



Interreg South Baltic Programme 2014-2020

1st Mini call for proposals for ongoing projects

2 November 2020 – 16 December 2020

ANNOUNCEMENT

1. Background information

The finalized projects financed by the Interreg South Baltic Programme have already generated some amount of savings and some more are expected to appear from ongoing projects. The Programme strives to use the whole amount of available ERDF. Therefore, the Monitoring Committee of the Interreg South Baltic Programme has made the decision to launch Mini calls.

The 1st Mini call for proposals is addressed to ongoing projects within all Specific Objectives, which are under implementation for the period enabling to sign the Annex to the Subsidy Contract. It means the Annex must be signed prior to the date of ending of factual activities in the project already defined in the Subsidy Contract. The overall purpose of the call is to create additional opportunity for projects to enhance their final results and their impact on the Programme Area as well as to mitigate negative consequences of COVID-19 pandemic situation on the programme area and implementation of projects.

2. Available funding

The Mini call is open for all Specific Objectives. The amounts of available ERDF resources are presented in the table below.

| Specific Objective | Available ERDF (in EUR)* |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| SO 1.1 | 137 921,28 EUR |
| SO 1.2 | 94 514,18 EUR |
| SO 2.1 | 335 317,33 EUR |
| SO 2.2 | 246 869,93 EUR |
| SO 3.1 | 124 869,71 EUR |
| SO 4.1 | 161 887,00 EUR |
| SO 5.1 | 43 236,11 EUR |
| TOTAL | 1 144 615,54 EUR |

*The amount of resources offered within the Mini call has an indicative character and is based on actual savings from the finalised projects. The final amount offered will equal the actual savings available at the time of the Monitoring Committee decision on the submitted applications. The indicative amounts were calculated based on data available on 2020-10-12. Additionally, reallocations between specific objectives may be possible within the flexibility limit set by the general regulation, if decided by the Programme Monitoring Committee.

The Mini call has a competitive character, thus the reasonable planning of the amount of the requested additional funding is essential. Additional ERDF funding can be requested only in case when the project extension cannot be financed by implementing reallocations within the original budget. Applications in the Mini call may be approved with conditions where financial deductions might be requested from projects before proceeding with signing the Annex to the Subsidy Contract.

3. Set-up of the Mini call project extension

3.1 Thematic scope of project extension

Within the Mini call facility, the Programme aims at providing support for projects to extend their scope and to mitigate the negative effects of COVID-19. The additional activities have to be in line with the Intervention logic of the project. Project extensions shall be aimed at contributing to at least one of the goals:

1. Extending project's scope in order to create added value.

Within this extension goal additional project effects and enhanced project impacts in the Programme regions are expected. The types of possible activities are not limited and depend on the partnership needs and observed opportunities. The proposals could focus on following activities:

- Increase of the target values of main outputs and/or target group-oriented indicators from current project (e.g. increased number of cross-border services delivered);
- Extension of project activities to other countries or regions (not included in the original application) - additional partners could be included;
- Additional dissemination efforts;
- Actions to increase durability of project results;
- Capitalisation activities, creation or use of synergies between projects.

2. The mitigation of negative consequences of COVID-19 pandemic in the support area

- Implementing activities that contribute to the adaptation of the Programme Area to the changes caused by the pandemic and the related regulations in the thematic field of the project.

3. The mitigation of negative consequences of COVID-19 pandemic on project implementation

- Covering expenditures related to implementation of project activities that had been planned but had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 without the possibility of refund, thus losses were covered from the project's budget;
- Changes in project activities due to Covid-19 pandemic;
- Implementation of new activities replacing activities that had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 pandemic;
- Adaptation of project implementation to the Covid-19 situation, e.g. expenditures related to online meeting tools that were not planned originally in the project;
- Ensuring sound financial management in case the project is prolonged due to reasons caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the extra costs (e.g. FLC costs and staff costs for the prolonged period) if cannot be covered from the original budget.

3.2 General rules for project extension

The application process in the Mini call is based on a "Request for changes" procedure. The general rules regarding eligibility of costs, dissemination, durability, monitoring and reporting of projects etc. presented in the Programme Manual remain valid for the project extension. Approval of Mini call applications is subject to the decision of the Monitoring Committee, therefore every type of change described in the Programme Manual (section VI, point 6) can be requested. Regarding project changes, the following factors shall be considered when applying in the framework of the Mini call:

- Budget changes: Additional ERDF can be requested for/within every work package, budget line and partner's budget. From financial point of view the Mini call focuses on additional ERDF funding, but besides increasing the planned budget the Mini call application can contain reallocations within the original budget as well.
- Changes to project activities: The scope of planned project activities can be extended and new activities can be added. If additional project activities require, completely new work package can be added (the total number of work packages including the newly added ones is up to 6).

- Changes to project main outputs and deliverables: Target values of outputs and deliverables can be increased and/or new outputs and deliverables can be designed.
- Changes to the workplan and project spending plan: The workplan and spending plan must be revised.
- Prolongation of the project implementation period: Optionally, projects can request the prolongation of the project implementation time. Despite of prolonging the implementation time every project has to be finalized on 31st of December 2023 the latest.
- Partnership: It is possible to add new partners in order to extend project activities to other countries, regions. Project partners taking part in the original project might withdraw from participating in the prolonged implementation period, however the cross-border character of the project must be ensured. The partnership during the extended period should consist of partners from minimum two Member States.

The remaining budget in the Programme for costs that are subject to the 20% eligibility rule (covering project activities being implemented outside the Programme eligible area) amounts to 14 513 013,43 EUR (total eligible expenditure).

4. Application procedure and submission deadline

The application process has been simplified and is based on a “Request for changes” procedure. Therefore, instead of the Programme’s regular Excel Application form, two other documents are to be used while submitting the application:

- a **Mini call application form** (a **Word File**), in which the applicants should describe their plans to alter the project,
- a **Mini call budget tool** (an **Excel file**), in which the applicants should present the breakdown of the project budget between work packages, budget lines and partners. The information should include the original project budget as well as reallocations/additional funding the project is applying for.

The application package to the Mini call should be submitted in an **electronic version** including:

- the completed **Mini call application form** (a **Word file** and - if the application is submitted via email - a **readable scan** of the signed and stamped (where applicable) printout);
- the **Mini call budget tool** (as a separate **Excel file**);
- readable **scans** of signed and stamped (where applicable) **Project Partner Declarations** for all partners (incl. lead partner) where the eligible budget increases as a result of the requested project changes, including new, additional partners;
- readable **scans** of signed and stamped (where applicable) **Letters of Commitment** for all associated partners added as a result of the requested project changes;
- readable **scans** of **Letter of dedication and support from EUSBSR Policy Area/ Horizontal Action Coordinator** (if requested project changes are of high relevance to the Policy Area/Horizontal Action of EUSBSR and the project was not previously supported by EUSBSR Policy Area/Horizontal Action Coordinator).

Applicants are allowed to send up to five pages of supplementing documents. Some additional documents may be required by the Joint Secretariat if specific character of project changes necessitates additional information before approval.

It is necessary that applicants submit all required documents in the requested format, using the templates mentioned above. All information must be provided in English as the official working language of the South Baltic Programme.

The application package must be sent **via SL2014 correspondence (message format) by 16 December 2020 (Wednesday), 23:59 CET at the latest.**

If technical problems occur in SL2014 the application may be submitted via email to application@southbaltic.eu within the indicated deadline.

Please note that the originals of the Mini call application form, Project Partner Declarations and Letters of Commitment **should not be provided while submitting the application**. However, the originals of project Application Form (updated during

clarification process once the Mini call application is selected for approval), Project Partner Declarations and Letters of Commitment will have to be delivered to the JS before signing the Annex to the Subsidy Contract. It is therefore recommended to collect the originals already in connection to the preparation of the application.

5. Selection and approval of projects

The decision on selection and approval of Mini call project proposals is taken by the Monitoring Committee of the Interreg South Baltic Programme 2014-2020. It is based on the results of the formal and eligibility assessment and the quality assessment, which is performed by the Joint Secretariat (JS).

The following assessment criteria will be applied to evaluate the submitted proposals:

- formal and eligibility assessment:
 - delivery of the complete application in a given timeframe and format (incl. Mini call application form, Mini call budget tool, scanned signed Project Partner Declarations (if applicable), scanned signed Letters of Commitment (if applicable));
 - fulfilment of the minimum requirements for partnership, eligibility criteria for newly involved partners, co-financing levels and timeframe of proposed actions.
- quality assessment:
 - Extension context (effectiveness of actions taken, coherence with project objectives, logic of the work plan)
 - Cooperation character
 - Added value of the project extension
 - Value for money (project effects provided for the applied additional budget)

In case of a similar level of contribution to the listed criteria by more than one project, the decisive criterion is the value for money.

6. Contracting process

After the project extension is approved by the Monitoring Committee, the lead partner is obliged to sign the Annex to the Subsidy Contract in order to receive additional subsidy from the ERDF. The JS is responsible for annexing the project as soon as the requirements necessary to sign an annex are met. The Annex must be signed prior to the date of ending of factual activities in the project already defined in the Subsidy Contract. It is assumed that all annexes resulting from the Mini call extensions are signed by the end of June 2021.

Please note, the necessary corrections and documents required to sign the Annex to Subsidy Contract must be delivered to the JS in two months after the decision of the Monitoring Committee. In case the requirement is not fulfilled, the approved extension might be rejected.

7. Further information and contacts

Comprehensive information on the Interreg South Baltic Programme can be found on the Programme website www.southbaltic.eu.

You are also welcomed to contact the Joint Secretariat in case of any further questions.

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of the INTERREG SOUTH BALTIC PROGRAMME 2014-2020**

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