

INTERREG IPA II CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME "GREECE – ALBANIA 2014-2020"

1st JOINT MONITORING COMMITTEE MEETING

**10th November 2015
Sheraton Tirana Hotel
Tirana, Albania**

Brief Minutes & Decisions

The Joint Monitoring Committee (hereinafter referred to as JMC) of the Interreg IPA II Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Greece-Albania 2014-2020" convened for its 1st Joint Monitoring Committee Meeting on November 10th, 2015 in Tirana, Albania, following an invitation by the Hellenic Managing Authority of European Territorial Cooperation Programmes (hereinafter MA of ETCP), in agreement with the co-chairs.

Mrs Daniela Cekani, Secretary General of the Ministry of European Integration (MEI), who is chair of the Committee, welcomed the participants, wished a fruitful 1st Joint Monitoring Committee Meeting and stressed the importance of the new Programme 2014-2020.

The chair then passed the floor to Ms Dominic Zaralidou, Legal Advisor to the Special Secretary of ERDF & CF funded sectoral Ops, Ministry of Economy, Development & Tourism, who substitutes Ms Evgenia Fotoniata Special Secretary of ERDF & CF funded sectoral Ops, Ministry of Economy, Development & Tourism of the Committee, as co-chair. Ms Zaralidou welcomed the participants and wished a successful meeting.

The floor was then passed to Mr Emmanuel, Head of the Managing Authority who welcomed the participants and described the procedure which was followed until the Interreg IPA II Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Greece-Albania 2014-2020" was approved by the European Commission on the 30-07-2015, C(2015) 5482. The Head of MA informed the JMC that the goals of the current Programme 2007-2013 were achieved under the conditions of the JMC members consensus procedure, the close cooperation with DG Regio and the JTS and MA contribution: securing the EU funds, the sound financial management of the Programme and the productive implementation for the first time of the Strategic Call.

The target for the next programme period is the timely activation of the CP by the end of 2015 with the approval of the 1st and 2nd Call for Project Proposals having assured the integrity of the Calls documents, the objective proposal evaluation and the timely transfer and establishment of the JTS in the new Programming period.

The chair asked the members to present themselves. All members (with and without voting right) presented themselves and wished a successful meeting.

The chair confirmed that quorum was achieved, requested that the draft agenda is adopted and opened the 1st Joint Monitoring Committee Meeting.

The Chair then passed the floor to Ms Katia Sagona, Head of Unit B2 of the MA, who presented the Rules of Procedure of the Joint Monitoring Committee.

Mr Gentian Xhaxhiu mentioned the establishment of a Committee for Complaints, and Ms Sagona clarified that this Complaint Committee is foreseen by the Programme and it will be established in the near future.

Mr Xhaxhiu asked clarification about the number of members necessary in order to achieve the quorum of JMC. It was agreed that quorum is achieved by 6 members from each side. Mr Xhaxhiu also referred to point 7.7 regarding

the number of days necessary before the JMC members may make proposals for amendments to the agenda in the exceptional cases. It was agreed that for exceptional cases 7 calendar days would be enough.

Ms Kalaboka, representative of the Region of Epirus, suggested some changes in the Rules of Procedure, as follows: point 4.6 "the number of days before a JMC member who is not in a position to participate in a meeting may be replaced" should change from 10 to 6 days.

The Rules of Procedure were approved in principle and the text will be amended accordingly.

Ms Kalaboka suggested that the Terms of Reference of the Call for the recruitment procedure of the JS staff are approved by the JMC.

The Chair then requested that all JMC members sign the Declaration of Impartiality.

The floor was then passed to Mr Vassilis Charitantis from Unit B2 of the MA, who presented the general framework of the Interreg IPA II CBC Programme 'Greece-Albania 2014-2020'.

The floor was then passed to Mr George Papadopoulos, JTS Coordinator of the Greece-Albania 2007-2013 Programme, who presented the 1st Call for Strategic Project Proposals package of the Interreg IPA II CBC Programme "Greece-Albania 2014-2020" (Programme and Project Manual, Evaluation Methodology and Project Selection Criteria).

Some corrections were suggested by Mr Xhaxhiu

1. the Managing Authority must be added in the point which mentioned that the financing Agreement is signed by the European Commission.
2. a column with the national (public/owned) contribution should be added in the table with the contributions.
3. the operational programme must change to cooperation programme.
4. Add text after the word 'demonstrate' on the concept note
5. To check if FIF is necessary to include in the package
6. The word 'shall be' will be changed to 'can be'
7. Regarding "the total funding per country does not exceed 70% of the total project budget" Mr Xhaxhiu suggested that the percentage should be 60-40 instead of 70-30. Discussion followed and the members expressed their opinions. Mr Csaba HENDE, Desk Officer of the Programme at DG Regio of the European Commission suggested that the decision should not depend on numbers, and projects can be viewed based on balance. Ms Zaralidou suggested the percentage of 65%-35% but this was not accepted by the Albanian side. A second suggestion was made by the Greek side that the whole paragraph with the percentages 70%-30% to be deleted. This was not accepted by the Albanian side with the argument that the concept of "balance" might be subject of interpretation and understanding insisting on the division 60%-40% as it used to be during the last Strategic Call under IPA I Programme.

Consequently as consensus was not reached, decision was made that members reconsider the issue and a written procedure is launched in the next days.

Mr Detsikas, representative of the Greek Union of Regions requested that the Decentralized Administrations do not participate as potential Lead Beneficiaries. The MA replied that according to the Strategic Call potential Lead Beneficiaries should be bodies which are policy makers and the Decentralized Administrations are such bodies.

The floor was then passed to Ms Victoria Sterjo and Ms Katerina Tsamouri, Project Officers of the Greece-Albania 2007-2013 Programme, who presented the 2nd Call for Ordinary Project Proposals package of the Interreg IPA II CBC Programme "Greece-Albania 2014-2020" (Programme and Project Manual, Evaluation Methodology and Project Selection Criteria). The Call will be approved via written procedure.

Mr Hende informed the Committee that the Regulation has been amended and the eligibility of expenses is extended to the end of 2023.

Ms Zarkopoulou of the Special Service for Strategy, Planning & Evaluation of Development Programmes who suggested that the criterion regarding the Relevance and Strategy and the sub-criterion about the horizontal principles to be moved to the Administrative Criterion (on/off) and to be rephrased in order to include the accessibility of the people with disabilities.

The floor was then passed to Ms Anastasia Brozou, Unit D of the MA, who presented the Technical Assistance Multiannual Budget Plan of the Interreg IPA II CBC Programme "Greece-Albania 2014-2020". The Technical Assistance Multiannual Budget Plan was then approved by the JMC members.

The floor was then passed to Mr Charitantis, who presented the proposal to give authorization to JTS 2007-2013 to activate the Interreg IPA II Cross-border Cooperation Programme "Greece - Albania 2014 - 2020".

The floor was then passed to Ms Anna Papanikolaou, Administrative Assistant of the Greece-Albania 2007-2013 Programme, who presented the Communication Plan of the Interreg IPA II CBC Programme "Greece-Albania 2014-2020". The Communication Plan was then approved by the JMC members. Mr Hende mentioned that the Communication Plan is the full responsibility of the JMC. The authorisation was given by the JMC members.

Ms Zarkopoulou mentioned that the JMC is responsible for the approval of the Evaluation Plan of the Programme. The MA has prepared the draft plan and will present it by July 2016, which is the deadline for submission.

The floor was then passed again to Mr Charitantis, who presented the key elements of the new Management and Control System.

The floor was then passed to Ms Anastasia Brozou, from Unit D of the MA, who presented the basic principles of the Management Information System (MIS) for the Programming Period 2014-2020.

Finally the floor was passed to Ms Sagona, who presented the timeline of future actions.

Following the discussions, the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) decides unanimously:

- Approved the Rules of Procedure of the Joint Monitoring Committee
- Decided to launch written procedures on the application package of the 1st and 2nd Call for Strategic Projects Proposals with the correction suggested
- Approved the Communication Plan of the Interreg IPA II Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Greece-Albania 2014-2020"
- Approved the Technical Assistance Multiannual Budget Plan of the Interreg IPA II Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Greece-Albania 2014-2020"
- To give authorization to the JTS 2007-2013 to provide the necessary legal and administrative actions for the activation of the Interreg IPA II Cross-border Cooperation Programme "Greece - Albania 2014 - 2020" (launching of the Calls, preparation of the necessary documents, evaluation of the proposals, implementation of the projects, etc).
- The JMC 2014-2020 suggests to give the authorization to JTS 2007-2013 to act as JS 2014-2020 for the new Programming Period 2014-2020 until the end of 2016.

At the end of JMC meeting, Brief Minutes and Decisions were drafted by the MA/JTS and the Chairperson read them out to all JMC members to comment.

Finally, the document was signed by the two co-chairpersons.

**The Co-Chairpersons
of the Joint Monitoring Committee**

Chair
Ms Daniela Cekani

Co-chair
Ms Dominic Zaralidou

Secretary General
Ministry of European Integration

Legal Advisor to the Special Secretary
for ERDF & CF
Ministry of Economy, Development &
Tourism

Attachments:

1. Agenda of the 1st Joint Monitoring Committee Meeting
2. Participant's list of the 1st Joint Monitoring Committee Meeting