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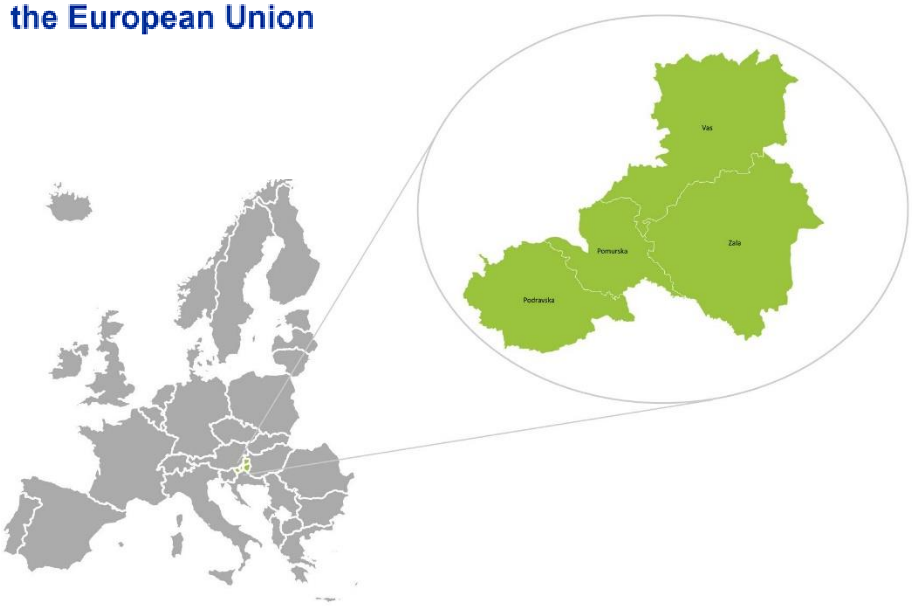

Manual for Beneficiaries

FOR SMALL-SCALE PROJECTS

Interreg Programme Slovenia-Hungary

2021-2027

21/27

Manual for Beneficiaries for small-scale projects of the Interreg programme Slovenia-Hungary for the period 2021-2027, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

Prepared and published by the Programme's Managing Authority and Joint Secretariat in cooperation with the representatives of Slovenia and Hungary (National Authority). The Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat is hosted within the official structure of the Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development.

ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Audit Authority
AB	Audit Body
BWG	Bilateral working group
BAF	Body entrusted with the accounting function
CB	Cross-border
CF	Cohesion Fund
CBC Programme	Cross-border Cooperation Programme
CSF	Common Strategic Framework
CPR	Common Provision Regulation
EC	European Commission
ECP	European Cohesion Policy
EGTC	European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
ETC	European Territorial Cooperation
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
CP	Cooperation Programme
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IP	Info Point of the Interreg Programme Slovenia-Hungary
IP SI-HU	Interreg Programme Slovenia-Hungary
JS	Joint Secretariat
LP	Lead Partner
MA	Managing Authority
MC	Monitoring Committee
MKRR	Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development
NA	National Authority
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
PA	Partnership Agreement
PP	Project Partner
RCO	Regio Common Output
RCR	Regio Common Result
RTD	Research, Technology and Development
SCO	Simplified cost option
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SO	Specific Objective
SSP	Small-scale projects
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis
TA	Technical Assistance
TO	Thematic Objective

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Manual for Small-Scale Projects (Manual for SSPs) is to assist potential applicants in project development and preparation of the application of small-scale projects for funding in the frame of the Interreg Programme Slovenia-Hungary for the period 2021-2027. Furthermore, it provides also the information on selection, implementation and closure of the projects.

The Manual for SSPs provides relevant and useful information on project implementation. It **is a part of the Application Pack** and consists of different thematic chapters.

- Chapter 1: information on the Interreg VI-A Slovenia-Hungary Programme
- Chapter 2: information on project development and partnership requirements
- Chapter 3: submission of the application and assessment process
- Chapter 4: information on eligibility of expenditure
- Chapter 5: information on procedures and requirements for reporting
- Chapter 6: information on communication and visibility
- Chapter 7: information on archiving and closure
- Chapter 8: Interreg VI-A SI-HU key principles
- Chapter 9: Legal framework and programme related documents
- Chapter 10: Support provided by the programme
- Chapter 11: Annex

Applicants should therefore read the entire Manual for SSPs carefully before submitting their application to the programme authorities. The information in this Manual is essential for the preparation of a good project application, as well as for the implementation of already approved projects.

The information provided in this Manual for SSPs will be, if necessary, further developed and updated during the programme implementation. It is project partners' **responsibility** to follow the changes of the Manual for SSPs. The notification will be published on the website and the newsletter will be sent. The programme will also provide beneficiaries with training and exchange opportunities in the form of workshops.

Additional information and documents related to the SSP Open Call for Proposals are available for download on the programme website www.si-hu.eu.

1 ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

1.1 ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

The Interreg VI-A Slovenia-Hungary Programme is funded by the European Regional Development Fund under the European Territorial Cooperation goal of EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027.

Improving coordination and cooperation in the SI-HU border area to reduce border obstacles and unleash the potentials for a resilient and competitive region.

The overall objective of European Territorial Cooperation is to promote cooperation between regions and countries to help their economic and social development and tackle the border obstacle.

The territorial and socio-economic analysis of the programme area (shared by Slovenia and Hungary) has identified several potentials, needs and challenges expressed by the actors in the programme area. These show clearly that important transitions are ahead of us. On the path to a more dynamic and especially more integrated and prosperous space these challenges should be addressed and solved by national/regional/local institutions jointly. Most of the identified challenges concern topics of environment and climate change, sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation, nature protection, as well as governance and coordination. The analysis also identified a common interest in finding arrangements to foster cooperation of actors with small-scale projects primarily focusing on building trust and cooperation among people living in the programme area.

1.1.1 PROGRAMME AREA

The programme area covers 10,658 km^2, which is home for around 980.500 inhabitants. The programme area comprises two Slovenian (Pomurje and Podravje) and two Hungarian (Vas and Zala) NUTS 3 regions.

1.1.2 PROGRAMME PRIORITIES AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The **overall aim of the programme** is to reduce territorial disparities in the cross-border region.

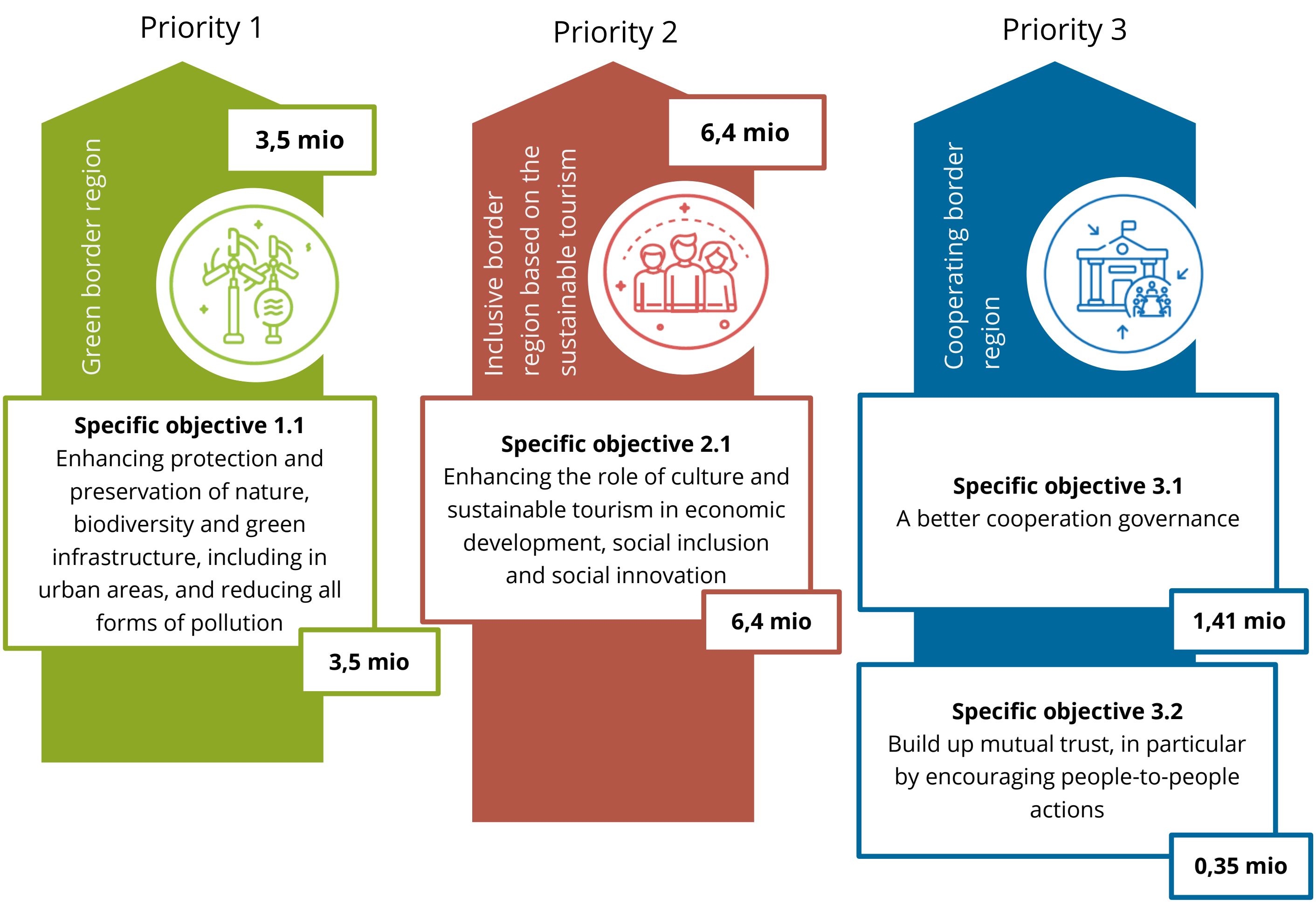
Based on this aim the following **vision of the programme** has been defined:

"Together we contribute to an active and cooperating programme area aware of its environmental, natural and cultural values, through promoting sustainable utilisation, preservation and exploitation for tourism purposes, setting up a well identifiable and attractive green tourism destination."

The programme is organised along three funding priorities that are further broken down into four programme specific objectives (SOs).

Small-scale projects will be supported under Priority 3, Specific Objective 3.2 (Build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions).

Figure 1: Programme priorities and specific objectives



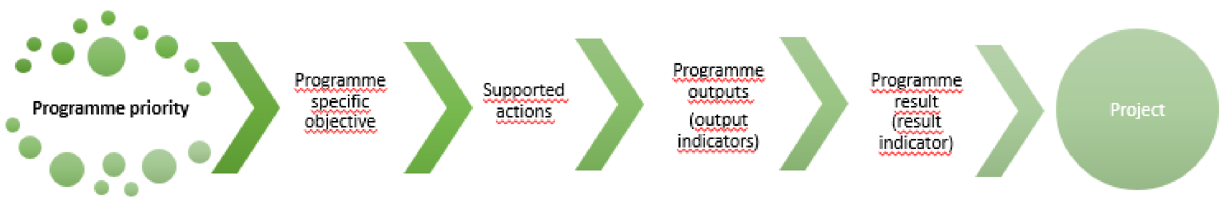
For detailed information on the description of the Priority 3, Specific Objective 3.2 refer to subchapter 2.3.2 of the Interreg Programme Slovenia-Hungary.

By every type of project, also the horizontal principles of the programme such as sustainable development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination and promotion of equality between men and women have to be considered. They will be specifically observed in the selection of projects.

1.1.3 PROGRAMME INTERVENTION LOGIC INCLUDING THE RESULT AND OUTPUT INDICATORS

The intervention logic of the IP SI-HU consists of three priorities and related specific objectives. For each specific objective expected results are defined which reflect changes that the programme seeks to achieve for the entire programme area through the implementation of projects. Results and related changes are measured through result indicators each linked to at least one of the programme specific objectives. The principle behind the intervention logic is that projects should lead to change for the better in the regions involved. It demonstrates how supported actions and developed outputs address the territorial challenges and needs tackled by the programme. Programme outputs and results build on outputs and results achieved by the funded projects. Therefore, there has to be a clear coherence between the programme and the project intervention logic. The IP SI-HU indicators will be monitored on the programme and project level. The intervention logic for each programme specific objective is described in detail in chapter 2 of the IP SI-HU.

Figure 2: Programme intervention logic



The **outputs** are the tangible outcomes (deliverables) of the project which contribute to the results. They are directly deriving from the activities carried out in the project. They do not lead to a qualitative judgment on the project's results.

The **results** are direct and immediate effects resulting from the project and from the production of the outputs. They represent what is intended to be changed by the project. The production of outputs such as organisation of events, are only means to achieve the results of the project. Compared to the outputs, they imply a qualitative value, an improvement compared with an initial situation. They have to be measured in physical units.

Figure 3: Programme specific output and result indicators for small-scale projects[1]

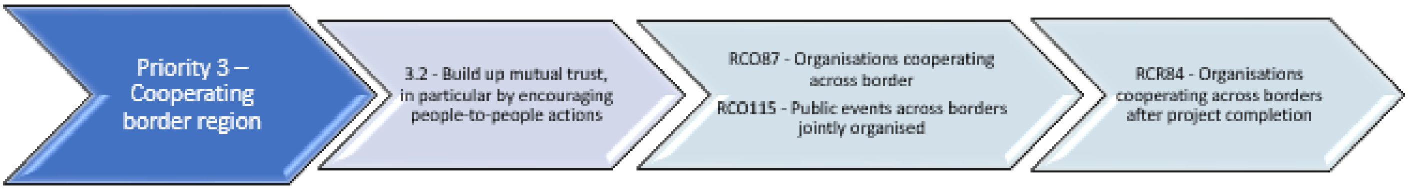


Figure 4: Output and result indicators per priority

	INDICATOR	PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 2	PRIORITY 3	
		PSO1.2 Protection of nature	PSO 2.1 Culture and tourism	PSO 3.1 Institutional cooperation	**PSO 3.2 Cooperation among people**
output	**RCO83** Strategies	✓		✓	
output	**RCO 84** Pilot actions	✓	✓		
output	**RCO 87** Organisations		✓	✓	✓
output	**RCO 115** Public events				✓
output	**RCO 116** Solutions		✓		
result	**RCR 79** Joint Strategies	✓		✓	
result	**RCR 84** Organizations	✓	✓	✓	✓
result	**RCR 104** Solutions		✓		

1.1.4 PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND THEMATIC FIELDS

Small-scale projects are considered an important new tool in the IP SI-HU, they are a new form of cross-border cooperation. With such projects the programme wants to reach certain target groups, allow newcomers to experience a cross-border cooperation project and to make greater use of synergies and complementarities with standard projects more intensely. **Small-scale projects are projects with limited financial volume, shorter duration and involve less partners compared to standard projects.** These characteristics allow the beneficiary to address innovative subjects from a thematic and/or territorial perspective.

Small-scale projects, representing people-to-people activities, are supported under Priority 3 – Specific Objective 3.2 Build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions. The activities of small-scale projects will contribute to the programme output indicators and result indicators specified in this specific objective, in which **joint activities/actions and cooperation initiatives in the form of multi-layered linkages of people and civil society organisations across the border** should be supported.

[1] *The detailed description of indicators is available in the Methodological Paper on Indicators: http://www.si-hu.eu/2127/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2023/03/Indicator-methodology_13.07.2022.pdf.*

Thematic focus
✓ Cross-border cooperation in arts and culture; ✓ Cross-border sport events (tournaments, festivities, camps); ✓ Cultivation of traditions of minorities; ✓ Promotion of trust and intercultural dialogue; ✓ Promotion of cross-border inter-generational solidarity.
Activities to be supported: ✓ Trust building activities in the field of arts and culture, sport, minorities, intercultural dialogue, inter-generational solidarity; ✓ Organisation of various events with involvement of the target groups and the general public.
Projects are expected to:
✓ Generate new links in civil society cooperation in the border region, as well as enhanced individual relationships; ✓ Generate new range of actors involved in a wide variety of events; ✓ Increase level of mutual understanding resulted by positive experience of cooperation; ✓ Contribute to the visibility of the Programme.
Main target groups
Direct target groups: ✓ Civil organisations (NGOs); ✓ Cultural and arts associations; ✓ Minority organisations (including minority self-governments); ✓ Sport associations, clubs; ✓ Youth organisations; ✓ Schools; ✓ Local governments. Wider target group includes the general public of the border area.

1.1.5 TYPES OF SMALL-SCALE PROJECTS

In the IP SI-HU, the following three types of small-scale projects will be supported:

- Type I - cooperation project based on unit costs
- Type II - mutual trust building projects based on lump sum
- Type III - employee exchange projects based on lump sum

Detailed description of all three types of small-scale projects can be found in Appendix 1 to the Interreg Programme Slovenia-Hungary.

1.1.6 FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

A total of EUR **352.726 of ERDF** funding shall be made available for co-financing of small-scale projects in the frame of the current SSP Open Call for Proposals:

Priority	ERDF (EUR)
P3 Cooperating border region (Specific Objective 3.2 - Build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions)	352.726

Only eligible expenditure shall be co-financed by the programme. Co-financing from the ERDF shall amount to a maximum of 80% of the total eligible costs, and at least 20% shall be provided by the Project Partners' own contribution and/or other sources.[2]

The projects eligible for participation in this call shall apply for **up to EUR 25.000 of ERDF** funds.

1.1.7 PROGRAMME LANGUAGE

The official languages of the IP SI-HU are Slovene, Hungarian and English, whereby by discrepancies between different language versions, the English version prevails. The official written communication with the JS or MA in principle is to be carried out bilingually in Slovene and Hungarian. Communication with Project Partners in all three languages is ensured.

The working language of the Programme structures is English.

1.1.8 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The IP SI-HU is a joint programme of the two Member States, Slovenia and Hungary. The governance and management of the programme is shared among various bodies that are in charge of managing, coordinating, supervising and controlling the implementation of the programme.

- Monitoring Committee (MC)

The MC steers the programme, supervises the quality and effectiveness of its implementation and decides on the approval or rejection of the projects for funding. It is composed of representatives of both Member States, Slovenia and Hungary. The list of the Monitoring Committee members is available on the programme website.

- Managing Authority (MA)

The MA bears the overall responsibility of managing and implementing the programme in accordance with the principle of sound financial management and in line with EU regulations ruling the European Regional Development Fund.

- Joint secretariat (JS)

The JS assists the MA and the MC in carrying out their respective functions and undertakes the day-to-day implementation of the programme. It also provides information and guidance to project applicants and partners.

[2] *In accordance with the Hungarian Government Decree 241/2023. (VI.20.) on the implementation of cross-border Interreg programmes in the programming period 2021-2027 Hungarian government degree (41/2023. (VI.20.) for Hungarian partners 45% or 50% of the partner's verified total eligible costs shall be provided as a national contribution. In addition, for them pre-financing will be assured.*

- Info points (IPs)

The IPs are established by the MA and have the same roles as the other JS members which provide information and consultancy service to potential applicants (in the application phase) and ensure programme management tasks related to projects under implementation (in the implementation phase).

- Audit Authority (Second level control)

The Audit Authority is assisted by the Group of Auditors comprising of a representative of both Member States participating in the Interreg programme. The Audit Authority is responsible for carrying out system audits, audits on projects and audits of accounts in order to provide independent assurance to the European Commission that the programme management and control system functions effectively and that expenditure submitted to EC is legal and regular.

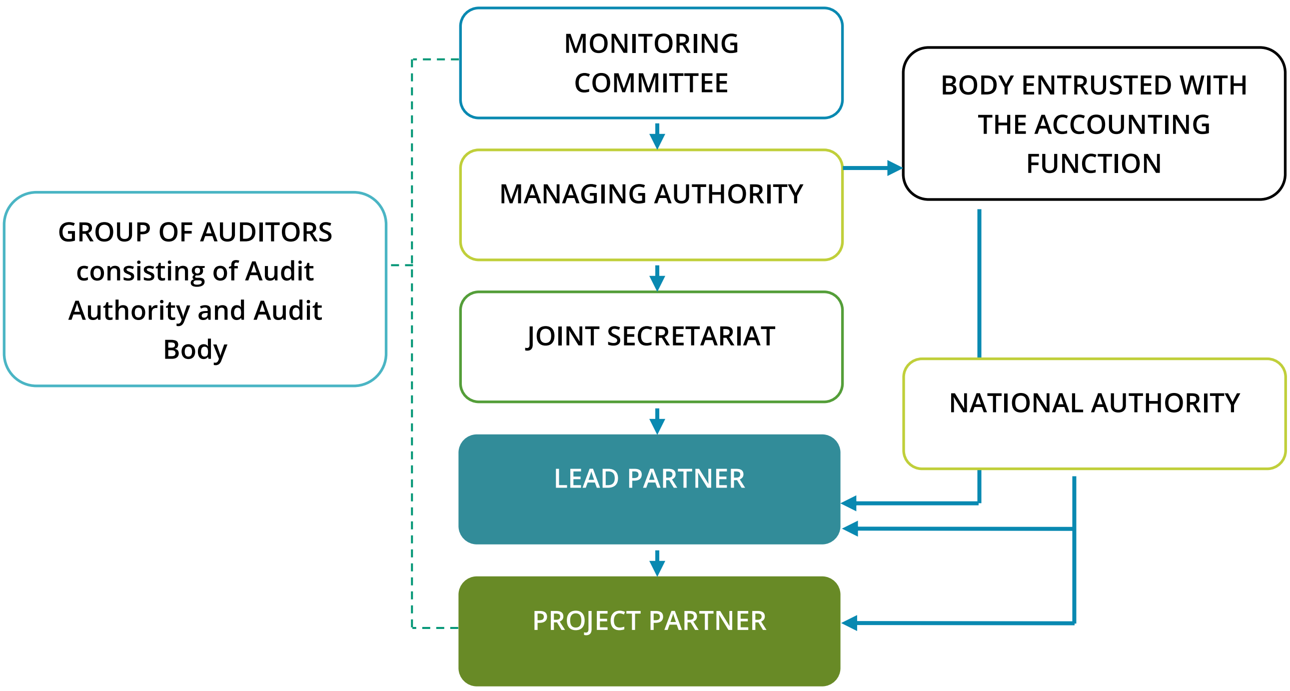
- Body performing the accounting function

The body performing the accounting function submits the payment applications to the Commission and makes payments to the Lead Partners or in exceptional cases to Project Partners *(if applicable).*

- Representatives of Member States

The representatives of the Member States (National Authorities) are providing information to applicants in order to obtain quality projects that will meet the programme objectives and indicators, as well as assisting the MA and JS in organising the support for potential applicants in finding cross border (CB) Project Partners.

Figure 5: Programme management structure



1.1.9 ELECTRONIC MONITORING SYSTEM (JEMS)

The Interreg SI-HU Joint Electronic Monitoring System (Jems) is a customised version of the common monitoring system developed by the Interact Programme, which is used by a large community of Interreg programmes.

Jems is an online system conceived to cover the full project and programme lifecycle in one monitoring tool that allows to reduce the need for additional paper processes to a minimum. Furthermore, the concept of "one single entry point" of data is followed, avoiding multiple manual entry of the same data, through automatic transfer of data to different sections in the system. Users can fill in online forms (e.g. application, reporting) and upload/download files.

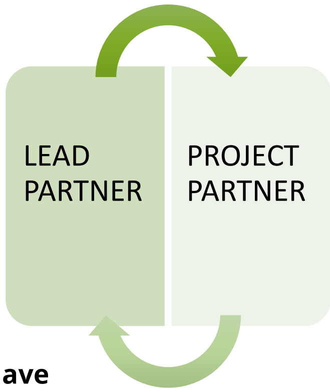
The IP SI-HU Jems is available at https://jems.si-hu.eu. It can be accessed via standard web browsers like Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge or Mozilla Firefox (recent versions). For working in Jems, it is recommended to use a PC or notebook rather than mobile devices. For more information on the Interact Jems initiative, please visit this page: www.interact-eu.net/#o=jems. Upon registration in Jems, users have access to the system as applicant users. Once a project is approved and contracted, the LP user will be assigned to the project, who in turn assigns the partner users to the Project Partners. A helpdesk for technical support specifically dedicated to Jems can be reached via email (si-hu.mkrr@gov.si). In addition, also workshops/trainings on how to use Jems will be organised by the Joint Secretariat.

2 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

2.1 HOW TO PARTICIPATE?

2.1.1 PARTNERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Project partners are organisations that are directly participating in the development and implementation of the IP SI-HU projects and are officially listed in the application form.



The minimum requirement is to have at least **one Project Partner from Slovenia and one from Hungary.** An EGTC registered in one of the participating countries consisting of members from both Member States can be a sole partner implementing a project. **The recommended number of Project Partners is 2.**

Natural person and political parties shall be excluded from participation. All other legal non-profit entities shall be able to participate provided they are not acting as external service providers in the same project and **have financial, administrative and operational capacity to participate in the programme.** All Partners shall be **located within the programme area.**

2.1.2 LEAD PARTNER PRINCIPLE AND REQUIREMENTS

The partners appoint a Lead Partner for each project among themselves. When applying for the co-financing the **Lead Partner** assumes the following responsibilities:

- ✓ It shall lay down the arrangements for its relations with the Project Partner/s participating in the project in an agreement comprising, inter alia, provisions guaranteeing the sound financial management of the funds allocated to the project, including the arrangements for recovering amounts unduly paid;
- ✓ It shall be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the entire project;
- ✓ It shall ensure that the activities presented by the Project Partners participating in the project were implemented as agreed between those partners;
- ✓ It shall be responsible for transferring the ERDF contribution to the Project Partner/s participating in the project.

Beside these responsibilities, the Lead Partner is also responsible for:

- ✓ Collecting the information from the Project Partners, cross-checking the verified activities with the progress of the project and submitting the reports to the JS;
- ✓ Signing the ERDF Subsidy Contract;
- ✓ Harmonizing eventual prolongation requests with the JS and other Project Partners.

Responsibilities of the Lead Partner are laid down in detail in the ERDF Subsidy Contract signed with the Programme Managing Authority. In turn, the Lead Partner concludes the partnership agreement with Project Partner/s. Templates of the ERDF Subsidy Contract and the Partnership Agreement are available on the programme website www.si-hu.eu.

2.1.3 SETTING UP A RELEVANT PROJECT PARTNERSHIP

The quality of a project depends largely on the composition of its partnership.

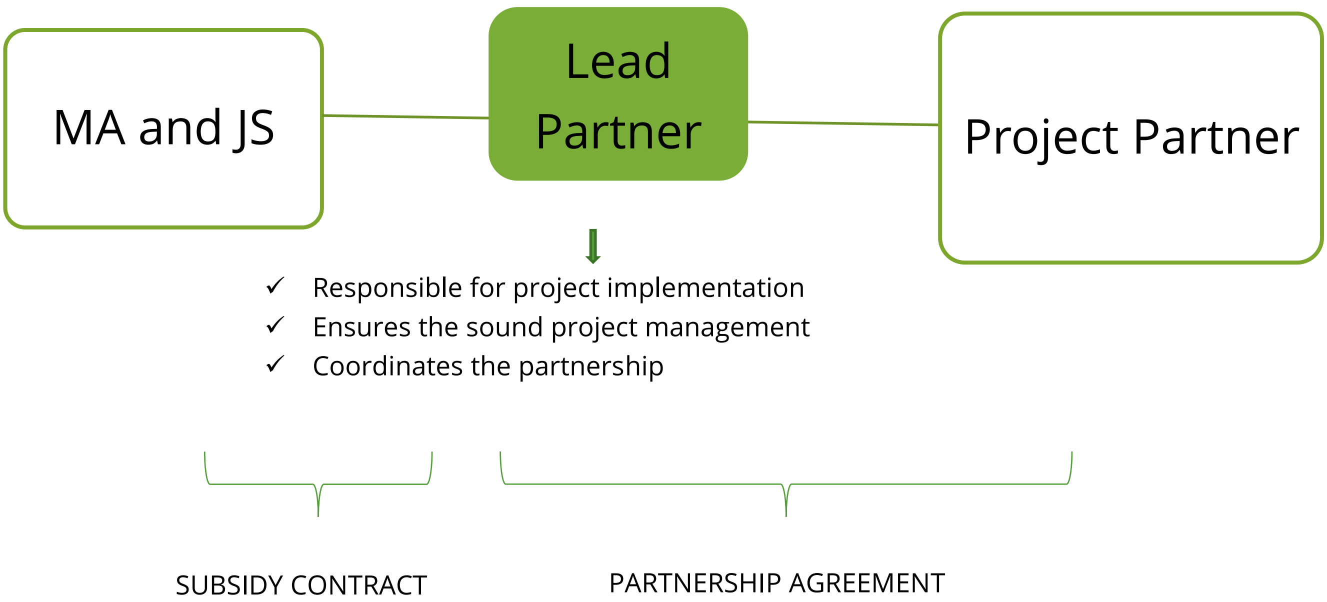
When building a partnership, the following general aspects should be taken into account:

- ✓ Involve as Project Partner/s only institutions whose **interests are closely linked to the project objectives** and planned interventions. It/They should also have the capacity to create strong links to target groups addressed by the project.
- ✓ The **partnership is recommended to have 2 partners, one of them is a lead partner.** Having a broad partnership should not be the goal when preparing a small-scale project.
- ✓ Ensure the **commitment of partner from the very beginning.**
- ✓ All Partners shall be located within the programme area.

> The Lead Partner takes over the role of the "engine" of the partnership, coordinating the work of the partners and being also the link between the project and the programme (MA and JS).

The following figure illustrates the relations between the Programme, Lead Partner and the Project Partners.

Figure 6: Project management structure



2.1.4 PROJECT SIZE AND PROJECT DURATION

The maximum project budget for small-scale projects is **up to 25.000 EUR ERDF.**

The duration of small-scale projects is limited up to 12 months.

Scope	Small-scale projects for the implementation of SO 3.2 within the Priority 3
Applicability	Projects related to SO 3.2
Duration	Up to 12 months
Budget	Up to 25.000 EUR ERDF
Partnership	As a recommendation 2 project partners

Expenditure shall be considered eligible at the earliest from the date of the approval of the project from Monitoring Committee of the IP SI-HU.

The project's end date shall be the date defined in the ERDF Subsidy Contract but shall not be later than 31 December 2028.

2.1.5 CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION CRITERIA

The cooperation has to be at the heart of each project. All Project Partners must work together actively for producing the project outputs and results and achieving their planned use. Project Partners shall cooperate in the project development and project implementation. In addition, they shall cooperate in the financing or the staffing.

At least three of the following cross-border criteria must be fulfilled to have the project eligible for funding.

- ✓ **Joint development (compulsory)** – i.e., partners have to be involved in an integrated way in developing ideas, priorities and actions in the project development process.
- ✓ **Joint implementation (compulsory)** – i.e., project activities must be carried out by partners in a cooperative way that ensures clear content-based links and be coordinated by the Lead Partner.
- ✓ **Joint financing**– i.e., the joint project budget shall be organised in line with activities carried out by each Project Partner. The Lead Partner is responsible for the administration and reporting towards the programme bodies as well as the distribution of the funds to the partners.
- ✓ **Joint staffing** – i.e., the project should not duplicate functions within the partnership. Staff members coordinate their activities with others involved in the activities and exchange information regularly.

2.1.6 STATE AID AND *DE MINIMIS* AID

2.1.6.1 General about State aid and *De minimis* aid

Public support granted by the IP SI-HU must comply with State aid rules. State aid is **defined** as any aid granted by a Member State or through state resources in any form whatsoever which distorts or threatens to distort competition by favo ring certain undertakings or the production of certain goods insofar as it affects trade between Member States, which is incompatible with the internal market[3].

The support applies not only to EU funds but also to all public grants (including national, regional and local levels).

The following five criteria define whether the support received is State aid or not. The State aid rules apply only to measures that satisfy all of the criteria listed in Article 107(1) of the TFEU[4]:

Undertaking: The recipient of the aid is an "undertaking", which is carrying out an economic activity in the context of the project.

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[3] *Article 107(1) of TFEU (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union).*

[4] *Official Journal 115, 9.5.2008, P.: 91-92.*

Transfer of state resources: The aid comes from the State or through State resources, which is always the case for any Interreg programme.

Economic advantage: The aid gives an economic advantage (a benefit), which an undertaking would not have obtained under normal market conditions.

Selectivity: Aid favors certain undertakings or the production of certain goods.

Effect on competition and trade: Aid affects trade between Member States because concerned activities are open to competition in various Member States. Such aid (directly or indirectly) distorts or threatens to distort competition and trade within the European Union.

It is important to mention that the concept of an undertaking covers any entity engaged in an economic activity, regardless of its legal status and the way in which it is financed. Therefore, the nature of activities of the undertaking in question is relevant to define if State aid rules will be applied.

Economic activity is broadly defined as offering goods or services on a given market. The key question is whether, in principle, an undertaking could carry out the activity in order to make profit.

2.1.6.2 State aid/*de minimis* aid measures

When activities are considered as State aid relevant, direct or indirect State aid will be granted. The direct state aid concerns Project Partners directly involved in the project. Indirect state aid concerns third parties involved in the project.

Direct aid will be preferably granted:

- under the General Block Exemptions regulation (GBER)[5]. The programme will open schemes under Article 20 (direct state aid) and 20a (indirect state aid). The maximum aid intensity granted under GBER Article 20 is 80%, which is also the maximal co-financing rate of the programme. The maximum amount under GBER article 20a is 22.000 EUR per third party involved in the project. This indirect aid (e.g. free of charge services, consultancy to companies) is to be determined by the concerned Project Partners prior to the implementation of project activities. The Project Partner is obliged to make sure that the upper ceiling is not exceeded during the implementation of the project activities under the *de minimis*[6] regulation. In this case the entire budget of the concerned project partner will be regarded as State aid granted.

The usage of following State Aid schemes is planned for the IP SI-HU 2021-2027: GBER Articles 20 and 20a and *de minimis*.

Aid can not be granted to:

- with the exception of de minimis aid - undertakings in difficulty;

[5] *Commission Regulation (EU) 651/2014 of 17 June declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty Text with EEA relevance with all amendments.*

6 *Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/2831 of 13 December 2023 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid Text with EEA relevance with all amendments.*

- undertakings active in the primary production of fishery and aquaculture products;
- undertakings active in the sector of processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products, where the amount of the aid is fixed on the basis of price or quantity of products purchased or put on the market;
- undertakings active in the primary production of agricultural products;
- undertakings active in the sector of processing and marketing of agricultural products, in the following cases:
  - o where the amount of the aid is fixed on the basis of the price or quantity of such products purchased from primary producers or put on the market by the undertakings concerned;
  - o where the aid is conditional on being partly or entirely passed on to primary producers;
- export-related activities towards third countries or Member States, namely aid directly linked to the quantities exported, to the establishment and operation of a distribution network or to other current expenditure linked to the export activity;
- activities where aid is contingent upon the use of domestic over imported goods;
- activities that result in a breach of EU law;
- with the exception of de minimis aid - facilitate the closure of uncompetitive coal mines, as covered by Council Decision 2010/787/EU
- with the exception of de minimis aid - production of nuclear energy.

Cumulation:

1) In the case of identical or partly identical identifiable eligible costs, aid may be cumulated with other State aid from local, regional, national or Union sources, provided that it does not lead to the maximum aid intensity laid down in the block exemption regulations or in the Commission's approval decision being exceeded.
2) Aid may be cumulated with other State aid from local, regional, national or Union sources for different identifiable eligible costs.

3) The aid intensity of all aid received for a project, whether financed from Union, national, regional or local sources, shall not exceed the aid intensity or aid amount laid down in the applicable Union State aid rules.

4) Limited amounts of aid to undertakings for participation in European Territorial Cooperation projects and de minimis aid that does not have identifiable eligible costs may be cumulated with any other State aid that has identifiable eligible costs. Aid with no identifiable eligible costs may be cumulated with any other State aid with no identifiable eligible costs up to the maximum overall funding ceiling laid down in the block exemption regulations and in the Commission's approval decision.

Aid intensity:

In calculating the aid intensity all figures used shall be taken into account before deduction of taxes and duties. The aid paid in several instalments is discounted to the value at the date of the decision to grant aid, using the discount rate.
The beneficiary shall keep all documents and records relating to the aid for a period of 10 years from the date of the decision to grant the aid.
The aid measures in this Program only be granted in a transparent form, as direct grant.

The grantor must provide information on each individual aid award exceeding EUR 100 000 or for beneficiaries active in primary agricultural production or in the fishery and aquaculture sector on each individual aid award exceeding EUR 10 000.

Aid for costs incurred by undertakings participating in European Territorial Cooperation project
1. In case of Aid for costs incurred by undertakings participating in European Territorial Cooperation projects covered by Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 the aid intensity shall not exceed the maximum co-financing rate provided for in Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 Art. 13 (1).
To the extent that they are linked to the cooperation project, the following costs, which shall have the meaning ascribed to them in Regulation (EU) 2021/1059, shall be eligible costs:

a. staff costs;
b. office and administrative costs;
c. travel and accommodation costs;
d. external expertise and services costs;
e. equipment costs;
f. costs for infrastructure and works.

2. Aid for costs incurred by undertakings participating in European Territorial Cooperation project cannot exceed EUR 2,2 million per undertaking, per project.

Limited amounts of aid to undertakings for participation in European Territorial Cooperation projects
In case of Aid to undertakings for their participation in European Territorial Cooperation projects covered by Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 the total amount of aid granted to an undertaking per project shall not exceed EUR 22 000.

De minimis aid
1) The gross grant equivalent[7] of any de minimis aid granted on the basis of the Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/2831 (hereinafter: De Minimis Regulation) to any single undertaking[8] shall not exceed EUR 300 000 over any period of three years per Member State taking into account Article 3 paragraph 8 and 9 of the De Minimis Regulation, which contain additional provisions for mergers, acquisitions and undertakings splitting into two or more separate undertakings.
2) Aid shall not be granted to undertakings active in the sectors listed in Article 1 paragraph 1 of the De Minimis Regulation, taking into account Article 1 paragraph 2, which contains additional provisions for undertakings active in sectors falling within the scope of the De Minimis Regulation and sectors excluded from the scope of the De Minimis Regulation as well.

3) De minimis aid may be cumulated with de minimis aid granted on the basis of other de minimis Regulations up to EUR 300,000 with the exception of aid granted on the basis of Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/2832.

7 The gross grant equivalent can be calculated on the basis of Article 4 of the Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/2831.
8 Undertakings within the meaning of Article 2 Section 2 of the general de minimis regulation are considered to be one and the same undertaking.

4) De minimis aid may be cumulated with State aid in relation to the same eligible costs or with State aid for the same risk finance measure, if such cumulation would not exceed the highest relevant aid intensity or aid amount defined in a block exemption regulation or a decision adopted by the European Commission.
5) The beneficiary must submit a declaration in accordance with Article 7 paragraph 4 of the De Minimis Regulation about any other de minimis aid received to which the De Minimis Regulation or any other de minimis Regulations apply over any period of 3 years.
6) With a direct reference to the De Minimis Regulation the aid grantor shall inform the beneficiary by issuing a certificate stating the amount of the aid expressed in gross grant equivalent and its de minimis character, in accordance with Article 7 paragraph 4 of the De Minimis Regulation.
7) Aid payable in several instalments shall be discounted to its value at the moment it is granted. The interest rate to be used for discounting purposes shall be the discount rate applicable at the time the aid is granted.
8) The records regarding information on de minimis aid must be kept for 10 years from the date on which the aid was granted. On request by the European Commission information shall be provided within 20 working days on aid granted under the De Minimis Regulation.

Besides EU and programme rules, the national rules have to be respected.

2.1.7 PROJECT MODIFICATION

During the project implementation, partners might face the need to modify their initial plans in order to adapt it to the actual needs, complete the project successfully and achieve the set objectives.

In the SSP Open Call for Proposals only the change of the project duration is possible.

> The LPs should always inform the Joint Secretariat as soon as they become aware that a change of the project might be needed. In any case the change must not affect the achievement of the result indicator.
>
> The project modifications can be approved only if the project is still reaching the main project and programme indicators.

In case of corrections of administrative elements (e.g. change of contact data, bank account, legal representatives, type of employment, the name of the PPs institution) the LP shall **inform the JS as soon as possible in written form**. The JS will then analyse the LP request and, if applicable, open the respective section in the Jems. The Lead Partner will then be able to update the information in the Jems.

2.1.7.1 The process for requesting change in the project duration

Once the project partnership agrees on the project modification, the Lead Partner should inform the JS about the upcoming project modifications.

The Lead Partner needs to fill in a modification request and submit it through the Jems. The requested project change needs to be clearly described and justified, including also the cause and effects of the proposed project modifications. The technical support through the project modification process will be provided by the JS.

Once the project modification is submitted by the Lead Partner, the JS screens the provided request and performs the decision procedures.

If the outcome of the proceedings is positive, the JS grants to the Lead Partner the possibility to revise the Application Form in the Jems. The JS examines the revisions done in the Application Form.

Based on the final submission of the revised Application Form in the Jems, the JS informs in written form the Lead Partner on the final decision on the requested project change.

Obligations deriving from the ERDF Subsidy Contract and the Partnership Agreement in terms of audits, retention of supporting documents and durability of outputs remain applicable after any type of the project modification.

2.1.8 AUDIT TRAIL

An audit trail is to be understood as a chronological set of accounting records that provide documentary evidence of the sequence of steps undertaken by the Project Partners and programme bodies for implementing an approved project. At the level of each PP, an adequate audit trail is composed at least of the following elements:

- ✓ The ERDF subsidy contract (and its amendments), only valid for LPs;
- ✓ The partnership agreement (and its amendments);
- ✓ The latest version of the approved application form in Jems;
- ✓ Adequate evidence and documentation of all outputs produced during the project lifetime;
- ✓ Reports submitted in Jems to the JS with the purpose of validating projects implemented activities;
- ✓ Documents issued by the JS validating implemented activities within the project.

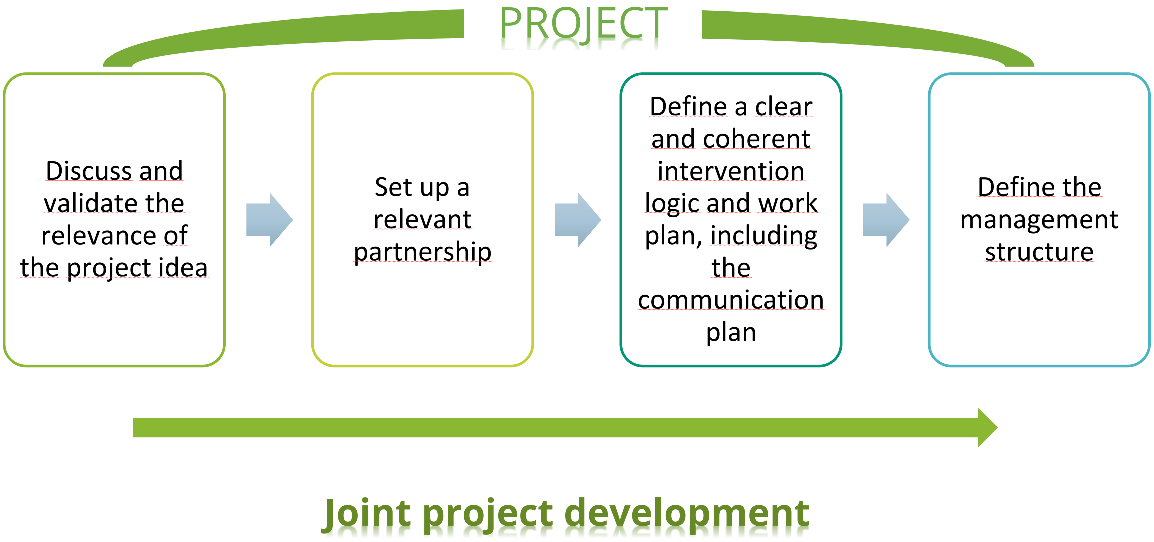
One important element to be taken into account when setting up the audit trail is the need to avoid double funding from different co-financing sources for the same implemented activity.

2.2 HOW TO DEVELOP A GOOD PROJECT?

In contrast to standard projects, small-scale projects have a shorter application form, smaller budget and partner size, and shorter project lifetime.

The preparation of a project application is a challenging process, especially in the cooperation context. It is therefore recommended to follow the structure of the Application Form in order to see which information is expected and not to miss out on any relevant topics. This chapter aims at helping you in preparing your Application Form. There are practical hints for advancing from the initial project idea to a successful application. The subsequent chapters guide you through the workflow from the project idea to the application ready for submission (as illustrated in figure 7).

Figure 7 – Project development: from a project idea to the application



The small-scale projects are required to contribute directly to the objective of the programme and apply the relevant indicators.

When establishing the intervention logic for a small-scale project the long-term effect of the cooperation and trust building should be considered and pointed out.

Project partners are encouraged to use/capitalise results of already implemented projects[9]**,** especially those supported by INTERREG (Cross-border Cooperation, transnational and interregional) in which partners were involved.

Each project needs to clearly indicate **why** it is needed, **what** cross-border common issues or challenges it will address and what change (project result) will result out of the project activities. These envisaged results have to reflect in the desired change and need to be translated into specific project objective.

After the intervention logic is set in place (starting from the initial situation and ending with the envisaged change), preconditions, activities and outputs necessary to reach the objectives and results need to be defined.

The project intervention logic must be coherent with the targeted specific objective of the IP SI-HU.

2.2.1 SETTING UP RELEVANT PROJECT COMMUNICATION

Communication plays an important role in the project implementation and requires careful planning. The communication activities raise awareness and provide information on thematic activities or help to change the attitude of relevant stakeholders towards the improvements aimed for by the project.

[9] *For that purpose, project partners can in particular use output libraries developed by some Interreg programs and the EU database www.keep.eu.*

Already in their application form, projects have to lay down what they aim for with communication activities and through which activities the partnership wants to achieve these targets. There is no dedicated communication work package in the application form, therefore communication activities have to be integrated throughout the project work plan.

Communication objectives for projects need to be linked to:

- ✓ spreading knowledge
- ✓ raising awareness
- ✓ changing attitude
- ✓ changing behaviour or mind-set

Communications must be understood as a strategic project tool, which contributes to achieving the project objectives. It cannot simply be an 'add-on' at the end of the project.

More information on communication requirements concerning the information and communication rules is provided in chapter 6 of this Manual.

2.2.2 DESIGNING A PROJECT BUDGET

The budget of the project must be drafted using the simplified cost options (SCOs). Accordingly, the project budget shall reflect the work plan, i.e., activities, and outputs planned by each Project Partner in order to achieve the intended results.

When designing the project budget, it is important to plan at the level of each partner.

Concerning the allocation of budget to reporting periods, the following element is to be taken into consideration:

- ✓ The reporting period runs as a general rule on year basis and can be adjusted in the contracting phase.
- ✓ The budget shall be planned realistically and not inflated.

3 APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT

3.1 APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Submission of applications runs on an "open" basis, which means that applications can be submitted continuously after the SSP Open Call is launched as long as funds are available. Nevertheless, the dates for submission of the applications to be discussed at the upcoming Monitoring Committee meeting are published on the website www.si-hu.eu. In general, applications are submitted to the Joint Secretariat via Joint Electronic Monitoring System (Jems) at the latest by noon of the set deadline. Applications submitted by the set deadline are assessed and, if eligible, proposed to the Monitoring Committee for decision. The deadline for submission of projects is published on the Programme webpage, and the upcoming Jems submission deadline is configured accordingly.

The applications submitted after the set deadline are not rejected; they stay in Jems waiting for the next assessment round (considered to be submitted by the next deadline).

We recommend that you make use of individual consultations offered by the Joint Secretariat and National Authorities before the submission of the Application.

3.1.1 APPLICATION PACK

The Application Pack for the SSP Open Call for Proposals can be downloaded from the programme website (www.si-hu.eu) and consists of the following documents:

- SSP Open Call for Proposals
- Manual for Beneficiaries for small-scale projects
- Sample of the Partnership Agreement
- Sample of the Subsidy Contract
- Interreg Programme Slovenia-Hungary approved by the European Commission as of 14 November 2022.

The application **must be submitted by the Lead Partner solely online through Jems**. The submitted project application must contain all the required data and the required supporting documents which are considered as annexes to the Application Form and have to be uploaded as scanned documents (signed by the legal representative of the Lead or Project Partner's organisation) in Jems.

The project application must be bilingual, written in both **the Slovene and Hungarian language**, except for **the project summary which must be written in Slovene, Hungarian and English language**. In case of discrepancies, the language of the Lead Partner prevails. The applicants should ensure quality in translation to avoid receiving lower scores in quality assessment due to insufficient, incomprehensible or unclear information in individual fields of the application. Potential translation-related shortcomings for the approved projects are dealt with in the frame of the clarifications before signing the ERDF Subsidy Contract (face-to-face meetings).

3.1.2 ONLINE SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATION

This part of the Manual contains key technical information on the use of the monitoring system Jems for the Interreg Programme Slovenia-Hungary.

The applicants are requested to complete and submit their Application Form via Jems. It is therefore highly recommended to read this chapter carefully before starting to use Jems.

When filling in the Application Form, the applicants should:

- focus on answering the questions precisely,
- write clearly and simply,
- respect the maximum length of text, when so requested,
- provide answers to all of the questions, unless the question is marked NOT RELEVANT for small-scale projects.

- **Technical information and system requirements**

Jems is a web application which can be accessed using the recent versions of most common browsers (e.g. Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Microsoft Edge). The functionality of the system follows the common standards of web applications for data entry and submission.

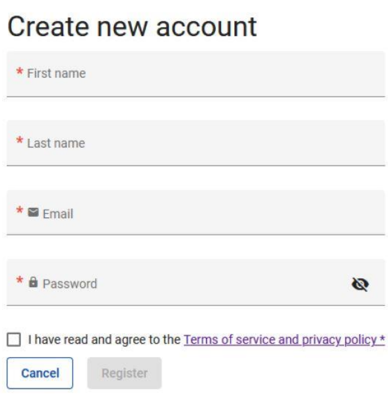
- **Access and registration**

Jems can be accessed at the following link: https://jems.si-hu.eu.

To use Jems, each applicant must first register by clicking on "Create a new account" on the homepage and provide a set of credentials.

In the registration form, enter the following information (all fields marked with * are mandatory):

- **First name / Last name**: personal information of the applicant's contact person.
- **E-mail**: the e-mail address of the applicant – it will be used to log in and notifications will be sent to it.
- **Password**: password which will be used to access Jems.



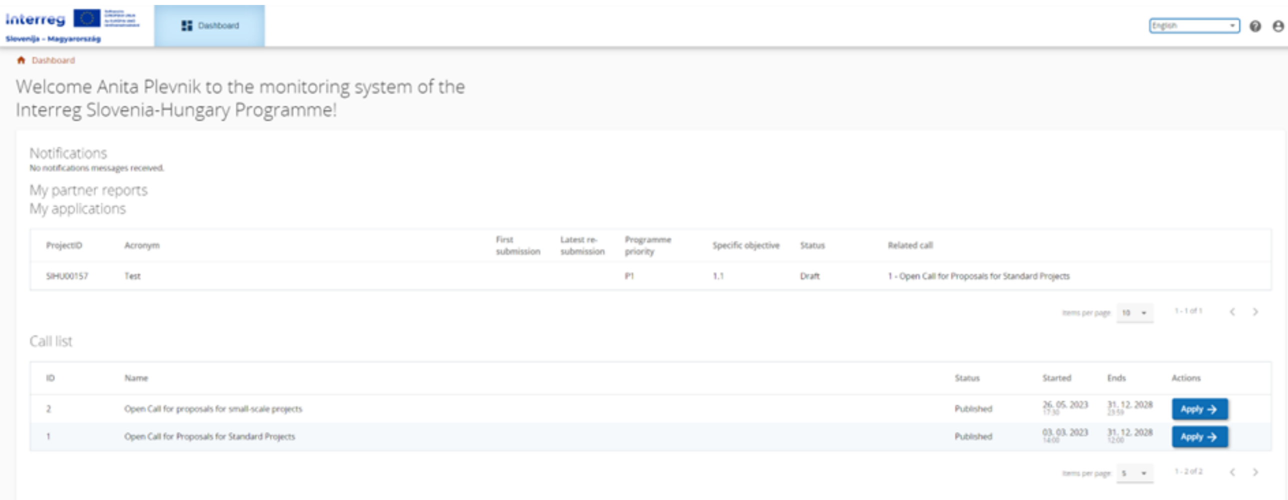
The minimum length of the password is 10 characters. It should contain at least one upper case letter, one lower case letter and one digit.

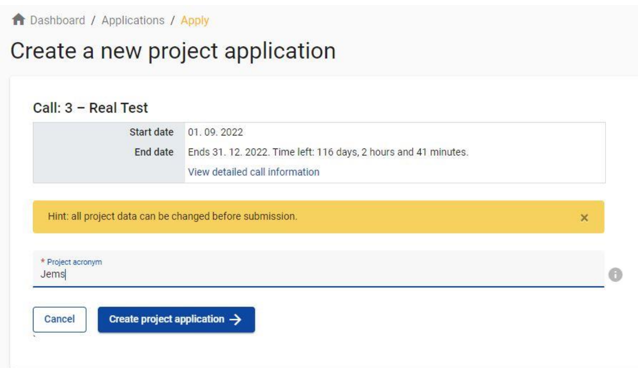
The "Register" button turns active only once all mandatory information are entered (including ticking the checkbox "I have read and agree to the Terms of service and privacy policy"). Following the registration, a confirmation e-mail is automatically sent to the e-mail address provided in the "Create new account" form. Only after confirmation, the applicant will be able to log into the system and create an Application Form. In case you do not receive an e-mail confirmation, please check your spam folder and, if needed, get in touch with the programme Helpdesk for assistance. Contacts are available on the Programme website www.si-hu.eu in the section "About us".

In case you forgot your password, contact the Programme Helpdesk by stating the e-mail address used during the registration.

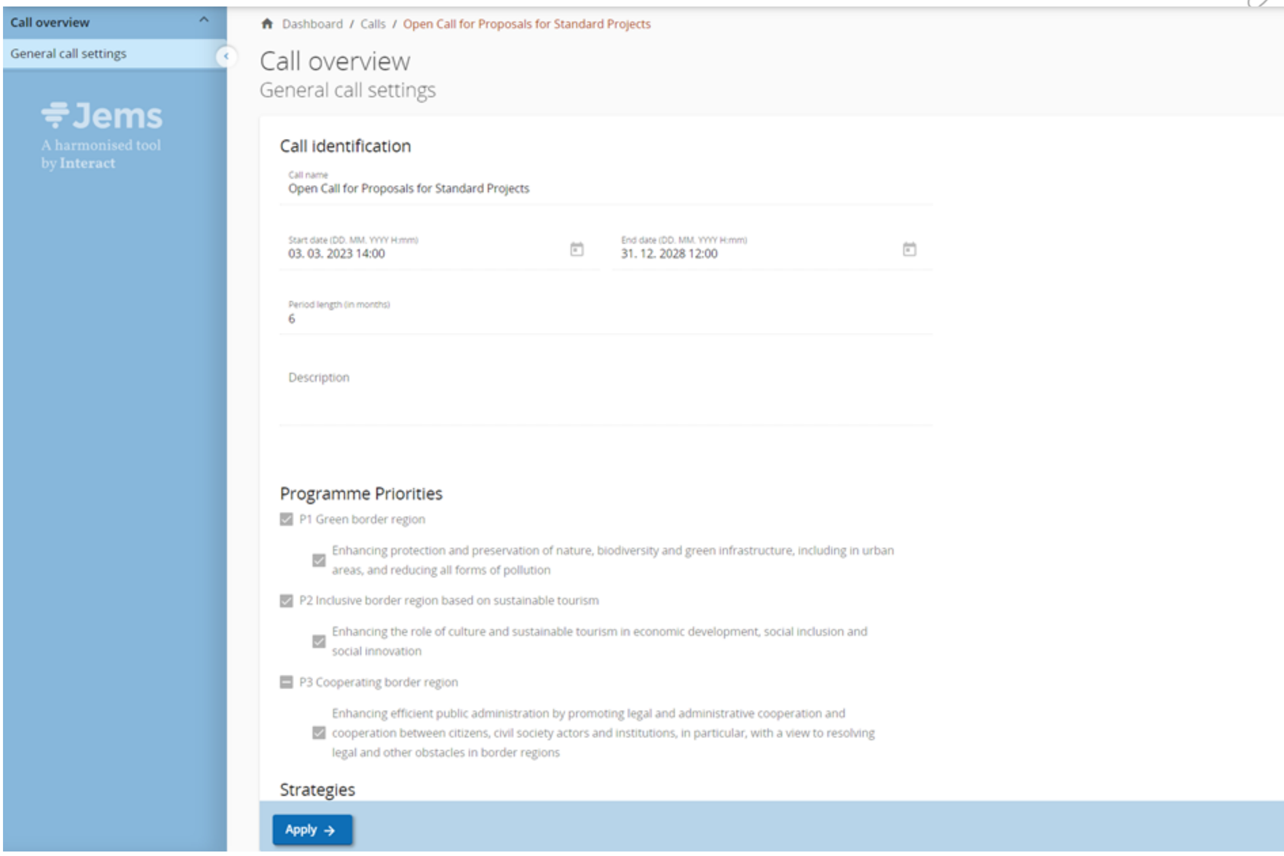
- **Applying for a Call**

To create your Application Form, click on "Apply" at the SSP Open Call for proposals for small-scale projects under the section "Call list" of your dashboard. At this point, enter the acronym of your project (which can always be modified afterwards) and click "Create project application".

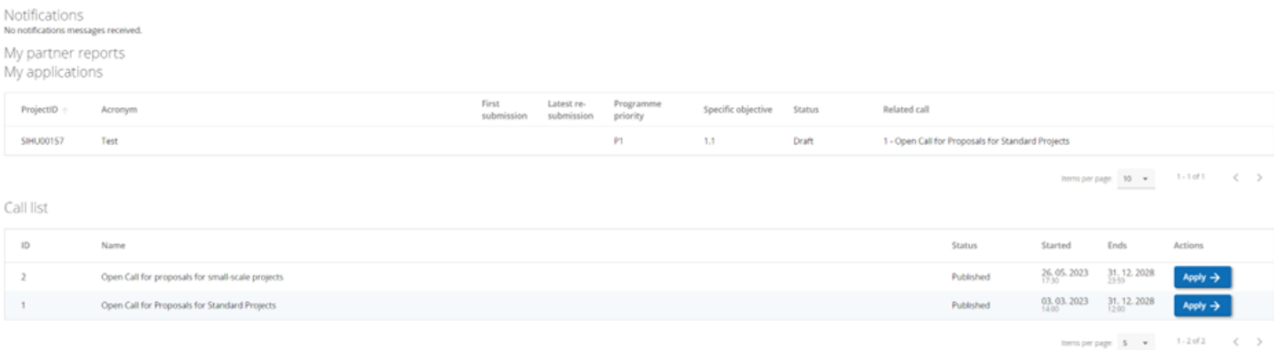




Alternatively, it is possible to click on the call row itself under the same section "Calls" and view the general call information through a read-only window. The "Apply" button will appear at the bottom of this page.



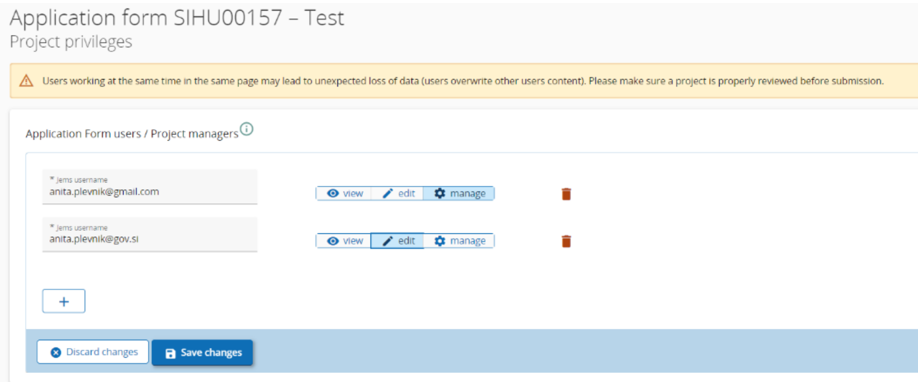
The newly created project application will be automatically listed under the section "My applications". The project ID is an automatically generated number given by the system – this number is unique and allows the programme to easily recognise a project.

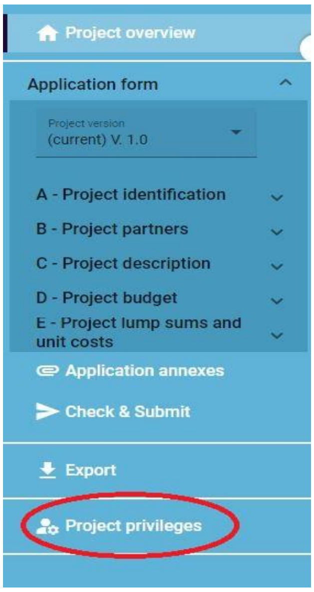


All applications created by the user are listed at this level – the user can select a project and open it by clicking on the name.

- **User management**

The Lead Partner can grant access rights to an open Application Form to Project Partners. They first have to register in the Jems and then provide the Lead Partner their e-mail address. The Lead Partner can then enable new users in the "Project privileges" section by entering a full valid e-mail address.





User can be granted either:

- Read-only rights ("view") – a user can access all the Application Form sections without being able to make any changes
- Edit rights ("edit") – a user can modify/fill in all the Application Form sections
- Lead applicant rights ("manage") – a user has both edit rights, but also access to the management of the "Project privileges" section.

Please note that only users with the "edit" and "manage" privileges can submit the application proposal. Therefore, we strongly recommend to identify and designate the user responsible for the submission of the Application Form beforehand (it should be the contact person of the Lead Partner institution).

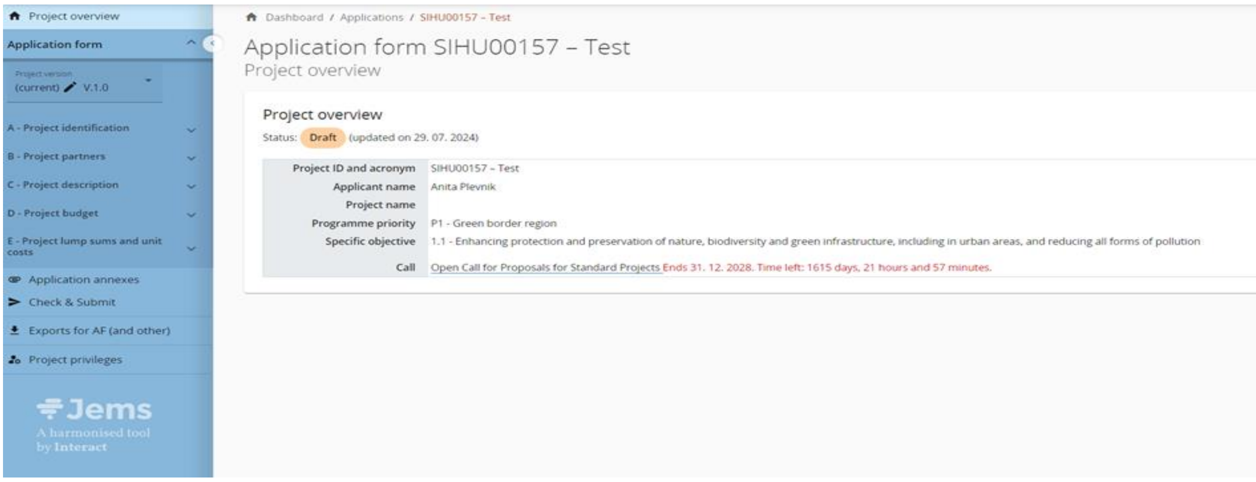
Special attention will be given to the risk of data overwriting.

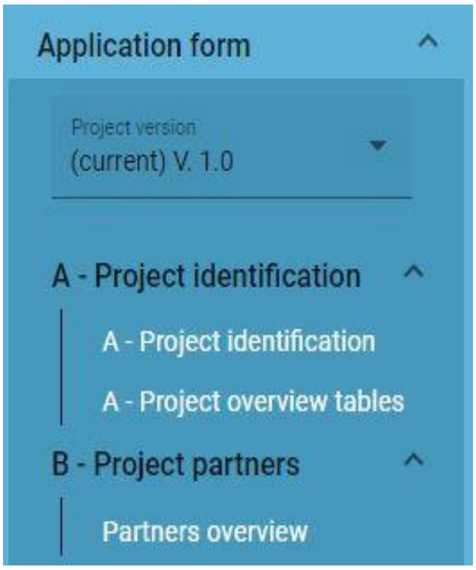
To a certain extent, it is possible for different users to work simultaneously (at the same time) on the same Application Form. When this happens though, users have to make sure that they are not working simultaneously in the same section or sub-section as they may risk overwriting the data.

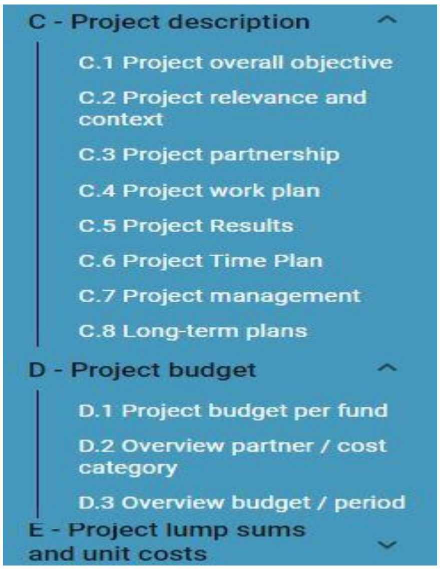
Users can be assigned to an unlimited number of application proposals with different user privileges.

- **Filling in the Application Form**

The “project overview” page offers general information on the project proposal, its application status and the ongoing call. Every application has a version number. Upon creation the project version number is set to “V.1.0” by default; the latter remains unchanged until the submission of your proposal. The same logic applies to the status “Draft”, which changes to “Submitted” right after the submission.

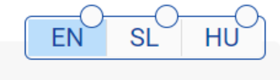






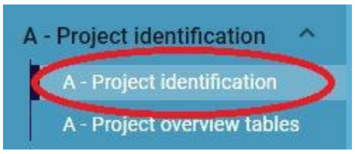
Applicants are invited to fill in the relevant section and sub-sections listed in the left menu which correspond to the Application Form template.

The Application Form must be filled in in Slovene and Hungarian language, except for the project summary which must be written in Slovene, Hungarian and English language by clicking on the language code:

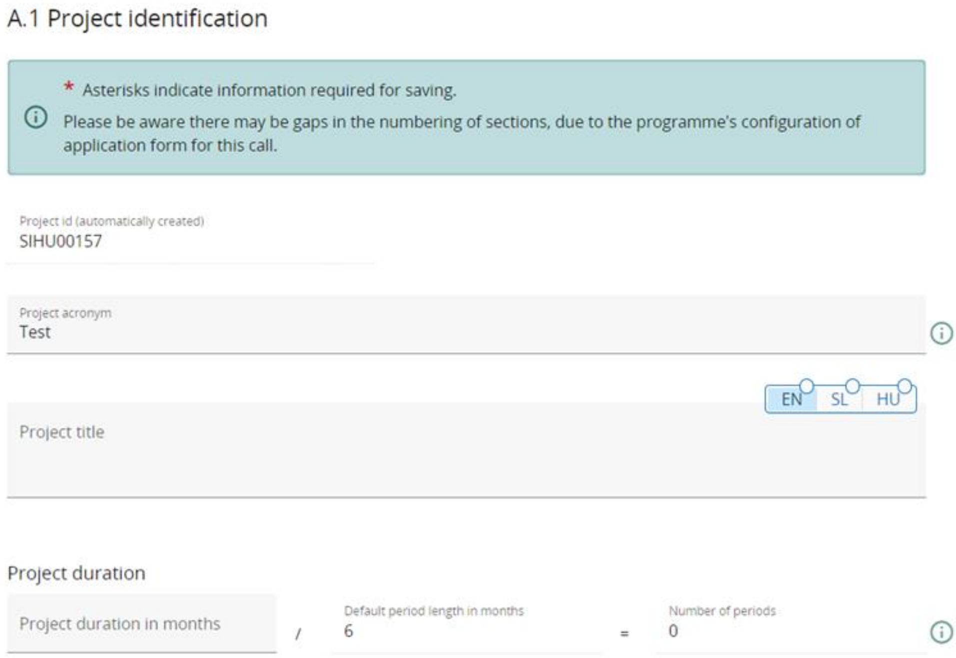


The white circle indicates the language version of a particular field that is not yet filled in.

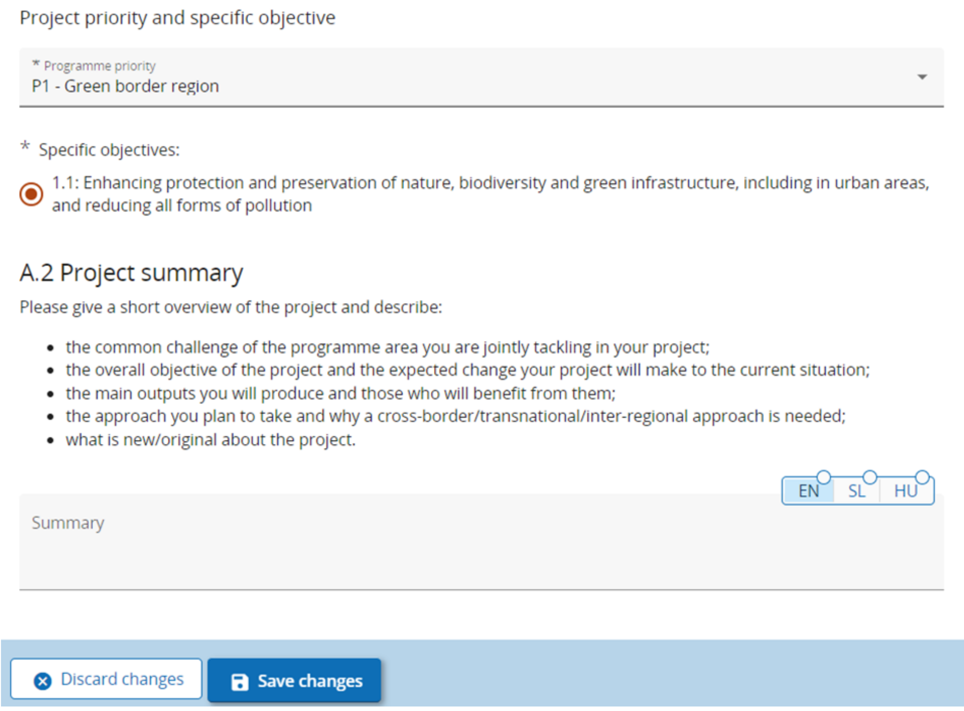
PART A – Project identification



By clicking on "A - Project identification" the following screen will appear. The user will enter information for project identification purposes, such as the project title, acronym, project duration, the relevant programme priority, specific objective and the project summary:

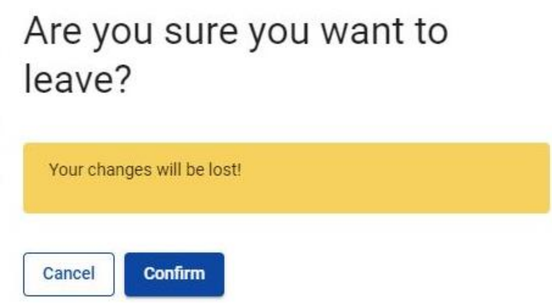


The "Project acronym" and "Project title" should be short and straightforward since, if selected for co-funding, this will be the official name of the project during its duration. For the project duration, enter the relevant number of months (automatically there will be only one period in the project, as the default period length in months is set to max. 12).



Select the "Programme priority" from the drop-down menu. After the "Programme priority" is selected, the relevant "Specific objective" will appear. It is mandatory to select this specific objective.

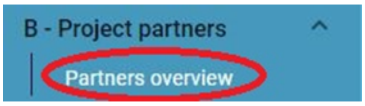
In the field **"Project summary"** provide a short overview of the project (in Slovene, Hungarian and **also in English language**) by following the instructions. The "Save changes" button turns active only once all mandatory fields in the section are filled in. Jems warns or asks users for confirmation before they leave any section of the Application Form. Always remember to save the data before leaving a section or sub-section in the Application Form, otherwise changes will be discarded.

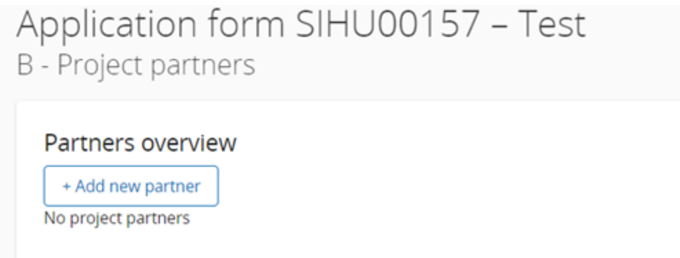


The Project overview tables will be generated automatically by filling in the whole Application Form.

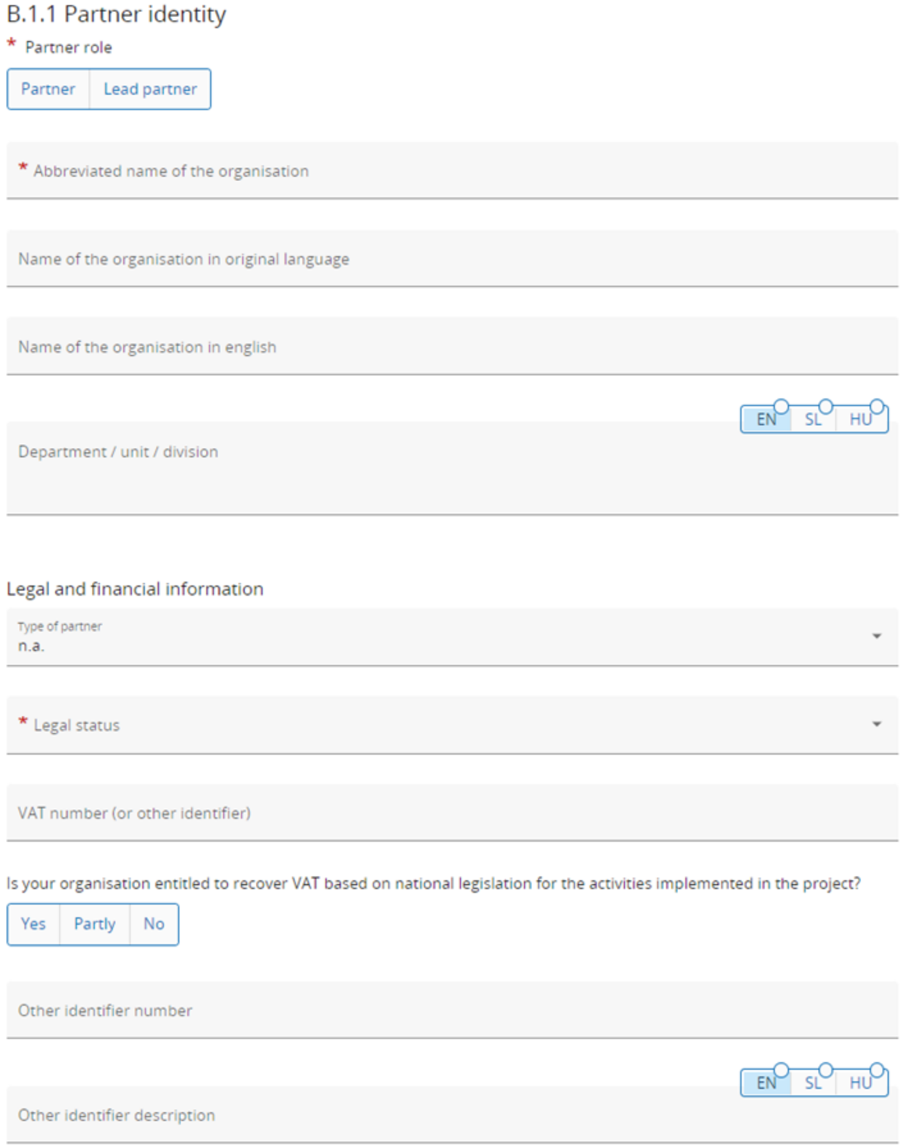
PART B – Project partners

By clicking on "Partners overview" the following screen will appear:





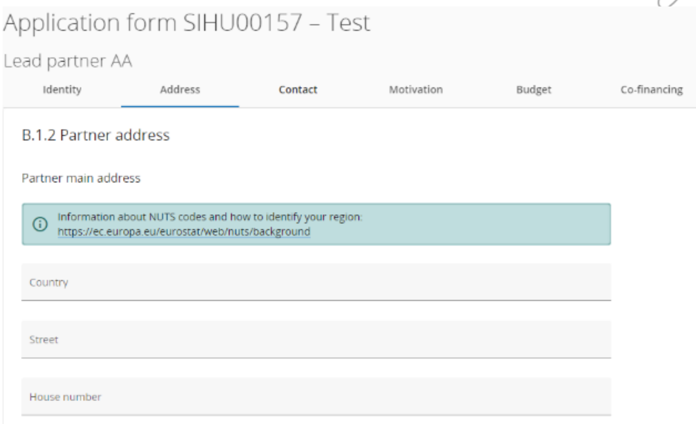
To add a new project partner, click on "+ Add new partner" and the following screen will appear:



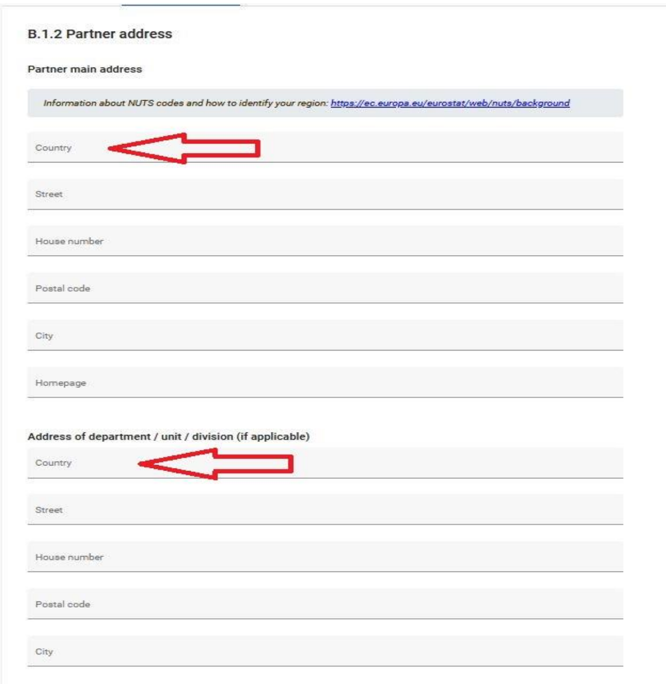
For each Project Partner the role in the project has to be defined (either Lead Partner or Partner). It is mandatory to provide an abbreviation of the organisation, the name of the organisation in the original language as well as its name in English language. The field "Department / unit / division" has to be filled in only if applicable. The data needed for the fields "Type of partner" and "Legal status" can be selected from the drop-down list. For all other fields input has to be provided. The fields "Other identifier number" and "Other identifier description" have to be filled in only if no VAT number exists.

The VAT number and the name of the organisation in the original language have to be consistent.

Once the "B.1.1 Partner identity" is entered, continue with the address section by clicking on "Address" (see the screenshot). In the "Address" section, the applicant is asked to provide the partner main address and address of the department/unit/division (if applicable).

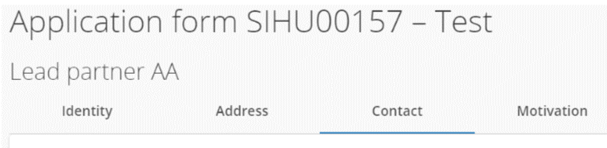


The following screen will appear:

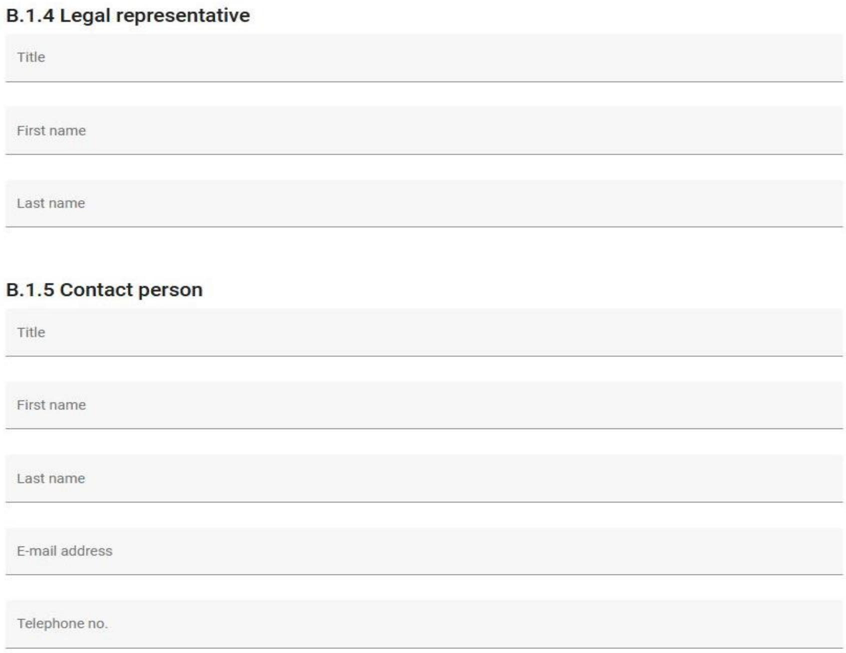


By clicking on the field "Country" a drop-down menu will appear where you can select a country. After the country selection, additional fields will appear, first "NUTS 2" and then "NUTS 3". Select from the drop-down menu. For all other fields input has to be provided.

Once the "B.1.2 Partner address" section is filled in, continue with the contact section by clicking on "Contact". In this section, the legal representative and the contact person details are required.



The following screen will appear:



B.1.4 Legal representative

Title

First name

Last name

B.1.5 Contact person

Title

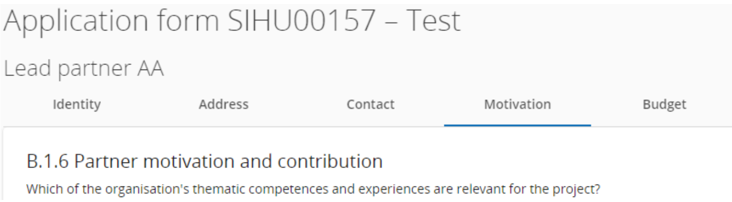
First name

Last name

E-mail address

Telephone no.

Once this section is filled in, continue with the motivation section by clicking on “Motivation”:



Application form SIHU00157 – Test

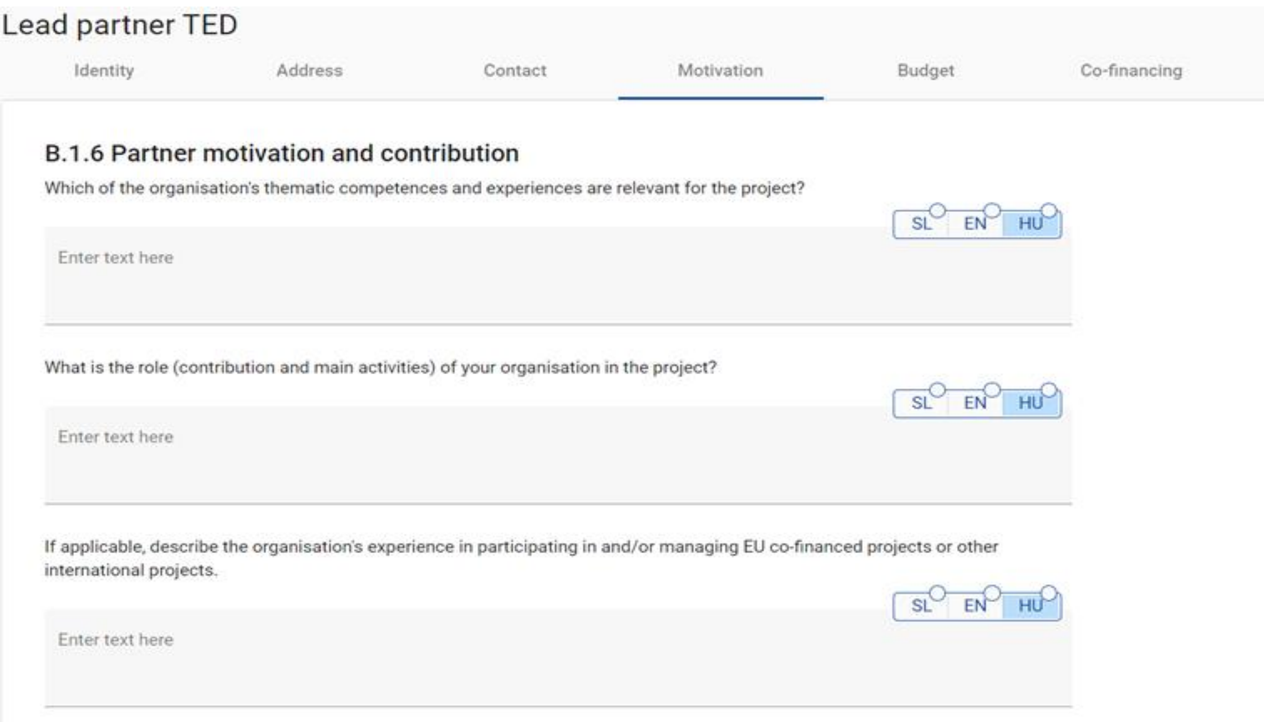
Lead partner AA

Identity | Address | Contact | Motivation | Budget

B.1.6 Partner motivation and contribution

Which of the organisation's thematic competences and experiences are relevant for the project?

The following screen will appear:



Lead partner TED

Identity | Address | Contact | Motivation | Budget | Co-financing

B.1.6 Partner motivation and contribution

Which of the organisation's thematic competences and experiences are relevant for the project?

SL EN HU

Enter text here

What is the role (contribution and main activities) of your organisation in the project?

SL EN HU

Enter text here

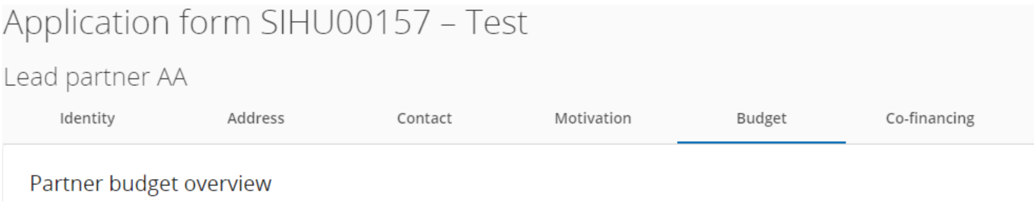
If applicable, describe the organisation's experience in participating in and/or managing EU co-financed projects or other international projects.

SL EN HU

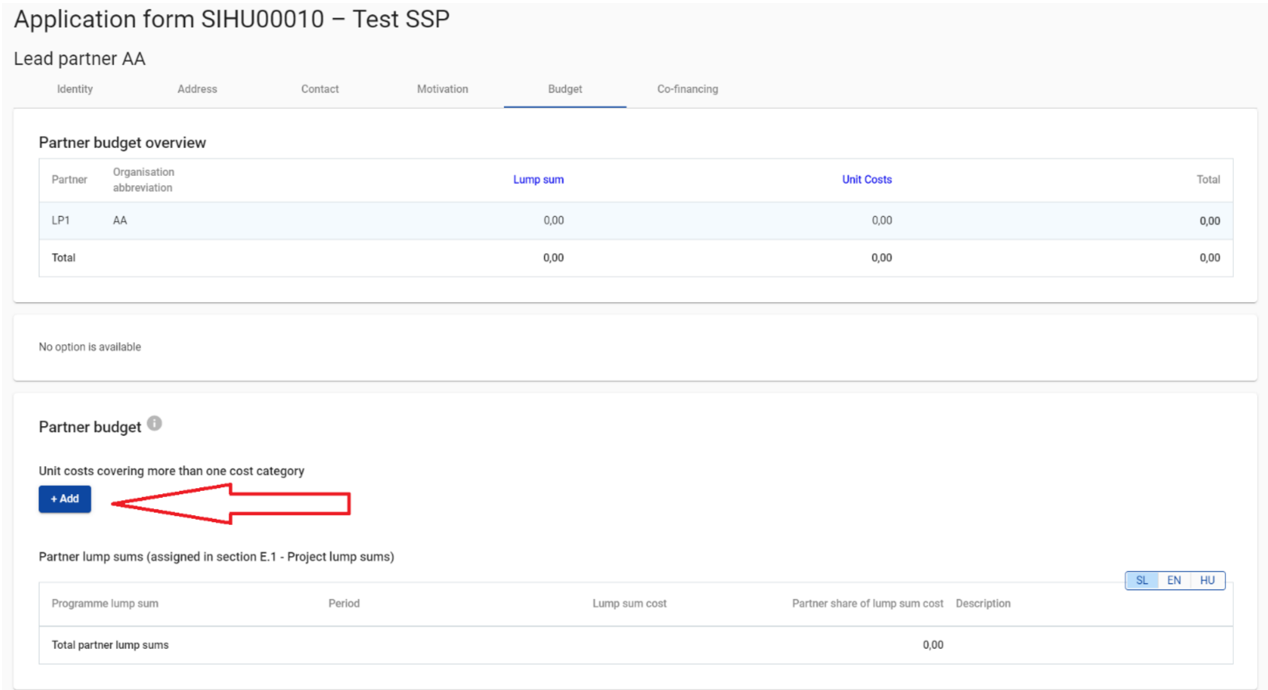
Enter text here

In this section, the partner needs to explain why they are participating in the project and what their role is in the project. Each field has a character limitation of 3,000 characters in each language.

Once the section "Motivation" is filled in, continue with the budget section by clicking on "Budget" (see the screenshot below). The sum total of the partners' budgets defines the overall project budget. Based on the financial data entered at the partner level, the overview tables foreseen in section "D – Project budget" are automatically updated.



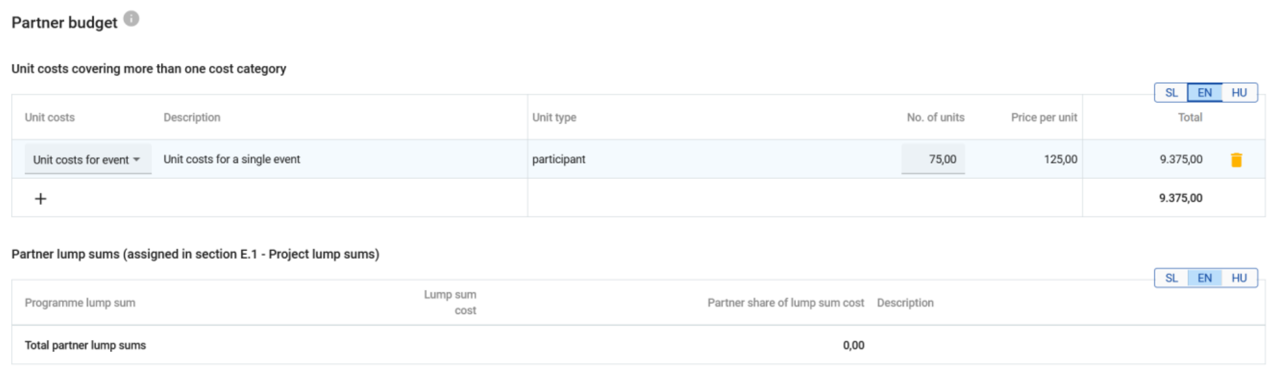
The following screen will appear:



The partner budget has to be filled in according to the type of project you have chosen. There are three options to fill in the partner budget:

1. Type I small-scale project:
   Unit costs covering more than one cost category:
   - unit costs for events
2. Type II small-scale project:
   Partner lump sum which needs to be assigned in section E1 – Project lump sums:
   - lump sum for events
3. Type III small-scale project:
   Partner lump sum which needs to be assigned in section E1 – Project lump sums:
   - lump sum for exchange of employees

In case you are preparing a Type I project you will have to select the "Unit costs covering more than one category" and by clicking on the button "+Add" the following screen will appear:



Under the Programme unit costs you have to select the "Unit costs for event" and enter the number of units => number of participants. The total amount will be calculated automatically. **Each event must be entered separately.** For further information on unit costs see the description in chapter 4 of this Manual.

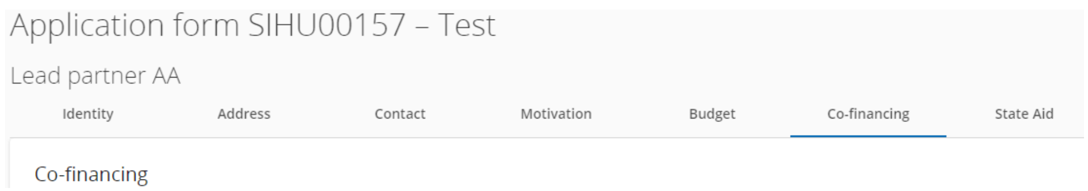
To add Unit costs for an additional event, please click on the "+" icon. To delete Unit costs for event, please click on the "trash" icon.

Before starting to build the budget, please make sure you have defined the project duration in section "A-Project identification", to structure the correct "periods" in the different budget tables.

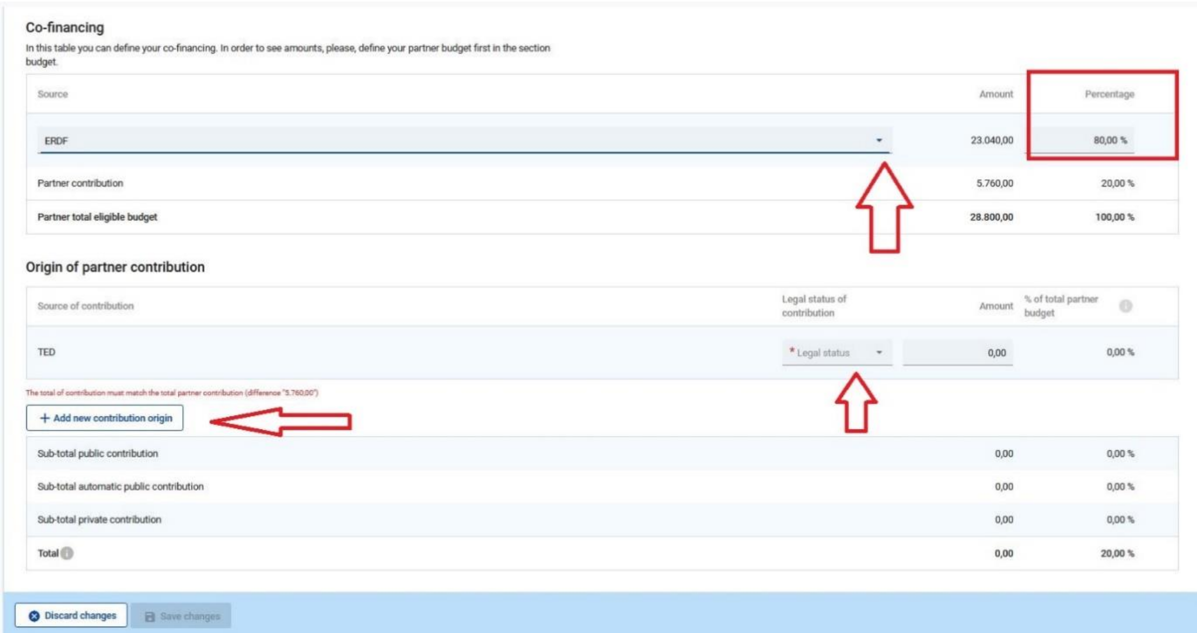
The explained budget input is only for Type 1 small-scale projects.

In case of Type II and Type III projects you will have to enter the budget under the PART E.1 Project lump sums!

Once the budget is entered, continue with the partner contribution. You can fill in this section by clicking on "Co-financing":



The following screen will appear:



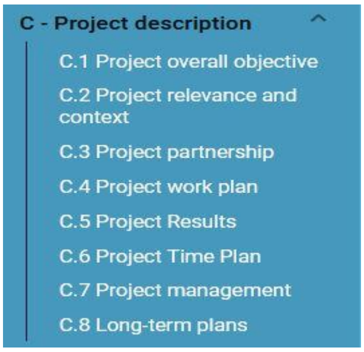
First, the co-financing source has to be selected in the drop-down menu. “ERDF” is the source available in the Programme. Normally, the rate of ERDF co-financing is 80% (set by default), in some cases it could be less and it is editable. The partner contribution entry (amount and percentage columns) is automatically calculated. The origin of the partner contribution, its legal status (private or public) and its amount must be entered. Different sources of contribution are allowed; a new source can be added by clicking on the “+ Add new contribution origin”. The total of contribution must match the total partner contribution.

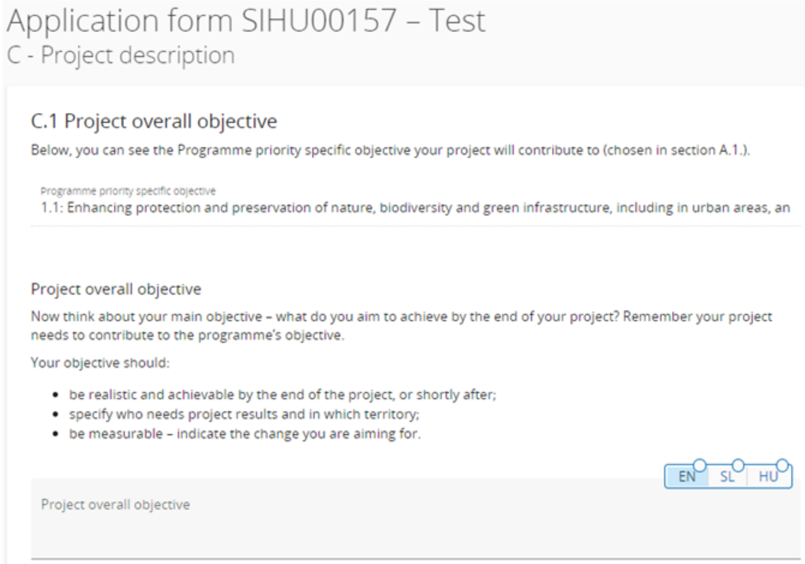
If changes to the budget are made after the “partner contribution” has been entered, it is necessary to update the “co-financing” section afterwards.

To create an additional partner, press the “+ Add new partner” button and repeat the procedure explained in “PART B – Project partners”.

PART C – Project description

This part consists of:




Application form SIHU00157 – Test
C - Project description

C.1 Project overall objective

Below, you can see the Programme priority specific objective your project will contribute to (chosen in section A.1.).

Programme priority specific objective
1.1: Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, an

Project overall objective

Now think about your main objective – what do you aim to achieve by the end of your project? Remember your project needs to contribute to the programme's objective.

Your objective should:

- be realistic and achievable by the end of the project, or shortly after;
- specify who needs project results and in which territory;
- be measurable – indicate the change you are aiming for.

EN SL HU

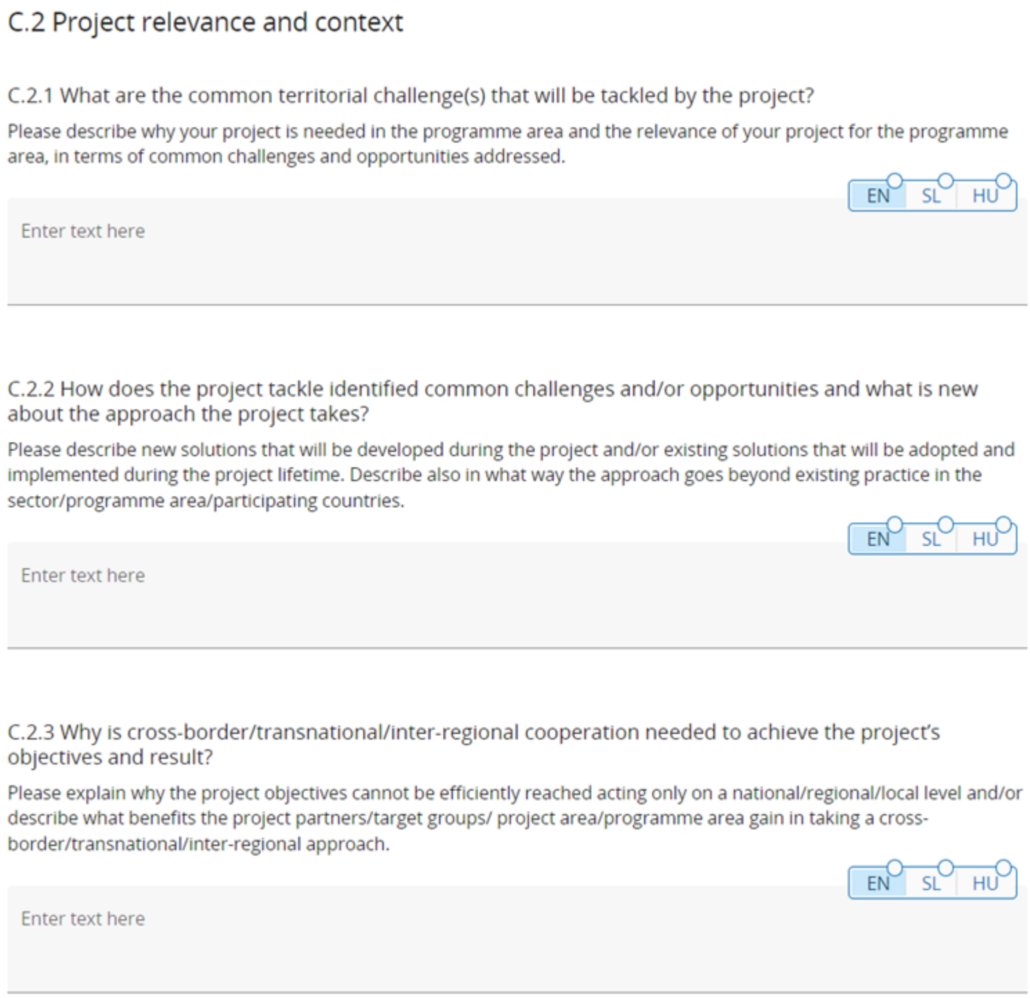
Project overall objective

Please note that since you are applying for a small-scale project, there is no need to fill in all the questions in Part C of the application form! The questions, which do not have to be filled in are under each point marked with red – please just write NOT RELEVANT into the text box (in both languages).

C.1 Project overall objective

In this section, the Programme specific objective chosen in the section "A - Project identification" is shown. The applicant is requested to describe the "Project overall objective". This field should contain information in both languages and has a character limitation of 500 characters.

C.2 Project relevance and context


C.2 Project relevance and context

C.2.1 What are the common territorial challenge(s) that will be tackled by the project?

Please describe why your project is needed in the programme area and the relevance of your project for the programme area, in terms of common challenges and opportunities addressed.

EN SL HU

Enter text here

C.2.2 How does the project tackle identified common challenges and/or opportunities and what is new about the approach the project takes?

Please describe new solutions that will be developed during the project and/or existing solutions that will be adopted and implemented during the project lifetime. Describe also in what way the approach goes beyond existing practice in the sector/programme area/participating countries.

EN SL HU

Enter text here

C.2.3 Why is cross-border/transnational/inter-regional cooperation needed to achieve the project's objectives and result?

Please explain why the project objectives cannot be efficiently reached acting only on a national/regional/local level and/or describe what benefits the project partners/target groups/ project area/programme area gain in taking a cross-border/transnational/inter-regional approach.

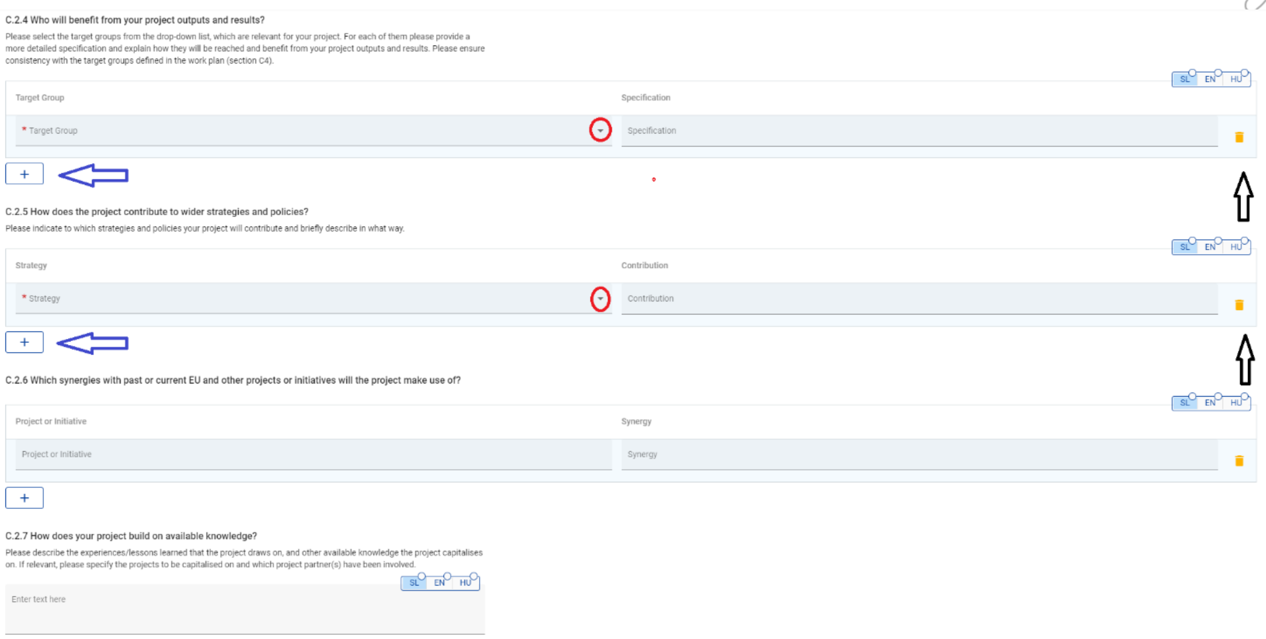
EN SL HU

Enter text here

This section consists of two questions (C.2.1 and C.2.3) that should be answered by the applicant in both languages and has a character limitation of 5,000 characters. The question C.2.2 is not relevant for a small-scale project, just write NOT RELEVANT into the text box.

For the section "C.2.4 – Who will benefit from your outputs and results?" the applicant should list their target groups from the pre-defined drop-down menu (marked red in the screenshot below) and specify the target group further. The field "Specification" has a character limitation of 2,000 characters and has to be filled in in both languages.

In the section "C.2.5 – How does the project contribute to wider strategies and policies?" the drop-down menu (marked red in the screenshot below) consists of the strategies selected by the programme. The field "Contribution" has a character limitation of 2,000 characters and has to be filled in in both languages.

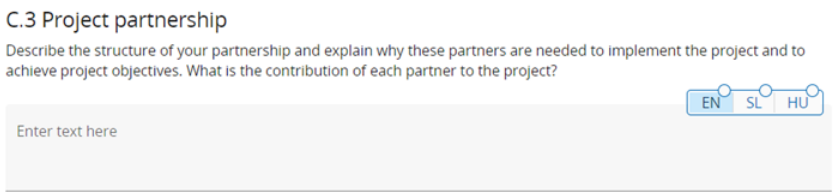


To add an additional "Target group" or "Strategy" please click on the "+" icon (blue arrow). To delete a "Target group" or "Strategy" please click on the "trash" icon.

The questions C.2.6 and C.2.7 are not relevant for a small-scale project, just write NOT RELEVANT into the text box.

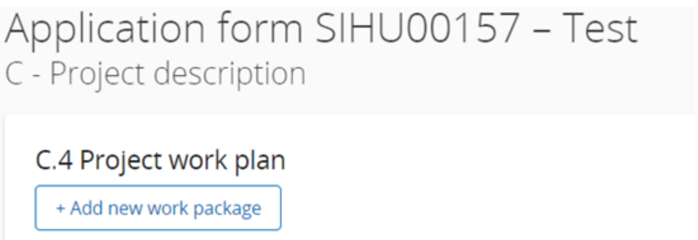
C.3 Project partnership

In this section, the applicant further describes the structure of the partnership. This field is a multi-language one and should be filled in in both languages; the character limitation is 5,000 characters.

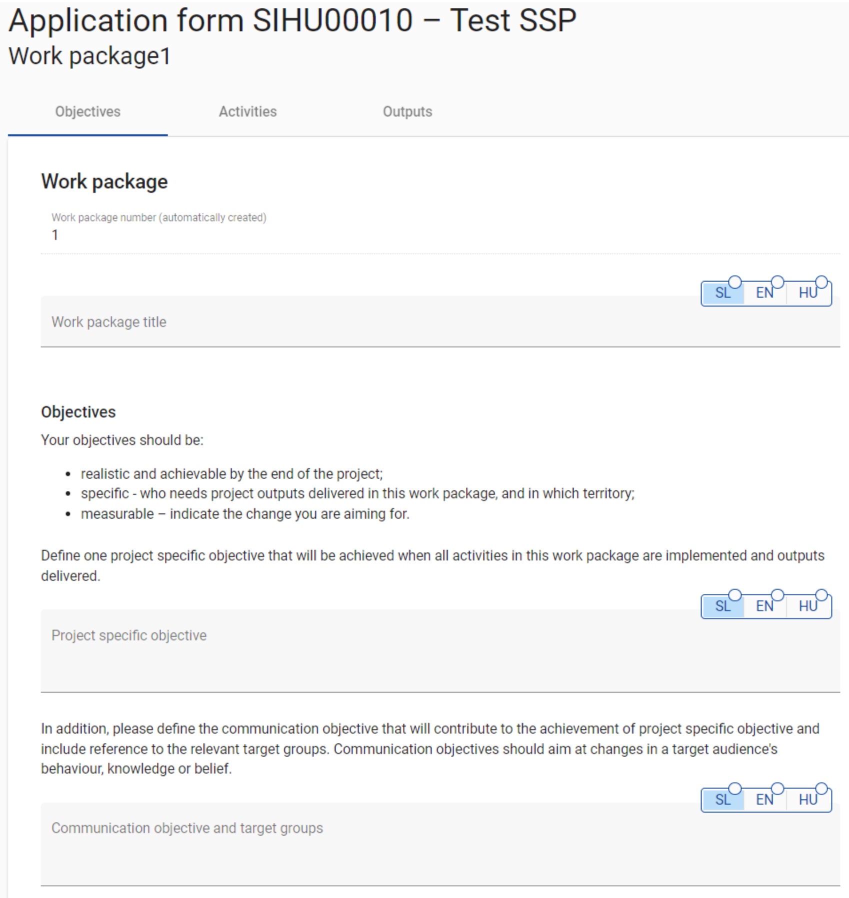


C.4 Project work plan

The work package describes the thematic activities carried out within the project and the related outputs. For a small-scale project there should be **ONE WORK PACKAGE** only! To open a new work package, click on "+ Add new work package":

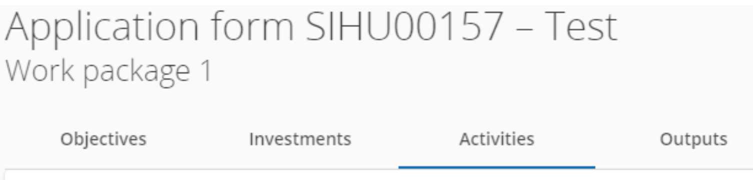


The following screen will appear:

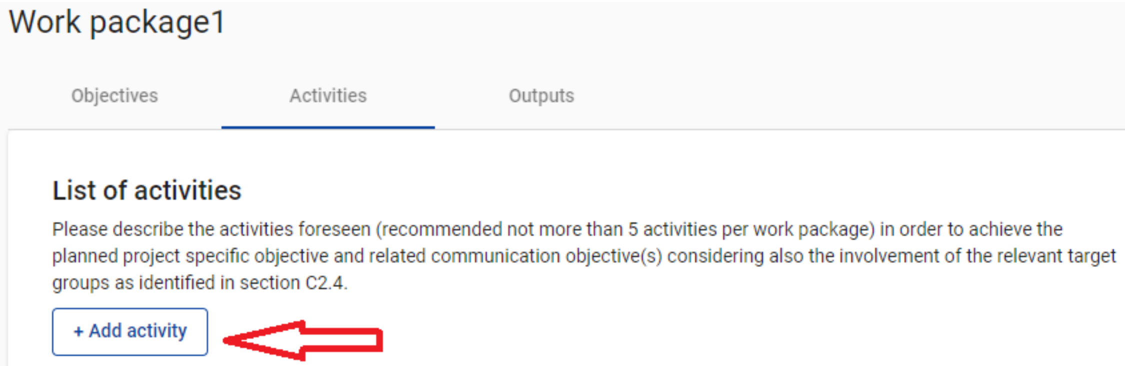


The work package is numbered automatically. The tab “Objectives” of a work package contains fields for the explanation of the “Project specific objective” and the “Communication objective and target groups” in both languages. The work package title should reflect the strategic cross-border focus and the intended results of the work package.

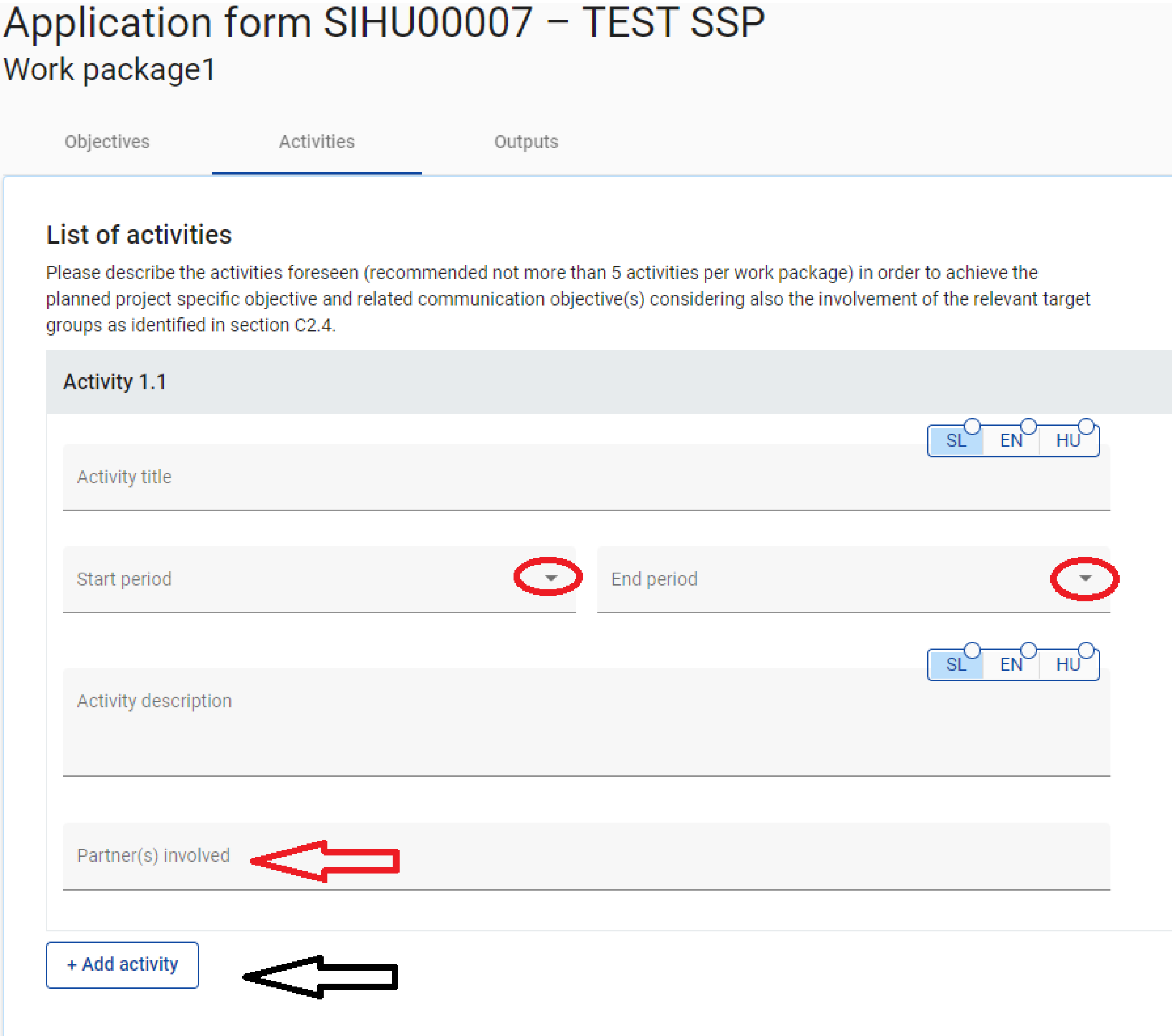
Once the “Objectives” section is filled in, continue with the activity section by clicking on “Activities”:



The following screen will appear:



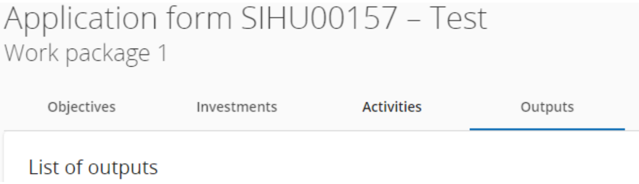
The work package is divided into activities – **each event (or exchange of personal) is one activity.** Activities have to lead to the development of one or more project outputs. To open a new activity, click on "+ Add activity". The following screen will appear:



Description of the fields in the activity section

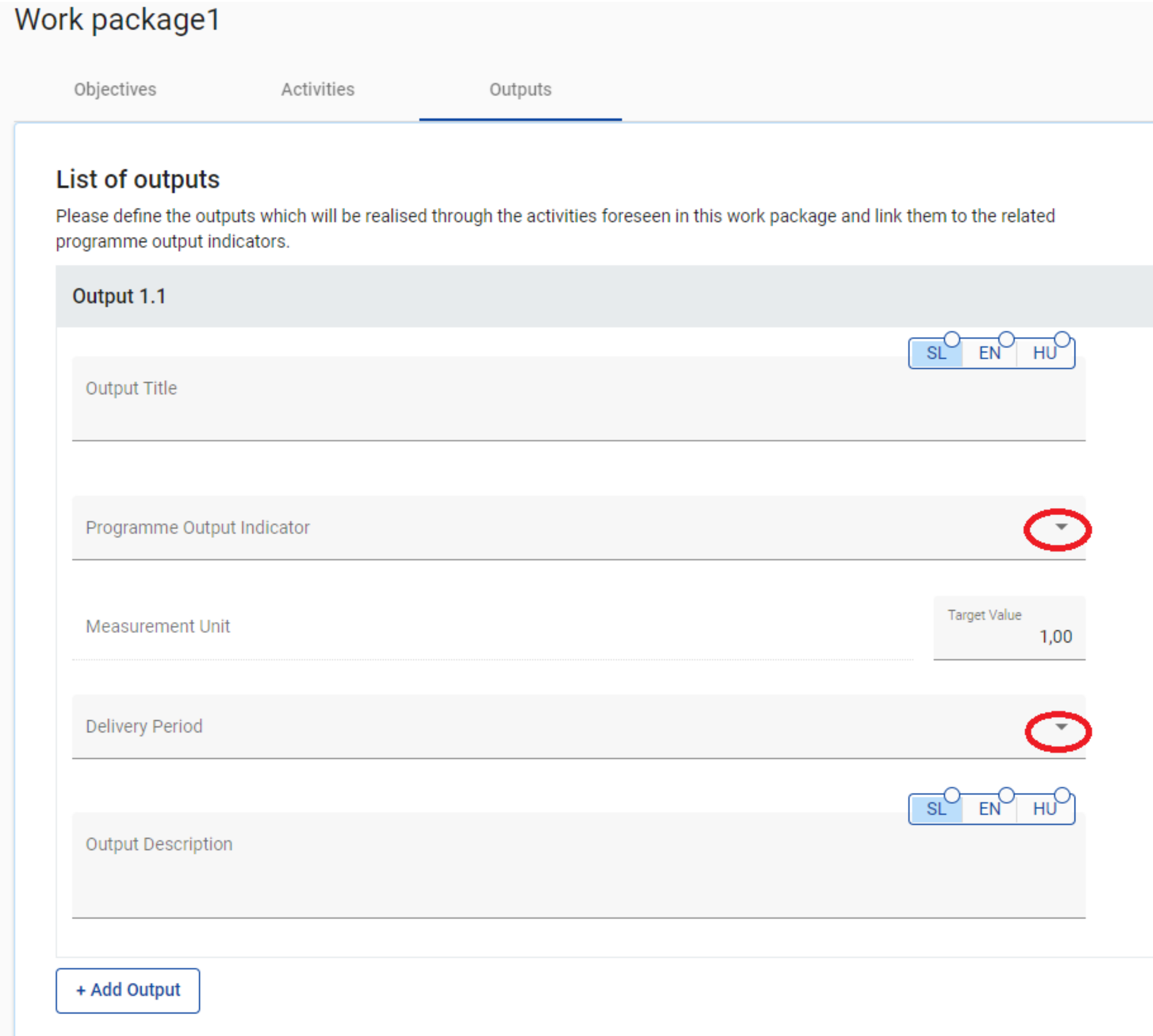
The “Activity title” field is filled in in both languages and has a character limit of 200 characters. In the drop-down menus “Start period” and “End period” you can select the Period 1 only. The “Activity description” field is filled in in both languages and has a character limit of 3,000 characters. **A full description of each planned activity/event is required.** From the drop-down menu “Partner(s) involved” select partners involved in the activity. To save all changes, press the button “Save changes”. To create an additional activity, press the button “+ Add activity” (black arrow).

Once the activity section is filled in, continue with the output section by clicking “Outputs”:



The following screen will appear:

To add an Output click on the button "+Add Output" and the following screen will appear:



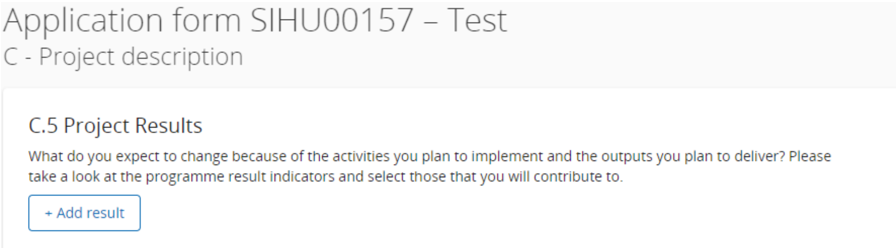
Description of the fields in the output section

Project outputs are tangible deliverables of the project which contribute to project results and are directly deriving from the activities carried out in the project. Outputs are measured in physical units such as the number of organisations or number of events. The "Output title" is filled in in both languages and has a character limit of 200 characters. From the drop-down menu "Programme Output Indicator" select one of the pre-defined Programme Output Indicators and the "Measurement Unit" will be filled in automatically. The default value for "Target value" is 1,00 and it is editable. In the drop-down menus "Delivery period" you can select the Period 1 only. The "Output description" field is filled in in both languages and has a character limit of 500 characters. To create an additional output, press the button "+ Add Output".

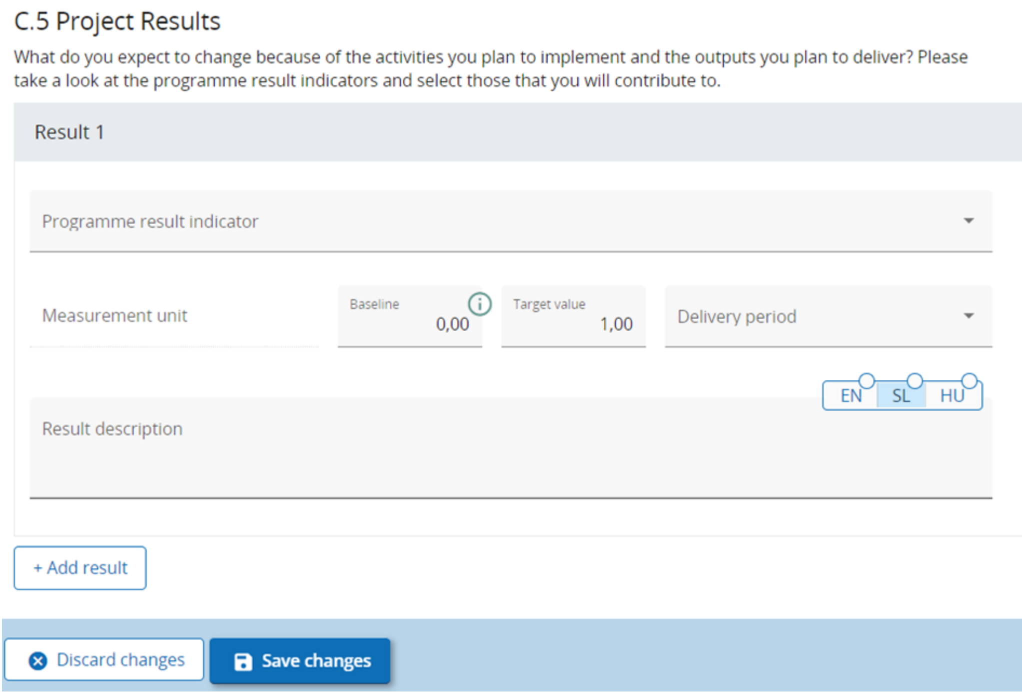
C.5 Project Results

The **results** are direct and immediate effects resulting from the project and from the production of the outputs. They represent what is intended to be changed by the project. The production of outputs such as organisation of events are only means to achieve the results of the project. Compared to the outputs, they imply a qualitative value, an improvement compared with an initial situation. They have to be measured in physical units, in number of organisations cooperating across borders after project completion.

In this section, the applicant can add Project Results to a list by clicking on "+ Add result":



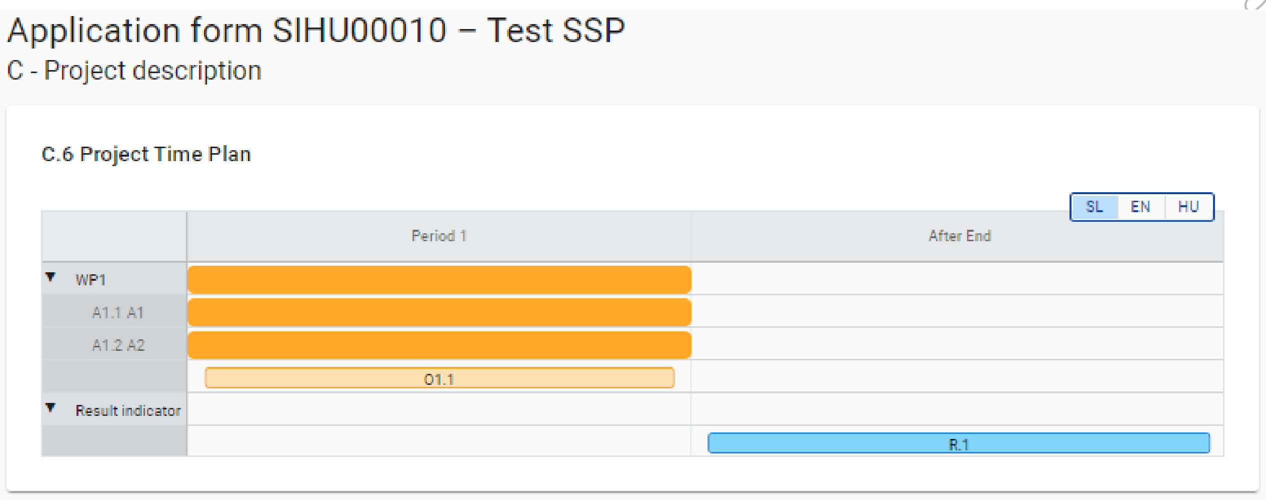
The following screen will appear:



The Programme Result Indicator has to be selected from the drop-down menu for each Project Result. There is only one Programme Result Indicator which can be selected, the measurement unit and baseline are automatically filled in. Please provide the delivery period for the result (select from the drop-down menu). The default value for "Target value" is 1,00 and it is editable. The field "Result description" is filled in in both languages and has a character limit of 1,000 characters. In this field, describe how the project will contribute to the Programme result indicator. Please remember to click the "Save changes" button.

C.6 Project Time Plan

The project time plan is automatically generated using data from the Application form.



Project duration (defined in Section A1) has to be filled in and each activity/output will be assigned to the Period 1.

C.7 Project management

C.7 Project management

In addition to the thematic work you will do in your project, you will need time and resources for coordination and internal communication. Please describe below how you plan to organise yourself to ensure the project work runs smoothly.

C.7.1 How will you coordinate your project?

Who will be responsible for coordination? Will you have any other management structures (e.g., thematic groups, WP managers)? How will the internal communication work?

EN SL HU

Enter text here

C.7.2 Which measures will you take to ensure quality in your project?

Describe specific approaches and processes and responsible partners. If you plan to have any type of project evaluation, please describe its purpose and scope here.

EN SL HU

Enter text here

C.7.3 What will be the general approach you will follow to communicate about your project?

Who will coordinate project communication and how will he/she ensure the involvement of all partners? How will the communication function contribute to transfer your project results? Please note that all communication activities should be included in the work packages, as an integral part of your project. There is no need to repeat this information here.

EN SL HU

Enter text here

C.7.4 How do you foresee the financial management of the project and reporting procedures for activities and budget (within the partnership and towards the programme)?

Define responsibilities, deadlines in financial flows, reporting flows, project related transfers, reclaims, etc.

EN SL HU

Enter text here

This section consists of two questions (C.7.2 and C.7.3) that should be answered by the applicant in both languages; the character limit is 5,000 characters. The questions C.7.1 and C.7.4 are not relevant for a small-scale project, just write NOT RELEVANT into the text box.

In the section "C.7.5 Cooperation criteria", tick the criteria and enter the description how the criteria will be met (see the below screenshot). Remember that three criteria are mandatory, and one is optional. The mandatory criteria are "Joint development", "Joint implementation" and one of the following criteria: "Joint financing" or "Joint stuffing".

C.7.5 Cooperation criteria

Please select all cooperation criteria that apply to your project and describe how you will fulfil them.

EN SL HU

Cooperation criteria	Description
☐ Joint development	Enter text here
☐ Joint implementation	Enter text here
☐ Joint staffing	Enter text here
☐ Joint financing	Enter text here

In the section “C.7.6 Horizontal principles”, indicate which type of contribution to horizontal principles applies to the project. This section contains pre-defined horizontal principles; the type of contribution is a pre-defined toggle button as well. The description is a free text input and has to be entered in both languages; the character limitation is 2,000 characters:

C.7.6 Horizontal principles

Please indicate which type of contribution to horizontal principles applies to the project, and justify your choice.

EN SL HU

Horizontal principles	Type of contribution	Description of contribution
Sustainable development	positive effects / neutral / negative effects	Enter text here
Equal opportunities and non-discrimination	positive effects / neutral / negative effects	Enter text here
Equality between men and women	positive effects / neutral / negative effects	Enter text here

C.8 Long-term plans

This section consists of two questions (C.8.2 and C.8.3) that are answered by the applicant in both languages; the character limitation is 5,000 characters.

NOTE: For the small-scale projects the questions are as follows (not the same as in the Jems):

The question C.8.1 is not relevant for a small-scale project, just write NOT RELEVANT into the text box.

C.8.2: Durability

Please describe the durability of project outputs/results in the sense that they bring people together and create favourable cooperation conditions.

C.8.3: Transferabilty

The outputs that you will deliver could be adapted or further developed to be used by target groups or in other territories not directly involved in the project. What will you do to make sure that relevant groups are aware of your outputs and are able to use them?

C.8 Long-term plans

As a programme, we would like to support projects that have a long-lasting effect in the territory and those who will benefit from them. Please describe below what you will do to ensure this.

C.8.1 Ownership

Please describe who will ensure the financial and institutional support for the outputs/deliverables developed by the project (e.g., tools), and explain how these outputs/deliverables will be integrated in the work of the institutions.

EN SL HU

Enter text here

C.8.2 Durability

Some outputs/deliverables should be used by relevant groups (project partners or others) after the project's lifetime, in order to have a lasting effect on the territory and the population. For example, new practices in urban transport need to be used by local authorities to have cleaner air in the city, and the whole population will benefit from this. Please describe how your outputs/deliverables will be used after the project ends and by whom.

EN SL HU

Enter text here

C.8.3 Transferability

Some outputs/deliverables that you will deliver could be adapted or further developed to be used by other target groups or in other territories. What will you do to make sure that relevant groups are aware of your outputs/deliverables and are able to use them?

EN SL HU

Enter text here

PART D – Project budget

In this section you can monitor the total budget per partner. Based on the financial data entered at the partner level, these overview tables are automatically updated.

D - Project budget
- D.1 Project budget per fund
- D.2 Overview partner / cost category
- D.3 Overview budget / period

Table D.1 includes data on the funds which shows the share of the funds per partner compared.

D.1 Project budget per co-financing source (fund) - breakdown per partner

Partner	Organisation abbreviation	Country	ERDF	ERDF % Rate	National HU	National HU % Rate	Public Contribution	Auto Public Contribution	Private Contribution	Total partner contribution	Total eligible budget	% of Total eligible budget
LP1	BB		40.000,00 84,21 % of total	80,00 %	0,00	0,00 %	10.000,00	0,00	0,00	10.000,00	50.000,00	76,92 %
PP2	AA		7.500,00 15,79 % of total	50,00 %	7.500,00 100 % of total	50,00 %	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	15.000,00	23,08 %
	Total		47.500,00	73,08 %	7.500,00	11,54 %	10.000,00	0,00	0,00	10.000,00	65.000,00	100,00 %

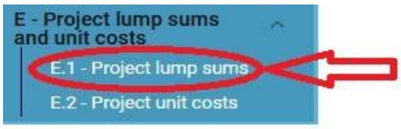
Table D.2 provides an automatically calculated overview of the total partner budget broken down per cost category.

D.2 Project budget - overview per partner / per cost category

Partner	Organisation abbreviation	Country	Staff costs	Office and administrative costs	Travel and accommodation	External expertise and services	Equipment	Infrastructure and works	Other costs	Lump sum	Total
LP1	BB		50.000,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	50.000,00
PP2	AA		0,00	0,00	0,00	15.000,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	15.000,00
Total			50.000,00	0,00	0,00	15.000,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	65.000,00

E.1 Project lump sums

In this section you enter the lump sum for the Type II and Type III small-scale project in amount of 31.250,00 EUR.



To access this section click on E.1 and the following screen will appear:

Application form SIHU00160 – Test1

E.1 - Project lump sums

Project lump sums table

In this table you can define your project lump sums. Please choose the applicable lump sums from the dropdown and allocate the lump sum cost to project partner(s).

+ Add

The next step is to click on the "+ Add" button and the following screen will appear:

Project lump sums table

In this table you can define your project lump sums. Please choose the applicable lump sums from the dropdown and allocate the lump sum cost to project partner(s).

Please update the lump sum table: The sum of the amounts per partner must match the total lump sum costs.

SL EN HU

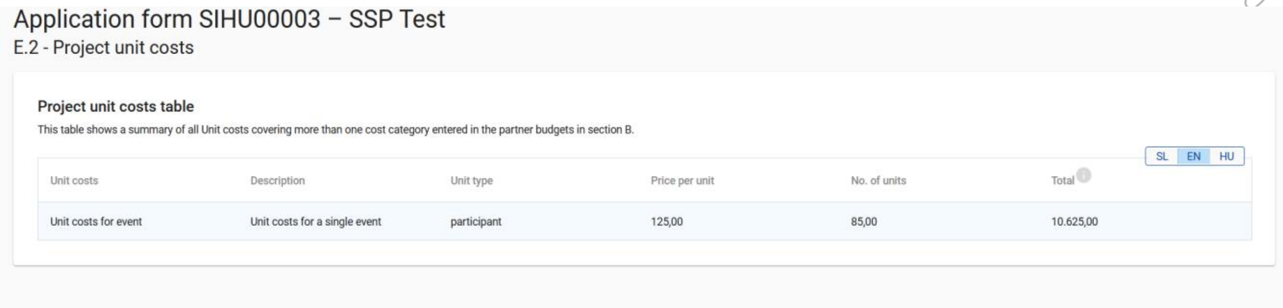
Programme lump sum	Split up	Costs	LP1 AA	PP2 BB	Sum	Gap	Description
Lump sum for ev...	Yes	31.250,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	31.250,00	Project type II
			0,00	0,00	0,00		

+

In the drop-down menu Programme lump sum you have to choose the Lump sum for events for the Type II projects or the Lump sum for exchange for the Type III small-scale project. All fields will be filled in automatically, except the shared costs between the project partners needs to be entered.

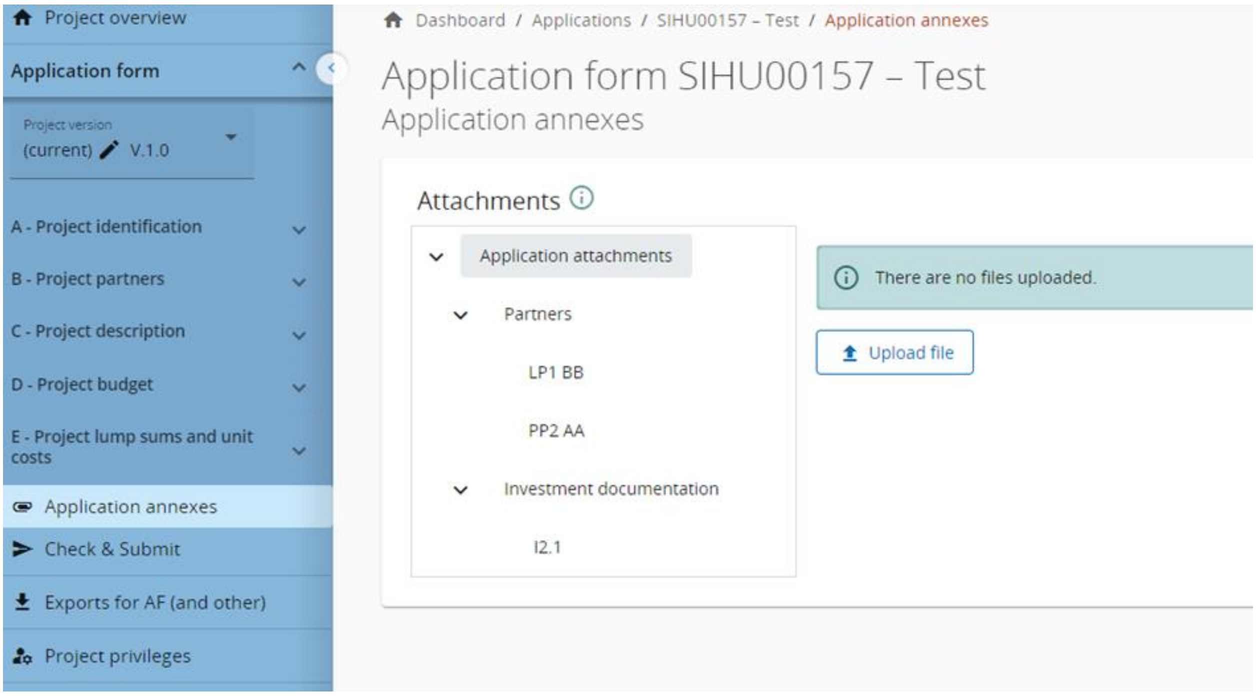
E.2 Project unit costs

In case of Type I small-scale project in this table you can monitor the total unit costs for events, entered by all project partners. Based on the financial data entered at the partner level, these overview table is automatically updated.



Application annex

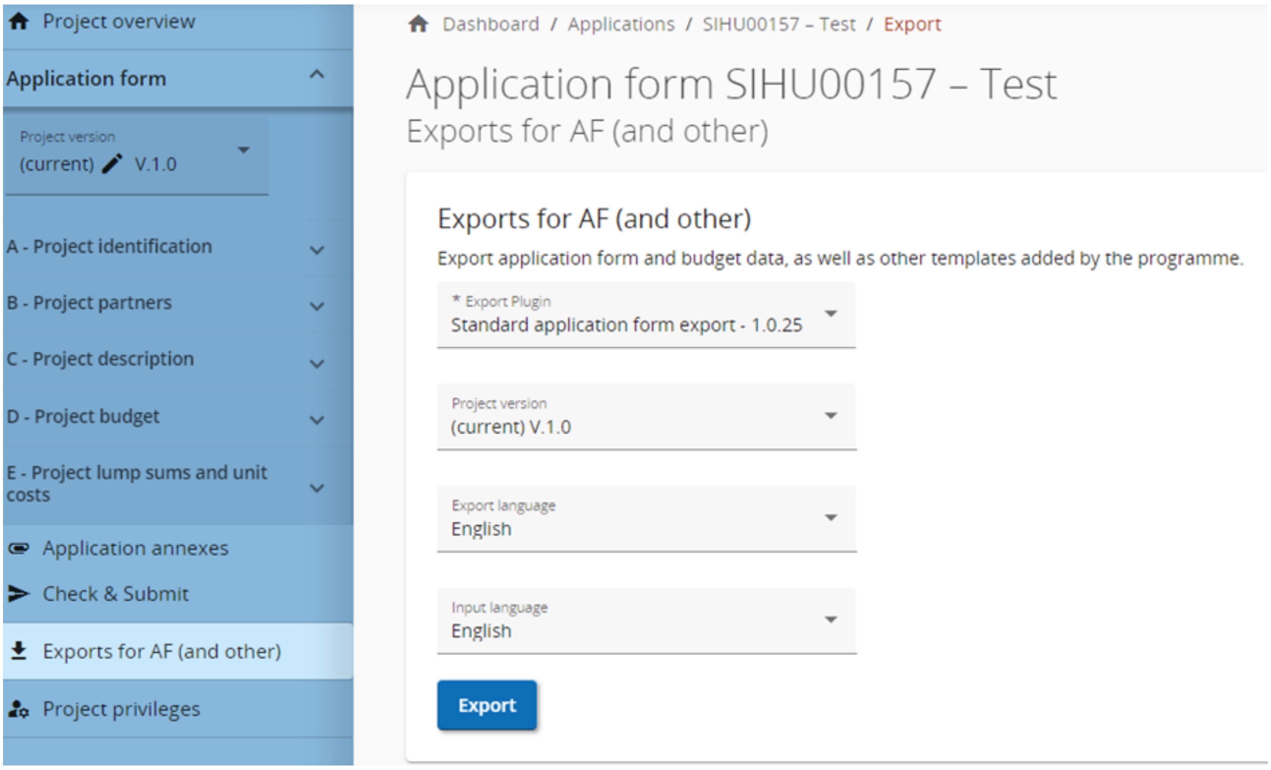
For each project, the Lead Partner has to upload **the annex Partnership Agreement** to the Application Form:



The respective annex must be uploaded before pressing the “Submit project application” button. To do so, the Lead Partner must click “Upload file” and wait until the document appears in the overview table automatically created on the same page.

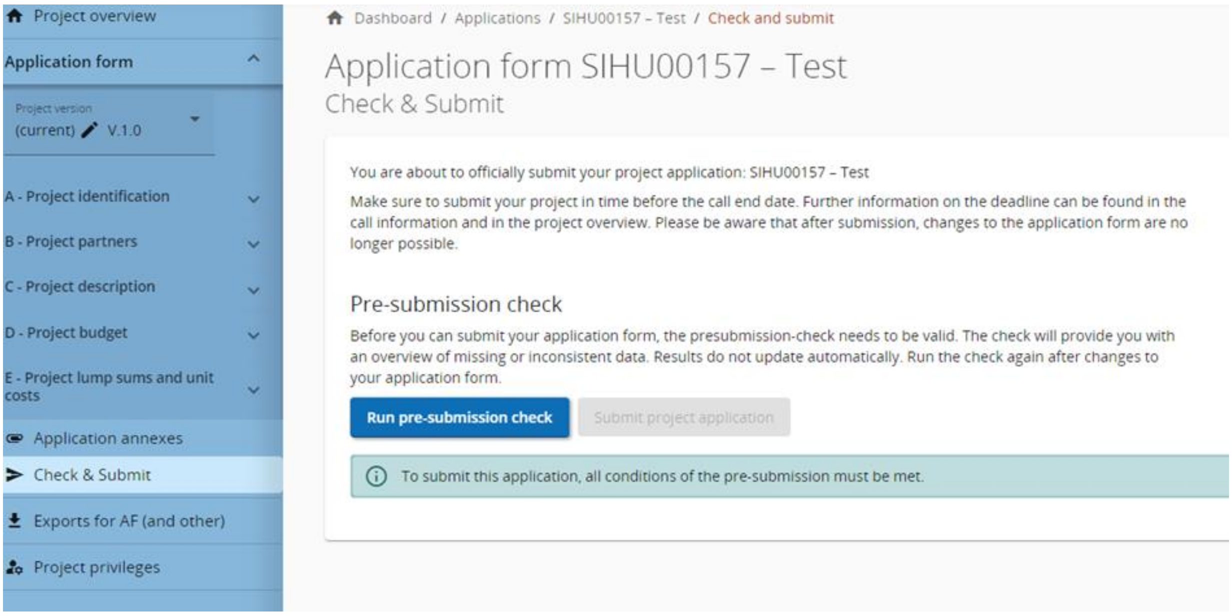
The export function

This section allows the user to create a pdf file of the Application Form at any time of its development as well as to export partner budgets. The export language can be selected from the drop-down menu:



Submission of the Application Form

Submission of the Application Form is a two-step process. Each Application Form requires a successful pre-submission check of content before it can be submitted.



Under the section “Check & Submit”, users with “edit” or “manage” privileges can perform the following actions:

- Run pre-submission check,
- Submit project application.

The pre-submission check warns applicants only if the pre-defined mandatory fields of the Application Form are not filled in (it does not check the quality of information provided and if all fields have a bilingual text entered in both languages). The button “Submit project application” is accessible only after all pre-submission checks are successfully passed.

After submission, the status of the application is changed to “Submitted” (see on your dashboard, under “My applications” or at the level of the project overview page); **NO automatic e-mail confirmation will be sent to your e-mail address**.

3.2 PROJECT ASSESSMENT AND CONTRACTING

3.2.1 ASSESSMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The assessment of received applications consists of several steps following a standardised procedure safeguarding the principles of equal treatment and transparency.

In the tables below, you will find the conditions and criteria under which the project will be checked and assessed. Examine them carefully and consider them when preparing the project application.

3.2.1.1 Administrative and eligibility check

In line with the e-cohesion requirements, **applications** under the IP SI-HU 2021-2027 **can be submitted only via the programme’s Joint electronic monitoring system (Jems)**. Jems applies certain pre-submission verifications that prevent applicants from submitting applications with obvious formal errors. In addition to pre-submission checks targeted at technical details (such as mandatory fields must not remain empty) formal/administrative criteria by the programme are also checked – where this is technically possible – via pre-submission verifications or are included in requirements such as submission by the set deadline.

Other administrative and eligibility criteria are subject to human check by the programme’s Joint Secretariat (JS) following the submission of the application for funding.

If there are discrepancies or if certain documents are missing according to the administrative check, the Lead Partner will be asked to provide supplements. **The supplements may refer to the compliance with the criteria A3, B1 and B2. Lead Partner shall be able to supplement the project application within seven (7) calendar days** after the request for supplements was sent. In case the project application fully complies with the administrative and eligibility criteria after the requested supplements have been provided and is approved by the MC, all supplements shall be entered in the Application Form (in Jems) before signing the Subsidy Contract.

If the project, after receipt of the supplements or passed seven (7) calendar days, still does not fulfil the administrative and eligibility criteria, the project shall be rejected in Jems.

The applicants can submit the revised application again by one of the next deadlines.

Only if all administrative and eligibility criteria are fulfilled, a project shall undergo quality assessment and be submitted to the Monitoring Committee (MC) for decision.

All administrative and eligibility criteria shall be answered with **YES** or **NA** (not applicable), that is fulfilled by every project proposal by the end of the administrative and eligibility check. They do not measure the quality of the project or its content. If only one field is answered with **NO**, the project shall be rejected.

Table 1: Administrative criteria

Nº.	**Administrative criteria**	**Description**	**YES or NO**	**Supplements possible**
A.1	The application is submitted by the set deadline.	*Ongoing submission.* *In general, applications are submitted via Jems to the Joint Secretariat at the latest by noon of the set deadline. Applications submitted by the set deadline shall be assessed and, if eligible, proposed to the MC for decision. The deadline for submission of projects is published on the programme webpage, and the upcoming Jems submission deadline is configured accordingly.* *The applications submitted after the set deadline shall not be rejected but will remain in Jems waiting for the next assessment round (considered to be submitted within the next deadline).*	Yes or No *Automatically checked by Jems*	No
A.2	The project fulfils requirements for partnership.	*The following requirements have to be fulfilled:* 1. *One of the partners shall be Lead Partner.* 2. *All partners are located in the programme area.* 3. *The Lead Partner can be EGTC (sole partner if it is located in the programme area).*	Yes or No	No
A.3	Obligatory annex is attached to the application form.	*Obligatory annex must be signed, scanned and attached to the electronic AF and be submitted by the deadline.* *Obligatory annex to be attached to all project applications is Partnership agreement (signed by Lead Partner and all Project Partners)*	Yes or No	Yes

Table 2: Eligibility criteria

Nº.	Eligibility criteria	Description for the human check	Yes or No	Supplements possible
B.1	The data of the Lead/Project Partner is identifiable	1. *The name and the address of the Lead/Project Partner is identifiable.* 2. *The Lead/Project Partner is identifiable according to the VAT or other registration number.*	Yes or No	Yes
B.2	The project fulfils minimum requirements for content.	*The following content-related requirements have to be fulfilled.* 1. *The project work plan includes at least one output with a positive target value, linked to one of the programme output indicators.* 2. *Outputs are delivered at latest at the end of the project.* 3. *The project work plan shall include at least one result with a positive target value, linked to the programme result indicator.*	Yes or No	Yes
B.3	Minimum partnership requirements are respected.	1. *At least one Slovene and one Hungarian partner is involved, or an EGTC registered in the participating country consisting of members from both Member States.* 2. *The Lead/Project Partner is not a natural person or political party.*	Yes or No	No
B.4	Minimum and maximum budget requirements are respected, including the percentage of co-financing.	1. *ERDF does not exceed 80% of the partner's total budget.* 2. *Min. 20% of partner total budget is secured by national contribution(s) in the form of own resources (public or private) of the partner and/or as third party financial contribution (public or private) including Hungarian government contribution for Hungarian project partners*[10] 3. *The project respects the maximum amounts set in the call.*	Yes or No	No
B.5	Minimum requirements for cooperation are fulfilled.	*Three (3) cooperation criteria should be met, "Joint development", "Joint implementation" and "Joint financing" or "Joint staffing".*	Yes or No	No

[10] *Hungarian Government Decree 241/2023. (VI.20.) on the implementation of cross-border Interreg programmes in the programming period 2021-2027.*

3.2.1.2 Quality assessment criteria

The quality assessment criteria measure the relevance and the feasibility of the project. They help to establish a common understanding for decision-making.

Quality assessment criteria are divided into two categories:

- **Strategic assessment criteria** - The main aim is to determine the extent of the project's contribution to the achievement of programme objectives (including contribution to programme indicators) by addressing the joint or common needs of the target group.
- **Operational assessment criteria** - The main aim is to assess the viability and feasibility of the proposed project, as well as its value for money in terms of resources used versus results delivered.

The assessment criteria are divided into questions and sub-questions for an assessment covering **four main thematic groups**, namely **project relevance, partnership relevance, work plan and budget.**

Based on the submitted Application form (and its annexes), the JS assesses every project and prepares a recommendation for the MC. Each SSP project will be **assessed by at least two JS members, also in cooperation with Member State representatives[11].** The purpose of the assessment is to support the MC in its decision-making. **The right and responsibility to decide on project approval is the sole responsibility of the MC.** For each Project partner, of the approved projects, the opinion on State aid (whether the activities in the submitted project application are state aid/de minimis relevant) is provided by the JS before signing the ERDF Subsidy Contract.

Projects will be assessed according to the criteria in the tables below.

Scores between 0 and 5 are allocated to each assessment criteria as follows:

insufficient	0	The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
poor	1	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
fair	2	The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
good	3	The proposal addresses the criterion well, but several shortcomings are identified.
very good	4	The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings is identified.
excellent	5	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

Each thematic group is assessed with a score which is supported by written comments. The comments should reflect the strengths and weaknesses fairly and give reasons for the scores. The assessment of one criterion should NOT influence the assessment of another criterion. In particular, the same weakness/shortcoming should not be referred to under different criteria (no double penalisation).

[11] *Member State representatives are meant National Authorities, Controllers and relevant field ministries.*

The total number of points for a project application in the scope **of quality assessment shall be 20 (100%).** Each project application has to score at least 3 points in each thematic group. Each project application shall have to achieve at least 60% or 12 points to be further considered. Projects not reaching at least 60% or 12 points will be rejected. In case two or more project proposals will reach the same points, project with more points in the thematic group "Project relevance" will be placed higher on the ranking list. Projects reaching 12 points or more or having at least 60% shall be discussed at the MC meeting with the possibility of **being approved or rejected.**

The quality assessment will be performed according to the following **selection criteria**:

Table 3: Strategic assessment criteria/project relevance

Nº.	Assessment question	Sub-questions for assessment	Score	Section in Application Form
C1 Project relevance			**0-1-2-3-4-5**	
C1.1	How well is the need for the project justified?	• The project addresses common territorial challenges of the programme or a joint asset of the programme area - there is a real need for the project (well justified, reasonable, well explained).		C.2.1 and C.2.3
		• The project clearly contributes to a wider strategy on one or more policy levels (EU/national/regional).		C.2.5
C1.2	To what extent will the project contribute to the achievement of programme's objectives and indicators?	• The project's overall objective clearly contributes to the achievement of the programme priority-specific objective.		C.1
		• The project's outputs clearly link to the programme output indicators and contribution to programme targets. • How well are the selected target groups addressed by planned outputs and results?		C.4 C2.4
		• The project's outputs enable or improve cooperation between institutions and target groups and/or strengthen mutual trust building.		C.5
C1.3	To what extent will project outputs have an impact beyond the project's lifetime?	• The project's outputs have potential to become durable (in the sense that they bring people together and create favourable cooperation conditions) – if not, it is justified.		C.8.2
		• The project's main outputs are applicable and replicable by other organisations/regions/countries outside of the current partnership– if not, it is justified.		C.8.3
C1.4	To what extent is the project intervention logic plausible?	• The project-specific objective is specific, realistic and achievable.		C.4 Specific objective
		• Proposed project outputs are needed to achieve project-specific objective.		C.4 Output

		• Project outputs and result that contribute to programme indicators are realistic (it is possible to achieve them with given resources – i.e., time, partners, budget - and they are realistic based on the quantification provided).		C.4, C.5, C.6, D
C1.5	What added value does the cooperation bring?	• The importance of cooperation beyond borders for the topic addressed is clearly demonstrated.		C.2.3
		• The result cannot/only to some extent be achieved without cooperation.		C.2.3
		• There is a clear benefit from cooperating for the project partners/target groups/project area/programme area.		C.2.4

Maximum score is 5 points (C1.1 – C1.5)

Table 4: Strategic assessment criteria/partnership relevance

Nº.	Assessment question	Sub-questions for assessment	Scores	Section in Application Form
C 2	**Partnership relevance**		**0-1-2-3-4-5**	
C2.1	To what extent is the partnership composition relevant for the proposed project?	• The project involves the relevant actors needed to address the territorial challenge/joint asset and the objectives specified.		C.3 and B.1.6
		• With respect to the project’s objective, the project partnership: o is balanced with respect to the territory o consists of partners that complement each other.		C.3 and C.7
		• All partners play a defined role in the partnership and the territory benefits from this cooperation.		C.3
		• Distribution of tasks among partners is appropriate (e.g., sharing of tasks is clear, logical, in line with partners’ role in the project, etc.).		C.4 Activities

Maximum score is 5 points (C2.1)

Table 5: Operational assessment criteria/work plan

Nº.	Assessment question	Sub-questions for assessment	Scores	Section in Application Form
C 3	**Workplan**		**0-1-2-3-4-5**	
C3.1	To what extent is the work plan realistic, consistent and coherent?	• Proposed activities are relevant and lead to planned outputs and result.		C.4 and C.5
		• The time plan is realistic.		C.6
		• Activities, and outputs are in a logical time sequence.		C.6
C3.2	To what extent are communication activities appropriate to reach the relevant target groups and stakeholders?	• Communication objective is relevant and is expected to contribute to project-specific objective.		C.4 Objective in work package
		• Communication activities are appropriate to reach the relevant target groups and stakeholders.		C.4 Activities in work package

Maximum score is 5 points (C3.1 – C3.2))

Table 6: Operational assessment criteria/budget

Nº.	Assessment question	Sub-questions for assessment	Scores	Section in Application Form
C4	**Budget**		**0-1-2-3-4-5**	
C4.1	To what extent is the budget built up in an appropriate way?	The project budget appears proportionate to the proposed work plan, project outputs and project's contribution to programme indicators.		

Maximum score is 5 points (C4.1)

Besides the strategic and operational criteria also **horizontal principles** shall be assessed. For such criteria no scores shall be given because the projects are not comparable.

For IP SI-HU, it is crucial that **horizontal principles** are integrated in the planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the project activities. During the whole life cycle of the projects, partners are requested to consider actions cross-cutting project activities, taking into account the horizontal principles of the EU[12]. More precisely, actions should be planned, implemented and reported considering the horizontal principles of **equal opportunity, non-discrimination, gender equality and environmental sustainability.** The Project Partners shall indicate the contribution of the project to horizontal principles as positive, neutral or negative and provide a short justification. A negative assessment of one of the horizontal principles will lead to project rejection.

Table 7: Specific horizontal principles for the programme

Reference	Nr.	Horizontal principles	
Horizontal principle	C6	The project makes a positive contribution to programme horizontal principle equal opportunities and non-discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.	**POSITIVE or NEUTRAL or NEGATIVE**
Horizontal principle	C7	The project makes a positive contribution to programme horizontal principle equality between men and women, gender mainstreaming and the integration of a gender perspective.	**POSITIVE or NEUTRAL or NEGATIVE**
Horizontal principle	C8	The project makes a positive contribution to programme horizontal principle sustainable development as set out in Article 11 TFEU, taking into account the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement and the "Do No Significant Harm" principle.	**POSITIVE or NEUTRAL or NEGATIVE**

3.2.1.3 Explanation of the Monitoring Committee decisions

The final decision on the projects is taken by the Monitoring Committee. Project proposals can be projects **being approved or rejected**.

3.2.1.4 Contracting

Upon decision taken by the MC, the Lead Partner is notified by the Managing Authority whether the proposed project is approved or rejected. The timeframe to inform the Lead Partner about the decision of the Monitoring Committee is 30 days from the Monitoring Committee meeting. Prior to signing the ERDF Subsidy Contract, face-to-face meetings are organised in order to clarify possible issues resulting from the quality check or Monitoring Committee decision. The Lead Partner of the approved project signs the contract for the total ERDF funds with the Managing Authority (see the sample of the Subsidy Contract in the Application Pack).

3.2.1.5 Resolution of complaints

Assessment and selection processes described in this Manual ensure a fair and transparent consideration of all received proposals. The rules set in this section are aimed at providing a transparent complaint procedure against the decisions taken by Programme authorities during the project assessment and selection processes.

The Lead Partner is the only one entitled to file a complaint. The right to complain against a decision regarding the project selection applies to the Lead Partner whose project application was not selected for co-financing by the Programme during the project assessment and selection process. The complaint must be lodged against the notification issued by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat on the basis of the decision by the Monitoring Committee as the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat's notification is the only legally binding act for the Lead Partner during the project assessment and selection processes. **The complaint can be lodged only against the outcomes of the administrative and eligibility**

[12] *Horizontal Principles as per Article 9 of the Regulation (eu) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021*

assessment. As regards quality assessment, the applicants can request further information and justification from the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat and can ask for face-to-face consultations. However, a complaint against quality assessment is not possible since the decision of the Monitoring Committee is final.

Prior to filing a complaint, the Lead Partner is strongly recommended to request additional technical or legal information from the Joint Secretariat within the timeframe available for submitting a complaint. The information requested may apply only to the application submitted by the respective Lead Partner. If the Lead Partner is not satisfied with the received additional information from the Joint Secretariat, it may decide to lodge a formal complaint. The complaint must be submitted in the Slovenian and Hungarian language in written form per e-mail to the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat of the Programme within 14 calendar days after the Lead Partner has been officially notified by the Managing Authority of the results of the project selection process.

The complaint must include:

a. name and address of the Lead Partner;
b. reference number and acronym of the application which is the subject of the complaint;
c. clearly indicated reasons for the complaint specifying what failures or mistakes had been made during the assessment of the proposal and including a clear reference to the relevant documents within the Application pack;
d. any supporting documents.

The relevant documentation must be provided for the sole purpose of supporting the complaint and may not alter the quality or content of the assessed application. No other grounds for the complaint than indicated above in point c are taken into account during the complaint procedure.

A complaint is rejected without further examination if it is submitted after the set deadline or if formal requirements are not observed.

The decision if the complaint is justified or to be rejected is taken by the Complaint Panel by consensus. In case it is justified, the case is sent back to the Monitoring Committee to review the project application and its assessment. The Complaint Panel has to provide the Monitoring Committee with a written justification with explicit reference to the criteria established in the complaint procedure.

The complaint procedure, from the receipt of the complaint to the communication of the Complaint Panel's decision to the Lead Partner, should be resolved within no longer than 30 calendar days.

The decision of the Complaint Panel is final, binding on all parties and not subject to any further complaint proceedings within the Programme on the basis of the same grounds.

The complaints differ according to the subject of the complaint.

- ✓ Complaints related to the selection process

Project Lead Partners are informed in writing form about the reasons why the application was not eligible or approved. Any complaint against the notification issued by the Managing Authority or the Joint Secretariat on the basis of the decision of the Monitoring Committee regarding the selection process must be submitted by the Lead Partner to the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat. The Managing Authority, assisted by the Joint Secretariat, examines and prepares the answer regarding the merit of the complaint. The decision if the complaint is justified or to be rejected is taken by the Complaint Panel. The latter only examines (if needed) the cases related to the formal/administrative aspects of the selection process. In all other cases, the complaint is dealt with by the Managing Authority.

- ✓ Complaints related to the decisions made by the Managing Authority or the Joint Secretariat regarding project implementation

Any complaints in relation to the decisions made by the Managing Authority or the Joint Secretariat regarding project implementation and the corresponding procedures (based on the ERDF Subsidy Contract or Monitoring Committee decisions) must be submitted by the Lead Partner to the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat following the provisions laid down in the ERDF Subsidy Contract.

- ✓ Complaints related to the national control

Lead Partners or Project Partners that have complaints related to national control can file the complaint to the institution responsible for the financial control of the relevant Lead or Project Partner within the respective Member State, according to the applicable national rules.

- ✓ Complaints related to second level control (auditors)

Complaints related to second-a Second level control have to be lodged to the responsible national Audit Authority in each Member State in accordance with the applicable national rules. The complaints received under the Programme, including the content and the solutions proposed or already implemented, are reported to the Monitoring Committee. The complaint procedures set out above are without prejudice to any legal redress mechanism or process at the national level, in particular with regard to unsuccessful applicants. Where courts, public prosecutor's offices or other national institutions are competent in relation to the subject of the complaint, the Project Partner has the right to turn also to the relevant authorities. The Programme authorities, upon request by the European Commission, examine complaints submitted to the European Commission falling within the scope of their responsibilities. The Managing Authority informs the European Commission, upon request, of the results of those examinations.

4 ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURE

4.1 ELIGIBILITY PROVISIONS

4.1.1 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY PROVISIONS

According to the Article 53 of the CPR Regulation for projects, where the total costs do not exceed 200.000 EUR, the contribution provided to the beneficiary from the ERDF shall take the form of simplified costs options (unit costs, flat rates or lump sums).

According to Article 24 of the Interreg Regulation, cross-border cooperation programmes (Interreg A) shall support projects of limited financial volume, either directly within the programme or within one or more small project funds. Since the support to small projects under a Small Project Fund, as defined in Article 2(10) of the CPR and Article 25 of the Interreg Regulation is **not foreseen** in the Interreg VI-A Slovenia-Hungary programme, it was agreed to implement projects of limited financial volume **directly within the programme**. These projects are referred to as **"small-scale projects"**.

Complementary to Chapter 6 of the IP SI-HU 2021-2027 (Indication of support to small-scale projects) and on the decision on the general approach to the separate Open Call for Small-Scale Project Proposals, this chapter provides eligibility information on small-scale projects.

4.1.1.1 General eligibility requirements

Expenditure in the form of SCO shall be eligible for funding when it is in accordance with the regulatory framework described in subchapter 1.3 and fulfils all general eligibility requirements listed below:

- It relates to the costs of implementing a project in the last valid Application Form in Jems;
- It relates to project relevant activities that did not receive support from other EU Funds or other contributions from third parties, except national contributions to the programme co-financing;
- It is essential for the achievement of the project objectives/outputs and it would not be incurred if the project was not carried out;
- The activities of a Project Partner were specified in the latest approved Application Form and were carried out in the period between the project start and end date set in the Subsidy Contract;
- Expenditures are included in the form of simplified cost options and shall not be controlled by the Programme itself, but their accounting shall respect all relevant national rules;
- The project-relevant obligatory documents are available as mentioned in chapter 4.1.2;
- The report has been validated by the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat.

4.1.1.2 Non-eligible costs

Costs related to any type of small-scale project in the form of real costs or the part of unit cost/lump sum exceeding the set value are not eligible.

The actual costs borne by the project partner in relation to the delivered outputs/results will not be checked by the Programme bodies.

4.1.1.3 Expenditure supported by financial contributions of third parties and prevention of double-funding

To prevent double funding, any project expenditure financed fully (in 100%) by financial contributions from third parties is not eligible in the frame of IP SI-HU. Similarly, financial contributions from third parties specifically earmarked for financing eligible costs of the project fully (in 100%) are ineligible. Third parties refer to national, regional or local sources.

Project related costs are financed by the following resources:

a) programme (EU/ERDF) co-financing (up to 80%)
b) national contributions[13] (at least 20% altogether) which may be available in the form of own resources (public or private) or third party financial contribution (public or private)

The sum of these resources must equal the amount of project related expenditure (as detailed in the project budget). The involvement of other EU or third party resources in excess of the incurred expenditure reduces the programme financing, otherwise it is considered as double financing and is forbidden.

If more project related expenditure is incurred by a Project Partner during implementation than foreseen in the approved budget (or in its valid modifications) this must be financed by partners' own contribution. Such additional financing (matching additional expenditure with additional funds) ensures the complete implementation of the project and is not considered as double financing.

Costs to be reimbursed in the form of SCOs cannot be claimed in more than one programme.

4.1.1.4 Time-wise eligibility of expenditure

Generally, the period of eligibility starts with 1st January 2022 the earliest and ends with 31st December 2028 the latest. As a main rule, the costs for the implementation of an approved project are eligible from its start date until its end date as set in the Subsidy Contract.

On this basis, Project Partners may decide at their own risk to start the implementation of the project after the deadline of submission of the applications but even before the Monitoring Committee decision for funding.

4.1.2 SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

To better respond to the objectives of the new programme and to offer a new form of cooperation a new possibility of projects with shorter duration and smaller budget is offered to the programme area. In general, small-scale projects involve less project partners compared to standard projects.
Three types of small-scale projects[14] were defined, that address the specific aim of building up mutual trust, in particular by enhancing people-to-people activities from a thematic and/or territorial perspective. Each type of the project has its own specific SCO calculated, that shall be applied when drafting the budget of the project.

This chapter gives specific provisions regarding the eligibility of small-scale projects, forms of reimbursement as well as audit trail on each of these three types of projects:

1. Type I - Cooperation projects based on unit costs,
2. Type II – Mutual trust building projects based on lump sum, and

[13] *In accordance with the Hungarian Government Decree 241/2023. (VI.20.) on the implementation of cross-border Interreg programmes in the programming period 2021-2027 for Hungarian partners 45% or 50% of the partner's verified total eligible costs shall be provided as a national contribution.*

[14] *As defined in Appendix I to the Interreg VI-A Slovenia-Hungary Programme; V 1.2, November 14, 2022.*

3. Type III – Employee exchange projects based on lump sum.

The forms of reimbursement are as follows:

- **unit costs** (Type I), or
- **lump sum** (Type II and III).

Project applicants have to consider the total maximum budget size of a small-scale project is 31.250 EUR total costs and not exceeding 25.000 EUR ERDF.

The calculated SCOs are applicable **only for small-scale projects**, which are implemented exclusively **under PSO 3.2**.

4.1.2.1 Type I - Cooperation projects based on UNIT COST

a) <u>Description of the project type:</u>

- The project is at most 1 year long and supports physical events that build up mutual trust, and enable or improve cooperation of institutions and target groups;
- At least two bilateral events (one per member state) per project are required; more than 2 events are allowed but the budget of the project must not surpass total value of 31,250 EUR;
- Each event must be at least 4 hrs long;
- The minimum of 25 participants per event is required;
- Events include e.g. workshops, conferences, seminars, trainings, tournaments, festivities and camps;
- Possible project partners are smaller institutions, such as NGOs, schools, SMEs and different kind of associations.

b) Indicator triggering reimbursement:

- Completed event.

c) Simplified cost option (SCO):

- Unit cost.

d) Unit of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement:

- Completed event.

e) Amount per unit of measurement of the SCO:

125 EUR total per participant per event day

f) Costs covered by the SCO:

The unit costs cover **all costs** occurring in the phase of preparation as well as implementation of the project (e.g staff costs, administrative costs, travel and accommodation costs, translation/interpretation costs, venue (room, equipment), moderation of the event and catering).

g) Verification of the achievements of the units:

<u>Obligatory documents to verify the achievements of the units delivered:</u>

- **Signed ERDF Subsidy Contract**;

- **List of participants** (containing the project logo, name of the event, date, place, ordinal number of participants, name, surname, country, e-mail address and signature)[15];
- **Event reports** about each completed event with clear description of the event implementation (in words and picture where and when the event took place; which target groups attended and what was presented, offered and shared with the participants and in what way);
- **Invitations and photos** of the implemented events.

Management verifications:

- The MA/JS will carry out the management verifications for the reimbursements based on the obligatory documents listed above, that are setting out the conditions for support (signed subsidy contract) including all conditions for event implementation and reporting (the proof that the event took place: list of participants and a final report containing information about the completed event including date, location, invitation, photos, duration).
- The payment will be depending on the number of participants at the events.

Arrangements to collect and store the relevant data/documents (audit trail):

- The original documents are kept by the project partners and shall be made available in case of site visits and audit controls.
- The obligatory documents listed above and other possible relevant data/documents will be collected by project partners and uploaded to Jems monitoring system in the process of reporting.

4.1.2.2 Type II – Mutual trust building projects based on LUMP SUM

a) Description of the project type:

- The project is at most 1 year long and supports physical events that build up mutual trust, and enable or improve cooperation of institutions and target groups;
- Two 1-day bilateral events, one per each member state are obligatory;
- Open events are considered, with approximately 200 people attending; such as concerts and markets/fairs;
- Possible project partners are smaller institutions, such as NGOs, schools, SMEs and different kind of associations.

b) Indicator triggering reimbursement:

- Completed events.

c) Simplified cost option:

- Lump sum.

d) Unit of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement:

- 2 events.

e) Amount per unit of measurement of the SCO: **31.250 EUR total per project**

f) Costs covered by the SCO:

[15] *In duly justified cases some of these requirements are not needed.*

The lump sum covers **all costs** occurring in the phase of preparation as well as implementation of the project (e.g. staff costs, administrative costs, travel and accommodation costs, translation/interpretation costs, venue (room, equipment), moderation of the event).

g) Verification of the achievements of the units:

Obligatory documents to verify the achievements of the units delivered:

- **Signed ERDF Subsidy Contract**;
- **List of service providers** (e.g. in the case of a cultural event, a list of program providers is required; in the case of a market/fair, a list of suppliers of goods and/or services is required); parts of the list of service providers are project logo, name of the event, date, place, ordinal number of service provider, name (of e.g. society, company), country, e-mail address and signature[16];
- **Event reports** about each completed event that must clearly describe the event implementation (in words and picture where and when the event took place; who was the service provider, which target groups attended and what was provided, offered and shared with the participants and in what way);
- **Announcements and/or invitations** to the events with the program and photos of the implemented events.

Management verifications:

- The MA/JS will carry out the management verifications for the reimbursements based on the obligatory documents listed above, that are setting out the conditions for support (signed subsidy contract) including conditions for event implementation and reporting (the proof that the event took place: list of service providers and a final report containing information about the completed event including date, location, invitation with program, photos, duration.
- The realisation of the project is the key to trigger the full payment (after the last event is implemented). The control thus consists of checking whether the events were fully implemented and the outputs/results were delivered in line with the conditions set by the programme authorities (the outputs/results need to be well documented).

Arrangements to collect and store the relevant data/documents (audit trail):

- The original documents are kept by the project partners and shall be made available in case of site visits and audit controls.
- The obligatory documents listed above and other possible relevant data/documents will be collected by project partners and uploaded to Jems monitoring system in the process of reporting.

4.1.2.3 Type III - Exchange projects based on LUMP SUM

a) Description of the project type:

- The projects are up to 1 year long and support cooperation in the field of education and labour market (emphasis on language education) to achieve a build-up of mutual trust, and enable or improve important cooperation of institutions and target groups;

[16] *In duly justified cases some of these requirements are not needed.*

- Within the project for the period of 1 year one employee is full-time working in host country, at location of the other project partner[17];
- Project partners represent institutions in the programme area, which consists of budget users (i.e. state bodies and self-governing local communities, public agencies, public funds, public institutes and public economic institutes, other public law entities that are indirect users of the state budget or local community budget), associations and small institutions in the programme area.

b) Indicator triggering reimbursement:
- 1 FTE.

c) Simplified cost option:
- Lump sum.

d) Unit of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement:
- Implemented project.

e) Amount per unit of measurement of the SCO: **31.250 EUR total per project**

f) Categories of costs covered by the SCO:

The exchange lump sum covers costs occurring in the phase of project preparation and implementation (e.g. staff costs and administrative costs).

g) Verification of the achievements of the units:

Obligatory documents to verify the achievements of the units delivered:
- **Signed ERDF Subsidy Contract**;
- **Signed employment contract** or another relevant act by which the employee is assigned to the project and in which there is a clear definition of his tasks. The employment contract is concluded between the project partner and the employee.
- **A final report** at the end of the project duration. The report must be approved by the responsible person of the hosting project partner, and it must clearly show that **the exchange duration was for 1 full year (1 FTE), what was done by the employee and where**.

Management verifications:
- The MA/JS will carry out the management verifications for the reimbursements based on the obligatory documents listed above, that are setting out the conditions for support;
- It is essential to get assurance that the outputs/results reported are real. The control thus consists of checking whether the project was **fully implemented** and the **outputs/results were delivered** in line with the conditions set by the programme authorities (the outputs/results need to be well documented).

Arrangements to collect and store the relevant data/documents (audit trail):
- The original documents are kept by the project partners and shall be made available in case of site visits and/or audit controls.
- The obligatory documents listed above and other possible relevant data/documents will be collected by project partners and uploaded to Jems monitoring system in the process of reporting.

[17] *It can be also implemented in the way for example that 2 people (coming from one or both member states) are employed within one project, each employee for the period of 6 months, respectively, **or any other combination corresponding to 1 person/1 year = full time equivalent (1 FTE)**.*

5 REPORTING ON THE PROJECT PROCESS

All projects will report on the implementation of project activities. Prior to the submission of a project report, each Project Partner will have to prepare a **Partner Report** in the Jems and submit it, within 1 month after the end of the reporting period. As a general rule **Project Reports** have to be prepared in the Jems by the Lead Partner and submitted to the Joint Secretariat.

The LP is responsible for monitoring the timely submission of partner and project reports after the project implementation. It is recommended to make sure that the used terminology is consistent and in line with the approved Application Form.

Table 8: The indicative reporting and payment procedures.

	End of the reporting period	Submission of the Partner Report for validation	Submission of the Project Report to the Joint Secretariat	Checking of Project progress report by Joint Secretariat	Payment to the Lead Partner
Deadline	☺	1 month after the end of the reporting period	Approx. 1 month from submitting the Partner Report to control (including the time for the verification of the report by the control)	1 month from the receipt of the Project Report + additional time for clarifications with the Lead Partner (if needed)	Approx. 3 - 5 months after the end of reporting period

5.1 PREPARATION OF THE PARTNER REPORT

Within 1 month after the end of project implementation, each Project Partner (including the Lead Partner in the role of the Project Partner) must complete a partner report in which it provides the necessary information on performed activities in the reporting period. The report with all supporting documents needs to be submitted via Jems. The partner report serves as a reporting tool for Project Partners towards the Lead Partner.

Expenditure reported in form of SCOs are not required to be supported by the specific costs based documentation. The certificate is visible for the relevant Project Partner, the Lead Partner, and all relevant programme authorities.

5.2 PREPARATION OF THE PROJECT REPORT

To follow the project implementation and as a basis for the reimbursement of the ERDF part to the project, a project report has to be submitted by the Lead Partner to the JS. The reports provide qualitative information on the results achieved and lessons learnt. The information reported by the projects should be as clear and coherent as possible.

Each Project Report is checked by JS, namely the JS will carry out the verifications for the reimbursements based on the obligatory documents[18], that are setting out the conditions for support (signed subsidy contract) including all conditions for event implementation and reporting.

In case the information in the submitted report is not sufficient for properly checking the progress and reimbursing the funds, the JS requests the LP to provide clarifications and to amend the Project Report within a given deadline. Once the check by the JS is positively concluded, the JS notifies the MA on the completion of the check. The MA carries out additional control steps and if no additional issues are raised the report is submitted to the body performing the accounting function for the payment of ERDF funds.

The **content part** of the Project Report provides a description of project activities, output and progress made towards achieving results during the respective reporting period.

The **financial parts** of the Project Report present the expenditure in the reporting period and consist only of SCO expenditures, for which a request for reimbursement is submitted to the MA/JS together with the report.

The partnership is expected to implement the activities and cover the costs according to the approved Application Form and should always keep in mind that the project is monitored against the approved Application Form.

Lead Partners are advised to use Project Reports as efficient communication tools: be concise and to the point while reflecting on the overall progress of the project. The content part of the reports should summarise the implementation of the activities and their outcome(s). A brief, relevant and informative description is better than a profuse and detailed account of activities without a clear relation to the project and its action plan. In this respect, project reports should focus on the implementation of the project itself, rather than on each partner's activities. Lead Partners are encouraged to ensure the informative quality and consistency of the reports. Accompanying the Project Report, Lead Partners should provide possible relevant supporting material such as press articles, social media activities etc. These should be included in the report and copies should be uploaded to Jems in electronic format when possible.

5.3 REPORTING IN THE JOINT ELECTRONIC MONITORING SYSTEM (JEMS)

To access the reporting, you have to log in to the Jems system, which can be accessed at the following link https://jems.si-hu.eu/. If you are not registered in the Jems yet, see Chapter 3 of this manual (Access and registration).

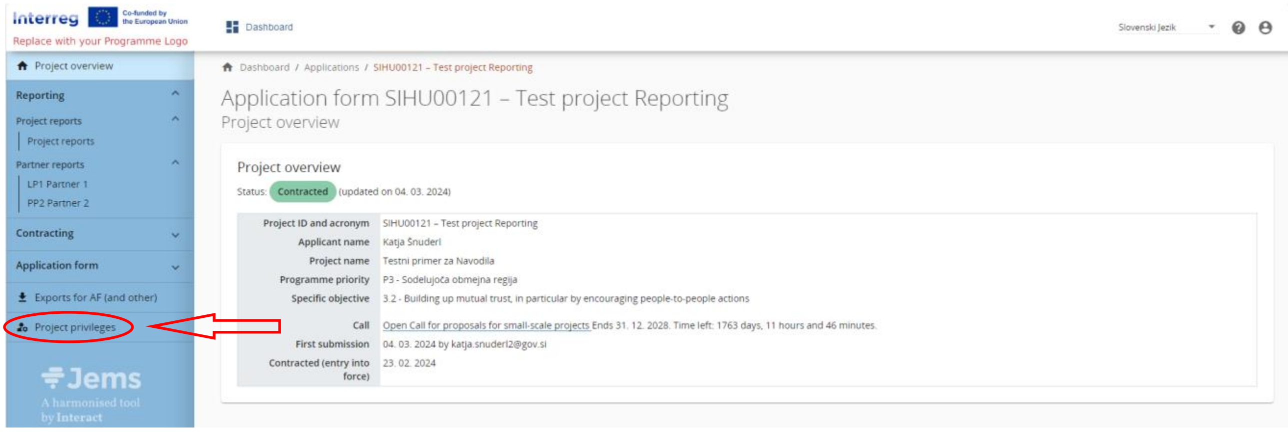
5.3.1 PARTNER REPORT IN JEMS

The Partner Report has to be prepared in the national language of the Project Partner. When a project status in the system Jems has been set to "Contracted", the Reporting section is available. Each Project Partner has to submit a Partner Report at the end of the project.

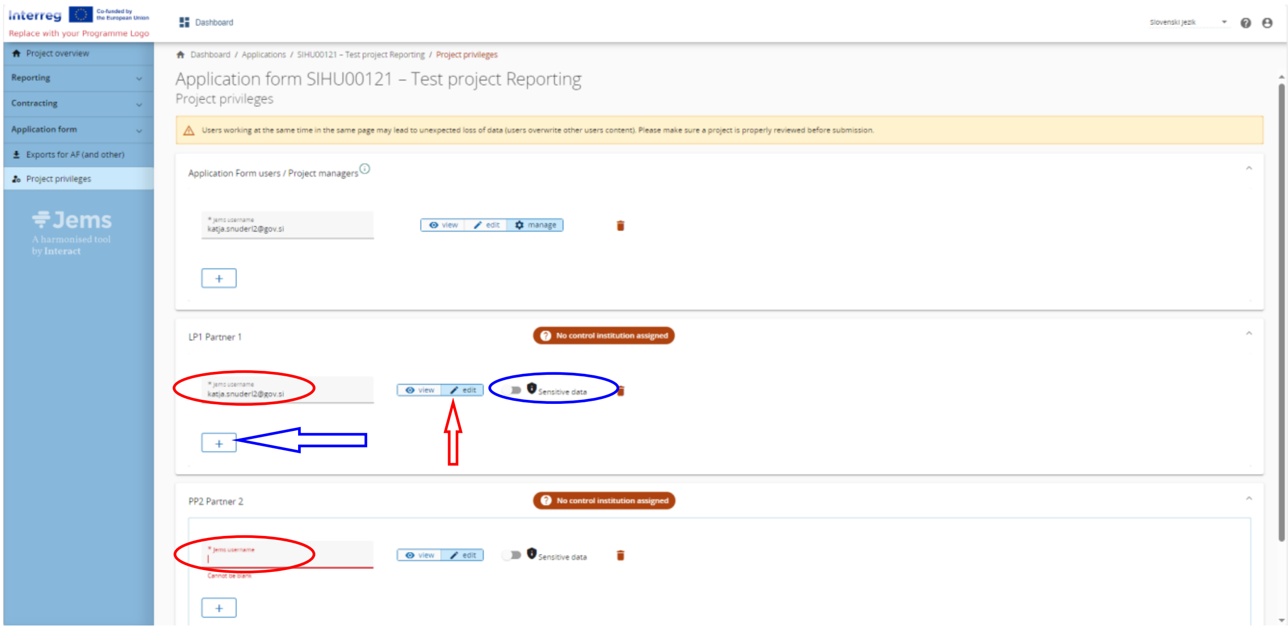
The Project Partners can access the reporting section in Jems only after the Lead Partner enters all Project Partners into the system. Users do not need any special privilege to create and/or submit a Partner

[18] *For more detailes please see Chapter 4 of this manual.*

Report. The access to a Partner Report is granted by the assignment of users as partners by the Lead Partner in the "**Project privileges**" section (see print screen below).

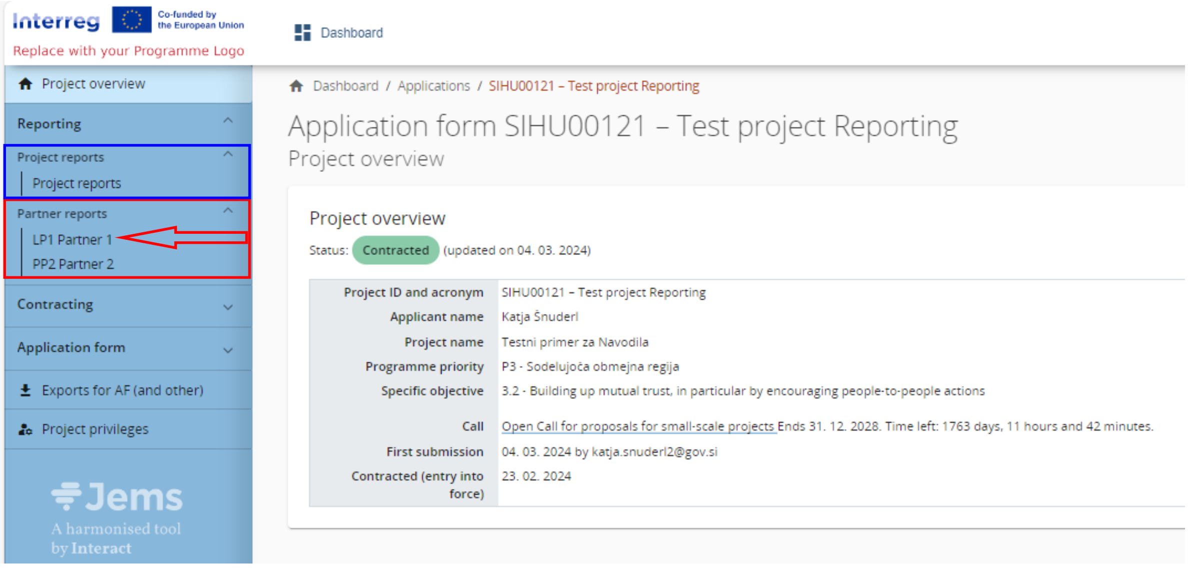


By clicking on "**Project privileges**" following screen will appear.

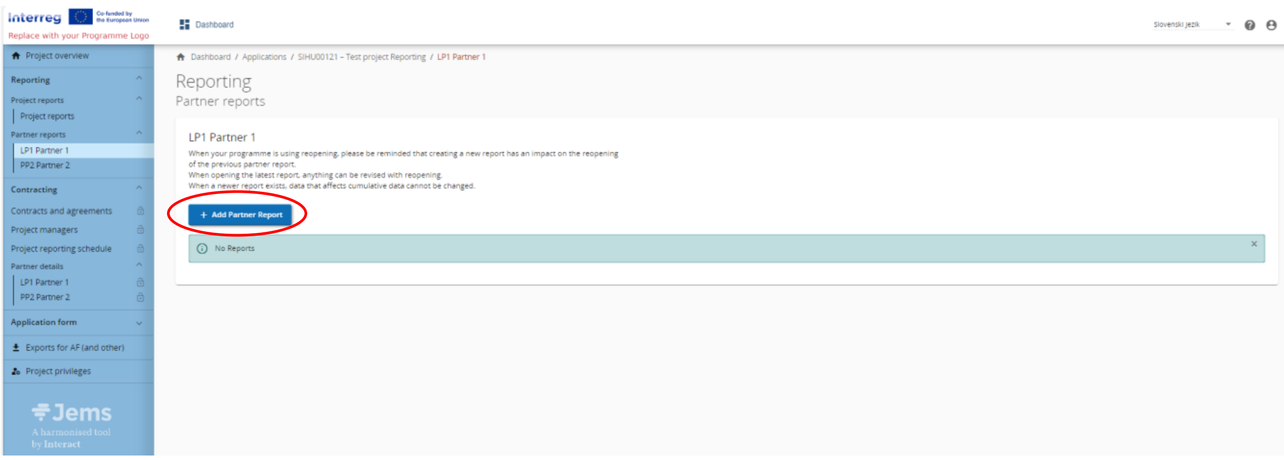


The Lead Partner has to enter the Jems username in the field "Jems username" (marked with the red circle) and add an additional user for this Project Partner with the "+" button. Only users with edit privileges can create and submit a Partner Report (red arrow). Sensitive data enables protection of person related data according to GDPR. Users with active flag are able to mark (and view) sensitive data in List of expenditure and Procurement section in Partner Reports.

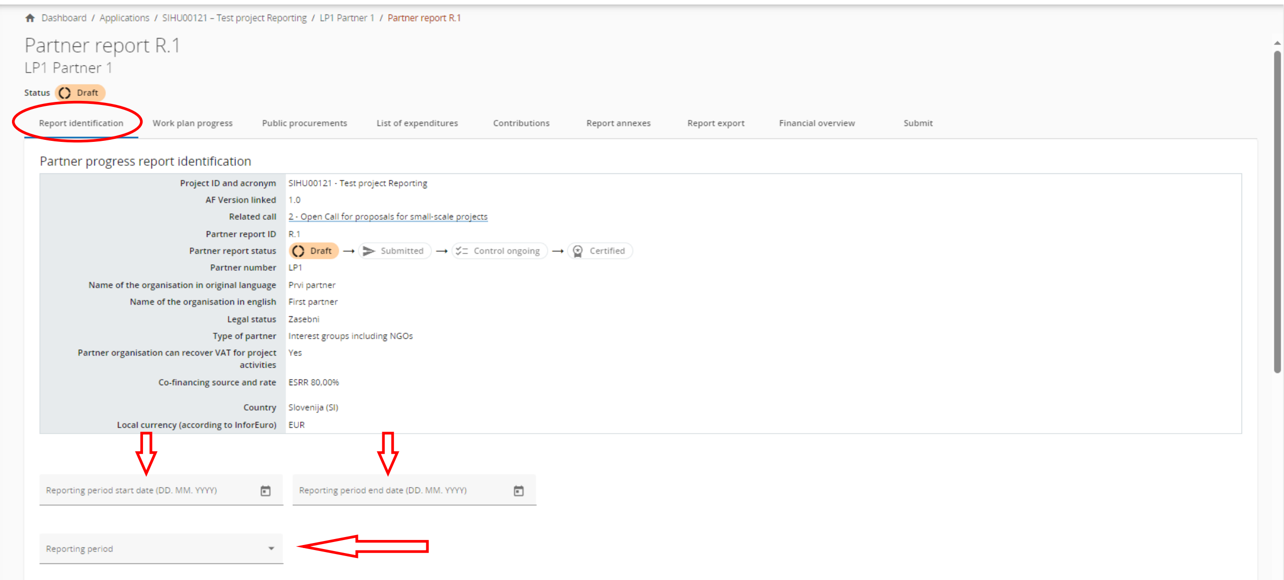
The user can start with the preparation of the Partner Report by clicking on the partners abbreviation (red arrow in the following screen):



The following screen will appear:

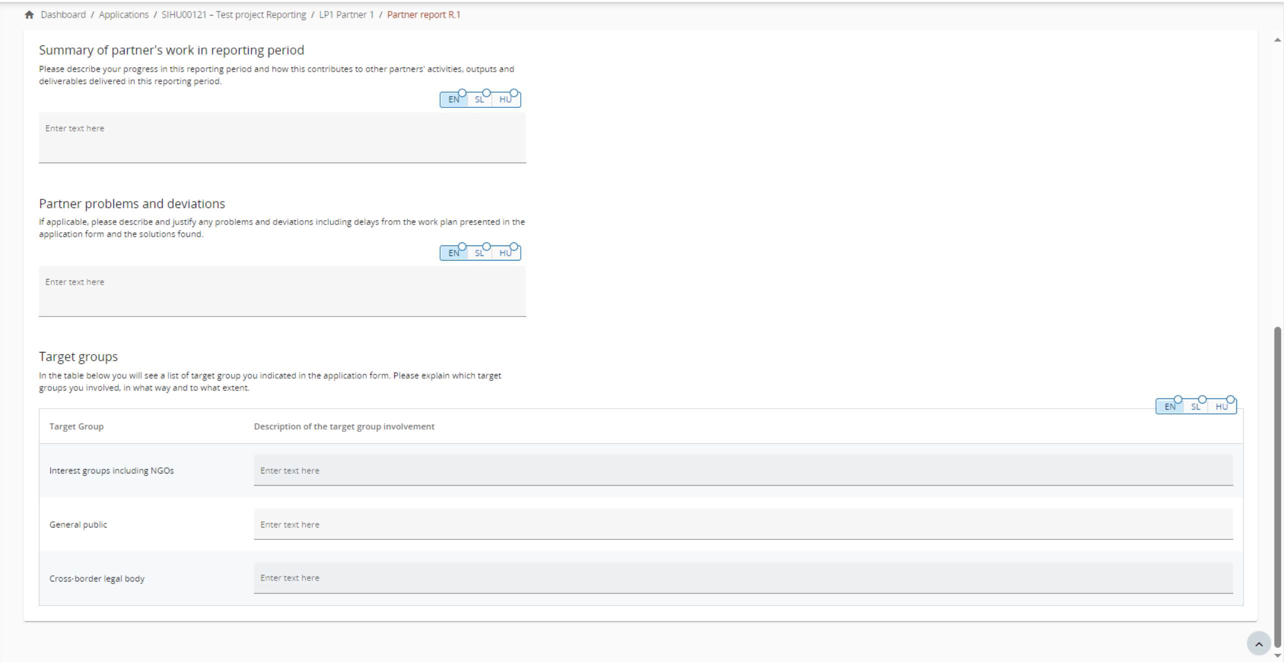


After clicking on “+ Add Partner Report”, the following screen will appear:



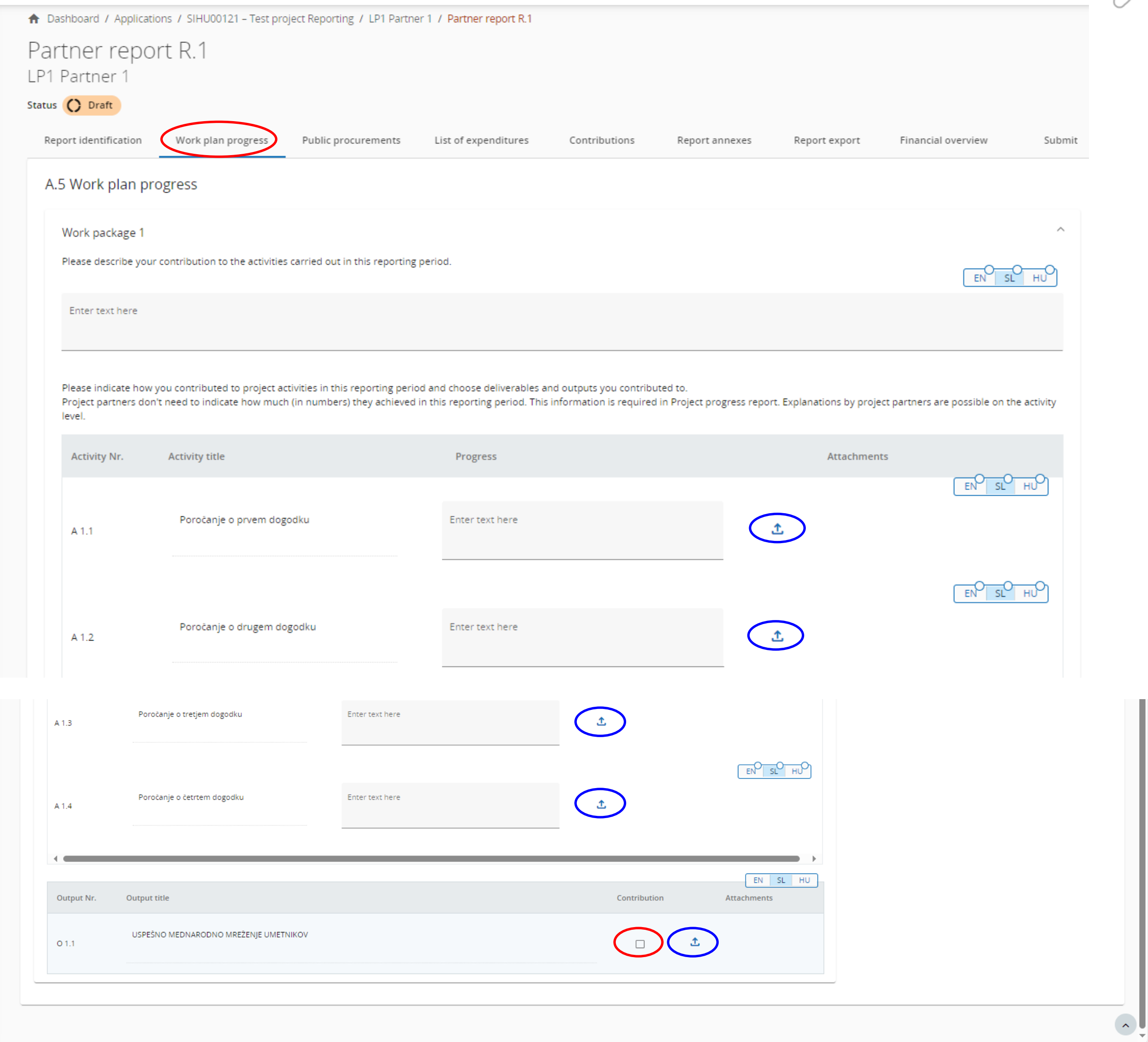
The user starts the work with the "**Report identification**", where first the reporting period from the drop-down menu (red arrow) has to be selected and then the start and the end date of the period has to be inserted. In addition, also the text input fields "Summary of partner's work in reporting period", "Partner problems and deviations" and "Target groups" have to be filled in.

The partner spending profile fields are filled in automatically (either from the Application Form or from the List of expenditures – "Current report"), except the field "Next report forecast" and "Target groups" (see next print screen) that need to be inserted/described.

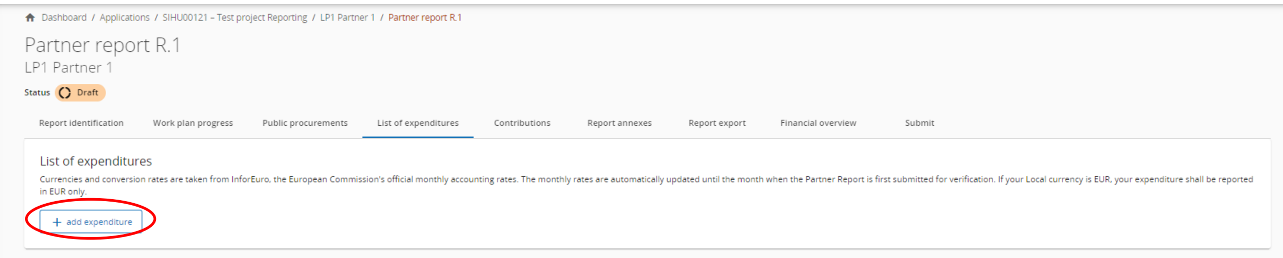


The user can continue with the tab "**Work plan progress**", that shows the work plan related data from the latest valid version of the Application Form, organised per work package.

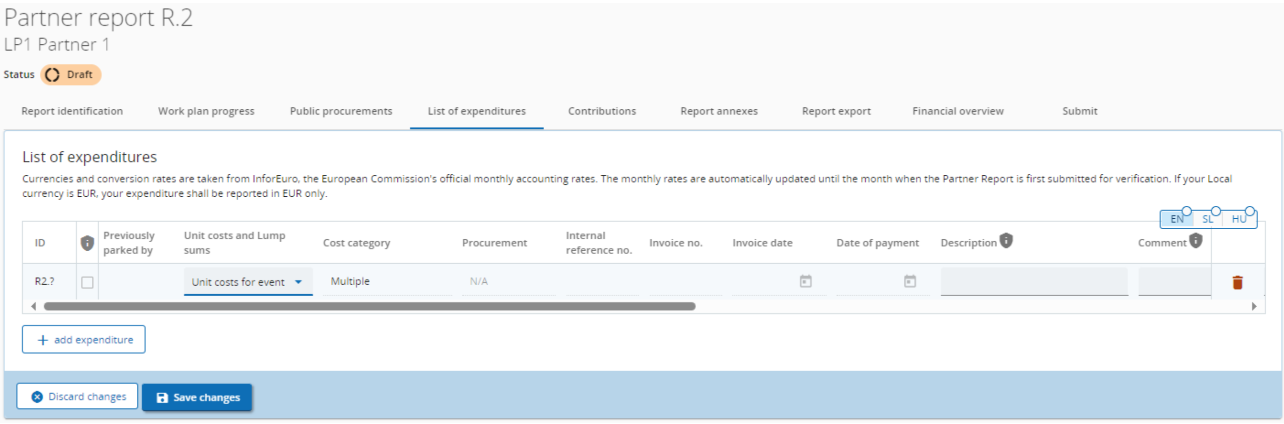
Partners have to describe the progress on certain work packages, objectives, activities and outputs and indicate if they contributed to them (by ticking the box – marked with red circles). Partner users can also upload an attachment (marked with blue circles) per item which will show up again in the Partner Report Annexes. In case multiple files need to be uploaded per item, it is recommended to upload a compressed file (e.g., zip).



Partners continue their work with the "**List of expenditures**" section, where incurred costs can be listed. By clicking the "+ add expenditure button" (red circle) the partner can add expenditure items, one by one.



When adding an expenditure item, the options columns available in the Form are showing up:



➢ Description of the input fields in the List of expenditure section:

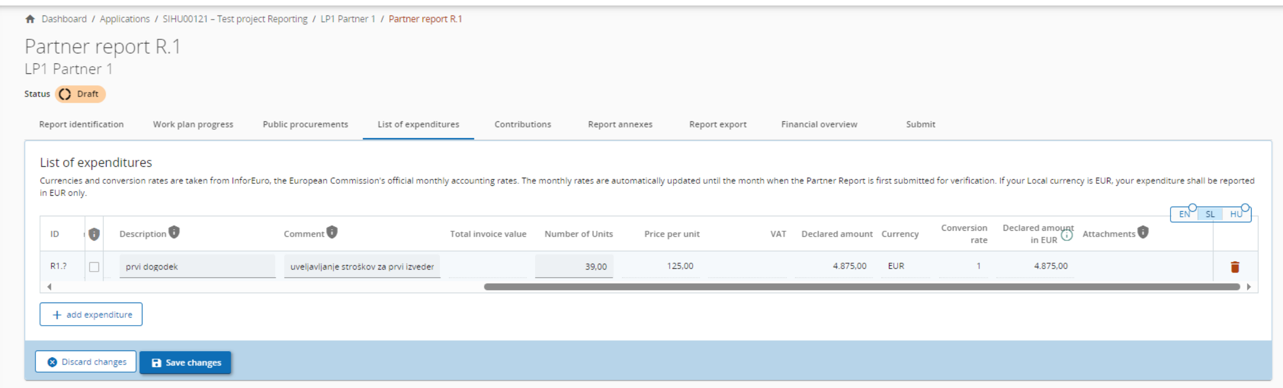
ID: This running number is always in the format R[report number].X. The ID is dynamic in draft status (reports created have seamless consecutive numbering, even if a report is deleted), however it will be frozen upon submission of the report. The number will be used later on to identify cost items coming from another (previous) report (through parking of expenditure).

GDPR flag: Partner user with privilege Sensitive data set to active in Project privileges can flag expenditure items that are GDPR sensitive. In this case, users without Sensitive data privilege active will not be able to see Description, Comment and Attachment.

Unit costs and Lump sums: This is the field where partners choose the type of SCO (*Unit cost for event* in case of Type I project and *Lump sum* in case of Type II and Type III projects).

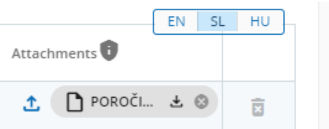
Description & **Comment**: Here the partner can provide further justification on the cost item.

Number of Units: Partners implementing a Type I project enter the number of participants for each event here. This is the value requested by the partner as a basis for reimbursement, i.e., this is the amount for which eligibility will be checked.



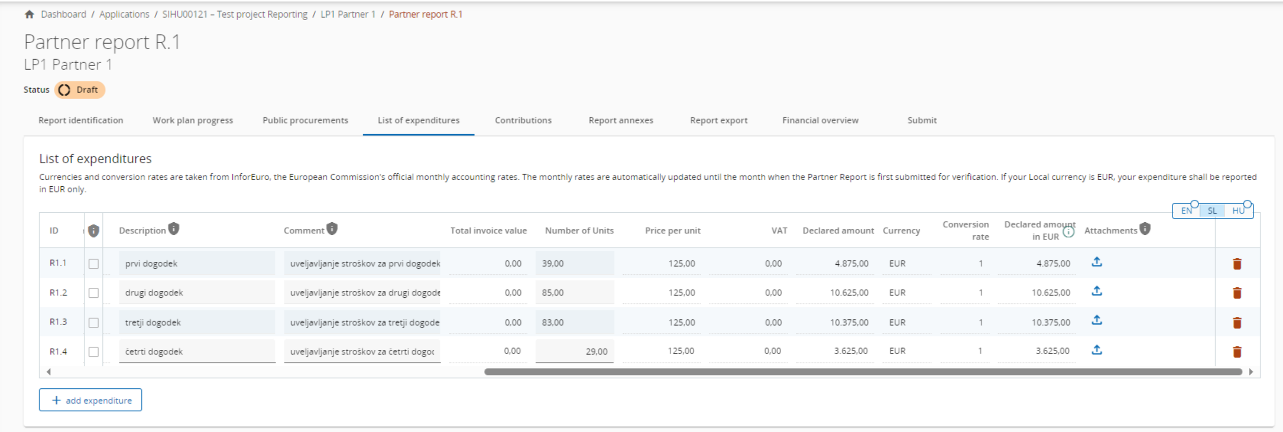
In the case of Type II and Type III projects, partners select SCO Lump sum when reporting in the partner reports and do not enter the amount of funds, since these are automatically filled in according to the breakdown in the latest version of the approved application form.

Attachments: Upon creation of an expenditure item, it is not possible to add attachments. After the item has been saved for the first time, one file can be uploaded to each item, which will show up in a chip style form (see below):

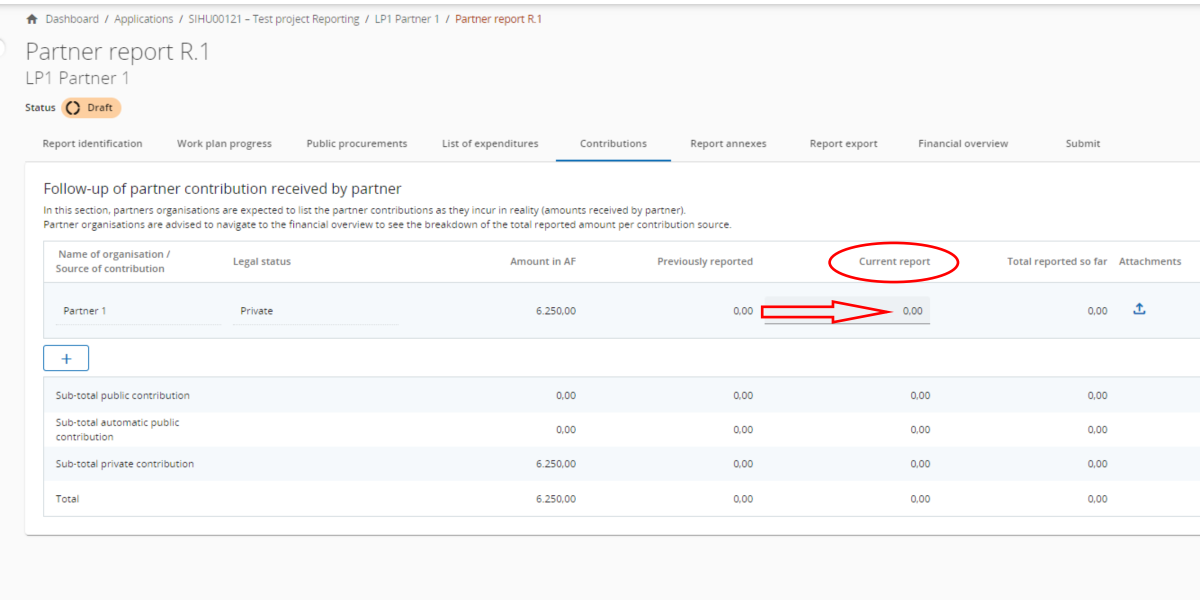


When an attachment is uploaded, the related expenditure item can only be deleted, if the related attachment is deleted before. If a user needs to upload multiple files to 1 cost item, it is recommended to upload a zip file.

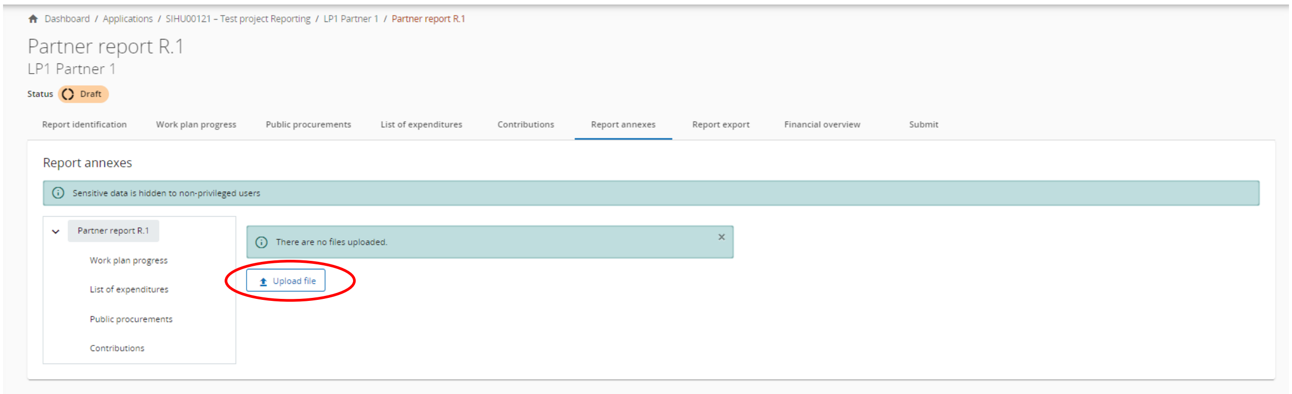
For each event carried out, one expenditure must be added.



Hereinafter the Project Partners have to fill in the section "**Contributions**". This is the section where partners should provide the information about the received partner contributions (the amounts are calculated in the section "Financial overview" under "Partner contribution"). This is a cumulative section, which records amounts received per report and adds them up in next reports. The partners have to fill in the empty fields in the column "Current report" (marked with the red circle).



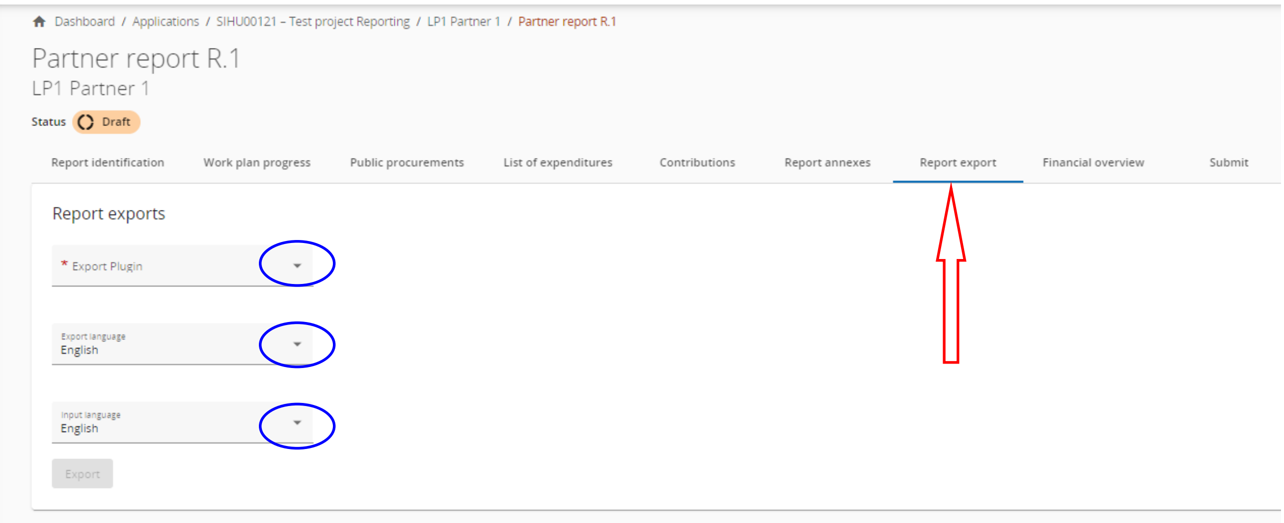
The next section is the "**Report annexes**" section. In this section is the overview off all files uploaded in the Partner Report.



The tree structure represents the places within that report where files can be uploaded. All uploads from all sections are shown in this list. Partner organisations have here the possibility to upload additional files linked to the Partner Report (by clicking the Upload file button – red circle). Since it is not always possible to add descriptions to files in the dedicated sections (due to the chip style upload), users with edit right are also allowed to add descriptions to all files in this section.

Files uploaded in this section can be deleted here, other files can only be deleted in the section where they were uploaded.

Project Partners have the possibility to export their reports in the "Report export" section.



The Project Partners need to choose from the drop-down menus (marked with blue circles) the plug-in, the export language and the input language.

In the "**Financial overview**" section are different financial overview tables (all filled in automatically). The first table is the "**Partner Expenditure – summary (in Euro)**":

Partner Expenditure - summary (in Euro)

	Partner total eligible budget	Previously reported	Current report	Total reported so far	% of total	Remaining budget	Previously validated	Previously paid
ESRR	25.000,00	0,00 parked 0,00	23.600,00 re-Included 0,00	23.600,00	94,40 %	1.400,00	0,00	0,00
Partner contribution	6.250,00	0,00 parked 0,00	5.900,00 re-Included 0,00	5.900,00	94,40 %	350,00	0,00	N/A
↳ of which Public contribution	0,00	0,00 parked 0,00	0,00 re-Included 0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00	N/A
↳ of which Automatic public contribution	0,00	0,00 parked 0,00	0,00 re-Included 0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00	N/A
↳ of which Private contribution	6.250,00	0,00 parked 0,00	5.900,00 re-Included 0,00	5.900,00	94,40 %	350,00	0,00	N/A
Total	31.250,00	0,00 parked 0,00	29.500,00 re-Included 0,00	29.500,00	94,40 %	1.750,00	0,00	0,00

The second table is the "**Partner Expenditure – breakdown per cost category (in Euro)**":

Partner Expenditure - breakdown per cost category (in Euro)

Cost category	Flat rate	Partner total eligible budget	Previously reported	Current report	Total reported so far	% of total	Remaining budget	Previously validated
Lump sum		0,00	0,00 parked 0,00	0,00 re-Included 0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00
Unit Costs		31.250,00	0,00 parked 0,00	29.500,00 re-Included 0,00	29.500,00	94,40 %	1.750,00	0,00
Total		31.250,00	0,00 parked 0,00	29.500,00 re-Included 0,00	29.500,00	94,40 %	1.750,00	0,00

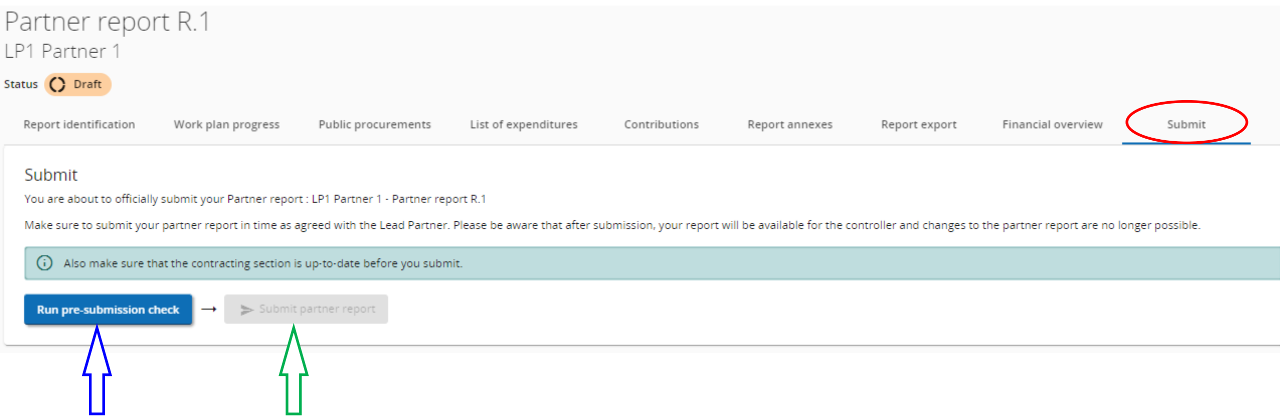
The third table is the "**Partner Expenditure – breakdown per Unit cost/Lump sum (in Euro)**" and is only relevant for Type I/Type II and Type III projects:

Partner Expenditure - breakdown per Unit cost (in Euro)

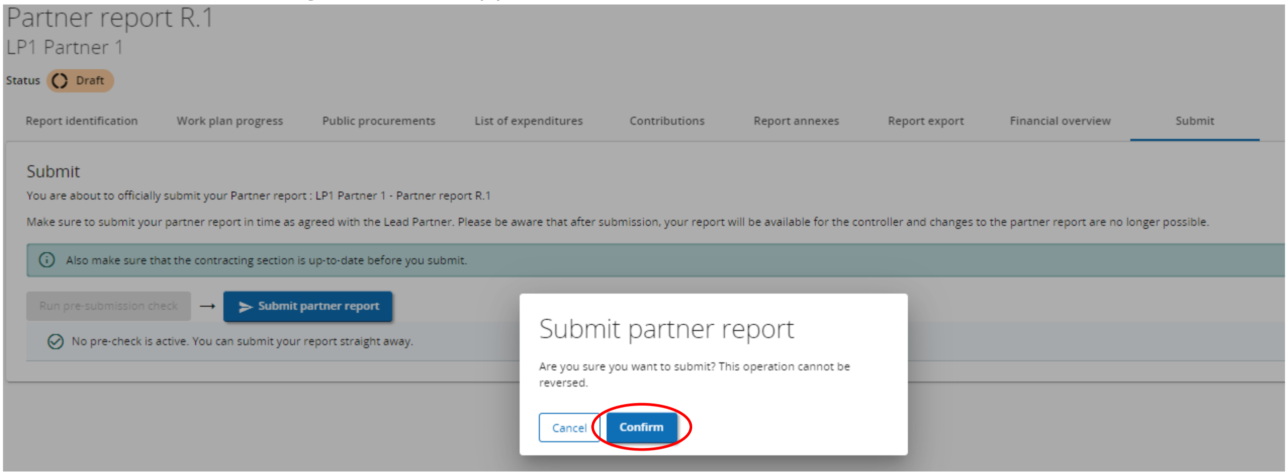
EN SL HU

Unit Cost	Partner total eligible budget	Previously reported	Current report	Total reported so far	% of total	Remaining budget	Previously validated
Unit costs for event	31.250,00	29.500,00 parked 0,00	0,00 re-Included 0,00	29.500,00	94,40 %	1.750,00	29.500,00
Total	31.250,00	29.500,00 parked 0,00	0,00 re-Included 0,00	29.500,00	94,40 %	1.750,00	29.500,00

The last step is in the reporting process is the submission of the Partner Report. The partners have to click on the "**Submit**" tab (marked with red circle) and the following screen will appear:



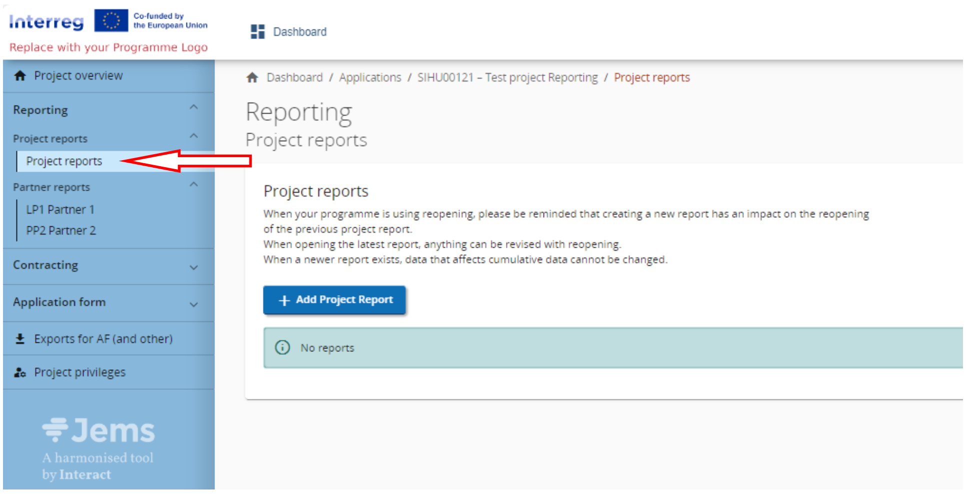
First the user has to click the button "**Run pre-submission check**" (blue arrow). If the control is successful, the button "**Submit partner report**" will be available (green arrow) and the user has to click this button. The following screen will appear:



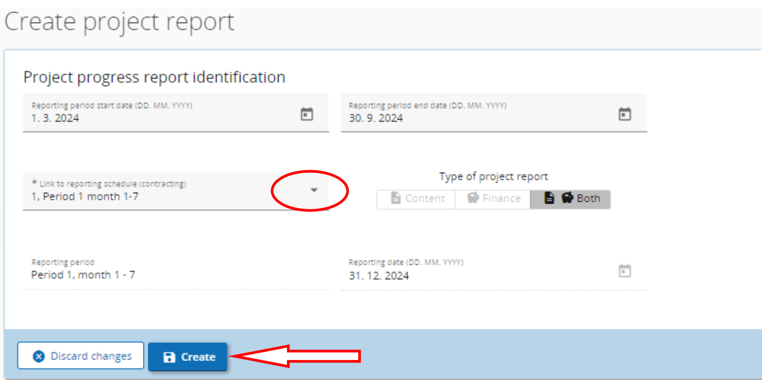
To submit the Partner Report, the Project Partner has to click on "**Confirm**".

5.3.2 PROJECT REPORT IN JEMS

The Project Report has to be provided bilingually (in Slovene and Hungarian language). Once all partner reports were submitted, the Lead Partner can start with the preparation of the Project Report. The user can start with the Project Report by clicking on "Project reports" (red arrow in following screen):

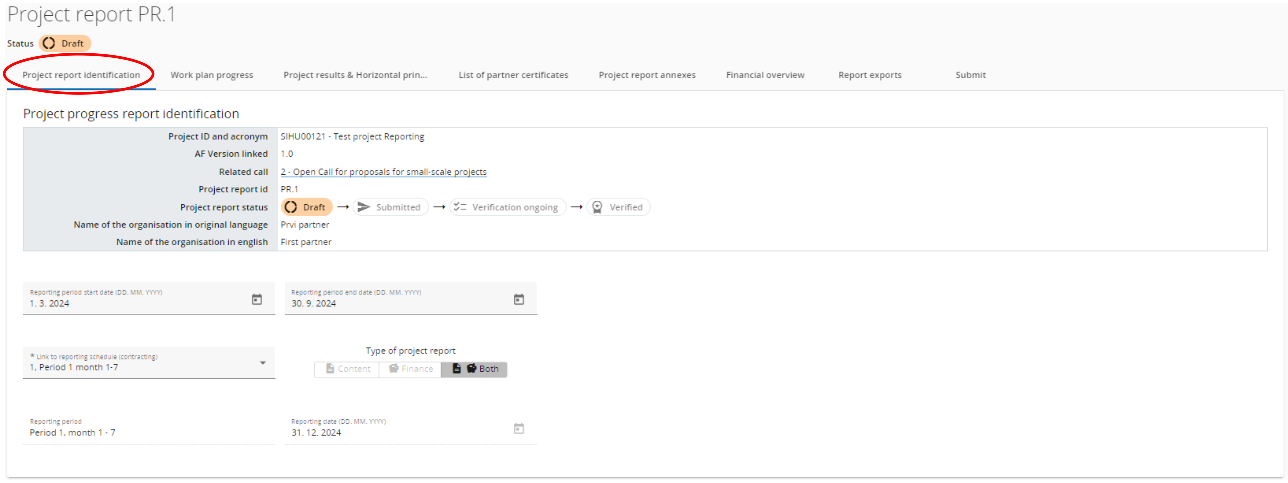


After clicking on "+ Add Partner Report", following screen will appear:

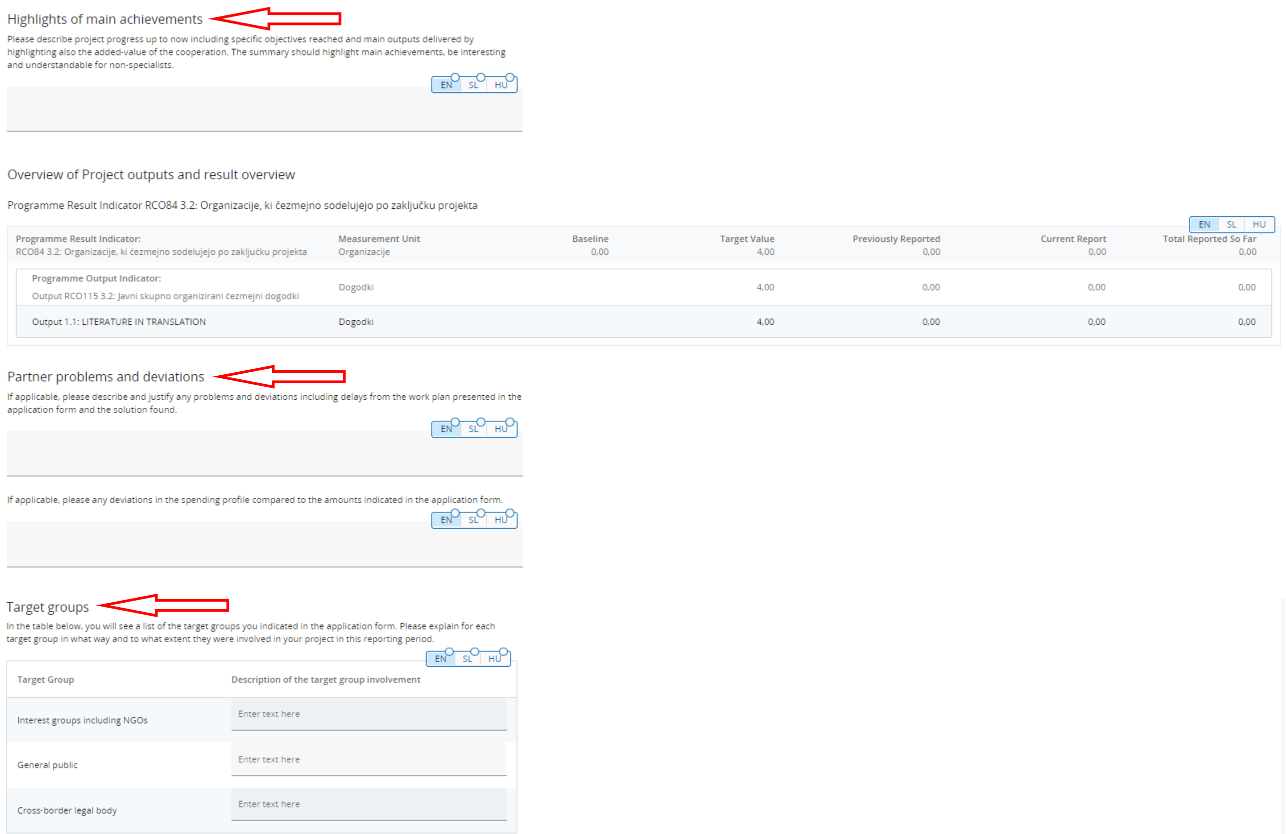


The user has to fill in the following fields “Reporting period start date”, “Reporting period end date” and select from the drop-down menu in the “Link to reporting schedule” the reporting period. All other data will be filled in automatically. In the end the user has to click on the button “Create” (red arrow).

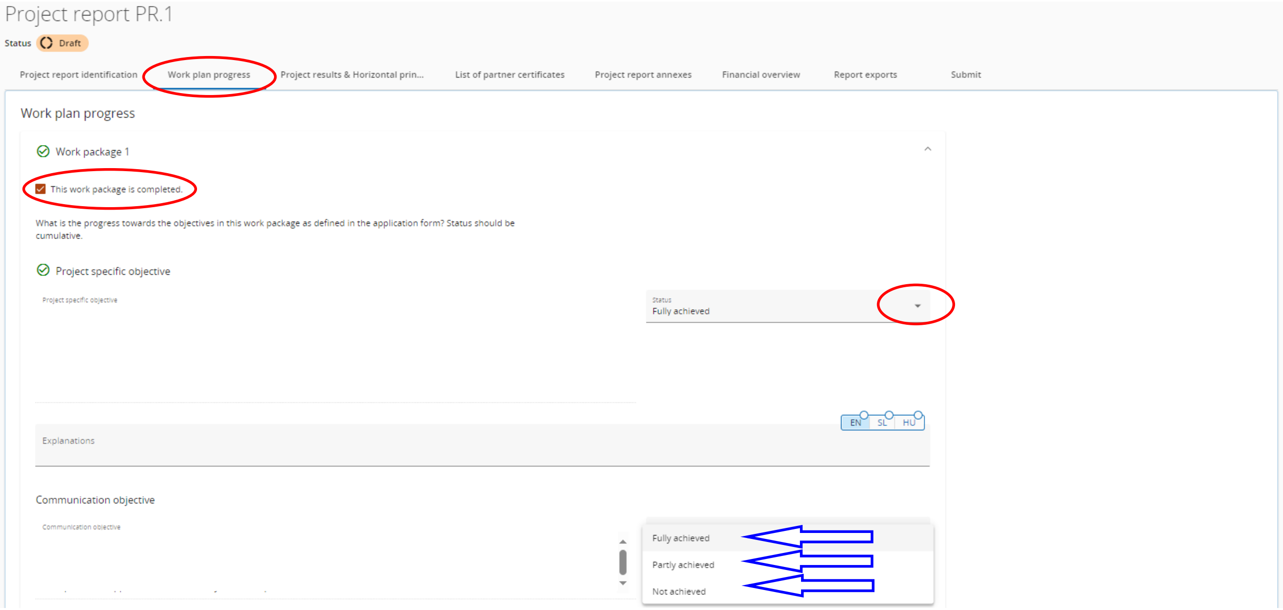
The Lead Partner continues with “**Project Report identification**” section:



The fields “**Highlights of main achievements**”, “**Partner problems and deviations**” and “**Target groups**” have to be filled in, while the “Overview of Project outputs and result overview” are filled in automatically.

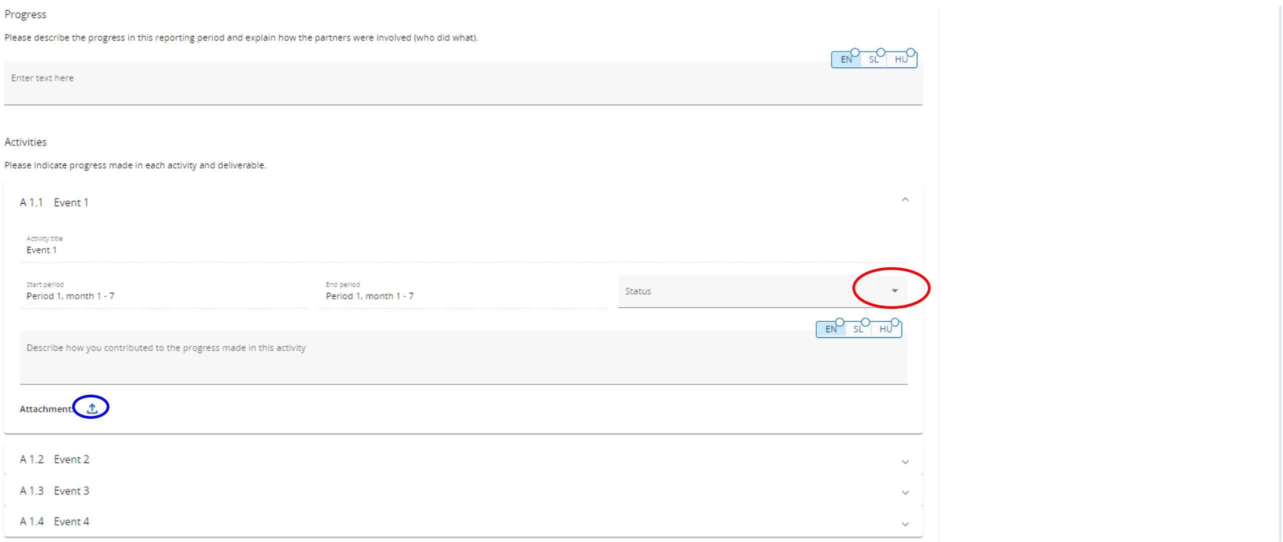


The next step is the description of the “**Work plan progress**”, where the Lead Partner has to provide the status of the work package, project specific objective and communication objective (red circles) and some explanations of them. The Lead Partner has to provide information on how the partners were involved (field "Progress").

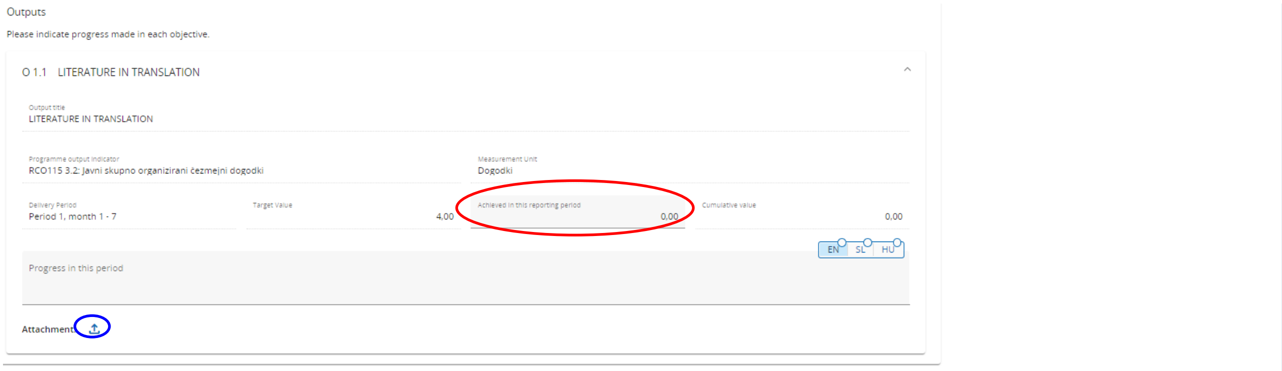


The user continues with the description of **activities**.

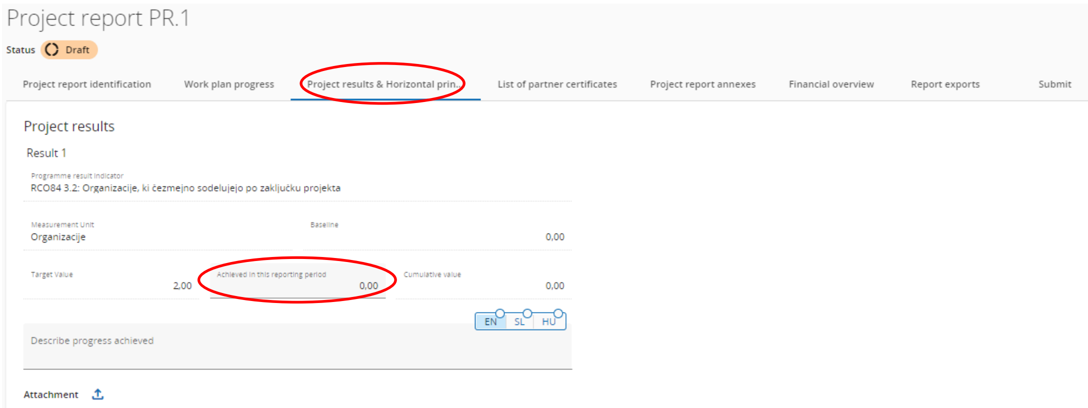
Here the user has to select the status of the activity (red circle) and provide the description of the activity. In this section the user can also upload attachments for evidence (blue circle). The last part in each work package is the description of the achieved project outputs.



The user provides the information of the achieved value (red circle) of the project output indicator and describes the progress in the respective reporting period. If there is evidence, the user can upload an attachment (blue circle).

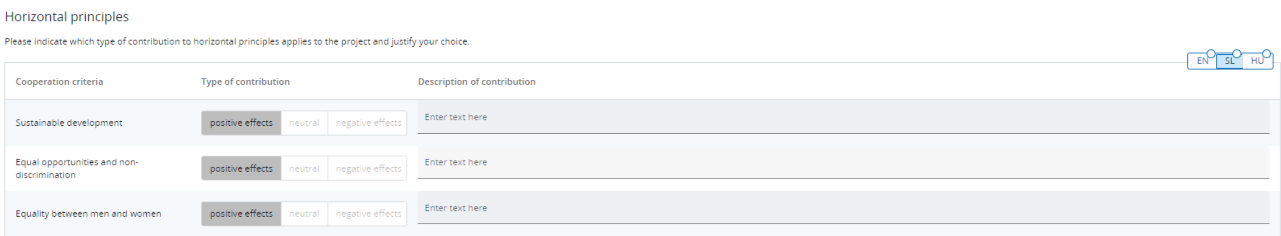


Next to be filled in, is the "**Project results & Horizontal principles**" section, where the users shall describe the progress on results and horizontal principles.

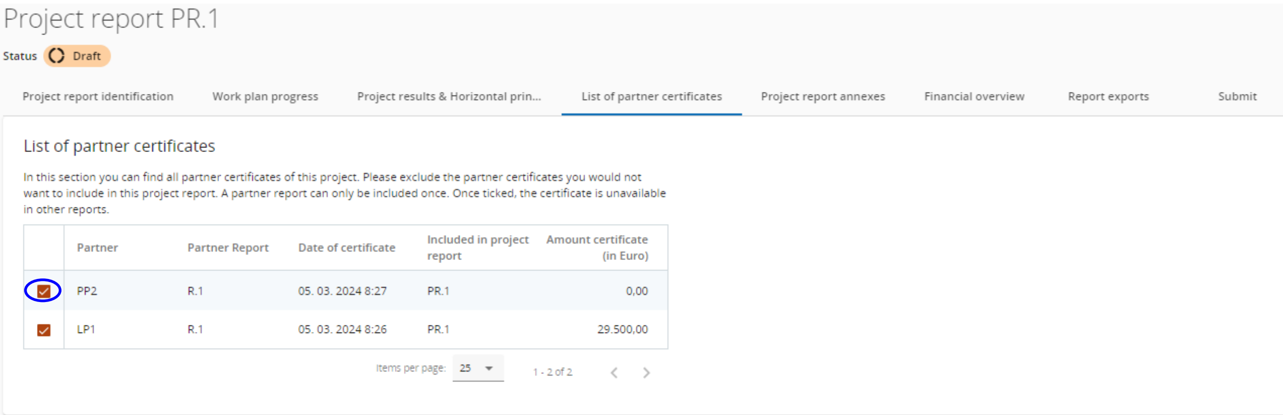


The users shall describe the progress towards achieving planned results by inserting how much has been achieved in the current reporting period. Results are cumulative, meaning that if a report is submitted and another report is created, the values from the previous report are added to the cumulative values. The cumulative value achieved is calculated as the sum of all the figures reported in all Project Reports with the status submitted. The Lead Partner can also upload an attachment per item which will show up again in the Project Report annexes.

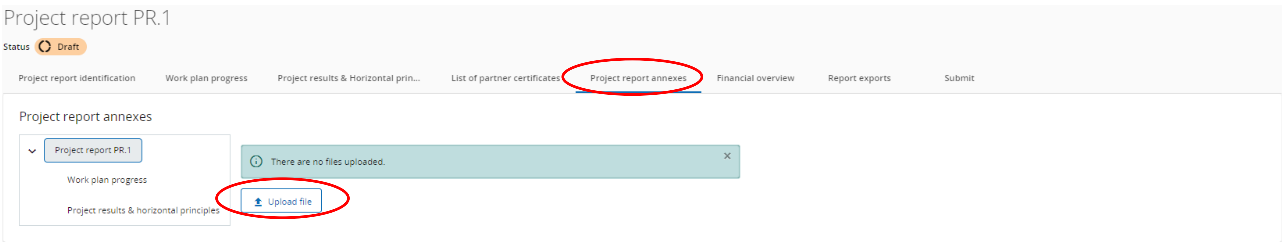
For Horizontal principles there is a table to report on the contribution for each of the three cooperation criteria. The Type of contribution is pre-defined from the latest approved Application form and cannot be changed. There is a text field to describe the contribution made in the respective reporting period.



The next step is to include the partner certificates. This shall be done in the "**List of partner certificates**" section. In this tab, all partner certificates of the project are listed. A certificate can only be included in one Project Report. Once ticked, the certificate is unavailable in other Project Reports. Upon creation of a new Project Report, all available partner certificates, which are not yet included in any other project report, are included in the newly created Project Report. If the users would not want to include a certificate in this project report, they should untick the respective partner certificates.



The next section is the "**Project report annexes**" section. This section shows all files uploaded in the Project Report.



The tree structure represents the places within that report where files can be uploaded. All uploads from all sections are shown in this list. Users have the possibility to upload additional files linked to the Project report here (by clicking the Upload file button – red circle). Since it is not always possible to add descriptions to files in the dedicated sections (due to the chip style upload), users with edit right are also allowed to add descriptions to all files in this section. Files uploaded in this section can be deleted here, other files can only be deleted in the section where they were uploaded.

In the “**Financial overview**” section are different financial overview tables (all filled in automatically). The first table is the “**Project Expenditure – summary (in Euro)**”, and the second table is “**Project expenditure – breakdown per cost category (in Euro)**”:

Project report PR.1

Status Draft

Project report identification | Work plan progress | Project results & Horizontal prin... | List of partner certificates | Project report annexes | Financial overview | Report exports | Submit

Financial overview

Amounts in tables below are always in Euro and include Fast track lump sums (if applicable for this project).

Project expenditure - summary (in Euro)

	Project total eligible budget	Previously reported	Current report	Total reported so far	% of total	Remaining budget	Previously verified	Previously paid
ESRR	25.000,00	0,00	23.600,00	23.600,00	94,40 %	1.400,00	0,00	0,00
Nacionalni HU	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00	0,00
Partner contribution	6.250,00	0,00	5.900,00	5.900,00	94,40 %	350,00	0,00	N/A
↳ of which Public contribution	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00	N/A
↳ of which Automatic public contribution	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00	N/A
↳ of which Private contribution	6.250,00	0,00	5.900,00	5.900,00	94,40 %	350,00	0,00	N/A
Total	31.250,00	0,00	29.500,00	29.500,00	94,40 %	1.750,00	0,00	0,00

Project expenditure - breakdown per cost category (in Euro)

Cost category	Project total eligible budget	Previously reported	Current report	Total reported so far	% of total	Remaining budget	Previously verified
Lump sum	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00		0,00	0,00
Unit Costs	31.250,00	0,00	29.500,00	29.500,00	94,40 %	1.750,00	0,00
Total	31.250,00	0,00	29.500,00	29.500,00	94,40 %	1.750,00	0,00

This is followed by a third table "**Project expenditure - breakdown per Unit cost (in Euro)**", a fourth table "**Project expenditure - overview per partner/per cost category - Current Report**" and a final table "**Project expenditure - summary of reduced items by control - Current Report**":

Project expenditure - breakdown per Unit cost (in Euro)

EN SL HU

Unit Cost	Project total eligible budget	Previously reported	Current report	Total reported so far	% of total	Remaining budget	Previously verified
Stroški na enoto za dogodek	31.250,00	0,00	29.500,00	29.500,00	94,40 %	1.750,00	0,00
Total	31.250,00	0,00	29.500,00	29.500,00	94,40 %	1.750,00	0,00

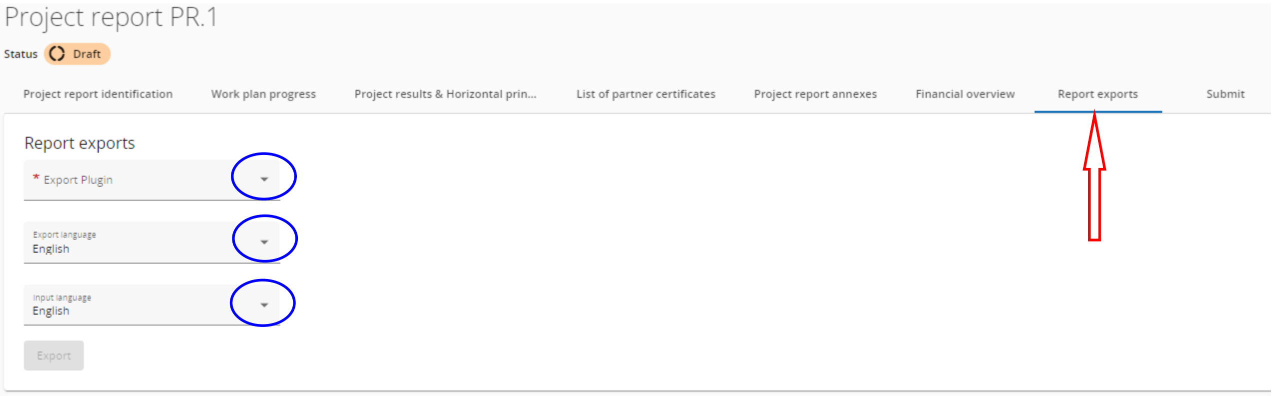
Project expenditure - overview per partner/per cost category - Current report

Partner	Organisation abbreviation	Country	Lump sum	Unit costs	Total current report
LP1	Partner 1	Slovenija (SI)	0,00	29.500,00	29.500,00
PP2	Partner 2	Magyarország (HU)	0,00	0,00	0,00
Total			0,00	29.500,00	29.500,00

Project expenditure - Summary of deducted items by control - Current report

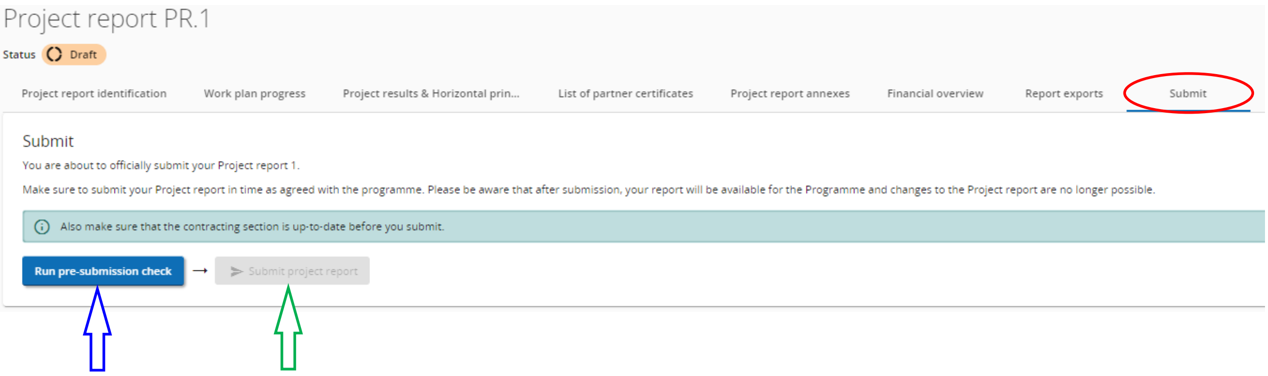
Partner	Organisation abbreviation	Country	Lump sum	Unit costs	Total deduction
LP1	Partner 1	Slovenija (SI)	0,00	0,00	0,00
PP2	Partner 2	Magyarország (HU)	0,00	0,00	0,00
Total			0,00	0,00	0,00

Lead Partners have the possibility to export their reports in the "**Report export**" section.

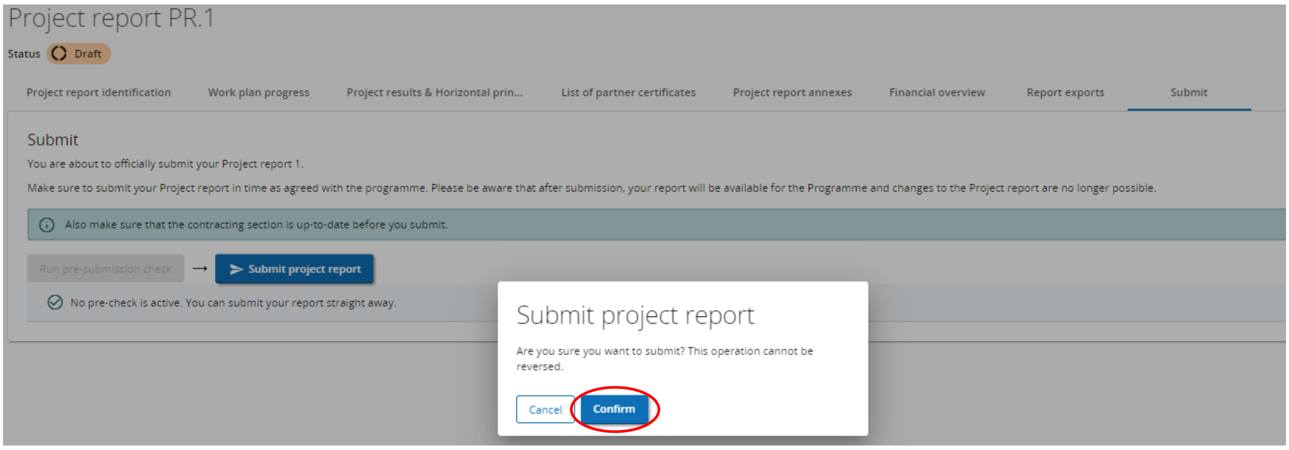


The Project Partners need to choose from the drop-down menus (marked with blue circles) the plug-in, the export language and the input language.

The last step is the submission of the Project Report. The users have to click on the "**Submit**" tab (marked with red circle) and following screen will appear:



First the user has to click the button "**Run pre-submission check**" (blue arrow). If the control is successful, the button "**Submit project report**" will be available and the user has to click this button. The following screen will appear:



To submit the Project Report the Lead Partner has to click on "**Confirm**".

6 COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Improving the visibility of EU funds has become a major priority in recent years. In the programming of the IP SI-HU the participating countries decided to support projects of limited financial value (small-scale projects) within the priority 3 (ISO 6.3) of the programme in order to increase visibility and trust among people living in the programme area and beyond. Institutions attracted by small-scale projects connect many local people in the programme area who will contact, cooperate, build trust and at the end improve the visibility of the programme. It is expected that lasting relationships will be built that could develop into bigger project ideas in the future. Effective and efficient communication is increasingly important in Interreg programmes and projects, too. It is not enough to carry out a project or an activity of good quality. The selected target groups, the general public and the programme organizations providing financial support must be properly informed as well. Well-designed and implemented communication helps to ensure the utilization of project results as well as raise awareness of EU funding and cross-border cooperation benefits. Already in the previous programme period, the European Commission (EC) placed more emphasis on communicating results. In the period 2021-2027, the unique Interreg brand[19] was further developed. The new Interreg brand is designed to provide a common identity that favours an easy combination with other logos. This branding is vital for consolidating the achievements of all IP SI-HU projects and, at the same time, for increasing the visibility of Interreg (as a brand).

The purpose of the Communication and Visibility chapter of the Manual is to inform (potential) beneficiaries about the requirements of the European Union (EU) and the IP SI-HU Programme concerning the information, communication and visibility measures to be carried out. These guidelines present a basis for each applicant and beneficiary (Lead/Project partner). The tasks of the beneficiary are to inform the public about the ERDF support received by the programme as well as about the results and impacts of the co-financing in the frame of the project in order to ensure the transparency of the use of EU funds.

6.2 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Responsibilities of the Project Partners concerning visibility, transparency and communication activities are laid down in Articles 47 and 50 of the CPR. The responsibilities of Project Partners with regard to transparency and communication are laid down in Article 36 of the Interreg Regulation. The use and technical characteristics of the emblem of the Union are laid down in Annex IX of the CPR.

6.2.1 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Upon request, all Project Partners are obliged to provide the IP SI-HU with any communication materials produced in the project. All Project Partners are obliged to offer them under a royalty-free, nonexclusive

[19] *See https://www.interact-eu.net/library/interreg-brand-design-manual-2021-2027/pageflip or its later valid version.*

and irrevocable licence and without significant additional costs or administrative burden. This license on intellectual property rights grants to the EU and the IP SI-HU the following rights:

- internal use (right to reproduce, copy and make available the communication and visibility materials to EU and EU Member States' institutions and agencies and their employees),
- reproduction of the communication and visibility materials by any means and in any form, in whole or in part,
- distribution to the public of the communication and visibility materials (or copies thereof) in any and all forms,
- storage and archiving of the communication and visibility materials.

6.3 PROGRAMME REQUIREMENTS

6.3.1 CONTENT-RELATED REQUIREMENTS

Communication is not important for the pure sake of communicating. **Communication is a part of all project activities, and it requires careful planning and implementation to make the project succeed.** Therefore, it is important to define the approach to communication and visibility of the project, based on what is expected to be achieved to ensure the project's success.

The project communication plan/activities are part of the project work plan. When preparing the project communication plan, communication activities should be planned that are adapted to the thematic content and activities of the project and that contribute to the achievement of the project's main goal/specific objectives. In the application form applicants shall define one project-specific objective which shall have a work package. The work package should also have one communication objective relevant to the objective and content of the particular work package and should define the target audiences as well in order to achieve the project main goal/specific objectives. This means that communication objective and activities are embedded in the thematic work package. Please refer to the relevant chapters (chapter 2: Project development, and chapter 3: Application and assessment) of this Manual for more information on how to prepare the project work plan.

Please note: Small-scale projects must include only one work package, with one project-specific objective and one communication objective.

When defining communication activities keep in mind that successful and efficient activities

- are planned carefully,
- are revised, if needed,
- are well tailored to the target groups,
- pay attention to multipliers' (e.g., journalists, bloggers, vloggers),
- use the partners' and the programme's channels for greater reach,
- are documented for reporting,
- are evaluated.

One Project Partner should be appointed as the main responsible partner for coordinating the communication work in the project. Communication is a common responsibility of all Project Partners, who must ensure that active and effective communication will be maintained throughout the whole project life cycle. It is crucial that the Project Partners stay in close contact with each other for spreading information about project events, activities and achievements. **Please note that project**

communication should be about the project as a whole, not just about the activities carried out and results achieved by individual Project Partners.

As per the Article 47 of CPR, Project Partners are required to use the EU emblem[20] and the statement "Co-funded by the European union" in their communication to acknowledge the support received under EU programmes and contribute to the visibility of the EU on the ground. To make Interreg programmes recognizable as a brand towards citizens among other EU programmes, the Interreg Regulation requires in Article 36 that the term "Interreg" should be written next to the EU emblem. The unique Interreg branding also highlights the unique spatial cross-border nature of the projects and programmes. Therefore, the visibility requirements will apply to all communication materials, i.e., co-funded printed or digital products, including brochures, publications, websites or any kind of items and products, such as online, offline, and on-site activities and events. In addition, sanctions are foreseen by the Regulation in case the branding is not adequately displayed (see 6.3.6. of this chapter).

Remember to always check also the other co-financers' requirements, if such requirements exist, for communication activities and follow the relevant rules on those issues as well.

The Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat (MA/JS) supports projects in fulfilling the visibility requirements by providing trainings, templates, guidance and feedback. Besides the programme logo and project logo (programme logo with added project acronym), the template for project poster is provided (see Figure 15 in the Annex).

6.3.2 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

The Lead and Project Partners of the IP SI-HU shall follow the programme's communication and visibility requirements for all co-funded visibility, transparency and communication activities. In this way, the Project Partners properly acknowledge the support from Interreg[21], and communicate the role and achievements of Interreg.

Project Partners shall acknowledge support from the IP SI-HU fund by using the term „Interreg" next to the emblem of the Union[22] and fulfil these requirements:

1) **include the project logo**
2) **include a statement** on the Interreg support
    a. include a statement that highlights the support from Interreg in all documents and communication materials for the general public and for participants;
    b. include on the partner's official website and social media sites, if such exist, a short description of the project, proportionate to the level of support, including its aims and results, and highlighting the financial support from Interreg.
3) **publicly display at least one poster** of a minimum size A3 or equivalent electronic display (at Project Partner locations) to highlight the support from Interreg.

In addition, Project Partners are obliged to ensure that all project participants have been informed of the IP SI-HU funding (issue certificates (e.g., attendance lists) and any other documents relating to the

[20] The EU emblem is also known as the EU flag.
[21] In accordance with Article 50 of CPR.
[22] In accordance with Article 47 of CPR.

implementation of the project including a statement to the effect that the project was supported by the IP SI-HU).

The compliance with the visibility rules will be checked throughout the project implementation.

The project logo shall be used by Project Partners during the whole project implementation, needs to be in all documents, on the website (if applicable), in all communication materials connected to the project, in public procurement procedures (where possible, in order to ensure a reference to the respective project), at events, on publications, etc.

The detailed rules about the correct use of the programme and project logos can be found in 6.3.3 and 6.3.4 point of this manual.

Since the IP SI-HU is a cross-border cooperation programme, the activities concerning information and communication with the public will, concerning the use of the language, be adapted to the cross-border setting. Guidance for use of language variants for the logo are explained in the next section.

Despite the requirement that the language of the information and communication materials shall be selected according to the language of the target audience, it is strongly recommended for Project Partners to prepare the project-specific communication/information materials used in the project area in the language understood by the majority of the participants.

Technical specification:

The brand colours are derived from the main EU corporate colours and shall not be changed *(see Figure 1 in the Annex)*.

The Reflex Blue and Light Blue define the Interreg brand's visual identity and shall be used as main colours in all communication materials. The Yellow can be used sparsely as accent colour.

According to the rules, the basic unit (u) used for the definition of the brand composition must be calculated with reference to half the height of the EU emblem (flag). Since **the minimum height of the EU emblem must be 1 cm,** the minimum height of the basic unit (u) must be 0,5 cm. The height of the programme name is equivalent to 1 „e" placed at a distance of „u" below the flag. The programme name must always start on the left line and expand no further than the end of the area which matches the right border of the flag.

In case of programme name, always use left-aligned font Montserrat Bold. Only the first letter is capitalised and only project acronyms can be written in all capital letters. The programme name must always be written in Reflex Blue, using the exact same colour codes as the EU emblem and statement.

Regarding the space between the Interreg logotype and the EU emblem, there is one unit of space („u"), while there is half a unit of space (½ „u") between the EU emblem and the co-financing statement.

6.3.3 THE PROGRAMME LOGO

The logo is the most important visual identity element of the IP SI-HU. It shall ensure that the elementary requirements set out in the CPR are met.

The programme logo consists of the Interreg logotype with the coloured arch inside, the EU emblem (=EU flag), the co-financing statement (a reference to the EU) and the programme name. The programme logo can be downloaded from the webpage of the programme (www.si-hu.eu).

6.3.3.1 Language variants of the logo

The logo exists in two language versions: the bilingual (Slovene and Hungarian) and the English version. As the language of the information and communication materials shall be selected according to the language of the target audience, also the proper language version of the programme/project logo has to be chosen *(see Figures 2-3 in the Annex)*.

6.3.3.2 Colour variants of the logo

The brand colours are derived from the main EU corporate colours and shall not be changed.

Ideally, the Interreg logo should be used on white or light backgrounds only. If the background is dark and the coloured background is by all means necessary, put a white border around the rectangle, the width of the border being 1/25th of the height of the rectangle *(see Figures 4-7 in the Annex)*.

In the frame of the programme, bilingual publications, events, etc. are favoured. **Therefore, the basic recommended logo version is the full colour bilingual one (if applicable, see requirements below)** *(see Figures 8-10 in the Annex)***.**

6.3.3.3 Usage of the logo together with other logos

In most cases the logo is used together with other logos (logos of the Project Partners, co-financers etc.). Please note that, when the Interreg programme or project logo is used in combination with other logos, the logo with the EU emblem shall not be smaller than the size of the biggest logo displayed, measured either in height or width. Please consult with the Joint Secretariat if in doubt about combining logos.

6.3.4 THE PROJECT LOGO

Each small-scale project will receive the respective Interreg project logo from the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat of IP SI-HU, therefore project developed own logos or stand-alone brands are not eligible.

Project logos are preferably positioned in the upper left corner of the front page of all publications and documents. If necessary, you can choose to position the logo on the upper right if you follow the rules for margins and dimensions. Concerning the correct use of the different communication products detailed guidelines can be found in points 6.3.5.1. – 6.3.5.6. of this chapter.

The project logo shall not be distorted, and its size shall be reasonable and recognizable. Do not cut, rotate, stretch, slant or modify the logo in any way, do not use outlines around it, or do not use it in body text, or in any other colour than the standard full colour version of the white and monochrome versions. Please note that the project logo with the EU emblem shall not be smaller than the size of the biggest logo displayed, measured either in height or width. Please consult with the JS if in doubt about combining logos.

As the language of the information and communication materials shall be selected according to the language of the target audience, also the proper language version of the project logo has to be chosen.

The standard Interreg project logo is the full colour version with the colour code matching the priority. In case of darker backgrounds, the project logo has to be positioned in a white rectangle (exclusion zone) or the black and white or inverted logo variant may be used.

6.3.4.1 Components and positioning

The project logo was designed on the basis of the programme logo (see above) which has to be used by the programme/programme structures. The logo is based on the harmonized branding initiative of the EC and the Interact programme, with the central graphical Interreg element.

To develop the project logo, the project name (=project acronym) is annexed to the programme logo. The project name/acronym is written in Montserrat Medium in the colour of the project's priority.

The project acronym does not exceed the width of the custom area which is equivalent to the width of the Interreg logotype, the EU emblem and the statement on co-funding altogether. Its maximum height is equivalent to the double height of the EU emblem (see the example below).

The standard placement for the project acronym is below the Interreg logo, separated by a thin straight line in Reflex Blue. The project acronym is placed against the left corner of the custom area.

The project acronyms are not to be placed above the programme logo *(see Figure 11 in the Annex)*. It is recommended that **only one language at a time** is used for the project name (acronym). The number of characters must not exceed 20.

Project acronyms always use the colour of the matching priority in which the project is being co-financed, so small-scale projects shall make use of the Priority 3 colour scheme shown in the Annex *(see Figure 12 in the Annex).*

6.3.5 EXAMPLES OF THE CORRECT USE OF THE BRAND

The communication products shall be clear, easily legible and placed readily visible to the public to fulfil their purpose: to inform the public about the respective activity and the received financial support from the EU thereof.

Table 9: Summary table of obligatory and optional visual elements.

	Small-scale projects
Project logo	✓
„Co-funded by the European Union" statement	✓
Public display of one poster	✓
Publications	optional
Promotional materials/items	optional
Events[23]	✓
Projects' subsites at programme website	✓
Social media	optional
Videos, short films	optional

[23] *With regard to small-scale projects it is compulsory to organize events only in case of Type I and Type II projects.*

In case Project Partners decide on the preparation of the optional elements listed above, as in case of the compulsory visual elements, these shall be prepared in accordance with the communication guidelines detailed in this chapter.

6.3.5.1 Posters

Each Project Partner must place at least one poster with information about the project (minimum size A3), including the financial support from the Union, at a location readily visible to the public, such as the entrance area of a building/office. The IP SI-HU provides a downloadable template[24] for producing the poster. The poster template *(see Figure 13 in the Annex)* can be modified by the Project Partners, however the necessary data (project acronym, project full title, project duration, total project budget/ERDF support received, project logo, name of the responsible organisation, project in one sentence – project aim) has to be included. The poster needs to stay visible for the whole duration of the project. It is not possible to substitute the poster with a roll-up banner. However, an equivalent electronic display of the poster is permissible. **The printed or electronic displays should be set up as soon as the project begins.**

6.3.5.2 Publications

The programme or project logo has to be placed on the front cover of all publications and documents, positioned preferably in the upper left corner in such a size that the EU emblem has a height of at least 1 cm. Although it is preferred to place the project logo in the top left corner, one can choose to position it in a different (upper right, lower left or right) corner as long as the rules for margins and dimensions are followed.

Concerning the size of the external margins, they are determined on the basis of the width of the EU emblem.

In case of darker backgrounds, the project logo has to be positioned in a white rectangle (exclusion zone) or the black and white or inverted logo variant may be used *(see Figure 14 in the Annex)*.

6.3.5.3 Promotional materials and smaller promotional items

The most common reason for purchasing promotional items (give-aways or gadgets) is to raise awareness about the programme in general and the respective project. They can be used at events, such as exhibitions and conferences or in broader awareness campaigns. Promotional items are by definition produced in larger quantities and come custom-printed with the project logo. Promotional items are usually relatively small and inexpensive. They can be important carriers of a project's main objective/message. Projects should thus consider the relevance of any promotional materials in relation to the project message, the promotion of the project and the usefulness of the items. They should be practical, relevant and creative enough so that they can become memorable. **In general, the minimum height of the EU emblem must be 1 cm. On smaller items, e.g., pens or business cards, the emblem can be reproduced in a smaller size[25].**

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[24] *The template is available at www.si-hu.eu.*

[25] *See last valid version of Interreg Brand Design Manual 2021-2027: https://interact.eu/library/61*

While almost any product can be branded with a project logo and used for promotion, the IP SI-HU provides examples *(see Figures 15-16 in the Annex)* of common promotional items for projects:

- pens and pencils,
- USB sticks,
- notebooks,
- bags.

In case of small promotional items or small printed materials like pens, USB sticks, etc. on which the project logo cannot be displayed, the EU emblem together with the statement "Co-funded by the European Union" has to be used and reproduced in smaller size *(see Figures 17-20 in the Annex)*.

6.3.5.4 Events

All event-related documents (invitation, agenda, list of participants/service providers, presentations etc.) have to be properly labelled with the project logo. At press conferences the project logo has to be visible.

6.3.5.5 Websites and social media

As the costs of stand-alone projects' websites outside www.si-hu.eu are not eligible, the use of already existing websites is advisable in such a way that a short description of the project (including its aims and results), and highlighting the total financial support from ERDF has to be included *(see Figure 21 in the Annex)*. The project logo has to be placed on the existing website, should be visible in the upper part without the need of scrolling down or clicking and corresponds to the language used on the website.

For social media platforms/channels it is obligatory to use the project logo. In case the background is coloured or very dark, a white border shall be put around the rectangle, the width of the border being 1/25th of the height of the rectangle. There is no rule for positioning in social media as long as the clear space area rule is respected. The same rule applies to online and smartphone applications and other digital platforms.

In case Project Partners wish to prepare a podcast about their project, they shall devote some time either at the beginning or at the end of the presentation to mention the support from Interreg SI-HU by providing a clear reference to the fund.

6.3.5.6 Videos and short films

Videos and short films are to be made in the most common digital video formats (e.g. .mp4 or .avi) with a length between 1 and 3 minutes for short films/videos. The project logo shall appear on the first and last picture/slide and during the film for about 2-3 seconds in a recognizable size and on suitable background *(see Figure 22 in the Annex)*. In case of videos shorter than 1 minute, the project logo shall be visible during the whole video length in a recognizable size and on suitable background.

6.3.6 FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES LINKED TO BREACHES OF COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY RULES

Projects risk financial consequences when they disregard EU and programme branding and visibility requirements. Failure to include the mandatory communication and visibility requirements (programme logo/project logo, statement, poster, etc.) and therefore one fails to meet the basic requirements outlined in the CPR and Interreg regulation as well as in this chapter, may lead to cuts in funding. Costs of any information and communication activity, such as conferences, events, seminars, printed materials, digital materials, web or social media appearance, giveaways, etc. might also be considered ineligible for ERDF funding in case rules are only partly followed (e.g., the programme logo is used in an incorrect way – too small in size, distorted, unsuitable position or not visible due to unsuitable background, etc.).

In case the communication rules are not respected and the situation cannot be corrected, the MA/JS may cancel up to 2 % of the support[26] from the ERDF granted to the Lead/Project Partner who fails to comply with their obligations on visibility, transparency and communication. The financial cuts will be applied to the concerned partner(s) and the principle of proportionality will be taken into account.

6.4 SUPPORT FROM THE PROGRAMME

IP SI-HU has a Communication Strategy to support successful programme implementation. The document acts as a strategic framework and a basis for the communication of the IP SI-HU during the whole programme period 2021-2027. It forms an integral part of the programme implementation and aims to ensure that the programme communication is well-coordinated, effectively managed and responsive to the diverse information needs of the public. The ultimate goal should be to raise public awareness of the added value of cross border cooperation.

Therefore, the communication strategy aims at:

1. raising awareness about the Programme and also the Cohesion policy and EU funds among the general public, stakeholders, the expert public (political public), the media and project partners and highlight the role, achievements and impact of the Interreg Programme and its projects,
2. informing potential project partners about funding opportunities under the IP SI-HU.

From programme point of view, it is important to support the success of the projects through sufficient, high-quality and timely support to the (potential) project partners during preparation and implementation of projects (absorption capacity). Moreover, it is important to support applicants and project partners in the effective project implementation by ensuring well-functioning internal communication between the programme bodies to make the programme function effectively, providing applicants and project partners high-quality and timely support in all phases of the project implementation. Programme bodies are intending to create a cooperative community with the project partners to deliver encouraging support during the project implementation ensuring efficient implementation, including communication and capitalization of results.

Thanks to effective cooperation with project partners, the IP SI-HU – using its own communication channels (webpage, newsletters, Facebook page, programme events, etc.) – can promote projects' achievements, to increase the projects' capacities to communicate their achievements, to enhance inter-project cooperation, and to underline the benefits of cross-border cooperation for the general public in the programme area. For this purpose, strong cooperation is needed also between programme bodies and project partners to reach the common objective of successful project implementation and promotion of results and added value. Besides the responsible contract manager in the JS, also Info Point(s) of the JS cooperate with the Project Partners in communication matters.

[26] *Art. 36 (6) of the Interreg regulation*

The support may serve different purposes, such as info days, trainings, seminars, information materials, and may be used for disseminating project news, outcomes and results. Projects need to be active towards the Joint Secretariat concerning the planning and implementation of efficient project communication.

Each small-scale project is highly recommended to provide and send the following items via e-mail to si-hu.ip@szpi.hu to the Info Point(s) to ensure that the IP SI-HU programme will be able to support efficient and successful project/programme communication through its own channels (web page, social media, newsletters, etc.):

- the invitations of the events **minimum 14 days prior to the event**,
- **at least five good quality and big size photos** (showing most of the participants, preferably 2160x3840 pixels, in jpg or png) per event (to be sent right after the event, but not later than 2 working days) etc. after the completion of the activity,
- the links to webpage, YouTube channel, Instagram, Facebook or any other relevant sites in case they exist and are connected to the project,
- appropriate links or any other formats of print media (newspaper article), TV or online appearance,
- short films or any audio-visual materials that have been prepared in the project.

Small-scale projects are characterised by smaller partnerships, shorter duration, fewer activities and a simplified financial framework. However, these projects can have a lot of impact on increasing visibility and trust among people living in the programme area and beyond. The IP SI-HU therefore intends to give these projects support and the opportunity to be promoted on its website and in the social media. In addition to the implementation of your activities, please devote time and attention to project communication and send all relevant information about events to the programme colleagues.

7 ARCHIVING AND CLOSURE

7.1 OBLIGATIONS AFTER THE PROJECT CLOSURE

Although the project has ended, obligations remain for the partnership. All partners should familiarise themselves with these specific rules and follow them closely. It is the responsibility of the Lead Partner to ensure that all partners are aware of these rules and follow them.

The essential purpose of the archive is to preserve the contents of the documents (data and information) which must be accessible, understandable and available to all representatives of the institutions in charge of controls foreseen by the Interreg Programme as well as to the bodies authorized to monitor the project. At the same time the archive must provide long-term stability and credibility of any records for the entire retention period.

7.2 AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

All supporting documents composing the audit trail must remain available at the premises of each Lead and Project Partner **at least for a period of five years**. This period starts **from 31 December of the year in which the last payment is made by the BAF (Body entrusted with accounting function) to the LP**. Furthermore, all documents referring to project activities and expenditure for which **State aid** was granted (the date of signature of the ERDF Subsidy Contract) shall be available for at least **10 years** from the date of granting the last aid issued by the programme. The retention period shall be interrupted either in the case of legal proceedings or by a request of the EC.

At the closure of projects, the MA/JS will inform each LP on the exact start date of the above mentioned retention periods. The LP shall in turn inform the PPs. Other, possibly longer document retention periods according to e.g., national and internal rules, remain unaffected. For the entire retention period, all bodies entitled to perform controls and audits are allowed to access the project and all relevant documentation and accounts of the project. The documents can be kept either in the form of originals or other documents of equivalent probative value.

Documents related to the project application and implementation (Application Form, Partner Progress report, Project progress report etc.) are in electronic form archived in the Joint Electronic Monitoring System (Jems).

7.3 DURABILITY OF PROJECT OUTPUTS AND RESULTS

Although the project has come to an end, the aim is that the project outputs or results of the cooperation would not come to a stop. The partnership should have planned for the durability of project outputs and results already during the project implementation. Projects will be asked for information on how the outputs and results will be maintained. The partnership must ensure that information can be collected and will be provided upon request.

7.4 PROJECT ARCHIVING

Concerning the closure of a project, it is to be clear that it is a closure of the project's grant, but it does not represent the end of project requirements. Even though the programme has accepted the final report and made the final payment, the project is still subject to possible control and checks, e.g., by the programme Audit Authority/Audit Body, Commission auditors, Court of Auditors.

The LP/PPs are obliged to store the documentation for audit purposes.

After the retention date mentioned in chapter 7.2 of this document, the project is considered finalized and archived in Jems.

7.5 PROJECT CLOSURE

Project closure is the final phase in the project implementation process. The closure involves two parallel activities: finalising project activities and preparing the last project report. In practice this involves accumulation of all project finances, documents/materials and achievements.

8 INTERREG VI-A SI-HU KEY PRINCIPLES

8.1 CROSS BORDER COOPERATION

The cross border cooperation is the key principle of the Programme. Projects should set up and foster cross border cooperation between Project Partners that should possibly continue beyond the project lifetime and provide benefits for wider group of stakeholders (e.g., cooperation networks in the border area).

8.2 RESULT ORIENTATION

The strong focus in this programme period will be given to the result orientation of a project with the demand for visible outputs and concrete results. The result-oriented approach is reflected in the new programme and project intervention logic.

Projects have to apply a result-oriented approach strictly, clearly defining the results the project is striving for and linking them with the territorial challenges and needs. Projects not showing a clear link to a programme specific objective and/or not contributing to the respective expected programme result will not be supported by the Interreg SI-HU programme.

A clear result-oriented approach contributing to a specific objective of the IP SI-HU is required from the projects.

- ✓ Project objectives have to clearly target the programme specific objective within the priority.
- ✓ The contribution of the project to the respective programme result (and the related indicator) has to be clearly demonstrated.
- ✓ Project activities and outputs have to be logically linked to the targeted specific objective.

8.3 TERRITORIAL RELEVANCE

Territorial relevance is one of the key quality requirements for a project to be funded. The cross-border relevance needs to be clearly demonstrated throughout the entire project, meaning that the problems identified cannot be solved efficiently by individual Member States.

8.4 PARTNERSHIP RELEVANCE

In order to achieve tangible project results it is essential to involve partner/s who is/are most relevant and competent for the development, implementation, communication as well as capitalization of the planned project outputs and results. In this respect, for designing a relevant partnership the thematic competence and expertise, geographical and institutional relevance have to be considered.

All partners have to be involved in a way that demonstrates the joint implementation and the cross-border added value of the project.

8.5 DURABILITY

The durability of project outputs and results is crucial for ensuring territorial impact and long-term benefits which continue after the project closure in order to reach the project`s overall objectives.

Therefore, projects have to ensure that outputs obtained, and results achieved are durable and suitable to be continued or capitalised on after project closure.

In order to achieve sustainability, projects need to adopt from the beginning a longer-term, strategic perspective that leads to desired results for the target groups over an extended time frame. In order to achieve such long-term benefits, it is essential to consider needs of key stakeholders as well as the institutional context already when planning the project. In particular, key stakeholders should be actively involved from the early stages of the project development.

A distinction between the following dimensions of sustainability should be made:

- financial sustainability (financing of follow-up activities etc.),
- staff sustainability (the staff of the project partner is also provided for the implementation of the follow-up activities),
- environmental sustainability (meet human development goals while also sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services on which the economy and society depend).

8.6 HORIZONTAL PRINCIPLES

In all phases of the programme cycle, the horizontal principles of equal opportunities, non-discrimination, gender equality, accessibility for persons with disabilities and environmental sustainability will apply. The programme authorities have and will through the entire lifecycle of the programme (preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation) ensure that the horizontal principles are respected.

No project that could potentially harm the environment will be supported.

In general, projects submitted under this priority are strongly encouraged to incorporate also activities for tackling environmental concerns and **reducing their environmental impact**, for example by:

- ✓ Contribution to reduced transport and mobility related air pollution (in particular for short travel distances).
- ✓ Contribution to more employment opportunities, training and education possibilities as well as support services regarding environmental protection and sustainable development.
- ✓ Application of green public procurement in a methodological way.
- ✓ Organising conferences and events in a sustainable way (e.g. by combining different meetings in one place, reducing printing and using recyclable materials, etc.).

9 LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND PROGRAMME RELATED DOCUMENTS

Projects implemented under the programme must comply with EU rules governing the Structural Funds, the national legislation, and must show coherence and complementarities with national, regional and sectoral development strategies/programmes. The documents listed below (not exhaustive list) are provided on the programme website www.si-hu.eu.

Relevant programme documents

- ✓ Interreg Programme Slovenia-Hungary No CCI2021TC16RFCB045, approved by the European Commission Decision, No C (2022) 8276 final as of 14 November 2022 with all amendments.

Key regulations for the period 2021-2027

- ✓ Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021, laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy (Common Provisions Regulation);
- ✓ Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund (ERDF Regulation);
- ✓ Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments (Interreg Regulation);
- ✓ Implementing acts and delegated acts adopted in accordance with the aforementioned regulations;
- ✓ Other legal acts applicable to the implementation of projects co-funded by the ERDF.

Besides EU rules and rules of the Interreg Programme, also the national rules shall be respected. We would like to highlight some examples:

- ✓ **Procurement of goods and services:** all Project Partners should comply with the principles of sound financial management and follow public procurement regulations.
- ✓ **State aid:** if the project or its activities are subject to State aid rules, the ceilings of public funding or aid intensity will have to be respected.
- ✓ Valid national legislation ruling **specific fields addressed by the project.**

10 SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE PROGRAMME

The following information and support related to project development and preparing of applications will be provided by the Joint Secretariat (Info Points):

- ✓ information about the programme and the SSP Open Call for Proposals;
- ✓ information concerning preparation and submission of applications;
- ✓ organisation of informative workshops;
- ✓ publication of frequently asked questions and answers;
- ✓ publication of information on approved projects on the programme website.

To take part in a project co-financed within the IP SI-HU, every Project Partner is advised to get in contact with the competent National Authority before the project application submission/preparation, to obtain the necessary information on the content, State aid etc. Experience has shown that with this approach a successful project preparation is possible and in the case of an approval unexpected EU funds losses or repayments can be counteracted/avoided.

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11 ANNEX

Figure 1: The main EU corporate colours.

Colour
Reflex Blue
Pantone
Reflex Blue
CMYK
100 / 80 / 0 / 0
HEX
003399
RGB
0 / 51 / 153

Colour
Light Blue
Pantone
2716
CMYK
41 / 30 / 0 / 0
HEX
9FAEE5
RGB
159 / 174 / 229

Colour
Yellow
Pantone
Yellow
CMYK
0 / 0 / 100 / 0
HEX
FFCC00
RGB
255 / 204 / 0

Colour Black
Pantone Black
CMYK 0 / 0 / 0 / 100
HEX 000000
RGB 0 / 0 / 0

Colour White
Pantone /
CMYK 0 / 0 / 0 / 0
HEX fffff
RGB 255 / 255 / 255

Figure 2: Bilingual version of the Programme logo.

Interreg
Sofinancira EVROPSKA UNIJA
Az EURÓPAI UNIÓ társfinanszírozásával
Slovenija – Magyarország

Figure 3: English version of the Programme logo.

Interreg
Co-funded by the European Union
Slovenia – Hungary

Figure 4: Full colour versions of the Programme logo for standard use.

Interreg
Sofinancira
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Az EURÓPAI UNIÓ
társfinanszírozásával

Slovenija – Magyarország

Interreg
Co-funded by
the European Union

Slovenia – Hungary

Figure 5: Black and white versions of the Programme logo if full colour version is not possible.

Interreg
Sofinancira
EVROPSKA UNIJA
Az EURÓPAI UNIÓ
társfinanszírozásával

Slovenija – Magyarország

Interreg
Co-funded by
the European Union

Slovenia – Hungary

Figure 6: White and colour version of the Programme logo for dark backgrounds.

Figure 7: Monochrome versions of the Programme logo if full colour version is not possible.

Figure 8: Full colour versions of the Programme logo for standard use.

Figure 9: Allowed but not recommended Programme logo use on a very light background.

Figure 10: Full Programme logo version with a white exclusion zone on a darker background.

The project logo consists of four elements:

a. the emblem of the European Union
b. the statement 'Co-funded by the European Union' written in full and placed next to the emblem of the European Union;
c. the programme name 'Interreg Slovenia-Hungary' placed next to the emblem of the Union;
d. the project acronym (short title of the project) placed, in standard form beneath the above three elements.

Figure 11: Standard placement for the project acronym in the project logo.

Interreg

Sofinancira EVROPSKA UNIJA
Az EURÓPAI UNIÓ társfinanszírozásával

Slovenija – Magyarország

Project name

Figure 12: Priority 3 colour scheme.

Priority 3

Cooperating border region

CMYK 87 / 51 / 0 / 0
HEX #0E6EB6
RGB 14 / 110 / 182

Figure 13: Poster template.

Figure 14: Publication template.

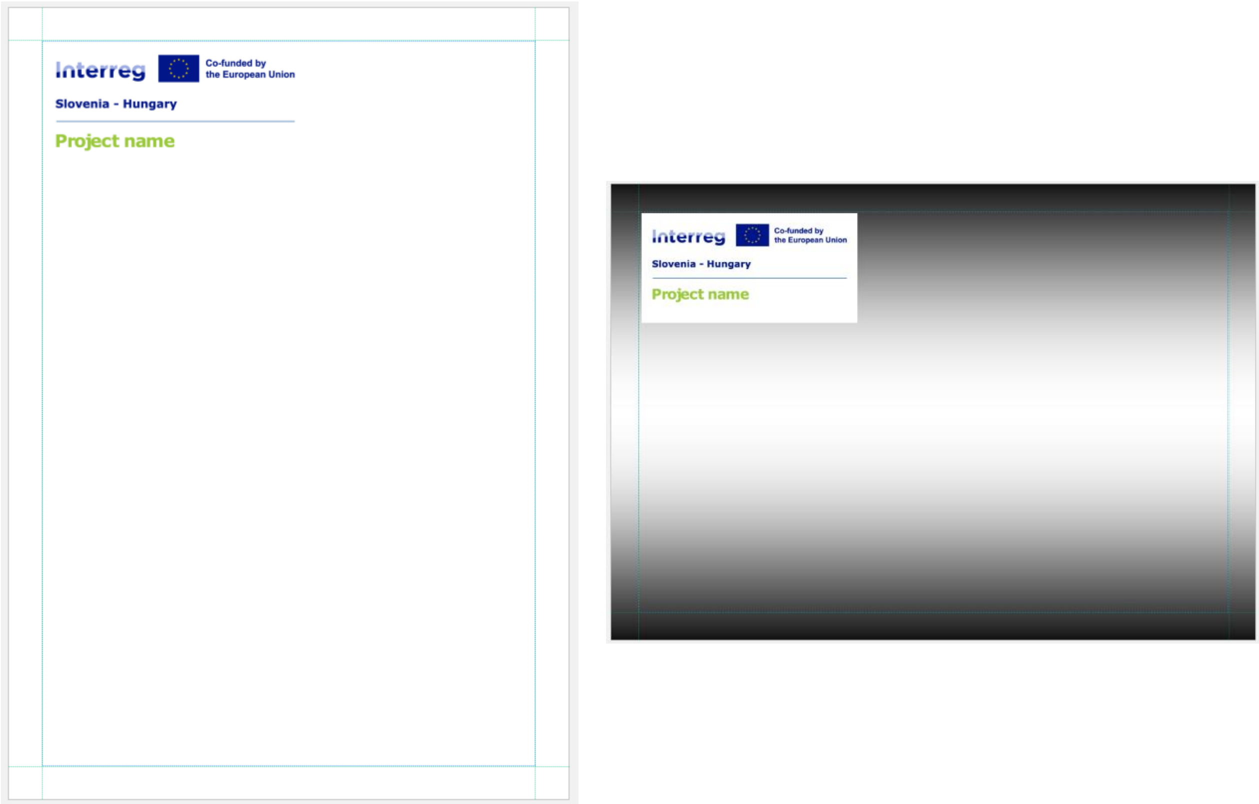

Figure 15: Example – promotional bag.

Figure 16: Example – promotional markers.

Figure 17: Full colour version of a small size logo for standard use.

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the European Union

Figure 18: One colour (black) version of a small size logo, if the use of the full colour version is not possible.

Co-funded by
the European Union

Figure 19: Example – promotional USB sticks.

Figure 20: Example – promotional pen.

Figure 21: Website.

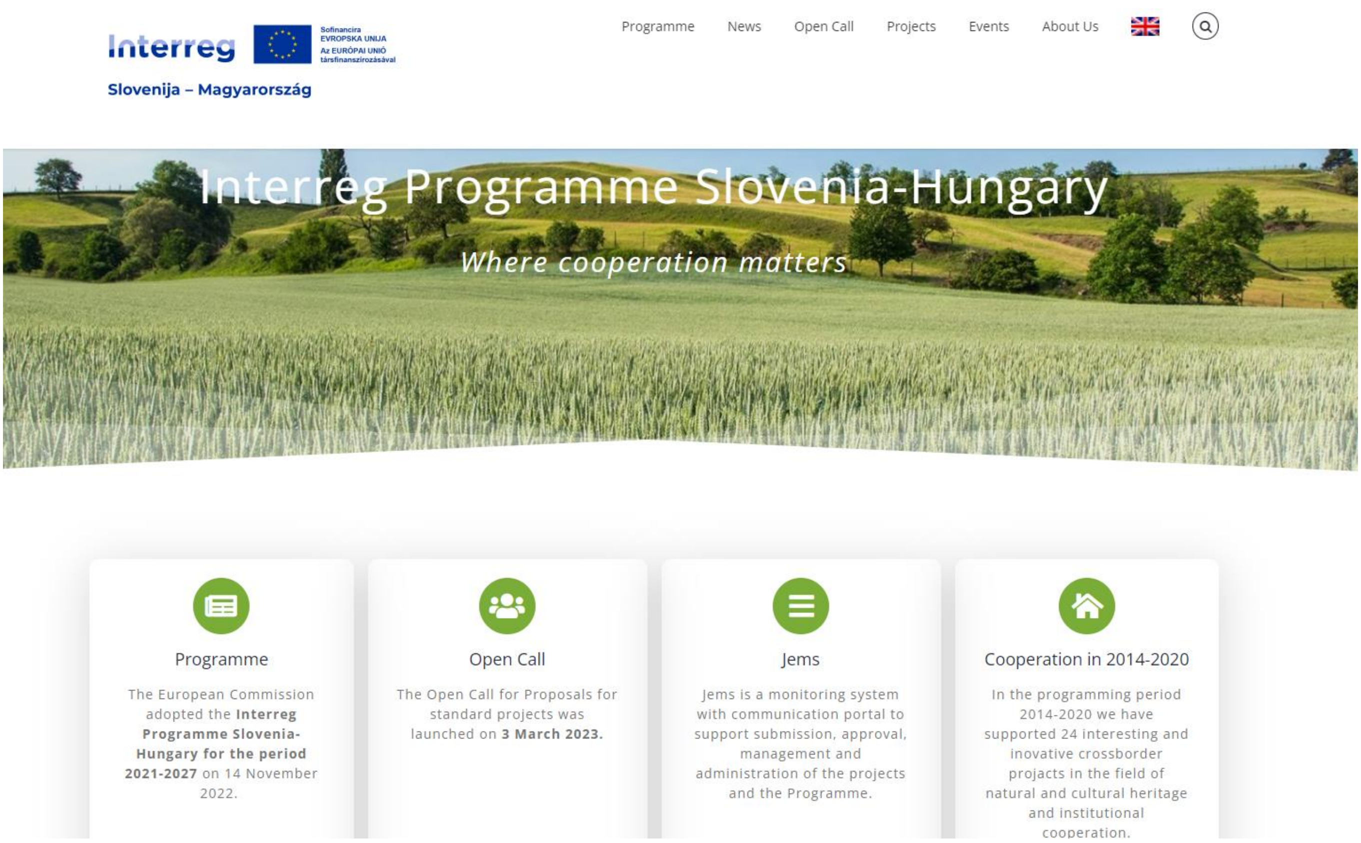

Figure 22: Video.