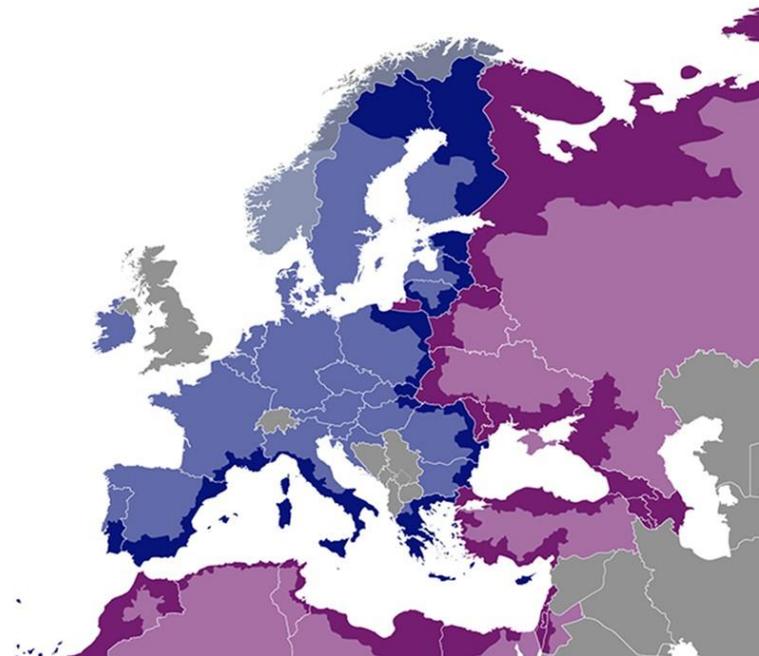# TESIM

Technical support to the implementation and management of ENI CBC programmes

Network meeting of ENI CBC communication managers

(Online – 9 June 2020)

ANNEX I to draft proceedings: Questions & Answers

Q&A on EU communication rules for the 2021-2027 programming period.

QUESTION	ANSWER
1. Will there be an extra document specific for the ENI CBC programmes, similar to the Comm&Vis Requirements for EU external actions used in the current period, or will the draft regulation and single set of rules be the only documents covering the Interreg NEXT programmes?	**No, there is no difference anymore between the programmes,** either an Interreg programme or an operation funded by another direct management programme or an external action. The same instructions will apply to all. What is being prepared by the EC will target all programmes and there will be no specific support tools for specific programmes.
2. Will the EC provide its vision on what it would like to see as indicators in the new programme document for communication?	**Yes. Regarding the common list of communication indicators, there is a manual with tips for evaluating communication actions** and this is being prepared by DG REGIO together with DG COMM. This document will **provide support for the definition of communication indicators.**
3. Is this document already available?	The final version was not ready by the time of the Interact CommNet meeting in Vilnius this February but **it has been finalised in the meantime**, **so it can be circulated** to the ENI CBC programmes through TESIM after the meeting.
4.Can the submission of the 2021-2027 programmes to the EC be done in parts since the communication chapter needs to be submitted as soon as possible? **(Interact)**	**The communication chapters can be submitted to the EC informally** because the official submission requires all chapters of the programme in place, otherwise the submission will be automatically rejected. In this informal stage, the Commission has already received parts from the mainstream programmes and also from some Interreg programmes.
5. When is the Commission planning to make all the support materials available? (Romania-Ukraine, Romania-Rep. of Moldova)	The communicating Cohesion Policy booklet is already available, the one on monitoring communication activities (mentioned before) has become available very recently. The online generator for branding issues is in the contracting, the draft will be ready by December, the formal version of **the online generator will be ready in the first quarter of 2021 for all the programmes**.
6. Will the single project data and calls system be a fully new platform? (Interact)	The Regulation foresees a website for aggregation of information from various programmes on the level of a Member State. Though the Regulation focuses on the requirements for Member States, **the idea of**

TESIM
Technical support to the implementation
and management of ENI CBC programmes

	the Commission is to aggregate these websites in which all data on the calls, projects etc can be found per region and per every EU-funded programme.
7. Will you provide a coordinated image manual for projects and programmes? Concretely a manual including technical specifications for the correct application of the logo and compliance with the information and communication rules.	The EC is planning to make available a branding manual with tips and suggestions on how to do things. Interact is also working on an Interreg branding manual and it will be made available to the ENI CBC programmes.
8. The official language of the Italy Tunisia Programme is French, so we use French on the billboards or the plaque inscription "co-financed by the European Union". Must these billboards be in English or can we use French? (Italy-Tunisia)	**French, as a programme language, can be used in the billboards or plaque inscriptions**.

Q&A on the future single branding

QUESTION	ANSWER
1. Is "Interreg NEXT" the official name for ENI CBC programmes?	"Interreg Next" is the name introduced by DG REGIO together with the European External Action Service to acknowledge that these programmes indeed continue to contribute to both the Cohesion Policy and the EU's External Policy, including the EU-Russia relations. It is the name being used in the so-called Joint paper on the Interreg Next Strategic Programming, which will become later on the multi-annual strategy document, to be adopted by the Commission as an Implementing Regulation.

This name has already been recognised officially by the community of the External Commission DGs d DG NEAR in their communication on the Eastern Partnership, that has been published recently. |
| **2. What about the name of the programmes? Would it be possible to use the brand of the programme?** | An important distinction needs to be made between the Regulation requirements and branding requirements for a community. "Interreg Next" is the label of the Interreg external programmes. The article 35 of the Regulation, requires that the Interreg name is put on the side of EU emblem. "NEXT" should be added *within the dedicated space for Interreg*. |

	To ensure the proper visibility of EU contribution the following requirement must be observed: the package Interreg + Emblem + slogan "co-funded by the EU". **A programme name or a cooperating country name can be used if they fit in the structure suggested**. An online generator for the single Interreg brand is being prepared for the next programming period. It will give possibility for introduction of **two additional elements** to the package: Interreg Next + Emblem + slogan "co-funded by the EU". They **can be used for the purposes programmes see fit, for the specific needs of the programmes** (taking in to consideration the requirements set and agreed with the partner countries.) Interact is asked to work on incorporation of NEXT into Interreg branding.
3. What about CBC Partner Countries contributing up to 50% of the funding? Will they be acknowledged?	The visibility of Partner Countries should be decided as not to damage the EU's visibility, as spelled out in the Annex 8 of the Regulation. The EU contribution should be as visible as any other.
4. What instructions are there for project beneficiaries?	The proposed format Interreg NEXT+ EU Emblem+ statement already harmonises and simplifies the approach for the beneficiaries as well. It further should be discussed at the programmes. The online generator that the Commission is developing will provide a brand manual for the correct use of the EU emblem and on how to best fill the requirements laid out in the CPR. Again, any requirement set by the Partner Countries will need to be discussed accordingly.
5. Would it be possible to include the name of the programme in the Interreg logo? (ENI CBC Med)	Yes, but a good visual solution should be found to fit it in the slot dedicated to the Interreg Next reference. **If the proportion with the EU flag is respected, it could be accepted.**
6. Would it be possible to mention the non-EU countries' contribution to the programmes? (Kolarctic)	**It is fair that non-EU countries' contribution should be visible. The online generator will provide two slots to make any contribution appear there; if the programme decides to go with their own tools, the proportion with the EU visibility needs to be respected.**
7. The new Regulation does not give room for changes in terms of programmes' logo if Member States and partner countries are to be represented. The partner countries	

which are putting forward significant amount of financing, need to have an equal share of contribution acknowledgement. The Russian partners have now separate rules for Russian beneficiaries, endorsed by the Russian national authorities. The proposal is to have an exception for external programmes, exception that could then be put forward in financing agreements on how we can otherwise shuffle all these rules that come from the EU perspective and other rules, then together create a logo that is user-friendly and reflects all partners equally. (Latvia-Russia)	Note was taken of these points, with no commitment to a legal adjustment though. The issue will be further investigated, referring as well to similar cases, such as cooperation programme between France and Switzerland, to find an applicable solution for all parties. Some tips will be also given in the brand manual.
8. It is impossible to exclude the Russian flag from branding in the Russia programmes. This is an issue that needs to be considered (Karelia)	
9. When will the brand manual by the EC be made available? (Interact)	**A draft of the branding manual should be ready by the end of the year 2020.**
10. It doesn't seem good if the simplification goes over transparency. This is how it looks if national languages could not be used. (South-East Finland - Russia)	The **online generator will foresee the possibility of using the national languages** of the partners involved. It would be possible to produce the sentence in the national languages, and not only in English.
11. What exactly will the online generator generate? (Interact)	**The user can create billboards, plaques and posters with the online generator, based on shared templates.**
12. We are soon discussing the programme's name in the Programming Committee. Is it possible to have a written indication from the EC side for this issue, also taking the word "Interreg" into account? We have discussed today about "NEXT" being part of the programme name, and also we have discussed in our programme whether Interreg is an official part of	This question should **be addressed to EC by email so that the EC can provide a written answer.**

particip

the future programme name. In that respect, the question is whether the EC could give some indications that we can pass to the programme committee (South-East Finland - Russia)	
13. Should the billboards be not in English only? (Romania-Ukraine, Romania-Rep. of Moldova)	No, the online generator offers the possibility **to choose the language in which you prefer the template to be produced.**
14. Which will be financial corrections in case of an incorrect use of a logo? Is it a 5% of the contract value per communication material, or per infrastructure work without correct visibility? How will the financial corrections apply in case of having another logo next to the one recommended by the Commission? (Latvia-Russia)	The financial correction from the draft regulation indeed mentions the 5% EU contribution to the specific action. However, it may be a smaller percentage after the negotiations with Member States. For what concerns non-compliance because of other logos being next to the one suggested by the Commission, it has to be seen whether it respects the requirements in Annex 8, namely whether the **EU contribution is visible as much as the other contribution(s), in which case there would not be any financial sanction.**
15. The common branding is a must-have: we are experiencing in the programmes' implementation many resistances from the projects because they are not allowed to be as creative as they would want to. We are trying to limit the amount of possible errors, so if the Commission itself is promoting this common branding, it is welcome and we will be totally engaged in the process for the next programming period. It will be time-saving for all and it is welcomed to be fully integrated in the Interreg family. (ENI CBC Med)	This comment is useful especially while working with the contractor about setting the branding and online generator, so it might be a possibility to liaise between the EC, the contractor and TESIM - representing ENI programmes - in order to safeguard the specificities.

Q&A on the template of the Annual Information and Communication Plan.

QUESTION	ANSWER
1. Which is the «previous year» for past activities or «the year for which the plan is developed» for future activities? Is it the calendar year, or the accounting year?	Regarding the <u>timing</u>, the timeframe will not be changed. **The programmes should do as they are doing so far.** The EC has seen that some of the programmes have already submitted their communication plan per calendar year and that some others are doing it for the accounting year plus 6 months, according to the reporting rules applicable to the AIR. **No interruption in the process** will be made for those programmes that have already started the partners consultations on the Communication plans, i.e. the programmes that plan the communication activities per accounting year. The template of the AICP shall become a mandatory document only after an official notification by the Commission.
2. Budgeting for specific activities can be challenging, many factors can affect costs: could it be more relevant to define the total budget for communication activities for reporting period?	**The budgeting per actions should be taken as an important element of the planning process.** The communication officers often budget the communication activities per actions for the subcontracting procedures, where more details are needed for the elaboration of technical specifications. In that aspect, the new requirement will not imply additional administrative burden; on the contrary, it will help the programme bodies to plan the activities more precisely and the JMC to monitor the visibility actions better.
3. The result-oriented approach is already present in the technical part of the annual implementation report: what is the added value of more indicators? Outputs and results are already defined at programme level in the Communication strategy: is there a need to foresee such indicators at activity level?	When we talk about result-oriented programmes, the indicators is this tool that help for monitoring the programme performance. This is also valid for the communication activities as well. The idea of introducing indicators already now is linked to practising and preparing for post-2020. In the new ETC regulatory proposal (article 17), it is stated that the cooperation programme must contain *the envisaged approach to communication and visibility through defining its objectives, target audiences, communication channels, social media outreach, planned budget and relevant indicators for monitoring and evaluation*. Some of the programmes have already communication indicators in the Joint Operational Programmes (JOP) for the current programming period. If the programme has already indicators in the JOP, it is quite easy to transfer them to the AICP; if they do not have them, programmes may

	consider to introduce some of the Interreg indicators published by INTERACT and TESIM.
4. Development of the communication planning and reporting is good and welcome. And yes, result-orientation is in everything we do, it is obvious. However, modifying templates in the middle of programme implementation creates challenges for collecting cumulative information, also for the programme's final report. In this respect, it is best to have all requirements clear at the programming phase. Also, the next work plan for the July 2020 - June 2021 accounting year is already in the pipeline for the JMC meeting. This new template comes too late. **(South-East Finland - Russia)**	Regarding the fact that the template of the AICP comes in the middle of the programme's implementation, SE Funland Russia comment is true. At the same time, **this information, which is now formalised in the template, already exist in the programmes plans. To draft the AICP in the new template will be only an adjustment,** which should not be harmful for programmes to introduce. Programmes having already submitted their plan to the JMC should not modify it; they can leave the format they have used already. For the rest, the idea is to have it for the next calendar year and with the next annual report due in February. **What is already in the pipeline, can keep the old format.** The EC is aware of the transitional period. In the programming phase for post 2020 we will look much more precisely at the communication part, so we will give advices on how to develop your strategy better in order to fulfil the requirements of the regulatory framework, but also to make it easier for the beginning of the implementation.
5. Is the new template to be used for the period 2021-2027 only? And not for the current period? (Romania-Ukraine, Romania-Rep. of Moldova)	**The template of the AICP shall be used as from the date of EC official notification (expected in July), i.e. with the next annual reports in February 2021.** The idea is to prepare early for the 2021-2027 new requirements on communication reporting will come in force. For the future programming period, the regulatory framework foresees that there will not be annual implementation reports. Instead, programmes will be asked to submit data regularly, and there will be annual review meetings. The template of the AICP is a good way forward to prepare for the future programming period and to know how to measure and stir the communication activities. **Programmes may use the format of the AICP for next programming period as well.**