



CENTRAL BALTIC
INTERREG IV A
PROGRAMME
2007-2013

6th Call for Proposals Selection Criteria

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Approved by the Programme's Monitoring Committee on 23 March 2011



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1. Admissibility check

All project applications must pass the admissibility check to enter into the quality assessment and the application can either fulfil the selection criteria or not (yes/no). In the latter case, if one of the admissibility check questions is answered with “no”, the application will not pass the technical admissibility check and hence not move on to the content assessment. Though, before coming to this conclusion, the Joint Technical Secretariat is authorised to ask from the project’s Lead Partner for clarifications and missing information respectively documents within a short deadline of 5 working days. The details of this possibility for clarification are laid down in the Programme Manual approved by the Monitoring Committee. Detailed information on the reasons for failing in the admissibility check will be presented to the respective Steering Committee which then has to confirm the list of and hereby reject for these technical reasons the project applications which did not pass the technical eligibility check.

The admissibility check criteria are:

- One electronic version of the application form has been submitted between the opening and closure of the call for proposals.
- The confirmation letter has been signed and mailed in paper latest the day of the closure of the call for proposals (post stamp) to the Joint Technical Secretariat in Turku/Finland.
- The application has been filled in English and all mandatory fields have been filled in adequately.
- All project partners including the Lead Partner participating in the project are listed in Annex 1 of the application form. Each project must involve partners from at least two of the participating countries according to the geographical eligibility for the chosen (sub-) programme as defined in the Programme Manual.
- All project partners including the Lead Partner are eligible as defined in the Programme Manual (e.g. legal status)
- Annex 6 “Partner budgets” is attached to the application form and budget information has been filled in for all project partners including the Lead Partner.
- The co-financing statements for each project partner including the Lead Partner are attached to the application, they correspond with Annex 1 and 6 of the application form and the indicated co-financing is eligible partner co-financing as defined in the Programme Manual. The standard form of the co-financing statement has been used and no changes to the standard form have been made.
- All mandatory annexes have been sent together with application form to the Joint Technical Secretariat between the opening and closure of the call for proposals:¹
 - VAT Declaration by each partner including the Lead Partner
 - Registration certificate of each project partner including the Lead Partner
 - Documentation by the Lead Partner on who has the authority to sign on behalf of the Lead Partner organisation
 - For Estonian private enterprises in Southern Finland - Estonia sub-programme: confirmation from state aid registry that de minimis threshold has been observed
 - Necessary permits (e.g. permits required for environmental projects)
 - For projects containing investments: investment plan, long-term financial plan, action plan including feasibility study, other possible documents, e.g. different permits, SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) if appropriate.²
 - For projects containing in kind contributions: documentation on the value of the in-kind contribution.

¹ If such are not yet available before submitting the project application, they have to be submitted within 10 working days after the closure of the call (pre-information in confirmation letter requested). The risk that these documents will not be issued is born solely by the applicants. For investment related permits cf. footnote 2.

² Note that if investment related permits are not yet available before submitting the project application, they have to be submitted not within 10 days after the closure of the call, but latest before signing the Subsidy Contract with the Managing Authority (pre-information in confirmation letter requested). The risk that these permits will not be issued is born solely by the applicants and in such case the Managing Authority is entitled to refuse signing the Subsidy Contract.

2. Content assessment

The content assessment of applications is divided into two different categories: the quality and maturity evaluation of the proposed project idea and the evaluation of the relevance of the application to the programme. Not all criteria can and have to be met to full extent due to the varying nature and content of the projects (e.g. criteria which refer to different policy objectives, investments in the project maturity part), but the projects contribute to a certain extent to the achievement of the targets of programme. Therefore the answer in most cases can not be simply *yes* or *no* as in the admissibility check.

Project assessment will be conducted by two persons of the Joint Technical Secretariat (Joint Assessment Tandem) – one from the overall point of the view of the whole Central Baltic INTERREG IV A Programme 2007-2013, the other from the respective (sub)programme perspective. If necessary external expertise will be involved in the quality assessment where special expert knowledge is required to ensure an appropriate evaluation of the project application.

The Joint Technical Secretariat will score the applications according to the content assessment criteria (scores to be used: 5 very good, 4 good, 3 acceptable, 2 poor, 1 unacceptable). The scores will not be aggregated, but will show which the strong or weak points of the project are. In the “overall” assessment report the scores, their justification and a short conclusion on the project’s strengths and weaknesses will be elaborated. Projects that receive in the content assessment the “score 1 (unacceptable)” at least once will be considered of too low quality to be approved.

In addition to these content criteria, in some application rounds specific criteria only for that call may be used. Each Steering Committee can approve for its (sub-)programme the possible use of specific content criteria which will be published together with the announcement of the call for proposals. Even though it is not a selection criteria, the Joint Technical Secretariat will assess the relevance of the project application for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) based on the information provided in the application form and, in case of the project being (part of) a EUSBSR Flagship Project, the recommendation letter issued by the respective Priority area coordinator.

On the basis of the results of the content assessment conducted by the Joint Technical Secretariat the Steering Committees will discuss the general strategic relevance of the proposed projects to the programme and European overall policy objectives and decide which project applications to approve (under conditions) and which to reject.

During the programme implementation the Monitoring Committee can decide to revise the programme selection criteria, if that is deemed to be necessary.

2.1. Relevance of the project proposal for the (Sub-)programme

Relevance of the project proposal for the Programme (priorities and directions of support)

Criterion to be assessed	Questions to be answered by JTS during the assessment
The project plan complies with the objectives of the chosen priority of the Central Baltic INTERREG IV A Programme 2007-2013	Does the project plan comply with the targets of the priorities of the programme? <i>(E.g. Priority 1: Does it contribute to the protection and improvement of the environment? Does it support sustainable development in the programme area? Priority 2: Does it contribute to the economic development and competitiveness of the programme area? Does the project contribute to the development of connections in the Programme Area? Priority 3: Does it contribute to the creating better living environment? Does it contribute to equal opportunities for different groups in the society and their active participation in the society?) Does the project contribute to the development of the information society? Does the project contribute to gender equality?)</i>
The project plan complies with the specific focus deriving from the geographical and thematic needs and opportunities of the chosen (sub)programme expressed in the (sub)programme's respective directions of support and substantiated in the programme manual	How the project contributes to one of the directions of support of the (sub)programme it is applying for funding?

Cross-border impact of the project

Criterion to be assessed	Questions to be answered by JTS during the assessment
The project activities have cross-border impact and added value	Does the project contribute to a joint solution of an existing problem/ a development area? Is there a mutual benefit for the project area? Does the project provide a solution with goes beyond a local solution, a solution which can be implemented only across the border? Does the project facilitate the transfer of environmental, economical and societal solutions and knowledge, and their practical application, from one country/region to another (<i>knowledge transfer</i>)? Does the project is about working together to develop new or innovative development solutions that can be applied in practice in more than one country/region (<i>innovation</i>)? Does the project is about exchanging ideas, experience and good practice that improve the stock of organisational knowledge (<i>organisational learning</i>)
The activities benefit the (Sub)Programme area	Do the activities benefit the (sub-)programme area? Do possible activities outside the (sub-)programme area / outside European Community benefit the (sub)programme area?

2.2. Quality and maturity of the project

Criterion to be assessed	Questions to be answered by JTS during the assessment
Coherence	
There is coherence between project objectives, activities, outputs and results	Is there coherence between project objectives, activities, outputs, results and the project budget (e.g. Can the expected results be achieved through the proposed approach? Are the planned outputs and results adequate for reaching the project objectives?) Are the outputs and results adequately planned, specified and quantified?) Are the proposed methodology and approach coherent?
The project has a clear and realistic work plan and schedule	Have the activities in the work plan including responsibilities inside the project partnership been planned and described clearly? Are the work plan and the schedule logical and realistic?
Budget	
The project has a realistic budget	Is the project budget realistic? Are the activities and budget in line with each other? Does the project's (!) ERDF co-financing rate exceed the maximum set for the respective Programme priority and communicated with the opening of the call? <i>NB! If so, this does not lead to a "1", but in case of the project being approved by the Steering Committee to an additional condition to adapt the project's budget before the signing of the Subsidy Contract with the MA in a way that the allowed maximum ERDF co-financing rate is kept.</i>
Partnership	
Project partnership is relevant, balanced and has the necessary capabilities for the implementation of the project	Are the institutions in the project partnership capable for implementing the project and achieving the project results? Is the partnership balanced? If not, has the reason been justified? Is the role of each of the partners in the project implementation described clearly?
All partners have been involved in the development of the project (application)? (joint development)	Have all the partners have been involved in the development of the project?
All partners contribute to the achievement of the project results (joint implementation)	Is there a clear division of tasks and do all partners have real contribution to the project targets? Do they have clear interest to the project activities?
All partners contribute financially to the project (joint financing)	Do all partners contribute financially to the project? If all partners are not contributing financially their own budget money, has the reason for that been explained? Is the needed national co-financing available for the project?
Implementation and Sustainability	
Implementation and management structure of the project are well planned and clearly described (joint staffing)	Are the implementation and management structures of the project well planned and clearly described? Has the duplication of functions in the project management be avoided?
Impact and sustainability of project results after the project closure have been considered and the project has long term/sustainable effects	Has the sustainability of project results (financial, institutional and administrative) been considered during the project planning? Does the project really have long term / sustainable effects? Does the project create or enable follow-up activities after the implementation has ended? Are the actual "users" of the project results among the project partners? If not, are there realistic means for the

	transfer of the results to them? Are there any obstacles for immediate application and use of the project results for its "users"?
The project does not have negative impacts on environment	Have the environmental impacts of the project been assessed and no negative impacts have been detected?
The project has clear plan for dissemination of project information	Is the dissemination of information about the project activities planned? Are the responsible partners nominated for dissemination? Do the communication methods foreseen by the project correspond to the specifics of the respective target audience?
Investments included in the project plan have been planned sufficiently, have cross-border character and sustainable	Do the planned investments have cross-border character and relevance? Are the investments prepared according to EU legislation and national rules? Has the body responsible for the maintenance of investment after the project implementation been defined?