



Contracting authority:

The Government of Montenegro, Ministry of Finance and Social Welfare,
Directorate for the Finance and Contracting of the EU Assistance Funds
(CFCU)

**Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Montenegro – Albania 2014-
2020 under the Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II)**

Guidelines
for grant applicants

Budget line(s): IPA 2018, 2019 & 2020

Cross-border Cooperation Action Programme Montenegro-Albania

Reference: EuropeAid/171769/ID/ACT/MULTI

Deadline for submission of concept note: 13th September 2021, 2:30 p.m.

NOTICE

Notice

This is a restricted call for proposals. In the first instance, only concept notes (Part A of the grant application form) must be submitted for evaluation. Thereafter, lead applicants who have been pre-selected will be invited to submit a full application. After the evaluation of the full applications, an eligibility check will be performed for those which have been provisionally selected. Eligibility will be checked on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority and the signed 'declaration by the lead applicant' sent together with the full application.

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1. CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME MONTENEGRO - ALBANIA 2014-2020

1.1. BACKGROUND

These guidelines are intended to be used by those applying for grants under the 3rd call for proposals for the 2014-2020 cross-border cooperation programme Montenegro – Albania (hereinafter ‘the programme’). The programme is implemented under the framework of the instrument of pre-accession assistance (IPA II) and is the result of joint planning efforts made by the governments and other stakeholders of the two countries. IPA II supports cross-border cooperation with a view to promoting good neighbourly relations, fostering European Union integration and promoting socio-economic development. The legal provisions for its implementation are stipulated in the following pieces of legislation:

- Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II);
- Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action; and
- Commission Implementing Regulation EU no 447/2014 of 2 May 2014 on the specific rules for implementing the IPA II regulation.

The programme analyses the socio-economic situation of the border region, sets out a common strategy for remedying problems identified and formulates joint thematic priorities for development. As specified in its programme document, its implementation is carried out through calls for proposals such as this one. These calls will be launched at regular intervals in order to fund cross-border cooperation projects that will contribute to achieving the strategic objectives agreed upon by the participating countries.

More details about this 2014-2020 IPA II cross-border cooperation programme can be found on the web page <https://www.cbc-mne-alb.org/documents/programme-documents> and are available for download on the web page of the OS in Montenegro <https://www.eu.me/mn/ipa/dokumenti/category/15-ipa-ii>, and on the web page of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania (Operating Structure) <http://integrimi-ne-be.punetejashme.gov.al/mbeshtetja-e-be-se/bashkepunimi-territorial/> :

The programme is implemented jointly by both countries. In Montenegro, the responsible institutions are:

- Government of Montenegro, European Integration Office, in charge of the overall coordination of the programme, is part of the operating structure (OS) in this country;
- Ministry of Finance and Social Welfare, Directorate for the Finance and Contracting of the EU Assistance Funds, part of the OS responsible for all contract and payment issues, is the contracting authority (CA).

In Albania, the responsible institutions are:

- Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, responsible for the overall coordination of the programme, is part of the OS in this country.
- Ministry of Finance and Economy, Central Finance and Contracting Unit (CFCU), as part of the OS and integral part of for the management and control system (control body) in this country.

Moreover, the implementation of the programme is overseen by a joint monitoring committee (JMC) composed of representatives of both participating countries' institutions. The JMC will examine and provide an advisory opinion on the list of operations selected through this call for proposals before the grant award decision.

The CA, the OSs and the JMC are assisted by the joint technical secretariat (JTS) based in Montenegro. The JTS is the administrative body responsible for the day-to-day management of the programme including support and advice to potential applicants as well as grant beneficiaries. The JTS has an antenna located in Shkoder, Albania. The JTS will assist potential applicants in partner search and project development, organising information days and workshops; develop and maintain a network of stakeholders; advise grant

beneficiaries in project implementation; and prepare, conduct and report on monitoring visits to cross-border cooperation operations.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

In line with the objectives specified in the programme document, the **overall objective** of this call for proposals is: “To promote/strengthen good neighbourly relations and socioeconomic development of the border regions, through the environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive economic development, with respect for its common cultural and natural heritage.”

As a result of a decision made by the JMC of the programme on 7 December 2020, out of the three thematic priorities of the programme document:

- ❑ Thematic priority 1: Encouraging tourism, culture and natural heritage
- ❑ Thematic priority 2: Protecting the environment, promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk prevention and management
- ❑ Thematic priority 3: Promoting employment, labour mobility and social and cultural inclusion across the border

the following are the specific objectives and the corresponding results that the applications submitted under this call will contribute to attaining:

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RESULTS
1. The competitiveness of the tourism sector is enhanced by the economic valorisation of the cultural and natural heritage	Result 1.1 The quality of tourism services and products is upgraded;
	Result 1.2. Cooperation in the field of cultural and natural heritage preservation is increased (e.g. around the Shkodra/Skadar Lake area)
2. The protection of environmental resources in lake and alpine areas is furthered	Result 2.1 Awareness of the sustainable use of environmental resources in lake and alpine areas is advanced
3. Employability and social inclusion is fostered	Result 3.1 Access to the labour market improved, especially for vulnerable groups

Mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues1:

This call for proposals will take into account the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues at project level. When developing a project to address any of the specific objectives of the call, cross-cutting issues need to be mainstreamed in the following manner:

- a) Gender equality and promotion of equal opportunities.

Equality between sexes has to be taken into consideration when setting the project objectives, defining activities (e.g. participation in capacity building activities) and expected results. Equal opportunity prevails when women and men have the same rights, obligations and opportunities.

- b) Protection and promotion of ethnic minority rights, including their participation in decision making processes.

¹ Please see recommendation no. 14 of the final report of the 2007-2013 CBC evaluation: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/final_approved_evaluation_report_0.pdf
https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/follow_up_action_plan_ipa_cbc_evaluation.pdf

Enforcement of equal opportunities has to be secured in the project design in order to promote the integration of ethnic minorities and ensure their participation in decision-making processes in line with project activities and expected results.

- c) Integration of persons with physical and mental disabilities.

Enforcement of equal opportunities has to be secured in the project in order to promote integration of persons affected by disabilities and in securing their participation in project activities (e.g. accessibility to buildings and project sites) and in decision-making processes in line with project activities and expected results.

- d) Safeguard and promotion of children's rights and promotion of children's participation in decision-making processes.

The project should involve children as relevant stakeholders where and if appropriate (e.g. in case the specific project objective is in a sector mainly relating to children's needs, such as education, health, sports and culture, but also in sectors in which the project can indirectly influence their lives).

- e) Democratic standards, anti-discriminatory practices and good governance.

Activities and operations cannot set up barriers in relation to religion or belief, age, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, racial or ethnic origin particularly regarding employment and HR policy pursued towards persons who will be employed within the projects implemented under this grant scheme. Actions must secure a wide public participation and consultation, where appropriate, throughout project activities. This may include setting up consultative processes in developing strategies/policies; executing infrastructural works; ensuring inclusion of target groups and a wide range of different stakeholders.

- f) Protection of environment and preservation of natural resources and biodiversity.

The project needs to describe how it will contribute to a better environment or otherwise have a neutral impact on the environment. The concept of environment involves not only issues of pollution, but issues sustainable development (e.g. waste supply chain management and recycling), nature protection and biodiversity, renewable energy, etc.

Please note that mainstreaming cross-cutting issues will be scored in the evaluation methodology of this call as formulated in Section 2.3 below.

NOTA BENE: The action should incorporate cross-border cooperation and have a tangible impact on its target groups at cross-border level. Sustainability should be embedded in the project proposal, showing how the desired outcomes will benefit the region even after the operation has ended.

1.3. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is EUR 4,930,000. The contracting authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

More specifically, the contracting authority might cancel the call completely or partially when only few good quality applications can be contracted and relaunch the unallocated assets in the next call for the specific objective(s) concerned.

Indicative EU-funded allocations by specific objective:

Specific objective	Allocation
1. The competitiveness of the tourism sector is enhanced by the economic valorisation of the cultural and natural heritage	EUR 2,365,000.00
2. The protection of environmental resources in lake and alpine areas is furthered	EUR 1,052,000.00
3. Employability and social inclusion is	EUR 1,513,000.00

fostered	
Total	EUR 4,930,000.00

The applications will compete with each other for the financial resources available within each specific objective separately.

When the remaining funds per specific objective will not allow financing another application, the evaluation committee may recommend to the contracting authority to pool these funds and award a grant to the application or applications with the highest scores in the ranking of the sole reserve list irrespective of the specific objective.

If the allocation indicated for a specific objective cannot be used due to insufficient quality or number of proposals received, the contracting authority reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds to that/those application/s being higher in the ranking of the sole reserve list irrespective of the specific objective.

Moreover, the contracting authority may increase the funds allocated to the call in order to fund all or part of those applications qualifying for funding.

Size of grants

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

Specific objective	Minimum amount of EU-funded grant	Maximum amount of EU-funded grant
1. The competitiveness of the tourism sector is enhanced by the economic valorisation of the cultural and natural heritage	EUR 200,000.00	EUR 600,000.00
2. The protection of environmental resources in lake and alpine areas is furthered	EUR 200,000.00	EUR 500,000.00
3. Employability and social inclusion is fostered	EUR 200,000.00	EUR 400,000.00

Any grant requested under this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:

- Minimum percentage: 50% of the total eligible costs of the action.
- Maximum percentage: 85% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also Section 2.1.5).

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the contracting authority) must be financed from sources other than the general budget of the Union.

SUSPENSION CLAUSE

Please note that the awarding of the contract is subject to the fulfilment of the following condition: The signature of Financing Agreement between the European Commission, Montenegro and Republic of Albania concerning the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Montenegro-Albania under IPA II for the year 2020, which does not modify the elements of the call for proposals. If the precedent condition is not met, the contracting authority will either abandon the call for proposals or cancel the award

procedure linked to the allocation 2020 without the candidates being entitled to claim any compensation.

2.

RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of the actions financed under this call, in conformity with the practical guide, which is applicable to the present call (available on the internet at this address <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do?locale=en>).²

2.1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

(1) the actors:

- The **'lead applicant'**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form (2.1.1),
- if any, its **co-applicant(s) (where it is not specified otherwise the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred as 'applicant(s)')** (2.1.1),
- and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the lead applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s). (2.1.2);

(2) the actions:

Actions for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.4);

(3) the costs:

- types of cost that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (2.1.5).

2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicant(s))

Lead applicant

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:

- be a legal person, **and**
- be non-profit-making, **and**
- be effectively established in³ either Montenegro or Albania, **and**
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary, **and**
- be one of the following institutions or organisations:
 - Local authorities,
 - Local governments and their institutions,
 - Tourism and cultural organizations,

² Note that a lead applicant (i.e. a coordinator) whose pillars have been positively assessed by the European Commission and who is awarded a grant will not sign the standard grant contract published with these guidelines but a contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement template. All references in these guidelines and other documents related to this call to the standard grant contract shall in this case be understood as referring to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement template.

³ To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. The effective establishment of applicants should be proved not only with the statutes but with the registration certificate. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

- Associations of municipalities,
- Development agencies,
- Local business support organizations,
- NGOs,
- Public and private bodies supporting the workforce,
- Vocational and technical training institutions,
- Bodies and organization for nature protection,
- Public bodies responsible for water management,
- Fire/emergency services,
- Schools, colleges, universities and research centres including vocations and technical training institutions.

In order to support development of capacities, policy implementation and governance on the local level, each project partnership must include at least one public entity operating on the local level (per each Country), as partner or associate to the action.⁴

(2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations listed in Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide;

Lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entities and, in case of legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over the lead applicant, the co-applicants and the affiliated entities are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion according to Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide, personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract. In this respect, provisionally selected lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities are obliged to declare that they are not in one of the exclusion situations through a signed declaration on honour (Annex H) to be sent together with the full application. For grants of EUR 60 000 or less, no declaration on honour is required.

In Section 3 of Part A and Section 8 of Part B of the grant application form ('declaration(s) by the lead applicant'), the lead applicant must declare that the lead applicant himself, the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of these situations.

The lead applicant must act with co-applicant(s) as specified hereafter.

If awarded the grant contract, the lead applicant will become the beneficiary identified as the coordinator in Annex G (special conditions). The coordinator is the main interlocutor of the contracting authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-beneficiary (if any) and coordinate the design and implementation of the action.

Co-applicant(s)

The applicant must act with at least one co-applicant as specified hereafter.

If the applicant is established in Montenegro, at least one co-applicant must be established in Albania, and vice versa.

⁴ Public entity operating on the local level is considered as such: municipal authority, business incubator/ICT hub, social welfare institution (day care centers for children/youth/people with disabilities/elderly people), protection and rescue service, environmental agency, local tourist organisation, public utility company, etc.

The maximum number of co-applicants and affiliated entities that could be involved in the action is 3. This means that an application cannot have more than 4 entities involved in total. However, CBC partners must carefully bear in mind the most appropriate conditions to ensure an intra-project efficient coordination when deciding on this. The number of partners and the composition of the partnership should be coherent with the envisaged objectives and activities of the action (see Section 2.1.4 below).

In genuine cross-border operations, the applicant and co-applicant(s) shall cooperate in the development and implementation of action. In addition, they shall cooperate in either the staffing or the financing of operation or both (see Section 2.1.4 below). The lead applicant and co-applicant(s) must represent different legal entities.

Co-applicants participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant.

Co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant himself⁵.

Co-applicants must sign the mandate in Part B Section 4.2 of the grant application form.

If awarded the grant contract, the co-applicant(s) will become beneficiary(ies) in the action (together with the coordinator).

(3) Applicants included in the lists of EU restrictive measures (see Section 2.4. of the PRAG) at the moment of the award decision cannot be awarded the contract⁶.

2.1.2. *Affiliated entities*

The lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) may act with affiliated entity(ies).

Only the following entities may be considered as affiliated entities to the lead applicant and/or to co-applicant(s):

Only entities having a structural link with the applicants (i.e. the lead applicant or a co-applicant), in particular a legal or capital link.

This structural link encompasses mainly two notions:

- (i) Control, as defined in Directive 2013/34/EU on the annual financial statements, consolidated financial statements and related reports of certain types of undertakings:

Entities affiliated to an applicant may hence be:

- Entities directly or indirectly controlled by the applicant (daughter companies or first-tier subsidiaries). They may also be entities controlled by an entity controlled by the applicant (granddaughter companies or second-tier subsidiaries) and the same applies to further tiers of control;
- Entities directly or indirectly controlling the applicant (parent companies). Likewise, they may be entities controlling an entity controlling the applicant;
- Entities under the same direct or indirect control as the applicant (sister companies).

⁵ In line with the cross-border nature of the programme, please note that the nationality of the lead applicant (either Montenegro or Albania) automatically determines the nationality of at least one co-applicant (Albania if the lead applicant is effectively established in country Montenegro or country Montenegro if the lead applicant is effectively established in Albania).

⁶ The updated lists of sanctions are available at www.sanctionsmap.eu.

Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

- (ii) Membership, i.e. the applicant is legally defined as a e.g. network, federation, association in which the proposed affiliated entities also participate or the applicant participates in the same entity (e.g. network, federation, association,...etc) as the proposed affiliated entities.

The structural link shall as a general rule be neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation. This means that the link would exist independently of the award of the grant; it should exist before the call for proposals and remain valid after the end of the action.

By way of exception, an entity may be considered as affiliated to an applicant even if it has a structural link specifically established for the sole purpose of the implementation of the action in the case of so-called 'sole applicants' or 'sole beneficiaries'. A sole applicant or a sole beneficiary is a legal entity formed by several entities (a group of entities) which together comply with the criteria for being awarded the grant. For example, an association is formed by its members.

What is not an affiliated entity?

The following are not considered entities affiliated to an applicant:

- Entities that have entered into a (procurement) contract or subcontract with an applicant, act as concessionaires or delegates for public services for an applicant,
- Entities that receive financial support from the applicant,
- Entities that cooperate on a regular basis with an applicant on the basis of a memorandum of understanding or share some assets,
- Entities that have signed a consortium agreement under the grant contract (unless this consortium agreement leads to the creation of a 'sole applicant' as described above).

How to verify the existence of the required link with an applicant?

The affiliation resulting from control may in particular be proved on the basis of the consolidated accounts of the group of entities the applicant and its proposed affiliates belong to.

The affiliation resulting from membership may in particular be proved on the basis of the statutes or equivalent act establishing the entity (network, federation, association) which the applicant constitutes or in which the applicant participates.

If the applicants are awarded a grant contract, their affiliated entity(ies) will not become beneficiary(ies) of the action and signatory(ies) of the grant contract. However, they will participate in the design and in the implementation of the action and the costs they incur (including those incurred for implementation contracts and financial support to third parties) may be accepted as eligible costs, provided they comply with all the relevant rules already applicable to the beneficiary(ies) under the grant contract.

Affiliated entity(ies) must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as the lead applicant and the co-applicant(s). They must sign the affiliated entity(ies) statement in Part B Section 5.2 of the grant application form.

2.1.3. Associates and contractors

The following entities are not applicants nor affiliated entities and do not have to sign the 'mandate for co-applicant(s)' or 'affiliated entities' statement':

- Associates

Other organisations or individuals may be involved in the action. Such associates play a real role in the action but may not receive funding from the grant, with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates

do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in Section 2.1.1. Associates must be mentioned in Part B Section 6 ‘Associates participating in the action’ of the grant application form.

- Contractors

The beneficiaries and their affiliated entities are permitted to award contracts. Associates or affiliated entity(ies) cannot be also contractors in the project. Contractors are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

2.1.4. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made

Definition:

An action is composed of a set of activities.

Duration

The initial planned duration of an action or operation will meet the following requirements depending on the programme’s specific objective addressed by the application, namely:

Specific objective	Minimum number of months	Maximum number of months
1. The competitiveness of the tourism sector is enhanced by the economic valorisation of the cultural and natural heritage	18	30
2. The protection of environmental resources in lake and alpine areas is furthered	18	30
3. Employability and social inclusion is fostered	18	24

Sectors or themes

As stipulated in Section 1.2 above, actions or operations will fall under only one of the following specific objectives and will have to prove their contribution to attain one or more of their intended results⁷:

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RESULTS
1. The competitiveness of the tourism sector is enhanced by the economic valorisation of the cultural and natural heritage	Result 1.1 - The quality of tourism services and products is upgraded;
	Result 1.2 - Cooperation in the field of cultural and natural heritage preservation is increased (e.g. around the Shkodra/Skadar Lake area)
2. The protection of environmental resources in lake and alpine areas is furthered	Result 2.1 - Awareness of the sustainable use of environmental resources in lake and alpine areas is advanced
3. Employability and social inclusion is fostered	Result 3.1 - Access to the labour market improved, especially for vulnerable groups

⁷ If the size of the grant and the duration depend on the expected result of the programme to which the application is trying to contribute, the applicant will not be able to single out but one result.

In their application, the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) will have to refer the programme's specific objective under which their action is meant to contribute, as well as the programme's result(-s) affected by the action, and the programme's indicators that will be instrumental to measure the action's success.

*Please be informed that the projects awarded under this Call for Proposals **must contribute** to the achievement of at least two indicators/targets set in the Programme document⁸ under the Results within the respective Thematic Priority which are presented in the table below:*

Result 1.1. The quality of tourism services and products is upgraded	1.1.2 At least 5 new joint touristic offers developed for the programme area (baseline 2013 = 2)
	1.1.3 Touristic offers generated by the CBC initiatives adopted by at least 40% of touristic operators active in the area
Result 1.2 Cooperation in the field of cultural and natural heritage preservation is increased (e.g. around the Skadar Lake area)	1.2.1 No. of tourists (disaggregated by gender and age) visiting the area such as Shkodra / Skadar Lake increased by 30%
	1.2.2 At least 2,000 participants (disaggregated by gender and age) in new cultural events
Result 2.1: Awareness of the sustainable use of environmental resources in lake and alpine areas is advanced	2.1.1 At least 40% of the population of the programme area has been target of environment awareness raising activities
	2.1.2 The control on the levels of pollution in the area such as Skadar Lake has become technically more accurate and regular
	2.1.3 Skadar Lake basin fulfills conditions to become part of UNESCO Biosphere Reserve List protected areas
	2.1.4 At least one harmonised environmental education curricula and/or an extracurricular programme introduced in secondary education on both sides of the border.
Result 3.1 Access to the labour market improved, especially for vulnerable groups.	3.1.1. At least 5 new business initiatives promoting labour mobility across the border
	3.1.2. At least 20% of the unemployed people (disaggregated by gender and age) going through CBC initiatives manage to get a job

For the sake of consistency and aggregation, applicants must have the same units to quantify their output, outcome and impact indicators in line with the programme output, outcome and impact indicators.

⁸ Programme document IPA CBC Programme Montenegro – Albania.

The following illustrates the list of indicators that the applicants will have to include, where appropriate, to estimate the project's contribution to the programme's objectives:

Programme specific objective 1 - The competitiveness of the tourism sector is enhanced by the economic valorisation of the cultural and natural heritage

Result 1.1 - The quality of tourism services and products is upgraded

IMPACT INDICATORS	Number of direct beneficiaries involved (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of new jobs resulting from programme activities (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of businesses still active after two years of their establishment (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of new services/products/offers available in the market one year after project ends
	Percentage of target groups of self-employment initiatives establishing new business initiatives in tourism and hospitality (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Percentage of returning visitors
	Percentage of increase in the amount of financial income from tourism attractions
	Percentage of increase in the number of hotel bookings (disaggregated by national and international tourists)
	Percentage of increase in the length of hotel bookings (disaggregated by national and international tourists)
	Number of new profiles officially introduced in schools for hotels and catering
	Increase in the number of visitors to the cross-border area
	Average length of tourist stay increased (overnights)
	Percentage of increase in the number of registered SMEs with a tourism related function (tourist guide, hotel, restaurant, bar, taxi driver)
	Percentage of increase in the number of hotels and restaurants with internationally recognised certificates
	Percentage of increase in the number of clients in outdoors active tourism services and products
	Percentage of stakeholders involved in activities
	Number of new jobs created by the businesses which received assistance from the scheme (including self-employment initiatives) (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
Number of students and unemployed who have finished a VET course in tourism services and products finding a job within one year after graduation (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)	

	Percentage of students and unemployed who have finished a VET course finding a job within one year after graduation (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of unemployed who went through an internship hired by the host tourism enterprises (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Percentage of unemployed who went through an internship hired by the host tourism enterprises (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of tourism enterprises accepting a continuing internship programme
	Percentage of increase of family income in the project area through the delivery of improved tourism services
	Number of new creative enterprises run by young people or women
	Percentage of population in the programme area having direct or indirect benefits as a result of the operation undertaken
	Number of and proceeds from visitors/users of joint rural and natural protected areas
OUTCOME INDICATORS	Number of organisations with increased capacities (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Number of users of digital platforms
	Number of plans implemented
	Number of new services commercialised
	Level of satisfaction of users/clients with new services
	Level of satisfaction of trainees with new training courses
	Number of new businesses established as a result of the call (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Increased level of competences among the trainees
	Number of new offers commercialised
	Number of new ideas commercialised
	Number of training courses certified
	Number of new products commercialised
	Number of new sites commercialised
	Number of historical, cultural and natural sites and buildings newly open to public visits
	Percentage of tourism offers generated by the CBC initiatives adopted by tourist operators active in the area
	Number of qualified tourism workers available in the labour market (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of new destinations integrated in the tourism offer
Number of new or improved tourism trails or routes	

	Length of new or improved tourism trails or routes
	Number of tourists using new/improved products/services/offers/ideas
	Number of existing tourist providers with improved competences
	Number of hotels with increased standards
	Number of students from the eligible areas participating in supported VET programmes related to tourism (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Percentage of increase in the number of students deciding to go for tourism-related careers after finishing high school
	Percentage of tourism operators active in the area that adopted touristic offers generated by the CBC initiatives
	Number of people with increased capacities for the development of complementary services valorising natural and cultural potentials (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of people belonging to specific groups using new niche offers developed (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of newly included subjects (providers of tourism services) in systems for gathering statistical data related to tourism
	Number of training curricula matching the needs of the labour market demand in the tourism sector implemented in (vocational) education institutions
	Number of students and unemployed who have finished a VET course in tourism services and products (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of unemployed who went through an internship in host tourism enterprises (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of families that make use of new knowledge in providing services for tourists
	Number of digital platforms operational
	Number of registered interventions by the mountain and water services
OUTPUT INDICATORS	Number of organisations directly involved in the implementation of this type of projects (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Number of inter-sectoral (local authorities-CSOs-private sector-public agencies-research and educational institutions) partnerships implementing this type of projects
	Number of information/promotion campaigns implemented
	Number of information/promotion events organised (to be disaggregated by type of event: conferences, exhibitions, fairs, other)
	Number of participants in information/promotion events (to be disaggregated by type of event, type of vulnerable group and gender)
	Number of promotion materials produced and distributed/published/broadcasted (to be disaggregated by type of promotional material)
	Number of people reached by information/promotion campaigns

Number of capacity building events organised (to be disaggregated by type of event: trainings, workshops, seminars, other)
Number of participants in capacity building events organised (to be disaggregated by type of event, type of vulnerable group and gender)
Number of training curricula developed
Number of studies developed (e.g. baseline, (pre)feasibility, research studies, etc)
Number of digital platforms (information systems) developed
Number of websites operational
Number of sets of equipment purchased and made available to target groups
Number of cross-border networks/partnerships formed
Number of organisations participating in cross-border networks/partnerships formed (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
Number of cross-border cooperation agreements signed
Number of plans developed (e.g. strategic, investments, business plans, etc)
Number of new services developed/introduced in the programme area
Number of facilities enhanced
Number of manuals, guidelines, handbooks developed
Number of study visits organised
Number of participants in study visits (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
Number of new joint tourism offers developed/introduced in the programme area
Number of new/improved sites developed
Number of new/improved products developed
Number of new/improved ideas developed
Number of tourism providers benefiting from trainings and mentorship
Number of organisations providing specific services (e.g. mountain rescuing, guiding services) included in capacity building activities
Number of participants in training and capacity building schemes related to the management and provision of tourism services and products (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
Number of participants in training and capacity building schemes interested in creating a tourism business or developing a tourism product (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
Number of trainees in hospitality industry (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)

Number of tourism employees who participated in capacity building events for business opportunities in the tourism sector (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
Number of unemployed who participated in capacity building events for (self-)employment in the tourism sector (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
Number of participants of capacity building events for the development of complementary services valorising natural and cultural potentials (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
Number of touristic maps and integrated touristic offers introduced for the areas with tourism potential on both sides of the border
Number of organisations participating in fairs (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
Number of families that learn and share cultural and traditional heritage with their hosts
Number of people with increased capacities
Number of territorial management plans for tourism development created
Number of fairs visited
Number of participants in visibility and communication events organised in the programme area to promote the new tourism products and services developed
Number of kms of new or rehabilitated biking or hiking trails
Increase in the number of mountain lodges
Number of professional and comprehensive hospitality programmes prepared
Number of secondary professional schools for hotels and catering included in programmes aiming to introducing new professional profiles of professionals in tourism
Number of innovative niche offers focusing on specific target groups (persons with disabilities, youth, elderly) developed (to be disaggregated)
Number of systems developed for collecting and monitoring of tourist statistics developed
Number of hotels included in activities aiming to assurance of standards of international quality
Number of beneficiaries targeted by self-employment initiatives in tourism (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
Number of people participating to training and capacity building for sustainable tourist product development (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
Number of small scale investments in tourist infrastructure
Number of participants in fairs visited (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
Number of tourism offers generated by the CBC initiatives adopted by tourist operators active in the area

	Number of buildings reconstructed and readapted
	Number of mountain rescuers trained according to ICAR recommendations
	Number of water rescuers trained according to ILS standards
	Number of Standard operational procedures (SOP) are available and used by all relevant parties
	Number of domestic and foreign tourists made aware about the new developed rescue services
	Number of CBC Coordination groups for risk management in tourism formed
	Number of organisations participating in networking events (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Number of tourism assets mapped in project target area
	Number of itineraries developed
	Number of entities that are linked by the itineraries developed
	Number of tourism operators that offer new itineraries
	Number of people engaged in tourism guide activities (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of municipalities in the CBC region that have updated local strategies and action plans
	Number of papers developed and implemented
	Number of GPS mapping of Action's region implemented
	Number of Geo-referenced locations of the service providers and their offers mapped
	Number of tourist friendly maps with marked sites and services produced
	Number of non-commercial (unpaid) reports published on project activities and results (press and electronic clipping)
	Number of databases created
	Number of organisations participating in B2B events (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)

Programme specific objective 1 - The competitiveness of the tourism sector is enhanced by the economic valorisation of the cultural and natural heritage

Result 1.2 - Cooperation in the field of cultural and natural heritage preservation is increased (e.g. around the Shkodra/Skadar Lake area)

IMPACT INDICATORS	Number of direct beneficiaries involved (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of new jobs related to the opening or upgrading of cultural heritage sites created (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)

	Number of businesses still active after two years of their establishment (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of new services available in the market one year after project ends
	Percentage of increase in the number of visitors in the cultural and natural sites as well as to existing cultural and sport events addressed by the programme (to be disaggregated)
	Number of cultural events that become a regular tradition
	Number of sport events that become a regular tradition
	Number of supported new products commercialised by the handicraft sector
	Number of new supported artisans products commercialized
	Percentage of increase in the workforce providing new products and services within the sector
	Number of visitors visiting supported natural and cultural heritage sites
	Number of visitors to cultural and sport events addressed by the programme
	Percentage of population in the programme area having direct or indirect benefits as a result of the operation undertaken

OUTCOME INDICATORS	Number of organisations with increased capacities (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Number of users of digital platforms
	Number of plans implemented
	Number of new services commercialised
	Level of satisfaction of users/clients with new services
	Level of satisfaction of trainees with new training courses
	Number of new businesses established as a result of the call (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Increased level of competences among the trainees
	Percentage of heritage sites which have improved their visibility
	Number of professionals in the cultural and sport fields participating in the implementation of operations (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of training courses certified
	Increased satisfaction of users/clients/visitors/spectators
	Number of newly established thematic routes
	Percentage of young people in the eligible areas participating in the cultural events
	Number of cross-border networks between cultural institutions formalized

	Number of newly included subjects (providers of tourism services) in systems for gathering statistical data related to tourism
	Number of people living in eligible area participating in cultural exchange activities
	Number of stakeholders involved in activities
	Number of coordination teams established for cross-border networks between cultural institutions formalized
	Number of new artisans providing new products and services within the intangible cultural heritage

OUTPUT INDICATORS	Number of organisations directly involved in the implementation of this type of projects (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Number of inter-sectoral (local authorities-CSOs-private sector-public agencies-research and educational institutions) partnerships implementing this type of projects
	Number of information/promotion campaigns implemented
	Number of information/promotion events organised (to be disaggregated by type of event: conferences, exhibitions, fairs, other)
	Number of participants in information/promotion events (to be disaggregated by type of event, type of vulnerable group and gender)
	Number of promotion materials produced and distributed/published/broadcasted (to be disaggregated by type of promotional material)
	Number of people reached by information/promotion campaigns
	Number of capacity building events organised (to be disaggregated by type of event: trainings, workshops, seminars, other)
	Number of participants in capacity building events organised (to be disaggregated by type of event, type of vulnerable group and gender)
	Number of training curricula developed
	Number of studies developed
	Number of digital platforms (information systems) developed
	Number of websites operational
	Number of sets of equipment purchased and made available to target groups
	Number of cross-border networks/partnerships formed
	Number of organisations participating in cross-border networks/partnerships formed (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Number of cross-border cooperation agreements signed
	Number of plans developed (e.g. strategic, investments, business plans, etc)
Number of new services developed	

Number of facilities enhanced
Number of manuals, guidelines, handbooks developed
Number of study visits organised
Number of participants in study visits (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
Number of upgraded natural sites
Number of upgraded museum collections
Number of new cultural and sport events (tournaments, concerts, festivals, exhibitions, etc.) to connect people of the programme area organised
Number of participants in new cultural and sport events organised (to be disaggregated by "protagonists" and "visitors/viewers")
New digitised collections/library funds created
Number of heritage sites in CB area systematically promoted
Number of joint programmes for protection, promotion and management of cultural assets and for safeguarding the most valuable heritage monuments and sites developed and implemented
Number of knowledge bases established (mapping of resources and potentials, common strategic development concepts) due to, for instance, studies, databases or other
Number of cultural heritage sites improved
Number of cultural heritage places without or with poor previous touristic activity, requesting support
Number of organisations participating in fairs (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
Number of upgraded historical sites and buildings
Number of cultural monuments rehabilitated and made accessible to visitors
Number of facilities newly constructed
Number of fairs visited
Number of participants in fairs visited (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
Number of centres for intangible cultural heritage promotion and artisan training established and functional
Number of cross border intangible cultural heritage coordination bodies established
Number of cultural institutions included in cross-border networking activities

Programme specific objective 2 - The protection of environmental resources in lake and alpine areas is furthered

Result 2.1 - Awareness of the sustainable use of environmental resources in lake and alpine areas is advanced

IMPACT INDICATORS	Number of direct beneficiaries involved (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of new jobs created by the businesses which received assistance from the scheme (including self-employment initiatives) (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of businesses still active after two years of their establishment (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of new services available in the market one year after project ends
	Percentage of reduction of water losses in the municipal supply networks
	Number of harmonised environmental education curricula and/or an extra-curricular programme introduced in secondary education on both sides of the border
	Number of municipalities having solved/agreed waste management issues through inter-municipal (regional) initiatives
	Number of new sites fully satisfying NATURA 2000 standards
	Percentage of waste collected for recycling
	Number of households benefiting from common waste management and wastewater treatment solutions/measures (to be disaggregated)
	Number of cross-border areas with threatened biodiversity have been protected/benefited from the actions
	Savings (percentage reduction) in the use of water by households and businesses
	Percentage of the programme area covered by strategies and action plans (disaggregated by solid waste, wastewater, soil erosion)
	Number of platforms for furthering the merits of complying with EU water supply, solid waste and wastewater management and environment protection up and running beyond the programme actions
	Decrease in the number of illegal dumpsites
	Number of platforms for the protection of these catchment areas and the promotion of their biodiversity is up and running beyond the programme actions
	Number of agreements/MoUs signed and entered in force at local and/or regional level on protecting the nature in the eligible area
	Number of agreements/MoUs signed and entered in force at local and/or regional level for joint management of nature protected areas in the eligible area
	Number of new dwellings/households served in the collection of solid waste in the CBC area as a result of programme intervention
	Percentage of municipalities having solved waste management issues through inter-municipal (regional) initiatives
	Percentage of the programme area benefiting from better enforcement of water supply standards

	Percentage of the programme area benefiting from better enforcement of wastewater standards
	Percentage of the programme area benefiting from better enforcement of solid waste disposal standards
	Percentage of the programme area benefiting from better enforcement of environmental protection standards
	Number of new jobs created in relation to prevention or management of disasters (including self-employment initiatives) (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of strategies and action plans adopted on prevention and mitigation of manmade hazards and natural disasters
	Number of cross-border teams established and empowered to deal with emergency situations
	Percentage of decrease in response time of the emergency services confronted with a crisis caused by manmade hazards and natural disasters
	Percentage of population benefitting from emergency preparedness and risk prevention measures
	Percentage of the population in the eligible area has been reached by an information campaign
	Percentage of population in the programme area having direct or indirect benefits as a result of the operation undertaken

OUTCOME INDICATORS	Number of organisations with increased capacities (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Number of users of digital platforms
	Number of plans implemented
	Number of new services commercialised
	Level of satisfaction of users/clients with new services
	Level of satisfaction of trainees with new training courses/curricula
	Number of new businesses established as a result of the call (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Increased level of competences among the trainees
	Number of training curricula certified
	Number of recycling yards in the territory of municipalities established
	No of people directly taking part in awareness raising activities (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of innovative ways to present the monitoring results on environmental quality in place

	Area covered by joint management measures for environmental protection (ha)
	Number of cross-border areas with threatened biodiversity protected/benefited from the actions
	The control on the levels of pollution of air in urban, rural and industrial areas have become technically more accurate and regular
	The control on the levels of pollution of water in urban, rural and industrial areas have become technically more accurate and regular
	The control on the levels of pollution of soil in urban, rural and industrial areas have become technically more accurate and regular
	Number of systems for exchange and collection of data on the quantities and composition of the waste generated operational
	Number of institutions included in joint management initiatives
	Number of joint solutions for effective waste management and waste water treatment, implemented, in particular in rural areas and along main rivers
	Number of public enterprises dealing with municipal solid waste and wastewater which have upgraded their operations (to be disaggregated)
	Percentage of all businesses and organisations participating in joint actions in wastewater and solid waste management (to be disaggregated)
	Kilometres of new sewage systems included in the investment plans, pre-feasibility and feasibility studies, etc.
	Percentage of the population covered and sensitized by the awareness raising campaign on the merits of complying with EU water supply, solid waste and wastewater management and environment protection
	Percentage of the population of the programme area has been target of environment awareness raising activities
	The control on the levels of pollution (in the area such as Shkodra/Skadar Lake) has become technically more accurate and regular
	Percentage of reduction in the number of houses not connected to the existing sewage system
	Number of platforms established in order to improve the management of river banks
	Number of platforms established in order to improve the management of national parks
	Number of kms of new sewage inserted (not designed) in new plans
	Total kilometres of catchment areas encompassed by the actions
	Number of site cleaning action plans completed
	No of organisations and companies taking part in awareness raising activities
	Percentage (%) of the population in the target area is aware and benefits of the project
	Number of households, farms, alternative and tourism businesses, and other SMEs from the target region, benefit from the plans for sustainable management of the existing ecosystem services.

	Percentage (%) of the population in the CBC area is made aware of the possibilities for cooperation and development of the target area as well as for possibilities and tools for better planning and management of the natural resources and heritage in the target region
	Percentage (%) of the cross-border area is covered with integrated environmental monitoring system
	Percentage (%) of population of the area targeted by the project made aware of sustainable use of natural resources and environment in key sectors
	Percentage of areas/sites at risk of soil contamination covered by joint harmonised plans/studies
	Number of farmers using fertigation
	Number of plans implemented (developed and operationalized)
	Number of new businesses established as a result of the call (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of local communities being beneficiaries of capacity building activities on prevention and mitigation of manmade hazards and natural disasters
	Population encompassed by the awareness campaigns for prevention and mitigation of manmade hazards and natural disasters
	Number of training courses certified
	Number of new or upgraded planning, action, information, coordination and notification systems to prevent and mitigate the consequences of manmade hazards and natural disasters at local and central level
	Number of new special departments created at local level for fighting against the consequences of manmade hazards and natural disasters
	Number of emergency services from both sides of the border with increased capacities through joint initiatives
	Area covered by joint risk measures / management plans for prevention of risks and man-made hazards (ha)
	No of people with increased competences related to emergency preparedness and risk management and adaptation action (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of joint risk management measures included in the routine of relevant bodies in the cross-border area
	Number of departments within the public administration equipped for improved cross-border management of disasters and dealing with climate change
	Length of roads protected from risks and man-made hazards (km)
	Population benefitting from emergency preparedness and risk prevention measures supported by the programme
	Percentage of areas/ sites at risk of soil contamination covered by joint harmonised plans/studies
	Level of cooperation between actors in the field of risk management and emergency

	preparedness increased
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OUTPUT INDICATORS	Number of organisations directly involved in the implementation of this type of projects (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Number of inter-sectoral (local authorities-CSOs-private sector-public agencies-research and educational institutions) partnerships implementing this type of projects
	Number of information/promotion campaigns implemented
	Number of information/promotion events organised (e.g. conferences, exhibitions, fairs, other information/promotion events)
	Number of participants in information/promotion events (to be disaggregated by type of event, type of vulnerable group and gender)
	Number of promotion materials produced and distributed/published/broadcasted (to be disaggregated by type of promotional material)
	Number of people reached by information/promotion campaigns
	Number of capacity building events organised (to be disaggregated by type of event: trainings, workshops, seminars, other capacity building events)
	Number of participants in capacity building events organised (to be disaggregated by type of event, type of vulnerable group and gender)
	Number of training curricula/courses developed
	Number of studies developed
	Number of digital platforms (information systems) developed
	Number of websites operational
	Number of sets of equipment purchased and made available to target groups
	Number of cross-border networks/partnerships formed
	Number of organisations participating in cross-border networks/partnerships formed (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Number of cross-border cooperation agreements signed
	Number of plans developed (e.g. strategic, investments, business plans, etc)
	Number of new services developed
	Number of facilities enhanced
	Number of manuals, guidelines, handbooks developed
	Number of study visits organised
	Number of participants in study visits (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Surface area (in ha) covered by improved shared environmental monitoring capacity or common monitoring actions

	Number of illegal dumps closed/removed
	Number of NGOs participating in capacity building and networking activities in relation to environmental and nature protection
	Number of participants of capacity building activities in relation to management of nature protected areas (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of endangered natural sites protected
	Number of systems for monitoring and exchange of monitoring data developed
	Number of bio-diversity and geo-diversity maps developed
	Number of pollution hot spots identified
	Number of sensitive eco-systems addressed by actions designed to protect them
	Number of site cleaning actions implemented
	Number of endemic and endangered species whose populations have been assessed as result of programme activities
	Number of upgraded facilities, equipment, procedures and operations of public utilities dealing with wastewater and solid waste disposal
	Number of public utilities staff whose knowledge and skills have been enhanced
	Number of studies/strategies developed for the use of renewable sources of energy
	Surface area of habitats supported in order to attain a better conservation status
	Number of planned joint actions, innovative services, etc., for improving the wastewater and solid waste management within the area
	Number of water, soil and air polluters newly identified
	Number of water, soil and air polluters newly registered in the cadasters
	Number of participants in capacity building initiatives for public utility companies to introduce inter-municipal/regional solutions to waste management and wastewater treatment (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of recycling yards in the territory of municipalities identified/planned
	Number of joint environmental actions planned
	Number of joint environmental actions implemented
	Number of municipalities benefiting from waste management and WWT solutions/measures supported by the programme
	Number of systems for solid waste, wastewater and sewage treatment enhanced
	Number of local authorities included in exchange of good international practices between local authorities on management of solid waste, wastewater and sewage systems
	Number of comparative analysis on utilization of natural resources in CBC area prepared
	Number of representatives of rural households benefitting from strengthened capacities

	in diversification, preservation and sustainable utilisation and management and of the natural resources
	Number of integrated environmental monitoring systems installed and functional
	Number of stakeholders trained on the possibilities and usage of the integrated environmental monitoring system
	Number of organisations participating in fairs (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Local population (number of inhabitants) in the area covered by the project
	Number of people in CBC area made aware of sustainable use of natural resources and environment in key sectors
	Number of viewers of videos produced
	Surface of CBC programme area (km2) benefiting from better enforcement of solid waste disposal standards
	Surface of CBC programme area (km2) benefiting from better enforcement of environmental protection standards
	Number of information/promotion events organised (to be disaggregated by type of event: conferences, exhibitions, fairs, other)
	Number of capacity building events organised (to be disaggregated by type of event: trainings, workshops, seminars, other)
	Number of training curricula developed
	Number of households/farms and other organisations benefitting from the upgraded infrastructure
	Number of disaster management systems developed based on the type of disaster
	Number of joint risk management measures agreed
	Number of joint risk management measures developed
	Number of joint emergency centres established
	Number of small scale investments realised
	Number of priority locations/areas of natural and cultural heritage and related hazard risks mapped
	Number of protocols for joint interventions in border areas established
	Number of organisations participating in fairs (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)

Programme specific objective 3 - Employability and social inclusion is fostered

Result 3.1 - Access to the labour market improved, especially for vulnerable groups

IMPACT INDICATORS	Number of direct beneficiaries involved (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
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	Number of new jobs created by the businesses which received assistance from the scheme (including self-employment initiatives) (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of participants managing to find employment thanks to new skills and competences acquired and/or as a consequence of development of new programmes and services (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of businesses still active after two years of their establishment (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group of the entrepreneur)
	Number of new services available in the market one year after the project ends
	Number of the unemployed people going through CBC initiatives (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Percentage of the unemployed people going through CBC initiatives who manage to get a job (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Percentage of people trained in rural areas who manage to find employment and decide not to move to the cities (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of unemployed who went through an internship or mentoring and were hired by the host enterprises (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Percentage of unemployed who went through an internship or mentoring and were hired by the host enterprises (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of enterprises, trades, crafts and institutions accepting a continuing internship programme (out of which for vulnerable groups)
	Number of training curricula matching the needs of the labour market demand introduced and implemented in (vocational) education institutions
	Number of potential entrepreneurs having been final beneficiaries of the actions who create a business (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Percentage of potential entrepreneurs having been final beneficiaries of the actions who create a business (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Percentage of new SMEs established in the cross border areas that are owned by young people and members of marginalised groups (to be disaggregated by gender and type of group)
	Increase in the number of registered agricultural producers and providers of rural tourism services in the cross-border areas
	Number of students who have finished school and were final beneficiaries of the actions and found a job within one year of graduation (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Percentage of students who have finished school and were final beneficiaries of the actions and found a job within one year of graduation (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Percentage of increase in the turnover and sales of the enterprises being part of the scheme
	Number of students and unemployed who have finished a VET course finding a job within one year after graduation (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable

	group)
	Percentage of students and unemployed who finished a VET course and found a job within one year after graduation (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of enterprises, trades and crafts accepting a continuing mentoring programme
	Percentage of increase in the number of people in cross border region who start practicing the collection, processing, cultivation and commercialisation of forest grown fruits and medical herbs (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of people in cross border region who start practicing the collection, processing, cultivation and commercialisation of forest grown fruits and medical herbs (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Percentage of population in the programme area having direct or indirect benefits as a result of the operation undertaken
	Number of people trained in rural areas who manage to find employment and decide not to move to the cities (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
OUTCOME INDICATORS	Number of organisations/institutions with increased capacities/competences (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Number of users of digital platforms
	Number of plans implemented
	Number of new services commercialised
	Level of satisfaction of users/clients with new services
	Level of satisfaction of trainees with new training courses
	Number of new businesses established as a result of the call (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group of the entrepreneur)
	Increased level of competences among the trainees
	Number of private and/or public sector operators developing possibilities and conditions for practical training of unemployed
	Number of new/improved cooperation models, programmes, products, services, tools, complementary courses (e.g. e-learning), industrial and commercial processes implemented/utilized
	Number of new employment and career information centres established
	Number of companies in which operations, products and/or processes were improved through joint initiatives
	Number of participants with increased employability and employment competences (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of enterprises involved in cooperation with education institutions for creating adequate training curricula
	No of agreements concluded for integration of cross-border labour markets

	Number of teachers and social services staff participating in the implementation of these operations in favour of vulnerable groups (to be disaggregated by gender)
	Percentage of increase in the number of people employed as a result of work of labour promotion institutions
	Number of training curricula/courses recognised/certified
	Number of certificates granted to enterprises for the implementation of quality systems
	Number of economic operators participating in capacity building for sustainable use of local resources and market needs
	Number of students and unemployed who have finished a VET course (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Percentage of the people being final beneficiaries of the actions registered as active job seekers (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of vocational educational institutions whose capacities were increased
	Number of occupational standards and training programs accredited and validated by relevant institutions in participating countries
	Percentage of increase in the number of unemployed that enter in the training programmes in Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of unemployed that enter in the training programmes in VTCs (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of trained beneficiaries who start practicing the collection, processing, cultivation and commercialisation of forest-grown fruits and medical herbs (to be disaggregated by age, gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of the people being final beneficiaries of the actions registered as active job seekers (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
OUTPUT INDICATORS	Number of projects implemented in relation to this specific objective
	Number of organisations directly involved in the implementation of this type of projects (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Number of inter-sectoral (local authorities-CSOs-private sector-public agencies-research and educational institutions) partnerships implementing this type of projects
	Number of information/promotion campaigns implemented
	Number of information/promotion events organised (to be disaggregated by type of event: conferences, exhibitions, fairs, other)
	Number of participants in information/promotion events (to be disaggregated by type of event, type of vulnerable group and gender)
	Number of promotion materials produced and distributed/published/broadcasted (to be disaggregated by type of promotional material)
	Number of people reached by information/promotion campaigns
	Number of capacity building events organised (to be disaggregated by type of event: trainings, workshops, seminars, other)

	Number of participants in capacity building events organised (to be disaggregated by type of event, type of vulnerable group and gender)
	Number of training curricula/courses developed
	Number of studies developed (e.g. baseline, (pre)feasibility, research studies, etc)
	Number of digital platforms (information systems) developed
	Number of websites operational
	Number of sets of equipment purchased and made available to target groups
	Number of cross-border networks/partnerships formed
	Number of organisations participating in cross-border networks/partnerships formed (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Number of cross-border cooperation agreements signed
	Number of plans developed (e.g. strategic, investments, business plans, etc)
	Number of participants in common education and training schemes to combat unemployment (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of new services developed
	Number of facilities enhanced
	Number of manuals, guidelines, handbooks developed
	Number of study visits organised
	Number of participants in study visits (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of persons obtaining new practical skills (thanks to VET programmes, internships and/or entrepreneurial schemes) which directly contribute to their employability (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of internship programmes supporting new business opportunities of unemployed, including social entrepreneurship activities implemented
	Number of interns involved (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of mentoring support services supporting new business opportunities of unemployed, including social entrepreneurship activities delivered
	Number of persons receiving mentoring support (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of new VET and life-long learning programmes implemented
	Number of people trained through new life-long learning services (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of campaigns for self-employment implemented
	Number of cross-border partnerships between labour promotion institutions formalized
	Number of people involved in self-employment initiatives (to be disaggregated by

	gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of people trained for establishing their own business (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of business start-up packs (equipment and supplies) provided
	Number of fairs visited
	Number of new products developed
	Number of new industrial and commercial processes developed
	Number of local value chains built
	Number of co-working facilities established
	Number of talent development programmes implemented
	Number of SMEs supported to work with students/unemployed
	Number of events organised for the integration and employability of vulnerable groups
	Number of participants in events organised for the integration and employability of vulnerable groups (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Knowledge base established (mapping of resources and potentials, common strategic development concepts) due to, for instance, studies, databases or other
	Number of organisations participating in fairs (to be disaggregated by type of organisation)
	Number of participants in fairs visited (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of new business development and employment generation initiatives launched and supported
	Number of potential entrepreneurs included in the target group (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of professionals from labour promotion institutions that participate in capacity building activities (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of participants in common education and training schemes to improve competitiveness (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
	Number of application packages prepared
	Number of calls for applications published
	Number of applications received
	Number of selected applications
	Number of organisations participating in B2B events
	Number of professionals providing mentoring support (to be disaggregated by gender)
	Number of people trained in rural areas with the aim of increasing their employability (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)

	Number of users of the equipment procured (to be disaggregated by gender and type of vulnerable group)
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The contracting authority will discuss with the would-be beneficiaries the **indicators** included in their application form and eventually agree upon their revision prior to the contract signature. This is meant to improve the quality of the project indicators to capture the outcomes at the level of overall objective, specific objective(s) and results.

Applicants are reminded that according to the provisions of the Article 4.3 of the special conditions of the grant contract they will quarterly have to report on the achievement of indicators through an information system. These reports will be submitted at regular intervals on 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December every year and then upon the submission of the final report. The Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) of the programme will be available for technical support while using the information system and will carry out a sort of verification of the submitted data.

Baseline data surveys: All applicants are advised to devote some time while preparing their application to collect statistics from relevant bodies or conduct surveys by their own in order to determine the baseline data of their indicators. Applicants are reminded that expenses such as these, related to the preparation of the application, are ineligible. However, during the period of implementation of the action, the expertise costs associated to the launch of surveys (particularly recommendable for qualitative indicators) and the collection and analysis of statistics to refine or amend the baseline data of the operation indicators may be eligible. ~~The contracting authority strongly recommends that the applicants envisage an amount in the budget for this purpose.~~

Location

Actions or operations must have as final beneficiaries the population of the programme area. They must take place in one or more of the following territorial units:

1. For Montenegro:

- Andrijevica;
- Berane;
- Plav;
- Gusinje;
- Petnjica;
- Rožaje;
- Podgorica;
- Tuzi⁹;
- Cetinje;
- Danilovgrad;
- Budva;
- Bar and

⁹ In line with the Law on Territorial Organization of Montenegro, from 1 September 2018

- Ulcinj
2. For Albania (division in accordance with the provisions of the Law 115/2014 “*On the Administrative and Territorial Division of Local Government Units in the Republic of Albania*”:
- Region of Shkodra including the following municipalities: Malesi e Madhe, Shkoder, Vau i Dejes, Puke, Fushe Arres;
 - Region of Lezha including the following municipalities: Lezha, Mirdite, Kurbin and
 - Municipality of Tropoja.

Types of action

Actions or operations selected under this cross-border cooperation programme shall deliver clear cross-border impacts and benefits, that is, they must:

- take place in the specific programme area of Montenegro and/or Albania;
- have cross-border impacts and benefits in parts of the programme area of Montenegro and Albania;
- foresee cooperation of the cross-border applicant and co-applicant(s) in both:
 - joint development: applicant and co-applicant(s) cooperate in designing the action, filling in a joint application form and drawing up their respective budget;
 - joint implementation: grant beneficiaries coordinate, in the frame of the operation, their activities across the border, and carry out most of the project activities together and not as independent, unrelated, mechanically reproduced and country-bound initiatives;
- foresee cooperation of the cross-border applicant and co-applicant(s) in either:
 - joint staffing: staff on both sides of the border act as one project team (e.g. some staffers carry out their duties for all entities in the partnership: procurement, financial management, overall coordination, training planning, etc.); or
 - joint financing: activities are financed by the applicant’s and co-applicant(s)’s own budget;
 - or both joint staffing and financing.

Briefly, following the joint development of an operation by at least two cross-border partners, **full cross-border cooperation would mean the joint implementation and financing of activities by the partners resulting in the intensification of neighbourly relations, sustainable partnerships for socio-economic development and/or the removal of obstacles to this development.**

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses or research;
- actions aimed at the upgrading of infrastructure and equipment in privately owned facilities;
- preparatory studies or preparation of preliminary design for works to be carried out within the project;
- actions without a real cross-border impact;

- actions linked to political parties;
- actions including commercial and profit-making activities¹⁰;
- actions which fall within the general activities of competent state institutions or state administration services, including local government;
- actions confined to charitable donations;
- actions covered and financed by other EU funded programmes.

Types of activity

Indicative types of activities which may be financed under this call for proposals are given below. The following list is not exhaustive and appropriate innovative activities that are not mentioned below may also be considered for financing when they can clearly contribute to the achievement of the call's specific objectives and results. By way of illustration applications could contain a range of the following activities in relation to the programme's results targeted in the call:

Thematic Priority 1 - Encouraging tourism, culture and natural heritage;

Specific Objective 1 - *The competitiveness of the tourism sector is enhanced by the economic valorisation of the cultural and natural heritage;*

Result 1.1: The quality of tourism services and products is upgraded;

Result 1.2: Cooperation in the field of cultural and natural heritage preservation is increased (e.g. around the Shkodra/Skadar Lake area)¹¹:

List of indicative types of activities

- Encourage entrepreneurship and competitiveness in the tourism sector;
- Diversification of touristic offer, upgrade and promote less known tourism attractions in the program area;
- Increase capacities and introducing new promotion techniques and approaches, including mapping, use of ICT, multi-media, research, etc.;
- Joint vocational training related initiatives targeting skills related to a competitive touristic offer and market demands;
- Small scale infrastructure works and provision of equipment to improve standards of tourist offer and restore or preserve the historical heritage;
- Awareness raising campaigns and educational programmes and curricula targeting tourism and best utilisation of its potentials in the area;
- Activities to promote the cultural and natural touristic potential of the programme area;
- Joint activities to promote, but also innovate cultural values and natural heritage through festivals, fairs, competitions;
- Targeted trainings to increase the quality of services in cultural and natural sites;
- Actions to increase awareness of people on the importance of cultural and natural heritage, particularly at schools;
- Encourage local government – CSO partnership.

Thematic Priority 2 – Protecting the environment, promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk prevention and management;

¹⁰ In case the project generates revenue, it shall be used to finance the operation, together with the other sources of funding. Revenue of an operation means cash in-flows directly paid by users for the goods and services provided by the operation, such as charges borne directly by users for the use of infrastructure, sale or rent of land or buildings, or payment for services incurred during the period of implementation of the operation.

Specific Objective 2 - *The protection of environmental resources in lake and alpine areas is furthered;*

Result 2.1: Awareness of the sustainable use of environmental resources in lake and alpine areas is advanced;

List of indicative types of activities

- Actions designed to deal jointly with environment protection and promotion in the programme area,
- Support to integrated protection and management of sensitive ecosystems giving priority to protected areas, giving priority to the protection of programme area;
- Actions designed to encourage environmentally-friendly economic activities in the programme area;
- Actions designed to prevent and manage natural disasters and man-made environmental hazards affecting the programme area;
- Support to awareness raising of the population about the importance, protection and promotion of the environmental resources of the programme area.

Thematic Priority 3 – Promoting employment, labour mobility and social and cultural inclusion across the border;

Specific Objective 3 - *Employability and social inclusion is fostered;*

Result 3.1: Access to the labour market improved, especially for vulnerable groups;

List of indicative types of activities

- Support cooperation among and between (vocational) education institutions and the private sector to improve the matching of training curricula for vulnerable groups with the labour market demand, including e-learning programmes and the use of ICT;
- Supporting initiatives and campaigns for self-employment, especially in the rural areas, including support to start up business for vulnerable groups;
- Support strengthening capacities of labour promotion institutions, sharing of experiences and best models to increase employability (especially of vulnerable groups) within and across the borders;
- Actions aiming at creation of job opportunities and skills for disadvantaged groups of the society;
- Research work to promote employment, labour mobility and social inclusion;
- Encourage local government – CSO partnership on social inclusion (local actions plans on disadvantaged groups, increase capacities of local government to manage social programmes and provide for the sustainability of actions);
- Organize youth exchange programmes, for example through school exchange programmes or other NGO initiatives.

Note: Applicants are encouraged to include an investment component (supply of equipment or small scale infrastructure related to specific objective of the project) but it must not exceed 60% of the EU requested funds.

Financial support to third parties¹¹

Applicants may propose financial support to third parties for TP1: Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage; and TP3: Promoting employment, labour mobility and social and cultural inclusion across the border.

Applicants may propose financial support to third parties in order to help achieving the objectives of the action.

The maximum amount of financial support per third party is **EUR ≤ 60 000**.

¹¹ These third parties are neither affiliated entity(ies) nor associates nor contractors.

Under this call, financial support to third parties is not considered essential to achieve the objective of the action.

In compliance with the present guidelines and notably of any conditions or restrictions in this Section, the lead applicant should define mandatorily in Section 2.1.1 of the grant application form:

- (i) the overall objectives, the specific objective(s) and the outputs¹² (i.e. the results) to be achieved with the financial support
- (ii) the different types of activities eligible for financial support, on the basis of a fixed list
- (iii) the types of persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support
- (iv) the criteria for selecting these entities and giving the financial support
- (v) the criteria for determining the exact amount of financial support for each third entity, and
- (vi) the maximum amount which may be given.

In all events, the mandatory conditions set above for giving financial support (points (i) to (vi)) have to be strictly defined in the grant contract as to avoid any exercise of discretion.

Financial support may be provided for the following activities for TP 1:

- Support to adaptation of rural households through procurement of equipment and small scale infrastructure for the purpose of increasing the standards in tourism;
- Enhance service quality in tourism;
- Support ecological food production;
- Support of cultural events in the CBC area;
- Promote less known tourism attractions in the program area.

Financial support may be provided for the following activities for TP 3:

- Activities for capacity building of vulnerable groups (women, youth, long term unemployed persons, PWD);
- Supporting initiatives and campaigns for self-employment;
- Support to start up business for vulnerable groups;
- Activities aiming at employing vulnerable groups;
- Business initiatives promoting labour mobility across the border;
- Support cooperation among and between (vocational) education institutions and the private sector.

For the purposes of this Call for Proposals, third parties per thematic priority are:

For TP1 - *Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage* - natural persons, rural households, local SMEs, NGOs, tourist service providers, tourism and cultural organizations.

For TP3 - *Promoting employment, labour mobility and social and cultural inclusion across the border* - local SMEs, local business support organizations, NGOs, vocational and technical training institutions.

Visibility

¹² As per OECD DAC definition, the term 'results' includes: 'impact' (overall objective), 'outcome(s)' (specific objective(s) and 'output(s)'.

The applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed or co-financed the action. As far as possible, actions that are wholly or partially funded by the European Union must incorporate information and communication activities designed to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the reasons for the action and the EU support for the action in the country or region concerned, as well as the results and the impact of this support.

Applicants must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU financing (see the 2018 Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU External Actions at: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions_en).

Number of applications and grants per applicants / affiliated entities

The lead applicant **may not** submit more than **2** applications under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant **may not** be awarded more than **1** grant under this call for proposals as a lead applicant.

The lead applicant **may** be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in more than 1 application at the same time.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity **may not** be the co-applicant or affiliated entity in more than **2** applications under this call for proposals.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity **may not** be awarded more than **1** grant under this call for proposals as a co-applicant or an affiliated entity.

Please note that in the event of failure to fulfil these requirements, the applications of all concerned entities will be rejected.

2.1.5. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included

Only 'eligible costs' can be covered by a grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for 'eligible costs'.

The reimbursement of eligible costs may be based on any or a combination of the following forms:

- financing not linked to costs of the relevant operations based on:
 - (i) either the fulfilment of conditions set out in sector specific legislation or Commission Decisions;or
 - (ii) the achievement of results measured by reference to the previously set milestones or through performance indicators;
- actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies);
- one or more simplified cost options.

Simplified cost options may take the form of:

- **unit costs:** covering all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by reference to an amount per unit.
- **lump sums:** covering in global terms all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance.
- **flat-rate financing:** covering specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by applying a percentage fixed ex ante.

Simplified costs options (SCOs) are divided in two categories:

1. "output or result based SCOs": this category includes costs linked to outputs, results, activities, deliverables in the framework of a specific project (for example the determination of a lump sum for the organization of a conference, or for the realisation of a determined output/activity). Where possible and appropriate, lump sums, unit costs or flat rates shall be determined in such a way to allow their payment upon achievement of concrete outputs and/or results. This type of SCO can be proposed by the Beneficiary (no threshold is applicable) at proposal's stage. In case the evaluation committee and the contracting authority are not satisfied with the quality of the justification provided reimbursement on the basis of actually incurred costs is always possible.
2. "Other SCOs". This second category, which is only applicable to pillar assessed entities, entails simplified cost options embedded in the accounting practices of the beneficiary, for which an ex-ante assessment is deemed necessary, considering the need of a consistent application of the conditions required. In order to enable the use of these SCOs, the beneficiary's cost accounting practices need to have been positively assessed by an audit firm based on standard Terms of Reference provided by the Commission. To obtain reimbursement of this category of SCOs, the beneficiary shall make reference to the previously obtained ex-ante assessment in the budget justification sheet (annex B).

The amounts or rates have to be based on estimates using objective data such as statistical data or any other objective means or with reference to certified or auditable historical data of the applicants or the affiliated entity(ies). Determining SCO is possible also through 'expert judgement' provided by internally available experts or procured in accordance with the applicable rules. Experts must be either commissioned auditors or chartered accountants, or staff of the Commission but cannot be staff of the beneficiary. The methods used to determine the amounts or rates of unit costs, lump sums or flat-rates must comply with the criteria established in Annex K, and especially ensure that the costs correspond fairly to the actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies), are in line with their cost accounting practices, no profit is made and the costs are not already covered by other sources of funding (no double funding). Refer to Annex K for the details of the procedure to be followed depending on the type and amount of the costs to be declared as SCO.

Applicants proposing this form of reimbursement, must clearly indicate in worksheet no.1 of Annex B, each heading/item of eligible costs concerned by this type of financing, i.e. add the reference in capital letters to 'UNIT COST' (per month/flight etc.), 'LUMPSUM', 'FLAT RATE' in the Unit column (see example in Annex K).

Additionally, in Annex B, in the second column of worksheet no.2, 'Justification of the estimated costs' per each of the corresponding budget item or heading applicants must:

- describe the information and methods used to establish the amounts of unit costs, lump sums and/or flat-rates, to which costs they refer, etc for output or result based SCO.
- clearly explain the formulas for calculation of the final eligible amount for output or result based SCO¹³
- make reference to the previously obtained ex-ante assessment for other/recurrent SCOs.

In case of output or result based SCOs the evaluation committee and the contracting authority decide whether to accept the proposed amounts or rates on the basis of the provisional budget submitted by the applicants, by analysing factual data of grants carried out by the applicants or of similar actions. In case the evaluation committee and the contracting authority are not satisfied with the quality of the justification provided reimbursement on the basis of actually incurred costs is always possible.

No threshold is set ex-ante for the total amount of financing that can be authorised by the contracting authority on the basis of simplified cost options. Other/recurrent SCOs can be declared only if previously successfully ex-ante assessed.

¹³ Examples: - for staff costs: number of hours or days of work * hourly or daily rate pre-set according to the category of personnel concerned; - for travel expenses: distance in km * pre-set cost of transport per km; number of days * daily allowance pre-set according to the country; - for specific costs arising from the organization of an event: number of participants at the event * pre-set total cost per participant etc.

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checks preceding the signing of the grant contract do not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (such as arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs and ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the contracting authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the grant or the percentage of EU co-financing as a result of these corrections.

It is therefore in the applicants' interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

The grant may take the form of a single lump-sum covering the entire eligible costs of an action or a work programme.

Single lump sums may be determined on the basis of the estimated budget, which should comply with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Compliance with these principles shall be verified ex ante at the time of evaluation of the grant application.

When authorising single lump sums the authorising officer responsible shall comply with the conditions applicable to output or result based SCOs.

When using this form of financing, the description of the action shall include detailed information on the essential conditions triggering the payment, including, where applicable, the achievement of outputs and/or results.

The responsible authorising officer may consider that the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary are compliant with the conditions applicable to simplified cost options, if they are accepted by national authorities under comparable funding schemes. In this case the grant beneficiary shall demonstrate that the national authority accepted the cost accounting practices and will have to specify in which context this acceptance is given.

The evaluation committee and the contracting authority will assess if the funding scheme is comparable and in case of positive outcome will consider these practices as if they were ex-ante assessed by an external auditor.

Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this call for proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the general conditions to the standard grant contract (see Annex G of the guidelines).

Salary costs of the personnel of national, regional or local administrations, as well as those of other publicly owned or controlled institutions or enterprises, may be eligible to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the action or operation were not undertaken.

These personnel shall not receive for the engagement in the project activities any other remuneration than their standard, regular salaries in their respective institutions.

The total sum of the salaries of this personnel shall not exceed the amount of co-financing provided by the applicant, co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies).

Prior to the signature of a grant contract, the contracting authority may require from the relevant beneficiaries the appointment of these staffers by their authorised representative in writing (indicating their names, project function and gross salaries).

Please note that this does not apply to professional staff recruited by the national, regional or local administrations, as well as other publicly owned or controlled institutions or enterprises, for the sole purpose of managing this project resulting from the grant award.

Contingency reserve

The budget may include a contingency reserve not exceeding 5 % of the estimated direct eligible costs. It can only be used with the **prior written authorisation** of the contracting authority.

Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding, but the total must not exceed 7 % of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. The lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the grant contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

If any of the applicants or affiliated entity(ies) is in receipt of an operating grant financed by the EU, it may not claim indirect costs on its incurred costs within the proposed budget for the action.

Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind mean the provision of goods or services to beneficiaries or affiliated entities free of charge by a third party. As contributions in kind do not involve any expenditure for beneficiaries or affiliated entities, they are normally not eligible costs.

As an exception, contributions in kind may include personnel costs for the work carried out by volunteers under an action or work programme (which are eligible costs).

Volunteers' work may comprise up to 50 % of the co-financing. For the purposes of calculating this percentage, contributions in kind in the form of volunteers' work must be based on the unit cost provided by the contracting authority. This type of costs must be presented separately from other eligible costs in the estimated budget. The value of the volunteer's work must always be excluded from the calculation of indirect costs.

When the estimated costs include volunteers' work, the grant shall not exceed the estimated eligible costs other than the costs for volunteers' work.

Other co-financing shall be based on estimates provided by the applicant.

Contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing.

However, if the description of the action as proposed includes contributions in kind, the contributions have to be made.

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible¹⁴:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union (including through EDF) grant;
- purchases of land not built on and land built on in the amount up to 10 % of the total eligible expenditure for the operation concerned shall be eligible for funding if it is justified by the nature of the action and provided in the annual action programme, in which case ownership must be transferred in accordance with Article 7.5 of the general conditions of the standard grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action;

¹⁴ The list takes into account the provisions of Section 1.5 of the standard PRAG 2020 template for the guidelines for applicants, the provisions of Article 14.11 of the general conditions for grant contracts (PRAG version 2020), the provisions of Article 6 of the annex II – general conditions of the IPA II financing agreement, Article 15(2)(a) of the IPA II implementing regulation (447/2014) and the provisions of Article 28(1) of the Framework Agreement for IPA II.

- currency exchange losses;
- credit to third parties;
- in kind contributions (except for volunteers' work);
- salary costs of the personnel of national administrations, unless otherwise specified in the special conditions and only to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the action were not undertaken;
- performance-based bonuses included in costs of staff;
- fines, financial penalties and expenses of litigation.

Ethics clauses and Code of Conduct

a) Absence of conflict of interest

The applicant must not be affected by any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other applicants or parties involved in the actions. Any attempt by an applicant to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation committee or the contracting authority during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing applications will lead to the rejection of its application and may result in administrative penalties according to the Financial Regulation in force.

b) Respect for human rights as well as environmental legislation and core labour standards

The applicant and its staff must comply with human rights. In particular and in accordance with the applicable act, applicants who have been awarded contracts must comply with the environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labour standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; abolition of child labour).

Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and sexual abuse:

The European Commission applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' in relation to all wrongful conduct which has an impact on the professional credibility of the applicant.

Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.

c) Anti-corruption and anti-bribery

The applicant shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The European Commission reserves the right to suspend or cancel project financing if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract and if the contracting authority fails to take all appropriate measures to remedy the situation. For the purposes of this provision, 'corrupt practices' are the offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded with the contracting authority.

d) Unusual commercial expenses

Applications will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a company which has every appearance of being a front company.

Grant beneficiaries found to have paid unusual commercial expenses on projects funded by the European Union are liable, depending on the seriousness of the facts observed, to have their contracts terminated or to be permanently excluded from receiving EU/EDF funds.

e) Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud

The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to substantial breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If substantial breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the contracting authority may refrain from concluding the contract.

2.2. HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

Information in PADOR will not be drawn upon in the present call.

Restricted call for proposals

2.2.1. *Concept note content*

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the concept note instructions in the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A).

Applicants must apply in English.

Please note that:

1. In the concept note, lead applicants must only provide an estimate of the requested EU contribution as well as an indicative percentage of that contribution in relation to the eligible costs of the action. A detailed budget is to be submitted only by the lead applicants invited to submit a full application in the second phase.
2. The elements outlined in the concept note may not be modified in the full application. The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20 %. Lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in these guidelines in Section 1.3. The lead applicant may replace a co-applicant or an affiliated entity only in duly justified cases (e.g. bankruptcy of initial co-applicant or affiliated entity). In this case the new co-applicant/affiliated entity must be of a similar nature as the initial one. The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). In such cases the duration must remain within the limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants. An explanation/justification of the relevant replacement/adjustment shall be included in an accompanying letter or email.

Own contributions by the applicants can be replaced by other donors' contributions at any time.

3. Only the concept note form will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that this document contains all relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the concept note instructions may lead to the rejection of the concept note.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is not sufficient to conduct an objective assessment.

Hand-written concept notes will not be accepted.

2.2.2. *Where and how to send concept notes*

The concept note together with its relating checklist and declaration by the lead applicant (to be found in **Part A Sections 2 and 3** of the grant application form) must be submitted in one original and **3** copies in A4 size, each bound.

An electronic version of the concept note must also be submitted. A CD-Rom or a USB memory stick with the concept note in electronic format will be included, along with the paper version, in a sealed envelope as described below. The electronic file must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version enclosed.

Where lead applicants send several different concept notes (if allowed to do so by the guidelines of the call), each one must be sent separately.

The envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the specific objective number and title, the full name and address of the lead applicant, and the words 'Not to be opened before the opening session' and equivalent in Montenegrin language („Ne otvarati prije sastanka za otvaranje prijedloga projekata“).

Concept notes must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) to the address below:

Postal address

Ministry of Finance and Social Welfare

Directorate for Finance and Contracting of the EU Assistance Funds (CFCU)

Stanka Dragojevića 2,

81000 Podgorica, Montenegro

Address for hand delivery

Ministry of Finance and Social Welfare

Directorate for Finance and Contracting of the EU Assistance Funds (CFCU)

Stanka Dragojevića 2, room 5

81000 Podgorica, Montenegro

Please note that the opening hours of the Contracting Authority are 07:00h – 15:00h.

Concept notes sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Lead applicants must verify that their concept note is complete using the checklist for concept note (Part A Section 2 of the grant application form). Incomplete concept notes may be rejected.

2.2.3. Deadline for submission of concept notes

The applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that there are two different systems for sending concept notes: one is by post or private courier service, the other is by hand delivery.

In the first case, the concept note must be sent before the date for submission, as evidenced by the postmark or deposit slip¹⁵, but in the second case it is the acknowledgment of receipt given at the time of the delivery of the concept note which will serve as proof.

¹⁵ It is recommended to use registered mail in case the postmark would not be readable.

The deadline for the submission of concept notes is 13th September 2021 as evidenced by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of hand-deliveries, the deadline for receipt is at 13th September 2021, before 2:30 p.m. local time, as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt. Any concept note submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

The contracting authority may, for reasons of administrative efficiency, reject any concept note submitted on time to the postal service but received, for any reason beyond the contracting authority's control, after the effective date of approval of the concept note evaluation, if accepting concept notes that were submitted on time but arrived late would considerably delay the evaluation procedure) or jeopardise decisions already taken and notified (see indicative calendar under Section 2.5.2)

2.2.4. Further information about concept notes

Information sessions on this call for proposals will be held in Montenegro and Albania. The dates, time and location of these sessions will be announced within 15 days of the publication of this call for proposals, on:

- The programme website <https://www.cbc-mne-alb.org/>
- The website of the contracting authority <https://cfcu.gov.me/direktorat>
- The website of DG International Cooperation and Development <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of concept notes to the address(es) below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: cfpmne.al@mif.gov.me

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for submission of concept notes.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), an action or specific activities.

- No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure will be published on the website of DG International Cooperation and Development: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> and web site of Contracting Authority <https://cfcu.gov.me/direktorat> as well as the web sites of the Government of Montenegro, European Integration Office- <http://http://www.kei.gov.me>; the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania - <http://www.http://punetejashtme.gov.al> and the Programme Montenegro-Albania 2014-2020 - <https://www.cbc-mne-alb.org>, as the need arises. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

2.2.5. Full applications

Lead applicants invited to submit a full application following pre-selection of their concept note must do so using Part B of the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A). Lead applicants should then keep strictly to the format of the grant application form and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order.

The elements outlined in the concept note cannot be modified by the lead applicant in the full application.

These elements are:

- The number and title of the specific objective of the call under which the concept note was submitted;
- the objective(s) of the action;

- its intended results;
- its target groups and final beneficiaries.

The EU contribution in the full application must not vary from the initial estimate in the concept note by more than 20 %, although lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in these guidelines under Section 1.3.

The lead applicant may replace a co-applicant or an affiliated entity only in duly justified cases (e.g. bankruptcy of initial co-applicant or affiliated entity). In this case the new co-applicant/affiliated entity must be of a similar nature as the initial one. The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). In such cases the duration must remain within the limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants. An explanation/justification of the relevant replacement/adjustment shall be included in an accompanying letter or email.

Lead applicants must submit their full applications in the same language as their concept notes.

Please complete the full application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

Any error related to the points listed in the checklist (Part B, Section 7 of the grant application form) or any major inconsistency in the full application (e.g. if the amounts in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is unclear and thus prevents the contracting authority from conducting an objective assessment.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that only the full application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be transmitted to the evaluators (and assessors, if used). It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL the relevant information concerning the action.

With the full application the lead applicant also has to submit completed PADOR registration form (Annex F) for the lead applicant, each (if any) co-applicants and each (if any) affiliated entities¹⁶.

No additional annexes should be sent.

2.2.6. *Where and how to send full applications*

Full applications (i.e. the full application form, the budget, the logical framework and the declaration by the lead applicant) must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) to the address below:

Postal address

Ministry of Finance and Social Welfare

Directorate for Finance and Contracting of the EU Assistance Funds (CFCU)

Stanka Dragojevića 2,

81000 Podgorica, Montenegro

¹⁶ Natural persons who apply for a grant (if so allowed in the guidelines for applicants) do not have to provide an organisation data form. In this case, the information included in the grant application form is sufficient.

Address for hand delivery

Ministry of Finance and Social Welfare

Directorate for Finance and Contracting of the EU Assistance Funds (CFCU)

Stanka Dragojevića 2, room 5

81000 Podgorica, Montenegro

Please note that the opening hours of the Contracting Authority are 07:00h – 15:00h.

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Applications must be submitted in one original and **3** copies in A4 size, each bound. The full application form, budget and logical framework must also be supplied in electronic format (CD-Rom or a USB stick) in a separate and single file (i.e. the full application must not be split into several different files). The electronic file must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version.

The checklist (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form) and the declaration by the lead applicant (Section 8 of Part B of the grant application form) must be stapled separately and enclosed in the envelope

Where lead applicants send several different applications (if allowed to do so by the guidelines of the call), each one must be sent separately.

The envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the number and title of the specific objective, the full name and address of the lead applicant, and the words 'Not to be opened before the opening session' and equivalent in Montenegrin language („Ne otvarati prije sastanka za otvaranje prijedloga projekata“).

Applicants must verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form). Incomplete applications may be rejected.

2.2.7. *Deadline for submission of full applications*

The applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that there are two different systems for sending full applications: one is by post or private courier service, the other is by hand delivery.

In the first case, the full application must be sent before the date for submission, as evidenced by the postmark or deposit slip, but in the second case it is the acknowledgment of receipt given at the time of the delivery of the full application which will serve as proof.

The deadline for the submission of full applications will be indicated in the letter sent to the lead applicants whose application has been pre-selected.

The contracting authority may, for reasons of administrative efficiency, reject any application submitted on time to the postal service but received, for any reason beyond the contracting authority's control, after the effective date of approval of the full application evaluation, if accepting applications that were submitted on time but arrived late would considerably delay the award procedure or jeopardise decisions already taken and notified (see indicative calendar under Section 2.5.2).

2.2.8. *Further information about full applications*

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of full applications to the addresses listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: cfpmne.al@mif.gov.me

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of full applications.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), or an action.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure, will be published on the website of DG International Cooperation and Development: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> and web site of Contracting Authority <https://cfcu.gov.me/direktorat> as well as the web sites of the Government of Montenegro, Office for European Integration - <http://http://www.kei.gov.me>); the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania - <http://www.http://punetejashtme.gov.al> and the Programme Montenegro-Albania 2014-2020 - <https://www.cbc-mne-alb.org>, as the need arises. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

2.3. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the contracting authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals at any time that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section 2.1, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

(1)

STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

During the opening and administrative check the following will be assessed:

- If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
- If the concept note satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in Section 2 of Part A of the grant application form. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The concept notes that pass this check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action.

The concept notes will receive an overall score out of 50 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check on compliance with the instructions on how to complete the concept note, which can be found in Part A of the grant application form.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation Grid

Scores

1. Relevance of the action	Sub-score	20
1.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals and to the specific themes/sectors/areas or any other specific requirement stated in the guidelines for applicants? Are the expected results of the action aligned with the priorities defined in the guidelines for applicants (section 1.2)?	5*	
1.2 How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the eligible programme area and/or relevant sector (including synergy with other EU initiatives, in particular with the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and the one for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, as well as avoidance of duplication)?	5	
1.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs and constraints been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5	
1.4 Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g. innovation, best practices)? <i>[and the other additional elements indicated under 1.2. of the guidelines for applicants]</i>	5	
2. Design of the action	Sub-score	30
2.1 How coherent is the overall design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results?	5x2**	
2.2 Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the interest and capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5	
2.3 Does the design take into account external factors (risks and assumptions)?	5	

2.4 Are the activities feasible and consistent in relation to the expected results (including timeframe)? Are results (output, outcome and impact) realistic?	5	
2.5 To which extent does the proposal integrate relevant cross-cutting elements such as environmental/climate change issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and children, support to youth, democratic standards and good governance?	5	
TOTAL SCORE		50

* Note: A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the concept note clearly demonstrates how it specifically addresses one of the specific objectives of the call as indicated in Section 1.2 (objectives of the programme) of these guidelines.

**This score is multiplied by 2 because of its importance

Once all concept notes have been assessed, a list will be drawn up with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score.

Firstly, only the concept notes with a score of at least 30 will be considered for pre-selection.

Secondly, the number of concept notes will be reduced, taking account of the ranking per specific objective, to the number of concept notes whose total aggregate amount of requested contributions is equal to at least 200% of the available budget for this call for proposals. The amount of requested contributions of each concept note will be based on the indicative financial envelopes for each specific objective, where relevant.

After the evaluation of concept notes, the contracting authority will send letters to all lead applicants, indicating whether their application was submitted by the deadline, informing them of the reference number they have been allocated, whether the concept note was evaluated and the results of that evaluation. The pre-selected lead applicants will subsequently be invited to submit full applications.

(2)

STEP 2: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION

Firstly, the following will be assessed:

- If the submission deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will automatically be rejected.
- If the full application satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form). This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The full applications that pass this check will be further evaluated on their quality, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants and affiliated entity(ies). They will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria in the evaluation grid below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

The selection criteria help to evaluate the applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s operational capacity and the lead applicant's financial capacity and are used to verify that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the proposed action and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding (this only applies to lead applicants);
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This applies to applicants and any affiliated entity(ies).

The award criteria help to evaluate the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives and priorities set forth in the guidelines, and to award grants to projects which maximise the overall effectiveness of the call for proposals. They help to select applications which the contracting authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the call for proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Scoring:

The evaluation grid is divided into Sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Evaluation grid

Section	Maximum Score
1. Financial and operational capacity	20
1.1 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house experience of project management?	5
1.2 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house technical expertise? (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)	5
1.3 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house management capacity? (Including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4 Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance? ¹⁷	5
2. Relevance	20
<i>Score transferred from the Concept Note evaluation</i>	
3. Design of the action	15
3.1 How coherent is the design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results? Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the envisaged outputs and outcome(s)? ¹⁸	5
3.2 Does the full application contain objectively verifiable indicators (at impact, outcome and output level)? Are the project indicators likely to contribute to the achievement of programme indicators? Does the full application/logical framework matrix include credible baseline, targets and sources of verification? If not, is a baseline study foreseen (and is the study budgeted appropriately in the proposal)?	5
3.3 Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5
4. Implementation approach	20

¹⁷ This section will be scored from 1 to 5 as follows: 1 = very poor, if the lead applicant had an average turnover or equivalent during latest year for which account has been closed below the 30 % of the requested grant amount under this call; 2 = poor, if the lead applicant had an average turnover or equivalent during latest year for which account has been closed above 30 % but below the 50 % of the requested grant amount under this call; 3 = adequate, if the lead applicant had an average turnover or equivalent during latest year for which account has been closed above 50 % but below the 70 % of the requested grant amount under this call; 4 = good, if the lead applicant had an average turnover or equivalent during latest year for which account has been closed above 70 % but below the 90 % of the requested grant amount under this call; 5 = very good, if the lead applicant had an average turnover or equivalent during latest year for which account has been closed amounting to at least 100 % of the requested grant amount under this call.

¹⁸ The score of this question will be seriously affected if the application includes the execution of works and the information included in Section 2.1.1 of the application form will call into question whether all preconditions to undertake works have been met by the applicants.

4.1 Is the action plan for implementing the action clear and feasible? Is the timeline realistic?	5
4.2 Does the proposal include an effective and efficient monitoring system? Is there an evaluation planned (previous, during or/and at the end of the implementation)?	5
4.3 Is the co-applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory? Does the proposal involve genuine cross-border cooperation (joint development, joint staffing, joint implementation, joint financing)? Are the activities proposed likely to have a clear cross-border benefit and impact?	5x2
5. Sustainability of the action¹⁹	15
5.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups at cross-border level? Have assumptions and risks been well assessed?	5
5.2 Is the action likely to have multiplier effects, including scope for replication, extension, capitalisation on experience and knowledge sharing?	5
5.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable?: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financially (<i>e.g. financing of follow-up activities, sources of revenue for covering all future operating and maintenance costs</i>) - Institutionally (<i>will structures allow the results of the action to be sustained at the end of the action? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the action?</i>) - At policy level (where applicable) (<i>what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods</i>) - Environmentally (if applicable) (<i>will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i>) 	5
6. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action	10
6.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget? Are the expenses well justified?	/ 5
6.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory? Are the costs estimated based on real market prices?	/ 5
Maximum total score	100

If the total score for Section 1 (financial and operational capacity) is less than 12 points, the application will be rejected. If the score for at least one of the subsections under Section 1 is 1, the application will also be rejected.

¹⁹ If the project is not able to demonstrate that it will intensify neighbourly relations, create sustainable cross-border partnerships for socio-economic development and/or remove cross-border obstacles to sustainable development, it is unlikely to have a tangible effect, multiplier effects or sustainable results, and hence should be marked to zero, irrespective of any other merits of the proposal.

If the lead applicant applies without co-applicants or affiliated entities the score for point 4.3 shall be 5 unless the involvement of co-applicants or affiliated entities is mandatory according to these guidelines for applicants.

Provisional selection

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications ranked according to their score. The highest scoring applications will be provisionally selected until the available budget for this call for proposals is reached. In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up following the same criteria. This list will be used if more funds become available during the validity period of the reserve list. Please see Section 1.3 above for more details.

Applications which had obtained less than 70 points as score in the ranking list will not be recommended for funding by the Evaluation Committee.

(3)

STEP 3: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANTS AND AFFILIATED ENTITY(IES)

The eligibility verification will be performed on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority (see Section 2.4). It will by default only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available budget for this call for proposals.

- The declaration by the lead applicant (Section 8 of Part B of the grant application form) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the lead applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the declaration by the lead applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.
- The eligibility of applicants and the affiliated entity(ies) will be verified according to the criteria set out in Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2.

Any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application on the reserve list that falls within the available budget for this call for proposals. Please see the provisions of Section 1.3 above for more details.

2.4.

SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROVISIONALLY SELECTED APPLICATIONS

A lead applicant whose application has been provisionally selected or placed on the reserve list will be informed in writing by the contracting authority. It will be requested to supply the following documents in order to allow the contracting authority to verify the eligibility of the lead applicant, (if any) of the co-applicant(s) and (if any) of their affiliated entity(ies)²⁰:

1. The statutes or articles of association of the lead applicant, (if any) of each co-applicant and (if any) of each affiliated entity²¹. Where the contracting authority has recognised the lead applicant's, or the co-applicant(s)'s, or their affiliated entity(ies)'s eligibility for another call for proposals under the same budget line within 2 years before the deadline for receipt of applications, it should be submitted, instead of the statutes or articles of association, a copy of the document proving their eligibility in a former call (e.g. a copy of the special conditions of a grant contract received during the reference period), unless a change in legal status has occurred in the meantime²². This obligation does not apply to international organisations which have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission.
2. For action grants exceeding EUR 750 000 and for operating grants above EUR 100 000, the lead applicant must provide an audit report produced by an approved external auditor where it is available, and always in cases where a statutory audit is required by EU or national law. That report shall certify the accounts for up to the last 3 financial years available. In all other cases, the applicant shall provide a self-declaration signed by its authorised representative certifying the validity of its accounts for up to the last 3 financial years available.

This requirement shall apply only to the first application made by a beneficiary to an authorising officer responsible in any one financial year.

3. The external audit report is not required from (if any) the co-applicant(s) or affiliated entities.

This obligation does not apply to public bodies and international organisations provided that the international organisation in question offers the guarantees provided for in the applicable Financial Regulation, as described in Chapter 6 of the practical guide.

This obligation does not apply to secondary and higher education establishments.

4. A copy of the lead applicant's latest accounts (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed)²³. A copy of the latest account is neither required from (if any) the co-applicant(s) nor from (if any) affiliated entity(ies)).
5. Legal entity sheet (see Annex D of these guidelines) duly completed and signed by each of the applicants (i.e. by the lead applicant and (if any) by each co-applicant), accompanied by the justifying documents requested there. If the applicants have already signed a contract with the contracting authority, instead of the legal entity sheet and supporting documents, the legal entity number may be provided, unless a change in legal status occurred in the meantime.
6. A financial identification form of the lead applicant (not from co-applicant(s)) conforming to the model attached as Annex E of these guidelines, certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank should be located in the country where the lead applicant is established. If the lead applicant has already submitted a financial identification form in the past for a contract where the European Commission was in charge of the payments and intends to use the same bank account, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead.

²⁰ No supporting document will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60 000.

²¹ Where the lead applicant and/or a co-applicant(s) and or an affiliated entity(ies) is a public body created by a law, a copy of the said law must be provided.

²² To be inserted only where the eligibility conditions have not changed from one call for proposals to the other.

²³ This obligation does not apply to natural persons who have received a scholarship or that are in most need in receipt of direct support, nor to public bodies and to international organisations. It does not apply either when the accounts are in practice the same documents as the external audit report already provided pursuant to Section 2.4.2.

7. Please bear in mind when an operation contains the execution of works, the following supporting documents, submitted along with the full application form, will be necessary:

- a. Proof of ownership or long term lease (at least for 10 years after the signature of the contract) of the land/assets where the works are to be executed;
- b. A positive decision on environmental impact assessment or otherwise a statement from the relevant public authority(ies) that the latter assessment(s) are/is not needed for the specific project activities;

8. Furthermore, when an operation contains the execution of works, the following supporting documents shall be submitted before the contract signature:

- a. All necessary legal authorisations (e.g.: location and construction permits).
- b. Approved/certified detailed work design or otherwise a statement by the relevant national institution(s) confirming that the national legislation(s) do/does not require the design's approval for this type of works;
- c. An indicative priced bill of quantities drawn not earlier than 2 years prior to the deadline for submission of full applications – calculated in euro.

9. The lead applicant as well as all co-applicants and affiliated entities shall fill in and sign the declaration on honour (Annex H) certifying that they are not in one of the exclusion situations (see Section 2.6.10.1 of the PRAG).

Documents must be supplied in the form of originals, photocopies or scanned versions (i.e. showing legible stamps, signatures and dates) of the said originals.

Where such documents are not in one of the official languages of the European Union or in the official languages of the country where the action will be implemented, a translation into English language of the relevant parts of these documents proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, must be attached for the purpose of analysing the application.

Where these documents are in an official language of the European Union other than English, it is **strongly** recommended, in order to facilitate the evaluation, to provide a translation of the relevant parts of the documents, proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, into English.

If the abovementioned supporting documents (with the exception of those submitted for operations containing the execution of works²⁴) are not provided before the deadline indicated in the request for supporting documents sent to the lead applicant by the contracting authority, the application may be rejected.

After verifying the supporting documents, the evaluation committee will make a final recommendation to the contracting authority, which will decide on the award of grants.

NB : In the eventuality that the contracting authority is not satisfied with the strength, solidity, and guarantee offered by the structural link between one of the applicants and its affiliated entity, it can require the submission of the missing documents allowing for its conversion into co-applicant. If all the missing documents for co-applicants are submitted, and provided all necessary eligibility criteria are fulfilled, the above mentioned entity becomes a co-applicant for all purposes. The lead applicant has to submit the application form revised accordingly.

2.5. NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION

2.5.1. Content of the decision

²⁴ Where appropriate, submitted together with the full application form.

The lead applicants will be informed in writing of the contracting authority's decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision.

An applicant believing that it has been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may lodge a complaint. See further Section 2.12 of the practical guide.

Applicants and, if they are legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over them, are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion, their personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract.

For more information, you may consult the privacy statement available on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm

2.5.2. Indicative timetable

	DATE	TIME
1. Information meetings (if any)	16 th & 30 th July 2021	10:00 h – 12:30 h
2. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the contracting authority	23 rd August 2021	3:00 p.m.
3. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the contracting authority	2 nd September 2021	-
4. Deadline for submission of: concept notes	13 th September 2021	2:30 p.m.
5. Information to lead applicants on opening, administrative checks and concept note evaluation (Step 1)	29 th October 2021	-
6. Invitations to submit full applications	29 th October 2021	-
6. Deadline for submission of full applications and, where appropriate, supporting documents for the execution of works	13 th December 2021	-
7. Information to lead applicants on the evaluation of the full applications (Step 2)	11 th February 2022	-
8. Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (Step 3)	22 nd March 2022	-
9. Contract signature	26 th May 2022	-

All times are in the time zone of the country of the contracting authority.

This indicative timetable refers to provisional dates (except for dates 2, 3, and 4) and may be updated by the contracting authority during the procedure. In such cases, the updated timetable will be published on the web

site of DG International Cooperation and Development: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> and the websites of the programme: <https://www.cbc-mne-alb.org/> and the contracting authority: <https://cfcu.gov.me/direktorat> .

2.6. CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AFTER THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION TO AWARD A GRANT

Following the decision to award a grant, the beneficiary(ies) will be offered a contract based on the standard grant contract (see Annex G of these guidelines). By signing the application form (Annex A of these guidelines), the applicants agree, if awarded a grant, to accept the contractual conditions of the standard grant contract. Where the coordinator is an organisation whose pillars have been positively assessed, it will sign a contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement template. In this case references to provisions of the standard grant contract and its annexes shall not apply. References in these guidelines to the grant contract shall be understood as references to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement.

Implementation contracts

Where implementation of the action requires the beneficiary(ies) and its affiliated entity(ies) (if any) to award procurement contracts, those contracts must be awarded in accordance with Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

In this context, a distinction should be made between awarding implementation contracts and subcontracting parts of the action described in the proposal, i.e. the description of the action annexed to the grant contract, such subcontracting being subject to additional restrictions (see the general terms and conditions in the model grant contract).

Awarding implementation contracts: implementation contracts relate to the acquisition by beneficiaries of routine services and/or necessary goods and equipment as part of their project management; they do not cover any outsourcing of tasks forming part of the action that are described in the proposal, i.e. in the description of the action annexed to the grant contract.

Subcontracting: Subcontracting is the implementation, by a third party with which one or more beneficiaries have concluded a procurement contract, of specific tasks forming part of the action as described in annex to the grant contract (see also the general terms and conditions in the model grant contract).

3.

LIST OF ANNEXES

DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED

- Annex A: Grant application form (Word format)
- Annex B: Budget (Excel format)
- Annex C: Logical framework (Word format)
- Annex D: Legal entity sheet
- Annex E: Financial identification form
- Annex F: Organisation data form (*ONLY IF IMPOSSIBLE TO REGISTER IN PADOR*)
- Annex H: Declaration on Honour

DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION²⁵

- Annex G: Standard grant contract
 - Annex II: general conditions
 - Annex IV: contract award rules
 - Annex V: standard request for payment
 - Annex VI: model narrative and financial report (incl. the detailed breakdown of expenditure)
 - Annex VII: model report of factual findings and terms of reference for an expenditure verification of an EU financed grant contract for external action
 - Annex IX: standard template for transfer of ownership of assets

- Annex I: Daily allowance rates (per diem), available at the following address:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-procurement-contracts/procedures-and-practical-guide-prag/diems_en

- Annex J: Information on the tax regime applicable to grant contracts signed under the call.
- Annex K: Guidelines for simplified cost options.

Useful links:

Project Cycle Management Guidelines

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/aid-delivery-methods-project-cycle-management-guidelines-vol-1_en

The implementation of grant contracts

A Users' Guide

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/companion/document.do?nodeNumber=19&locale=en>

Financial Toolkit

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/procedures-beneficiary-countries-and-partners/financial-management-toolkit_en

Please note: The toolkit is not part of the grant contract and has no legal value. It merely provides general guidance and may in some details differ from the signed grant contract. In order to ensure compliance with their contractual obligations beneficiaries should not exclusively rely on the toolkit but always consult their individual contract documents.

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²⁵ These documents should also be published by the contracting authority.