

**European Union**European Regional
Development Fund
Investing in your futureSpecial EU Programmes Body
Foras Um Chláir Speisialta An AE
Boord O Owre Ocht UE Projecks

UPDATE ON THE EVALUATION PLAN – INTERREG VA Programme

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This paper outlines the progress made on the development and approval of the Evaluation Plan for the INTERREG VA Programme. It will also report on the work of the Evaluation Steering Group which was established following the last monitoring committee meeting in December 2015.

2.0 Evaluation Steering Group

- 2.1 The Evaluation Plan for the INTERREG VA Programme has been drawn up in accordance with Articles 56 and 114 of the Common Provisions Regulation (EU) 1303/2013 and has taken account of the guidance provided by the Commission Services in the ‘Guidance Document on Monitoring and Evaluation’.
- 2.2 At the last Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC) on 9 December 2015, Members were issued the draft evaluation plan for comment and requested to register their interest in participating on an Evaluation Steering Group (ESG) which would finalise the plan and oversee its implementation throughout the programme period.
- 2.3 The ESG was established at the beginning of 2016 (membership listed in annex 1) and two meetings of the group have been held on 23 March and 1 June 2016. The main focus of the group has been on finalising the Evaluation Plan, taking consideration of PMC comments.
- 2.4 The Evaluation Plan was finalised and approved, on behalf of the PMC on 1 June and is included in Members’ papers for noting. The Managing Authority will proceed to issue the Plan to the Commission.

Update on the Evaluation Plan – INTERREG VA Programme

3.0 Progress in Implementation of the Evaluation Plan

3.1 As outlined in the Plan, two types of evaluations are planned during the programme;

- **Implementation Evaluations** - 3 reports required; February 2017, February 2018 and December 2018 - will support the smooth delivery of the programme by assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation mechanism established for the programme, including measures to reduce the administrative burden. The timing of the work has been planned to facilitate a review of processes in a timely manner to enable lessons learned to be incorporated into future implementation.
- **Impact Evaluations** - will be carried out on each priority axis, to test the intervention logic of that priority axis, and form a view of the effectiveness and impact of the investment, with a particular emphasis on learning any lessons that could inform future programmes or other related public sector investments. The appointed evaluators will report in 2018, 2020 and 2022.

3.2 A draft terms of reference for the first implementation evaluation was reviewed and approved by the ESG on 1 June 2016. The Managing Authority are currently awaiting approval from the Member States to commence public procurement to ensure a timely first report.

3.3 In addition, the group considered a draft timetable for the appointment of evaluators for the impact evaluations (attached as annex 2), based on the anticipated letters of offer issued dates. The group also considered a draft 'core' terms of reference for an impact evaluation of the Health priority axis.

4.0 Recommendation.

The Monitoring Committee is requested to:

- **Note** the final Evaluation Plan, approved by the ESG on behalf of the PMC;
- **Note** the work carried out to date by the Evaluation Steering Group; and
- **Note** progress to date in implementation of the Evaluation Plan for the INTERREG VA Programme

Update on the Evaluation Plan – INTERREG VA Programme

Annex 1 – Membership of the Evaluation Steering Group

Working Group Member	Sector
Shaun Henry	SEUPB (Chair)
Dr Sue Christie	Council for Nature, the Conservation and the Countryside (CNCC) Environmental Sector
Blair Horan	ICTU Ireland Trade Unions Sector
Sarah English	Scotland Europa Local Government Interests
Edel Hendry	NISRA
Gearoid O'Keefe	DPER
Siobhan O'Higgins	DPER
Frank Duffy	DoF
Dominic McCullough	DoF
John Maxwell	Scottish Government
Celeste Wilson	Scottish Government
Sarah Reid	SEUPB, Managing Authority (Secretariat)

Update on the Evaluation Plan – INTERREG VA Programme

Annex 2 – Draft Impact Evaluation Timetable

Priority Areas	Objectives	Steering Committee Stage 2 Dates	Anticipated LoO issue dates	2016				2017				2018 - 2022		
				Qr 1	Qr 2	Qr 3	Qr 4	Qr 1	Qr 2	Qr 3	Qr 4			
1	Research & Innovation	Health & Life Sciences & Renewable Energy	No later than 07 December 2016	December 2016									plan To be completed using the appointed Evaluators detailed time	
		Innovation Capacity of SMEs	No later than 22 June 2016	July 2016										
2	Environment	Protect & Restore Biodiversity	Protected Habitats & Species	No later than 07 September 2016	September 2016									
			Marine Protected areas & species	No later than 07 September 2016	September 2016									
		Invest in water sector	Water quality – transitional waters	No later than 22 June 2016	July 2016									
			Freshwater quality in river basins	No later than 07 September 2016	September 2016									
3	Sustainable Transport	Cross Border Sustainable Transport	Electric Vehicles	TBC	Subject to change – EV project under review									
			Greenways	No later than 07 September 2016	September 2016									
			Multi Modal Hub	No later than 21 December 2016	January 2017									
4	Health	Cross Border Health & Social Care	No later than 27 July 2016	August 2016										

Key – Appointment of Evaluators / Evaluation work commences