

Programme Manual

**For the Restricted Call for Proposals for Selection
of the Operations of Strategic Importance (OSI)
Interreg VI-A Latvia–Lithuania Programme
2021–2027**

Version 1

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Table of Contents

Abbreviations	4
1. Introduction	5
2. General information about the Programme	5
2.1 Interreg VI-A Latvia-Lithuania Programme 2021-2027	5
2.2 Programme area	5
2.3 Programme funding	6
2.4 Programme priorities	6
2.5 Programme language	6
2.6 Management bodies	7
2.7 Legal framework	8
2.8 Use of Joint Electronic Monitoring System	9
2.9 Operation of Strategic Importance and Restricted Call for Proposals	9
3. Programme priorities and supported activities	10
3.1 Priority I	11
3.2 Ineligible activities	14
4. Project requirements	15
4.1 General requirements	15
4.2 Project partnership	17
4.3 Project duration	19
4.4 Programme and project intervention logic	20
4.5 Project management and communication	24
4.6 Budget planning	25
4.7 Strategic framework	26
4.7.1 Horizontal principles	26
4.7.2 New European Bauhaus	27
4.7.3 EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region	27
4.7.4 State Aid	27
5. Application and selection procedure	28
5.1 Application requirements	28
5.2 Assessment of application	29
5.2.1 Eligibility assessment criteria	30
5.2.2 Quality assessment criteria	31
5.3 Selection and decision making	36
5.4 Contracting	36
6. Project implementation	38
6.1 Coordination and management	38
6.2 Project changes	39
6.2.1 Deviations	40
6.2.2 Minor changes	45
6.2.3 Major changes	46
6.3 Project reporting and payments	50
6.4 Publicity requirements	53

6.5	Project closure and durability of project results	62
6.6	Controls and audits	64
7.	Project budget.....	67
7.1	General requirements	67
7.2	Eligibility of costs	68
7.3	Simplified cost options	69
7.5	Description of cost categories	70
7.5.1	CC1 Staff costs.....	70
7.5.2	CC2 Office and administration costs	71
7.5.3	CC3 Travel and accommodation costs	72
7.5.4	CC4 External expertise and services costs.....	72
7.5.5	CC5 Equipment costs.....	74
7.6	De-commitment	76
7.7	Irregularities and recovery of expenditure	76
8.	Resolution of complaints.....	78
Annex I.	Programme output and result indicators	81

Abbreviations

AA	Audit Authority
CC	Cost Category
EC	European Commission
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
EU	European Union
EUSBSR	European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region
GoA	Group of Auditors
Programme	Interreg VI-A Latvia–Lithuania Programme 2021-2027 CCI 2021TC16RFCB026
JEMS	Joint Electronic Monitoring System
JS	Joint Secretariat
LP	Lead Partner
MA	Managing Authority
MC	Monitoring Committee
NA	National Authority
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OSI	Operation of Strategic Importance
PP	Project Partner

Restricted Call for Proposals for Selection

1. Introduction

The Programme Manual is based on the Interreg VI-A Latvia–Lithuania Programme 2021-2027 CCI 2021TC16RFCB026, which was approved by the EC on 4 October 2022 with Programme amendments approved on 6 December 2023. This is the main guidance document for the LP/PPs on the process of application, implementation, monitoring, reporting and finalisation of the project.

The Programme Manual is issued for each call for proposals. JS updates the Programme Manual throughout the programming period and the LP/PPs must follow the latest approved version of the of the Programme Manual of the respective call for proposals (available on the Programme's website www.latlit.eu)

This Programme Manual is for the project applying for the restricted call for the selection of the Operation of Strategic Importance (OSI).

2. General information about the Programme

2.1 Interreg VI-A Latvia-Lithuania Programme 2021-2027

The Programme is implemented under the ETC goal of European Structural and Investment funds of Cohesion Policy. The Programme's objective is to contribute to the sustainable and cohesive socio-economic development of the Programme regions by helping to make them more competitive and attractive for living, studying, working and visiting.

The Programme continues cooperation started during 2000–2006 programming period, Latvia–Lithuania Cross Border Cooperation Programme under ETC Objective 2007–2013 and Interreg V-A Latvia–Lithuania Programme 2014–2020.

The Programme document is available on the Programme's website www.latlit.eu.

2.2 Programme area

The Programme area covers the western and southern parts of Latvia and northern part of Lithuania and includes following NUTS 3 regions¹:

- Latvia: Kurzeme, Zemgale, Latgale
- Lithuania: Klaipėda, Telšiai, Šiauliai, Panevėžys and Utena counties.

¹ The Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics established to provide a single uniform breakdown of territorial units for regional statistics for the European Union (ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ramon/).



Figure No. 1. **Programme area**

2.3 Programme funding

ERDF co-finances the Programme. 42 421 961,00 EUR from the ERDF is allocated for projects. The Programme co-finances 80% of the total eligible project costs and the LP/PPs' own contribution must be 20% of the total eligible project costs.

2.4 Programme priorities

The Programme has four priorities:

- 1) Priority I. Capacity building and people-to-people cooperation.
- 2) Priority II. Green, resilient, and sustainable development.
- 3) Priority III. Fair and inclusive society.
- 4) Priority IV. Economic potential of tourism and heritage.

Restricted call for the selection of the OSI project is open for Priority I. Capacity building and people-to-people cooperation.

2.5 Programme language

English is the official language of the Programme. All official documentation (Application Form, Partner and Project Reports, Lead Partner/Project Partner Statements, etc.) and official communication between the LP and the PPs and the Programme management bodies must be in English. However, LP/PPs are allowed to submit supporting documents (building/technical documentation, cost estimations, agendas of local events, invoices, etc.) in national languages (Latvian or Lithuanian).

2.6 Management bodies

The following bodies are involved in the management of the Programme:

Monitoring Committee. The MC ensures the quality and effectiveness of the Programme, performing the duties listed in Article 38 of the Common Provisions Regulation and Article 22 of the Interreg Regulation. It approves Programme implementation procedures, reviews the Programme's implementation and achievement of its objectives. It assesses necessary changes in the Programme, and selects projects for funding. The MC consists of representatives from national, regional and/or local authorities, economic and social partners as well as civil society from Latvia and Lithuania.

National Authorities. The NAs coordinate the implementation of the Programme on behalf of the Member States. Functions of the NAs are carried out by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania and by the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia.

National sub-committees. The national sub-committees are established in Latvia and Lithuania to support work of NAs and/or the MC. They ensure wider participation of line ministries, regional and/or local authorities, economic and social partners, and other stakeholders during the implementation period of the Programme.

Managing Authority. The MA is responsible for the day-to-day sound financial and operational management of the Programme and the project quality assessment. The MA, based on the MC decision on project selection, issues decision on project approval and financing, signs the Subsidy Contract. It fulfils certifying functions and is responsible for the accuracy of expenditure statements and their compliance with the EU and national rules, makes payments to the LP, draws up and submits requests to the EC for ERDF co-financing payments and receives payments from the EC. Functions of the MA are carried out by the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia.

Joint Secretariat. The JS is the main contact point for the applicants, LP and PPs providing daily assistance during the preparation and implementation of projects. The JS carries out project assessment, monitoring and promotes the Programme. It assists the MA and the MC in performing their functions. Functions of the JS are carried out by the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia.

Contact details of the Joint Secretariat

Mailing address (official correspondence): Peldu street 25, Riga, LV-1050, Latvia

Office address: Doma laukums 8a, Riga, Latvia

E-mail: latlit@varam.gov.lv

Web: www.latlit.eu

The Programme has a Contact Point located in Vilnius, Lithuania, and it is hosted by the public entity Project Management Agency of the Ministry of Interior. The tasks of the JS and its Contact Point can vary during the Programme implementation cycle. These must include informing potential applicants about funding opportunities, helping potential applicants to prepare applications and LP/PPs to implement the projects. JS and Contact Point ensure project monitoring, assessing of project applications (at least, administrative and eligibility checks), informing about the Programme and its projects, and communicating its results in the Programme regions and at EU level.

Audit Authority. The AA carries out system audits to verify the effective functioning of the management and control system of the Programme, and audits of operations on an appropriate sampling basis to verify correctness of the declared project expenditures. Functions of the AA are

carried out by the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia.

Group of Auditors. The GoA assists the AA in carrying out system audits. It carries out the audits of projects limited to the LP/PPs, located in the territory of the respective Member State, represented by the member(s) of the GoA. The GoA consists of representatives from the AA and the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania.

National Control. The National Control verifies if the co-financed products and services have been delivered, if expenditures declared by the LP/PPs have been paid out and they comply with applicable legal framework and the Programme. In Latvia the National Control system is centralized and its functions are carried out by the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia. In Lithuania a decentralized system is established by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania.

For contact details of the Programme management bodies please see Programme website www.latlit.eu.

2.7 Legal framework

LP/PPs must respect applicable EU regulations, horizontal policies and national legislation, provisions of the Subsidy Contract and all practical information set out in the Programme Manual. Please see the list of legal frameworks below (in order of hierarchy):

- EU rules:
 - Common Provisions Regulation²,
 - ERDF Regulation³,
 - Interreg Regulation⁴,
 - Financial Regulation⁵,
 - Other applicable EU legislation, including the Community rules laying down provisions on public procurement and entry into the markets, on competition, on state aid, on protection of environment, on sustainable development and on the promotion of equality between men and women and non-discrimination, on the protection of natural persons regarding the processing of personal data, etc.
- Interreg VI-A Latvia-Lithuania Programme 2021-2027.
- Common rules established by the Member States in the MC – Programme Manual for the restricted call for the selection of the OSI of Interreg VI-A Latvia-Lithuania Programme 2021–2027 and other relevant Programme documents, its Annexes and guidance.
- Latvian and Lithuanian national legal framework.

² Regulation (EU) No 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R1060&qj100d=1654086756583>).

³ Regulation (EU) No 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund (eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R1058&qid=1654086837093).

⁴ Regulation (EU) No 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments (eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R1059&qid=1654086873309).

⁵ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj/eng>).

The hierarchy of rules sets out a priority of the EU legislation. Where no or no detailed provisions are stipulated in the EU rules, the Programme rules can be set up accordingly. National legislation only applies where specific issues are not regulated either by the EU legislation or the Programme rules.

For matters not covered by eligibility rules laid down in the Common Provisions Regulation, ERDF Regulation, Interreg Regulation or in rules established by the Programme, the national rules of the Member State in which the expenditure has incurred (paid out) must apply.

2.8 Use of Joint Electronic Monitoring System

JEMS is an online application and reporting system developed by INTERACT. It is used by the Programme for all official communication and for all steps of the application and implementation of a project. JEMS is available on the website <https://jems.latlit.eu>

“Guidance for JEMS” is available on the Programme’s website www.latlit.eu

2.9 Operation of Strategic Importance and Restricted Call for Proposals

Operation of Strategic Importance (OSI) will be developed on the basis of the cross-border area potential, challenges, needs and goals in the fields of strengthening civil protection crisis management and public awareness. Taking into account current geopolitical situation, cooperation of emergency services provides basis for safe and sustainable development of other sectors. Planned actions will contribute to the development of the Programme area through strategic cooperation in the above-mentioned fields and strengthening of resilience of the population across the border.

The selected OSI will serve as flagship for visibility and promotion purposes. It is expected that OSI will implement joint communication and dissemination actions. Programme bodies will provide support in these actions.

The OSI will be selected through the procedure of Restricted Call for Proposals. The launched Restricted Call for Proposals is limited to one OSI project application, due to its strategic importance and specific and unique functions related to the OSI thematics which fall under responsibility of designated institutions in both countries. Decision on selection of OSI project will be approved by the MC.

In this Restricted Call for Proposals for OSI, the full application shall be fully developed and submitted through JEMS under Priority 1, Specific Objective 1.1. OSI shall have strong contribution to the Programme specific objective 1.1, as well as the Programme output and result indicators.

3. Programme priorities and supported activities

The Programme is result oriented and thematically concentrated. Result orientation means that projects are targeted to achievement of the Programme output indicators, projects are expected to achieve results which are relevant to the target groups of the project and have long lasting effect on the Programme area.

Thematic concentration means that the Programme intervention is planned in restricted number of fields. Programme priorities are selected based on the Programme area characteristics, identified needs and challenges.

Restricted call for the selection of the OSI project is open under Priority I Capacity building and people-to-people cooperation Specific objective 1.1.

Priority I include one Programme SO. To measure the progress of SO the result indicators are defined. A set of output indicators is developed to measure the outputs produced by the projects. Detailed information on the Programme and project intervention logic is available in section 4.4 "Programme and project intervention logic" of the Programme Manual.

Table No. 1. Programme priority, SO and indicative financing available for project for restricted call for the OSI

Priority	Specific objective		Max ERDF per project (EUR)	Max total project budget (EUR)
1. Capacity building and people-to-people cooperation	1.1 Other actions to support better cooperation governance (ISO6.6)		2 700 000	3 370 000

3.1 Priority I

Capacity building and people-to-people cooperation

Specific objective 1.1 Other actions to support better cooperation governance (ISO6.6)

	Output indicators	Result indicators
Mandatory indicators:	Organisations cooperating across borders and Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects and Jointly developed solutions	Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion and Solutions taken up or upscaled by organisations

Maximal ERDF co-financing per project under SO 1.1	2 700 000 EUR
Maximal total project budget under SO 1.1	3 370 000 EUR

Based on existing **joint challenges** the Programme has identified that cross-border cooperation is necessary for establishment of joint networks to maintain accessibility of qualitative public services. It is also required to preserve unique socio-cultural environment and active citizenship by people-to-people activities, especially in remote areas.

The **aim of this specific objective** is to help local and regional authorities in the Programme area with cross-border cooperation to solve similar challenges caused by changes of population structure, regional disparities, global climate changes, environmental effects, new territorial and thematic settings.

It is expected that in the result of activities implemented by project would be improved capacity and developed mechanisms for cooperation among public institutions and entities at local and regional level, in rural areas and cities. Cross-border interaction among people and communities on both sides of the border would be enhanced, thus contributing to better understanding between the inhabitants of Latvia and Lithuania.

Given the joint challenges and the aim of the SO 1.1, OSI project should be developed to increase the level of regional security, to create or improve cross-border cooperation mechanisms and joint initiatives in the field of civil protection, to mobilise regional and local communities and actors and to increase overall level of public awareness and preparedness for potential emergency situations.

Indicative list of supported activities for SO 1.1 for OSI project (the list is not arranged in the order of priority):

- 1) Efficient joint solutions and pilot actions for development/improvement of mechanisms to increase preparedness for potential emergency situations, fostering civil protection mindset and resilience, increasing regional safety and public awareness in the respective field
 - integrated actions for simplification and reduction of administrative burden,
 - development of joint concepts, strategies, action plans, etc. for development/improvement of cross-border initiatives/mechanisms,
 - enhancing the adaptation and provision of joint mechanisms through pilot actions that tackle cross-border area obstacles, etc.
- 2) People-to-people actions and involvement of society in the field of civil protection and regional security with an aim to raise awareness level and mobilise local and regional communities
 - initiatives boosting activity of local civic society
 - organisation of joint trainings, workshops, and other events, etc.
- 3) Capacity building, transfer of good practices and development of necessary competences of authorities and other actors in the field of civil protection and regional security
 - development and implementation of training and mentoring activities as capacity raising initiative for authorities and other actors,
 - transfer of solutions, good practices and exchange of experience (among partners, in the Programme area and outside it), etc.

The project should use a suitable mix of the actions based on the project topic. The chosen actions must be relevant for achieving the Programme specific objective 1.1 and contributing to both output and result indicators.

Information on the Programme and project intervention logic please find in section 4.4 “Programme and project intervention logic” and Annex I “Programme output and result indicators” of the Programme Manual.

This Programme specific objective contributes to the actions of EUSBSR Policy Areas “Health”, “Culture” and “Secure”.

Specific rules for SO 1.1:

- 1) Project must contribute to both: mandatory Programme output indicator “Organisations cooperating across borders” with respective result indicator “Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion” and Programme output indicator “Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects” with respective result indicator “Solutions taken up or upscaled by organisations”.
- 2) Project activities and planned results must demonstrate cross-border cooperation nature. Detailed information on requirements for cross-border cooperation is in section 4.1 “General requirements” of the Programme Manual.
- 3) Project solutions and actions should be clearly justified, ready to be implemented and used during and after the end of the project.
- 4) Capacity building activities must contribute to the development of new or improvement of existing public services with new methods and approaches. Trainings or other activities aiming at the development of the basic skills (e.g., computer literacy, language, etc.) are not eligible.
- 5) If LP/PP intends to develop documentation in the project (e.g., action plan, recommendations, etc.), it must explicitly outline in the Application Form the purpose of the documentation, its intended audience, and how it will be utilized.

- 6) Project must ensure wide territorial coverage (as minimum all bordering regions with participation of at least 2 municipalities per each region per country) and involve at least 2-3 NGO's per country. Representatives of regions, municipalities and NGO's should be involved in implementation in activities which are relevant to them (for example, in creation/or in assessment of procedures and requirements targeting them, receive training on created procedures and regulations and on practical aspects of mass evacuation, as well as take part in executing mass evaluation simulations);
- 7) Project must ensure that mass evacuation simulations should target both countries in a balanced way, ensuring that at least 1 simulation is implemented in each country targeting balanced civil society coverage and wide representation of different groups of people (age, distance from evacuation routes, including persons with disabilities etc.). As minimum 150 persons should be targeted in organized simulations per country.
- 8) If stakeholders (e.g., national authorities, local municipalities, etc.) who would directly benefit from the project results are not involved in the project activities, the Application form must include an explicit information on who and how will use the project results during and after the project.
- 9) If development of ICT products (e.g., e-systems, databases, etc.) is planned in the project, approval from relevant authorities on development of such products must be submitted with the application, if required by national regulation.⁶
- 10) Purchase of equipment under this specific objective is only eligible if it is used for implementation of **joint cooperation project activities (core activities)**, its need is clearly justified (excluding equipment for administrative purposes) and it specifically contributes to the Programme specific objective 1.1 as set out in the Interreg Regulation.
- 11) Investments in infrastructure under CC6 are not supported.

⁶ In Latvia: Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 597 of 31 August 2021 "Procedures for Supervising Development Projects for State Information Systems".

3.2 Ineligible activities

Please note that activities listed below are not supported by the Programme:

- the decommissioning or the construction of nuclear power stations,
- investment to achieve the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from activities listed in Annex I to Directive 2003/87/EC,
- the manufacturing, processing and marketing of tobacco and tobacco products,
- an undertaking in difficulty, as defined in point (18) of Article 2 of Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014⁷,
- investment in airport infrastructure,
- investment in disposal of waste in landfill,
- investment increasing the capacity of facilities for the treatment of residual waste,
- investment related to production, processing, transport, distribution, storage or combustion of fossil fuels,
- purchase of luxury goods,
- purchase of real estate,
- construction of roads,
- purchase of not specialised cars,
- political and religious activities,
- investments in infrastructure and equipment outside the Programme territory⁸,
- creation of stand-alone logos or designs for projects use of which is limited to the lifetime of the project,
- creation of stand-alone project websites outside www.latlit.eu, unless it directly serves for reaching of the project results and exceeds lifetime of the project.

⁷ Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty Text with EEA relevance.

⁸ In exceptional cases, investments in infrastructure and equipment outside the Programme area could be eligible, if they are well justified and contribute to and directly support project outputs and results.

4. Project requirements

This chapter provides details of how to apply to the Programme. The “Guidance for JEMS” on the website www.latlit.eu of the Programme will tell you how to fill in and submit your project application.

The Programme highly recommends applicant to prepare project application in a close consultation process with the JS. But please note that the JS cannot directly assess application at this stage.

A project should be defined by the need to achieve **defined objectives** with **limited resources** (budget and staff) in a **set period of time**.

The Programme assess(es) all stages of the project lifecycle, based on the following criteria:

- whether outcomes justify resources used (**efficiency**), and
- whether activities carried out really contribute to objectives (**effectiveness**).

The complexity of the project should decide its length, budget and management practices. Two crucial tasks of an applicant are:

- finding a balance between the project scope, costs and time, and
- ensuring the quality of the project outputs and results.

4.1 General requirements

The Programme focuses on activities contributing to the sustainable and cohesive socio-economic development of the Programme area by helping to make it more competitive and attractive for living, studying, working and visiting.

The Programme will support the project if that fulfils all of these criteria. The project has to be:

- 1) relevant to the Programme area,
- 2) clearly linked to the Programme,
- 3) clearly expressing the need for cross-border cooperation,
- 4) ensuring durability of the results,
- 5) having added value and innovative approach,
- 6) prominently communicating about project activities and results to ensure wide information dissemination and project visibility,
- 7) contributing to the horizontal principles and wider strategies,
- 8) involving relevant PPs that jointly contribute to project implementation,
- 9) ensuring balanced partnership,
- 10) having clear and logically interconnected work plan,
- 11) having coherent and proportionate project budget to the proposed work plans, main outputs and results.

For more information on project assessment criteria and assessment procedure, please see section 5.2 “Assessment of application” of the Programme Manual.

Relevance to the Programme area

Project must be relevant for the Programme area and address challenges and opportunities common to both PPs in the field of civil protection. The project has to demonstrate its strategic importance and relevance for the Programme regions and beyond and should demonstrate how the results will be used and transferred to a wider level.

Clear links to the Programme

The link between the project and the Programme is one of the most important aspects for approval of the project. Therefore, the applicant should ensure that the project's overall objective is coherent with the Programme priority 1. Project **specific objective, outputs and results must contribute to the Programme specific objective 1.1, output indicators and result indicators.**

Please find more information on the Programme intervention logic in section 4.4 "Programme and project intervention logic" of the Programme Manual.

Cross-border cooperation

The OSI project should address common regional development challenges in the field of civil protection and response to emergency situations. It also can exploit the untapped development potentials in the Programme area. The LP and PP must attempt to solve the issues together by using cross-border approach.

The cross-border cooperation should bring added value and positive impact for the Programme area, and have a long-lasting effect after the end of the project. The applicant should clearly demonstrate that the project objectives cannot be reached by partner only from one country. The LP/PP and/or target groups, the project area and the Programme territory must benefit from the cross-border cooperation.

Project must meet at least three out of four cooperation criteria. Joint development, joint implementation and joint financing are **mandatory**, while joint staffing is optional.

- 1) **Joint development** (mandatory). The LP and PP must jointly develop project. It must clearly integrate ideas, expectations, priorities and contributions from all PPs. LP and PP must share understanding of the project objective and contribute to achieving of its results. Project partnership should be balanced in terms of project objectives. Plus, PPs must benefit from the project and also bring their knowledge and competence to the project and its area.
- 2) **Joint implementation** (mandatory). The LP and PP must jointly coordinate and implement activities of their project. The division of tasks and responsibilities must be balanced, the activities of each partner must be clearly linked, and the partnership must communicate regularly.
- 3) **Joint financing** (mandatory). The budgets of LP and PP together form the joint budget of the whole project.
- 4) **Joint staffing** (optional). The functions of the project staff on either side of the border should not duplicate and the staff on both sides of the border should work together on the project.

Durability of the results

Project should aim to produce results and establish structures that can exist beyond its' lifetime. The benefits of the project must not stop as soon as the project ends. Therefore, LP/PP should plan actions to ensure continuation of knowledge, services and benefits developed during the project. Activities to ensure long-term effects of the project must form the relevant work package. The partnership should strategically plan long-term effectiveness of the work plan.

Applicant should consider following aspects of the results' durability when planning the project:

- 1) **Ownership.** Who and how will support financial and institutional maintaining of the outputs and/or deliverables? How the outputs or deliverables will be integrated into activities of partners' organisations?

- 2) Durability. Who and how will ensure that the final beneficiaries and target groups will use the reached outputs and/or deliverables and the effect on the Programme area will be long-lasting?
- 3) Transferability. Who and how will ensure that the target groups in other areas will adapt the project outputs and/or deliverables? What will be done to ensure that the target groups are aware of them?
- 4) The Programme has specific requirements on the durability of the project results that also must be respected. For more information please see section 6.5 “Project closure and durability of project results” of the Programme Manual.

Please note that if there will be equipment purchased, the applicant must provide information on the ownership and maintenance of it after the end of the project. .i

Added value and innovative approach

Project must demonstrate innovative approach. It must develop new solutions that go beyond existing practice in the sector and/or Programme area and avoid duplication with already implemented projects.

The project may use synergies with other past or current EU and other projects. This should be clearly described in the Application Form.

Contribution to the horizontal principles

Project must make a positive or neutral contribution to the horizontal principles (equal opportunities and non-discrimination, equality between men and women, and sustainable development). Otherwise, the project will not be selected for funding. For more detailed information please see subsection 4.7.1 “Horizontal principles” of the Programme Manual.

4.2 Project partnership

Size of the partnership

OSI project partners, one of them acting as LP and other one as PP, are State Fire and Rescue Service of Latvia and Fire and Rescue Department under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania as they hold unique and exclusive functions in the field of civil protection and response in emergency situations. During the implementation period of the project, partners may decide to involve additional partner(s), provided it is strongly justified, new partner brings added value and unique competences to the project, and it is the best for the achieving of the project outputs and results, Their involvement has to be justified.

Geographical eligibility of LP/PPs

OSI project involves **at least one Lithuanian and at least one Latvian** partner, which are registered or permanently located and actively operate in the Programme area. PPs from both countries should be represented.

During the implementation period of the project, project partners may decide to involve additional partner(s). Partners registered outside the Programme area can participate only if it is crucial for achieving of the project objectives, and competence or knowledge of such partners do not exist in the Programme area. All benefits from the activities should remain in the Programme area. Activities carried out by the partners from outside the Programme area have to contribute to the development of the Programme area that is specified in section 2.2 “Programme area” of the Programme Manual.

Capacities and motivation of LP/PPs

Project partnership must indicate that they have sufficient cross-border representation and necessary experience and expertise in the field of management of EU and/or international projects. LP and PP also have to allocate sufficient financial, technical and human resources that are relevant to the complexity of the project.

LP and PP have to contribute to the project financially. That should be confirmed in the Lead /Project Partner Statements which are a part of the project application.

Balanced partnership

The partnership should demonstrate that it is balanced and that partners complement each other, and play a defined role in the project. The Programme territory should benefit from this cooperation.

Lead partner

LP takes the overall responsibility for development and implementation of the project and sound financial management of the allocated funds⁹. It acts as a link between PP and the Programme management bodies, submits the project application. It is also responsible for:

- signing the Subsidy Contract with the MA,
- concluding the Partnership Agreement with the PP,
- overall managing of the project,
- ensuring communication with the JS/MA,
- establishing adequate project monitoring and evaluation system that ensures timely delivery of project outputs and results in a proper quality,
- delivering of the project outputs,
- delivering of the project reports and documentation,
- ensuring that the certified expenditure for LP and PP match activities outlined in the approved Application Form and Subsidy Contract,
- submitting Project Reports,
- requesting payments and afterwards forwarding them to the PP,
- observing the project spending forecast.

Project partner

PP must contribute to the development and the implementation of the project. The PP undertakes sound financial management and administrative tasks at its own level, participates in the project preparation, implementation and closure in accordance with the Partnership Agreement.

⁹Article 23 and Article 26 of Interreg Regulation.

Requirements for partnership eligibility

OSI project partners are State Fire and Rescue Service of Latvia and Fire and Rescue Department under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania. Both institutions are public authorities and, as such, are eligible organizations for participation in the Programme.

During the implementation period of the project, project partners may decide to involve additional partner(s).

1. The following organisations are eligible to apply as a PP:

1.1 Public authorities (national, regional and local authorities).

1.2 Public equivalent bodies. Meaning any legal entity:

- established for the specific purpose of meeting the needs for the general interest and not having an industrial or commercial character*,
- having legal personality, and
 - financed for the most part by the state, regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed under public law, or
 - subject to management supervision by those bodies, or
 - having an administrative, managerial, or supervisory board where more than half of the members are appointed by the state, regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed by public law.

1.3 NGOs. Within the framework of the Programme NGO means a legal body having legal personality and established for the specific purpose of meeting the needs for the general interest; and not having an industrial or commercial character.

* Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC¹⁰.

2. PP must be a registered legal entity (i.e. registered in the Register of Legal Entities in Lithuania (www.registrucentras.lt) or in the Register of Enterprises of the Republic of Latvia (www.ur.gov.lv) and must have a bank account.

If branch division situated in the Programme's area is responsible for the implementation of the project, it must have legal status and own bank account as stipulated above. The project must clearly describe how such PP will organise implementation and management of the project and will ensure that the benefits from the activities remain in the Programme area.

4.3 Project duration

Project work plan must be implemented within the project duration which strongly depends on the project objectives. **The maximum project duration is 30 months.** Duration may be prolonged in exceptional and justified cases.

¹⁰ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014L0024>

4.4 Programme and project intervention logic

The structure of project must follow the intervention logic and present how work packages, activities and deliverables will lead to achieving of the project outputs and results (Fig. No. 2). Project intervention logic must address the challenges and opportunities faced by LP/PP in the field of civil protection and/or target audiences in the Programme territory. The change that will be achieved by the project should be clearly identified.

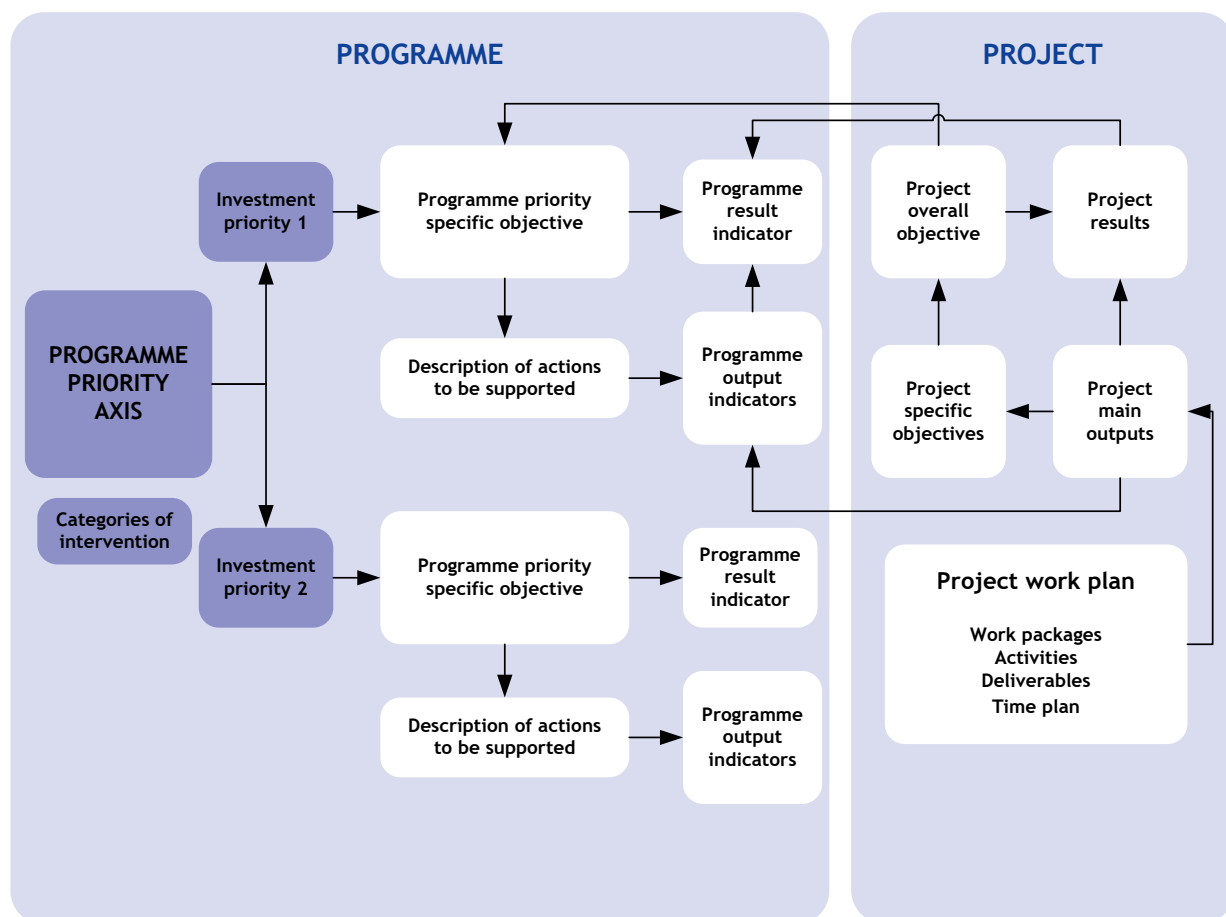


Figure No. 2. **Programme and project intervention logic**

Project specific objective 1.1., main outputs, results and time plan must have logical link with the work plan. The work plan clearly has to show how the project objectives will be achieved and results reached. It is very important for the OSI applicant to clearly define project main outputs and results, contributing to the achievement of the project overall objective. The project overall objective must be in line with the Programme specific objective 1.1. of the Programme priority I and respective result and output indicators.

The Programme has defined a set of indicators to capture outputs and results achieved by the projects. Output indicators measure the specific deliverables of the intervention. Result indicators measure the effects of the interventions supported with particular reference to the direct addresses, population targeted or users of infrastructure.

Please read detailed information on Programme output and result indicators in the Annex I “Programme output and result indicators” of the Programme Manual! The provided

information is crucial for the planning, achieving and reporting of the main outputs and results of the project.

Project must contribute to achievement of the following output indicators:

- 1) “Organisations cooperating across borders (RCO87)” with corresponding result indicator “Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion (RCR84)”.
- 2) “Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects” with corresponding result indicator “Solutions taken up or upscaled by organisations”.
- 3) “Jointly developed solutions” with corresponding result indicator “Solutions taken up or upscaled by organisations”.

Project overall objective

Project has to have its main objective which is directly related to the Programme specific objective 1.1.. It relates to the strategic aspects of the project and must provide overall context for what the project is trying to achieve.

The project overall (main) objective:

- has to be realistic and achievable by the end of the project,
- has to specify who needs project results and in which territory,
- has to be measurable.

Project specific objective

Project specific objective is a statement describing what the OSI project will achieve during its implementation in the field of civil protection. It refers to the project's main outputs. It must be measurable and by the end of the project it must be possible to conclude whether the specific objective was achieved. Project can have several specific objectives.

Activities leading to the achievement of the specific objective should be grouped to one work package. This means that the project will have as many work packages as many specific objectives are defined.

Project main outputs

Project main output is a final product of the project activities implemented under work package. The main outputs need to be consistent with and contribute to the achieving of the project specific objectives.

Measurement units of the project main outputs are pre-defined for each specific objective by the Programme. For more information, please see chapter 3 “Programme priorities and supported activities” and Annex I “Programme output and result indicators” of the Programme Manual.

Project results

In the context of the Programme, project result is the immediate advantage of carrying out the project. It tells about the benefit of using the project's main outputs and indicates the change the project is aiming for.

The project results must be coherent with the project overall objective and quantify the degree to which the objective will be achieved in the project timeframe.

Measurement units of the project results are pre-defined for each specific objective of the Programme. For more information, please see chapter 3 “Programme priorities and supported activities” and Annex I “Programme output and result indicators” of the Programme Manual.

Communication objective and target audience

The communication objective should contribute to the achieving of the project specific objective. It aims to change behaviour, knowledge or belief of the target audience in the field of civil protection. Considering limited resources of the project, the communication objective should be well-tailored to target the specific audiences very precisely.

When defining communication objectives, the strategic importance of the OSI project should be considered and communication objectives should be defined to ensure prominent and higher visibility communication actions to ensure that information about the strategic project and its achievements is widely disseminated and reaches the vast majority of target groups, citizens and the general public.

The communication objectives should be SMART, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound.

Project must have at least one project communication objective.

Target audiences relevant to the project must be identified in the same section. Communication target audiences should match target groups defined in the Application Form section C.2.4. OSI project should plan activities raising awareness and level of knowledge of general public on topics related to civil protection and actions during emergency situations.

The applicant must explain in the Application Form:

- Why it is necessary to reach out to the specific target groups.
- How they will reach the target audiences.
- What communication channels and what communication messages will they use for the specific target audience.

Project work plan

The work plan is a part of the project Application Form. It includes information on activities and deliverables that have to be implemented to deliver project main outputs and achieve project objectives. The work plan is prepared for the whole project implementation period. It serves as a basis for project implementation, reporting, monitoring and financial control and audit after the project is approved. The work plan has to be prepared as thoroughly as possible. Changes in it during the project implementation, except some minor deviations, need prior approval by the JS, MA or MC.

Please find more information on the possible project changes in section 6.2 “Project changes” of the Programme Manual.

All project activities should lead to the achievement of the main outputs of the project. The related activities and deliverables should be grouped into work packages. Each project specific objective must have its work package. **The programme recommends not to have more than 2-3 work packages in the project.**

Only thematic work packages should be used, i.e. there must be no work packages that would be devoted for project management, investments or communication only.

Project activity

Project activity is a specific task performed by using project resources. It is the main implementation step that contributes to the development of the outputs. LP and PP must jointly develop and implement the activities.

Each project activity must have title, description, start and end periods and involved partners.

The applicant should answer to “Five Ws and How” when describing project activities (who, what, when, where, why, how). They should explain in detail why the activities are needed to deliver the outputs of the work package, what is the scope of the activity, and how LP and PP will be involved in each activity.

From the description of the activity, it must be clear what should be achieved to consider that the activity was completed successfully.

Project deliverable

Project deliverable is a side-product or service of the project that contributes to the development of a project main output.

An activity can have one or more deliverables. Milestones of activity implementation should be identified as tangible deliverables thus allowing to monitor success of the activity's implementation. The Programme recommends to design deliverables as efficiently as possible and to have not more than 4-6 deliverables per activity. Each project deliverable must have title, description, delivery period and specified responsible partners. If there is not enough space for description of deliverable, please specify information in the description of activity.

The description of the deliverable must provide clear information on what is planned in the project, who it is for, and why it is being planned. Below are provided some examples of the possible project deliverables. Types of deliverables are not limited to specified examples.

Table No. 2. **Examples of project deliverables**

Examples of deliverables	Main elements in description of deliverables
Event	Topic of the event and provisional place (Latvia or Lithuania), duration of the event (number of days), approximate number of participants, purpose of the event, target group (please specify if mixed groups with participants from Latvia and Lithuania are planned).
Purchase of equipment	Short description of planned equipment, its purpose, justification that it will be used for implementation of core activities, link to the list of equipment that is in the attachments.
IT solution (database, application, etc.)	Name of solution, scope, content, end users, promotion channels.
Video	Content, duration, language(s), target group, promotion channels.
Brochure	Content, language(s), scope, target group, promotion channels.
Development of document/concept	Name of document, purpose, scope, language, end users, information on endorsement of the document by responsible authorities, if applicable, or the document's adoption by LP/PP institution for their work or by other adopting organizations.

Investments

Investments can be financed only if they are necessary for achieving of the project objectives, their durability is guaranteed, cross-border relevance is evident and it is used for implementation of project core activities. The fixed investments in equipment (with costs planned under CC5) refer to the outputs of the project, which remain in use by the LP/PP and/or target groups after completion of the project.

Time plan

Project time plan should be realistic and all project activities should be implemented, deliverables delivered, planned project outputs reached within planned project duration. Don't leave implementation of activities and deliverables for the last reporting period.

For more information on achievement of the project results please see Annex I "Programme output and result indicators" of the Programme Manual.

Please note that the project time plan table is automatically generated from thematic work packages in the Application Form.

4.5 Project management and communication

Project management

All information of how the project will be managed should be provided the Application Form. In no case project management should be indicated as a separate management work package.

The project should demonstrate that the partnership has thought through the implementation of the project, is aware of the administrative requirements and has planned resources needed for coordination. Please consider following when planning:

- How partners will be coordinate the project, i.e. distribution of responsibilities for coordination, management structures, internal communication, etc.
- How partners will ensure quality of the project, i.e. specific approaches, processes and responsible LP/PP, etc.
- How partners will organize the financial management and reporting for activities and budget within the partnership and to the Programme, i.e. how the responsibilities, deadlines in financial flows, reporting flows, project related transfers, reclaims, etc. will be defined.

For more information on the Programme requirements to the project management please see section 6.1 "Coordination and management" of the Programme Manual.

Project communication

The project communication is an important tool in the dissemination of the project results, ensuring their long-term use and replication. Active involvement and contribution of LP/PP should be ensured. Project is expected to produce effective and durable communication tools that present added value for the target group.

The project must consider following when setting-up project communication plan:

- Communication requires good planning and sufficient financial and human resources.
- Project funded by the Programme must make its outputs freely available to general public provided they don't have limited access status.

- General approach of the project communication, strategies that will be used, channels that will be employed, division of the responsibilities must be described in project Application Form. LP and PP should actively participate and take responsibility for the ensuring publicity of the project. The Programme recommends to define this general approach before setting-up communication objectives and activities in the thematic work packages.
- **Project must have at least one project communication objective and communication activities embedded in the thematic work packages.**
- The project has clearly to acknowledge the ERDF co-financing and follow visibility requirements for all co-financed visibility, transparency and communication activities¹¹. Project should have a set of **mandatory communication activities and/or deliverables** to highlight the EU funding. The minimal Programme publicity requirements are specified in section 6.4 “Publicity requirements” of the Programme Manual.

The Programme has a **strict approach to promotional materials** (e.g., “gadgets”, “giveaways” or “souvenirs”). Only promotional material specifically required for reaching one of the defined target groups and objectives may be produced by projects. Any promotional material has to be planned in the approved Application Form. For more details please see section 6.4 “Publicity requirements” of the Programme Manual.

4.6 Budget planning

The project budget should be based on the objectives and planned activities, and must ensure that the project activities are cost-effective.

The applicant must consider project **budget size limit** for project specified in chapter 3 “Programme priorities and supported activities”.

LP and PP should be involved in the preparation of the project budget, and take responsibility to develop their project budgets according to the market prices in their countries. The budget plan should be as accurate as possible.

In the project Application Form the project budget is broken down in several dimensions (by partners and by reporting periods). This ensures that all aspects of the project budget are considered. The individual partner budgets are at the same time a useful tool for the LP to keep the overview of to which extent PPs fulfil their obligations.

When preparing the project budget the applicant has to:

- Plan costs according to the market prices in PPs’ countries. Provide breakdown of costs and justify planned amounts. When it comes to equipment, explain on the required specific functionalities to justify the selected price-category. Additionally, for certain equipment or services where it is not possible to identify average market price via publicly available sources, provide commercial offers to justify planned costs.
- Plan sufficient financial resources to cover costs of project activities. The PPs will have to pre-finance project expenses from their own financial resources. The ERDF co-financing will be reimbursed after the National control and the JS/MA check each Project Report and confirm that the requested ERDF co-financing is ready for payment.
- Plan costs for informative posters, plaques and other publicity measures that are necessary for meeting the Programme requirements specified in section 6.4 “Publicity requirements”.

¹¹ Article 47 of Common Provisions Regulation.

- Plan costs for National control for Lithuanian PP (approximately 3-4% of LP/PP budget). Costs for National control for Latvian PP are covered by state budget.
- Indicate costs for project activities precisely within the cost categories and provide link to a respective deliverable for which costs are planned.

The project budget should only include realistic costs for the project activities and main outputs. The project spending forecast from the Application Form is crucial for the Programme implementation. Therefore, the project must:

- carefully prepare a realistic spending forecast,
- be ready to start project implementation as soon as possible but not later than a month after project Subsidy Contract is signed,
- ensure regular and timely reporting.

For more information on the requirements to the project budget please see chapter 7 “Project budget” of the Programme Manual.

4.7 Strategic framework

4.7.1 Horizontal principles

Projects has to be in line with three horizontal principles of the Programme: 1) sustainable development, 2) equal opportunities and non-discrimination, and 3) equality between men and women. The Programme will assess the contribution to its horizontal principles during the assessment process. The Programme will not select project for the funding with a direct negative impact on its horizontal principles.

Sustainable development

The Programme aims to ensure that all its projects are socially, ecologically, culturally, and economically sustainable. The impact on the environment, climate and human wellbeing should be positive. This horizontal principle is related to making decisions in a way that economic, ecological and social effects of each decision are taken into account. Green Public Procurement, nature-based solutions, lifecycle costing criteria, standards going beyond regulatory requirements, avoiding negative environmental impacts, climate proofing and ‘energy efficiency first principle’ etc. should be used when relevant. The actions that Programme supports cannot have a significant negative impact on the environment and are fully compatible with the “Do No Significant Harm” principle.

Equal opportunities and non-discrimination

Respecting the fundamental rights¹², guaranteeing equal opportunities and preventing discrimination are important principles in all Programme stages. No-one should be discriminated based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation. Instead, Programme and project activities should, where possible, increase the possibilities of all groups to participate in the society.

Equality between men and women

In addition to the general principle of non-discrimination the Programme will pay attention to equality between men and women. The Programme will assess the relevance of measures to promote gender

¹² In accordance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and in compliance with Article 9 of Common Provisions Regulation.

equality and their impact on the achievement of the objectives set out by the Programme. It is important to ensure that equal rights and responsibilities, equal access to resources and project outputs, and opportunities to use them are granted to everyone.

4.7.2 New European Bauhaus

The New European Bauhaus is a creative and interdisciplinary initiative that connects the European Green Deal to our living spaces and experiences. This movement proposes a new way of delivering sustainable development and bringing the positive experience closer to citizens. It should be affordable, accessible and co-created with people.

Core values of the New European Bauhaus:

- Sustainable, in harmony with nature, the environment, and our planet (e.g. circular economy, energy efficiency, use of sustainable materials and construction techniques, re-use of materials and spaces, green mobility, restoring biodiversity (re-naturing, landscapes).
- Enriching, inspired by art and culture, responding to needs beyond functionality (places in harmony with nature, rediscovery of history and architectural heritage, places or forms that appeal to people's creativity and imagination).
- Inclusive, encouraging a dialogue across cultures, disciplines, genders and ages (attention to the needs of marginalised groups, wider participation in decision-making, housing access and affordability).

Where relevant, LP/PP are invited to incorporate core values of the New European Bauhaus in project activities.

More information about New European Bauhaus is available at new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/index_en

4.7.3 EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

All priorities of the Programme are in line with EUSBSR¹³. The main objectives of this macro-regional strategy are saving the sea, connecting region and increasing prosperity. The applicant should be familiar with the detailed objectives of the EUSBSR and describe project contribution to them in the Application Form section C.2.5.

4.7.4 State Aid

Within this call State Aid activities are not supported.

¹³ For more information about EUSBSR please see www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu

5. Application and selection procedure

5.1 Application requirements

Application is a set of information and documents which is submitted by the LP on behalf of the partnership within the opening and closing time of the call for proposals. Partnership will be contacted directly informing on the opening and closing time of the call for proposals.

The project application is done via JEMS. Detailed information on how to acquire JEMS username and password and how the project application will be registered as received is available on the Programme's website www.latlit.eu in "Guidance for JEMS".

Table No. 3. **Documents for application**

No.	Document	Requirements
1.	Application Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Filled in and submitted in JEMS (https://jems.latlit.eu).• All relevant fields must be filled in English.
2.	Project Confirmation letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The template is available on the Programme webpage www.latlit.eu.• The document is in English and its template cannot be changed.• Must be signed by the authorised person holding the right to sign documents on behalf of the LP organisation confirming the validity of the whole project application with electronic signature. The Confirmation letter must be attached to the application in "Attachments" in JEMS. In exceptional cases (e.g., when the Project Confirmation Letter was forgotten to attach in JEMS), it can be sent to email latlit@varam.gov.lv.• If LP's authorised person is substituted, documents on substitution rights must be submitted together with the Project Confirmation Letter.• If the Confirmation letter is missing, it will be asked during eligibility check as specified under section 5.2 "Assessment of applications" of the Programme Manual.• If the Confirmation letter is incorrect, corrections will be asked by JS as a condition as specified under section 5.3 of the Programme Manual, if project will be selected for funding.
3.	Lead Partner / Project Partner Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The template is available on the Programme webpage www.latlit.eu.

No.	Document	Requirements
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The document is in English and its template cannot be changed. • Documents attached to “Attachments” in JEMS. • Filled in and submitted by the LP and PP to confirm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – commitment and ability to participate in the project both legally and financially, deliver the required outputs and results and to comply with the eligibility rules set by the Programme, – required partner contribution (the exact amounts of the LP/PP total eligible budget and partner contribution must be specified as calculated in JEMS), – compliance with other Programme requirements. • Must be signed by the authorised representative of LP and PP organisation holding the right to sign documents on behalf of the organisation with electronic signature and attached to “Attachments” in JEMS. • If Lead Partner / Project Partner Statement is missing, it will be asked during eligibility check as specified under section 5.2 “Assessment of applications” of the Programme Manual. • If Lead Partner / Project Partner Statement is incorrect, corrections will be asked by JS as condition as specified under section 5.3 of the Programme Manual, if project will be selected for funding.

If any documentation (except the Application Form) cannot be submitted electronically but only in paper format, the LP must contact the MA via the official Programme e-mail latlit@varam.gov.lv. The LP need to provide a clear explanation of why electronic submission is not possible and request MA permission to submit the documents in paper form, as an exception to the rules outlined above.

5.2 Assessment of application

Assessment procedure begins on the next working day after call for proposals is closed. After assessment of application has finished, the MC will take the decision on selection of project for funding.

Application is subject to a two-step assessment procedure performed by the MA and the JS:

- Eligibility assessment,
- Quality assessment.

In addition, the following external experts can be involved in the assessment of the application:

- experts of a particular field under Programme priority 1, in case specific knowledge of the field is required in order to carry out quality assessment,

When carrying out verification of application for compliance with eligibility criteria, the MA or the JS may request LP to submit to the official Programme e-mail latlit@varam.gov.lv the following annexes of the application:

- 1) missing Project Confirmation Letter, in case it is not submitted or it is not submitted in accordance with the requirements set in section 5.1 “Application requirements” of the Programme Manual.
- 2) Missing Lead Partner / Project Partner Statement.

The request will be sent to the LP’s official email address indicated in the Application Form section “Contact” from the Programme’s official e-mail latlit@varam.gov.lv. The LP must submit requested documents to the JS to latlit@varam.gov.lv within 10 working days from the date of sending of the request from the MA/JS as indicated in the request.

In case the eligibility criteria are not observed after completion of eligibility assessment, the LP is not requested to provide additional information or corrections and the application is considered as invalid.

5.2.1 Eligibility assessment criteria

Eligibility criteria are assessed on the basis of yes, no or not applicable.

Table No. 4. **Eligibility criteria**

No.	Criteria	What is assessed
1.	Application Form is correctly filled in and submitted via JEMS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* All relevant fields of the Application Form are correctly filled in. There is no incorrect information e.g., “to be added later”.* Application Form is filled in English.
2.	Project Confirmation Letter is submitted by the LP to the JS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Signed document is attached to section “Attachments” in JEMS or delivered to latlit@varam.gov.lv upon JS request as specified under section 5.2 “Assessment of applications” of the Programme Manual.
3.	Lead Partner/Project Partner Statements are submitted by the LP to the JS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Lead Partner/Project Partner Statements for the LP and PP are attached to section “Attachments” in JEMS or delivered to latlit@varam.gov.lv upon JS request as specified under section 5.2 “Assessment of applications” of the Programme Manual.

No.	Criteria	What is assessed
4.	Minimum requirements for partnership are fulfilled; LP and PP are registered in Lithuania and in Latvia, they are eligible organisations (type, financial requirements) and comply with eligibility requirements set out in section 4.2 "Project partnership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * At least one partner registered in Lithuania and one partner registered in Latvia participate in the project. * Lithuanian partner(s) registered in Lithuania and Latvian partner(s) registered in Latvia are public authority or public equivalent body or NGO.
5.	Budgetary requirements are observed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * LP and PP contribute to the eligible project budget. * Project requested amount of ERDF co-financing is within the set limits for the project's selected priority and specific objective according to chapter 3 "Programme priorities and supported activities" of the Programme Manual.
6.	Project duration is within set limits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Project duration is within set limits (maximum 30 months).

5.2.2 Quality assessment criteria

Application provided it has passed eligibility assessment is subject to quality assessment. The quality assessment is carried out based on quality assessment criteria, included below. For each criterion main assessment question with several sub-questions is identified. **Information must be provided in relevant sections of the Application Form** as specified in Table No. 5.

During quality assessment project is assessed against strategic and operational criteria and each criterion is assessed according to the following scores: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Shortcomings detected under one criterion may affect scoring for other criteria. Afterwards, scores received for each criterion are reflected as weight in percentage according to the table below.

Table No. 5. **Assessment grid for quality assessment criteria**

Criteria	Score	Criteria score weight in percentage
STRATEGIC CRITERIA – maximum 60%		
Project context and contribution to the Programme Maximum weight 40%	5	40
	4	32
	3	24
	2	16
	1	8
Cooperation character Maximum weight 10%	5	10
	4	8
	3	6
	2	4
	1	2

Criteria	Score	Criteria score weight in percentage
Partnership relevance and cooperation intensity Maximum weight 10%	5	10
	4	8
	3	6
	2	4
	1	2
OPERATIONAL CRITERIA – maximum 40%		
Methodology and work plan Maximum weight 20%	5	20
	4	16
	3	12
	2	8
	1	4
Budget Maximum weight 20%	5	20
	4	16
	3	12
	2	8
	1	4

Table No. 6. **Quality assessment criteria**

Weight	Criteria	What is assessed <i>* (Sections in the Application Form where information must be provided)</i>
STRATEGIC CRITERIA – maximum 60%		
40%	Project context and contribution to the Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project addresses common territorial challenges in the Programme area or joint potential of the Programme area - there is a real need for the project (also by the target groups and stakeholders). The justification is supplemented with a proper and concrete facts and statistics explaining and proving the territorial challenge and the need for the project. <i>* (Application Form section C.2.1).</i> - The project overall objective, activities, outputs and results are clearly linked to a Programme priority specific objective, output and result indicators and activities supported, including specific requirements, defined under specific objectives. <i>* (Application Form sections C.1, C.5 and C.4).</i> - Project outputs are durable (the project is expected to provide a significant and durable contribution to solving the challenges targeted). Project main outputs are applicable and replicable by other organisations/regions/countries outside of the current partnership (transferability). <i>* (Application Form sections C.4 "Investments", C.8).</i> - The project proposes innovative solutions and brings new knowledge to the region and LP/PP. The project tries to avoid overlaps and replications; there is evolution of ideas. <i>* (Application Form sections C.2.2, C.2.6, C.2.7).</i> - The project makes a positive or neutral contribution to the Programme horizontal principles of sustainable development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, equality between men and women. <i>* (Application Form section C.7.6).</i> - The project clearly explains its contribution to wider strategies on one or more policy levels (EU/national/regional/EUSBSR). <i>* (Application Form section C.2.5).</i>
10%	Cooperation character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The importance of cross-border cooperation for the topic addressed is clearly demonstrated. The project results cannot (or only to some extent) be achieved without cooperation. There is a clear benefit from cooperating for the LP/ PP / target groups / project area /Programme area. The cross-border cooperation aspect is incorporated in and evident throughout the project activities, including investments, outputs and results. Cooperation principles are specified. <i>* (Application Form sections C.2.3, C.7.5, C.4 and C.5).</i>

Weight	Criteria	What is assessed <i>* (Sections in the Application Form where information must be provided)</i>
10%	Partnership relevance and cooperation intensity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project involves relevant LP/PP needed to address the territorial challenge/opportunity and the objectives specified and their involvement is justified; In case of LP/PP outside the Programme area, the added value of their participation duly justified. <i>* (Application Form sections B, C.3, B.1.6).</i> - Partner organisations have the competence in the thematic field concerned, as well as the necessary capacity to implement the project (financial, human resources, etc.). <i>* (Application Form sections B.1.6., C.7).</i> - Tasks and responsibilities are clearly defined and justified among the LP/PP. <i>* (Application Form sections C.3, C.4).</i> - The project partnership is balanced in terms of the project's objectives, territory coverage, financial contributions, and expected project outputs. Partnership consists of LP/PP that complement each other. <i>* (Application Form section C.3, C.4).</i>
OPERATIONAL CRITERIA – maximum 40%		
20%	Methodology and work plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project intervention logic (the sequence of activities, proportions of activities, methods of work) is optimal for achieving targeted project objectives, outputs and results. Proposed activities and deliverables are logical and transparent, lead to planned outputs and results and it is possible to achieve activities, deliverables and outputs with given resources and timeline. <i>* (Application Form sections C1, C.2.2, C.4, C.5).</i> - The importance of investments planned in the work plan with corresponding costs under CC5 and their cross-border relevance is demonstrated to reach project objectives. <i>* (Application Form section C.4).</i> - Target group(s) are clearly described and involved in the project activities. <i>* (Application Form section C.2.4, C.4).</i> - Communication activities are planned in the work plan and are appropriate to reach the relevant target groups and stakeholders. Mandatory publicity measures applicable to the project are included as tangible deliverables. <i>* (Application Form sections C.4 and C.7.3).</i> - Management structures and procedures are clear, efficient, proportionate to the project size and needs and allow involvement of LP/PP in decision-making and ensure quality of the project. <i>* (Application Form sections C.7.1 - C.7.4).</i>

Weight	Criteria	What is assessed
		* <i>(Sections in the Application Form where information must be provided)</i>
20%	Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project budget is coherent, proportionate and cost-efficient in regard to the proposed work plan and the main outputs and results. Breakdown of costs is presented, costs are in line with the workplan and costs are sufficiently described. Planned costs are eligible costs according to the requirements set in chapter 7. "Project budget" and section 3.5 "Ineligible activities" of the Programme manual. The application of SCOs is appropriate and in line with the Programme rules. The need for engaging external expertise is justified and the costs are realistic. The need for equipment purchases is justified (e.g., prices, number of units, functionality is provided) and the costs are realistic. <i>(Application Form sections B, D, C.4, E):</i>

Table No. 7. **The explanation of the scores**

5 Very good	The application fulfils the given criteria to an excellent and the provided information is sufficient, clear and coherent for assessing the criteria.
4 Good	The application fulfils the given criteria well, however the provided information includes minor shortcomings (e.g., the timeline provides little space for unexpected delays, details are missing in the given information in minor parts of the application).
3 Sufficient	The application fulfils the given criteria to a sufficient level, however some aspects of the given criteria have not been fully met or not explained in full clarity or detail (e.g. the partnership lacks certain expertise to address the identified challenge; the implementation steps are not fully clear based on the description in the work plan).
2 Weak	The application has serious shortcomings fulfilling the given criteria and/or the provided information is in low quality (e.g., the cross-border relevance of the project is not clearly justified; the main outputs are not clearly described; the target groups of main outputs are not described).
1 Insufficient	The application does not fulfil the given criteria or information required is missing (e.g., the application addresses issues that are not relevant to the Programme priorities, the information in the application is not complete or is unclear).

Assessment result (total scoring of a project) is presented as a sum of percentage received in all criteria against the following thresholds :

- 1) If Project receives total scoring at least 66% it is recommended for approval,
- 2) Project receives total scoring less than 66% it is recommended for rejection.

As derogation from above described, following restrictions shall apply:

- If project application receives **“1” for any of the criterion**, the project application is recommended for rejection.
- If project application receives **two “2” for any operational criteria**, the project application is recommended for rejection.
- If project application receives **“2” for any strategic criteria**, the project application is recommended for rejection.

5.3 Selection and decision making

The MC is responsible for selecting project for funding based on results of eligibility assessment and quality assessment ensured by the MA and the JS.

The MA based on the MC decision on selection of project for funding prepares decision (MA letter) on awarding or rejecting the ERDF co-financing and sends it electronically to the project LP within 10 working days after the MC decision on selection of projects for funding was taken.

MA decision states:

- If project is approved – information on the total ERDF co-financing,
- If project is approved under conditions – information on the maximum ERDF co-financing, conditions that must be fulfilled within deadline indicated in the decision,
- If project is rejected – justification, why the application was not selected for funding.

Conditions that project must fulfil before it is finally approved may include:

- 1) changes and technical corrections in the application form (e.g., removal or adding of an activity, decrease of a project budget or budget adjustments or corrections, specification of information, etc.),
- 2) explanation (e.g., unclear description of an activity, discrepancies in the information, etc.).

LP is responsible for informing PP on the MA decision.

If project is approved under conditions, all conditions must be fulfilled before final decision on project approval is made by the MA. In exceptional cases, LP may submit an official request to the MA about prolongation of deadline for fulfilment of conditions. MA will assess each request and inform the LP with an official reply whether LP request is approved.

If any condition/technical correction remains unfulfilled, project will be rejected by the MA.

MA prepares final decision stating whether project is approved or rejected and within 10 working days after it is taken sends it electronically to the project LP.

5.4 Contracting

After the MA has taken a final decision on awarding the ERDF co-financing, the contracting phase starts and the Subsidy Contract between MA and LP can be signed.

Subsidy Contract

Subsidy Contract is signed by the LP and the MA and acknowledges agreement of both parties on conditions under which the ERDF co-financing is awarded. The Subsidy Contract regulates the legal

and financial framework for the implementation of the project. A template of the Subsidy Contract is available on the Programme's website www.latlit.eu.

The MA prepares and sends the Subsidy Contract to the LP after the MA has taken final decision on funding.

Partnership Agreement

Partnership Agreement is an agreement between the LP and PP which states each partner's financial obligations and outlines each partner's responsibilities in the project. While the LP is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the entire project towards the MA, PP is responsible for ensuring the implementation of its part of the project towards the LP. A template of the Partnership Agreement is available on the Programme's website www.latlit.eu.

The Partnership Agreement allows the LP to extend the arrangements of the Subsidy Contract to the level of each partner. Preparation of the Partnership Agreement between PPs has to start immediately after the LP has received MA decision on funding of the project. Signed Partnership Agreement shall be uploaded via JEMS not later than when the Project Report for preparation costs is submitted by the LP.

Upon necessity, additional clauses can be included and content of the Partnership Agreement changed. The LP is responsible for Partnership Agreement amendments if relevant changes in project are approved by the Programme management bodies.

According to the provisions of Partnership Agreement in general project partner shall give full support to the LP to ensure the successful implementation of the project, fulfilment of its objective and high quality of outputs and results.

6. Project implementation

Consultations and training are organized for the LP and PP of the projects implemented within the Programme. The purpose is to provide guidance on Programme's requirements for project management, reporting, financial rules, and communication. More information on upcoming consultations and training is available on the Programme website www.latlit.eu.

6.1 Coordination and management

LP must establish efficient and reliable coordination and management system for the project. The coordination and management concern the implementation of the various components of the project, including its joint administrative and financial management.

LP and PP must determine the necessary procedures for decision-making and coordination of activities between the PPs.

PPs shall coordinate and jointly implement project activities – to apply joint solutions, methods, and approaches in the project.

Based on the work plan in the Application Form, the LP and PP may decide to prepare a more detailed work plan for internal use where all activities are listed, deadlines and responsible persons are indicated, etc.

Project start

The **start and end date** of the project are fixed in the Subsidy Contract.

The earliest date when the project activities can start and the expenditure can incur (be paid out) is the next day after the project is approved by the MC. All project's activities are implemented at the PPs' own risk until the Subsidy Contract is signed. However, the Programme recommends to start project implementation as soon as possible but not later than a month after the Subsidy Contract is signed.

During the signing of the Subsidy Contract, the JS assigns a contact person for the whole project duration. After the assignment, the contact person will introduce himself/herself to the LP via email.

The LP should inform assigned the JS contact person via email two weeks in advance about the planned first project management meeting, so that he/she could participate in the meeting.

Composition of the project management staff

The LP and PP **must** appoint or subcontract the **project manager** and **financial manager**. The project manager and financial manager of the LP are the main project manager and the main financial manager. They are responsible for the fluent implementation of planned project activities, including the achievement of project main outputs and results, submission of Project Reports, preparation of requests for changes, and communication with the JS. Additional staff necessary for the project management may be appointed or subcontracted, but only in duly justified cases. The LP and PP financially contributing to the project and receiving ERDF co-financing from the Programme are not allowed to subcontract each other, themselves (e.g., internal invoice) and own or LP/PPs' employees.

Requirements of project management staff for the LP and PP:

- Project manager: implementation of project activities in the LP's and PP's organization, working in close cooperation with the LP main project manager, preparing and uploading the Partner reports via JEMS,
- Financial manager: project bookkeeping in the LP's and PP's organization, working in close cooperation with the LP's main financial manager.

Structure of the project coordination and management

LP with PP must establish an efficient and reliable coordination and management structure at the beginning of the project. The coordination and management affect the qualitative and successful implementation of the planned activities and the whole project, including its joint administrative and financial management.

Each project shall have a clear distribution of responsibilities for the project coordination. To include necessary management structures and procedures in place for the cooperation and communication among PPs, implementation of the planned project activities, and reporting of outcomes and results.

The project shall have approaches and processes aimed at quality assurance both for produced project outputs and overall management of the project.

LP and PP has to secure an audit trail when implementing project activities from the beginning of the project implementation. Also, ensure evidence of the implemented activities.

Processing of personal data of natural persons

During the project LP and PP must keep and provide Programme implementation bodies with all the required information, including natural person data. LP and PP must also ensure the data are processed and moved in compliance with the requirements set in General Data Protection Regulation¹⁴.

6.2 Project changes

The work plan and project budget should be planned as thoroughly as possible. However, during the project implementation, it may become evident that the work plan or project budget needs to be revised.

General principles

The LP is responsible for preparing the Request for Changes (a template is available on the Programme website www.latlit.eu) on behalf of partnership and its submission via JEMS to the JS. The JS strongly recommends to plan carefully and include as many necessary modifications as possible needed by the LP/PP in one Request for Changes. **The LP submits electronically signed Request for Changes to the JS ONLY after prior harmonization with the JS.**

All Requests for Changes must be submitted and approved by the JS/MA/MC within the project duration.

¹⁴ Regulation (EU) No 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC.

Changes are divided into three main categories: deviations, minor changes and major changes. More detailed information is provided in subsections 6.2.1 “Deviations”, 6.2.2 “Minor changes” and 6.2.3 “Major changes” of the Programme Manual.

As a derogation from project changes, the **flexibility rule** may be applied for the **final** reporting period allowing overspending in CCs up to 5% from the total eligible project budget. This is allowed only if the overspending is justified and the total eligible project budget, as well as the LP/PPs’ budgets remain within their approved limits. If the overspending exceeds 5%, JS/MA will deduct excess amount from the final Project Report.

Request for changes procedure

PP must submit information to the LP about necessary project changes by the deadline agreed within the PPs. The LP must review submitted changes to check whether they are clearly described and sufficiently justified, and are in line with the allowed changes described in the Programme Manual. If needed, the LP asks for additional clarifications from the PP.

The LP must fill in the Request for Changes and send it via email to the assigned the JS project manager for the prior check. LP sends the electronically signed final version of the Request for Changes to the JS to email pasts@varam.gov.lv.

When filling in the Request for Changes, the PPs provide the following information for each change:

- initially planned in the Application Form: title of the work package, activity and deliverable, CC and cost item,
- requested changes: the description of necessary changes, their purpose, financial sources covering the changes, if relevant (work package, CC and cost item),

justification and

- impact of requested changes: how proposed changes help achieve a project objective more efficiently and foster cooperation.

The JS within 20 days after the electronically signed final version of the Request for Changes is received at JS, assesses its compliance with the Programme requirements, decides on minor changes, or forwards the Request for Changes to the MA/MC for decision-making. When provided information is insufficient, the JS asks LP to submit an updated Request for Changes.

Requested changes are considered approved only when the decision by the JS/MA/MC is sent to the LP (except for deviations that do not require prior approval).

The JS/MA sends a decision on approval or disapproval of requested changes to the LP. In case of approval, the LP updates the Application Form and uploads relevant project documents via JEMS within the set deadline (the “Guidance for JEMS” is available on the Programme website www.latlit.eu). After checking the updated Application Form, the JS prepares the Addendum to the Subsidy Contract, if necessary, and sends it to the LP for signing. The MA expects that the Addendum to the Subsidy Contract will be signed electronically when this format of signing is available in the LP institution.

6.2.1 Deviations

Deviations from the project Application Form have no impact on the project implementation, project outputs and results. Amendments in the Application Form are not required.

Deviations are considered as harmonized by the JS when the JS harmonization email is sent to the LP (except for deviations that do not require prior harmonization). **The LP and PP are responsible for keeping correspondence with the JS as a confirmation for National Control!**

See table No. 8 for described cases of deviations and procedures to be followed.

Table No. 8. **Deviations**

Description of the change	Restrictions	To do list
1. Rescheduling project activities and/or output(s) delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes do not have a considerable impact on the project outputs and their delivery schedule. <p><i>Example: in the Application Form project planned to organize two seminars in the first reporting period. Due to x reasons organization of the second seminar is moved to the second reporting period.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate deviations via the Partner Report and provide summarised information on all deviations in the project via Project Report.
2. Changes in costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reallocation of costs between planned cost items within one CC (CC4, CC5) - technical adjustments to cost items resulting from deviations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of related outputs and results must not be decreased. - - Technical adjustments to cost items include renaming cost items, updating comments, and adding, removing cost item, etc. based on the deviations outlined in table No. 8. Total sums of CCs must not be exceeded. <p><i>Example: under CC4 costs for planned translation services are higher than expected, but savings for room rent for seminars are available, etc.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate deviations via the Partner Report and provide summarised information on all deviations in the project via the Project Report.
4. Change of LP/PP project data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change of name or contact details of LP/PP contact person. - Change of title of LP/PP, address of the institution, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes shall not affect the legal status or cause the structural change of LP/PP institution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform the JS on changes and submit relevant documents; - Update Application Form in JEMS.

Description of the change	Restrictions	To do list
change of authorized representative, etc.		
5. Minor adjustments in planned activities/deliverables not affecting their substance		
5.1 Change of technical specification for equipment items planned in budget and work plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for changes is strongly justified in relation to achieving the project's objectives, outputs and results, while ensuring compliance with sound financial management principles - Changes do not cause a decrease in the quality of the equipment and do not change the purpose of its use. - It is recommended to make such changes before the procurement procedure (if applicable). If changes occur during the implementation of the procurement contract the terms of the procurement contract and the public procurement regulations should be followed. <p>Example: initially planned size of the monitor 18` needs to be changed to 22`.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harmonize changes with the JS in advance (<u>before change happens</u>) by email; - Receive the JS harmonization via email and attach it to JEMS Shared folder; - Communicate changes via the Partner Report. Also, provide summarized information on all deviations in the project via the Project Report.
5.2. Change of technical specification for planned equipment set (inclusion/exclusion of items from a set)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for changes is strongly justified in relation to achieving the project's objectives, outputs and results, while ensuring compliance with sound financial management principles Changes do not cause a decrease in the quality of the equipment set and do not change the purpose of its use. - New equipment that was not part of the original plan may only be included if it serves the same purpose as the initially planned equipment It 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harmonize changes with the JS in advance (<u>before change happens</u>) by email; - Receive the JS harmonization via email and attach it to JEMS Shared folder; - Communicate changes via the Partner Report. Also, provide summarized information on all deviations in the project via the Project Report.

Description of the change	Restrictions	To do list
	<p>is recommended to make such changes before the procurement procedure (if applicable). If changes occur during the implementation of the procurement contract the terms of the procurement contract and the public procurement regulations should be followed.</p> <p>Example: the plan was to purchase 3 wardrobes and 4 sofas, but later the need changed to 4 sofas, 3 wardrobes, and 1 table</p>	
<p>5.3 Inclusion of missing cost item within CC4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for changes is strongly justified in relation to achieving the project's objectives, outputs and results, while ensuring compliance with sound financial management principles. Inclusion of missing cost item is necessary for the implementation of already planned activity/deliverable. - Missing cost item must be an interlinked part of planned expenditures under CC4 for already planned activity/deliverable. - Total amount of CC4 must not be exceeded. <p>Example: translation costs are missing for the organization of the event that is planned in the work plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harmonize changes with the JS in advance (<u>before change happens</u>) by email; - Receive the JS harmonization via email and attach it to JEMS Shared folder; - Communicate changes via the Partner Report. Also, provide summarized information on all deviations in the project via the Project Report.
<p>5.4 Minor adjustments to the planned activity/deliverable</p> <p>-- increase/decrease in the number of events originally planned;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for changes is strongly justified in relation to achieving the project's objectives, outputs and results, while ensuring compliance with sound financial management principles. Changes do not negatively influence the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harmonize changes with the JS in advance (before change happens) by email; - Receive the JS harmonization via email and attach it to JEMS Shared folder; - Communicate changes via the Partner Report. Also,

Description of the change	Restrictions	To do list
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>change of duration of the event,</i> - <i>change of the number of the participants in the event,</i> - <i>change of topic for the event,</i> - <i>change of venue of the event, etc.)</i> - <i>increase/decrease of number of communication or promotional materials originally planned, etc.).</i> 	<p>quality and achievement of the project objective, outputs, results and achievement of planned target groups.</p>	<p>provide summarised information on all deviations in the project via the Project Report</p>

6.2.2 Minor changes

Minor changes have a minor impact on the project implementation, project outputs and results. Approval of the JS with amendments in the Application Form is required.

Requested minor changes are considered approved only when the LP receives the email from JS on approval of minor changes.

Table No. 9. **Minor changes**

Description of the change	Restrictions	To do list
<p>1. Minor changes in planned activities/deliverables affecting their substance and requiring changes in the Application Form</p> <p>(e.g.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adding new events, -adding new equipment, services, products, etc., - adding new communication or promotional materials, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for changes is strongly justified in relation to achieving the project's objectives, outputs and results, while ensuring compliance with sound financial management principles. Minor changes under this point are considered substantial and cannot be treated as deviations outlined in Table No. 8. - Changes do not cause a decrease in the quality of respective activity's results and do not negatively impact project outputs and their delivery schedule. - Total sum of CC4, CC5 must not be exceeded. - Such changes must be made before the procurement procedure (if applicable). If changes occur during the implementation of the procurement contract the terms of the procurement contract and the public procurement regulations should be followed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit electronically signed Request for Changes to the JS to email pasts@varam.gov.lv with supporting documents, if relevant (e.g., price offers for equipment, services, products, etc.); - Receive decision on changes inform JS by email; - In case of a positive decision, update the Application Form in JEMS.
<p>2. Reallocation between cost categories and/or partners up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget changes must not cause the increase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit electronically signed Request for

Description of the change	Restrictions	To do list
to 15% of the initial total eligible project budget.	of total eligible project budget. - Reallocation between CCs is relevant only for CC4, CC5.	Changes to the JS to email pasts@varam.gov.lv with supporting documents, if relevant (e.g., changes in cost-estimates, price offers, etc.). - If the project budget is reallocated between PPs, and as a result, PP's budget is increased, the updated Lead Partner/Project Partner Statement of the LP/PP with increased budget must be submitted together with the Request for Changes. - Receive decision on changes from JS by email. - In case of a positive decision, update the Application Form in JEMS and attach the updated Partnership Agreement in JEMS.

6.2.3 Major changes

Major changes have a significant impact on the project implementation, project outputs and/or results. Approval of the MA/MC with amendments in the Application form is required.

Requested major changes are considered approved only when the MA sends an electronically signed decision on changes to the LP.

Any changes not listed in the table below or are exceptional cases from the Programme Manual rules are subject to the decision of the MC.

Table No. 10. **Description of major changes**

Description of the change	Restrictions	To do list
1. Partnership change		
1.1. Withdrawal of project partner(s) without a replacement		
The LP/PP withdraws and no other organisation(s) takes over the implementation of the	- Project partnership corresponds to the eligibility criteria – at least one Latvian and one	- Submit electronically signed Request for Changes to the JS to email pasts@varam.gov.lv .

Description of the change	Restrictions	To do list
planned activities or the budget.	<p>Lithuanian PP remains in the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities removed from the work plan and the withdrawn PP's role are not crucial for achieving the project objective, outputs and results. Otherwise, activities have to be taken over either by existing PP(s) or by inviting a new organisation to join the partnership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receive an electronically signed decision on changes. - In case of a positive decision, update the Application Form in JEMS and attach the updated Partnership Agreement in JEMS.
1.2. Replacement of the LP/PP		
Replacement of withdrawn LP/PP to take over the implementation of the planned project activities and the budget.	<p>The replacement can be done either by involving a new organisation or by giving the responsibilities of the withdrawn partner to an existing PP(s).</p> <p>The following should be observed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes in partnership do not affect the project objective, outputs and results. - In the case the withdrawn PP has implemented part of the planned project activities and received ERDF co-financing, a new LP/PP will take over the remaining activities and the budget. - Eligibility criteria for the new LP/PP are observed. <p>Project partnership corresponds to the eligibility criteria – at least one Latvian and one Lithuanian PP remains in the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit electronically signed Request for Changes to the JS to email pasts@varam.gov.lv with relevant supporting documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for new PP: a letter of consent and Lead Partner/Project Partner Statement. In the case of NGO – additional supporting documents must be submitted according to section 5.1 “Application requirements” of the Programme Manual), • for existing PPs: updated Lead Partner/Project Partner Statements reflecting the increase of the project budget. - Receive an electronically signed decision on changes. - In the case of a positive decision, update the Application Form in JEMS and attach the updated Partnership Agreement in JEMS.

Description of the change	Restrictions	To do list
1.3. Structural or legal changes of LP/PP organisation		
Legal changes (title, legal status, etc.) of the LP/PP organisation occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eligibility criteria for the partnership must be observed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit electronically signed Request for Changes to the JS to email pasts@varam.gov.lv with supporting documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a copy of the official document stating the structural or legal change, • updated Lead Partner/Project Partner Statement. - Receive an electronically signed decision on changes. - In the case of a positive decision, update the project Application Form in JEMS and submit the Partnership Agreement in JEMS.
For partnership changes in points 1.1. – 1.3. MA takes the decision and informs NAs on partnership changes. The MC decides in a case respecting of eligibility criteria for the partnership is questioned.		
2. Change in the project activities		
<p>Only activities that do not alter the objective of the project can be changed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increase/decrease in the number of existing project outputs and/or results; - significant extension/reduction of the range of the existing project activity; - create new project output and/or activity; - hand over activity to another PP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change shall not alter the objective of the project. - Changes foster more efficient achievement of the project objectives and results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit electronically signed Request for Changes to the JS to email pasts@varam.gov.lv; - If changes are introduced in the investments planned in the work plan and are related to changes in costs estimations, technical projects, etc., the relevant documents should be submitted together with the Request for Changes. - Receive an electronically signed decision on changes. - In case of a positive decision, update the Application Form in JEMS and submit the updated

Description of the change	Restrictions	To do list
		Partnership Agreement in JEMS, if applicable.
MA takes a decision. The MC takes a decision on changes which reduce achievement of planned output and results.		
3. Budget reallocation		
Reallocation between CCs and/or PPs above 15% of the initial total eligible project budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget changes must not cause the increase of total eligible project budget. - Reallocation between CCs is relevant only for CC4, CC5. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit electronically signed Request for Changes to the JS to email pasts@varam.gov.lv. - If applicable, submit together with the Request for Changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • costs estimations, • updated Lead Partner/Project Partner Statements reflecting the increase of the project budget. - Receive an electronically signed decision on changes. - In case of a positive decision, update the Application Form in JEMS and submit the updated Partnership Agreement in JEMS, if applicable.
MA takes a decision.	-	-
4. Prolongation of the project duration		
The project duration can be prolonged if the requested prolongation is justified and the project can be successfully finished within the requested end date.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project can be prolonged by the necessary number of months if justification is provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit electronically signed Request for Changes to the JS to email pasts@varam.gov.lv. - Receive an electronically signed decision on changes. - In case of a positive decision, update the Application Form.
The decision is taken by the MA. If the project requests to prolong the initial project duration by more than nine months (this threshold is counted cumulatively if the request for prolongation is submitted more than once), the decision is taken by the MC.		

6.3 Project reporting and payments

Project reporting

During the project implementation, project must report on its progress regularly. Reporting will be done in JEMS according to “Guidance for JEMS” which is available on the Programme website www.latlit.eu.

The project reporting covers both: the project activities, including outputs, and the financial implementation. The report serves as the basis for the regular payments to the project and is used for monitoring of project's progress. In addition, the report is used to communicate deviations. For more information please see in subsection 6.2.1 “Deviations” of the Programme Manual.

Project reporting consists of:

- 1) the **Partner Reports** prepared and submitted in JEMS by LP and PP,
- 2) the **Project Report** prepared and submitted in JEMS by LP,
- 3) the **Final Report** filled in JEMS within the Project Report for final reporting period by LP,
- 4) the **Report on achieved project results** submitted in JEMS by LP in a year after project end.

When compiling the Project Report, the LP must make sure that for any included expenditure a clear link to the activities and deliverables is made.

If LP/PP has no costs to report, the Partner Report still has to be formally submitted (so-called “zero costs report”) by the set deadline.

As a general rule, expenditure included in the Partner Report must be paid out before the end of the respective reporting period and before the end of the project. Costs paid out outside the reporting period can be eligible only in these exceptional cases:

- Costs for verification of the last Partner Report by National Control from Lithuania.
- Costs for organising or participating in events. Such costs must be reported in the reporting period when the event took place and cannot be reported in parts. They can be reported in the next reporting period when the final settling of accounts takes place).
- Costs that were not included in the correct reporting period by mistake. The costs must be essential for the project implementation and planned in the Application Form. In such cases strong justification of the situation that occurred must be provided in the Partner Progress Report.
- Costs which are withdrawn and/or postponed by the National Control/JS/MA from the respective Partner Report for additional clarification. Such costs can be reported in the following reporting period if found eligible by the National Control/JS/MA. This exception cannot be applied for the last reporting period.
- Costs of LP/PP from previous periods that were not included by LP. LP has a right not to include costs of PP to Project Report due to the fact that the preparing and/or certifying of the Partner Report was delayed or due to other justified reasons. Such costs can be included in the Project Report of the following reporting period if found eligible and certified by National Control. This exception cannot be applied for the last reporting period.

The Partner Report

At the end of each reporting period, the LP and PP must submit its Partner Report with all supporting documents to the National Control in JEMS. The National Control will verify compliance of expenditures and activities with the legal framework of the Programme. The National Control can

clarify any issues and may deduct any expenditure that is considered ineligible. The National Control confirms eligible expenditure in a form of the Certificate and Control Report, which is available in JEMS for the LP, PP and all relevant Programme bodies. The National Control may postpone expenditure under question or clarification (for example, in case of suspicion of ineligible costs, etc.) for further checks.

More information on the National Control is specified in section 6.6 “Controls and audits” of the Programme Manual.

The Project Report

After the National Control has issued Certificates and Control Reports for LP and PP, LP prepares a Project Progress Report and submits it to the JS in JEMS. The Project Report must include information on the achievement of all project activities and incurred expenditure during the respective reporting period. If there are questions about any part of the Project Report during the review, the JS will contact the LP for clarification or additional information. The JS/MA may withdraw and/or postpone expenditure under question or clarification (for example, in case of suspicion of possible irregularity, etc.) for further checks.

The Final Report

With the Project Report for final reporting period, the LP must fill in the Final Report. The Final Report must include information on the project's final achievements, project output(s), results and cooperation.

The Report on achieved project results

The Programme will request to report on the achievement of project results one year after the project ends, as planned in the Application Form. The LP will prepare the Report on behalf of the partnership, and PP must ensure collection and provision of the information to the LP upon request. This report contains only content and does not include any reported costs.

The timeline of reporting and payments

LP must submit Project Reports to the JS in JEMS **according to the reporting periods and deadlines for submission** as stipulated in JEMS.

The reporting period is six months!
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In case the project is prolonged, reporting periods could be set according to the MA/MC decision on project prolongation.

The timeline below provides a schedule for reporting and payments.

Table No. 11. **The timeline for reporting in JEMS and payment schedule**

Activity	The LP and PPs submit Partner Reports to the National Control	Verification of Partner Reports and issuing of Certificates and Control Reports by the National Control	The LP prepares and submits the Project Report to the JS	The MA processes the 1st payment (70% of reported eligible ERDF co-financing) to the LP	The JS approves the Project Report	The MA processes the 2nd payment (30% of reported eligible ERDF co-financing) to the LP
Deadline	2 weeks after the end of the reporting period	2 months after the Partner Report is submitted	2 weeks after the National Control has issued Certificates and Control Reports	2 weeks after the Project Report is submitted	1,5 months after the 1 st payment is made	2 weeks after the Project Report is approved by the JS
Total max time passed since the end of the reporting period	up to 5,5 ¹⁵ months					

If during verification of the Partner Report by the National Control and Project Report check by the JS, PP or LP is asked to clarify or provide additional information about any part of the report, check of the report will be put on hold. Therefore, it is in the best interests of the project to submit correct and complete reports and to reply to questions of National Control and the JS within deadlines.

In addition, the National Control and the JS will verify the report in the order of submission, therefore it is important to submit the report in time – according to the deadline for its submission.

The MA may terminate the Subsidy Contract and demand the repayment of ERDF co-financing in full or in part if the LP has failed to submit Project Report, proof or necessary information requested by the Programme bodies within the set deadline.

Payments to the projects

Payments to the project are made on a reimbursement basis and no advance payments from the Programme are available.

The Project Report verified during 1st check (for 70% payment) and approved by the JS (for 30% payment) serves as a basis for MA to transfer the ERDF co-financing to the LP account. Payments by the MA will be processed in two separate payments to the LP for costs reported via Project Report (timeline indicated in Table No. 11 above).

If the JS/MA receives information indicating a suspected irregularity or ineligible costs within a project, payments to the project may be suspended until the matter is clarified.

¹⁵ Article 74 (1) (b) of CPR.

In case costs are to be withdrawn and/or postponed by the JS/MA from the respective Project Report, they are deducted from the respective payment. In case ineligible costs are detected during the approval of the Project Report, they will be automatically deducted from the total reported eligible costs, therefore the 2nd payment could be paid less than 30% of the total requested ERDF co-financing.

If ineligible costs, withdrawn and/or postponed costs exceed 30% of the requested ERDF co-financing, the 2nd payment will not be made and the difference will be deducted automatically from the amount of total eligible costs reported in the next Project Report (except for the last reporting period). In case withdrawn and/or postponed costs are found eligible (except for the last reporting period), they can be reported by LP or PP in the Partner Report of the following reporting period or are added to the next payment to the project. For the last reporting period the JS/MA will initiate the recovery procedure, if needed.

For the deduction of costs in public procurement, *Guidelines for determining financial corrections to be made to expenditure financed by the Union under shared management, for non-compliance with the rules on public procurement (Commission Decision of 19.12.2013 C(2013) 9527 final)* apply.

For the deduction of costs for not achieved or partly achieved project output indicators, *Guidelines for determining financial corrections to be made for not achieved or partly achieved project output indicators*, approved by the MA and published on the Programme website will be applied.

The LP must transfer the received ERDF co-financing to the PP not later one month. And within 5 working days after the transfer to the PP must upload proof (bank account statement) in JEMS.

6.4 Publicity requirements

This section focuses on the Programme requirements to the projects' communication activities. These requirements aim:

- to inform public about the project and its benefits,
- ensure transparency of the use of the EU funding,
- prominently highlight contribution of the EU.

Given its strategic importance, the OSI project should plan a prominent role for communication and higher visibility actions to ensure that information about the strategic project and its achievements is widely disseminated and reaches the vast majority of target groups, citizens and the general public. Strong communication actions and targeted visibility activities are key and should aim to raise awareness about the benefits of the EU to people's lives by acknowledging the EU's support.

The Programme requirements are in-line with the legal requirements and technical specification set out in the EU regulations¹⁶.

For more information how to structure communication activities and what information to provide in the Application Form please see chapter 4 "Project requirements" of the Programme Manual.

For more detailed guidance on the Programme communication requirements and use of the Programme logo please see "Communication Guidelines".

The subsection "Financial corrections for not respecting mandatory publicity requirements" specifies financial corrections that might be applied to the project failing to meet requirements set up in the Programme Manual and "Communication Guidelines".

¹⁶ The PPs should familiarise themselves with the requirements set-up in Article 36 of Interreg Regulation and Articles 47 and 50 and Annex IX of Common Provisions Regulation.

Programme logo

The Programme logo consists of three elements (Fig. No. 3):

- the emblem of the EU¹⁷,
- the statement “Co-funded by the European Union” written in full and placed next to the emblem of the EU,
- the Programme name “Interreg Latvia – Lithuania” placed next to the emblem of the EU.



Figure No. 3. **Logo of the Programme**

Please download file of the needed format and language from the website of the Programme www.latlit.eu. Please do not attempt to amend or modify the Programme logo on your own, under any circumstances!

Using of the Programme logo is obligatory.

The logo must always be clearly visible and placed in a prominent position:

- In publications and documents the logo preferably should be placed on front cover.
- In electronic formats (e.g. online and applications, etc.) it has to be positioned in a place visible without scrolling down or clicking.
- When used on electronic banners the Programme recommends placing the logo in a position where the banners remain complete even if the platform crops the image.
- In videos logo of minimum 240 px should be used at the beginning and/or the end of the video.
- On other promotional materials it also has to be placed in a prominent place.

The size of the Programme logo must be reasonable and recognisable. For the minimum size requirements please refer to the “Communication Guidelines”.

When displayed in association with other logos (e.g., of PPs or sponsors), the Programme logo must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos. Also, the EU emblem (the EU flag) shall have at least the same size (height or width) as the biggest of the other logos.

Whenever possible, project must use the Programme logo in full colour. Ideally, it should be used only on white or light backgrounds. If a coloured background is the only option, place a white border around the logo. The border should be 1/25th the height of the logo rectangle. If adding a white background is not possible due to space limits, design context, or because it would cover an important element of the background image, you may use a white & colour version of the logo instead. For single colour reproductions (e.g., for printing or specific document uses), you may use the monochrome version of the logo but only when absolutely necessary. Use these alternative versions of the logo only if the full-colour version cannot be applied. For full guidance on Programme logo use, please refer to the

¹⁷ In accordance with the technical specifications laid down in Annex IX of the Common Provisions Regulation.

“Communication Guidelines”.

Name and logo of the project, QR codes

The Programme recommends using short and memorable project acronyms that are easier to promote and combine with the Programme logo.

If the project chooses to create its own logo, it should combine the project title or acronym with the Programme logo. The instructions on Programme logo usage outlined in the “Communication Guidelines” have to be followed, and the logo templates available on www.latlit.eu have to be used.

The Programme does not recommend creation of other logos or stand-alone logos or designs for projects. As a general rule, such costs are not eligible. Such designs are considered as not being cost-effective as their use is limited to the lifetime of the project. The only exception from this rule can be cases when specific logo and design would lead to reaching and ensuring long-term use of the project results and costs are planned in the approved Application Form.

We encourage projects to use QR codes leading to project profiles on www.latlit.eu or, in exceptional cases, to project websites where project results (such as reports, videos, applications, etc.) can be found. Smart use of the QR codes could increase visibility of the project and could be the most suitable for the outdoors use (e.g., on information stands, plaques, etc.) or when rather small space is available for information due to objective reasons. However, QR codes should not be overused.

Any QR code generator can be used.

Statement on the Interreg support

The project must display the Programme logo with a statement highlighting the support from the Programme, which is already incorporated into the Programme logo. It should be done in a visible manner on all documents and communication materials, as well as websites of LP/PP and social media channels. The partnership should also provide information on the project in all possible occasions when appropriate and technically possible, e.g. during the events, presentations, interviews, in produced documents, reports, materials, social media posts, audios and videos, etc. For more detailed information on the specific requirements please see “Communication Guidelines”.

Disclaimer on expressed opinion

If project expresses an opinion, it is strongly recommended to use a disclaimer stating that the expressed opinion does not necessarily reflect EU view. For proposed wording which could be used in communication materials please see “Communication Guidelines”.

Mandatory actions to publicise project and the Programme

Project must plan these actions (measures) to promote project and publicise support of the Programme:

- to create and regularly maintain project profile on www.latlit.eu,
- to publish information about the project on websites or social media accounts of LP and PP,
- to mark physical investments,
- to display project poster in a location visible to the public, unless LP/PP have already placed durable plaques or billboards to mark physical investments,
- to display the Programme logo or the EU flag at project events,
- to display the Programme logo in a visible manner on documents and communication materials relating to the implementation of the Interreg project, intended for the general public or for participants, to organise at least one communication event and invite representatives of the EC and the Programme bodies in a timely manner.

The above indicated actions are minimum which is required by the Programme. Summary on the mandatory and recommended publicity actions is provided in table No. 12. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and PPs are welcomed to use other additional cost-effective measures.

All publicity measures, including the mandatory ones, must be indicated as deliverables of the relevant project activities.

Table No. 12. **Mandatory and some of recommended publicity activities and measures**

Publicity activities and measures	If mandatory	Start	End	Frequency of maintaining
1. Project profile on www.latlit.eu	Mandatory	Start of project	End of project	At least twice per reporting period.
2. Information on social media	Mandatory	Start of project	End of project	Minimum 10 posts per PP with tagged Programme.
3. Project information on official websites and/or social media accounts of LP/PP	Mandatory	Start of project	Information must remain after the project	Regularly. By the end of the project all its results must be uploaded there.
4. Durable plaques or billboards to mark physical investments at each location of physical investment	Mandatory if the project involves purchase of equipment	As soon as the project physical investment or the purchase of equipment starts, or equipment is installed	At least for five years after the final payment to the project	To repair/replace if damaged or information needs update
5. Marking of equipment with stickers	Smart use is recommended. Cannot replace durable plaques or billboards or posters	After purchased or installed	At least for five years after the final payment to the project	To replace if damaged or information needs update
6. Marking of specialised cars	Mandatory	After purchased	At least for five years after the final payment to the project	To replace if damaged or information needs update
7. Informative posters at premises of each LP and PP	Mandatory. However, if LP/PP have already placed durable plaques or billboards to mark physical investments	Start of project	End of project	To replace if damaged or information needs to be updated

Publicity activities and measures	If mandatory	Start	End	Frequency of maintaining
	they are not required to display an informative poster			
8. Displaying the Programme logo or the EU flag at events* *Partners may use movable stands, posters, roll-ups, banners, or other visual aids featuring the Programme logo.	Mandatory	During the event		
9. Displaying the Programme logo on all documents and communication materials relating to the implementation of the project, intended for the general public or for participants	Mandatory	As soon as document or communication material is published or produced	For digital products – at least for five years after the final payment to the project	N/A
10. Organise communication event with invitation to representatives of EC and MA =	Mandatory	Start of project	End of project	At least one communication event per project

Project website and social media

The Programme will provide approved project with an access to create its subsection on the Programme website www.latlit.eu. The project must create it at the start of the project and maintain regularly, at least twice per project reporting period. LP and PP must upload produced audio visual content, publications and other materials after they are finalised. Thus, the project should plan sufficient resources to manage project profile.

The stand-alone project website outside www.latlit.eu will not be eligible, unless it directly serves for reaching of the project results and exceeds lifetime of the project (e.g., special platforms, applications, databases, etc.). The Programme logo must be prominently displayed on such project's website and its mobile version.

We encourage project to communicate their results in social media. The partners can mention support of the EU and the Programme in social media posts, use logo of the Programme or project on visuals, and / or mention the support in the text. The approaches can variate between different posts. Project should tag the Programme @LatviaLithuaniaProgramme (on Facebook). Minimum 10 social media posts (at least 2-3 per project reporting period) with tagged Programme are mandatory during the

implementation of the project per each PP. Paid posts must acknowledge support of the EU and the Programme.

Links to the existing social media accounts of the LP or PP should appear in the project profile on the Programme website.

Official websites and/or social media accounts of LP/PP

LP and PP must acknowledge support from the Programme, and provide information about the project on its website or social media profiles. They must provide a short description of the project, indicate its aims and planned results, highlight the financial support of Interreg, display Programme logo, and provide link to the project profile on www.latlit.eu.

The partners must prepare and publish the information at the start of the project on their websites, and report it with the Partner Report for the first period. By the end of the project all results that can be displayed publicly in electronic format should be uploaded to the section devoted to the project on LP/PP's website. The basic project information (aims, LP/PP, amount of funding and its source, description of activities) and description of the main results must be available on the LP/PPs' websites even after the project closure.

Description of the project should be in the location that is easy to find, navigate and access for the external user. The Programme recommends that not more than 3-4 clicks would be needed to access the description.

Marking of physical investments

LP/PP must display durable plaques or billboards clearly visible to the public at each location of the physical investment **for the projects involving purchase of equipment. The plaques or billboards must clearly display the logo of the Programme.** We recommend putting a durable plaque or billboard on object with project investments (equipment purchases/upgrades), or, if not possible, at a place nearby, that is readily visible and accessible to the public.

The partners must place plaques or billboards at each location of the physical investment as soon as the purchase of equipment starts or equipment is installed. It should remain and be maintained at least for five years after the final payment to the project is done. The plaques and billboards are to be made of durable material that enables long-lasting display and **are of the significant size. It is recommended to be not smaller than A3 size.**

The plaques and billboards should contain:

- Mandatory:
 - Logo of the Programme of the prominent size. In the case project has its logo consisting of project acronym and Programme logo, as stated above, the project logo can be used instead.
 - Project title, ID, acronym, and duration (start and end dates).
 - Total project budget and total ERDF co-financing.
- We also recommend including:
 - Description of the main project objective and the aim of the supported activity.
 - Name, budget, and ERDF co-financing of the investment object.
 - QR code leading to project profile on www.latlit.eu, or address of the project profile on www.latlit.eu, or project website.
 - Contact details of the responsible project partner.

The Programme will provide project with the non-binding templates for the billboards. In the case project uses its own design and includes other information in the plaque or billboard, the above indicated information on the project must not take less than 15-25% of the total space.

Stickers are generally optional and additional measures to increase the visibility of the Programme support. The stickers cannot replace billboards, or plaques or posters in the premises of partners. Nevertheless, their smart use can considerably contribute to the communication efforts by specifying objects that have been funded by the EU.

Specialised vehicles must be marked with the Programme logo for at least five years after the final payment to the project. The Programme also recommends marking mobile equipment that can be used in various locations (e.g. screens, tents etc.).

As there are different needs for the stickers (size, material, etc.) the stickers shall be produced by the project.

Informative posters

LP and PP must display at least one informative poster of at minimum size A3 or equivalent electronic display at a location visible to the public in their premises, for example, at the entrance area of the building.

The poster must provide information about the project and financial support of the Programme, and should contain:

- **Mandatory:**
 - Logo of the Programme of the prominent size. In cases where the project has its logo consisting of project acronym and Programme logo, as stated above, the project logo can be used instead.
 - Total project budget and total ERDF co-funding.
 - Project title, ID, acronym, and duration (start and end dates).
- We also recommend including:
 - Brief description of the project, including the main project objective and main activities.
 - QR code leading to project profile on www.latlit.eu, or address of the project profile on www.latlit.eu, or project website.
 - Information about all project partners (titles, and, if possible, logos, contact information, etc.).

The Programme will provide project with the non-binding templates for the posters.

The partners should set-up printed posters or electronic displays as soon as the project begins. The posters are cost-efficient to produce. Thus, to ensure visibility and when reasonable, the LP/PP can consider placing a few of them at the project site. As a good practice partners should update the posters when they wear out and/or information on the project needs to be updated.

In cases where LP/PP have already placed durable plaques or billboards to mark physical investments, they are not obliged to display an informative poster.

Events

Public events of the project should aim to disseminate its results and have to be interesting for target groups and media. Information about project events has to be sent to the assigned JS staff member not later than two weeks before event. In addition, information about the upcoming public events has to be entered in the calendar on the Programme website www.latlit.eu as soon as possible, but not later than two weeks prior to the event.

The project must display the Programme logo or the EU flag at all events, co-financed by the Programme. Partners can use movable stands, roll-ups, banners, posters or other relevant materials to meet this mandatory requirement. Thus, the Programme highly recommends project to plan to produce or purchase these materials when relevant.

Documents of events (agenda, invitations, list of participants, hand-outs, presentations, etc.) must have the Programme logo on them. The Programme recommends to use its template for the list of event participants. It can be downloaded from the Programme website www.latlit.eu.

We encourage partners to participate in the events of the Programme (e. g Programme Annual events, Interreg Cooperation Day, Balts Unity Day) upon request by the MA/JS. Project also is invited to plan their own activities for the Interreg Cooperation Day and/or Balts Unity Day. Both traditionally are organised in the second half of September.

Communication event

Partners are required to organise a communication event or activity to promote their project and involve the EC and MA. This is also an opportunity to showcase the project's impact and visibility, and its relevance for national development and contribution to EU priorities. Partners must coordinate closely with the JS/MA and inform the EC in a timely manner. **The responsibility to involve the EC and the MA remains with the beneficiary.**

Preparation phase:

- invitations to the EC should include key project details, date, venue, type and format of the event, and the expected role of the EC representative in the event's agenda (preferably active, e.g. delivering a speech);
- invitations to the EC should be sent at least four weeks in advance;
- ensuring appropriate visibility – the EU flag should always be displayed prominently on the invitation, information materials and during the event.

Media outreach:

- partner should prepare a press release and consult it with the JS/MA to ensure it highlights the European dimension;
- the reference to the EU budget should be made directly in the headline, subheading, or text of the press release;
- when an EC representative cannot attend, a quote from the EC representative should be requested in good time and included in the press release;
- the press release should be shared with the national press agencies representing all partners of the project.

Audio-visual material:

- clear reference to EU funds as the source of funding should be included in any audio-visual material – the logo of the EU flag or emoticon of the EU flag should be permanently visible in the layout (using fine print or making a reference for a few seconds at the end of the spot are insufficient);
- the audio-visual material should serve solely as promotion of the project and its contribution to EU policies, excluding promotion of institutions, individuals or local political entities/activities;
- all materials prepared by the beneficiary for promotional activities should be shared with the EC.

Social media:

- partner and public authorities involved in the project materially or territorially should also inform about EU funding in their social media channels;
- in line with the Horizontal European Funds Communication Strategy, standard hashtags #CohesionPolicy or #Interreg should be used;

- the social media account of the EC/EC representations in the given country, DG REGIO/Unit for Interreg should be tagged in the posts: @EURegioInterreg (FB), @RegioInterreg (X).

The event or activity should serve as an opportunity to make the project's work visible to the public and showcase the positive changes being brought to the country/ies and region, namely the project's importance for achievements of the specific objective of the programme.

All visibility and publicity rules outlined for other project events must also be observed during the communication event (see chapter above).

Promotional materials

The Programme has a strict approach to promotional materials (e.g. "gadgets", "giveaways" or "souvenirs"). Projects can produce only promotional materials that are specifically required for reaching target groups and project objectives defined in the Application Form. The JS will assess use of any promotional material during project assessment.

If produced, then all promotional materials must be properly branded with the Programme logo. To avoid mistakes, we recommended to harmonise design with the JS prior to the production.

When planning promotional materials, one should consider their environmental, social and economic impact, and to give preference to:

- items that are needed and have a high use value,
- the European and local products or the ones with closer production sites,
- durable, environmentally friendly materials,
- durable, reusable items and designs; please avoid single use items (for example, banners for single event).

Reporting of publicity and communication activities

The projects must report to the JS on the publicity and communication activities and provide information and proofs the same way as for other thematic activities of the project.

To ensure proper delivery, maintenance and reporting of the publicity materials each project has to:

- 1) Collect the evidence of the promotional activities (copies of publications, photos of events, copies of the press releases with the list of recipients, photos of physical investment marking, etc.).
- 2) Submit a copy of any publicity or information material together with Partner and Project Reports.
- 3) Keep at least one set of the produced information or promotional material at LP/PP institution for audit purposes.
- 4) Ensure that the marking of physical investments (permanent plaques, billboards, stickers, etc.) remains in place or is replaced if damaged for at least for five years after the final payment to the project.

Additionally, the LP/PP shall guarantee the availability of project results to wide public also for at least five years after the project closure. LP/PP shall also ensure that the basic project information (aims, beneficiaries, amount of co-financing and its source, description of activities) and a description of the main results are available on their websites and the project website, if one was created, even after the project closure.

Financial corrections for not respecting mandatory publicity requirements

The LP/PP must take immediate actions to correct any mistakes related to the publicity requirements (e.g. mistakes in colours, size or distortion of the logo, incorrect, incomplete or missing information about Interreg support or project, or other). In the case LP/PP disregards the EU and the Programme requirements on publicity, and where remedial actions have not been put into place, the MA may cancel up to 2% of the ERDF co-financing granted to the beneficiary concerned. The principle of proportionality shall be applied. Please note that failing to meet requirements set up in "Communication Guidelines" might also lead to the financial corrections.

Depending on the type of non-compliance with the requirements and/or for the first non-compliance a warning may be expressed. When it is not possible to quantify the financial amount of ineligible costs the principles indicated in Table No. 13 shall be applied to determine amount of financial correction.

Table No. 13. **Financial corrections due to mistakes in projects' publicity**

Type of mistake	Amount of correction of declared costs for production of informative or other materials
Mandatory publicity requirements have not been fulfilled and it is not possible to correct mistakes	100%
Mandatory publicity requirements have been fulfilled partly and it is not possible to correct mistakes (e.g. mistakes in colours, size or distortion of the logo, incorrect, incomplete or missing information about Interreg support or project, or other)	25%
Other cases	Warning, and if mistake repeated - 10%

6.5 Project closure and durability of project results

With regards to the project closure, it is important to be aware of the following:

- All outputs co-financed by the Programme must comply with the applicable Programme information and communication requirements as specified in section 6.4. "Publicity requirements" of the Programme Manual.
- Physical (durable equipment) and/or productive investments produced during the project implementation must be owned and maintained by the LP or PP at least five years after the final payment to the project has been made.
- The project outputs and results, including the cooperation established within the project, must be maintained, updated, and continued for at least one year after the project ends, as specified in Annex I "Programme output and result indicators" of the Programme Manual. Project will be asked for information on what has happened after the project one year after the project ended as specified in section 6.3. "Project reporting and payments" of the Programme Manual.
- The LP and PP must assign a contact person for five years after the final payment of the ERDF co-financing has been made to the LP from the Programme.

Without prior consent of the MA, neither the LP nor PP are allowed to transfer ownership, titles, industrial and intellectual property rights for outputs of the project related to investment in durable equipment items and/or productive investment during the project duration and at least five years after the final payment to the project has been made.

LP and PP are obliged to repay the ERDF co-financing if within five years of the final payment to the LP or within the period of time set out in State aid rules, the project is subject to any of the following:

- a cessation or transfer of a productive activity outside the NUTS level 2 region in which it received support,
- a change in ownership of an item of investment which gives to a firm or a public body an undue advantage,
- a substantial change affecting its investment's nature, objectives or implementation conditions which would result in undermining its original objectives¹⁸.

If any of the above-mentioned cases enter into force, the repayment of the ERDF co-financing shall be made in proportion to the period of non-compliance.

Availability of project-related supporting documents

The LP and PP (each for its part) at all times are obliged to retain all files, documents and data about the project on standard data storage media in a safe and orderly manner for control and audit purposes **at least for five years** after the final payment has been made by the MA to the LP¹⁹. Documents shall be kept either in the form of the originals, or certified true copies of the originals, or on commonly accepted data carriers including electronic versions of original documents, or documents existing in electronic version only.

The following project-related supporting documents/information should be available at LP and PP (for their parts) premises for control and audit purposes:

- Subsidy Contract, Project Partner Statements, addendums to Subsidy Contract, if applicable;
- Partnership Agreement, its amendments, if applicable,
- Relevant project correspondence,
- Reports issued by the National control (including checklists/control reports), if not available in JEMS,
- Book-keeping lists/overviews,
- Bank account statements proving reception and transfer of the ERDF co-financing,
- Invoices, contracts, acceptance acts,
- Bank account statements/proof of payment for each invoice,
- Documents confirming fulfilment of the conditions for support in the case the project is implemented via SCOs: a confirmation of employment, etc.,
- Public procurement documents, including contracts,
- Proof of outputs and activities: studies, training programmes, minutes of meetings, signed participant lists for physical meetings and electronic lists of participants for online meetings, agendas, etc.,
- At least one sample of each prepared promotional material,

¹⁸ Article 65 of Common Provisions Regulation.

¹⁹ Due to the fact that at the start of the project the date of final payment can't be precisely projected, it is recommended, first, to set a period for retention of project documents for a period of 6 years after the end date of the project and after transfer of final payment by the MA to LP to adjust the period accordingly.

- Record of assets that confirms physical availability of equipment/ purchased in the framework of the project,
- Other project documentation confirming implementation of the project,
- Proofs that publicity rules have been respected.

The procedure for certification of conformity of these documents held on commonly accepted data carriers with the original documents must be in line with provisions set in the national legislation and shall ensure that the versions held comply with national legal requirements and can be relied on for audit and control purposes. Where documents exist in electronic form only, the computer system used shall meet accepted security standards that ensure that the documents held comply with national legal requirements and can be relied on for audit purposes.

In all cases, this given retention period is interrupted either in case of legal proceedings or by a request from the EC. Other possibly longer statutory retention periods, as might be required by national law, remain unaffected.

6.6 Controls and audits

Project audit trail

LP is responsible to ensure that an adequate audit trail is documented at all levels of the project, including PPs' expenditure. Therefore, the LP has an overview on:

- who paid,
- what was paid,
- who verified, and
- where the related documents are kept,
- who is the contact person of the PP.

The LP should request that PP keeps the documents related to the project in a safe and orderly manner at least five years after the final payment has been made by the MA to the LP. The documents are archived either as originals or as certified copies on commonly used data media (in compliance with the national legislation). If documents are retained electronically, national security standards must be met. If deemed appropriate, the LP may ask for copies of accountancy documents from the PP.

The PP must ensure that project funding is explicitly separated from the PP's general budget and can be clearly identified, as well as properly managed and monitored. Thus, PP must follow these requirements for the accounting of the ERDF co-financing from the Programme:

- Separate accounting records or appropriate (project specific) accounting code for all real costs' transactions relating to the project must be used. It should be supported by accounting documents or equivalent documentation.
Note: The SCOs are reported based on pre-defined calculation methods. Therefore, these costs are not expected to match with bookkeeping and don't have to be in the separate project account.
- Exact reported amount must be indicated on the invoice in case the invoice is partly reported to the Programme. In addition, it is recommended that project index is written or stamped on original invoices reported to the Programme.

- Book-keeping lists/overviews, i.e. list of all expenditures for all transactions relating to the project without prejudice to national accounting rules, must be available.

All PPs must ensure that all accounting documentation related to the project is available and filed separately and that all related payments of the project have a clearly distinguishable book-keeping code, even if this leads to a dual treatment of accounts. This requirement allows to file and keep original accounting documents related to the project in a centralized filing system, e.g. in project partner organisation's financial unit according to the national legislation requirements and to make the approved copies of the accounting documents, file and keep them separately in a project folder with a reference to the place where the original documents are kept. The project folder should also contain the evidence of the project outputs, where possible (e.g. copies of brochures, photos). The documents must be kept as originals or certified true copies of the originals, or on commonly accepted data carriers including electronic versions of original documents or documents existing in electronic version only.

National control

The National control include bodies from Latvia and Lithuania responsible for verification of LP/PP expenditure based on Partner Reports that the co-financed products and services have been delivered, expenditure declared by the LP/PP has been paid out and that it complies with applicable legal framework and the Programme rules. It means that at the end of each reporting period LP and PP will fill in the Partner Report and submit it with all mandatory annexes through JEMS. The National control will check the expenditure entered in the project accounts and the supporting documents (e.g., invoices, contracts, timesheets, and public procurement documentation) as well as the correct application of SCOs.

In **Latvia** the National control is **centralized** and its functions are carried out by the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia. For PP from Latvia National control is free of charge.

In **Lithuania** a **decentralized** system is established by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania. PP from Lithuania must plan costs for National control in their budgets (usually 3-4% of the total partner budget).

Detailed information on National control is available on the Programme webpage www.latlit.eu

On-the-spot checks

Verifications of the Partner Reports by National control can provide assurance on the correctness of expenditure to a large extent. Still, depending on the nature of the project its activities and purchased equipment or installed investment, such checks cannot always cover all aspects. Therefore, on-the-spot checks will be carried out by the National control with focus on the two main aspects:

- 1) good functioning of internal processes and systems related to the approval, ordering, accounting and payment of reported costs,
- 2) existence and delivery of goods and services.

During on-the-spot check the National control visits the LP/PP and verifies that certain purchases of services and products of the approved application have actually taken place during the project implementation and that the related processes (e.g., public procurement, archiving and bookkeeping) have been carried out according to rules. On-spot checks are performed by the National control at the premises of the LP/PP as well as in any other place where the project is being implemented. On-the-spot checks should check the existence of the project, especially with regard to cost items referring to the CC5 and to accounting documents that form part of the audit trail.

In Latvia, with a centralised control system, on-the-spot checks will be performed on a sample depending on planned and reported costs under CC5.

In Lithuania, with a decentralised control system, on-spot verifications of PP will be performed based on *Methodology for national controllers on risk-based management verification of expenditure*

Second level control

The AA is the Programme body responsible for carrying out system audits and audits of projects in order to provide independent assurance to the EC that the Programme management and control system functions effectively and that expenditure submitted to the EC is legal and regular.

The projects to be audited will be selected under the appropriate sampling method, which means that LP or PP can be chosen for the second level control. The AA will check costs and original supporting documents for real costs for the respective period of time.

The audit is in most cases performed on-the-spot, at the premises of the audited body or in any other place where the project is being implemented. It is complemented by check of supporting documents submitted with reports.

Other controls and audits

In addition to the sample audits explained above, other bodies, such as the EC's audit services, the European Court of Auditors, NAs, MA, JS may carry out audits/ sample checks to verify the quality of the Programme and project implementation and in particular their financial management and compliance with EU and national rules. Project may be audited or checked even after the project has ended. It is therefore important to ensure good documentation and the secure conservation of all project documents according to requirements specified in section 6.5 "Project closure and durability of project results".

7. Project budget

The project budget is the total amount of financial resources planned for project implementation. It is defined in the Application Form, approved by the MC when selecting project for funding, and stipulated by the MA in a Subsidy Contract.

7.1 General requirements

Sound financial management

PPs must use project budget in line with sound financial management principles, namely in accordance with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness:

- **Principle of economy** requires that the resources used by the organisation in the pursuit of its activities shall be made available in due time, in appropriate quantity and quality and at the best price;
- **Principle of efficiency** concerns the best relationship between resources employed and results achieved;
- **Principle of effectiveness** concerns the attainment of the specific objectives set and the achievement of the intended results.

Sub-contracting between LP/PP and subcontracting of employees

PPs financially contributing to the project and receiving ERDF co-financing from the Programme are not allowed to subcontract each other, themselves (e.g., internal invoice) and own or LP/PPs' employees.

Avoiding conflict of interests and corruption

The Programme has zero tolerance towards the existence of a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest exists when the impartial and objective exercise of the functions of any person involved in the project is compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other direct or indirect interest, as stipulated in Article 61 of Financial Regulation. Where there is a risk of a conflict of interests involving a member of staff in LP/PP organisation, measures and procedures indicated in Article 61 of Financial Regulation have to be applied to prevent a conflict of interests.

If any party detects the existence of conflict of interest, including a third party, it shall notify the Programme bodies via e-mail address: latlit@varam.gov.lv. The Programme bodies will maintain confidentiality regarding sources of such information.

Double financing

If other EU funds have contributed towards financing of the same expenditure, such expenditure will be not eligible as this is considered double financing, as stipulated in Article 191 (3) of Financial Regulation.

Cost sharing

Cost sharing is not allowed according to Programme rules. The Programme defines cost sharing as a proportional allocation of certain project expenditures incurred by one PP and allocated to other PPs.

A situation in which one PP conducts the procurement process while the other involved PPs receive separate invoices directly from the supplier may also be considered as form of cost sharing.

To avoid cost sharing, PP needs to plan its own budget and report its own expenditure to the LP. Therefore, a well-planned division of tasks and project budget among the partnership is essential when setting up the project.

Value added tax (VAT)

Value added tax is eligible for LP and PP in project with total eligible budget below 5 000 000 EUR.

Competition and public procurement

The purchase of goods and services is subject to public procurement procedures that have to be in line with national public procurement rules, EU rules, where applicable.

The public procurement procedures aim at more efficient and transparent use of public funds and increasing competitiveness. PPs shall respect the main principles of public procurement (equal treatment, non-discrimination, transparency, free movement and competition) and sound financial management principles (economy, efficiency and effectiveness) throughout the entire process of public procurement. This also applies to purchasing goods and services below the threshold values.

LP and PP shall follow the public procurement rules irrespectively of their legal status.

If national legislation on public procurement is stricter than the EU legislation, PPs shall apply national legislation.

In case of questions on applying the national public procurement rules, LP/PP shall contact Procurement Monitoring Bureau of the Republic of Latvia (www.iub.gov.lv) and Public Procurement Office under Government of the Republic of Lithuania (www.vpt.lt).

7.2 Eligibility of costs

Programme Manual, Subsidy Contract and relevant EU and national legislation define the eligibility of costs.

As a general rule, costs shall be directly related and essential for the project implementation. They must be planned in the Application Form as well as shall not exceed the eligible budget under the respective CC, total eligible partner and project budget.

Project costs can be planned as real costs or as SCOs. Real costs are all costs incurred, actually paid and booked in the accounting system of LP/PP. SCOs are a way of reporting project costs when they are not based on real costs but based on a pre-defined methodology.

The main preconditions for **eligibility** of real costs incurred by the projects are the following:

- Expenditure has actually been paid out by LP/PP. The Programme considers that expenditure was paid out when the amount is debited from the LP/PP organisation's bank account. The bank statements usually prove the payment. The date when the invoice was issued, recorded or booked in the accounting system does not count as a payment date.
- Costs must be paid out before the end of the respective reporting period and within the project duration with exceptions stated under section 6.3 "Project reporting and payments" of the Programme Manual. The earliest date when costs can be paid out is on the next day after the project is approved by the MC.

- Only costs incurred (paid out) by LP/PP, accounted for the project and proved by delivery of works, services or supplies within the project duration could be considered as eligible project costs.
- Advance payments to the external service providers are eligible:
 - 1) if LP/PP pay up to **30%** of total contract amount as advance payment, proof of partial or full delivery of goods or services is not required,
 - 2) if a service or goods contract foresees a higher advance payment percentage, LP/PP shall report full costs (both advance payment and remaining payment) of goods/services in the reporting period when delivery takes place and LP/PP have to provide the proof of full delivery of goods or services.
- Costs have incurred (paid out) by the LP/PP and would not have been incurred (paid out) without the project.
- PPs report costs under the correct CC.

The following costs are considered **ineligible**:

- Costs incurred and/or paid outside project duration (except for cases specified under section 6.3 “Project reporting and payments” of the Programme Manual).
- Fines, financial penalties and expenditure on legal disputes and litigation.
- Purchase of land
- Costs of gifts
- Interest on debt.
- Charges for national financial transactions (e.g., bank transfers within Latvia and Lithuania).
- Costs related to subcontracting LP/PP or employees of LP/PP organisations.
- Costs that were already supported from any EU funds or by other international, national, regional and/or local funds.
- In-kind costs.
- Cost sharing.
- Lessor’s margin in case of lease of equipment;
- Costs of preparation of technical documentation for (re)construction costs.
- Creation of stand-alone logos or designs for projects whose use is limited to the lifetime of the project.
- The stand-alone project website outside www.latlit.eu, unless it directly serves to reach project results and exceeds the lifetime of the project.
- Promotional materials except items required explicitly for reaching defined target groups. The Programme has described such items in detail under section 6.4 “Publicity requirements” of the Programme Manual and PPs must plan them in the Application Form.

7.3 Simplified cost options

The Programme uses both real costs and SCOs. The SCOs are reported based on pre-defined calculation methods. Therefore, the Programme does not expect these costs to match with the bookkeeping system.

For SCOs general rule on eligibility of costs also applies: costs shall be directly related and essential for the project implementation, planned in the approved Application Form and they shall not exceed the eligible budget under the respective CC.

There is the following type of SCO:

- 1) Flat rates – are calculated as a % of the defined base cost (e.g. office and administration costs are calculated from staff costs),

The use of SCOs is mandatory for the following CCs:

- 1) flat rate for CC1,
- 2) flat rate for CC2,
- 3) flat rate for CC3.

It is possible and natural that the LP/PP expenditures will sometimes be under-compensated or over-compensated when SCOs in a form of flat rates are applied.

There are many benefits of SCOs. They are typically straightforward to calculate; LP/PP rarely make mistakes in applying them. Reporting becomes much easier as there is no need to attach invoices. Thus, SCOs help to focus the efforts more on results and less on technicalities connected with regular reporting.

7.5 Description of cost categories

PPs must plan project budget under the following CCs:

- CC1 “Staff costs”,
- CC2 “Office and administration costs”,
- CC3 “Travel and accommodation costs”,
- CC4 “External expertise and service costs”,
- CC5 “Equipment costs”,

7.5.1 CC1 Staff costs

Staff costs consist of gross employment costs of staff employed by the LP/PP organisation engaged in the project activities. Staff costs can be planned in the Application Form and reported by one of these methods:

- SCO flat rate method (up to 15% of total eligible LP/PP's real costs (CC4, CC5)),

The method does not require documents that expenditure has been paid out.

Flat rate method

LP/PP can use a flat rate to calculate and report staff costs. The calculation is done automatically in the Application Form and Partner Report.

JEMS calculates the eligible staff costs as a flat rate of **up to 15%** of total eligible LP/PP's real costs.

When using the flat rate, the LP/PP does not need to document that the expenditure has been incurred (paid out) (filling in Programme timesheet forms is also not necessary) or to prove that the reported amount of the flat rate would correspond to the actually spent staff costs. Nevertheless, to ensure proper verification of costs reported under CC4, PPs shall provide information on employees involved in the project management/implementation to National control with the Partner Report.

- **If LP/PP chooses the flat rate method, external project management costs** (project manager, coordinator, assistant, financial managers, procurement and public relation specialists, etc.) **are ineligible.**

LP/PP do not have to provide any supporting documentation (i.e. no invoices, payment proof, etc.) for reporting and control purposes.

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7.5.2 CC2 Office and administration costs

Office and administration costs cover the operating and administrative expenses of the LP/PP organisation implementing project activities.

LP/PPs shall use the flat rate for calculating and reporting office and administrative costs. The calculation is done automatically in the Application Form and the Partner Report.

Eligible costs under CC2 “Office and administration costs” are calculated as a flat rate of **up to 15%** of eligible staff costs or LP/PP may decide not to use office and administration costs in case they are not needed.

When using the flat rate, the LP/PP does not need to document that the expenditure has been incurred (paid out) or to prove that the reported amount using the flat rate would correspond to the real costs for the office and administration.

The flat rate under CC2 “Office and administration costs” covers the following costs and they cannot be reported under any other CC:

- office rent,
- insurance and taxes related to the buildings where the staff is located and to the equipment of the office (e.g. fire, theft insurance),
- utilities (e.g. electricity, heating, water),
- office supplies,
- accounting,
- archives,
- maintenance, cleaning and repairs,
- security,
- IT systems (operating/administrative IT services of general nature that support project delivery. This includes maintenance costs of IT systems, e.g., costs related to the maintenance of a computer used by the project manager to administrate the project),
- communication (e.g., telephone, fax, internet, postal services, business cards),
- bank charges for opening and administering the account or accounts where the implementation of the project requires a separate opened account,
- charges for transnational financial transactions,
- costs related to the organization of internal one partner (without the participation of LP or PP) meetings.

Depending on the partner's organisation set-up or project specifics, some costs might belong either to CC2 or others (e.g., CC1, CC4 or CC5).

For example:

Services: in some cases, there may be a justified need for an accountant to be part of the project team (under CC1), whereas in other cases, support from general internal accounting service will suffice and PP shall include such costs under CC2.

PPs must include office equipment, IT hardware and software, and furniture and fittings under CC5. This does not relate to IT system support of an administrative nature; such costs fall under CC2.

LP/PP do not have to provide any supporting documentation (i.e. no invoices, payment proof, etc.) for reporting and control purposes.

7.5.3 CC3 Travel and accommodation costs

LP/PP shall use the flat rate for calculating and reporting travel and accommodation costs. The calculation is done automatically in the Application Form and the Partner Report.

Eligible costs under CC3 “Travel and accommodation costs” are calculated as a flat rate of **up to 10%** of eligible staff costs or LP/PP may decide not to choose travel and accommodation costs if they are not needed.

When using the flat rate, the LP/PP does not need to document that the expenditure has been incurred (paid out) or to prove that the reported amount using the flat rate would correspond to the real costs for travel and accommodation.

The following costs are covered by the flat rate under CC3, and PPs cannot report them under any other CC, as stipulated in Article 41 of Interreg Regulation:

- travel (such as tickets, travel and car insurance, fuel, car mileage, toll, parking fees, rent of vehicle),
- the cost of meals (e.g., cost of meals provided during travelling (PPs must plan and report costs for catering during events under CC4)),
- accommodation costs,
- costs related to mandatory requirements for entering countries, e.g. visa costs, mandatory health tests, etc.,
- daily allowances.

LP/PP do not have to provide any supporting documentation (i.e. no invoices, payment proof, etc.) for control and reporting purposes.

The flat rate for CC3 is directly linked to the staff cost and JEMS always counts these costs from the final eligible staff costs. If the National Control or other Programme bodies would reduce staff costs, the travel and accommodation costs would also be proportionally reduced.

The flat rate only covers travel and accommodation costs of **LP/PPs’ own employees**. Travel and accommodation costs of target groups, external experts and service providers are covered by CC4, except costs for rented transportation that is used for the events when project management staff and project target group participate.

7.5.4 CC4 External expertise and services costs

External expertise and services costs cover expenditures paid by the partner organisation for the support in the project implementation provided by a public or private body or a natural person outside of the partner organisation. LP/PP shall base those costs on contracts or agreements concluded with external experts and service providers and paid based on invoices or equivalent requests for reimbursement.

In accordance with Article 42 of Interreg Regulation the following costs are eligible under this CC:

- studies or surveys,
- trainings,

- translations,
- development, modifications and updates to IT systems and websites except ineligible costs specified in section 7.2 “Eligibility of costs” of the Programme Manual,
- promotion, communication, publicity, promotional items and activities or information linked to a project or a Programme except ineligible costs specified in section 7.2 “Eligibility of costs” of the Programme Manual.
- financial management,
- services related to the organization and implementation of events or meetings (including rent, catering or translation),
- participation in events (e.g., registration fees),
- legal consultancy and notarial services, technical and financial expertise and other consultancy services,
- intellectual property rights,
- costs for verifications (e.g., cost of the National control),
- the provision of guarantees by a bank or other financial organisation, where required by EU or national law or in the Programme Manual,
- travel and accommodation for the target group, external experts, speakers, chairpersons of meetings and service providers,
- insurance for equipment and infrastructure,
- other specific expertise and services needed for the project.

CC4 specific rules

- LP/PP must follow the rules on eligibility of costs stated in section 7.1. “General requirements”.
- Costs must be borne by the LP/PP organisation.
- The work by external experts and service providers must be essential to the project and specified in the Application Form.
- All services must comply with other applicable EU and Programme information and publicity rules.
- Costs for external services are eligible if LP/PP ensure the quality of produced outputs.
- LP/PP must calculate the price of the external service or expertise reasonably and according to the standard rates of the country where the LP/PP concluding the contract is located.
- All additional costs related to external experts (e.g. travel and accommodation costs for external experts) must be foreseen in the service contract and planned under this CC.
- LP/PP must include under this CC all costs of external expertise and services that are linked to an investment in equipment planned under CC5 .
- Costs related to the organization of internal one partner (without the participation of LP or PP) meetings are not eligible under this CC, but LP/PP could cover these costs from CC2 “Office and administration costs”.
- Wages/compensation for artists and authors are not eligible, with the exception if activities are essential for the implementation of the project and costs have been specified in the approved Application Form under CC4.
- General internal accounting services are not eligible under CC4, and LP/PP must attribute such costs to CC2.
- Costs of groceries purchased from the shops are not eligible under CC4.
- If LP/PP use rented transportation for the events where project management staff and project target group participate, total costs for transportation are eligible under CC4.

- Costs for lunch are eligible for a minimum six hours meeting, and LP/PP can include costs for dinner for events taking place more than one day. Costs for dinner on the last day of the event are eligible if dinner is a part of networking activities.

In general, the following main documents must be available for control purposes:

1. Evidence of the procurement process (announcement, selection, award) in line with the national procurement rules.
2. A contract or an agreement laying down the services to be provided, if required by national legal act. For experts paid based on a daily fee, PPs shall provide the daily rate, the number of days contracted, and the total amount of the contract. Any changes to the contract must comply with the public procurement rules and PPs must properly document them.
3. An invoice or a request for reimbursement providing all relevant information in line with the applicable accountancy rules.
4. Results of the work of external experts or service deliverables, e.g.:
 - developed documents (e.g., studies, researches, programmes),
 - developed ICT solutions,
 - etc.
5. In the case of organisation of meetings and events:
 - meeting/event agenda with indicated breaks for the catering. If catering is not indicated in the agenda, the National Control/JS/MA will ask for clarifications during the check of reported costs. If costs are not justified, they might be found ineligible.
 - memo/minutes/report of the meeting/event, if available.
 - list of participants with signatures for each day (PPs are recommended to use a standard form of a "List of participants" for reporting on physical events which is published on the Programme website www.latlit.eu) and a verifiable list of participants for online meetings.
 - photos from significant meetings/events.
 - handouts (obligatory to be provided for control purposes if the preparation of handouts is paid under CC4).
6. Proof of payment.
7. Act of delivery and receipt (if required).
8. Other documents that could be relevant according to the national legislation.

7.5.5 CC5 Equipment costs

Equipment costs cover the eligible expenditure paid by the partner organisation for purchased, rented or leased equipment necessary to achieve the project's objectives. To rent or lease equipment, LP/PP should provide justification in the project Application Form stating clear advantages of rent or lease compared to the purchase of equipment.

In the case of the equipment lease, final ownership should belong to the respective LP/PP, and the leasing period should be within the duration of project implementation.

A cross-border character and relevance of the investments in the equipment should be evident and in line with the project objective. Investments in the equipment should form a part of an overall cooperation strategy implemented by the LP/PP.

In accordance with Interreg Regulation, the following costs are eligible under this CC:

- Office equipment costs,
- IT hardware and software costs,

- Furniture and fittings costs,
- Laboratory equipment costs,
- Machines and instruments costs,
- Tools or devices costs,
- Costs of other specific equipment needed for the project.

CC5 specific rules

- Rules on eligibility of costs stated in section 7.1 “General requirements” must be followed.
- Costs must be borne by the LP/PP organisation.
- The needed functionality and quantity of equipment have to be justified in the Application Form.
- Costs of equipment are eligible if they are planned in the approved Application Form.
- Equipment ownership and the way of use cannot be changed – according to the rules in section 6.5 “Project closure and durability of project results”.
- All costs must comply with other applicable EU and Programme information and publicity rules (see section 6.4 “Publicity requirements”).
- Purchase of equipment is eligible if it is used solely for the purpose of the project or the target group in line with the objectives of the project and costs incurred (were paid out) within the project duration.
- LP/PP cannot place depreciation of the equipment purchased from the project in the project budget.
- Purchase of only specialised cars is eligible if they are operated and used solely to fulfil the main objective of the project.
- Equipment cannot be purchased, rented or leased from another LP/PP.
- For equipment rented or leased for a certain period during the project lifetime, rental or leasing costs for the respective period are eligible if the necessity for renting and lease of equipment is appropriately justified and PPs plan these costs in the Application Form.
- Expenditure for insurance of the equipment permanently installed in the project is eligible only for the project duration period. PPs must provide justification for equipment insurance in the Application Form and must plan and report relevant costs for insurance under CC4.
- Costs linked to gifts, including granted or given at competitions organised by the LP/PP are not eligible.
- Purchase of warranty for equipment for a period outside the project duration is not eligible.
- Purchase of animals is allowed only in justified cases.

The purchase costs of second-hand equipment are eligible if the following four conditions are fulfilled:

1. The seller of the equipment must provide a declaration stating its origin, and confirm that it has not been purchased with the aid of other financial instruments (EU, national, international).
2. The price of the equipment must not exceed its market value and must be less than the cost of similar new equipment.
3. The equipment must have the technical characteristics necessary for the project, and it has to comply with applicable norms and standards.
4. LP/PP plan the purchase of second-hand equipment in the Application Form.

In general, the following main documents must be available for control purposes:

1. Evidence of the procurement process (announcement, selection, award) in line with the national procurement rules.
2. Invoice or a request for reimbursement providing all relevant information in line with the applicable accountancy rules.
3. A document laying down the equipment purchase, if required by national legal acts. Any changes to the contract must comply with the public procurement rules and PPs must properly document them.
4. Proof of payment.
5. Act of delivery and receipt.
6. Pictures of purchased equipment, including proof that publicity rules have been respected (upon request).
7. Other documents that could be relevant according to national legislation.

7.6 De-commitment

The Programme funding is subject to the de-commitment rule. If PPs do not spend the Programme funding according to the defined schedule (known as the 'N+3 rule'), the EC will de-commit the unspent funding from the Programme²⁰.

De-commitment imposes risk on the Programme's success; therefore, regular control of the Programme spending and implementation of risk-preventing countermeasures is part of the Programme's management.

The payment claims to the EC are based on the projects' reported and certified expenditures, thus very much depending on the projects' financial performance. In this regard, the Subsidy Contract will commit approved project to follow a pre-defined spending schedule set out in the Application Form. If the Programme faces de-commitment and it cannot be secured by other means, the MA/JS will reduce budget granted to the delayed project. The decision on whether projects is affected by the de-commitment will be based on an assessment of the project's spending plan as fixed in the Application Form and the actual spending rate of the project.

The Subsidy Contract provides the legal basis for the de-commitment of funding from running project.

7.7 Irregularities and recovery of expenditure

An irregularity is any breach of the legislative acts of the EU, Republic of Latvia, Republic of Lithuania and documents of the Programme that regulate the management of the Programme. It results from the action or failure to act of any institution involved in the Programme and project implementation, which has or might have a negative influence on the general budget of the EU²¹.

²⁰ Article 105 of Common Provisions Regulation.

²¹ Based on definition of the "irregularity" in Article 2 (31) of Common Provisions Regulation "irregularity" means any breach of applicable law, resulting from an act or omission by an economic operator, which has, or would have, the effect of prejudicing the budget of the Union by charging unjustified expenditure to that budget.

The Programme will consider any violation of the legislative acts of the EU, Republic of Latvia, Republic of Lithuania, and documents of the Programme found in the project activities or after project closure, for which costs have been declared to the EC, as irregularity.

The Programme will also consider the suspected fraud and fraud as irregularities.

Suspected fraud is an irregularity giving rise to the initiation of administrative or judicial proceedings at the national level to establish the presence of intentional behaviour, particularly fraud.

Fraud is any intentional act or omission relating to:

- 1) the use or presentation of false, incorrect or incomplete statements or documents, which has as its effect the misappropriation or wrongful retention of funds from the general budget of the EU or budgets managed by, or on behalf of, the EU,
- 2) non-disclosure of information in violation of a specific obligation, with the same effect,
- 3) the misapplication of funds for purposes other than those granted initially.

Possible irregularities can be identified by:

- LP and PPs,
- National Control,
- AA, EC auditors,
- MA/JS,
- NAs.

In case of possible irregularity, the MA is responsible for investigating possible irregularity cases, and deciding on irregularity existence or non-existence.

In case of irregularity existence, within MA decision, the MA indicates the method how irregularly carried out expenditure will be recovered (by deducting from the current/next payment to the LP or by requesting reimbursement from the LP). Then it notifies the LP (in case irregularity was detected for PP – also the respective PP), respective National control, AA and the respective NAs about the decision.

In case if MA requests reimbursement from the LP, the LP is obliged to repay the respective amount to the Programme by the deadline set within the MA decision. PPs shall refund to the LP any amounts unduly paid in line with the Partnership Agreement.

In case irregularity originates from a breach of GBER requirements by LP/PP that receives Aid under Article 20 of GBER, recovery of such unlawful and incompatible aid with respective interest shall be performed by the MA in accordance with the Law on Control of Aid for Commercial Activity of Republic of Latvia.

After taking the decision on irregularity existence, the MA prepares an amendment to the Subsidy Contract by reducing the total project budget by the amount of irregularity, and the exact sum may not be used again by the project.

8. Resolution of complaints

Article 69(7) of the Common Provisions Regulation requires arrangements to ensure the effective examination of complaints concerning the Programme Funds.

Lodging a complaint does not affect the implementation of the decision subject to the complaint.

The complaint procedure described in this section concerns:

- complaints about decisions taken by the MA during the project selection process (administrative act or administrative decision) and complaints by third parties regarding decisions taken by the Programme authorities,
- LP complaints to the MA against the decision taken by the MA during project implementation.

Complaints about decisions taken by the MA during the project selection process

The MA makes a decision based on the MC's decision on the selection of project for funding or takes the final decision if the project had to fulfil conditions.

If the applicant does not agree with the decision of the MA, it may lodge a complaint about this decision.

Submission of the complaint and formal requirements

A complaint regarding a decision of the MA taken during the project selection process, must be prepared in English and submitted by the claimant (the claimant can be the applicant (including LP of the approved project) or a third party) representative with an official letter to the State secretary of the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia. The complaint must be submitted within one month of the day when the decision, which serves as a reason for complaining, was received.

The complaint should include:

- 1) Name and postal address of the legal entity (e.g., applicant organisation) or natural person filing the complaint.
- 2) Name of the respective authority.
- 3) Reference number of the project or application which is a subject of the complaint.
- 4) Clearly indicated reasons for the complaint, indicating the decision against which the complaint is filed. All elements which are being complaint and/or failures in adherence with Programme or Programme related documents must be listed. The applicant must list all elements of the selection process which the applicant is complaining about, including clear reference to the Programme Manual and specific documents of the call for proposals.
- 5) Information to what extent the decision is disputed (describing which part/article of the administrative act the complaint is about).
- 6) The petition (explicitly stating what decision/action applicant envisages to be taken regarding the decision taken).
- 7) Signature of the legal representative of legal entity (e.g., applicant organisation) or natural person.
- 8) Supporting documents, if relevant.

The relevant documentation will be provided solely to support the complaint and may not alter the quality or content of the assessed application or other decision of the MA. No other grounds for the complaint will be considered during the complaint procedure.

Supplementing complaints and rejection without examination

If the complaint does not contain the necessary information as referred to above, the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia requests the claimant to supplement the complaint with the required information within 5 (five) working days after the day on which the claimant receives the information from the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia. The term for completing the complaint is indicated in the official letter from the MA providing information about the shortcomings.

If the claimant fails to submit the requested information by the term specified in the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia letter or if it submits the complaint after the time limit of one month as of the day when the decision, which serves as a reason for complaining, was received, the complaint is left unexamined.

If the complaint is left unexamined, within 10 (ten) working days the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia informs the claimant by an official letter about the rejection of the complaint without examination, as well as electronically informs the MC.

Handling of the complaint

The maximum duration for the whole complaint procedure (from the receipt of the complaint to the decision by the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia on the complaint) is four months.

The Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia within one month reviews the complaint. If additional documents/clarifications are needed, the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia asks claimant to provide them.

The Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia reviews the documentation and takes a decision, based on which the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia issues its decision.

Depending on the legal status of the claimant, the MA issues its decision in accordance with the national laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia:

- in the form of an administrative act if the claimant is a Latvian legal entity under private law (including NGO) or claimant is from Lithuania;
- in the form of an administrative decision if the claimant is a Latvian public authority or public equivalent body.

Complaints by third parties:

Complaints lodged by third parties regarding decisions taken by the Programme authorities, are answered by MA. The answer given by MA cannot be appealed.

This is without prejudice to the general possibility to address claims on the implementation of the Programme or its projects thereunder, to the MA by citizens and stakeholders anonymously. Anonymously submitted information is not considered a complaint and is not treated as such.

LP's complaints to the MA against the decision taken by the MA during project implementation.

Submission of the complaint and formal requirements

The LP may submit a complaint on behalf of the project partnership to the MA against the decision taken by the MA during project implementation.

The LP has to prepare the complaint in English and submit it with an official letter to the MA within one month after the MA submits the final decision that is the subject of the complaint.

The complaint shall include:

- Name and postal address of the legal entity (LP organisation) filing the complaint.
- Name of the respective authority.
- Reference number of the project which is a subject of the complaint.
- Clearly indicated reasons for the complaint, indicating the decision against which the complaint is filed, listing all elements which are being complaint and/or failures in adherence with Programme or Programme related documents.
- Information on to what extent the administrative act is disputed (describing which part/article of the administrative act the complaint is about).
- The petition (explicitly stating what decision/action LP envisages to be taken regarding the decision taken).
- Signature of the legal representative of legal entity (e.g., LP organisation).
- Supporting documents, if relevant.

Handling of the complaint, supplementing the complaint and rejection without examination

Complaints about the decision taken by the MA during project implementation are solved depending on the legal status of the LP:

- in civil procedure (if the dispute cannot be resolved after the complaint has been reviewed by the MA), or
- in the form of an administrative decision. The administrative decision issued by the MA can be appealed to the State Secretary of the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development of Latvia. The administrative decision cannot be appealed in court.

If the complaint does not contain the necessary information as referred to above, the MA requests claimant to supplement the complaint with the required information within 5 (five) working days. The term for completing the complaint is indicated in the official letter from the MA providing information about the shortcomings. If the claimant does not eliminate discovered shortcomings within the above-mentioned time, the complaint is left unexamined.

If the complaint is left unexamined, within 10 (ten) working days, the MA informs the claimant by an official letter about the rejection of the complaint without examination.

The maximum duration for the whole complaint procedure (from the receipt of the complaint till the final decision by the MA on the complaint) is 4 (four) months.

Annex I. Programme output and result indicators

Specific objective 1.1							
Output indicator name	Measurement unit	Definition	Time measurement achieved	Result indicator name	Measurement unit	Definition	Time measurement achieved
Organisations cooperating across borders (RCO87)	Organisations	The indicator counts the organisations cooperating formally in supported projects. The organisations counted in this indicator are the legal entities including project partners.	Upon project finalisation.	Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion (RCR84)	Organisations	The indicator counts the organisations cooperating across borders after the completion of the supported projects. The organisations are legal entities involved in project implementation. The cooperation concept should be interpreted as having a statement that the entities have a formal agreement to continue cooperation, at least one year after the end of the supported project. The cooperation agreements may be established during the implementation of the project or within one year after the project completion. The sustained cooperation does not have to cover the same topic as addressed by the completed project.	One year after project completion
				Comments The target as set in the Application Form and the reported value for this result indicator should be equal to or less than the value of the corresponding output indicator– “Organisations cooperating across borders (RCO/87)”. Reporting on cooperation concept between organisations after project completion includes: a) formal agreement to continue cooperation at least one year after the end of the project;			

				b) a short description of cooperation activities, which were performed by organisations within one year after the end of the project.			
Specific objective 1.1							
Output indicator name	Measurement unit	Definition	Time measurement achieved	Result indicator name	Measurement unit	Definition	Time measurement achieved
Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects (RCO84)	Pilot actions	<p>The indicator counts the pilot actions developed jointly and implemented by supported projects. The scope of a jointly developed pilot action could be to test procedures, new instruments, tools, experimentation or the transfer of practices.</p> <p>In order to be counted by this indicator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the pilot action needs not only to be developed, but also implemented within the project <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the implementation of the pilot action should be finalised by the end of the project. <p>Jointly developed pilot action implies the involvement of organizations from Latvia and Lithuania in its implementation.</p>	Upon project finalisation.	Solutions taken up or upscaled by organisations (RCR104)	Solutions	<p>The indicator counts the number of solutions, other than legal or administrative solutions, that are developed by supported projects and are taken up or upscaled during the implementation of the project or within one year after project completion.</p> <p>The organisation adopting the solutions developed by the project may or may not be a participant in the project.</p> <p>The uptake / up-scaling should be documented by the adopting organisations in, for instance, strategies, action plans etc.</p>	During project implementation / One year after project completion
<u>Comments</u> In the Application Form PPs should describe the need for the pilot action (implementation-related activity designed to test the feasibility of jointly developed new approach (e.g. procedures, new instruments, tools, experimentation or the transfer of practices), who will participate in its development,				<u>Comments</u> Project should report at least ‘1’ as target value for the result indicator “Solutions taken up or upscaled by organisations (RCR104)” if the project has chosen the output indicator “Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects (RCO84)”.			

<p>how it will be used during project implementation and by whom, as well as who will participate in the testing of the pilot action.</p> <p>In order to be counted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The pilot action should be jointly developed by all PPs; 2) Depending on the nature of the pilot action the Programme accepts several options for joint testing: The pilot action can be tested by PPs (or institutions owned or supervised by project partners) jointly in both countries or in each country separately, or PPs from Latvia and Lithuania can jointly test the developed pilot action in one country (for example, Lithuanian PPs physically arrive in Latvia and test pilot action jointly with Latvian PPs or Lithuanian PPs participate in testing online). <p>If after testing only some of the PPs decide to use the piloted action, reasons why the other PPs will not use the piloted action should be provided in the Project report.</p>	<p>"Solution taken up or upscaled by organisations" refers to a pilot action, which after its testing was recognised as appropriate for further use without any major improvements.</p> <p>In the Application Form PPs should describe who and how will use and/or upscale the jointly developed solution during project implementation or after project completion, provided that after testing the pilot action will be accepted as appropriate for further use.</p> <p>In order to be counted when reporting either during project implementation or after project completion, the jointly developed solution (pilot action) should be applied at least in one of the following ways during project implementation or after project completion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) after the testing all PPs should decide to use the tested pilot action; 2) after testing part of PPs should decide to use the tested pilot action; 3) after the testing it should be used by other stakeholders (e.g. at national or local level etc.) <p>If after testing pilot action will not be considered as appropriate for further use, project should report value "1" for output indicator "Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects (RCO84)" and value "0" for result indicator "Solutions taken up or upscaled by organisations (RCR104)".</p>
<p><u>Comments</u></p> <p>Project should choose output indicator "Jointly developed solutions (RCO116)" if during project implementation PPs intend either to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) jointly develop the solution, test it at least within one of the following groups: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. PPs from both Member States; b. institutions owned or supervised by PPs in both Member States; c. test group with involvement of one or both Member State(s). d. jointly introduce necessary improvements and use it as jointly developed solution either in institutions of all PPs (or institutions owned or supervised by PPs), or institutions of part of PPs. <p>If the solution will be used only by part of PPs, reasons why respective PPs decided to not use the jointly developed solution should be described in the Project report.</p> <p>or</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) take the solution which was jointly drafted and tested by PPs (or institutions owned or supervised by PPs) from both Member States in some other project, if required introduce the necessary improvements and jointly develop a revised solution. 	<p><u>Comments</u></p> <p>Project should plan at least '1' as target value for the result indicator "Solutions taken up or upscaled by organisations (RCR104)" if project has chosen output indicator "Jointly developed solutions (RCO116)".</p> <p>"Solution taken up or upscaled by organisations" refers to a jointly developed solution (for example, for improving cross-border public services and digitalization of public services by increasing quality level of the service, adopting improved regulation, adopting policy document or plan, shortening time of the service delivery, expanding target group, improving usability of the service, improving participation (including feedback) opportunities etc.), which is either taken up or upscaled by project partners (or institutions owned or supervised by PPs) or stakeholders during project implementation or after project completion.</p> <p>In the Application Form PPs should describe who and how will use or upscale the jointly developed solution during project implementation or after project completion.</p> <p>In order to be counted when reporting either during project implementation or after project completion, the jointly developed solution should be applied at least in one of the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) all PPs should use or upscale the jointly developed solution by adopting it in organisations' strategies, action plans etc. or incorporating into PP organisation's list of officially provided services;

<p>If the solution will be used only by part of PPs, reasons why respective PPs decided to not use the jointly developed solution should be described in the Project report.</p> <p>In case this output indicator is chosen, the project should not choose the output indicator "Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects (RCO84)".</p> <p>In the project Application Form PPs should describe the need for a jointly developed solution, who will participate in its development, how it will be used during project implementation and by whom.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) part of PPs should use or upscale jointly developed solution by adopting it in organisations' strategies, action plans etc. or incorporating into PP organisation's list of officially provided services; 3) stakeholders (e.g., national, local municipalities, etc.) should use or upscale jointly developed solution by adopting it in organisations' strategies, action plans etc. or incorporating into organisation's list of officially provided services.
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