ENI CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME
POLAND-BELARUS-UKRAINE 2014-2020

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT MANUAL

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PL-BY-UA
2014-2020

Content

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AaE check	Administrative and eligibility check
BO	Branch Office
CBC	Cross-border Cooperation
CfPs	Call for Proposals
CN	Concept Note
EC	European Commission
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
FAF	Full Application Form
JTS	Joint Technical Secretariat
QA	Quality Assessment
JMC	Joint Monitoring Committee
MA	Managing Authority
NA	National Authority
PSC	Project Selection Committee
RoP	Rules of procedures
TO	Thematic objective

LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex I	Concept Note administrative and eligibility and quality assessment check grids
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EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT MANUAL

Foreword

This document is addressed to all actors involved in the evaluation of the project applications within the framework of the ENI Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020 (Programme). It will be also used as a complementary material for training the relevant actors before initiating the assessment process as well as a reference tool during their work.

Contents have been developed taking into account the relevant legal framework of the Programme.

1. Actors involved, roles and responsibilities

Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC)

In the context of the evaluation process, the main task of the JMC is to decide on the evaluation criteria for the projects and to take the final decision on projects to be approved and amount granted to them. In addition, it appoints by name the voting and non-voting members of the Project Selection Committee (PSC) and approves the specific requirements for PSC voting members and assessors.

Project Selection Committee (PSC)

The PSC is responsible for carrying out and supervising the entire evaluation and selection process. In the framework of the Programme. Unless decided otherwise, under each call for proposals there is one PSC for each Thematic Objective Opened (Heritage, Accessibility, Safety, Borders). The work of each PSC is regulated by the provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the PSC (PSC RoP) approved by the JMC.

Assessors

Working under the supervision of the PSC Secretary, the assessors assist the PSC in a confidential, fair and equitable way in the evaluation of the proposals. The tasks of the assessors shall include assessment of the applications and attached documentation on the basis of evaluation criteria which are provided in the Programme Manual Part I – Applicant applicable for the respective Call.

There are two kind of assessors in the Programme: internal and external. Employees of the JTS and Branch Offices (if needed) shall act as the internal assessors.

The external assessors shall be selected via the open call for assessors in line with the provisions of §7 and 9 of the PSC RoP. Unless decided otherwise, the external assessors shall work remotely. They may also be invited to the PSC meetings. The external assessors must be free from conflict of interest and are deemed to work in a personal capacity. Therefore, in performing the work, they do not represent any organisation and are expected to act impartially, in an independent, objective and confidential manner and apply the best of their abilities, professional skills and knowledge in accordance with the Programme Manual Part I – Applicant applicable for the respective Call and the time-schedules provided by the PSC Secretary.

The external assessors must strictly comply with the rules defined by the Programme for ensuring the impartiality and the confidentiality of the evaluation process. Therefore they:
 − Must not discuss any proposal with others, including other experts or the MA/JTS/BO/NAs staff not directly involved in the evaluation of the proposals;

- Must not communicate with applicants and partners. This includes communications related to clarifications, the announcement of the results of each evaluation phase as well as dealing with any sort of requests for information and questions raised by the applicants;
- Must not disclose the names of other assessors participating in the evaluation;
- In case of work in the JTS premises, are not allowed to take outside the JTS premises any parts of project proposals and annexes either on paper or in electronic form;
- Must immediately inform the PSC Secretary if during the assessment she/he discovers being directly or indirectly connected with a proposal to be assessed.

Assessors must be aware that failure to comply with these rules may result in exclusion from the immediate and future evaluation processes.

2. Principles applying to the evaluation and selection process

Project selection procedures shall ensure that the principles of transparency, equal treatment, non-discrimination, objectivity and fair competition are complied with. The projects shall be selected and awarded on the basis of pre-announced selection and award criteria defined in the Programme Manual Part I – Applicant published for each Call. The selection criteria serve to assess the applicant's ability to complete the proposed action. The award criteria shall be used to assess the quality of the project's proposal against the set objectives and priorities. Any conflict of interest shall be avoided. The same rules and conditions shall be applied to all applicants.

The grants shall be subject to ex ante and ex post publicity rules. At the same time, the applicants shall be informed in writing about the evaluation results. If the grant requested is not awarded, the MA shall provide the reasons for the rejection of the application with reference to the selection and award criteria that are not met by the application.

Actors involved in the evaluation declare to ensure the fulfilment of the following principles:

- **Confidentiality and secrecy** – the entire procedure, from drawing-up the CfPs to the selection of successful applicants, is confidential and secret. The PSC decisions are collective and its deliberations must remain secret. Therefore all information made available to actors involved in the evaluation process is to be treated as strictly confidential and specifically no information on the proposals submitted or the results of the assessment may be made public to any other person than applicants. Under no circumstances may a member of the PSC or the assessor attempt to contact an applicant or partner on his/her own account, either during the evaluation process or afterwards. The names of the assessors are confidential. Any documents disclosed to the PSC participants, including evaluation reports, shall be used only for the purposes directly related to the works of the PSC. All the copies of proposals and evaluation documents should be archived under secure conditions at all times. Observers are required to respect the same confidentiality obligations as other members of the PSC.

- **Objectivity, impartiality and equal treatment** – all proposals have to be assessed alike and treated impartially on their merits, following a review strictly based upon the information they contain, to be assessed in line with the criteria set up in the Programme Manual Part I – Applicant published for each Call and irrespective of where the applicant and its partners originate and their identity. Impartiality applies to PSC (both voting and non-voting) members as well as to the assessors and observers, therefore they may not assess applications submitted by institutions or individuals with whom they have a personal link. Any case of possible conflict of interest has to be reported to the PSC Secretary, so that the proposal to be assessed may be assigned to

someone else. In line with the above mentioned principles, before starting the evaluation, all PSC (both voting and non-voting) members, as well as the assessors and observers must sign a Declaration of impartiality and confidentiality (annex 2 to the PSC RoP), that must be adhered to before, during and after the evaluation. By signing this Declaration they commit themselves to strict confidentiality and impartiality concerning their tasks and they declare not to have any conflict of interest. Therefore assessors with existing or past link with any applicant must declare it and immediately withdraw from the assessment or evaluation process. Persons involved in the assessment and evaluation process should also declare not to offer their services under a sub-contract to successful project applicants that they have assessed.

- **Transparency and clarity** – the process of evaluation, described in the Programme Manual Part I - Applicant and based on a scoring and ranking system, must be strictly kept and therefore eligibility, selection and award criteria must not be changed during the evaluation process of the CfPs. Comments have to be written in an explicit and detailed manner and adequate feedback must be provided to applicants on the outcome of the evaluation.

- **Quality** – projects selected for funding must demonstrate a high technical and managerial quality and must help in making a contribution to achieving the objectives of the Programme and those set out for each thematic objective and priority. Key features of a high quality ENI CBC project are: cross-border impact, cross-border partnership and common benefits. The selected projects should clearly demonstrate compliance with these criteria.

- **Efficiency and speed** – the procedures should be designed to be as rapid as possible, commensurate with maintaining the quality of the evaluation and respecting the legal framework of the Programme.

- **Traceability** – the overall evaluation process should be documented and recorded in the evaluation reports. These documents should be kept for five years after payment of the balance for the Programme (Art. 70 of the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 897/2014).

3. Evaluation process

The evaluation process depends on the nature of the call:

1) Restricted call for regular projects

The project evaluation and selection procedure consists of two stages. First the submitted CNs are subject to a general AaE check and QA carried out in accordance with the criteria set up in this Manual and Programme Manual Part I – Applicant published for each CfPs by the JTS employees acting as internal assessors. Basing on the results of this assessment the PSC approves the list of the positively assessed CNs which are invited to submit FAF.
During the second stage, the FAF undergo the full AaE check. It is performed by the JTS and/or BOs experts. Subsequently, for FAFs which met previous criteria, the QA is carried out by the JTS assessors and/or external assessors (if PSC Chairperson decides to engaged them). The objective of the QA is to obtain a list of proposals recommended for funding for each of the thematic objective of the Programme within a call ranked according to the scores attributed to them.

2) Open call for regular projects

The JMC may decide to shorten the application process to call for FAF only – in this scenario the CN stage is omitted, the evaluation of FAFs is conducted similarly as in the restricted call described above.

3) Open call for projects with small budget

Process alike in case of no 2) with some simplifications envisaged. Both, the AaE check and QA is entrusted to the JTS. The detailed procedures and process of the selection will be described in the Programme Manual Part I – Applicant applicable to the Call for PSBs.

4. How to evaluate?

How to give scores?[1]

The QA is carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the Programme Manual Part I – Applicant which is applicable to the respective call. The maximum score the application can obtain is 100 points.

Each FAF shall be assessed by 1 internal assessor (JTS employee) and 1 external assessor. 2 independent evaluation grids shall be prepared for each application.

The minimum score the application has to achieve in order to be taken into consideration for possible financing is 70 points. In addition, each project to be taken into consideration for possible financing has to achieve at least 60% from each of the parts of the quality assessment, i.e. at least 36 points from the strategic assessment and at least 24 points from the operational assessment.

The FAF evaluation grid is divided into sections and sub-sections. For each sub-section there is information about the maximum score which may be given for the relevant sub-section and each bullet point (if sub-section is divided into bullet points). Depending on the importance of the specific issue from the Programme point of view, the maximum score possible to be attributed varies for each bullet point/sub-section. In case where the maximum possible score to be obtained is 5 the point shall be understood as follows:

0	Zero	Information provided in FAF is not relevant at all or information is not provided.
1	Very poor	Information provided in FAF is incomplete, not clear or not convincing for the evaluation criterion being assessed.
2	Poor	The weaknesses are more important than strengths and there are no specific aspects which single out the proposal from others.
3	Adequate	The proposal demonstrates overall adequate features with regards to the evaluation criterion towards which it is being assessed even though it may contain some notable weaknesses.
4	Good	The proposal has clearly identifiable features which demonstrate that it is of good quality with regards to the criterion towards which it is being assessed.
5	Very good	The content of the proposal assessed cannot be improved with regards to the

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[1] Information in this chapter relates to the 1st CfP and FAFs assessment. Some differences in particular aspects (like number of total points, etc.) in relation to the assessment in the subsequent call(s) may be presented in the respective Programme Manual Part I – Applicant published for each of them.

		evaluation criterion towards which it is being assessed.	

The assessors are obliged to give the score for each bullet point/sub-section. In case of bullet point with a maximum score making 1, 2, 3 or 4 point the scores shall be attributed by the assessors according to the completeness and relevance of information provided by the applicant and following the spirit of evaluation described above, i.e. the highest possible score may be only attributed if the content of the proposal assessed cannot be improved with regards to the evaluation criterion towards which it is being assessed. Decimal scores (e.g. 2,5) may not be attributed.

How to formulate comments and recommendations?

The assessors are obliged to provide the explanation of the scores awarded in each sub-section of the evaluation grid, if relevant. The assessors shall strictly use the evaluation grid provided to them. They are expected to assess applications in a highly professional manner and objectively and they must be conscious that their comments and arguments for or against a proposal will constitute the basis for the approval or rejection of the application.

Scores shall be attributed according to the schemes set out in the Programme Manual Part I – Applicant applicable for the respective Call. Assessors will justify their scores with clear, objective and relevant comments for each section. The assessors should focus on points that they consider to be extremely positive or negative in answer to the questions of the evaluation grid.

Assessors should be aware that comments serve:
- as inputs to the PSC deliberations to take the decision to recommend or reject the project. When using value statements, such as "excellent", "adequate" or "weak", assessors should always provide clear evidence explaining on which aspect this conclusion is based;
- to provide feedback to applicants in order to help them to improve their proposals in an eventual later call by clarifying the reason(s) for the proposal's failure. They should always be formulated in a clear but diplomatic and constructive way and must be based on facts in order to minimize possibilities of contestation. In particular, for scores below the eliminating thresholds it is essential to provide a clear justification for the corresponding recommended rejection;
- as inputs to the MA/JTS to understand on which aspects to insist more when providing information to potential applicants in order to strengthen quality of the proposals in the future.

Comments and scores must be coherent and consistent. Therefore a high score combined with critical or negative comments or a low score accompanied by positive comments would be incomprehensible and rather confusing for the PSC to appreciate. The PSC Secretary supervising the work done by the assessors shall ensure coherence and possibly request a re-assessment.

Assessors can give recommendations to the project proposals . Such recommendations should be clearly indicated in their comments and will be the subject of the PSC deliberations.

Recommendations may concern, among others:
- excluding certain elements (equipment, activities) which are not relevant to the achievement of the project objectives;
- budget reductions (overall or for certain budget lines), because the proposed budget is unrealistic or inefficient;
- cutting ineligible expenditure;

- modifying the proposed schedule of the projects (if activities can be implemented in a shorter time or may require a longer period);
- involving additional stakeholders if the partnership in the poject can be improved.

Assessors will make final conclusions on each application in the "COMMENTS" section the end of each evaluation grid. They will consist of a short critical analysis of the proposal, followed by a list of the main strong and weak points for each section of the evaluation grid. They will also contain concrete and objective reasons for the pre-selection or the rejection of a given proposal and they must be coherent with the final score and justify it in a relevant way. If specific recommendations for a project proposal were given by the assessor, they should also be included in this section. The conclusions and recommendations must be formulated in a clear and concise way so that they may be presented to the PSC and applicants.

How to understand the assessment criteria?[2]

1. Strategic assessment criteria		
Assessment questions	**Aspects to be assessed**	**Specific questions which shall be considered by assessors**
1. Project's context (relevance and strategy) *How well is a need for the project justified?*	a) The problems and needs that justify the necessity of the project implementation are precisely defined and described	Assessed by the JTS only. Scoring e gained during CN assessment is automatically transferred to the FAF assessment (same question). No possibility to change the assessed information in FAF. – Does the project clearly identify the problems and needs for partners in each country? Are these challenges and opportunities common and cross-border? – Is the situation of each partner (in terms of defined problems) similar and comparable? – How real is the demand for the project? – To what extent does the project make use of the available knowledge and build on existing results and practices? – Is the point of view of the project target groups / final beneficiaries reflected in the presented needs analysis?
	b) The project proposal: ▪ is relevant to the particular identified problems/needs ▪ is relevant to particular constraints of the target regions ▪ is likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups	– How clear is the connection between the problem and solution suggested in FAF? – Is the project a concrete contribution to the solution of the problem? – Is the solution proposed by the beneficiary reasonable or there might be other more effective option which could have been proposed in the FAF? Is the solution proposed innovative? – Is the entire project and its activities devoted to the solution of the identified problems/needs? – Does the project take into account the constraints of the area covered by the proposal? – To what extent the target group profit from the project? Is its impact supposed to be substantial for the defined target groups on both/three sides of the border? Please refer to their perspective on the situation tackled (if analyzed in the description). Shall the benefits for target groups be tangible on both sides of the border in a balanced way? – Does the foreseen impact on the target groups/final beneficiaries relate also to the persons with disabilities? Will they be able to equally benefit on the project?

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[2] As above - the form of the assessment grid used in this Manual applies to the 1st CfP. It may be changed in the subsequent CfPs, particularly in case of a Call for PSBs. The evaluation grids applicable to the subsequent call(s) will be published in respective Programme Manual Part I – Applicant.

		– Will the project impact only the project participants or perhaps also for the wider scope of beneficiaries?
	c) The project demonstrates added value to implementation of the Programme strategy and relevant national/regional strategies	– How precise is the coherence of the project with the Programme strategy and with other relevant national or regional strategies? – Does the beneficiary refer to national/regional strategies covering all target regions (both/three countries, all regions targeted by the project)? – Is there any reference to specific points/objectives/assumptions of these documents?
	d) The project is relevant to the: ▪ particular TO (2 points) ▪ priority (2 points) ▪ (including also specific added value elements, such as promotion of gender equality, human rights, democracy, environmental sustainability, struggle against HIV/AIDS, where relevant) (1 point)	Assessed by the JTS only. Scoring gained during CN assessment is automatically transferred to the FAF assessment (same question). No possibility to change the assessed information in FAF. – How coherent is the project in terms of its objectives and activities and the selected thematic objective? – How relevant is the project, its objectives and activities, for the selected priority? – Does the project positively contribute to the programme horizontal principles in terms of gender equality, human rights, democracy, environmental sustainability, HIV/AIDS countermeasures? How reliable and feasible its declared contributions is?

2. Cooperation character
 	
What added value does the cooperation bring?
	The project contributes to the strengthening of cross-border cooperation:
	▪ the results benefit both/three sides of the border
	▪ there is a clear benefit from cooperating in the proposed project partnership (results cannot be fully achieved without cooperation in proposed partnership)
	▪ the project creates the basis to develop cross-border cooperation
	▪ partners share their experience, methods, models, data, ideas, know-how, knowledge etc.
		Assessed by the JTS only. Scoring gained during CN assessment is automatically transferred to the FAF assessment (same question). No possibility to change the assessed information in FAF.
		– Is the importance of the cross-border approach to the issue addressed clearly demonstrated?
		– To what extent can the planned results be achieved without cbc cooperation?
		– Is there a clear benefit from cooperating for:
		  • all of the project partners,
		  • target group(s),
		  • the programme area?
		– How does the project demonstrate implementation of the new solutions that go beyond the existing practice in the sector/programme area/participating countries? To what extent do the partners share their experience and knowledge?
		– Are there provisions in the project regarding plans to develop the established cooperation and the created outputs beyond the project? How feasible are they?

3. Project's contribution to the Programme's expected results and outputs *To what extent will the project contribute to the achievement of Programme's objectives?*	a) The project's implementation will contribute to the achievement of the Programme output and result indicators ***Note:*** a score 5 (very good) may only be allocated if the project includes at least one output indicator presented in the JOP – point 3.1.6 "Programme Indicators".	– Will the project contribute to achievement of the result indicator relevant for selected priority? – Will the project contribute to achievement of the output indicators given in the Joint Operational Programme? – If so, to what extent will the project help the Programme to reach the values estimated in the JOP? – Will the project contribute to achievement of other output indicators given in the full list of indicators (annex 8 to the Programme Manual – Part I)? – Are there any risks for the indicators achievement, and if so, are these properly described?
	b) The project indicators have been properly chosen	– How correctly are the values of output and result indicators measured? Are the provided values realistic or over-/ underestimated? Is the calculation method as well as sources and means of verification for each indicator provided? Are they clear, reliable and adequate to the selected indicator? – Is it justified and proved that the estimated value of output and result indicators shall be really achieved? – Shall the activities planned in the project really result in the selected output indicators? Are these values in line with activities

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		presented by the beneficiary? − How coherent is the logic of applied indicators – are the selected indicators related with project activities with each other?
4. Partnership relevance *To what extent is the partnership composition relevant for the proposed project?*	a) The project involves the relevant partners needed to implement the project	− Are the partners competent enough to ensure the appropriate implementation of the project in the suggested scope? − Is there a clear description of particular experience, capacity, know-how of each of the involved beneficiaries to achieve the expected results? − Do they possess the authority required to make sure that the activities shall bring the forecasted results? − Is the composition of partnership relevant in terms of project location? Is it wide enough to ensure that project reaches the target group without any support needed from other entities? − If partners from the outside of the Programme area are involved – are they necessary to achieve the project's results? How important/unique is their role/responsibilities? Is it possible to implement the project with institutions from the eligible area only?
	b) All partners play a defined role in the partnership and get a real benefit from it	− Is the distribution of tasks between partners properly defined? − How clear is the description of tasks given to the concrete partners? − Has it been proved that each of the partners will get real benefits from the project? How has it been justified and explained? Has it been proved with some specific and concrete data or figures? − Are these benefits reliable and reasonable in terms of each partner?
	c) The roles have been assigned to specific partners according to the organizations' competences	− To what extent is the partnership composition necessary to achieve the forecasted results? − Are the partners appointed to the roles which are coherent with their so-far experience and background? − Is the statutory goal of the partners coherent with the planned theme of the projects and activities?

2. Operational assessment criteria		
Assessment questions	**Aspects to be assessed → To what extent does the project…**	**Specific questions which shall be considered by assessors**
1. Management *To what extent are management structures and procedures in line with the project size, duration and needs?*	a) The lead beneficiary and other beneficiaries have sufficient experience on project management	− How clear is the project management structure and management team description? − Does the project management structure represent all the partners? Does it represent the project target groups? − Is the management structure and management team and its procedures appropriate to the scope of suggested activities? Shall the project management be able to ensure the appropriate implementation of activities on both sides of the border? − To what extent are the project management procedures (such as reporting and evaluation procedures in the area of finance, project content, communication) clear, transparent, efficient and effective? − Are the necessary provisions for risk and quality management in place? − Do all of the partners possess sufficient experience in implementation of projects of similar size of the budget? − Have the partners implemented before the projects financed by EU (preferably within the cross-border cooperation)?
	b) The lead beneficiary and other beneficiaries demonstrate sufficient technical expertise and	− Do all of the partners possess sufficient technical expertise in implementation of projects of similar theme? − Has it been justified why the selected organisation was

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	management capacity, including staff, equipment, knowledge and ability to handle the budget of the project	appointed as the lead beneficiary? Has it been sufficiently explained what were the reasons behind and what were the advantages of such decision? − Does the lead beneficiary really possess the competences required to play the appointed role? − Are the administrative capacities of the lead beneficiary and all partners sufficient to ensure the smooth implementation of the project – is the office and equipment appropriate to manage the project? − Both in terms of project management and content-wise activities – what is the know-how of the lead beneficiary? Is the appropriate staff already employed by the lead beneficiary or shall it be only selected and employed? Are there any risks not to launch the project on time as scheduled in the application? − What are the administrative capacities of the partners – are there any doubts whether they shall be really able to handle the project?

	c) How satisfactory is the level of involvement and activities of the cross-border beneficiaries, whether the project: was jointly prepared/will be jointly implemented/will have shared staff/will be jointly financed.	− Is the obligatory joint project preparation sufficiently ensured:
		  o Did all partners contribute to the creation of a project concept? How clearly has it been described?
		  o Did all partners have a chance to determine how the project is to be managed and implemented? Has it been sufficiently justified and proved with information on meetings, consultations, joint researches, etc.?
		  o To what extent does the information in other parts of the application prove the intensity and quality of joint project preparation?
		  o Did each of the partners define what knowledge and experience may be involved and what are partner's expectations of project realization?
		  o Did the partners consult the project idea with the target groups and other relevant organisations in their regions in order to best address their needs?
		
		- Is the obligatory joint project implementation sufficiently ensured:
		  o Is the lead beneficiary going to be responsible for the implementation of the entire project?
		  o Shall the beneficiaries assume responsibility for parts of the project implementation? Shall each beneficiary ensure the coordination and implementation of his part of the project?
		  o Are the roles of beneficiaries complementary?
		  o Shall the beneficiaries from both / three sides of the border be responsible for implementation of activities and achievement of forecasted outputs and results?
		  o Shall all partners have equal decision making rights in terms of project implementation?
		  o Is the communication between partners planned in a way which proves the joint implementation of the project?
		
		- Is the joint project staff sufficiently ensured (optional):
		  o Shall all project beneficiaries take over some roles in the project and engage staff for this purpose?
		  o Shall the employees of beneficiaries coordinate their tasks among themselves and exchange information on a regularly basis?
		  o Shall the unnecessary duplication of functions in partner institutions be avoided?
		
		- Is the joint project financing sufficiently ensured (optional):
		  o Does the project have a joint financial plan?
		  o Shall at least one Polish and at least one Belarusian and/or Ukrainian beneficiary contribute to the financial

		plan through their own contributions? Shall such contribution be comparable to its share in the budget? o How much is the budget balanced? In case the distribution between partners is not equal, is it justified with the common interest of the partners and project?
2. Communication *To what extent are communication activities appropriate and forceful to reach the relevant target groups and stakeholders?*	The project information and communication plan is appropriate to achieve project communication goals	− How detailed is the information and communication plan? − Is the communication plan feasible? − Are the communication tools appropriate and reasonable in terms of the scope of forecasted activities? Will they promote the project in a way that will ensure reaching the public opinion with the information about the project, Programme and the EU? − Are there any innovative methods of information and promotion of the project planned? − Will the communication activities be equally conducted on both / three sides of the border? − Are the communication activities in line with the Programme requirements? − Will the information about the project reach the relevant target groups and stakeholders? − Will the communication activities promote not only the project itself but also the Programme and the EU?
3. Work plan *To what extent is the work plan realistic, consistent and coherent?*	a) The overall design of the project is coherent, it clearly presents the proposed activities, results and objectives. The intervention logic and project plan are clear and feasible. If applicable: to what extent is the brief feasibility study is realistic and consistent and coherent with the project activities?	− What is the quality of the project design? Is it coherent and justified in terms of the activities planned? − How clearly have the project activities been described? − Are the project activities feasible in the given legal and social background of the partners? − Will the partners themselves be able to implement all the suggested activities? − To what extent is the work plan consistent and coherent? − Are the suggested activities logically resulting in the subsequent parts of the project? − If applicable: what is the quality of the attached (brief) feasibility study? Is it coherent with the project activities?
	b) Proposed activities and deliverables are appropriate, practical and consistent with the objectives and expected results c) Activities outside the Programme area clearly benefit the Programme area (if applicable)	− Are the suggested project activities consistent with the defined overall and specific objectives? − Are the suggested project activities consistent with the planned outputs and results? − Are there any activities planned to be implemented outside the Programme area? − Shall these activities bring real benefit to the Programme area?
	d) The time schedule is realistic (contingency included)	− Is the project ready for implementation? − Do the activities require any permission? If so, how do they determine the project implementation? Are they attached to the application? − Shall the suggested project activities be ex-ante consulted with wider audience? − Is it feasible to implement the forecasted activities in the given timeframe? Is there an appropriate contingency included? − Are there any risks defined in the application which can lead to possible delays? − Are there any mitigation measures described?
4. Budget *To what extent does the*	a) Sufficient and reasonable resources are planned to ensure project implementation (both the lead beneficiary and other	− What are the sources of funding the lead beneficiary? Does it have sufficient resources to ensure smooth implementation of the project?

project budget demonstrate value for money? To what extent is the budget coherent and proportionate?	beneficiaries who financially contribute to the project have stable and sufficient sources of financing)	− To what extent are other partners (with financial contribution) reliable in terms of financial capacities? − Do they possess stable and sure sources of own financing which shall allow them to contribute 10 per cent of the budget? − Is the value of the budget proportionate to the annual turnover of the partners? − In terms of private organisations – has it been explained how shall the grant be secured?
	b) Project budget is proportionate to the proposed work plan and the main outputs and results aimed for (the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results is satisfactory)	− To what extent is the budget coherent and adequate to the scope of proposed activities? − To what extent are the expenditures justified in terms of the forecasted outputs and results (value for money)? − Are there any expenditures to be incurred outside the Programme area? If so, are these expenditures in line with the Programme requirements? − Are there any expenditures to be incurred by the partners registered outside the Programme area? If so, are these expenditures in line with the Programme requirements? − Are the partners planning to use the simplified cost options (preparation of strong partnership/staff costs/administrative costs)? If so, are they correctly indicated and, if applicable, justified?
	c) Total partner budgets reflect partners' actual involvement in the project (are balanced and realistic). The planned project financing (financial flows) ensures its stable implementation. It refers to the payment options that may be used by the project.	− What is the quality of the project financial plan? − Is it relevant to the forecasted work programme? − Are the financial flows in the project related with the payment of the advance payment? − Shall the partners be able to ensure smooth and continuous implementation of the project?
	d) The budget is transparent and adequately related to the planned activities	− To what extent are the specific budget lines transparent? − Are the suggested expenditures really necessary to implement the forecasted activities? − Are all of the expenditures eligible in terms of the Programme requirements? − To what extent are the forecasted expenditures in line with the market prices? Shall it be anyhow possible to reduce the suggested level of expenses? − Are all the infrastructure-related expenditures connected with works to be done in the Programme area? Are all investments to be done in the Programme area? − Are all the applicable thresholds observed? − Are there any risks that some of the planned expenditures may be covered from other sources? − Shall there be any income generated in the project? − If applicable, is the flat rate for administrative costs calculated correctly and efficiently?
5. Sustainability	a) Project is likely to have a long-lasting impact on its target groups. The project main outputs will be further used once the project has ended. b) Project is likely to have multiplier effects (including scope for replication and extension of the outcome of the project and dissemination of information)	− How detailed and how realistic is the description of the project sustainability provided in the application? − Is the provided description related to the partners on both / three sides of the border? − To what extent shall the project outcomes be durable and shall have a long-lasting impact on the Programme area and the project target groups? − How wide (territorial, subject, object-wise) is the possible group of future users of the project results? − Can it be assumed that the partners will continue their cooperation after the project ends? Shall this cooperation lead

		to further development of the elaborated outcomes? − How likely is it that the project outcomes may be used in the other fields (multiplier effect)?

	c) The expected results of the proposed project are sustainable in relation to:
	 ▪ financial sustainability (there are sources of revenue for covering all future operating and maintenance costs during the period of project results sustainability, for financing of follow-up activities etc.)
	 ▪ institutional level (there are structures that would allow the results of the project to be continued after the end of the action - local "ownership" of the project results
	 ▪ environmental sustainability (there are conditions put in place to avoid negative effects on natural resources on which the project depends and on the broader natural environment).
		− How clearly has it been described what is the financial sustainability of the project?
		   o Has it been indicated who shall finance the maintenance of the project outcomes after the project ends?
		   o Has it been indicated from which sources shall the project outcomes be maintained after the project ends?
		   o How realistic these plans are?
		   o Are these plans elaborated in relation to the outcomes on both/three sides of the border?
		
		 − How clearly has it been described what is the institutional sustainability of the project?
		   o Has it been precisely indicated who shall be responsible for the maintenance of the project outcomes after the project ends?
		   o Are there already structures ready to take responsibility for the project outcomes?
		   o How realistic these plans are?
		   o Are these plans elaborated in relation to the outcomes on both / three sides of the border?
		   o Are there any plans to transfer the ownership of the project results? If so, how justified they are?
		   o In terms of any investment project or project with infrastructural component – how realistic are the plans to ensure the sustainability of results for the period of at least 5 years?
		
		 − To what extent has it been proved that future use of project results shall bring no negative effects on the environment?