



## MED STRATEGIC PROJECTS

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Promotion of information and communication technologies for a better accessibility of rural and remote areas**

***1st April 2011***

*Second call for MED strategic projects*



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## Introduction for MED strategic projects

As it is stated in the operational programme, the general objective of the MED programme is *“to make the whole Med space a territory able to match international concurrence in order to ensure growth and employment for the next generations. Support territorial cohesion and actively intervene in favour of environmental protection in a logic of sustainable development.”*

These various issues cannot be tackled efficiently, neither at the regional nor at national scale: they require a significant effort in terms of transnational coordination and consultation.

For the programming period 2007-2013, specific themes are identified by the Monitoring Committee as being particularly important for all European regions of the Med space.

Corresponding to these topics, the Monitoring committee launches targeted calls for proposal aiming to elaborate “Strategic projects”.

Strategic projects shall have a horizontal approach and should pay particular attention to the following issues:

### Coherence with European, national and regional policies

- Strategic projects must be developed in coherence with EU, national and regional policies and with existing Mediterranean cooperation initiatives. In order to contribute to the implementation of those policies, strategic projects must be elaborated in cooperation with public authorities and institutions concretely involved as partners in their implementation
- Strategic projects must take into account existing initiatives and programmes in the definition of their objectives in order to implement activities or to prepare initiatives, methodologies or processes which could be financed by these programmes in the future (mainstream programmes, European Investment Bank, etc.)<sup>1</sup>
- Strategic projects are advised to take into account results achieved and problems encountered by projects implemented during the 2000-2006 programming period, especially territorial cooperation projects implemented on the same issue than the strategic project (MEDOCC programmes). Project partners are invited to consider as well innovative projects implemented in other cooperation areas (SUDOE, South East Europe, Atlantic, North West Europe, Baltic Sea, ENPI CBC Mediterranean, etc.). Activities can include the capitalisation of experiences and results and the overcoming of weaknesses observed in projects already implemented. For the Med programme (like for the others) the JTS can support the partners and provide them detailed information on projects launched since 2007.

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<sup>1</sup> Here is mentioned the use of other financing means after the end of the Med project. During its implementation, a project cannot get funds from different EU programmes (double financing is forbidden)

### **Impact on the cooperation area**

- Strategic projects must have a wide geographical coverage involving as much as possible partners from the different countries of the MED programme area (**at least six EU countries of the MED programme represented**)
- Strategic projects should be directly useful for local and/or regional and/or national authorities and their results should be of benefit of all the cooperation area, directly or indirectly through a wide dissemination (methods, results of pilot projects, benchmarks, best practices, experiences of existing cooperation, etc.). Local and regional authorities should be involved as much as possible in the project life cycle (from the idea generation to the implementation)
- It is essential that strategic projects build on the basis of a thorough knowledge of existing state of the art, that they take into account former and actual public policies and projects in order to generate significant added value related to existing needs
- Strategic projects should not be limited to producing information and analyses with a theoretical approach. They must capitalise on experiences and experimentation, proposing a transfer of know-how, methods, and practices likely to have tangible impact on actors and territories and being transferable in other EU regions

### **Strong and coherent partnerships**

- Strategic projects shall allow for the building of large partnerships around key actors in specific fields of intervention involving decision makers, thematic experts, specialised bodies and end-users (regional authorities, State services, specialised institutions, intermediary bodies...)
- There must be a strict relation between project objectives and institutional and administrative competences of partners. As such, they require a coordinated and formal commitment of the partners for the achievement of expected results (detailed information will have to be provided in the application form for the different work packages)
- Strategic projects must contribute to achieve the Med programme's key objectives (competitiveness, innovation and sustainable development), whilst showing a clear transnational added value. They must be forward-looking, and have a long-term impact on the MED space.

### **Sustainability of results**

- From their conception, strategic projects must include statements and activities which will ensure that the results achieved will be further used and promoted by other programmes and projects after the end of the project. They should preferably be able to mobilise additional private and/or public funds to pursue its activities or generate effects in the mid/long term. They should as well lead to concrete policy agreements, memorandum of understanding (MOU) or similar instruments able to ensure long lasting effects
- Strategic projects should be setup taking into account perspectives of cooperation with non-European Mediterranean countries as well. This can be done with the identification of needs, the participation of non EU partners to the project ("external partners" VI 1) and the dissemination of the project results in these regions

### **ERDF allocation**

The ERDF allocation for this strategic call in objective 3.2 of the operational programme is **5 million Euro**.

The minimum ERDF allocation for one strategic project is **1 million Euros and the maximum is 3 million**

The number of projects selected will depend on the quality of applications and of the budget available for this call. Applicants are reminded that strategic projects are not intended to finance facilities or heavy infrastructures. Investments can be made however for the implementation of pilot actions.

The global ERDF allocation for the call can be increased by the Monitoring Committee in the case of several high quality applications

## 1. Administrative framework

In order to properly elaborate their application, the candidates shall take into account the requirements of these terms of reference. They shall refer as well to the main programming documents which are:

- The Operational MED Programme
- The Implementation guide of the MED programme

It is specified that actors interested by a call for strategic projects can take part to **a maximum of four applications** under the same objective. In the case they participate in more than four applications, all of them will be considered ineligible.

### I. Draft project

1. The official submission phase for an application in the framework of a Strategic Call for Proposal is preceded by a 2 months period of a draft project preparation. The step to follow is indicated in the launching document published on the Programme MED website ([www.programmed.eu](http://www.programmed.eu)):
  - a. To download the template foreseen for the draft project published in the programme website;
  - b. To submit the template to the JTS, only by e-mail, to the address indicated and within the deadline specified in the launching document;
  - c. To respect all the indications specified in the Call for the draft project;
2. Any draft submitted beyond the foreseen deadline and that would not respect the template will not be able to go through the proposal submission official stage, foreseen only for the draft projects having respected points 1.a, b and c;
3. The Lead Partner of a Strategic Project must be a state-owned organisation (central or decentralised state administration or related institutions) or a Regional authority. Only draft proposals with an eligible Lead Partner will be accepted for the full proposal
4. Strategic projects must be composed of partners from at least 6 different eligible Member States. It is recommended that these partners are already identified in the draft project

*It is specified that although the “core partnership” is identified at this stage, it is possible to add and/or change partners until submission of the final application*

*In case the LP changes between the 2 stages, a specific communication must be made to the JTS.*

## II. Final application

1. Once the draft project is submitted to the JTS, and after the verification check (1.1. “Draft project”), the Lead Partners can profit of a **4 months period** to elaborate the final application form. This period could be used to implement merges of different draft projects following a spontaneous decision of the partnerships or following a recommendation as explained below. PRESAGE CTE (online system) shall necessarily be used for the drafting and submission of the final application. Once the regularity of the draft projects is verified (see above 1.1. “Draft project”), the JTS will send an email to the Lead Partner containing the access to the PRESAGE system;
2. During this period, the JTS and the Member States (national coordination and National Contact Points) can provide assistance to the partners in order to improve the composition of the partnerships and (according to their competences) specify the contents of the final applications (objectives and results). This assistance can include the identification of other key players, information on other projects that might create synergies together, networking, methodological support, etc.

The Managing Authority will have the possibility **to ask for the contribution of external thematic experts** (under the supervision of Member States). The experts will provide their comments to the JTS and NCPs to help identifying strengths and weaknesses of the draft projects, their strategic potential and to suggest possible merging of draft projects when relevant for the elaboration of the final application. The recommendations of the experts, the contributions of national coordination, National Contact Points and of the JTS will constitute a non-binding *tailored opinion* which will be sent by the JTS<sup>2</sup> to the Lead Partners with the twofold objective of:

- Improving the drafting of the strategic projects;
  - Inviting the applicants at a working day meeting to discuss orally these opinions and exchange with the various actors concerned (Project Partners, Member States, experts, JTS);
3. Concerning the submission of final applications, interested partners could be involved in a **maximum of four applications** in the same objective (**legal personality of the organism is evidenced**): if a body is involved in more than four applications in the same objective, either as a Lead partner or partner, the respective projects will be considered ineligible
  4. At the moment of the final submission of applications through PRESAGE CTE system, all conditions **mentioned in the text** of the Call for proposals, **contained in the *application pack*** published on the Programme’s website, have to be respected. **If one of these conditions is not respected, it will cause the ineligibility of the application file;**
  5. The JTS will ask for complementary information outside the PRESAGE system, especially concerning:
    - the governance system of the project (organisation chart)
    - a short description of how economic and institutional sustainability will be guaranteed through the project actions

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<sup>2</sup> The JTS may integrate the tailored opinion with remarks regarding formal aspects, such as: number of countries represented; the nature of partners; the coordinators and structure of the work packages.

- a declaration of proposals or projects to which partners have been participating in the last three years on the same theme (projects financed by the ERDF or other EU funds, including the 7<sup>th</sup> FP and regional operational programmes i.e. pedagogic file)
- a description of the pilot actions indicating their transnational added value, timing and modalities for their implementation

### III. Submission procedure

See “Submission procedure document” contained in the official Application pack published in the programme website after the draft project phase.

### IV. Selection Procedure

1. When final applications will be received, the JTS will check their eligibility. Specific attention will be drawn to the following points:
  - The Lead Partner signature and/or stamps on the application form and on his letter of commitment are original;
  - The budget in the letters of commitment of each partner must be coherent with the application form. In any event the amount stated in the Letters of commitment shall not be less than that indicated in the application form.

If these criteria are not met, the application will be rejected

Furthermore, the JTS may request from the Lead partner to correct certain administrative errors corresponding to the following:

- One or more partners' letters of commitment (except the LP's commitment letter) are not in original version (fax, scan or copy);
- Project summary, short description and/or theme is not provided in the second mandatory language of the Programme;
- One or more documents related to State aids are copies or not entirely filled in. However, they must be signed and stamped;
- One or more documents do not include the signature date;
- The project duration exceeds 36 months by **1 day** maximum in order to avoid misunderstandings on the dates of starting and ending 36 months period: an alert system is foreseen in PRESAGE CTE;
- The e-mail submission has not been received by the JTS (keep a copy of your e-mail transmission in the format outlook “envelope” for any verification of deadline respect).

In order for the respective proposal/s to be considered eligible, the corrections must to be done within 10 working days (French calendar as reference) starting from the correction request, sent via email by the MED JTS<sup>3</sup>;

The Programme's Selection Committee is in charge of the selection of the strategic projects assisted by the JTS and the independent thematic expert/s (as necessary) Member States, via the Selection Committee, may transmit to the JTS information concerning the national strategic orientations and the relevance of the partnership;

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<sup>3</sup>

In case of request of one or more new original documents post-mark is evidenced.

II) The JTS proceeds with the final projects' evaluations on the basis of the documents and rules approved by the MED Monitoring Committee (evaluation grid and PRESAGE CTE);

The Selection Committee could decide to have a face-to-face interview with the eligible projects.

## 2. Content

### I. Context and general orientations

#### 1. Context and needs

The MED programme area is characterised by a very long coast line, mountainous regions (Alps, Pyrenees, Pindos etc.) and many islands, two of which are new Member States (Malta and Cyprus). This area does face **difficulties in communication and access** concerning physical connections (roads, highways, maritime accessibility, railways) and electronic connections (Internet, broadband).

If the regions of the MED programme have invested much in ICT technologies over the last years, they have still not reached a level that comes close the EU25 average.

During the period 2003 – 2005, the average EU 25 investment in IT was around 3% of the GDP annually. Only in France the annual expenditure as % of the GDP was above this level (by 3,3% in 2003 and 2004 and 2,4% in 2005.). The rest of the MED space countries' investments in the ICT sector were well below this level, and they were stagnating.

In terms of use, and in spite of an increasing trend, the civil society is still not using e-government services offered to a comparable level with the EU25 average<sup>4</sup>. Only few regions in northern Italy and Spain and in southern France perform at high or average level in comparison to the Central and Northern European regions.

Information and communication technologies can speed-up the exchange of information and data between territories to develop economic activities or improve the access of population to services (**e-administration, e-inclusion, health, culture...**).

ICT can as well improve the efficiency of public policies implemented in Mediterranean regions by setting common methods and priorities (**e-government, e-environment, risk management, tourism...**) and by using common tools for analysis and implementation of public policies (**Geographic Information System, cartography, statistics, and digital atlas**).

#### 2. Legal and political tools

In June 2006, the Riga Declaration adopted at the Ministerial Conference "ICT for an inclusive society" set out a number of policy priorities to be implemented.

Among these priorities, the territorial issue was the first mentioned and referred to cheap access to networks and services particularly in remote and rural areas lagging behind, including small towns (broadband for the population, public and private internet access points, connecting administrations, schools, health centres, etc.).

In the recent Communication *A Digital Agenda for Europe* (May 2010)<sup>5</sup>, the territorial approach is less important as compared to technical, economic and sectoral priorities (development of the digital market, interoperability, security, broadband, research institutes in innovation) which are clearly detailed in the

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<sup>4</sup> Source : ESPON project 1.2.3. "Identification of Spatially Relevant Aspects of the Information Society", pg. 14 ff., May 2006

<sup>5</sup> A Digital Agenda for Europe, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, com(2010)245 final, Brussels, 19.5.2010

7<sup>th</sup> framework programme and in the programme for competitiveness and innovation (CIP) (see following pages).

The reduction of disparities is mentioned for certain population groups (disabled, elderly people...) and the territorial dimension is addressed indirectly through major social issues (environment, health, culture, e-government, intelligent transport systems).

These guidelines are included in the EU 2020 strategy which deals only marginally with the question of territorial disparities<sup>6</sup>.

*The following points draw guidelines that can be used by the applicants in the definition of the objectives and strategy of their strategic project. The projects must be coherent with EU orientations and create synergies on issues where EU programmes and funds are concentrating their attention.*

**a) A digital Agenda for Europe**

*Communication from the commission to the european parliament, the council, the european economic and social committee and the committee of the regions, com(2010)245 final, brussels, 19.5.2010 (abstract)*

The Digital Agenda for Europe is one of the seven flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, set out to define the key enabling role that the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) will have to play if Europe wants to succeed in its ambitions for 2020<sup>7</sup>.

The objective of this Agenda is to chart a course to maximise the social and economic potential of ICT, most notably the internet, a vital medium of economic and societal activity: for doing business, working, playing, communicating and expressing ourselves freely. Successful delivery of this Agenda will spur innovation, economic growth and improvements in daily life for both citizens and businesses.

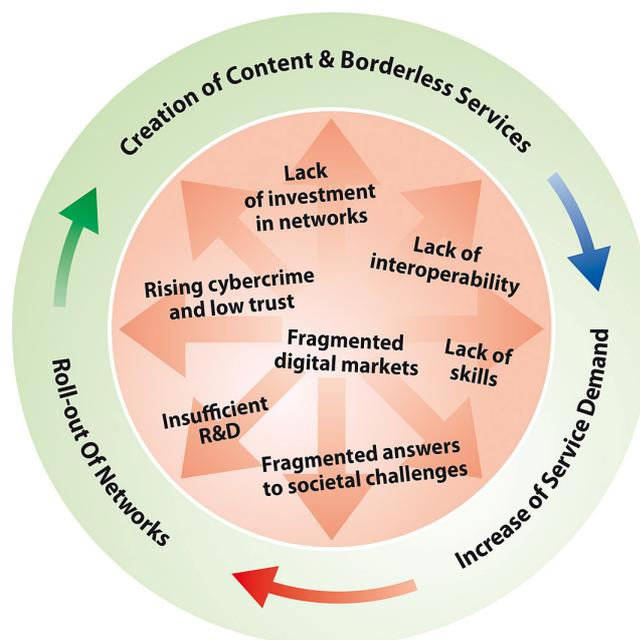
This great potential of ICT can be mobilised through a well-functioning virtuous cycle of activity. Attractive content and services need to be made available in an interoperable and borderless internet environment. This process is illustrated in the outer ring of Figure 1 (below).

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<sup>6</sup> EU 2020. A European strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive growth

<sup>7</sup> The Digital Agenda is built upon wide consultations, in particular on inputs from the Digital Competitiveness Report 2009 - COM(2009) 390; the Commission's 2009 public consultation on future ICT priorities; the Conclusions of the TTE Council of December 2009, the Europe 2020 consultation and strategy; and the ICT Industry Partnership Contribution to the Spanish Presidency Digital Europe Strategy; the own-initiative report of the European Parliament on 2015.eu and the Declaration agreed at the informal Ministerial meeting in Granada in April 2010. All these are available at:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/eeurope/i2010/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/eeurope/i2010/index_en.htm).

**Figure 1: Virtuous cycle of the digital economy**



Based on consultation with stakeholders and on the insights contained in both the Granada Declaration and the European Parliament Resolution, the Commission has identified the seven most significant obstacles.

*Fragmented digital markets*

Europe is still a patchwork of national online markets, and Europeans are prevented by solvable problems from enjoying the benefits of a digital single market. Commercial and cultural content and services need to flow across borders; this should be achieved by eliminating regulatory barriers and facilitating electronic payments and invoicing, dispute resolution and customer trust. More can and must be done under the current regulatory framework to weave a single market in the telecoms sector.

*Lack of interoperability*

Europe does not yet reap the maximum benefit from interoperability. Weaknesses in standard-setting, public procurement and coordination between public authorities prevent digital services and devices used by Europeans from working together as well as they should. The Digital Agenda can only take off if its different parts and applications are interoperable and based on standards and open platforms.

*Rising cybercrime and risk of low trust in networks*

Europeans will not engage in ever more sophisticated online activities, unless they feel that they, or their children, can fully rely upon their networks. Europe must therefore address the rise of new forms of crime - "cybercrime" - ranging from child abuse to identity theft and cyber-attacks, and develop responsive mechanisms. In parallel, the multiplication of databases and new technologies allowing remote control of individuals raise new challenges to the protection of Europeans' fundamental rights to personal data and privacy. The internet has now become such a critical information infrastructure for individuals as much as for the European economy at large, that our IT systems and networks must be made resilient and secure to all sort of new threats.

*Lack of investment in networks*

More needs to be done to ensure the roll-out and take-up of broadband for all, at increasing speeds, through both fixed and wireless technologies, and to facilitate investment in the new very fast open and competitive internet networks that will be the arteries of a future economy. Our action needs to be focused on providing the right incentives to stimulate private investment, complemented by carefully targeted public investments, without re-monopolising our networks, as well as improving spectrum allocation.

*Insufficient research and innovation efforts*

Europe continues to under-invest, fragment its efforts, under-use the creativity of SMEs and fail to convert the intellectual advantage of research into the competitive advantage of market-based innovations. We need to build on the talent of our researchers to deliver an innovation ecosystem where European based ICT companies of all sizes can develop world-class products that will generate demand. We therefore need to address the suboptimal character of current research and innovation efforts by leveraging more private investment, better coordinating and pooling of resources, 'lighter and faster' access of digital SMEs to Union research funds, joint research infrastructures and innovation clusters and the development of standards and open platforms for new applications and services.

*Lack of digital literacy and skills*

Europe is suffering from a growing professional ICT skills shortage and a digital literacy deficit. These failings are excluding many citizens from the digital society and economy and are holding back the large multiplier effect of ICT take-up to productivity growth. This requires a coordinated reaction, with Member States and other stakeholders at its centre.

*Missed opportunities in addressing societal challenges*

By harnessing the full potential of ICT, Europe could much better address some of its most acute societal challenges: climate change and other pressures on our environment, an ageing population and rising health costs, developing more efficient public services and integrating people with disabilities, digitising Europe's cultural heritage and making it available to this and future generations, etc.

Taking into account these objectives, the MED programme must implement actions focused on the specific stakes of the Mediterranean regions. In the last point (*Missed opportunities in addressing societal challenges*) are mentioned questions related to **climate change and environment**, as well as **e-government** which constitute a means to reduce the digital divide for population or **remote territories**.

## **b) Seventh Framework Programme**

### **Main themes mentioned in the work programme 2011 for ITC<sup>8</sup>**

A reinforced ICT contribution to Europe's major socio-economic challenges

ICT R&D helps address Europe's key socio-economic challenges, from a lower carbon economy, to health and well-being in an ageing society, competitive businesses and manufacturing for a sustainable recovery, and learning and sharing of cultural resources.

#### **Challenge 5: ICT for health, ageing well, inclusion and governance**

Challenge 5 has a focus on ICT for disease prediction, early diagnosis, prevention, minimally invasive treatment, and overall disease management and support to healthy lifestyles. Another focus is on ICT solutions for prolonging independent living and for extending active working life, as well as ICT solutions enabling accessibility of emerging mainstream ICT solutions, and assistive technologies for people with disabilities. A final focus is on ICT tools for governance and policy modelling.

#### **Challenge 6: ICT for a lower carbon economy**

Challenge 6 concentrates on the development of ICT to achieve substantial efficiency gains in the distribution and use of key resources such as energy and water, as well as the application of ICT to decarbonise transport and make it safer. This incorporates the ICT contributions to the Public-Private Partnerships on Energy Efficient Buildings and on Green Cars: ICT for the fully electric vehicle.

#### **Challenge 7: ICT for manufacturing & factories of the future**

Challenge 7 incorporates the ICT contributions to the Public-Private Partnership on Factories of the Future. It aims to improve the technological base of manufacturing across a broad range of sectors by improving, not only their efficiency and adaptability, but also the sustainability of manufacturing systems as well as their better integration within business processes.

#### **Challenge 8: ICT for learning and access to cultural resources**

Challenge 8 has the objective is to develop technologies and methodologies that make people learn more effectively and support the acquisition of new skills. It also aims to ensure the effective use and exploitation of the cultural resources by developing technologies to make them available, usable and re-usable regardless of their form, location, time sphere etc.

## **c) Competitiveness and innovation framework programme (CIP)**

### **Information and Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme (ICT-PSP)**

The Information and Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme (ICT-PSP) aims at stimulating a wider uptake of innovative ICT based services and the exploitation of digital content across Europe by citizens, governments and businesses, in particular SMEs. It has €728 million.

Activities supported by ICT-PSP

Funding goes mainly to pilot actions, involving both public and private organisations, for validating in real settings, innovative and interoperable ICT based services in areas such as:

- ICT for health, ageing and inclusion;

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<sup>8</sup> Work Programme 2011, Cooperation, Theme 3, ICT - information and communications technologies (European Commission c(2010)4900 of 19 July 2010)

- Digital Libraries;
- ICT for improved public services;
- ICT for energy efficiency and smart mobility;
- Multilingual web and Internet evolution.

Networking actions for sharing experiences and preparing the deployment of innovative ICT based solutions in such areas are also supported, as well as the monitoring of the Information Society through benchmarking, analyses and awareness raising actions.

### Summary of EU intervention priorities in the field of ICT

<b>Research and innovation</b>	<b>Economy and Work</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Culture and society</b>	<b>Education and training</b>	<b>Quality of life</b>	<b>Regions / World</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Public financing</li> <li>- Private investments</li> <li>- Coordination of R&amp;D</li> <li>- Support to innovation for ICT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- e-business</li> <li>- SMEs</li> <li>- Manufacturing</li> <li>- Transport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication</li> <li>- Dissemination</li> <li>- Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Culture</li> <li>- e-administration</li> <li>- e-inclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- e-learning</li> <li>- e-culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Environment</li> <li>- Health</li> <li>- Safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduction of regional disparities</li> <li>- Openness to the world</li> </ul>

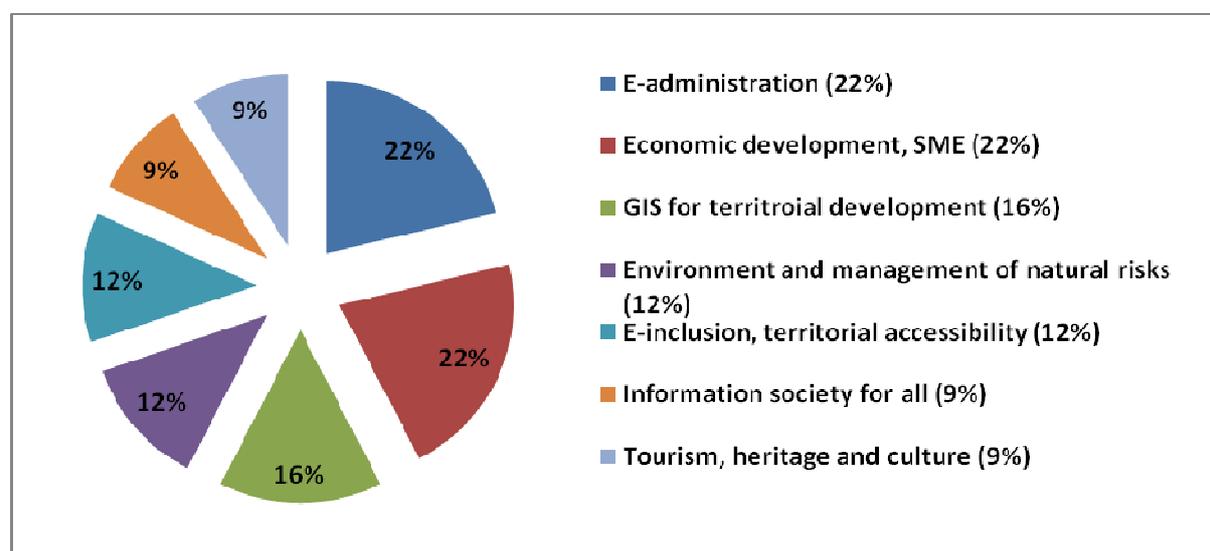
## II. Completed and on-going programmes and projects

Beyond their statistic dimension, the information provided in this chapter must be used by the applicants to identify issues and other projects corresponding to their priorities. It is indispensable that the applicants identify the projects already implemented in their field of intervention and that they take into account previous experiences and results to elaborate their own project.

### 1. 2000-2006 projects

During the 2000-2006 programming period, around 30 projects of territorial cooperation have been realised in the field of ITC (programme MEDOCC, SUDOE, Alpine Space, 3C South, 3A France/Italy, 3A Alcotra, 3A France/Spain).

Distribution of projects by theme



The analysis of this projects highlight seven priority areas of intervention for local and regional actors:

#### E-administration

- Development of ICT to improve administration and territorial governance (DEPURE - 3C South - E-ASLA - SUDOE)
- Use of ICT to improve interaction between government authorities and citizens (ADMITRON - SUDOE; SERDIGSEG – SUDOE; LIMEX – SUDOE; E-SAFER – 3C South)

#### Economic development / SMEs

- One-stop shops, Telecentre (INFO VIVEROS - SUDOE; CIBERSTRATEGY - 3C South - ICHNOS - 3C South)
- Promoting the knowledge economy (RKMnet - 3C South)
- Exchange of information relating to the cooperation areas, (MEDIA ALP - Alpine Space; Creation of statistical databases for European Regions, 3A France/Spain)
- Promotion of territorial development (PAMELA – MEDOCC)

#### Geographic information systems for territorial development

- Development of GIS to facilitate the implementation of projects of local authorities (GRISI - 3C South)
- Organization and sharing of data related to territories and regional development (IDEUNIVERS - MEDOCC; ROL - MEDOCC; SISTRIE - 3C South; "Integrated Pyrenean pastures through a geographic information system" - 3A France/Spain Pyrenees border Atlas - 3A France/Spain; PAMELA – France/Spain 3A)

#### **Environment and management of natural risks**

- Tools for communication and joint planning for the protection of fragile areas (ALPENCOM - Alpine Space)
- GIS to improve the management of Mediterranean forests (TECNOMED - SUDOE)
- Knowledge management Platform dedicated to water management (TETHYS - MEDOCC)
- Improvement of the forecasting of rain on watersheds (FRAMEA – Alcotra)

#### **E-inclusion, territorial accessibility**

- Development of services and electronic systems for administrations and access to services in mountain areas (MODI - 3C South)
- Support the use of ICT in less dynamic territories (TICADERU – 3A France/Spain)
- Creation of virtual technology centre to bring together companies and strengthen interregional cooperation - Island regions (ISNOVA – SUDOE)

#### **Information society for all**

- Promotion of ICT and training for citizens (Wireless Cities - 3C South)
- Establishment of information society observatory networks (EATLAS - SUDOE)
- Promotion of broadband and wireless networks (BLUE MED - MEDOCC; Connection of research centres to broadband – 3A France/Spain)

#### **Tourism, heritage and culture**

- Cultural platform, exchange of information (PIC – 3A ALCOTRA; MEDIA ALP – 3B Alpine Space)
- ICT for the promotion of tourism activities (E-Tourism - SUDOE)

## **2. 2007-2013 Projects**

### **MED Programme**

For the first call of proposal of the programme MED, there hasn't been any project on the objective 3.2. "Support to the use of information technologies for a better accessibility and territorial cooperation ».

For the second call, one project has been selected for the implementation of an ICT platform of information and services aimed to improve the integration of the freight transport chains (Freight4all) and a second for the promotion of services and intelligent transportation systems in areas with low population density (LiMIT4WeDA)

*The applicants for strategic projects can ask the JTS to provide further information on on-going Med projects*

### **SUDOE programme**

9 projects focused on ICT have been selected by the 2007-2013 SUDOE programme.

These projects are quite varied and include the competitiveness of SME and economic activities (CYBERSUDOE, VIAJANDO POR BESANAS), vocational training (SUDOEFOP), access to information and ICT for youth (PORTEDEJO II), cooperation in the field of culture (LABTECHNOCULTURS), sustainable mobility (SUMOBIS), safety and service continuity (DISASTER RECOVERY), services for rural areas (PARTNET-TIC) or health networks (RESATER).

## **III. Objectives of strategic projects**

### **1. General objective of the programme**

At the EU level, the strategic orientations on ICT are influenced by the objectives of the Lisbon strategy in favour of innovation, competitiveness and employment (A digital agenda for Europe – May 2010). The “territorial” approach is less significant than it was in the Riga Declaration « ICT for an inclusive society (2006)”. The concept of “inclusion” (e-inclusion) is getting a more social (and less geographical) content focusing on some categories of the population (disabled, elderly, long term unemployed).

With the Med programme, ICT are considered as a means to improve territorial development and the quality of life in remote areas of the Mediterranean regions (islands, peripheral areas, rural areas, mountainous areas, etc.). In these areas, economic development and access to basic services are still hampered by insufficient physical networks, connections, facilities or competences.

### **2. Specific objectives of the strategic projects**

Despite on-going investments, broadband networks must be further developed in Mediterranean regions. New technologies are emerging (4G herzien, interoperability of networks...) and could be tested **to improve digital accessibility of rural and remote areas**. However, a strategic project should not be only focused on the promotion of technical solutions (other financing tools are available for this). Activities could be launched to better coordinate strategies of regional authorities or to implement digital agendas in Mediterranean regions. There is room for improvement concerning for example the management of radio frequencies (wireless technologies) at the Mediterranean level and the promotion of solutions for less accessible (and less profitable) areas.

One other issue related to the first one is the **access to public data and the participation of people to public policies** in order to better understand people’s needs and bring relevant solutions for these regions. It concerns the promotion of Open data systems, the production and dissemination of information and the possibility of interaction between citizens and the public authorities.

Geographic information systems and Geoportal could be better promoted and used for the conception of public policies and the communication with the population, referring for example to the “Inspire Directive” establishing an infrastructure for spatial information in Europe to support Community environmental policies.

The use of ICT requires as well skills and know-how. However, the MED programme is not dedicated to training activities. They can be part of the project if they are essential to reach its objectives.

Using the information provided by the terms of reference, the strategic projects applications must clearly identify:

- The bottlenecks and needs in the Mediterranean area justifying the implementation of the project
- The tools, methods, analysis, pilot actions which will be developed and implemented to meet those needs<sup>9</sup>
- The practical use of tools, analysis and methods by the final beneficiaries and the direct benefits they will get from it
- How the outputs of the project will be used and promoted in its own territory and in other areas of the Mediterranean.

*The strategic project must contribute to implement proposed solutions and should not only define a series of policy recommendations. This means that a minimum number of pilot actions must be foreseen in order to assure a direct territorial impact.*

*To achieve this, the project should be structured around compulsory and optional work packages whose content is detailed in the following part « Description of work packages ».*

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<sup>9</sup> “Pilot actions” correspond to some activities of the strategic project aiming to experiment a process, a method, a system and test its feasibility, its functioning and viability for wider dissemination in the Mediterranean area. The “pilot actions” that the partners will detail in their application must correspond to this definition (all the activities of a strategic project are not necessarily “pilot” ones)

## IV. Description of work packages

The strategic project is based on two categories of work packages:

- Work packages related to the management of the project, communication activities, capitalisation and long lasting effects (work packages 1, 2 and 3)
- Technical work packages focused on the concrete implementation of the activities of the project

**Work packages 1, 2 and 3 are compulsory** and must be included in the project.

**The other two work packages (technical work packages) provide detailed information on the projects' purpose. The applicants can elaborate their proposal on the basis of one or both of these technical work packages.**

Each work package includes specific types of activities which could be implemented by the partnership. The partnership is not obliged to implement all these activities but can focus its work on some of them, provided that it ensures a strong coherence and integration of the overall project.

**The partners involved must have a high level of experience and competence in the field of intervention.** Work packages must be elaborated and implemented in a coordinated way (definition of working methods, goals, exchange of information and data, coordination of activities...) to ensure a high overall efficiency of the implementation of the strategic project.

The coherence of the overall project is ensured by the WP 1 on strategic and administrative coordination of the project, and by the WP 2 and 3 on information, capitalisation and promotion of project results.

In order to guarantee sufficient internal coordination between the WP, the coordinators of technical work packages must participate in the implementation of WP 1, 2 and 3.

***For each one of the work packages, the partners must clearly specify the concrete outputs and strategic results they aim to produce and the actions necessary to achieve them.***

### 1. COMPULSORY WORK PACKAGES

#### ► ***Work package 1: Administrative and financial management of the project / coordination of the partnership***

The work package 1 is under the responsibility of the Lead partner who must ensure the management of the whole project. It includes the administrative and financial monitoring as well as the steering and coordination of the partnership and the different work packages. Equally, a Project **Steering committee** shall be established as specified in chapter VI 1 b of the ToR.

The Lead partner must be institutionally and financially solid and able to play actively his role in coordinating and steering the work.

These coordination capacities constitute one of the main criteria for the selection of strategic projects.

All partners will participate in this WP concerning their own financial and administrative management.

#### ► ***Work package 2: Information and awareness raising***

This work package has a horizontal impact on issues covered by the other work packages. It aims to raise awareness of populations and institutional actors. It aims as well to disseminate the results of the

strategic project to these actors. It must be based on a comprehensive communication strategy as specified in part **V.2.** of the terms of reference. The work package 2 must be developed in close relation with the work package 3 on capitalization and promotion of project results.

- To inform, raise awareness and/or train target populations
- To compare experiences to develop standard procedures and share practices
- To disseminate the results of the work packages to local and regional authorities and to other target groups
- To achieve information and publicity activities as specified in the communication strategy of the project

► **Work package 3: capitalisation and long lasting effects**

This work package aims to ensure the use of the project results and the implementation of long lasting measures triggered by the project activities.

“Capitalisation” means the identification, organisation and enhancement of experiences, know-how or operational results in order to use them in the implementation of new and innovative projects and activities.

The work package 3 must be developed in close relation with the work package 2 on information and awareness raising while maintaining their specificities.

- To define the strategy and actions for the use of the results after the end of the project
- To set up agreements and obtain political commitments with relevant decision makers and stakeholders for the use and promotion of the project’s results after the end of the project
- To identify financing mechanisms allowing new public and private investments
- To set up, if relevant, permanent structure and define the scope, composition, financing in order to ensure the long lasting effect and the sustainability of the project results

## 2. TECHNICAL WORK PACKAGES

Mediterranean regions are confronted with a digital divide that affects people living in areas poorly equipped in networks or services. The evolution of digital technologies represents an opportunity for public authorities willing to provide a better access to public services and to enhance citizenship and participation in policy making.

### ► **Work package 4: To improve digital accessibility of rural and remote areas**

The overall objective of this work package is to better coordinate policies and strategies related to digital accessibility of rural and remote areas. This includes the identification of needs and existing methodologies, the testing of technologies and/or processes and the dissemination of results towards the target areas

- To promote common ICT and Internet planning strategies between Med regions: use of common benchmarking instruments and development of common policies; standardisation of procedures; definition and adoption of common technical approach tailoring Med specificities; coordination of regional strategies for the implementation of a Mediterranean digital agendas
- To promote and coordinate policies and strategies supporting internet and wireless broadband technologies (use of radio frequencies freed by the move from analogue to digital broadcasting for example)
- To promote technical platforms (digital public service) gathering a wide set of services in remote and rural areas (public services, youth information, employment, media...). To share best practices or pilot actions

### ► **Work package 5: To improve access to public data and the participation of people to public policies**

The overall objective of this work package is to identify existing systems and processes, to launch pilot actions to test identified solutions and support their implementation in the target areas

- To support on-line access of information and data related to on-going public policies (spatial planning programmes; town planning projects; transports; safety and risks; socioeconomic data; cadastre; cartography; etc.). To promote open data systems for information and awareness raising
- To develop digital tools for online consultation and debate (Agenda 21; climate and energy package; spatial planning; mobility and transports; environment...). To support the implementation of Agenda 21 with collaborative technologies
- To promote social networks and the use of collaborative technologies (« web2.0. ») allowing citizens to produce information for decision makers

### **Beneficiaries:**

*In the framework of territorial cooperation projects, the proposed activities are largely based on new governance practices, on the coordination of sectoral policies (telecommunications, environment, economy, spatial planning ...) and on the coordination of different level of public authorities (local, regional, national, European) on one single territory.*

*There is a large set of potential beneficiaries, but the success of their projects will largely depend on their capacity to coordinate their priorities and strategies.*

**Indicative non-exhaustive list of potential beneficiaries:**

- **Regional and Local Authorities**

Services in charge of:

- Information and communication technologies
- Spatial planning, economic and territorial development
- Participation and citizenship

**State services**

Services in charge of:

- Telecommunications and ITC
- Spatial planning, economic and territorial development

**ICT specialised bodies and institutions**

- Telecommunication private companies
- Innovation and technologic centres
- Think-tank specialised in ICT and services

**Territorial development bodies**

- Regional development agencies
- Town planning agencies
- 
- Chamber of commerce and industry

**Scientific bodies**

- Universities and research centres

**Other relevant bodies**

- Nongovernmental organisations
- Civil society
- International Organisations

**V. Indicators and communication strategy**

**1. Indicators for strategic projects**

In order to properly monitor and evaluate the project, the partnership must provide information concerning the set of indicators listed below (see application form). These indicators must help to specify the initial objectives of the project, the working method, and to assess the results achieved at the end of the project.

The project can add one or two 'personalised' sub-indicators to each cluster.

The objective is to have a measurable follow-up of the projects with a link to the "capitalisation" work package.

The indicators have a quantitative and a qualitative part.

### **Identification of problems, weaknesses or needs to take into account in order to reach the objectives of the strategic project**

Qualitative indicators

- Nature of problems identified
- Type of problems, weaknesses or needs to be addressed by project activities

### **Tools and solutions created to address these problems, weaknesses and needs**

Quantitative indicators:

- Number of structures participating to the implementation of solutions

Qualitative indicators

- Type of tools or solutions provided

### **Expected results**

Quantitative indicators:

- Number of structures benefiting from solutions offered (in the project eligible space or beyond)

Qualitative indicators

- Type of structures benefiting from solutions offered (in the project eligible space or beyond)
- Types of expected results for the different activities of the project
- Method used to analyse the results of the activities of the project

### **Capacity of project activities to trigger other financing**

Quantitative indicators

- Amount of new financing foreseen

Qualitative indicators

- Type of activities that need bigger scale financing
- Type of institutions and/or programmes with whom cooperation are launched to capitalise and promote the results of the project
- Type of financing triggered

### **Consequences of project activities**

Qualitative indicators

- Type of new projects, new activity plans, by the end of the project
- Type of structures involved

### **Information dissemination (best practises, tools, policy instruments...)**

#### Quantitative indicators

- Number of structures reached
- Number of dissemination events organised
- Number of structures affected

#### Qualitative indicators

- Type of target group
- Method of dissemination
- Nature of the foreseen impact of dissemination
- Method of analysing the impact

## **2. Information and publicity**

The project must elaborate a communication strategy including: the dissemination of information; awareness raising for the population and for institutions; publicity; dissemination of the results of the project toward relevant bodies.

This strategy will be implemented through work packages 2 and 3 focused on communication and capitalisation of project results.

This implies the definition of:

- Specific information and publicity objectives,
- Key target groups and stakeholders who need to know about the project and its results
- A dissemination strategy

Mandatory (minimum) outputs to be included in the I&P strategy:

- Project logo and visual identity
- Project website at least in English to inform about the project aim, progress and results. The web site shall be launched within the first 6<sup>th</sup> months after the beginning of the implementation of the project and kept on line for 2 years after the closure of the project
- Brochure presenting project aim and main activities
- Poster for the participation of the project to Programme MED events
- Project results leaflet (can be also DVD featuring the results of the project)
- Public final event or conference to spread project results to relevant target groups

## **VI. Partnership and actors involved**

### **1. Composition of the partnership**

The experience of “traditional projects” showed that partnerships are set up with institutions which have a certain experience of working together but with sometimes difficulties to integrate other types of actors which could bring substantial contribution on the intervention theme (key players).

For this reason, it is necessary that strategic projects identify different types of actors having **strong institutional competences related to the project** (local, regional, national, international actors) and that they elaborate an implementation system which will take into account their contributions in the conception, implementation, capitalisation of the project and in the dissemination of results.

*It is specified that actors interested by a call for strategic projects **can take part to four applications maximum under the same objective**. In the case they participate in more than four applications, all related projects would be considered ineligible.*

The partnership has to combine “**institutional bodies**” (public authorities) and “**operational bodies**” to help to reach the objectives.

**Institutional bodies** (e.g. national, regional and local authorities) have the institutional and/or political competences to promote the project, coordinate the key players and ensure its connection and coherence with other on-going projects and public policies.

**Operational bodies** are specific stakeholders directly operating in the related field or in contact with implementing structures. Their role is to ensure that the project tackles the identified challenges in a concrete and operational way and that high level competences are mobilised (telecommunication companies, bodies specialised in telecommunications or in information technologies, research centres, universities, chamber of commerce, etc.)

Operational bodies must include actors with specific and high technical-scientific competences that can support the implementation of the project any other stakeholder whose involvement is needed for project purpose.

These consecutive roles seek to ensure that the project combines the conceptual (policy) development with concrete solutions, tools and methods adapted to needs identified amongst the target groups.

According to their responsibilities, their competences, their status and their availability, these bodies can be involved in the project as “partners” or as “**external partners**”. Whereas “partners” constitute the core of the partnership with clear dedicated tasks and responsibilities, “external partners” are involved in a more peripheral way (they are not bound by the partnership agreement and cannot get ERDF).

External partners correspond to institutions whose contribution does not require a full involvement in the project (technical advises, share of punctual experience and know how, dissemination of information, networking, dissemination of the results of the project...) or institutions located outside the eligible area (In “third countries”) and which could not be formally involved in the project (like south Mediterranean regions). It is recommended to include third countries in the partnerships, so as to have a greater impact in the Mediterranean Sea area.

External partners listed in the application will have to provide a non-binding letter of support/interest (template provided by the JTS). In this letter they will express their interest for the project; they will specify the nature of their involvement, in which WPs/actions and understanding that they will not get ERDF.

***It must be noticed that the participation of each project partner (public and private) and the use of subcontractors for the implementation of the project must respect the national and EU competition and public procurement rules as stated in the MED operational programme and in the Implementation guide.***

#### ***a) The Lead partner***

Taking into account the large budget of the strategic project and the complexity of its partnership, the Lead partner must be able to ensure consensus and strong leadership (impulse, management, coordination of the partnership).

The Lead Partner must be an **EU regional or national level authority legally based in an area eligible to the MED programme.**

#### ***b) The steering committee of the project***

The **steering committee of the project** is composed of all project partners. Whatever the organisation of the steering committee, the Lead partner must ensure a transparent management, a good communication between partners and the dissemination of information to all the partners.

#### ***c) Organisation of work packages***

All partners are expected to participate in WP1. The number of partners involved in the other WPs depends on the kind of activities to be developed and the specific contribution of each partner, which needs to be clearly explained. For each work package, a **WP coordinator** must be designated among the partners. It must be a national or NUTS II institution <sup>10</sup> (body of national or regional level).

It is recommended that the subcomponents of the technical WPs be composed of between 3 and 10 partners (with a possible additional participation of external partners). This range is a recommendation and if more partners are indispensable for the implementation of the work package, the purpose should be clearly stated in the application form.

The activities must specify the contribution of each partner in the work package outlining clearly the deliverables and tangible results.

The WP coordinator must ensure the proper implementation of the work package. The Lead partner manages the work package 1 (administrative and financial monitoring of the project, steering and coordination of the partnership) with the participation of the coordinator of each one of the work packages.

Administrative and financial tasks of the strategic project vis-à-vis the Managing Authority remain under the responsibility of the Lead partner. The coordinators only have a role of coordination within their work package.

It is recommended that the partnership does not exceed **25 partners**. This figure is a recommendation and may change if it is essential for the good achievement of the strategic project.

Partnerships should combine operational and institutional bodies in a balanced way in order to achieve consortiums of high quality.

#### ***d) Participation of partners outside MED area***

##### **IPA Partners:**

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<sup>10</sup> NUTS II partners are partners whose responsibilities and fields of intervention cover areas corresponding to the NUTS II areas defined by EU institutions.

**The participation of Mediterranean candidate or potential candidate countries to the Med programme** will be possible with IPA funds which can finance up to 85% of the total eligible costs of the action carried out by partners from these countries in joint operations. The minimum total budget for the participation of an IPA partner to the project is 100.000 euros. The responsibility for the financial management of IPA funds lies with the single contracting authority (MED Managing Authority) of Mediterranean candidate or potential candidate countries.

**EU Partners outside MED area:**

According to Article 21(2) of ERDF regulation, in the context of transnational cooperation and in duly justified cases, the ERDF may finance expenditure incurred by partners located outside the MED area participating in operations and up to 20% of the ERDF total budget requested by the whole of the EU partners of a project. This expenditure must be targeted and must be for the benefit of the regions of the Med area.

**Non EU Partners:**

In addition, according to article 21(3), the ERDF may finance expenditure incurred for implementing operations or parts of operations on the territory of countries outside the European Community up to 10% of the ERDF total budget requested by all EU partners of a project. The funds allocated under this 10% flexibility option must be targeted and must be for the benefit of the regions of the Med area. Even if the regulation foresees this possibility, **this rule does not apply within the MED Programme.**

Otherwise non EU institutions can participate as associated partners (without ERDF cofinancing).

**e) Target groups**

Target groups include actors or institutions which could benefit from the dissemination of the results of the strategic project, whether they have contributed or not to the implementation of the project.

Applicants are requested to clearly identify the target groups and the way to ensure their involvement.

**2. Setting up of the partnerships**

To setup their partnership, Lead partners can activate institutional networks with the assistance of the National Contact Points.

During the preparation of the draft projects and then for the drafting of the final applications, the National Contact Points and the Joint Technical Secretariat may encourage some Lead partners to develop joint proposals to build stronger and more integrated applications

**VII. Budget**

The ERDF allocation for this strategic call in objective 3.2 of the operational programme is **5 million Euro.**

The minimum ERDF allocation for one strategic project is **1 million Euros and the maximum is 3 million**

The number of projects selected will depend of the quality of applications and of the budget available for this call. Applicants are reminded that strategic projects are not intended to finance facilities or heavy infrastructures. Investments can be made however for the implementation of pilot actions.

The global ERDF allocation for the call can be increased by the Monitoring Committee in the case of several high quality applications

### **VIII. Duration of the project**

The operational phase of strategic projects shall not exceed **36 months** (preparation phase excluded) and it must finish within June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at the latest.

## ANNEXES

### Annex 1: Checking of draft projects

**The checking of draft projects does not lead to a selection process.** Its aim is to provide advice and recommendations to support the drafting of high quality applications. Each partner who has submitted a draft-project respecting the criteria listed in point 1.1. "Draft project" will have the possibility to submit a final application.

Points to be checked by the JTS:

- Respect of the format of the draft project,
- Coherence of the draft project with the objectives of the Med programme and with the Terms of reference
- Description of the strategy to ensure long lasting effects of the project (institutional, political, financial perspectives...)
- Description of the work packages
- Quality of the partnership
  - Identification of the Lead partner (relevance of the national or regional institutional authority legally based in an EU area eligible to the MED programme)
  - Relevance of the institution as Lead partner of the strategic project (competences, experiences, on-going activities...)
  - Involvement of partners from at least six EU countries of the Med eligible area (recommendation for the draft and compulsory for the final application)
  - Role of each partner in the project and relation with their institutional competences

## Annex 2: Project selection grid

### a) Eligibility criteria

#### Administrative conditions

- The application has been filled in and validated on the online monitoring tool of the Programme PRESAGE CTE
- The complete application has been sent in electronic version (e-mail) and in paper version before the deadline. The application is **signed in original**
- The application has been provided in English or in French and the sections to be filled in double language have been respected (short description , summary and theme of the project)
- The submitted paper version of the application includes the original hand signed commitment letters of each partner taking part to the proposed operation, Lead Partner included. When necessary the application also includes all the required annexes dully signed
- The application takes into account the rules of free market competition (State Aid regimes), of public procurement and of the other community and national rules. Should there be state aid relevant activities, applicants are requested to submit the “de minimis declaration”, otherwise, it is sufficient to submit the “state aid declaration” (see the application pack)
- The application includes a synthetic assessment of the environmental incidence of the project

*The administrative omissions that may be corrected on specific request by JTS under set conditions are listed in Section 1-IV*

#### Partnership

- The partnership includes partners from at least **six EU countries** from the eligible area of the Med programme
- The Lead Partner must be a regional or national level authority legally based in an EU area eligible to the MED programme
- The partners do not participate to more than four applications for strategic projects under the same objective under the penalty of disqualifying all the different applications in which they appear
- No partner must concentrate more than **20%** of total eligible budget (ERDF + national co financing) of the project. IPA funds are not taken into account in this percentage
- No country must concentrate more than **30%** of the total eligible budget (ERDF + national co financing) of the project. IPA funds are not taken into account in this percentage
- The partners submit the original Partnership Agreement signed by all the partnership after their selection by the Selection Committee (either 1 PA for each partner or 1 combined PA containing all PPs signatures)

#### Identification of the project

- The operational phase of strategic projects does not exceed **36 months** (preparation phase excluded) and it must finish within June 30th, 2015 at the latest
- The ERDF allocation for one strategic project is **between 1 and 3 million Euros**

### Financial statements

- The ERDF contribution foreseen in the application must not exceed the maximum rate allowed at State level with reference to the foreseen national public counterpart
- Overheads must not exceed **5%** of the total eligible budget of the project (ERDF + national co financing). IPA funds are not taken into account in this percentage
- The commitment letter of each partner (Lead partner included) specifies the precise TOTAL amount of the national co-financing corresponding to the total ERDF amount requested with the application form

### **b) Selection criteria**

#### Coherence of the project with the strategy of the MED programme and the EU policies

- General coherence with the objectives of the MED programme and with the terms of reference
- Quality of arguments provided to justify that the project has a positive impact or does not have any negative effect on environment and sustainable development
- Taking into account the principle of equal opportunities (objectives, management system...) and non-discrimination

#### Coherence of the project with European, national and regional policies and with other Community programmes or projects

- Coherence with other programmes and actions
  - Taking into account CSG, NSRF and regional (and local) policies of the territories where the partners are coming from
  - Taking into account policies and structural actions taken on the same subject at the Community level, national and regional level
  - Taking into account current regional operational programmes
- Synergies with other programmes and actions
  - Synergies foreseen with policies and actions existing on the same theme at community, national and regional level (including ENPI CBC Mediterranean programme)

#### Transnational dimension of the project

- Geographical balance of the partnership
  - Number and the types of partners according to the nature of the project
  - Geographical balance of the partnership (distribution of the partners among the different countries according to their specific nature and role)
- Transnationality of the project
  - The project is not a mere addition of local actions and the transnational implementation of the project is bringing a real added value
  - Each partner is bringing a significant contribution to the content of the project (not only a logistic contribution for example) and the activities are shared in a balanced manner
  - All partners will benefit from the participation to the Med programme

- The whole area represented by partners will benefit from the project implementation and from its results (other areas may or could benefit as well)

### Quality of the project

- Origin of the project
  - Justification of the project, its links with an existing partnership and with other existing actions
  - In case the project is based on the capitalisation of past experiences, whether it takes into account the experience of Interreg IIIB (MEDOCC, Archimed and others) and Interreg IIIC programme and whether it is bringing a real added value as compared to the projects already implemented (*The participation to an Interreg III programme is not a selection criteria. The objective is to have the possibility to check the evolution of projects between two programming periods*)
  - The project is taking into account sufficiently the state of the art related to the Programme's SWOT analysis
- Innovative approach of the project
  - Innovative aspect of the proposal regarding the theme of intervention, the state of the art, the composition of the partnership, the working methods used, the initiatives of capitalization
- Impact of the project
  - Concrete impact of the project on territories, on socio-economic situations, employment, on institutions and public policies (to avoid reports and exchanges of experience without a real impact)
  - Level of coherence between the objectives and the results of the project
  - Feasibility
- Continuity of the project
  - Specific measures taken to ensure the sustainability of the project and its long lasting effect. The links between the project and other current public actions able to contribute to its coherence and its effects at middle and long term
  - Measures taken by the partnership to ensure its institutional and financial sustainability beyond the duration of European financing (if relevant for this kind of project)
  - Possible effects and impacts of the project at middle and long term on other sectors, on actors and on public policies
- Dissemination, promotion, valorisation of actions and results
  - Existence of a strategy of capitalisation, enhancement and dissemination of the results of the project (refer to the work package on capitalisation)
  - Existence of a Communication strategy, its relevance according to the theme of the project, according to the actors and to the actions driven by the institutions as well as its coherence with the Communication plan of the programme

- Coherence between the budget and the actions of information and communication to be implemented
- Identification of target groups and methodology for involving them
- Quality of the drafting and consistency of the description of the project
  - The different parts of the application form and attachments are properly completed; Information provided is accurate, consistent and sufficiently detailed
  - Comprehensibility of the working plan and of the described and expected results

#### Quality of the partnership

- Experience and credibility of the partners
  - Relevance and the credibility of each partner and of the partnership according to the type of activities foreseen
  - Financial solidity of the Lead Partner
  - Experience of the different partners in the management and the implementation of transnational programmes
  - Experience of the partners concerning the nature, the theme and the objectives of the project
- Nature and composition of the partnership
  - Presence of key players able to bring a significant contribution to the project
  - Composition of partnership and capacity of the partners in to reach project objectives
  - Clear distinction between institutional and operational partners to ensure the strategic impact
- Balance between the partners and organisation of the partnership in relation to the project
  - Composition of the partnership; Clear definition of the role of each partner and the distribution of responsibilities for the implementation of the project and its management. The evaluator will check that each partner is playing a significant role and is getting a real benefit from the project (to avoid “alibi” partners)
  - Management system of the project and the communication system between the Lead Partner and the partners
  - Organization of the steering committee, its functioning and the relevance of communication and coordination systems
  - Financial balance between the partners

#### Financing

- Relation budget-activities-results
  - Adequacy of the budget in relation to the results expected
  - Adequacy of expenditures in comparison with the size and the financial capacities of each partner (commitment letters including specific information on financial and management capabilities of the partners)
- Staff costs do not exceed **40%** and external expertise costs do not exceed **35%** of the total budget of the project (recommendation)

- Cost/benefit relation: is the value for money well demonstrated? Is the budget requested in reasonable relation with the foreseen activities and number of partners?
- Coherence of the share of the budget between the different work packages of the project and between the partners
  - Balance of the budget between partners
  - Appropriateness of the budget allocated for each work package, the balance between the work packages and the relation with the budgetary headings
- Balance of the annual budget
  - Coherence between the timetable of activities and the share of the costs per year
- Relevance of the costs of different budget lines
  - Balance between the different budget headings
  - Relevance of the amounts allocated to each budget headings and notably the budget allocated to human resources and the level of salaries