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**EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT MANUAL**

**Version 1.**

**Approved by the JMC of the Poland-Russia CBC Programme on July 6th, 2018**

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AaE check Administrative and eligibility check

AF Application Form

BO Branch Office

CBC Cross-border Cooperation

CfPs Call for Proposals

EC European Commission

ENI European Neighbourhood Instrument

EU European Union

JMC Joint Monitoring Committee

JTS Joint Technical Secretariat

MA Managing Authority

NA National Authority

PM Programme Manual Part I - Applicant

QA Quality Assessment

TO Thematic objective

**LIST OF ANNEXES**

Annex I  Application Form administrative and eligibility check and quality assessment checklist

Annex II Report on the administrative and eligibility check of the application forms

Annex III Report on the quality assessment of the application forms

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# Introduction

This document is addressed to all actors involved in the assessment of the application form (AF) within the framework of the Poland-Russia Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020 (Programme). It will be also used as a complementary material for training the assessors and external experts before initiating the assessment process as well as a reference tool during their work.

The contents of this document have been developed taking into account the relevant legal framework of the Programme.

# Institutions involved, roles and responsibilities

**Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC)**

In the context of the assessment process, the main task of the JMCis todecide on the assessment criteria for the projects and to take the final decision on the projects to be approved and amounts to be granted to them.

**Internal assessors and external experts**

The tasks of the assessors shall include assessment of the AF and attached annexes on the basis of assessment criteria which are provided in the Annex I to this Manual.

AFs will be assessed by the internal assessors represented by the JTS/BO employees and where necessary by the external experts.

If necessary, the JTS employees might be supported by the external experts in terms of verification of the technical documentation, state aid rules and financial capacity of the applicants. The external experts shall be selectedvia the open call for external experts. The external experts must be free from conflict of interest and are deemed to work in a personal capacity. Therefore, in performing the work, they do not represent any organisation and are expected to act impartially, in an independent, objective and confidential manner and apply the best of their abilities, professional skills and knowledge in accordance with the Programme documents. Unless decided otherwise, the external experts shall work remotely.

**The external experts** must strictly comply with the rules defined by the Programme for ensuring the impartiality and the confidentiality of the assessment process. Therefore they:

* must not discuss any project proposal with others, including other experts or the MA/JTS/BO/NAs staff not directly involved in the assessment of the project proposals;
* must not communicate with applicants.This includes communications related to clarifications, the announcement of the results of each assessment stage as well as dealing with any kind of requests for information and questions raised by the applicants;
* must not disclose the names of other assessors and external experts participating in the assessment process;
* in case of work in the JTS premises, are not allowed to take outside the JTS premises any parts of project proposals and annexes either on paper or in electronic form;
* must immediately inform the Head of the JTS if during the assessment he/she discovers being directly or indirectly connected with a project proposal to be assessed.

External experts must be aware that failure to comply with these rules may result in exclusion from the immediate and future assessment processes.

External experts will be chosen by equal treatment principle, following confidentiality and secrecy rules. Fulfilling those rules JTS will announce open call for external experts for respective field (technical documentation, state aid rules and financial capacity of the beneficiaries) with description of necessary requirements. Based on the received documents JTS will perform an assessment and prepare a database of external experts which fulfil the requirements. All the external experts will be informed by email on the results of the assessment of their proposals.

The candidate for external expert may be a person who fulfils all the following criteria:

1. under penalty of perjury submitted the statement confirming that he/she:
* enjoys full civil rights;
* possesses legal capacity;
* has not been found guilty for an intentional offence or for intentional fiscal offence;
1. is not involved in the Programme implementation by carrying out tasks of the Programme institutions;
2. must not be involved in the preparation of project proposals to the CfPs organized within the Programme;
3. must not be linked to lead beneficiaries/beneficiaries in the projects;
4. candidates for external experts shall possess:
5. the candidates for the **state aid** external experts:
* at least 3 years of proven professional experience in the field state aid issues;
* university degree of at least Master;
* fluent knowledge of Polish language[[1]](#footnote-1)
* very good command of English (written and spoken, at least C1 level).
1. the candidates for the **technical documentation** external experts:
* at least Master university degree in the field of construction or architecture`;
* at least 3 years of proven professional experience in preparation or verification of the technical documentation for the construction purposes;
* fluent knowledge of at least one of the following languages: Polish, Russian;
* very good command of English (written and spoken, at least C1 level);
1. the candidates for the **financial capacity** external experts:
* at least 5 years of proven professional experience in field of accountancy or be registered as an auditor in the national register of auditors;
* university degree of at least Master;
* fluent knowledge of at least one of the following languages: Polish, Russian;
* very good command of English (written and spoken, at least C1 level);
1. agrees to publish his/her personal data on the List of candidates for external experts/List of external experts and to process these data while creating and modifying both of these lists.

g) Tasks of the external expert include in particular:

1. evaluation of the AFs and attached documentation in order to resolve a particular problem/problems, specified by the JTS, regarding technical documentation, state aid rules or financial capacity of the applicant;
2. verification of the whole technical documentation, state aid rules or financial capacity of the applicant in the context of defined problem/problems;
3. assuring support to the JTS staff regarding assessment of the AFs in question;
4. resolving doubts concerning some parts or elements of technical documentation, compliance of the applicant with the state aid rules or applicant’s financial capacity;
5. preparation of expert’s opinion in the scope required, including summary, list of evaluated documents, description of the problem, expert’s opinion on the problem, justification of the opinion and expert’s recommendations;
6. providing additional comments or explanations on request of the JTS or Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC);
7. attendance of the meetings of the JMC in the status of an observer in order to present the expert’s opinion and answer possible questions of the JMC members.

The external expert will be obliged to deliver expert’s opinion within deadline set by the JTS (e.g. 2 working days), counting from the date of receipt of the AF. If more AFs will be assigned to one external expert, the period for the assessment completion will be counted on the basis of the same assumption (e.g. 2 working days per each AF).

External expert will be obliged to prepare expert’s opinions and any other elaborated documents in English.

The remuneration for the external experts is foreseen in the amounts indicated below:

1. for state aid external experts – 200 EUR per one AF;
2. for technical documentation/financial capacity external experts – 130 EUR per one AF.

# Principles applied in the assessment and selection process

Project selection procedures shall comply with the principles of transparency, equal treatment, non-discrimination, objectivity and fair competition. The projects shall be selected and awarded on the basis of pre-announced selection criteria defined in the Annex I to this Manual. The selection criteria serve to assess the applicant's ability to complete the proposed action. The selection criteria shall be used to assess the quality of the project's proposal against the set of objectives and priorities. The same rules and conditions shall be applied to all applicants.

The applicants shall be informed in writing about the assessment results. If the grant requested is not awarded, the JTS shall provide the reasons with reference to the selection criteria that are not met by the project proposal.

Institutions involved in the assessment declare to ensure the fulfilment of the following principles:

* **Confidentiality and secrecy** – the entire procedure, from drawing-up the CfPs to the selection of successful applicants, is confidential and secret. All information made available to assessors involved in the assessment process is to be treated as strictly confidential and specifically no information on the project proposals submitted or the results of the assessment may be made public to any other person than applicants. Under no circumstances may an assessor or external experts attempt to contact an applicant or partner on his/her own account, either during the assessment process or afterwards. The names of the assessors are confidential. Any documents disclosed to the assessors and external experts, including assessment reports, shall be used only for the purposes directly related to the assessment procedure. All the copies of project proposals and assessment documents should be archived under secure conditions at all times.
* **Objectivity, impartiality and equal treatment** – all project proposals have to be assessed alike and treated impartially on their merits, following a review strictly based upon the information they contain, to be assessed in line with the selection criteria and irrespective of where the applicants originate and their identity. Any case of possible conflict of interest has to be reported to the Head of the JTS, so that the project proposal to be assessed may be assigned to different assessor or external expert. In line with the above mentioned principles, before starting the assessment, all the assessors and external experts must sign a Declaration of impartiality and confidentiality (Annex V to this Manual) which must be complied with before, during and after the assessment. By signing this Declaration they commit themselves to strict confidentiality and impartiality concerning their tasks and they declare not to have any conflict of interest. Therefore assessors and external experts with existing or past link with any applicant must declare it and immediately withdraw from the assessment process. Persons involved in the assessment process should also declare not to offer their services under a sub-contract to successful project applicants that they have assessed.
* **Transparency and clarity** – the process of assessment, described in the Programme Manual Part I - Applicant and based on a scoring and ranking system, must be strictly kept and therefore eligibility, selection criteria must not be changed during the assessment process of the CfPs. Recommendations/remarks/conditions given to the project proposals have to be written in an explicit and detailed manner and adequate feedback must be provided to applicants on the outcome of the assessment.
* **Quality** – projects selected for funding must demonstrate a high technical and managerial quality and must help in making a contribution to achieving the objectives of the Programme and those set out for each thematic objective (TO) and priority. Key features of a high quality European Neighbourhood Instrument Cross-border Cooperation (ENI CBC) project are: cross-border impact, cross-border partnership and common benefits. The selected projects should clearly demonstrate compliance with these criteria.
* **Efficiency and speed** – the selection procedures should be designed to be as rapid as possible, commensurate with maintaining the quality of the assessment and respecting the legal framework of the Programme.
* **Traceability** – the overall assessment process should be documented and recorded in the assessment reports. These documents should be kept for five years after payment of the balance for the Programme (Art. 70 of the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 897/2014).

# Assessment process

The project assessment and selection is the overall responsibility of the JMC.

The assessment process starts immediately after the closing of the CfPs and ends with the JMC approval of a ranking list of submitted project proposals. It consists of two phases:

* administrative and eligibility check (AaE check), and
* quality assessment (QA).

If necessary, the JTS employees acting as assessors could request external experts to support them in assessment of parts of AF such as: technical documentation, state aid rules and financial capacity of the beneficiaries. In such cases the external experts would verify whether the submitted technical documentation is complete, legally valid and prepared in accordance with national Polish and/or Russian requirements, if as well as whether the project does not constitute state aid or whether the beneficiaries have sufficient financial capacity.

In case the assistance of external experts is needed, the JTS asks them to perform an assessment in some limited period of time. If the external assessor is available and willing to perform an assessment, he/she must sign declaration of impartiality and confidentiality (Annex V to this Manual). Only then external expert could receive access to selected elements of project proposals[[2]](#footnote-2).

An assessor and external experts could be assigned to more than one project proposal based on his/her education, experience and knowledge.

The external experts will provide assistance in carrying out assessment of the application form and respective documents according to assessment criteria of AaE and QA. External experts are obliged to make comments/recommendations following provisions of section 3.3 and 3.4 of this Manual. External experts shall also provide the additional comments at the request of the JTS or the JMC.

Eventual recommendations/conditions issued by the external experts will be included into assessment checklist prepared by the assessors. The external experts will be responsible for verification of their recommendations/conditions fulfilment.

The external expert will be obliged to carry out the assessment of the selected part of the application form within 5 working days from the date of its obtaining. If more application forms will be assigned to the external expert, the period for the assessment completion will be counted basing on the same assumption - 5 working days per application form.

# The administrative and eligibility check

The administrative and eligibility check (AaE check) is always carried out in accordance with the assessment criteria by two JTS/BO employees who prepare one joint assessment checklist. They will first make an individual assessment of the project and then they will coordinate their assessment and produce one joint assessment checklist. Such a system ensures that the assessment is transparent.

During the AaE check the assessors assess the compliance of the received project proposals and their annexes with the formal AaE criteria. All the criteria of the AaE check shall be answered “yes” or “no”. In order to pass the AaE check each project proposal must unconditionally fulfill the criteria.

If the submitted AF and annexes are not complete, some annexes are missing or the information provided in the annexes is not clear, the JTS will ask the applicant to provide clarifications and/or supplement missing annexes within the deadline set by the JTS but not later than within 14 calendar days since the request was sent via e-mail.

If the project proposal receives only the positive answers (“yes”), its AaE check is considered passed and the project proposal will be a subject of quality assessment. In case any of the criteria of AaE check is answered “no”, such a project proposal is assessed negatively and will not be further assessed.

If assessors need assistance of external experts they could request them to make verification of the technical documentation and/or state aid issues and/or financial capacity of beneficiaries.

Results of AaE check are presented in the administrative and eligibility check report which will be sent to the JMC members for informational purposes.

# Quality assessment

Only AF which was positively assessed during AaE check will be a subject of the QA. It will be done by two JTS employees. As a result of the QA one joint checklist shall be prepared for each AF and signed by both JTS employees. QA criteria are divided into two categories:

* strategic assessment criteria, and
* operational assessment criteria.

The QA is carried out in accordance with the assessment criteria set out in the Annex I of this Manual. The maximum score the project proposal can obtain is 100 points.

The minimum score the application has to reach in order to be taken into consideration for possible financing is 70 points. In addition, each project to be taken into consideration for possible financing has to reach at least 60% for each of the parts of the quality assessment, i.e. at least 36 points for the strategic assessment and at least 24 points for the operational assessment.

The project proposal assessment checklist is divided into sections and sub-sections. For each sub-section there is information about the maximum score which may be given for the relevant sub-section and each bullet point (if sub-section is divided into bullet points). Depending on the importance of the specific issue from the Programme point of view, the maximum score possible to be attributed for the relevant section (sub-section) will be multiplied by the weight according to description given below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Weight** | **Description** |
| 1 - very good  | relevant information has been provided, showing that project is exceptionally well in line with the requirements set by the Programme |
| 0,75 – good  | relevant information has been provided, showing that the project is well in line with the requirements set by the Programme |
| 0,5 – satisfactory  | information has been provided, showing that the project meets the requirements set by the Programme |
| 0,25 – poor  | information can be found to prove that the minimum requirements of the Programme have been met |
| 0 – unsatisfactory or information was not provided | no information has been provided or the information provided is not in line with the requirements set by the Programme |

# How to formulate comments and recommendations?

The assessors are obliged to provide the explanation of the scores awarded in each sub-section of the assessment checklist. The assessors shall strictly use the assessment grid prepared by the Programme. Applications shall be assessed objectively and assessors must be aware that their comments and arguments will constitute the basis for decision on awarding or non-awarding the grant to the application.

Scores shall be attributed according to the schemes set out in the Annex I of this Manual. Assessors will justify their scores with clear, objective and relevant comments for each section. The assessors should focus on points that they consider to be extremely positive or negative while answering the questions of the assessment checklist.

Comments and scores must be coherent and consistent. Therefore a high score combined with critical or negative comments or a low score accompanied by positive comments would be incomprehensible.

Assessors can give recommendations to the project proposals. Such recommendations should be clearly indicated in their comments and will be the subject of the JMC deliberations.

**Recommendations** may concern, among others:

* excluding certain elements (equipment, activities) which are not relevant to the achievement of the project objectives;
* budget reductions (overall or for certain budget lines), because the proposed budget is unrealistic or inefficient;
* removing ineligible expenditure;
* modifying the proposed schedule of the projects (if activities can be implemented in a shorter time or may require a longer period);
* involving additional stakeholders if the partnership in the project can be improved.

Assessors will makethe final conclusionson each application in the “COMMENTS” section at the end of each assessment checklist. They will consist of a short analysis of the proposal, followed by a list of the main strong and weak points for each section of the assessment checklist. They will also contain specific and objective reasons for the proposing for selection or rejection of a given proposal and they must be coherent with the final score and justify it in a relevant way. If specific recommendations/conditions/ requirements for a project proposal were given by the assessor, they should also be included in this section. The conclusions and recommendations must be formulated in a clear and concise way so that they may be presented to the JMC.

# How to understand the assessment criteria?[[3]](#footnote-3)

|  |
| --- |
| **1. Strategic assessment criteria** |
| **Assessment questions** | **Aspects to be assessed** | **Specific questions which shall be considered by assessors** |
| 1. Project’s context (relevance and strategy)*How well is a need for the project justified and problems described?* | a) The problems and needs that justify the necessity of the project implementation are precisely defined and described.Maximum 5 points. | * How well are the problems and needs of the Programme area identified and described?
* How well are these needs justified?
* Are they common and cross-border?
* Is the situation of each area (in terms of the identified problems) similar and comparable?
* How real is the demand for the project? Is specific statistical data provided to support it?
* Are the target groups and final beneficiaries correctly identified and described?
* Are the cross-cutting issues and accessibility-related actions included?
 |
| b) The project proposal:* is relevant to the particular identified problems/needs;
* is relevant to particular constraints of the target regions;
* is likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups.

Maximum 9 points – 3 points for each bullet point. | * How clear is the connection between the problem and the solution suggested in the AF? How well is the solution justified?
* Are the entire project and all its activities devoted to the solution of the identified problems/needs?
* Does the project take into account the constraints of the area covered by the project proposal, viewed as limitations for project implementation (different national legislation, different language, environmental challenges etc.) which need to be solved simultaneously on both side of the border,?
* Are the benefits for the target groups described? Are the benefits for the target groups tangible on both sides of the border in a balanced way?
* Does the foreseen impact on the target groups/final beneficiaries relate also to the persons with disabilities? Will they be able to equally benefit from the project?
 |
| c) The project demonstrates added value to implementation of the Programme strategy and relevant national/regional strategies.Maximum 5 points. | * Are references to the Programme strategy, EU and relevant national/regional strategies provided?
* Is the relevance of the project to these strategies well justified referring to specific points/objectives/assumptions of these documents?
* Do the beneficiaries refer to relevant national/regional strategies covering all target regions (both countries, all regions targeted by the project)?
 |
| d) The project is relevant to the: * particular TO (including also specific added value elements, such as promotion of gender equality, human rights, democracy, environmental sustainability, struggle against HIV/AIDS, equal treatment of persons with disabilities where relevant).

Maximum 5 points. | * Is the project coherent in terms of its objectives and activities and the selected thematic objective?
* Are the project and its objectives and activities relevant to the selected priority?
* Does the project positively contribute to the Programme cross-cutting issues in terms of gender equality, human rights, democracy, environmental sustainability, HIV/AIDS countermeasures and equal treatment of persons with disabilities? How well it is described and justified?
 |
| 2. Cooperation character*What added value does the cooperation bring?* | The project contributes to the strengthening of cross-border cooperation:* the results benefit both sides of the border;
* there is a clear benefit from cooperating in the proposed project partnership (results cannot be fully achieved without cooperation in proposed partnership);
* the project creates the basis to develop cross-border cooperation;
* partners share their experience, methods, models, data, ideas, know-how, knowledge etc.

Maximum 16 points – 4 points for each bullet point. | * Are the benefits for both sides of the border clearly described and justified?
* Is the importance of the cross-border approach to the issue addressed clearly demonstrated? To what extent can the planned results be achieved without CBC?
* Are there any plans to develop the established cooperation and build on the created outputs/results beyond the project? How feasible are they?
* Do the beneficiaries share their experience and knowledge? Is the project going to provide any new solutions that go beyond the existing practice in the sector/programme area/participating countries?
 |
| 3. Project’s contribution to the Programme’s expected results and outputs*To what extent will the project contribute to the achievement of Programme’s objectives?* | a) The project’s implementation will contribute to the achievement of the Programme output and result indicators; | * Will the project contribute to achievement of the output indicators given in the full list of indicators (Annex 8 to the Programme Manual – Part I)?
* Will the project contribute to achievement of other output indicators given in the full list of indicators (annex 8 to the Programme Manual – Part I)?
* Will the project contribute to achievement of the result indicator relevant for the selected priority?
* For projects with infrastructural components: are there any risks of not achieving the proposed indicators? If so, are these risks properly described and risk mitigation measures foreseen?
 |
| b) the project indicators have been properly chosen and are adequate to the project activities and goals.**Note:** a score of 10 (very good) may only be allocated if the project includes at least one output indicator presented in the JOP. | * Are the selected output and result indicators properly chosen? Are they related to the project activities?
* Are the values of the selected indicators measured correctly? Are these values realistic or over-/underestimated? Is the calculation method correct and clearly presented?
* Are sources and means of verification for each indicator provided? Are they clear, reliable and adequate to the selected indicator?
* Will the activities planned in the project really result in the selected output and result indicators? Are these values in line with the activities and objectives presented by the beneficiary?
 |
| 4. Partnership relevance*To what extent is the partnership composition relevant for the proposed project?* | a) The project involves the relevant partners needed to implement the project.Maximum 4 points. | * Does the composition of the partnership include all relevant beneficiaries needed to implement the project?
* Will the beneficiaries be able to implement all suggested activities themselves?
* Is it described that the beneficiaries possess the authority required to make sure that the activities will bring the expected results?
* Is there a clear description of particular experience, competence, capacity, know-how of each of the involved beneficiaries to achieve the expected results?
* If beneficiairies from the outside of the Programme area are involved – are they necessary to achieve the project’s results? Is their involvement well justified (e.g. important/unique role/responsibilities/capacity/authority are described)?
 |
| b) All partners play a defined role in the partnership and get a real benefit from it.Maximum 3 points. | * Is a role for each beneficiary properly defined?
* Has it been proved that each of the beneficiaries will get real benefits from the project? How has it been explained?
 |
| c) The roles have been assigned to specific partners according to the organizations’ competences.Maximum 3 points. | * Are the roles have been properly assigned according to the competences of each beneficiary (including the role of the lead beneficiary)?
* Are the statutory goals of the beneficiaries coherent with the roles assigned to them?
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| --- |
| **2. Operational assessment criteria** |
| **Assessment questions** | **Aspects to be assessed** | **Specific questions which shall be considered by assessors** |
| 1. Management *To what extent are management structures and procedures in line with the project size, duration and needs?* | a) The lead beneficiary and other beneficiaries have sufficient experience on project management.Maximum 2 points. | * Do the beneficiaries possess sufficient experience in implementation of projects (including projects financed by the EU - preferably within the cross-border cooperation) of similar scope and size of the budget?
 |
| b) The lead beneficiary and other beneficiaries demonstrate sufficient technical expertise and management capacity, including staff, equipment, knowledge and ability to handle the budget of the project.Maximum 3 points. | * Is the project management structure (e.g. steering committee etc.) clearly described?
* Is the composition of the management team appropriate to the scope of the suggested activities?
* Are technical expertise and management capacity in terms of staff demonstrated? Is the appropriate staff already employed by the lead beneficiary/beneficiaries or will it be selected and employed after a grant award?
* Are the project management procedures (such as reporting arrangements, monitoring of indicators, risk management etc.) clear and efficient?
* Do all of the beneficiaries possess sufficient technical expertise and administrative capacities for implementing the proposed project including handling the budget?
* Are necessary technical resources (office space, equipment, materials, supplies etc.) available or planned?
 |
| c) How satisfactory is the level of involvement and activities of the cross-border beneficiaries, whether the project: was jointly prepared/will be jointly implemented/will have shared staff/will be jointly financed.Maximum 3 points. | * Is the obligatory joint project preparation sufficiently ensured?
* Is it demonstrated that all beneficiaries contributed to the preparation of the project proposal (information on number of meetings, joint research, consultations etc.)?

- Is the obligatory joint project implementation sufficiently ensured?* Is it demonstrated in the description of the project activities and the indicative project plan that all the beneficiaries will be involved into implementation of the project?

- Is the joint project staff sufficiently ensured (optional)?* Is it demonstrated in the description of project management and the budget that representatives of all the beneficiaries are involved in the project implementation?

- Is the joint project financing sufficiently ensured (optional)?* Is it demonstrated that at least one Polish and at least one Russian beneficiary contribute to the financial plan through their own contributions?
 |
| 2. Communication*To what extent are communication activities appropriate and forceful to reach the relevant target groups and stakeholders?* | The project information and communication plan is appropriate to achieve project communication goals.Maximum 4 points. | * Is the information and communication plan clearly presented?
* Are the communication tools appropriate and reasonable? Will the information about the project reach the relevant target groups and stakeholders? Will they promote the project in a way that will ensure reaching the public opinion with the information about the project, the Programme and the EU on both sides of the border?
* Is the communication plan feasible? Are the relevant costs planned in the budget?
 |
| 3. Work plan*To what extent is the work plan realistic, consistent and coherent?*  | a) The overall design of the project is coherent, it clearly presents the proposed activities, results and objectives. The intervention logic and project plan are clear and feasible.b) If applicable: to what extent is the brief feasibility study realistic and consistent and coherent with the project activities?Maximum 4 points. | * What is the quality of the project design? To what extent are the intervention logic and the project plan consistent and coherent?
* Are the project objectives, activities and results clearly described? Is the project justified in terms of the planned activities?
* Is tender documentation prepared and ready to be announced after signing the grant contract?
* For projects with infrastructure component:
* What is the quality of the brief feasibility study (point 3.5 of the AF) or the full feasibility study (Annex A8 to the AF)? Is it coherent with the project activities?
* Is the project ready to be implemented after signing of the grant contract?
* Do the activities require any permission? If so, how do they influence the project implementation? Are they attached to the application?
 |
| c) Proposed activities and deliverables are appropriate, practical and consistent with the objectives and expected results.d) Activities outside the Programme area clearly benefit the Programme area (if applicable).Maximum 3 points. | * Are the suggested project activities consistent with the defined overall and specific objectives?
* Are the suggested project activities consistent with the planned outputs and results?
* Are there any activities planned to be implemented outside the Programme area? Are these activities justified in terms of bringing real benefits to the Programme area?
 |
| e) The time schedule is realistic.Maximum 3 points. | * Does the indicative project plan cover all the planned activities? Is it clearly presented?
* Is it feasible to implement the forecasted activities in the given timeframe?
* Are there any risks defined in the AF which can lead to possible delays? Are there any mitigation measures described?
 |
| 4. Budget*To what extent does the project budget demonstrate value for money?* *To what extent is the budget coherent and proportionate?* | a) Sufficient and reasonable resources are planned to ensure project implementation (both the lead beneficiary and other beneficiaries who financially contribute to the project have stable and sufficient sources of financing).Maximum 3 points. | * What are the sources of funding of the lead beneficiary? Does it have sufficient resources to ensure smooth implementation of the project?
* To what extent are other beneficiaries (with financial contribution) reliable in terms of financial capacities?
* Do they possess stable sources of financing which will allow them to contribute their share (e.g. 10 per cent or less) to the co-financing of the project?
* Is the value of the budget related to beneficiary organisation proportionate to the annual turnovers of this beneficiary (if applicable)?
 |
| b) Project budget is proportionate to the proposed work plan and the main outputs and results aimed for (the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results is satisfactory).Maximum 2 points. | * To what extent is the budget coherent and adequate to the scope of the proposed activities?
* To what extent are the expenditures justified in terms of the forecasted outputs and results (value for money)?
* Are there any expenditures to be incurred outside the Programme area? If so, are these expenditures in line with the Programme requirements?
* Are there any expenditures to be incurred by the beneficiaries registered outside the Programme area? If so, are these expenditures in line with the Programme requirements?
* Are the beneficiaries planning to use the simplified cost options (preparation of strong partnership/staff costs/administrative costs)? If so, are they correctly indicated and, if applicable, justified?
 |
| c) Total partner budgets reflect partners’ actual involvement in the project (are balanced and realistic). Maximum 2 points. | * Are the budget shares allocated to each of the beneficiaries in line with the scope of the activities assigned to these beneficiaries?
* Will the beneficiaries be able to ensure smooth and continuous implementation of the project in terms of financial management?
 |
| d) The budget is transparent and adequately related to the planned activities. The costs foreseen within the budget are eligible and in line with the Programme rules.Maximum 3 points. | * To what extent are the budget lines transparent?
* Are the suggested expenditures really necessary to implement the forecasted activities? Are they well justified?
* Are all of the expenditures eligible in terms of the Programme requirements?
* Are the forecasted expenditures in line with market prices? Is it anyhow possible to reduce the suggested level of expenses?
* Are there any expenditures to be incurred outside the Programme area which exceed 10% of the project budget?
* Are there any expenditures connected with the infrastructure component planned to be incurred in the Programme area?
* Are all the applicable thresholds observed?
* Are there any risks that some of the planned expenditures may be covered from other sources (other aid programmes etc.)?
* Will there be any income generated in the project?
* If applicable, is the flat rate for administrative costs calculated correctly and efficiently?
* Are there any technical mistakes in the budget?
 |
| 5. Durability | a) Project is likely to have a long-lasting impact on its target groups. The project main outputs will be further used once the project has ended.b) Project is likely to have multiplier effects (including scope for replication and extension of the outcome of the project and dissemination of information).Maximum 4 points. | * Is the project’s long-lasting impact on the Programme area and the project target groups clearly described? Is it described in what way the project’s results will be further used? Is the provided description related to the beneficiaries on both sides of the border?
* How realistic is the project’s long-lasting impact described in the AF?
* Can it be assumed that the beneficiaries will continue their cooperation after the project ends? Will this cooperation lead to further development of the elaborated outcomes?
* How likely is it that the project outcomes may be used in the other fields or by other institutions?
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| c) The expected results of the proposed project are sustainable in relation to:* financial durability (there are sources of revenue for covering all future operating and maintenance costs during the period of project results durability, for financing of follow-up activities etc.);
* institutional level (there are structures that would allow the results of the project to be continued after the end of the action - local "ownership" of the project results);
* environmental sustainability (there are conditions put in place to avoid negative effects on natural resources on which the project depends and on the broader natural environment).

Maximum 4 points. | * Is it clearly described how the financial durability of the project’s outputs/results will be secured?
* Has it been indicated who and from which source will finance the maintenance of the project’s outputs/results after the project ends?
* How realistic are these plans?
* Are these plans elaborated in relation to the outputs/results on both sides of the border?
* Is it clearly described how the institutional durability of the project’s outputs/results will be secured?
* Has it been precisely indicated who will be responsible for the maintenance of the project’s outputs/results after the project ends?
* Are there already structures ready to take responsibility for the project’s outputs/results?
* How realistic are these plans?
* Are these plans elaborated in relation to the outputs/results on both sides of the border?
* Are there any plans to transfer the ownership of the project’s outputs? If so, how justified are they?
* In case of a project with an investment or infrastructural component – how realistic are the plans to ensure the durability of the outputs for the period of at least 5 years?
* Is it clearly described how the environmental sustainability of the project’s outputs/results will be secured? Is it proved that future use of the project’s outputs/results will bring no negative effects on the environment?
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# Appeal procedure

The lead beneficiaries believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the assessment or in case the lead beneficiary does not agree with the final decision of the JMC, have right to make a complaint.

The complaint can be sent after each assessment stage. The complaint can be filed in case the decision:

* infringes the rights stipulated in the Programme legal basis and Regulations of the European Union (EU), Poland and Russia;
* presents an encroachment to the published CfPs or the procedures regulating the assessment process.

Only the lead beneficiary as representing the whole project is entitled to submit a complaint. Therefore, the task of lead beneficiary is to gather and forward the justification of the complaint from all project beneficiaries.

The complaint has to be:

1. written in English;
2. sent to the MA via the JTS e-mail ([plru@plru.eu](file:///%5C%5CTango%5CDWT%5C%21%20W%20X%5C03%20PL-RU%202014-2020%5CWKM%5CKaliningrad%2022-23.03.17%5Cdokumenty%20po%20WKM%5Cz%20dnia%2031.03.2017%5Cplru%40plru.eu)) which should be followed by original sent by the regular mail at the address of the JTS;
3. signed by the legal representative of the lead beneficiary;
4. clearly referred to the nature of the encroachment based on the Programme legal basis, EU Regulations and procedures for the CfPs.

Moreover the complaint should include:

1. name and address of the lead beneficiary;
2. reference number of the application form which is a subject of the complaint;
3. any supporting documents.

All the complaints shall be submitted to the MA via the JTS not later than 21 calendar days
(as evidenced by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip) after a letter from the JTS informing about result of the assessment stage was sent by e-mail. Any complaint submitted after the deadline or not fulfilling formal requirements will be rejected.

After receiving the appeal the JTS examines it and checks whether the complaint is in accordance with requirements and contains all necessary details. The complaint will be checked on the basis of the information provided by the lead beneficiary in the complaint. If the complaint fulfils all necessary requirements the JTS shall provide MA with:

1. the complaint checklist after the formal check by the JTS;
2. the original AF and all supporting documents that were taken into consideration by the relevant bodies during the project assessment and selection process;
3. all documents related to the assessment of the application including checklists and the record of the JMC decision;
4. any other documents requested by the MA relevant to the complaint.

If needed the MA can request for further clarification from JTS and/or the lead beneficiary. On the basis of submitted documents and further clarifications, if needed, MA takes decision on acceptance or rejection of the complaint, which is communicated to the lead beneficiary without delay.

The complaint procedure – from the receipt of the complaint to the communication of the MA decision to the lead beneficiary should be resolved within maximum 45 calendar days. The decision of the MA is final, binding to all the parties and cannot be a subject of any further complaint proceedings within the Programme based on the same grounds.

1. Verification of the occurrence of state aid only applies to activities carried out by Polish beneficiaries. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. According to p. 4.2 of the PM external experts will be responsible for assessing only completeness of technical documentation, constitute of state aid and financial capacity of beneficiaries. Following those provisions external experts will have online access only to parts of AF which are necessary to conducting assessment. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. As above - the form of the assessment grid used in this Manual applies to the 1st CfP. It may be changed in the subsequent CfPs. The assessment grids applicable to the subsequent call(s) will be published in respective Programme Manual Part I – Applicant. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)