

**Summary of the Minutes
of the 3rd Monitoring Committee (MC) Meeting
of the
Interreg V-A Hungary-Croatia Cooperation Programme 2014-2020**

Date: 23 May 2016
Place: Zalaegerszeg, Hungary

Agenda Point 1: Approval of the Agenda, technicalities (MC decision)

Ms Viktória Anna Ratskó-Tóth, representing the Hungarian Prime Minister's Office and the Managing Authority of the Programme, acting as the Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee (MC), welcomed all the participants of the 3rd meeting of the MC, thanking the host, Zala County, for their support in the organisation of the meeting.

The participants of the meeting were also addressed by the Mr Zsolt Szokolai, Desk Officer with the EC in charge of following the implementation of the Programme, who pointed out that the meeting was organised in order to discuss in person the first Annual Implementation Report (AIR) of the Programme and encouraged everyone to join the discussion and contribute to the quality of the report. Mr Szokolai also reminded the MC that the deadline for submission of the Evaluation Plan is one year following the adoption of the Programme and that it should be discussed by the MC and submitted to the EC before September 2016.

Establishing that the quorum for the meeting had been met, the Chairperson put the Agenda to vote. Since there were no objections to or amendments of the Agenda, it was unanimously accepted.

MC decision: The Agenda of the meeting was accepted.

Agenda Point 2: Discussion on the Draft Annual Implementation Report 2015 of the Interreg V-A Hungary-Croatia Co-operation Programme 2014-2020, to be submitted by the MA to the EC (MC decision)

The Head of the Joint Secretariat (JS) presented the drafted document, highlighting the key points. The report, due to the fact that the implementation of the Programme has only recently begun, is quite short, with only few pieces of data available, mostly connected to Priority Axis 5, Technical Assistance. Having presented the content of the document, Mr Szűcs invited the Members of the MC to give their opinions and inputs, especially since this is the first time the new reporting approach is used.

Following several technical comments from the members of the MC, the document was put to vote.

MC decision: The Annual Implementation Report for 2015 of the Interreg V-A Hungary-Croatia Cooperation Programme 2014-2020 is approved with the comments to be incorporated before the upload of the report to the SFC system of the EC.

Agenda Point 3: Discussion on the Draft Assessment Manual of the Interreg V-A Hungary-Croatia Co-operation Programme 2014-2020 (MC decision)

The Head of JS presented both the draft Assessment Manual and its Annex, the Declaration on Confidentiality and Impartiality. He pointed out that the declaration has remained the same as in the previous periods, and the manual has also been developed based on the document successfully used in the previous, 2007-2013 programming period. It was pointed out that the manual and the processes described in it are only valid until the electronic application system is developed. Once the electronic system becomes fully operational, all rules and descriptions of work steps will have to be revised accordingly.

Following a set of comments from the members of the MC, it was concluded that a final draft of the Assessment Manual be circulated together with the minutes of the meeting, and that the document should be approved together with the minutes after the new round of sending and commenting.

Agenda Point 4: Information about the state of play regarding the strategic project 'Determine HU-HR II'

The status of the first strategic project of the Programme was presented, pointing out that the project submitted all the documents required for the contracting phase to begin. All the conditions set by the MC have been met and the project is ready to begin with implementation from 1 June 2016.

Although there was a delay in the planned beginning of implementation, the main activities are not at risk, as the procurement procedures connected to them have been initiated on time.

Due to the specific nature of the project, the reporting periods might be shortened and the validation procedure accelerated as much as possible. These possibilities were discussed at the meeting with the representatives of the partnership where the JS and the First Level Control Bodies were also present.

Agenda Point 5: Overview of communication activities, with special regard to the ongoing open Call for Proposals (HUHR/1601)

JS communication staff reported on the communication activities implemented since the adoption of the Programme, pointing out especially the activities relating to the first Call for Proposals (CfP). The Programme has taken a very proactive approach, with the feedback from the field being very positive, reflected also in the largest yet number of participants at the events. This CfP introduced the option of personal consultation with the JS, which proved very popular, increasing at the same time the presence of the Programme in the border region and the direct approach to the applicants. In an effort to raise the transparency and visibility of the Programme, especially in the general public and with the end users, the Programme has also launched its social media profiles,

All the envisaged events were implemented, although some of the planned communication activities had to be postponed, e.g. the ordering of paper- and non-paper print materials designed to advertise the new Programme. Nevertheless, since a few more communication events are planned for this year, including European Cooperation Day in September, the managing of these activities is an important task for the upcoming months, therefore also the Annual Communication Plan and the Annual Working Plan of the JS have to be amended as regards the scheduling of these communication activities.

Agenda Point 6: Any other business

The representative of the Croatian Ministry of Tourism informed the Members of the MC about the effort of the Ministry to encourage the actors from the field of tourism to take advantage of the cross-border, transnational and interregional co-operation programmes funded by the EU. The Ministry has organised a series of trainings for the potential beneficiaries in several regions in Croatia and has cooperated with the NA and the JS to present the Programme as well in the relevant area.

The question of the elaboration and conclusion of the seven-year working framework agreement and the annual financing agreements connected to it, to be stipulated by the MA and the hosting institution of the JS, was also discussed. It was concluded that a formal letter is drafted by the MC which is to be sent to the MA, enquiring about the situation and

requesting that it be resolved as soon as possible so as not to affect the implementation of the Programme.

MC Decision: The MC will request a report from the MA on the situation regarding the administrative issues that need to be settled in order to ensure the smooth implementation of the Programme, i.e. a report about the current status of the negotiations between the MA and the JS' hosting institution regarding financing.

MC Members were informed about the annual Interreg event to be held in June 2016 in Brussels, which is a good opportunity to find out more about European Territorial Co-operation in general, to share knowledge and to discuss issues in an informal way. Mr Szokolai also informed the MC that the ex-post evaluation of 2007-2013 period is almost finalised and that the results would be shared with the MC when they are available. The results of the public consultations for the Cross-border Review are already available and they point out the role of Interreg programmes and their contribution to the regional policy of the EU.

The Chairperson thanked all the participants and adjourned the meeting.