

4th Monitoring Committee meeting - Brief Minutes

Transnational Cooperation Programme Interreg
Balkan-Mediterranean 2014-2020

CCI 2014TC16M4TN003

Approved by the Monitoring Committee in Tirana, on 11/7/2018

The Monitoring Committee (hereinafter referred to as MC) of the Transnational Interreg Cooperation Programme V-B “Balkan-Mediterranean 2014-2020” assembled for its 4th meeting on 11th of July 2018 in Tirana, following an invitation by the Managing Authority of European Territorial Cooperation Programmes (hereinafter MA of ETCP), in agreement with the European Commission and the Partner States.

Ms Daniela Cekani, representing the National Authority of Albania, as Chair of the Monitoring Committee welcomed the participants and opened the 4th Monitoring Committee meeting, highlighting the role of the Programme in regional development.

Ms Angeliki Bouziani, Head of the Managing Authority of European Territorial Cooperation Programmes, as Operational Chair of the MC, in turn welcomed all participants and outlined the agenda of the MC meeting.

Ms Nadine Lakhal, representing the European Commission, also welcomed the participants.

Quorum was achieved and it was identified that no members of the MC present had a conflict of interest. The Agenda of the meeting was approved unanimously.

The Table attached presents the participation in the 4th meeting of members with and without voting rights.

1. Information on the State of Play of the Programme

Ms Nikoletta Tatari, MA of ETCP, presented the State of Play of the Programme and the developments since the last Monitoring Committee meeting, focusing especially in the implementation of the projects and the Performance Framework.

The MC acknowledged the content of the presentation.

2. Funding of the Reserve List projects

Mr Chatzikonstantinou, JS, presented the proposal for funding the projects placed in a Reserve List, as approved during the 3rd Monitoring Committee meeting in Limassol, as well the impact of the projects in the Programme’s finances and its performance in terms of indicators.

The proposal was also presented during the National Authorities’ meeting on 10/07/2018 in Tirana.

A Written Procedure (WrPr12) on the subject had been launched on 17/04/2018, but after an exchange of clarifications and ideas closed on 17/05/2018 without a unanimous decision.

Following a discussion and comments posed, **the MC unanimously decided:**

- **To proceed with the funding of the Reserve List projects (see Annex) under the following conditions**
 - Amendment of the budget of the projects to be contracted, according to the BalkanMed Budget Reduction Methodology and taking into account the restrictions of the 1st Call for Project Proposals;
 - Reduction of the budget of IPA partners of the projects to be funded by 20%, taking into account the restrictions of the 1st Call for Project Proposals. Further reduction may apply if justifiable (as incl. in Budget Reduction Methodology);
 - Reduction of the budget of ERDF partners of the projects to be funded by 15%, taking into account the restrictions of the 1st Call for Project Proposals. Further reduction may apply if justifiable;
 - Overbooked funds (national and EU contribution) at the closure of the Programme, if this will be the case, will be covered by the Beneficiaries' own funds of the seven (7) approved projects of the Reserve List. Overbooking at Programme level shall not lead to any financial obligations at the expense of the national budgets;
- **The MC decided with a qualified majority of four votes (Albania, Cyprus, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Greece) to one negative vote (Bulgaria) to overbook Programme funds without amending the Subsidy Contract regarding to the national co-financing to Bulgarian beneficiaries;**
- **The MC decided to add an article on the eventual treatment of overbooked funds, if any, in the Subsidy Contract (Annex) and the Partnership Agreement.** Bulgaria's proposal to add in the Subsidy Contracts an article stipulating that the Bulgarian beneficiaries agree to implement the project pre-financing with their own funds the amounts needed for national co-financing and in case of availability of programme resources these beneficiaries' funds could be reimbursed by the Bulgarian National Authority under a subsequent contract for national co-financing, providing that Bulgarian additional funds from the national budget could be available to support the national co-financing of Bulgarian beneficiaries, was not approved.

All Lead Partners are going to be officially notified in writing on the decision of the Monitoring Committee.

3. Technical Assistance

Mr Chatzikonstantinou presented an overview of the BalkanMed resources and needs, pointing out the need for the staffing of the JS with an additional Project Officer.

Ms Bateka, JS, presented proposed revisions to the Technical Assistance Manual and the Technical Assistance Multi-annual Breakdown table. She presented the significant savings achieved so far and explained that they could be re-directed to the financing of the approved Projects and to the additional staffing of the JS.

Following a discussion, **the MC unanimously approved**

- **the staffing of the JS with an additional Project Officer from the existing ranking list, resulted from the recruitment procedure already undertaken by MOU S.A. with the participation of all BalkanMed countries in the Evaluation Committee; and**
- **the Technical Assistance Manual and the Technical Assistance Annual Breakdown.**

The MC has been informed on the methodology of apportionment of the General Operational Costs of the Programmes managed by the Managing Authority of European Territorial Programmes.

4. Programme & Project Implementation Manuals

Ms Tatari presented proposed amendments to the Programme Manual.

Ms Kouloumpatsani and Ms Matiaki, JS, presented proposed amendments to the Project Implementation Manual.

Following a discussion and additional comments, the **MC unanimously approved the two (2) revised documents and delegated the Managing Authority to proceed to any other amendments necessary.**

5. Communication activities

Ms Bateka presented an overall Assessment of Information & Publicity Measures. She also presented the communication activities undertaken by the Programme so far, as well as those planned for the second half of 2018, according to the requirements of EC Regulations.

The MC acknowledged the presentation.

6. Joint Secretariat Internal Rules of Procedure

Ms Mastoraki, JS, presented the Joint Secretariat Internal Rules of Procedure.

The MC acknowledged the presentation.

7. Risk Assessment Tool

Ms Tatari presented the Risk Assessment Tool, developed by the Managing Authority, and the procedure that has been followed so far with the participation of the National Authorities.

The MC acknowledged the presentation.

8. BalkanMed post-2020

Mr Chatzikonstantinou presented the draft EC Regulation for the Programming Period 2021-2027 and the prospects of the future implementation of the BalkanMed Programme.

Following a discussion on the necessity of the Programme, **the MC unanimously decided to delegate the Head of Managing Authority to submit an official letter to the European Commission on the post-2020 period. In addition, the BalkanMed participating countries agreed to co-ordinate their efforts to the European Commission regarding the future BalkanMed Programme.**

9. Other issues

The request to the European Commission for the allocation of additional IPA Funds, the evaluation procedure of the BalkanMed Programme, the Management & Control System, the MIS, future Programme revisions, the BalkanMed participation in other transnational projects and the timeline of future actions were discussed.

The MC acknowledged the information provided.

At the end of the meeting, Brief Minutes and Decisions were drafted by the MA and the Chairperson read them out and all MC members approved them.

Signed

Albanian Delegation

Bulgarian Delegation

Cypriot Delegation

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Delegation

Greek Delegation

Managing Authority

Attached:

1. Participants' List
2. Agenda
3. List of the Reserve List projects to be funded
4. Amended Subsidy Contract for the Reserve List projects

Approved