PROGRAMME MANUAL

MULTI-MODULAR PROJECTS

	Content of the modification	Approval date
V1	-	January 2017
V2	Adaptation of the factsheet to all kind of multi-modular projects Revision of the timeframe for the verification procedure	January 2019

Verification phase for multi-modular projects

According to the rules in the Programme Manual, Terms of Reference and the Subsidy Contract definition, the multi-modular projects will undergo a verification from the JS/MA before passing from one module to the other.

This is the case for M1+M2 projects; M2+M3 projects and M1+M2+M3 (integrated) projects.

When?

The process of JS verification <u>starts 1 month before the closure of the module under verification</u>.

The JS proceeds to its verification within one month from the reception of all documents and information necessary for verification.

If any changes ought to be made in the project, the entire modification procedure – from the proposal to the signing of the amendment – is recommended to be closed within the first 3 months of the implementation of the subsequent module bringing the duration of this process of verification and changes to maximum four months.

How?

The LP provides a short specific report ("Module Report", available on SYNERGIE CTE, to be validated on line) considering as a baseline the data available in the consolidated AF (the version annexed to the subsidy contract). The LP is asked to confirm the achievement of the expected milestones and justify any deviations from the AF.

This report, together with the other available elements, is analysed by the JS. Further clarification might be necessary. Once these exchanges are concluded, should any modification take place (including on one hand modifications on partnership, activities or budget or on the other hand the total cancelation of project), the decision is taken by the Programme Steering Committee through a written procedure.

What?

The verification focuses in four main aspects of the project implementation:

- The involvement of all the project partners in the activities of the project (at least a FLC certificate per each partner would has been submitted to the JS)
- The level of expenditure (at least 75% of foreseen payments, of which at least 50% certified) and respect of the cost eligibility
- The availability and quality of deliverables
- The respect of the timing in the implementation of the activities

To each one of the above points, the LP is requested to identify to which extent the forecast presented in the AF has been accomplished, providing clarification to any deviance.

This verification will be complemented with the analysis of:

- the data included in Synergie system and in the Interreg MED web-platform (namely regarding budget consumption and deliverables)
- the payment claims available
- the information gathered during the day-to-day follow-up of the project
- the result of the external evaluation that is mandatory for the multi-modular projects

Why?

This verification represents, both to the project partners as to the JS, the opportunity to propose any major modifications deemed necessary to the project.
These modifications could be proposed by the partnership and include a readjustment of:

- the work plan
- the budget
- the partnership

as a consequence of the evolution observed during the first phase and/or the conclusions of the external evaluation.

On the other hand, as defined in art. 3.4 of the Subsidy Contact, the JS will inform the Steering Committee about the outcomes of this verification and might, in particularly difficult cases, suggest to the Programme Steering Committee that the operation should be cancelled or modified when passing from one module to the next one.

Should any modification be necessary, the project Lead partner will be notified and will have to act in the foreseen time to either amend the project or, in severe cases, to cease the project, as foreseen in article 21.1 b of the Subsidy Contract.

How to go from a module to another in a multi-module type of project?

A verification performed by the MA/JS will determine if a project continue to the next module, in a multi-module project

In case of multi-module projects, at the end of each module, the MA/JS will perform a verification of the activities carried out and the deliverables produced by the project in order to check their compliance with the requirements established and to pass to the next module.

The aim of this verification will be to confirm that the identified expected results for the concerned module have been reached according to the Subsidy Contract and the approved Application Form, and that the partnership is ready to start the new phase of the project.
In particular, the MA/JS verification will focus on following aspects:

- Analysis of content-related progress and production of key pre-identified deliverables in due form as scheduled;
- Financial progress of the project;
- Management and administrative performance;
- Partners' engagement;
- Realistic forecast and recommendations for the remaining modules;
- If applicable, identification of deviations and delays in regard to the Application Form, as well as necessary project modifications (partnership, finance and activities).

This verification will take place in a short period of time between the end of a module and the start of the following one on the basis of a specific report. The MA/JS will ensure that this verification does not hinder the progress of activities and the transition between modules.

Based on this verification, the MA/JS may decide:

- to agree on the **continuity** of the project as foreseen in the Application Form;
- to propose a **modification** of the project in order to adapt it to the new "reality", taking into account the results of the verification;
- to propose to the Interreg MED Programme Steering Committee a **deprogramming** of the forthcoming modules.

Upon transition from one module to another, the partnership may propose a modification of the project regarding the partnership, major budget changes and activities in order to better adjust to the needs of the following module. For further information regarding modifications please refer to Factsheet on "Project Modifications" of the Programme Manual.

Why an external expert to go from a module to another?

For 2014-2020, the issue of the quality of projects is particularly important for multi-module projects, since their funding is subject to successful completion of each module that compose the whole project (incomplete or unsatisfactory completion of a module can block the implementation of the following one(s)). In order to ensure that all multi-module projects are able to successfully complete their project, a specific monitoring system has been developed by the Interreg MED Programme.

MOBILISATION OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS

For 2014-2020 programmes, partnerships who decide to carry out multi modules projects must recruit an "**external expert**".

This expert will have to meet a number of conditions specified by the programme (see the guidelines provided for the drafting of the tender for the recruitment of external experts.)

Once recruited, the role of the external expert is to assist the Lead Partner and the partners in successfully implementing their project. In particular, the expert must help the project to anticipate any difficulties that could prevent the transition from one module to another.

The level of methodological assistance of the expert may be adapted to suit the needs of each project (needs to be specified in the tender for the recruitment of the expert). The minimum requirements are that the expert:

- provides assistance for the implementation and progression between modules
- provides a "monitoring form" to the Joint Secretariat before the start of a new module
- ensures that the Lead Partner informs the Joint Secretariat in case major problems arise in a project (timing, budget, partnership…)
- transmits any information about his "assessment of the support system" to the Joint Secretariat at the end of its assignment, if relevant

It should be noted that the programme does not require external monitoring throughout the duration of the project. Once the last module has been launched (the second or the third of the project), the project can be finalised with or without the support of the external expert depending the needs of the project (to be specified in the contract signed with the expert).

USE OF A MONITORING FORM

To promote a qualitative monitoring, the programme provides partners with a "**monitoring form**" that should help them assess the project progress on some key points and to propose any adjustments for the transition to the next module. The drafting of this form is provided by the external expert in close collaboration with the Lead Partner and all the partners of the project.

The monitoring form is essentially dedicated to project partners. The partnership and the external expert will specify how this form shall be used (producing a form for each monitoring committee, at key implementation steps of the project, at mid-term, etc.). **The project will have to transmit one copy of this form to the Joint Secretariat to report on project progress one month before the start scheduled for the following module.**

The form provides information to the Joint Secretariat but does not take part to the formal validation process of the module.

The transition from one module to another requires that the ongoing module is well implemented and that a number of conditions are met to move towards the next module. This process requires anticipation work because difficulties met in achieving a first module may have direct consequences on the implementation of the following ones (partnership, organization, budgets, skills, goals, etc.).

The "monitoring form" should allow the external expert and project partners to monitor the implementation of the module and anticipate potential difficulties. In particular the form should help to:

- check that the module is implemented in accordance with the framework set out in the application form
- anticipate potential bottlenecks
- ensure that the activities of the ongoing module are well implemented and that the project can move towards the next module

The external expert is in charge of filling out the monitoring form. To be useful and effective, the form shall be completed by taking the situation and the comments of each project partner into account.

Partners and external experts will specify how the form shall be used (completion of a form for each monitoring committee, at key implementation steps, at mid-term, etc.) at the start of the project. This timing is particularly important since the forms will foster exchanges and discussions between the partners for the proper achievement of the project. The form must not only be drafted to describe a situation, but also to anticipate potential difficulties and take the necessary actions at key stages of the project.

The only obligation for partners and the external expert is to provide the Joint Secretariat with a monitoring form one month before the start of a new module in order to inform the programme authorities about the progress of the project.

FIGURE 45: MONITORING FORM
Project:
Module:
Date:
N° of monitoring form:

Key issues for the implementation of the project		Indicators	Source of information	Findings	Actions already taken or foreseen
1. Planned and foreseen operations / targets met	1.1. What operations / activities foreseen in the current module must be completed (or what target met) in order to start the activities of the next module?	- Listing of operations and activities	Application form Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners		Actions already taken: Actions foreseen:
	1.2. What is the status of these operations? To what extent are the targets met? (or will be met?) What are the possible consequences on the activities planned for the next module?	- Operations not started, ongoing and completed - % of the target met - Qualitative analysis	Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners Control panel, progress reports Minutes of the steering committee		Actions already taken: Actions foreseen:
	1.3. What measures are proposed by the partnership to address any gaps in the implementation of planned activities? (were activities well defined, are objectives shared between partners, are means appropriate, is the organisation of the project efficient, are skills suitable / sufficient? …)	- Types of measures proposed	Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners Minutes of the steering committee Expert opinion		Actions already taken: Actions foreseen:

Key issues for the implementation of the project		Indicators	Source of information	Findings	Actions already taken or foreseen
1. Planned and foreseen operations / targets met	1.4. Has the partnership planned corrective measures ?	- Qualitative analysis	Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners Minutes of the steering committee Progress report		Actions already taken: Actions foreseen:
2. Set up and operation of the partnership	2.1. Are partnership operating conditions adequate for a good implementation of the module? What are these operating conditions?	YES / NO - Frequency of meetings - Terms of exchange and cooperation between partners	Application form Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners		Actions already taken: Actions foreseen:
	2.2. Do partners mention specific difficulties in the achievement of their tasks? Which ones? (Administrative, economic, legal, organisational…) Does the external expert observe any other specific difficulty? Which one?	YES / NO - Types of difficulties	Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners Minutes of the steering committee		Actions already taken: Actions foreseen:
	2.3. Can these difficulties alter the implementation of the following module? (availability of partners, responsibilities, skills, …)	YES / NO	Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners Expert opinion		Actions already taken: Actions foreseen
	2.4. What kind of measures are being considered to alleviate the difficulties encountered? (Organisational changes, new partner, share of responsibilities…)	- Types of measures	Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners Minutes of the steering committee Expert opinion Desk analysis		Actions already taken: Actions foreseen
Key issues for the implementation of the project		Indicators	Source of information	Findings	Actions already taken or foreseen

				Actions already taken:
3. Performance of project management	3.1. Have project management tools been implemented? Which ones (planning, IT project management tools…)	YES / NO - Types of tools	Desk analysis	Actions already taken: Actions foreseen:
	3.2. Are projects management tools in place performing well? (planning and coordination between activities…)	- Qualitative analysis	Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners	Actions already taken: Actions foreseen:
	3.3. Do partners feel comfortable with these tools?	- Grading scale 1-3 (no, somewhat, yes)	Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners	Actions already taken: Actions foreseen:
4. Deadlines and budget	4.1. Does the implementation of the module respect the original planning? What are the potential sources of delay?	- YES / NO - Delay observed (weeks…) - Source of delay observed	Application form Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners	Actions already taken: Actions foreseen:
	4.2. Can the delays observed/foreseen affect the implementation of the next module? If so, what steps are taken to remedy this situation?	- YES / NO - Qualitative analysis	Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners Expert opinion	Actions already taken: Actions foreseen:
	4.3. Does the project face any difficulty regarding the budget? Is the expenditure in line with the estimated budget?	- YES / NO - Qualitative analysis	Application form Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners	Actions already taken: Actions foreseen:
	4.4. Can the difficulties related to the project budget affect the implementation of the next module? If so, what steps are taken to remedy this situation?	- YES / NO - Qualitative analysis	Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners Expert opinion	Actions already taken: Actions foreseen:

Key issues for the implementation of the project	Indicators	Source of information	Findings	Actions already taken or foreseen

| 4. Deadlines and budget | 4.5. Do the expenses incurred correspond to the estimated budget? Should budget adjustment be considered by the end of the module? Which ones? | - YES / NO
- Quantitative analysis | Application form Exchanges with the lead partner and the partners | | Actions already taken:

Actions foreseen: |

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