MC members.



Obligations deriving from the ERDF Subsidy Contract and the 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 Application Form in the Jems. The LP then updates the relevant parts of the Application Form (partnership, work plan or budget) in line with the approved project change request. In case the requested project change requires additional supporting documents (e.g. partner declaration, withdrawal letters etc.), they have to be uploaded in the Jems as annexes of the revised Application Form.

The JS examines the revisions done in the Application Form. The LP can be asked to provide further clarifications and/or amendments of the Application Form, in case the changes done in the Jems and related

explanatory information is not sufficient.

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

## 1.8 AUDIT TRAIL, DURABILITY OF OWNERSHIP AND DURABILITY OF PROJECT OUTPUTS AND RESULTS

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 its national controller plays a key role in ensuring an adequate audit trail. In turn, setting up and maintaining an adequate project audit trail is a basic requirement for the eligibility of the expenditure claimed. At the level of each beneficiary, an adequate audit trail is composed at least of the following elements:

- ✓ The ERDF Subsidy Contract (and its amendments);
- ✓ The Partnership Agreement (and its amendments);
- ✓ The latest version of the approved Application Form in Jems;
- ✓ Adequate evidence and documentation of all outputs and deliverables produced during the project lifetime;
- ✓ For real costs claimed within the project, the documents proving the expenditure incurred and the payment made;
- ✓ Adequate documentation of all procurement procedures according to Part 4 of Manual for beneficiaries for standard projects (hereinafter Manual for beneficiaries) and implemented for selecting experts, service providers and suppliers;
- ✓ Any other supporting document applicable to each cost category as further specified in Part 4 of Manual for beneficiaries;
- ✓ Reports submitted in Jems to the national controller with the purpose of validating project expenditure;
- ✓ Documents issued by the national controller validating expenditure claimed within the project.

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.

### 1.8.1 Durability of Ownership

Requirements concerning durability shall apply to investment in infrastructure or productive investment funded within the project. This means that the beneficiary shall repay the ERDF contribution if **within 5 years of the final payment to the beneficiary or within the period of time set out in State Aid rules**, where applicable, the infrastructure or productive investment project is subject to any of the following:



- ✓ a cessation or transfer of a productive activity outside the programme area in which it received support,
- ✓ a change in ownership of an item of infrastructure which gives to a firm or a public body an undue advantage,
- ✓ a substantial change affecting its nature, objectives or implementation conditions which would result in undermining its original objectives.

### 1.8.2 Durability of project outputs and results

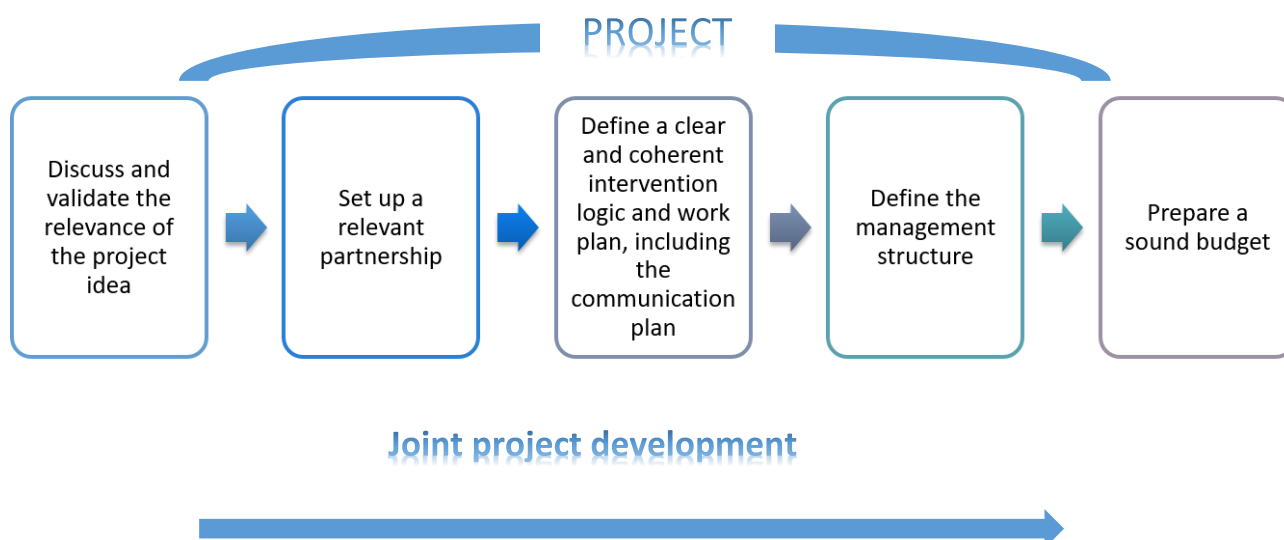
Although the project has come to an end, the aim is that the project outputs or results of the cooperation would not come to a stop. The partnership **should have planned for the durability of project outputs and results** already during the project implementation. Projects will be asked for information on how the outputs and results will be maintained. The partnership must ensure that information can be collected and will be provided upon request.

The investment owner shall carry out maintenance works on the investment during project implementation and **at least five years starting from the final payment to the project partner or within the period time set out in State Aid rules, where applicable, and shall keep records of the investments made.**

## 2 HOW TO DEVELOP A GOOD PROJECT?

The preparation of a project application is a challenging process, especially in the cooperation context. It usually starts with a first project idea, which is then further developed through the inputs of the future Project Partners and according to the programme guidance. It is therefore recommended to follow the structure of the Application Form in order to see which information is expected and not to miss out on any relevant topics. This chapter aims at helping you in preparing your Application Form. 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 1).

Figure 1 – Project development: from a project idea to the application





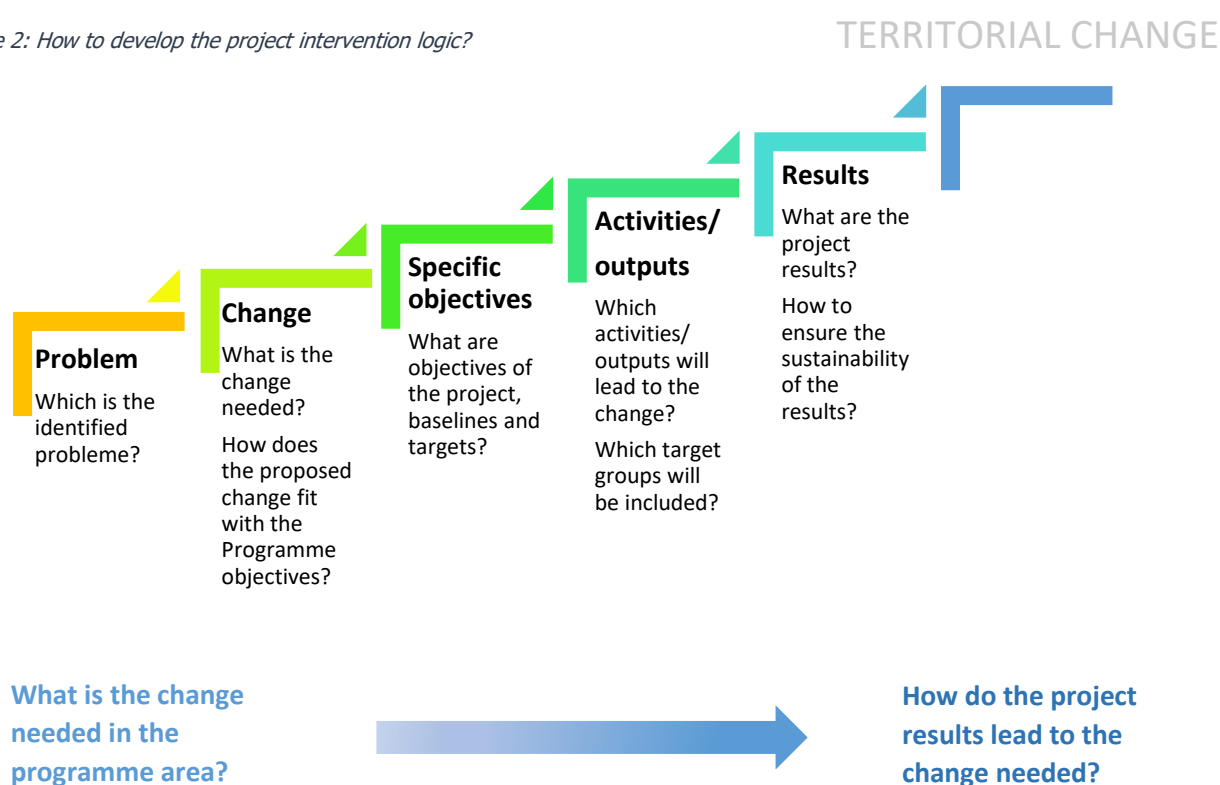
## 2.1 DEVELOPING THE PROJECT CONCEPT AND INTERVENTION LOGIC

As the programme, also the projects have to follow a clear intervention logic that reflects the current context (e.g. particular territorial challenge or need). The project intervention logic needs to show how a desired change will be achieved. It should duly reflect the current situation (e.g. the problem), its underlying causes and the change which the project seeks to achieve by implementing the planned activities. It also needs to indicate the activities needed to result in the change.

**Project partners are encouraged to use/capitalise results of already implemented projects<sup>6</sup>**, especially those supported by INTERREG (Cross-border Cooperation, transnational and interregional) in which partners were involved. Additionally, synergies with running projects leading to improved know-how transfer and project results should be investigated and in the same way incorporated in the project concept.

The following figure illustrates different components of the project development and basic questions to be addressed during the development of the project.

Figure 2: How to develop the project intervention logic?

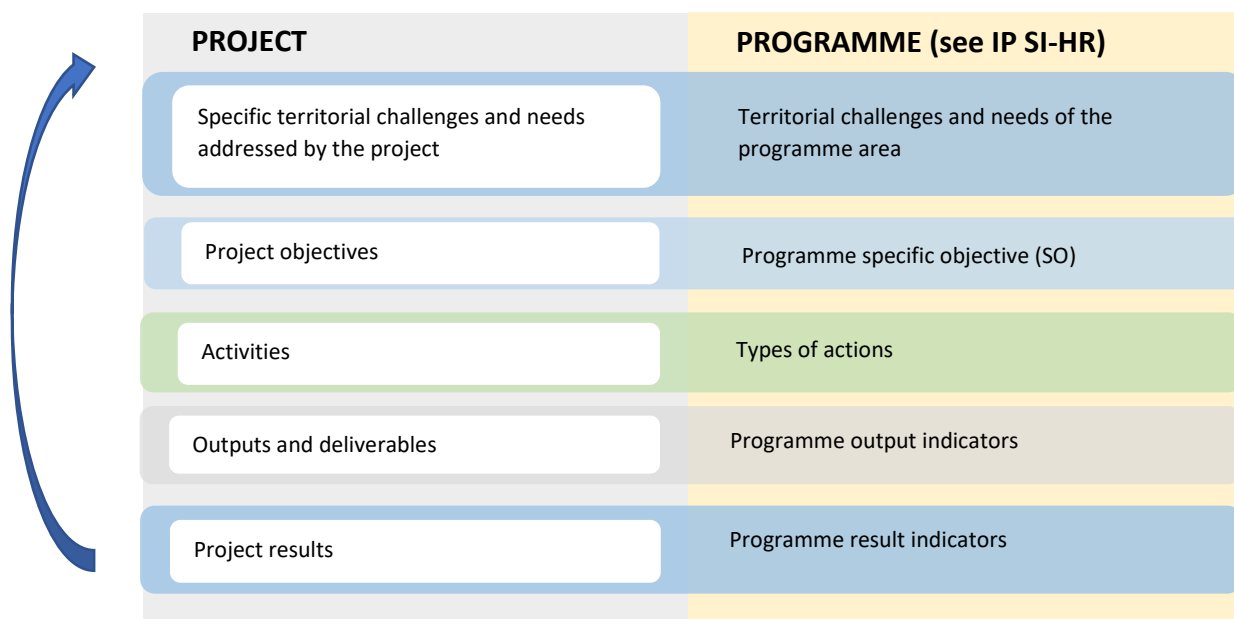


Each project needs to clearly indicate **why** it is needed, **what** cross-border common issues or challenges it will address and what change (project results) will result out of the project activities. These envisaged results have to reflect in the desired change and need to be translated into specific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

<sup>6</sup> For that purpose, project partners can in particular use output libraries developed by some Interreg programs and the EU database [www.keep.eu](http://www.keep.eu).



Figure 3: Links between the programme and project intervention logic



After the intervention logic is set in place (starting from the initial situation and ending with the envisaged change), preconditions, 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 objectives of the IP SI-HR programme.

## 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 Partners 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.
- ✓ Focus your partnership on institutions **relevant for reaching the project results** (e.g. thematically, geographically, level of governance). Apply a result-oriented approach by involving institutions who are able to realise and subsequently **implement the project outputs and results**. Ensure that they have fitting **competences** (e.g. involve environmental authorities if you work on the development of environmental policies).
- ✓ Ensure a **balanced partnership** in terms of number of institutions involved per country. Distribution of project activities, responsibilities and results should be also adequately balanced.
- ✓ Ensure that **decision makers** (e.g. ministries) are either directly (where needed) included in the partnership or can be effectively reached by the Project Partners.



- ✓ Where necessary, involve **expert organisations** (e.g. universities, research institutions) as a source of knowledge.
- ✓ Keep the **partnership size** manageable (recommended **maximum of 6 partners**). Having a broad partnership should not be the goal when preparing a project.
- ✓ Ensure the **commitment of all partners from the very beginning**.
- ✓ Institutions from **outside the programme area should only be involved in exceptional and well justified cases**. Their involvement should bring a clear benefit to the programme area and add value to the partnership.

## 2.3 DEVELOPING A SOUND PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

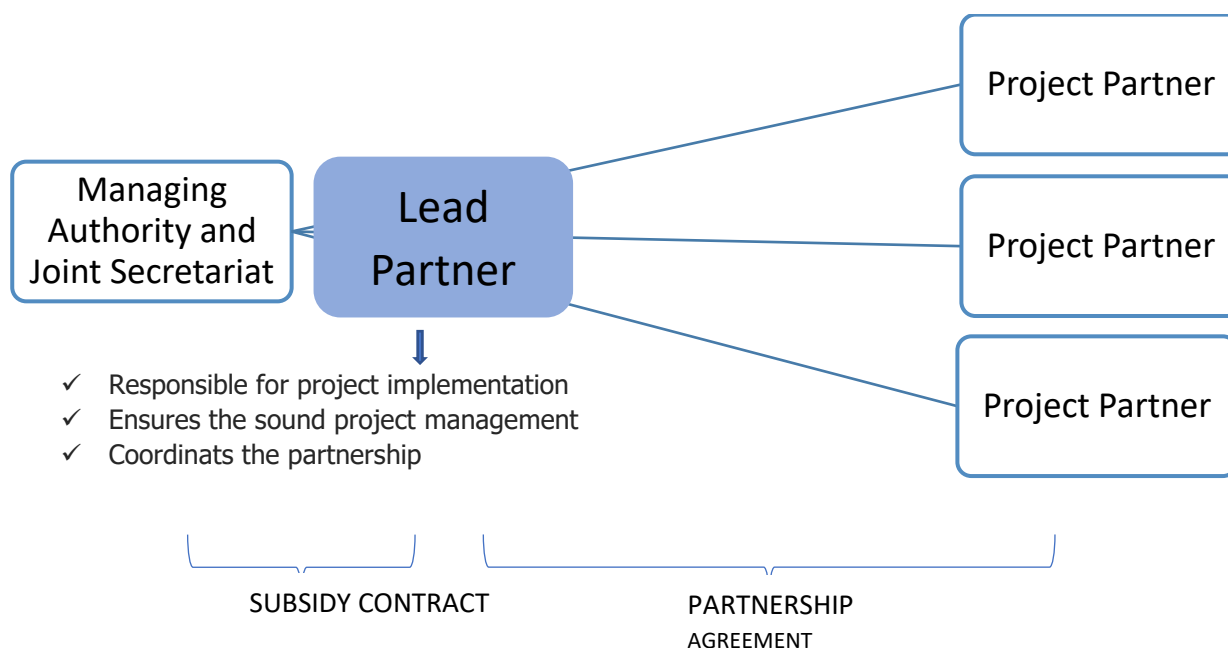
The sound project management is secured by adopting quality management tools. The partnership is governed by the **LP principle**. This means that among the partners implementing the project, one institution is appointed as LP acting as project interface with the programme (MA and JS) and is responsible for the successful implementation of the entire project. The LP is also responsible to ensure the sound project management (including internal communication among the Project Partners).

The LP takes over the role of the “engine” of the partnership, coordinating the work of the partners and being also the link between the project and the programme (JS).

On the level of the LP, as well as on the Project Partner level, it is recommended to establish the project management team comprised of the project manager, financial manager and communication manager in order to enable a good information flow and coordination.

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

Figure 4: Project management structure





## 2.4 SETTING UP RELEVANT PROJECT COMMUNICATION

Communication plays an important role in the 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 improvements aimed for by the project.

Communication activities can also contribute to the capitalisation of achieved project outputs and results and aim at their roll out into broader policies, strategies and action plans. Communication activities focused on capitalisation should address audiences/target groups that go beyond the partnership and participating regions. Already in their Application Form, 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 Application Form, therefore communication and capitalisation activities have to be integrated throughout the project work plan (see also Part 3 of the Manual for beneficiaries for standard projects (hereinafter Manual for beneficiaries), chapter 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 Part 6 of the Manual for beneficiaries.

## 2.5 DESIGNING A SOUND PROJECT BUDGET

The budget of the project must be drafted following the real cost principle<sup>7</sup>, fulfilling the principles of adequacy of costs and sound financial management (i.e. economy, efficiency and effectiveness). Accordingly, the project budget shall reflect the work plan, i.e. activities, deliverables 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 (and allocate the funds according to budget lines, work packages and reporting periods).

Concerning the allocation of budget to reporting periods, the following elements are to be taken into consideration:

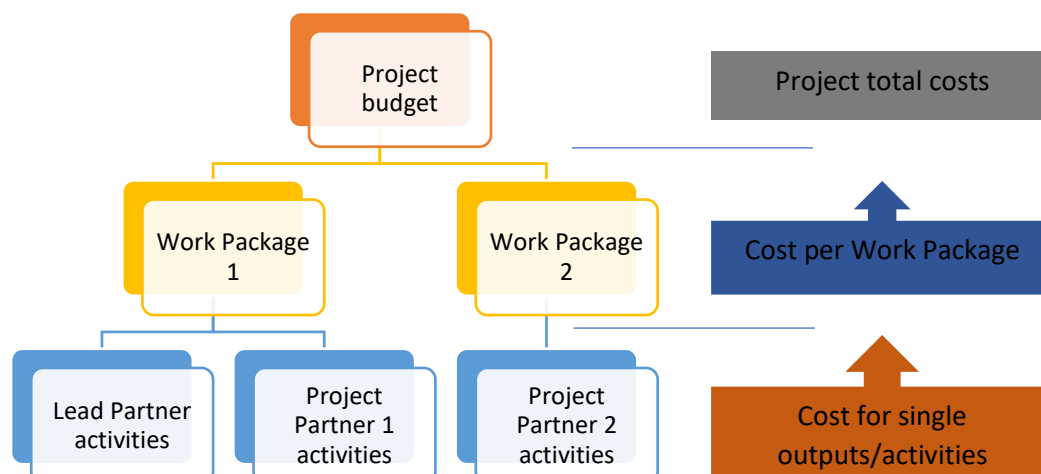
- ✓ The reporting periods run as a general rule on a six-month basis as from the project start date.
- ✓ The budget allocated to each reporting period should be an estimation of the actual payments to be done in the respective reporting period. Therefore, the budget only partly reflects the activities taking place in a certain period. Indeed, if an activity is carried out close to the end of a reporting period, the related payment may take place in the following period. The budget shall be planned realistically and not inflated.

---

<sup>7</sup> Except when simplified cost options are used for calculating costs. For further information please refer to Part 4 of the Manual for beneficiaries.



Figure 5: Project budget planning



## 2.6 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;
- ✓ 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
<p><b>Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development</b>  <b>Interreg and Financial Mechanisms Office</b>  <b>Cross-Border Programme Management Division</b>  <b>Joint Secretariat Slovenia-Croatia 2021-2027</b>  <b>Kotnikova 5, 1000 Ljubljana</b></p> <p><b>Contact:</b>  <b>e-mail: <a href="mailto:si-hr.mkrr@gov.si">si-hr.mkrr@gov.si</a></b>  <b>or by telephone +386 (0)1 400 3435</b></p>	
Representatives of Slovenia (National Authority)	
<p><b>National Authority in Slovenia</b>  <b>Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development</b>  <b>Interreg and Financial Mechanisms Office</b>  <b>Interreg Division</b>  <b>Kotnikova 5, 1000 Ljubljana</b></p>	





**Contact person: Vesna Silič**  
**e-mail: [vesna.silic@gov.si](mailto:vesna.silic@gov.si)**  
**or by telephone +386 1 400 3474**

**or Substitute Contact person: Mojca Krisch**  
**e-mail: [mojca.krisch@gov.si](mailto: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](mailto:alen.malnar@mrrfeu.hr)**  
**or by telephone: +385 (0)1 6471 272**

**or: Perica Gabrić**  
**e-mail: [perica.gabric@mrrfeu.hr](mailto: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 ideas within the partnership.