



INTERREG IIC West Zone

Programme Complement

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According to the definition of Article 9 (m) and the description of Article 18 (3) of the Council Regulation laying down general provisions on the Structural Funds (EC No. 1260/1999) and as specified in paragraph 27 of the INTERREG III Communication (2000/C 143/08), the INTERREG IIIC Community Initiative Programmes are to be supplemented by a Programme Complement. Herewith the Member States of the West zone of INTERREG IIIC present the Programme Complement for the INTERREG IIIC West zone Community Initiative Programme. It gives information on the eligible measures, the final beneficiaries, the financing plan, the publicity plan, the arrangements between the Commission and the Member States for exchange of data and related issues.

In relation to Belgium, the obligations and responsibilities of Member State authorities for INTERREG IIIC are carried out by the authorities designated for this purpose. This is the case whenever this document refers to the Member State or the national authorities.

1. Description of Measures

The objective of the interregional co-operation is to improve the effectiveness of policies and instruments for regional development and cohesion.¹ The effects will materialise both at national or regional and European level:

- The regional and other public authorities will gain a mean to enhance development through access to the experiences of others; this will enable them to better develop policies and projects to overcome problems and exploit potentials.
- The European policies will be boosted by added value through expanding the effects from individual structural funds interventions to different regions across Europe. Learning effects can be multiplied by disseminating experience interregionally.
- The goal of improving the effectiveness of policies and instruments for regional development and cohesion may be achieved by:
- Changes on the level of projects by introducing new methods or approaches or by improving existing ones. The focus here is on improving the delivery of existing programmes and instruments of regional policy.

¹ This is coherent with the objectives given in the IIIC-Communication, point 5, and the INTERREG Communication point 17.

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- Changes on the level of policies imply a more far-reaching change of political and institutional structures related to regional policy. Changes at this level occur when a policy instrument, programme, etc. is readjusted or reoriented, or if a new instrument is added.

The co-operation under this programme may be organised along one of the following three types of operations. This chapter gives the definition and summary description of the three types.

1.1 Operation Type (a) Regional Framework Operations (RFO)

A RFO is aimed at exchanging experience on methodology and project-based activities among a group of regions. The goal is to produce a clear strategic approach to interregional co-operation for the participants, which will allow them to develop a process of exchange and learning, which can grow over the long-term.

The RFO is based on an interregional co-operation strategy covering the participating regions. Within the frame given with the INTERREG IIIC programme, the RFO's strategy is forming a self-standing strategic framework which is kind of a "mini-programme". Each RFO should address a limited range of subjects relevant to the regions participating, thus ensuring that interregional co-operation activity is better integrated into the economic and social development of the participating areas. In line with its strategy, a RFO should cover a limited number of smaller projects.

The selection of RFO-internal projects is the responsibility of the regional partners co-operating in the RFO. They will form a Steering Committee at RFO-level for the purpose of project selection. Each RFO should be prepared by a group of regional authorities or equivalent regional bodies in a number of regions from a minimum of three countries of which at least two must be Member States. **RFO-internal projects in turn should involve participants from different countries** within the participating regions. A RFO under this programme can only be submitted by a lead partner that is located in the programme area of the West zone. The other partners need not to be located in the programme area of the West zone. Each partner should be supported by a regional partnership. The regional partnership would consist of the authorities and organisations in each region with a role to play in the RFO.

A RFO is based on a detailed interregional co-operation strategy, which is focused on a limited number of subjects and includes a detailed work-plan and forms the basis for project development and selection. The strategy needs to give sound information on the management and implementation structures of the RFO. The strategy will indicate the expected concrete results that can be evaluated and disseminated.

As the RFO is a new type of co-operation, no region should participate in more than 2 such operations under INTERREG IIIC until the mid term review of the programme has been completed.

The total ERDF contribution for a RFO may normally be between € 500,000 and € 5 million. RFOs can cover all the topics covered by INTERREG IIIC. An indicative share of 50% to 80% of the funding under this programme should be allocated to RFOs.

Regions eligible to present a RFO are listed in Annex C of the Community Initiative Programme of the West zone. Regional authorities at a geographically lower level can be either lead partner or partner in a RFO on behalf of the region defined in Annex C of the West zone programme.

1.2 Operation Type (b) Individual Co-operation Project:

Individual Co-operation Projects aim at exchanging experience on methodology and project-based activities. The goal is not merely a transfer of knowledge, but genuine co-operation on the realisation of various parts of the project, with a significant added value to the project participants. The implantation of project results from one region into another with a clear impact in the recipient region would be one concrete effect of such a project.

The Individual Co-operation Project is based on a detailed work programme, defining the expected outcome and concrete results and allowing for evaluation and dissemination of achievements.

Projects should involve partners from a minimum of three countries of which at least two must be Member States. Not more than 40% of the overall funding can go to the lead partner and the total ERDF contribution may normally be between €200,000 and €1,000,000.

Individual Co-operation Projects can cover all the topics covered by INTERREG IIIC. An indicative share of 10 to 30% of the funding under this programme should go to Individual Co-operation Projects.

1.3 Operation Type (c) Networks:

Networks aim to link the various regions inside and outside the European Union on project implementation methods and development.

Only costs related to actions such as seminars, conferences, websites, databases, study trips and exchange of staff, all in order to exchange experience and pass on expertise, might be considered. However, networking should lead to concrete results, which can be evaluated and disseminated. All networking actions should have detailed work programmes, indicating the tasks to be carried out and the expected outcomes.

A Network must have partners from at least 5 countries of which at least three must be Member States. The ERDF contribution may normally be between € 200,000 and € 1 million. All the aid will be paid to and managed by the lead partner of the Network.

Networking can cover all the topics covered by INTERREG IIIC with the exception of those related to topic (d) of point 22 of the INTERREG IIIC Communication - Innovative Actions - which, as indicated in the Programme, can be covered elsewhere. An indicative share of 10% to 20% of the funding under this programme should go to Networks.

1.4 Participation of Non Member States

Non Member States can participate in INTERREG IIIC both on programme level and on operation level.

On programme level Non Member States can participate provided that they sign a corresponding letter of commitment specifying which zone they want to adhere to for the overall programme period. Public authorities in these Non Member States will have the option to act as functional lead partner in that zone. This means that they can perform the co-ordination and management tasks of a lead partner for a project. However, as ERDF funds cannot be administered by a Non Member State, the functional lead partner will need a financial lead partner from a Member State of the same zone who will be responsible for the use of the ERDF funds. There has to be a close cooperation between the functional and the financial lead partner. As this makes the administration of the project rather difficult, functional lead partners should be the exception rather than the rule.

On operation level Non Member States can participate throughout all zones. Financing for partners from third countries can nonetheless not be provided under this programme, but needs to be taken from their own resources or relevant European Union funding sources (e.g. Phare, Tacis, Meda, CARDS etc.) in line with the funding rules for each source. Although the difficulties of joint financing with this sources are well known, it can be expected that the development of the next years, as described e.g. in the Phare Review will allow for a better co-ordination even before the candidates formally join the EU.

To ease the co-operation as much as possible, travel and subsistence expenses of partners or participants from third countries outside the EU can be eligible costs for an operation when the meeting or seminar takes place in the EU and is part of an approved operation.

The travel and subsistence expenses by partners or participants from EU Member States on parts of operations that take place in a third country and are vital for the success of the operation as a whole are also eligible for ERDF assistance.

In order to be considered as partner in the understanding of the partnership requirements set out in the eligibility criteria, the partners from candidate countries have to contribute financially to the operation. This contribution, however, can be of a minimum amount or can be exclusively in kind. These contributions from candidate countries are not eligible for ERDF funding.

In accordance with EU public procurement law, services or equipment used for implementing an INTERREG IIIC operation in the EU can also come from the "partner country" or third countries in question, according to general national, EU or international legislation on public procurement.

1.5 Strand C - co-ordination actions

On the initiative of the European Commission the West zone INTERREG IIIC programme includes a special priority on co-ordination between the four INTERREG IIIC zones, especially for the initial implementation phase and until the INTERACT programme has come into operation.

Activities under this priority will be concentrated in 2001 and 2002. On a Commission proposal the activities will be co-financed at 90% and the resources from the ERDF will be allocated to the programme from the allocation under par.53 of the INTERREG guidelines.

1.6 Technical Assistance (TA)

TA will be spent on activities necessary for the effective and smooth management and implementation of the programme. An important element for this is a competent and efficient day-to-day work that holds together the flow of information between the bodies involved, prepares the decision making properly, oversees the information collected and its use in the programme management. To fulfil these tasks, a highly skilled and professional secretariat is required.

As INTERREG IIIC introduces a new approach, special emphasis will be given to the assistance and advice in the development of operations. TA will be invested in the promotion of the programme, awareness rising, pro-active search and interactive development of operations. The strategy will be built on broad involvement of multiple actors on national and European level and is aiming in activating them.

Besides the information and advice given to potential applicants, a broader dissemination of the achievement of this programme is foreseen under the publicity plan (cp. chapter 7). Activities necessary to do so are also part of TA.

External advice may be needed to assist gathering and processing of data, implementing a computerised management system, and so on. Additional advice may be necessary on specific questions of managing a programme to assist international co-operation, concerning e.g. the development of operations and drafting of the legal documents that form the basis for the organisational framework of the co-operation projects.

Another element that will need spending of TA is the tasks of evaluation.

According to rule 11 of the Annex to Commission Regulation (EC) No 1685/2000, TA is calculated separately for the expenditure directly related to administration, implementation, monitoring, and control of the programme on the one hand, and other expenditure (e.g. studies, evaluations, information, seminars, etc.) on the other. The TA under this programme will only fund activities directly related to the programme, whereas

the Strand C co-ordination activities (cp. chapter 1.5) will be designed to co-ordinate the activities of all four zones. All activities falling under Strand C co-ordination activities will be excluded from the TA budget of this programme and funded from the budget for the Strand C co-ordination activities. In relation to these tasks, the TA budget will only cover the adaptation and specification for this zones needs, if necessary.

The ERDF contribution to this programme's TA budget will be 50%. Additional information on the financial calculation of the TA budget is given in chapter 5 on the financing plan. The TA under this programme will be supplemented by the activities under the INTERACT programme.

1.7 Quantified objectives

According to Annex B of the INTERREG IIIC Communication, quantified monitoring indicators are not yet needed at this stage. Due to the innovative character of the initiative, the quantification of objectives is quite difficult for INTERREG IIIC. The quantification of objectives will be developed by the Monitoring Committee when a sufficient number of applications have been approved. The annual reports will inform about the status of quantification of objectives.

2. Indicators for Monitoring and Evaluation

To monitor and evaluate the results and effects of the INTERREG IIIC activities, a number of indicators can be applied. The following is giving an overview over some of the core criteria and concepts, the monitoring and evaluation will use. According to Working Paper 3 of the Commission (Indicators for Monitoring and Evaluation), we distinguish output indicators on the one and result/impact indicators on the other hand:

Output indicators relate to activity. They are measured in physical or monetary units.

Result indicators relate to the direct and immediate effect brought about by a programme. Such indicators can be of a physical (reduction in journey times, number of successful trainees, number of roads accidents, etc.) or financial (leverage of private sector resources, decrease in transportation cost) nature. Impact indicators refer to the consequences of the programme beyond the immediate effects on its direct beneficiaries. Two concepts of impact can be defined. Specific impacts are those effects occurring after

a certain lapse of time but which are, nonetheless, directly linked to the action taken. Global impacts are longer-term effects affecting a wider population. Clearly, measuring this type of impact is complex and clear causal relationships often difficult to establish.

2.1 Output Indicators

The basis for both monitoring and evaluation is a sound overview of what is really going on in the programme and of how implementation is working. Information on these issues is part of the monitoring indicators – which despite their naming certainly form also the basis for evaluation purposes. The monitoring indicators are based on the Annex IV of Commission Regulation (EC) No 438/2001², with some additional indicators for INTERREG IIIC specific issues.

² Please note that the following table is not listing the full range of information necessary to meet the requirements of the Control Regulation, which is certainly to be held available for the Commission for the purposes of this Regulation.

Table 1: Output Indicators

Output Indicators for INTERREG IIIC
Data for these Indicators should be available at the level of the single operation . This allows to aggregate data on the level of topics for co-operation or types of operation. For every single operation, data will be provided for:
1) Overall indicative figures for approved operations, and 2) Expenditure declared so far: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Total cost of approved operation,- Total eligible cost of approved operation,- Total public contribution (% and €), including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- ERDF Contribution (% and €)- National Contribution (% and €)<ul style="list-style-type: none">- national (% and €)- regional (% and €)- local (% and €)- other (% and €)- Private Contribution (% and €)- topic for co-operation- type of operation- Classification of intervention according to Annex IV of Commission Regulation (EC) 438/2001 (cp. chapter 6)- Location: Region (according to Annex C of the CIP INTERREG IIIC West zone) in which the project lead partner and other partners are located- Effect on social and economic cohesion- Effect on the environment- Effect on equal opportunities- Effect on sustainable development- Number of partner (in case of RFO also at project level: number of projects, number of participants, budget, classification)

2.2 Result and impact indicators

The evaluation of the INTERREG IIIC programme is a demanding task as it poses the problem of grasping a newly designed approach. This is the reason why in the case of INTERREG IIIC one can hardly define a chain of effect in the way it is possible for established measures of regional development policies. So the evaluation in the case of this programme can not be limited to measuring and assessing given indicators, but has to work on identifying the mechanisms by which effects are reached. This Programme Complement will therefore not give a detailed list of indicators, but rather list the categories the evaluation has to deal with. A first task of the evaluation will consist in research on the processes of forming the partnerships of the operations and of working within the partnerships.

Crucial categories in this respect are:

- Type of operation: RFO, Network or Individual Co-operation Project

- Intensity of co-operation is a category allowing to analyse the co-operation processes in the networks by distinguishing exchange and dissemination of experience from transfer of instruments or projects as well as development of new approaches and joint development of new approaches. The four categories mentioned cover a continuum from rather separated acting partners to close co-operation. The evaluation will keep in mind that the three eligible types of operations differ in terms of intensity. Whilst Networks may be limited to exchange and dissemination, although the aim should be to reach the level of transfer, the RFOs and Individual Co-operation Projects should at least have the level of transferring instruments or projects.

- Products of Co-operation consist of the tangible outcome. A product may for instance be a new political instrument applied in one region, but also a written concept for the transfer and adoption of a project approach. The first step in evaluation is to document the products achieved. It should not be sufficient for a project to claim its success; instead it should be able to document the output by products.

- Quality of products. Innovation is one aspect of the quality of products as the programme aims at improving the existing instruments and policies. This can only be achieved by changing the status quo and thus introducing an innovation – compared to the regional status quo ante.

For the purposes of the INTERREG IIIC Programme, innovation is defined on regional level: the product that derives from the co-operation should be something new compared to the already existing instruments and projects in the region. Innovation under this programme may be achieved in different ways:

- by developing new methods, instruments and concepts or improving existing ones (process-oriented innovation). In this context, the improvement of implementation of regional development policies is dominant. This may include for instance the adoption of new financial or advisory instruments by the use of information technology.

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- by formulating new goals for regional policies and instruments of regional development and cohesion(goal oriented innovation), e.g. by orientation to the potentials for regional learning and innovation, by exploiting the potentials of social capital in the region, by making use of the potentials offered by technical progress or by continuing to integrate aspects like e.g. sustainability or equal opportunities more fully into regional development policies and instruments.
 - by developing political and institutional structures and systems related to regional policy (context-oriented innovation). Context-oriented innovation relates to structural improvements like e.g. networking, development partnerships, etc. This changes the overall setting in the regional policy system, e.g. by adding new aspects to the role of politicians and officials, who are becoming enablers and moderators, and by changing the role of enterprises and other regional organisations, who are becoming involved in the process of goal-definition.

One can expect that the implementation of INTERREG IIIC will bring a number of complex, integrated operations, combining two or all three of the innovation types. Specifically the RFOs present a complex approach combining a range of different projects. Most operations therefore will all contain process-oriented, goal-oriented and context-oriented innovations in different mixing ratios.

On the basis of the analysis of processes, the second task of the evaluation is to grasp the effects of the programme:

- The evaluation will assess whether the INTERREG IIIC activities initiated co-operation activities linking and exchanging experiences and best practice from the type of activity supported under Objective 1 and 2 programmes, the INTERREG Community initiative, the URBAN Community Initiative and urban development, future regional innovative actions programmes, and other subjects appropriate for interregional co-operation.
- The evaluation will assess the effects of the programme on the social and economic cohesion, environment, equal opportunities and sustainable development.
- The evaluation will finally assess the improvement of effectiveness of policies and instruments for regional development and cohesion achieved by INTERREG IIIC.

3. Eligibility and Selection Criteria for Operations

This Programme Complement is giving information on the criteria to be applied when selecting operations. Two sets of criteria – eligibility criteria and selection criteria – will be applied.

Eligibility criteria are minimum requirements, each of which has to be met for an operation to be declared eligible. Selection criteria will be applied to assess the respective merits of eligible operations. For the eligibility criteria, a distinction can be made between core criteria (applying for all operations) and specific criteria (applying for specific topics for co-operation or types of operation).

The Joint Technical Secretariat makes use of the eligibility criteria to check the applications. To do so it takes the relevant core and specific eligibility criteria and tests, if the application contains the relevant elements. The answer of such a test must be a clear yes or no. As a result it drafts two lists: one listing the eligible applications, and another listing the ones assessed as not eligible giving the reason for this assessment.

Eligible applications will be subject to a ranking by the Joint Technical Secretariat applying the selection criteria given in table 5. An external pool of experts may assist the secretariat. Based on the ranking list the Steering Committee is taking the decision on selection of operations. The selection will be done in several steps:

1. The ranking will be done for each type of operation (RFO, Individual Co-operation Project and Network) separately. The assessment of every single operation will include a short explanation for the scoring chosen. The results of this step are three type-specific ranking lists of eligible applications. For information, the Steering Committee will also be provided with a list of the non-eligible operations giving the reasons for this.
2. The Steering Committee decides on operations to be selected. The applications to be approved by the Steering Committee are taken from the three type-specific lists. As a rule, only applications fulfilling the eligibility criteria and reaching a high score with the selection criteria could be proposed for approval to the Steering Committee. The reasons for acceptance or rejection of applications will be clearly set out in the Steering Committees' decisions.

3. The list of all applications to be proposed for approval is checked against the indicative financial share of the programme funding given per type of operation. (50% to 80% for RFOs, 10% to 30% for Individual Co-operation Projects, and 10% to 20% for Networks).
4. In the last step the list is checked against the financial quota that 75% of ERDF contribution goes to operations involving partner outside the programming zone. If the list of operations foreseen to be approved so far does not fulfil the 75% criterion, the lowest ranking operations not including partners from outside the programming zone are replaced by the next highest ranking operations of the same type doing so.

The procedure for doing the ranking will be managed by the Joint Technical Secretariat. Having provided the list of eligible applications, the Joint Technical Secretariat is distributing to each member of the Steering Committee a ranking list of applications based on the criteria given in table 5 in due time before the meeting. On this basis, the Steering Committee will then take its decisions on applications.

Table 2 Core Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility Criteria
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application form has been submitted in due time in original and electronic version. It is completely and properly filled in according to the instructions, and includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Description of rationale (problem and objectives) and expected effects (impact, results and outputs) - Description of expected <i>contribution to</i> ERDF policies and sustainable development of the participating regions - Description of the work programme - Description of management and implementation arrangements, including division of roles and responsibilities among the partners - Complete financial table - Description of the partners - Co-financing statements that are in line with requested funding and financial tables are attached from all partners / participants duly stamped and signed by a legal responsible - Partnership statement for each regional partner in case of RFO 2. When requested, national authority statements for public equivalent partners 3. Lead Partner is located in the zone, where the Application has been submitted 4. The general ERDF co-financing rates of maximum 50% (75% for Objective 1 regions) have been observed 5. The indicative costs applied for consider the regulation (EC) No 1685/2000 of 28 July 2000 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 as regards eligibility of expenditure of operations co-financed by the Structural Funds and the INTERREG IIIC Programme Complement 6. Duration of the operation is clearly indicated. Operation will be finalised before end 2008 7. Proposed operation is in line with relevant national and EU legislation and policies 8. Proposed operation provides added value and excludes double financing from other EU and / or national sources

Table 3: Specific eligibility criteria by topic for co-operation

	Eligibility Criteria
a) Exchange Objective 1 and 2	- link to activities supported under previous or current Objective 1 or 2 programmes
b) Exchange on INTERREG	- link to activities supported under previous or current INTERREG A or INTERREG B programmes - partners are involved in cooperation on cross-border or transnational activities - At least one partner is involved in current or previous INTERREG , Phare CBC or Tacis-CBC programme
c) Exchange on Urban development	- link to urban development issues - partners are cities, and urban areas, including small and medium-sized towns
d) Exchange on Innovative Action	- link to one or several of the three themes of Innovative Actions: (1) regional economy based on knowledge and technological innovation, (2) EuroRegio: the information society and regional development, and (3) regional integrity and sustainable development - type of operations is not Networks
e) Exchange on other subjects	- link to other regional development activities such as maritime and coastal co-operation, spatial planning issues, co-operation on insular and ultra-peripheral issues, on solutions to natural or man-made catastrophes, on alleviating the economic effects of handicaps such as very low population density or mountainous conditions, cooperation in the areas of research, technological development and SMEs, the information society, tourism, culture and employment, entrepreneurship, environment, etc.

Table 4 Specific Eligibility Criteria by Type of Operation

	Eligibility Criteria
a) Regional Framework Operation	- partners from a minimum of three Countries, of which at least two are Member States - - not more than 40% of ERDF contribution is foreseen for the lead partner - partners of the operation are regional authorities or equivalent regional bodies from regions as defined in Annex C of the CIP INTERREG IIIC West zone or – if needed – regional authorities at a geographically lower level on behalf of these regions - each partner is supported by a regional partnership
b) Individual Co-operation Project	- partners from a minimum of three countries, at least two of which are Member States (for operations in border regions, topic f: at least three partners from at least two countries) - partners of the operation are public authorities or equivalent bodies - not more than 40% of ERDF contribution is foreseen for the lead partner (for operations in border regions, topic f, more than 40% may go to the lead partner) - operation addresses only one topic of the programme
c) Network	- partners are from at least five countries, at least three of which are from Member States (for operations in border regions, topic f: at least five partners from at least three countries) - partners of the operation are public authorities or equivalent bodies - operation addresses only one topic of the Programme

Table 5 Selection Criteria

Selection Criteria
<u>Coherence / Consistency of Proposal</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Clear statement of problem and relevance of the defined problem in the Programme context, clear definition of objectives and relevance of the defined objectives to the Programme objectives, clear definition of planned effects (outputs, results, impacts)- Coherence between problem, objectives and planned effects- Coherence between planned effects and financial resources- Intensity of co-operation (exchange and dissemination of experience, transfer of instruments and projects, development of new approaches)
<u>Quality of Approach and Management</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Coherence between the planned project effects and proposed approach and methodology- Clear division of tasks and responsibilities, realistic and transparent work-plan and time-table- Experience of the Lead Partner in project management and financial management- Experience of partners in similar programmes and projects
<u>Quality of Partnership</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Coherence between the project objectives and partnership- Level of involvement of all partners in developing project idea, preparing application, implementing and co-financing operation- One or more partners from third countries or of the islands and outermost regions involved in developing idea of operation, preparing application, implementing and co-financing operation. Also, in case of topic a: one or more current or previous Objective regions are involved in the operation, in case of topic c: one or more urban area receiving or having received funding from Structural funds involved in the operation, in case of topic d: one or more regions involved in current or previous Innovative Actions programmes.
<u>Quality of Results</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Expected results are concrete (visible and measurable) and will be seen in public- Expected influence on other structural fund programmes co-financed by the ERDF- Degree of innovation to be achieved (new methods, new goals for regional policies, development of political structures and systems)- Expected influence on the development of participating regions
<u>Sustainability and Durability of Project Results</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Provisions to ensure the durability of the project effects (e.g. strategy to ensure financing, strategy for further co-operation, actors responsible for continuation of activities, etc.)- Expected results promote sustainable development of the participating regions, in the meaning of combining economic growth, social cohesion and protecting the environment

4. Final beneficiaries

The INTERREG III guidelines, laid down by the European Commission on 28 April 2000, define the term "final beneficiary" as follows (cf. No. 31 sentences 4 and 5):

"In the case of operations involving partners in different Member States, the final beneficiary will be the partner in charge of the operation which will undertake financial management and co-ordinate the various partners in the operation. This partner in charge will bear financial and legal responsibility to the managing authority. The partner in charge will establish with these partners, possibly in the form of an agreement, the division of the mutual responsibilities."

According to this definition, to be seen in the special context of financial and legal responsibility, the final beneficiary is only the lead partner of an operation. (In case of functional lead partners from Non Member States, the financial lead partner is the final beneficiary). Only the lead partner, representing the various partners in the operation, will conclude a subsidy contract (awarding a grant to the operation) with the managing authority and may, on the basis of this contract, request payments from the paying authority; only this lead partner will be liable for the total amount of subsidy awarded to the specific operation. As a result the other partners in the operation do not bear financial and legal responsibility to the managing authority directly.

Taking these principles into consideration, the following categories of lead partners are admissible:

1. Lead partners of regional framework operations (RFO)

In the INTERREG IIIC West zone lead partners of RFOs can be

- all territorial units forming a region as defined in Annex C Table C.1 of the CIP INTERREG IIIC West zone. Regional authorities at a geographically lower level can be lead partner in a RFO on behalf of a region defined.
- public equivalent bodies on the level of regions described above.

2. Lead partners of individual interregional cooperation projects and networks

Lead partners of individual interregional cooperation projects and networks can be

- public authorities;
- public equivalent bodies.

Public equivalent body means any legal body governed by public or private law

- (1) established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest, not having an industrial or commercial character³, and
- (2) having legal personality, and
- (3) * either financed, for the most part, by the State, or regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed by public law,
 - * or subject to management supervision by those bodies,
 - * or having an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, more than half of whose members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities or by other bodies governed by public law.

Concerning admissible partners and participants of operations it is referred to chapter 2.6 of the CIP (Target groups).

Partners in an operation funded under INTERREG IIIC should consider the benefit of concluding an agreement concerning their mutual financial and legal responsibilities, including the functions and responsibilities of the lead partner.

To guarantee similar conditions for all partners, these rules apply to all INTERREG IIIC programmes.

³ This definition does not exclude bodies partly having an industrial or commercial character.

5. Financing Plan

Each Member State is contributing its share of INTERREG IIIC money to its programme. In the case of Germany, Greece, France and Italy, which are participating in more than one INTERREG IIIC zone, those Member States decided themselves how to distribute the money to the programmes. The sum of all single national shares of ERDF money is the overall ERDF contribution available under this programme.

Due to the opportunity offered to give partner from objective 1 regions an assistance rate of 75%, the national contribution is somewhat difficult to calculate. The reason for the difficulties is that one cannot know in advance how many projects will involve partners or participants from objective 1 regions. It depends on the project applications to show how frequently a co-operation with objective 1 partners is planned. So to calculate the financial tables, one can only assume an effective average rate of assistance, which is in case of this programme expected to be 60% for the North, East and West zones, and 63,29% for the South zone.

The contribution from the ERDF is calculated in relation to the total eligible cost.

As concerns the private participation, one has to keep in mind that INTERREG IIIC is mainly oriented to public actors. The opportunities for private contribution are therefore very limited and the financial calculation is assuming a 5% share of financial contribution from private actors, except for the South zone (0%).

For TA purposes, a share has been foreseen as follows: 4,27% for the North zone, 5,00% for the South zone, 4,76%.for the East zone and 4,88% for the West zone. The following table gives the indicative breakdown of the TA-budget according to rule 11 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1685/2000.

Eligibility of preparation costs

The date from which programme's expenditure shall be eligible, has been decided by the European Commission as follows:

INTERREG IIIC North: 05.10.2001

INTERREG IIIC East: 05.11.2001

INTERREG IIIC South: 06.12.2001

INTERREG IIIC West: 12.10.2001

As a rule, preparation costs of operations are eligible costs, as the preparation of interregional operations may consume more resources, both in time and finance, than other ERDF supported projects. To avoid preparation costs becoming a large indefinable part of the operation's budget, the following core conditions must be met:

- Preparation costs forming a part of the total eligible budget of an operation have to comply with Commission Regulation (EC) No 1685/2000 regarding the eligibility of expenditure;
- Only operations approved by the Steering Committee qualify for co-financing from ERDF;
- Only costs that show a direct demonstrable connection to the development of the operation based on verified audited invoices are eligible;
- Total eligible preparation costs are subject to a ceiling of 50,000 Euro for RFOs and 25,000 Euro for individual interregional cooperation projects and networks.⁴

Before the approval of an operation by the Steering Committee no other costs than these preparation costs are eligible for ERDF funding.

More details on preparation cost will be provided in the application documents.

⁴ In exceptional and justified cases preparation costs can be higher. Decisions on higher preparation costs will be made by the Steering Committee

Table 5 Breakdown of TA budgetNorth zone

	% ERDF	ERDF	National	Total
TOTAL TA budget	4,27%	1.222.550	1.222.550	2.445.100
Expenditure for Management, Implementation, Monitoring and Control (rule 11, 2)	4,06	1,162,550	1,162,550	2,325,100
Other Expenditure, including seminars, studies, evaluation, information, etc (rule 11, 3)	0,21	60,000	60,000	120,000

South zone

	% ERDF	ERDF	National	Total
TOTAL TA budget	5,00%	6.918.400	4.013.417	10.931.817
Expenditure for Management, Implementation, Monitoring and Control (rule 11, 2)	4,50%	6.226.560	3.612.075	9.838.635
Other Expenditure, including seminars, studies, evaluation, information, etc (rule 11, 3)	0,50%	691.840	401.342	1.093.182

East zone

	% ERDF	ERDF	National	Total
TOTAL TA budget	4,76%	2.214.388	2.214.388	4.428.776
Expenditure for Management, Implementation, Monitoring and Control (rule 11, 2)	4,50%	2.092.994	2.092.994	4.185.988
Other Expenditure, including seminars, studies, evaluation, information, etc (rule 11, 3)	0,26%	121.394	121.394	242.788

West zone

	% ERDF	ERDF	National	Total
TOTAL TA budget	4,88%	4.587.688	4.587.688	9.175.376
Expenditure for Management, Implementation, Monitoring and Control (rule 11, 2)	4,50%	4.230.450	4.230.450	8.460.900
Other Expenditure, including seminars, studies, evaluation, information, etc (rule 11, 3)	0,38%	357.238	357.238	714.476

Table 6: Financial Table – INTERREG IIIC

North zone

Priority	Total eligible expenditure					Norway	Third countries (not decided yet)
	Total costs	Public expenditure			Private ⁵		
		Total public elig. cost	ERDF ⁶	National, regional or local			
1	2=3+6	3=4+5	4	5	6	7	8
Operations	45,645,750	44,732,835	27,387,450	17,345,385	912,915	5,700,000	
2000	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2001	6,752,123	6,617,081	4,051,274	2,565,807	135,042	950,000	
2002	7,790,932	7,635,113	4,674,559	2,960,554	155,819	950,000	
2003	7,727,113	7,572,571	4,636,268	2,936,303	154,542	950,000	
2004	7,800,302	7,644,296	4,680,181	2,964,115	156,006	950,000	
2005	7,800,302	7,644,296	4,680,181	2,964,115	156,006	950,000	
2006	7,774,978	7,619,478	4,664,987	2,954,491	155,500	950,000	
Technical assistance	2,445,100	2,445,100	1,222,550	1,222,550	0	300,000	
2000	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2001	361,690	361,690	180,845	180,845	0	50,000	
2002	417,336	417,336	208,668	208,668	0	50,000	
2003	413,918	413,918	206,959	206,959	0	50,000	
2004	417,838	417,838	208,919	208,919	0	50,000	
2005	417,838	417,838	208,919	208,919	0	50,000	
2006	416,480	416,480	208,240	208,240	0	50,000	
Total	48,090,850	47,177,935	28,610,000	18,567,935	912,915	6,000,000	
2000	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2001	7,113,813	6,978,771	4,232,119	2,746,652	135,042	1,000,000	
2002	8,208,268	8,052,449	4,883,227	3,169,222	155,819	1,000,000	
2003	8,141,031	7,986,489	4,843,227	3,143,262	154,542	1,000,000	
2004	8,218,140	8,062,134	4,889,100	3,173,034	156,006	1,000,000	
2005	8,218,140	8,062,134	4,889,100	3,173,034	156,006	1,000,000	
2006	8,191,458	8,035,958	4,873,227	3,162,731	155,500	1,000,000	

⁵ The indicative financial contribution from private actors is difficult to estimate in advance. If the indicative 5 % private contribution is not realised, the Member States will guarantee the total national co-financing from public resources.

⁶ The average co financing rate for operations in INTRREG IIIC North Zone is calculated with 60 % since partners and participants in Objective 1 areas can apply for ERDF co-funding rates of up to a maximum of 75 %.

Priority	Total eligible expenditure					Norway	Third countries (not decided yet)
	Total costs	Public expenditure			Private ⁷		
		Total public elig. cost	ERDF ⁸	National, regional or local			
1	2=3+6	3=4+5	4	5	6	7	8
Other priorities							
Strand C Co-operation (see chapter 1.5 of this Programme Complement)							
	2,222,222	2,222,222	2,000,000	222,222			
2001	555,555	555,555	500,000	55,555			
2002	1,666,667	1,666,667	1,500,000	166,667			
Border regions (see chapter 1.6 of this Programme Complement)							
Operations	2,985,714	2,940,930	2,090,000	850,930	44,784	0	
2000	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2001	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2002	597,142	588,186	418,000	170,186	8,956	0	
2003	597,143	588,186	418,000	170,186	8,957	0	
2004	597,143	588,186	418,000	170,186	8,957	0	
2005	597,143	588,186	418,000	170,186	8,957	0	
2006	597,143	588,186	418,000	170,186	8,957	0	
Technical assistance	220,000	220,000	110,000	110,000	0	0	
2000	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2001	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2002	44,000	44,000	22,000	22,000	0	0	
2003	44,000	44,000	22,000	22,000	0	0	
2004	44,000	44,000	22,000	22,000	0	0	
2005	44,000	44,000	22,000	22,000	0	0	
2006	44,000	44,000	22,000	22,000	0	0	
Total	3,205,714	3,160,930	2,200,000	960,930	44,784	0	
2000	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2001	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2002	641,142	632,186	440,000	192,186	8,956	0	
2003	641,143	632,186	440,000	192,186	8,957	0	
2004	641,143	632,186	440,000	192,186	8,957	0	
2005	641,143	632,186	440,000	192,186	8,957	0	
2006	641,143	632,186	440,000	192,186	8,957	0	

⁷ The indicative financial contribution from private actors is difficult to estimate in advance. If the indicative 5 % private contribution is not realised, the Member States will guarantee the total national co-financing from public resources.

⁸ The average co financing rate for the priority border regions is calculated with 70 % since partners in Objective 1 areas can apply for ERDF co-funding rates of up to a maximum of 75 %.

South zone

	Total eligible expenditure					Third countries
	Total costs	Public expenditure			Private*	
		Total public	ERDF	National		
Opérations	207 704 523	207 704 523	131 449 599	76 254 924	0	
2001	26 832 903	26 832 903	16 489 969	10 342 934	0	**
2002	34 996 633	34 996 633	22 123 680	12 872 953	0	**
2003	35 993 358	35 993 358	22 873 325	13 120 033	0	**
2004	36 419 425	36 419 425	23 170 921	13 248 505	0	**
2005	36 748 058	36 748 058	23 406 321	13 341 736	0	**
2006	36 714 145	36 714 145	23 385 383	13 328 762	0	**
Technical assistance	10 931 817	10 931 817	6 918 400	4 013 417	0	0
2001	1 412 258	1 412 258	867 893	544 365	0	0
2002	1 841 928	1 841 928	1 164 404	677 524	0	0
2003	1 894 387	1 894 387	1 203 859	690 528	0	0
2004	1 916 812	1 916 812	1 219 522	697 290	0	0
2005	1 934 108	1 934 108	1 231 912	702 197	0	0
2006	1 932 323	1 932 323	1 230 810	701 514	0	0
Total	218 636 340	218 636 340	138 367 999	80 268 341	0	
2001	28 245 161	28 245 161	17 357 862	10 887 299	0	**
2002	36 838 561	36 838 561	23 288 084	13 550 477	0	**
2003	37 887 745	37 887 745	24 077 184	13 810 561	0	**
2004	38 336 237	38 336 237	24 390 443	13 945 794	0	**
2005	38 682 166	38 682 166	24 638 233	14 043 933	0	**
2006	38 646 468	38 646 468	24 616 193	14 030 275	0	**
Additional priority (2.2.6), ERDF-Contribution financed under Art.53 of the INTERREG guidelines						
Strand C Co-ordination actions **	0	0	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0	0	0

** Although the participation of private actors under this programme is warmly welcome, their indicative financial contribution is hard to estimate in advance. However, the financial plan doesn't integrate the financial contribution of the private sector

** The participation of third countries, however warmly welcome, is difficult to estimate to this day. It will be accounted for in the course of the programme's development.

East zone

Financial Table – Zone East INTERREG IIIC						
	Public Expenditure					Third Countries (not decided yet)
	Total Costs	Total public	ERDF	National	Private*	
	Operations	73.826.020	72.349.498	44.295.612	28.053.886	
2001	7.738.077	7.583.315	4.642.846	2.940.469	154.762	0
2002	12.446.138	12.197.215	7.467.683	4.729.532	248.923	0
2003	12.745.833	12.490.916	7.647.500	4.843.416	254.917	0
2004	13.138.500	12.875.730	7.883.100	4.992.630	262.770	0
2005	13.142.092	12.879.250	7.885.255	4.993.995	262.842	0
2006	14.615.380	14.323.072	8.769.228	5.553.844	292.308	0
Technical Assistance	4.428.776	4.428.776	2.214.388	2.214.388	0	0
2001	430.240	430.240	215.120	215.120	0	0
2002	610.634	610.634	305.317	305.317	0	0
2003	805.000	805.000	402.500	402.500	0	0
2004	829.800	829.800	414.900	414.900	0	0
2005	830.026	830.026	415.013	415.013	0	0
2006	923.076	923.076	461.538	461.538	0	0
Total	78.254.796	76.778.274	46.510.000	30.268.274	1.476.522	0
2001	8.168.317	8.013.555	4.857.966	3.155.589	154.762	0
2002	13.056.772	12.807.849	7.773.000	5.034.849	248.923	0
2003	13.550.833	13.295.916	8.050.000	5.245.916	254.917	0
2004	13.968.300	13.705.530	8.298.000	5.407.530	262.770	0
2005	13.972.118	13.709.276	8.300.268	5.409.008	262.842	0
2006	15.538.456	15.246.148	9.230.766	6.015.382	292.308	0
Additional priority (2.2.6), ERDF-Contribution financed under Art.53 of the INTERREG guidelines						
Strand C Co-ordination actions **	1.111.111	1.111.111	1.000.000	111.111	0	0
2001	277.778	277.778	250.000	27.778	0	0
2002	833.333	833.333	750.000	83.333	0	0

* Although the participation of private actors under this programme is warmly welcome, their indicative financial contribution is hard to estimate in advance. If the indicative private contribution is not realised, the Member States can replace this contribution from public resources without a change of a programme.

** The national contribution for these activities is calculated by a share of 10%.

Additional priority (2.2.7), ERDF-Contribution financed under Art.53 of the INTERREG guidelines						
Border regions operations	17.976.925	17.662.330	11.685.000	5.977.330	314.595	0
2001	0	0	0	0	0	0
2002	3.595.385	3.532.466	2.337.000	1.195.466	62.919	0
2003	3.595.385	3.532.466	2.337.000	1.195.466	62.919	0
2004	3.595.385	3.532.466	2.337.000	1.195.466	62.919	0
2005	3.595.385	3.532.466	2.337.000	1.195.466	62.919	0
2006	3.595.385	3.532.466	2.337.000	1.195.466	62.919	0
Technical Assistance	1.230.000	1.230.000	615.000	615.000	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0	0	0
2002	246.000	246.000	123.000	123.000	0	0
2003	246.000	246.000	123.000	123.000	0	0
2004	246.000	246.000	123.000	123.000	0	0
2005	246.000	246.000	123.000	123.000	0	0
2006	246.000	246.000	123.000	123.000	0	0
Total***	19.206.925	18.892.330	12.300.000	6.592.330	314.595	0
2001	0	0	0	0	0	0
2002	3.841.385	3.778.466	2.460.000	1.318.466	62.919	0
2003	3.841.385	3.778.466	2.460.000	1.318.466	62.919	0
2004	3.841.385	3.778.466	2.460.000	1.318.466	62.919	0
2005	3.841.385	3.778.466	2.460.000	1.318.466	62.919	0
2006	3.841.385	3.778.466	2.460.000	1.318.466	62.919	0

*** Indicative Figures include a share of 5% for Technical Assistance for Operations on border regions. The national plus private contribution to operations is calculated by a share of 65% to 35% with respect of partners in objective 1 border regions.

West zone

Financial Table – West zone INTERREG IIIC						
	Public Expenditure					Third Countries
	Total Costs	Total public	ERDF	National	Private*	
Operations	149.037.190	146.056.446	89.422.314	56.634.132	2.980.744	7.434.067
2001	22.428.427	21.979.858	13.457.056	8.522.802	448.569	1.119.100
2002	25.451.318	24.942.292	15.270.791	9.671.501	509.026	1.269.596
2003	25.279.242	24.773.657	15.167.545	9.606.112	505.585	1.261.204
2004	25.332.085	24.825.443	15.199.251	9.626.192	506.642	1.264.054
2005	25.201.760	24.697.725	15.121.056	9.576.669	504.035	1.255.900
2006	25.344.358	24.837.471	15.206.615	9.630.856	506.887	1.264.213
Technical Assistance	9.175.376	9.175.376	4.587.688	4.587.688	0	0
2001	1.380.792	1.380.792	690.396	690.396	0	0
2002	1.566.894	1.566.894	783.447	783.447	0	0
2003	1.556.300	1.556.300	778.150	778.150	0	0
2004	1.559.552	1.559.552	779.776	779.776	0	0
2005	1.551.530	1.551.530	775.765	775.765	0	0
2006	1.560.308	1.560.308	780.154	780.154	0	0
Total	158.212.566	155.231.822	94.010.002	61.221.820	2.980.744	7.434.067
2001	23.809.219	23.360.650	14.147.452	9.213.198	448.569	1.119.100
2002	27.018.212	26.509.186	16.054.238	10.454.948	509.026	1.269.596
2003	26.835.542	26.329.957	15.945.695	10.384.262	505.585	1.261.204
2004	26.891.637	26.384.995	15.979.027	10.405.968	506.642	1.264.054
2005	26.753.290	26.249.255	15.896.821	10.352.434	504.035	1.255.900
2006	26.904.666	26.397.779	15.986.769	10.411.010	506.887	1.264.213
Additional priority (2.2.6), ERDF-Contribution financed under Art.53 of the INTERREG guidelines						
Strand C Co-ordination	1.111.111	1.111.111	1.000.000	111.111	0	0
2001	277.778	277.778	250.000	27.778	0	0
2002	833.333	833.333	750.000	83.333	0	0

* Although the participation of private actors under this programme is warmly welcome, their indicative financial contribution is hard to estimate in advance. The programme aims to obtain 5% of the national funds normally expected from public bodies to match ERDF for projects to come from private sector contributions. If this % target is not met, then other national funding sources would be expected to make up the rest.

As already mentioned in the chapter on eligibility and selection criteria (cp. chapter 3), the financial share of the three types of operations is not fixed in advanced. According to the INTERREG IIIC Programme, the share of RFOs may vary between 50% and 80%, Individual Cooperation Projects may be funded by 10% to 30% of the programmes budget, for the Networks, a range of 10% to 20% is foreseen. The fact that the share of the different types of operations is not fixed leads to the consequence, that a financial breakdown per type of operation is not easy to calculate.

Depending on the relative weight of the types of operations, the amount of ERDF grants may vary:

Table 7: Budget – Breakdown of ERDF contribution per Type of Operation

North zone

€ 27.387.450	RFO	Individual	Network
Maximum RFO	80% : 21.909.960	10% : 2.738.745	10% : 2.738.745
Average RFO	65% : 17.801.842	20% : 5.477.490	15% : 4.108.118
Minimum RFO	50% : 13.693.725	30% : 8.216.235	20% : 5.477.490

South zone

€ 131.449.599	RFO	Individual	Network
Maximum RFO	80% : 105.159.679	10% : 13.144.960	10% : 13.144.960
Average RFO	65% : 85.442.239	20% : 26.289.920	15% : 19.717.440
Minimum RFO	50% : 65.724.799	30% : 39.434.880	20% : 26.289.920

East zone

€ 44.295.611	RFO	Individual	Network
Maximum RFO	80% : 35.436.489	10% : 4.429.561	10% : 4.429.561
Average RFO	65% : 28.792.147	20% : 8.859.122	15% : 6.644.342
Minimum RFO	50% : 22.147.806	30% : 13.288.683	20% : 8.859.122

West zone

€ 89.422.314	RFO	Individual	Network
Maximum RFO	80% : 71.537.852	10% : 8.942.231	10% : 8.942.231
Average RFO	65% : 58.124.504	20% : 17.884.463	15% : 13.413.347
Minimum RFO	50% : 44.711.157	30% : 26.826.694	20% : 17.884.463

6. Codification

In Annex IV of Commission Regulation (EC) No 438/2001 of 2 March 2001, the European Commission is giving a classification of areas of intervention. This classification is introduced to contribute “to clear communication on the various Community policies” and shall be mainly used for the communication to the Commission. The list of 14 basic categories is drawn from the types of activity carried out in earlier Objective 1 programmes.

INTERREG IIC does not fit directly into this classification. Operations under INTERREG IIC aim at “linking and promoting exchanges of experience and best practice from the types of activity supported under Objective 1 and 2 programmes, the INTERREG Community Initiative, the Urban Community Initiative and urban development, and the future regional innovative actions programme” (INTERREG IIC Communication, point 6). All Structural Funds related activities may be subject of INTERREG IIC operations, but the Operations themselves can hardly be categorised in this way.

The essential core of IIC measures is the “exchange of experience and best practice”. Operations of this kind can only fall under Category 4 “Miscellaneous” and code 414 “innovative actions” of Annex IV, Chapter 3, of the above-mentioned regulation.

For the information of the Commission and in order to relate INTERREG IIC operations to the Structural Funds activities, the classification of operation will be supplemented by a classification of the subject of exchange, according to Annex IV of Commission Regulation (EC) No 438/2001. All operations of this programme will be classified as follows:

Classification of the operation	Classification of the subject of exchange	Additional Information
414 for all activities under INTERREG IIC TA under rule 11,2: 411 TA under rule 11,3: 412, 413, 415	according to Annex IV of Commission Regulation (EC) No 438/2001	1. location: (a) urban, (b) rural or (c) not geographically limited 2. (a) environment as main focus (b) environment-friendly (c) environmentally neutral 3. (a) equality as main focus (b) positive in terms of equality (c) neutral

7. Publicity

7.1 Strategic objectives of the publicity plan

The overall aim of the publicity plan is to constantly provide different kinds of target groups with adequate and high-quality information about INTERREG IIIC. An efficient communication of information should both increase the public awareness about the programme as well as providing the stakeholders with accurate and reliable information and data on the programme. All information and publicity measures will take into account Article 46 of the Structural Fund Regulation (Council Regulation No. 1260/1999) and the Information and Publicity Measures Regulation (Commission Regulation No. 1159/2000).

Reflecting the specific nature of INTERREG III C with an administrative structure divided into four zones but interregional cooperation activities mainly going beyond the zone division it is especially important to assure consistent information on the programme throughout the eligible area. Therefore all information and publicity activities have to be closely coordinated between the four zones.

7.2 Responsibility

The publicity plan will be jointly implemented by the Managing Authorities respectively Joint Technical Secretariats of the four INTERREG IIIC programme zones. All information and publicity will be carried out under supervision of the monitoring and steering committees of the four zones. National stakeholders including the regions involved will play an important role when it comes to information activities in the respective participating countries.

7.3 Target group

The target group of the programme is compound and manifold. This implies that the information communicated to different stakeholders has to be adjusted to various needs.

Primarily information should be directed to potential as well as final beneficiaries becoming or being involved in operations within the programmes. Information should also be provided for on a regular basis to relevant public authorities on national, regional and local level, in order to e.g. achieve a full coverage when it comes to further dissemination of information in the participating countries. Economic and social partners as well as NGO's are parties that also should be included in frequent communication activities. By marketing the programme through different kinds of media the general public is also becoming aware of the role played by the European Union in co-operation with the Member States.

7.4 Information sources and means of communication

Information about the programme will be spread through a variety of channels in order to reach the different stakeholders and raise general awareness. A number of basic sources of information as well as some essential means of communicating this information serve as a basis for a constantly broad and a deep communication of programme-related information.

7.5 Sources of INTERREG III C information:

(A) Core documents

INTERREG IIIC Community Initiative Programmes (CIP): The work within the programme revolves around the Community Initiative Programmes of the four INTERREG IIIC zones, which are almost similar in content. All relevant information about the programme, e.g. topics for cooperation, types of operation as well as means of implementation are defined in these documents.

Programme Complements: The Programme Complements add more information to the programmes; especially final beneficiaries, criteria for project selection as well as for monitoring and evaluation are depicted.

(B) The joint INTERREG IIIC Internet portal

The four programme zones set up a joint Internet portal, which comprises a main section for general information on INTERREG IIIC and four sub-sections with special information for each programme zone. The Internet portal will be the main information source for the programme. It will be constantly updated and filled with all kinds of relevant information and data on e.g. ongoing activities and calls for proposals, as well as facts and figures about the programme and its implementation. Hyperlinks to other INTERREG programmes as well as to applicable sites of the EU and to relevant institutions and organisations will be also presented.

Target group: interested general public, potential final beneficiaries, Lead Partners and other partners working with the programme, stakeholders and programme owners.

Output indicator: number of visits to the website.

Result indicators: well informed potential and final beneficiaries, level of knowledge in the public on the programme, level of awareness of the general framework of the programme.

(C) Publications

Flyers and brochures: Printed flyers and brochures giving general information about the programme and its objectives, implementation, activities and results will be constantly produced in order to inform the public about INTERREG IIIC. The aim is to market the programme and its funding opportunities, and to generally encourage interest and participation in the programme. There will be both printed information material valid for all four zones and zone specific flyers and brochures.

Target group: potential beneficiaries, potential project partners, general public.

Output indicators: number of flyers produced, numbers of copies requested and distributed.

Result indicator: broader and better awareness of the general framework of the programme.

The INTERREG IIIC application and operation pack: The INTERREG IIIC application and operation pack will be published on the joint INTERREG IIIC website. Main documents in this pack will be the application manual, the operation manual, the application form, a practical guide for filling in the application form and various model contracts. The INTERREG IIIC application and operation pack will apply to all four zones.

The application manual is to be seen as an applicants' handbook for the application phase, which will be regularly updated and completed with relevant information. The application manual contains e.g. information about eligibility and selection criteria, the application procedure, the involvement of partners from third countries and the establishment of the partnership.

The operation manual in turn is to be seen as a handbook for both applicants as well as Lead partners and partners in INTERREG IIIC operations. It will also be regularly updated and completed with relevant information. The operation manual contains e.g. information about management and administration of INTERREG IIIC operations, monitoring and reporting procedures as well as publicity and information activities.

Target group: potential beneficiaries, lead partners and partners in operations.

Output indicator: number of application and operation packs downloaded, number of visits to the relevant website pages.

Result indicator: better quality of project applications, well prepared activity and final reports, high cost-effectiveness between implementation and administration costs in relation to programme work and produced outputs.

Specific publications: In connection to e.g. seminars, conferences, speeches, exhibitions and fairs a wide range of specific information material will be produced by the Joint Technical Secretariats and Managing Authorities in order to meet the needs of information at each specific occasion. Information material and reports produced by the final beneficiaries in the framework of their work will also be collected and distributed at appropriate occasions.

Target group: specific thematic or sector related potential final beneficiaries, Lead Partners and other partners working in related sectors.

Output indicator: number of copies distributed on average at each occasion.

Result indicator: well informed potential and final beneficiaries related to specific sectors, synergy and networking of final beneficiaries.

(D) The INTERREG IIIC Joint Technical Secretariats and Managing Authorities

The INTERREG IIIC Joint Technical Secretariats and Managing Authorities of the four programme zones will provide continuously information about the programmes. They could be contacted by telephone, fax, e-mail, via web sites as well as visits.

(E) Information- and partner-search forums

Information- and partners-search forums marketing the programme to applicants and potential final beneficiaries are planned.

<p><u>Target group:</u> interested general public, potential final beneficiaries. <u>Output indicator:</u> number of participants. <u>Result indicators:</u> well informed potential and final beneficiaries, level of knowledge in the public on the programme, level of awareness of the general framework of the programme.</p>
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(F) Lead partner seminars

Seminars on management and administration of INTERREG IIIC operations will be organised for lead partners of approved operations. Information about e.g. reporting and monitoring procedures will be given, as well as information about administrative, legal and practical matters of relevance concerning project co-ordination and management.

<p><u>Target group:</u> Lead partners. <u>Output indicator:</u> number of Lead partners participating. <u>Result indicator:</u> well prepared activity and financial reports, high cost-effectiveness between implementation and administration costs in relation to programme work and produced outputs at project and programme level.</p>
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(G) Participation in external events

The programme will be marketed at several occasions like conferences, seminars, exhibitions and fairs organised by different organisations or networks active in the field of regional policy. At these occasions information will be given on e.g. funding opportunities and application procedures. On occasions of national relevance, information will be provided mainly by national stakeholders. At transnational events, the members of the Managing Authorities and Joint Technical Secretariat will promote the programme depending on staff resources and travel limitations.

<p><u>Target group:</u> international potential beneficiaries, all parties interested in INTERREG IIIC. <u>Output indicator:</u> number of events the Managing Authorities / Joint Technical Secretariats have participated in. <u>Result indicator:</u> well informed potential and final beneficiaries, level of knowledge in the public on the programme, level of awareness of the general framework of the programme.</p>
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(H) Media

Press releases and other kind of information to the media will be provided for when issues of interest to the general public or to experts so arise.

Target group: press directed at regional and transnational issues, sector specific media.

Output indicator: number of articles published.

Result indicator: better knowledge and awareness of the programme and of the role played by the European Union's ERDF programmes.

8. Information System

The INTERREG IIIC programmes will develop a common database for the administration of operations, which facilitates the generation of data files that support the requirements of the file interface of the Structural Funds common (SFC) database. The financial data in the project administration database will be organised by taking into account the 'Vademecum for the Programming Period 2000-2006'.

During the application phase the indicative budgets of applications will be compiled in financial tables. The total budget will be broken down by topics for cooperation and types of operation. During the selection process the tables can have the status 'proposed plans', 'programme complements' or 'decided plans'. It will be possible to generate PG-files from the database. The version-management will be taken into account.

During the reporting phase requests for payments from operations will be gathered for each reporting period. The operations will be assigned to topic for cooperation and types of operation. From this information DP-files can be generated.

The next step will be the payment phase when after checking the financial reports payments of EU funding will be carried out. All payments will be registered in the database. Also the initially agreed budgets of the operations will be kept in the database for comparison. All data will be related to topics for cooperation and types of operation. From it a RE-file will be produced for each payment. As there will be no advance payments under INTERREG IIIC FC-files are not foreseen.

Data concerning national co-financing will be gathered in the database and transferred to MO-files.

The database will allow a recording of all changes. Thus, it is possible to get information on the budgetary status for each single day. From it AR-files can be produced for the annual and final report.

The generation of interface files and the submission to the SFC-database will be recorded in the database.

When establishing the INTERREG IIIC administration databases for operations following conventions will be taken into account:

- Convention 1: "The internal reference codes for each operational level should have only numerical values. This would facilitate the data extraction in respect of the file interface specifications";
- Convention 2: "In all the cases the references (codes and description) which characterise the initial structure of the assistance have to remain unchanged in the revised financing plan";
- Convention 3: "Presentation of amounts into the financial reports. For reporting purposes, amounts will be in Euro. Financial reports should be internally consistent (for example amounts at priority level should equal the sum of the amounts at measure level)".

For creating the file names of interface files the rules of file interface 1.2 will be taken into account. The character code ISO 8859 will be applied. Language will be English.

Files generated from the database will be submitted via email.

The development of the administration databases for operations will take place during 2002. New requirements for the file interface can still be taken into account.