



**INTERREG IPA CBC PROGRAMME  
"GREECE – THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA  
2014-2020"**

**1<sup>st</sup> JOINT MONITORING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**November 18, 2015**

**Romantik Hotel**

**Veles, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

**Brief Minutes & Decisions**

The Joint Monitoring Committee (hereinafter referred to as JMC) of the Interreg IPA Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Greece-The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020" convened for its 1<sup>st</sup> Joint Monitoring Committee Meeting on November 18th, 2015 in Veles, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, following an invitation by the Hellenic Managing Authority of European Territorial Cooperation Programmes (hereinafter MA of ETCP), in agreement with the co-chairs.

Mrs. Mjellma Mehmeti-Petersen, Ministry of Local Self Government, who is chair of the Committee, welcomed the participants, wished a fruitful 1<sup>st</sup> Joint Monitoring Committee Meeting and stressed the importance of the new Programme 2014-2020. She highlighted that this is the first time that shared management will be applied at these borders. She concluded her opening speech by wishing strong cooperation and honest relations.

The chair then passed the floor to Ms Aggeliki Bouziani, Ministry of Economy, Development & Tourism, who substitutes Ms Evgenia Fotoniata Special Secretary of ERDF & CF Funded Sectoral OPs, Ministry of Economy, Development & Tourism of the Committee, as co-chair. Ms Bouziani welcomed the participants and wished a successful meeting.

Afterwards, Mr Emmanuel, Head of the Managing Authority welcomed the participants and described the procedure followed until the Interreg IPA Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Greece-The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020" was approved by the European Commission on the 06-08-2015, C(2015) 5655. The Head of MA informed the JMC that the goals of the current Programme 2007-2013 were achieved under the conditions of the JMC members consensus procedure, the close cooperation with Programme management bodies and the JTS/ MA contribution: securing the EU funds, the sound financial management of the Programme and the productive implementation of three Calls for proposals.

The target for the next programme period is the timely activation of the CP by the end of 2015 with the approval of the 1<sup>st</sup> Call for Project Proposals having assured the integrity of the Calls documents, the objective proposal evaluation and the timely transfer and establishment of the JTS in the new Programming period.

Then, the floor was passed to Mr. Hende Csaba who introduced the INTERREG harmonized branding, a common approach for all CPs inside and outside of EU.

The chair asked the JMC members and participants in an advisory capacity to present themselves.

The Chair requested that the draft agenda is adopted and opened the 1<sup>st</sup> Joint Monitoring Committee Meeting.

Mr. Dimitris Gertsos, Unit A of the MA, presented the Rules of Procedure of the Joint Monitoring Committee. The Rules of Procedure were approved. The Chair confirmed that quorum was achieved.

The members of the JMC were asked to declare their impartiality related to the decisions taken. All members declared their impartiality. Mrs. Gjirkova, Southeast Planning Region, asked for clear definition of conflict of interest as

regards to a JMC member (Planning Region) which submits a project proposal. Mr. Samaras replied that there is no conflict of interest at this point of time, but it will appear only in the case where the applicant (& simultaneously JMC member) participates and votes in the selection of operations.

The floor was then passed to Mr. Nikos Chatzisavvas from Unit B1 of the MA, who presented the general framework of the Interreg IPA CBC Programme 'Greece- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020' and its implementing provisions.

Afterwards, Mr. Hende Csaba mentioned the recent letter sent by Commissioner Mrs. Corina Cretu, which encourages CPs to implement promotion actions for the support of refugees in the region and in the framework of social responsibility. Adding to that, Mrs. Bouziani informed the JMC about the Hellenic National Authority's full support to such actions. Mr. Samaras reminded that the Programme participated in ETC Day 2015 by donating medicine for refugees. The Chair reflected on the issue and proposed synchronized such actions in both countries. Mr. Mouratoglou, Central Union of Municipalities of Greece, proposed that donations should be orientated towards three categories; a) medicine, b) long-life food and c) bottles of water.

The JMC members agreed to decide upon a concrete set of actions for refugees via a written procedure.

The representative from Secretariat for European Affairs, Mrs. Zafirovska, asked about the Financing Agreement signature status. Mr. Hende replied that the related draft is in a final phase.

The floor was then passed to Mrs. Eleftheria Votsari, JTS Communication & Technical Assistance Officer, who presented the Communication Strategy of the Interreg IPA CBC Programme "Greece- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020". The Communication Plan was approved by the JMC members.

The floor was then passed to Ms. Martha Vafeidou, Unit D of the MA, who presented the Technical Assistance Multiannual Budget Plan Form, draft Manual and allocation of the TA projects for the Managing Authority and the IPA National Authority. They were all approved by the JMC members.

The allocation of the IPA National Authority's budget per budget line and per year and the final version of the Manual will be approved via a written procedure.

Mr. Hende clarified that ERDF TA 2007-2013 can be used for the preparation and the smooth transition to the 2014-2020 period. On the contrary, IPA TA 2007-2013 cannot be used for such purpose.

The Chair proposed to authorize the JTS 2007-2013 to activate the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme "Greece - The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014 - 2020". She also informed that the 9th JMC 2007-2013 agreed to support this authorization. In this respect, all JMC members decided to authorize the JTS 2007-2013 to provide the necessary

legal and administrative actions for the activation of the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme "Greece - The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014 - 2020" (launching of the Call, preparation of the necessary documents, evaluation of the proposals, implementation of the projects, etc) until the end of 2016.

Later, Mr. D. Gertsos presented the Internal Rules of procedures of the Joint Secretariat. They were all approved unanimously.

Mrs. Katerina Samakovli, JTS Coordinator, presented basic facts and documents of the 1<sup>st</sup> Call for Project Proposals of the new Programme. The Application form was approved in principle and the MA will make the final adjustments.

Regarding the proposal that "the total funding per country does not exceed 65% of the total project budget", Mr Giantsis suggested that there should be no limitation such as the 65%-35%. Discussion followed and the members expressed their opinions. Mrs. Samakovli, Mr. Samaras and Mrs. Bouziani agreed that projects eventually find their internal balance. On the other hand, Mr. T. Efremov and the Chair argued that this forum should not be a bargaining place and the 65%-35% ratio sets a base in the application phase which reflects the desired end result. Finally, consensus was reached and the decision was to approve the 65%-35% ratio as proposed.

Clarifications regarding the 20% flexibility rule were provided related to the participation of the region of Western Macedonia. Beneficiaries located outside the eligible area within the two countries are eligible under the condition that their activities are in benefit of the eligible area and their budget will not exceed 20% of the total project budget.

Then the officers of JTS (Mrs. E. Votsari, Mr. Z. Martinovski and Mrs. K. Kouliali) continued with the Lead beneficiary principle, evaluation procedure, contracting issues, progress reports and JoB.

The JMC approves the selection criteria and the evaluation procedure. Regarding the horizontal principles of the Programme, it authorizes the MA to elaborate on the issue with DG REGIO and National Authorities.

The JMC approves the 1<sup>st</sup> CFP Application Package and authorizes the MA/JTS to proceed with all the necessary actions and adjustments in order to launch the Call.

Mr Hende informed the Committee that the Regulation has been amended and the eligibility of expenses is extended to the end of 2023.

The JMC agreed to the formulation of a Joint Steering Committee. The National Authorities will designate members and the MA is authorized to elaborate the relevant documents.

Finally, the floor was passed to Mr. Alexandros Samaras, Head of Unit B1, who presented the timeline of future actions. He proposed that the 1<sup>st</sup> CFP is published on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December, 2015 and the project submission deadline is on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2016. Four Info Days will be organized in time and place agreed between the NAs. The JMC members agreed.

**Following the discussions, the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) decides unanimously to:**

- Approve the Agenda
- Approve the Rules of Procedure of the Joint Monitoring Committee
- Implement promotion actions for the support of refugees in the region and in the framework of social responsibility. However, decision upon a concrete set of actions for refugees will be taken via a written procedure.
- Approve the Communication Strategy of the Interreg IPA Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Greece-The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020"
- Approve the Technical Assistance Multiannual Budget Plan Form, the current version of the Manual and allocation of the TA projects for the Managing Authority and the IPA National Authority. The allocation of the IPA National Authority's budget per budget line and per year and the final version of the Manual will be approved via a written procedure.
- Authorize the JTS 2007-2013 to provide the necessary legal and administrative actions for the activation of the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme "Greece - The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014 - 2020" (launching of the Call, preparation of the necessary documents, evaluation of the proposals, implementation of the projects, etc).
- Authorize the JTS 2007-2013 to act as JS 2014-2020 for the new Programming Period 2014-2020 until the end of 2016.
- Approve the Application Form in principle and authorize the MA to make final improvement technical adjustments
- The JMC approves the selection criteria and the evaluation procedure. Regarding the horizontal principles of the Programme, it authorizes the MA to elaborate on the issue with DG REGIO and National Authorities.
- The JMC members approve the 1st CfP Application Package:

- Call for proposals
- Call summary
- Application Form
- Progress Reports
- Justification of Budget
- Partnership Declaration – Co-financing statement
- Declaration of not generating revenues
- Declaration of non distribution of profits
- Financial Identification Form
- Legal Entity Form
- Programme Manual
- Project Implementation Manual
- Project Selection procedure
- Project selection criteria

and authorizes the MA/JTS to proceed with all the necessary actions and adjustments in order to launch the Call

- Launch the 1st CfP on the 7th of December, 2015 with a project submission deadline on the 31st of March 2016. Four Info Days will be organized in time and place agreed between the NAs.


At the end of the JMC meeting, Brief Minutes and Decisions were drafted by the MA/JTS and the Chairperson read them out to all JMC members to comment.

Finally, the document was signed by the two co-chairpersons.

**The Co-Chairpersons  
of the Joint Monitoring Committee**

**Chair**

Ms. Mjellma Memmeti- Petersen



State Counsellor for European  
Integration  
Ministry of Local Self Government

**Co-chair**

Ms. Aggeliki Bouziani



On behalf of Mrs. Evgenia Fotoniata,  
Special Secretary of ERDF & CF Funded  
Sectoral OPs  
Ministry of Economy, Development &  
Tourism

Attachments:

1. Agenda of the 1st Joint Monitoring Committee Meeting
2. Participants' list of the 1st Joint Monitoring Committee Meeting