

PROGRAMMING TASK FORCE

5th MEETING – 17th JUNE 2021 *online*

Main decisions:

1. Programme area 2021-2027: Commission's proposal to exclude the Italian territories of Brindisi and Lecce

The Task Force acknowledges the following: in February 2021, the European Commission made a proposal to exclude the territories of Brindisi and Lecce from the 2021-2027 Programme area. A meeting between Italy representatives and the European Commission took place last week to discuss the matter. Both Italian and Croatian delegations strongly support the continuity of the current Programme area, i.e. keeping the territories of Brindisi and Lecce in the Programme area. The Commission's final decision will be included in the implementing act setting out the list of Interreg programme areas to receive support, broken down for each strand and each Interreg programme.

2. Strategic territorial and thematic scenarios

The Task Force acknowledges the strategic territorial and thematic scenarios report which identifies, based on the challenges and potentials mapped in the territorial analysis, six territorial and thematic scenarios, each containing the compatible specific objectives and challenges.

The Croatian delegation identifies the first three scenarios (continuity, consistency and blue economy) while the Italian delegation identifies two scenarios (firstly the blue economy, secondly the consistency) as the most relevant for the next Programme.

Both delegations agree on the most relevant challenges: 9 challenges common to the three scenarios and inclusion of challenges 13 and 30, merging of challenges 6 and 7 and challenges 18 and 20, consideration of three cross-cutting challenges (3, 4 and 15).

Both delegations agree to give a mandate to the external expert to elaborate the «customized» scenario, merging the three preferred scenarios and taking into account the considerations made by the delegations on different challenges. In particular four policy objectives (POs) and six specific objectives (SOs) have been identified as potentially relevant to be included within the new “customized” scenario:

- PO1 (SO1.1 and SO1.4),
- PO2 (SO2.4 and SO2.7),
- PO3 (SO3.2) and
- PO4 (SO4.6)

[numbers refer to the list of policy and specific objectives ex art. 3 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1058]

At the same time, it is decided to postpone the possible inclusion of ISO1 (*Interreg Specific Objective n. 1: a better cooperation governance*) for further discussion and investigation of potential activities to be funded.

The Joint Secretariat proposes to verify how the current 2014-2020 SOs would fit in the new intervention logic agreed, with a specific reference to current 3.3 SO and to support the analysis on ISO1.

The Commission strongly encourages the delegations to take into account the use of ISO1 as much as possible.