

**Interreg  
Danube Region**



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

# **2nd DRP Lead partner seminar**

Bucharest, 11 June 2025

# **Welcome!**

**Rector Mr. Mihnea Cosmin Costoiu**

**General Director Ms. Camelia Coporan**

# Agenda

08:30 – 09:00	Registration
09:10-09:15	Introduction and scope of the seminar
09:15–09:45	Project management “dos and don’ts”
09:45-11:15	Reporting in JEMS
11:15-11:35	Coffee break
11:35-12:00	Peers to peers
12:00-12:30	First Year Review
12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30-14:45	Project changes
14:45-15:15	Peers to peers –
15:15 -15:30	Coffee break
15:30-16:00	Communication
16:00-17:00	Networking with POs and PACs

# DRP LP seminar – 2nd call projects

<https://app.sli.do/event/vYxiXjEKn3n2hBMQZqB4MA>

Slido #2514 482



# Project management “dos and don’ts”

# **What are the most frequent omissions in terms of project management**

(content wise)

- Clear project management structure - well-defined responsibilities
- Well-defined positions - clear roles & tasks - sufficient expertise & capacities - commitment
- Knowledge of programme rules and procedures
- Continuous monitoring of implementation progress
- Risk management - detecting problems asap
- Quality control and evaluation
- Practical management tools
- Regularly meet and communicate with partnership
- Personal relationships with PPs
- Regular contact with MA/JS PO

# What are the most frequent omissions in terms of project management (financial wise)

## DO:

- Permanent monitoring of all financial aspects is essential
  - ✓ Overseeing internal management of funds
  - ✓ Regular monitoring of real spending against targets fixed in the SC (spending rates)
- Ensuring compliance with the approved budget and financial rules
- Managing budget reallocations within the project, ensuring they align with programme rules
- Financial Reporting
  - ✓ Preparing accurate financial reports for the project and ensuring timely submission for verification and reimbursement
- Identifying and addressing financial risks, such as irregularities or delays in fund transfers
- Close collaboration and constant communication within partnership, also with MA/JS

## Consequences:

- unjustified low spending can lead to decommitment (based on decision of MC)
- Unjustified delays in submitting of PPR and AfR or project modification requests can lead to proportional reduction up to 5% of the total project budget (based on decision of MC)

# What are the most frequent omissions in terms of project management

(communication wise)

## DON'T

- Take anything for granted
- Leave communication for the last point in the agenda
- Think of communication activities sporadically

## DO

- Appoint a knowledgeable and accountable communication manager (CM)
- CM IS in charge of the planning, coordination and implementation of the project communication and of the involvement of all partners in communication activities
- Communication at project level is the responsibility of the beneficiaries. All project partners must be involved in communicating the project results. Good communication manager knows it!
- Preparations start well before the official date of implementation
- Keep the communication flow and prioritise internal communication
- Involve the whole partnership in external communication.



# Why having a reliable quality assurance manager?

- Ensures High Standards
- Risk Management
- Consistency
- Increased Efficiency
- Cost Savings
- Improved Communication
- Compliance and Regulations
- Continuous Improvement

## **What makes an effective project steering committee?**

- Oversight, guidance & direction
- Joint involvement (LP : Primus inter pares)
- Importance of who participates
- High level of project knowledge
- Set up and guidance (roles/protocols incl. decision making)
- Clear vision, goals and actions
- Use of full range of competencies
- Find the balance between uniform and context specific approaches
- Importance of communication

# How to use the programme documents?



- ❖ Approved Application form in JEMS and Subsidy Contract
- Always refer to the latest version of the documents
- Use the programme website and check the relevant documents there
  - ✓ Implementation manual + Annexes
  - ✓ Reporting
  - ✓ Eligibility of expenditure manual
  - ✓ Communication and visibility

<https://interreg-danube.eu/regular-projects>

# How to monitor the spending forecast and coordinate the partners in following it?

<b>1. Use Budget Monitoring Tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project Management Software</li><li>• Financial Management Tools</li><li>• Custom Dashboards</li></ul>
<b>2. Regular Monitoring:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use tools like the Minor Reallocation Tool (Annex B2) to track budget reallocations and spending progress</li><li>• Continuously monitor spending rates and compare them against the forecast to identify deviations.</li><li>• Establish regular check-ins and reports (e.g. every 3 months)</li></ul>
<b>3. Coordination with Partners:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Require PPs to report their expenditures regularly through partner reports (PRs).</li><li>• Ensure PPs inform the LP about any planned budget reallocations and seek approval for changes exceeding 15% of their budget from MA/JS.</li></ul>
<b>4. Timely Communication:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintain open communication channels with PPs to address any financial issues or delays.</li><li>• Provide reminders about reporting deadlines and spending targets.</li></ul>
<b>5. Verification of Expenditures:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure all expenditures are verified by national controllers and comply with eligibility rules.</li><li>• Address any irregularities or discrepancies promptly</li></ul>
<b>6. Reallocations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coordinate minor budget reallocations within cost categories and seek MA/JS confirmation for reallocations exceeding 15%.</li><li>• Coordinate major project change with MA/JS and affected PPs</li></ul>
<b>7. Training and Support:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide guidance and training to PPs on financial management and reporting requirements</li><li>• Offer support in resolving financial challenges.</li></ul>

# How to motivate weakly responsive PPs

- Understand the real issues
- Stay professional
- Address issues early
- Person to person approach
- Be supportive incl. practical assistance
- Carrot rather than the stick. The latter if necessary
- Patience and perseverance - "Several times in the end they were the best partners"

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# Reporting in JEMS

- When to report?
- How to report?
- Why to report?
- Hints and tricks
- Reporting indicators

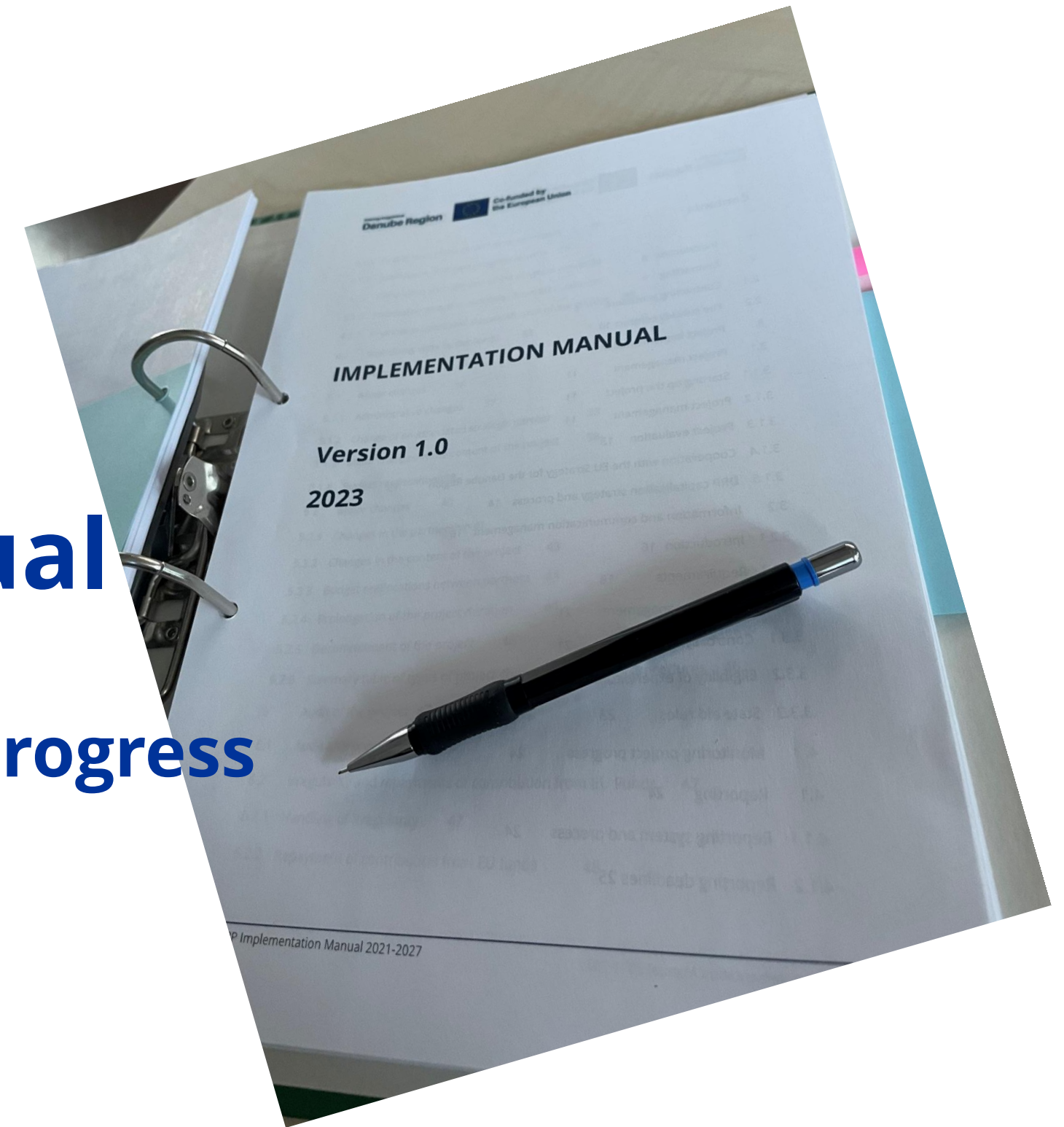


# Crash course:

## Implementation Manual

### Chapter 4 Monitoring project progress

p 30 ff





# Crash Course (Parts 2 & 3)



# Spending Forecast

## SC Article 5: Reporting obligations and payment

The reporting periods and the deadlines for submission of the PPR and AfR of the project are the following:

Period ID	Reporting period (dd/mm/yyyy- dd/mm/yyyy)	Deadline for submission of the Project Progress Report and Application for Reimbursement (dd/mm/yyyy)	Spending forecast EUR  example
Period 1	01.04.2025 – 30.09.2025	01.02.2026	150.000,00
Period 2	01.10.2025 – 31.03.2026	01.07.2026	200.000,00
Period 3	01.04.2026 – 30.09.2026	01.02.2027	50.000,00
Period 4	01.10.2026 – 31.03.2027	01.07.2027	100.000,00
Period 5	01.04.2027 – 30.09.2027	01.02.2028	200.000,00
Period 6	01.10.2027 – 31.03.2028	01.07.2028	300.000,00

## IM 4.1.7 Financial progress and decommitment of the project (SC Article 14)

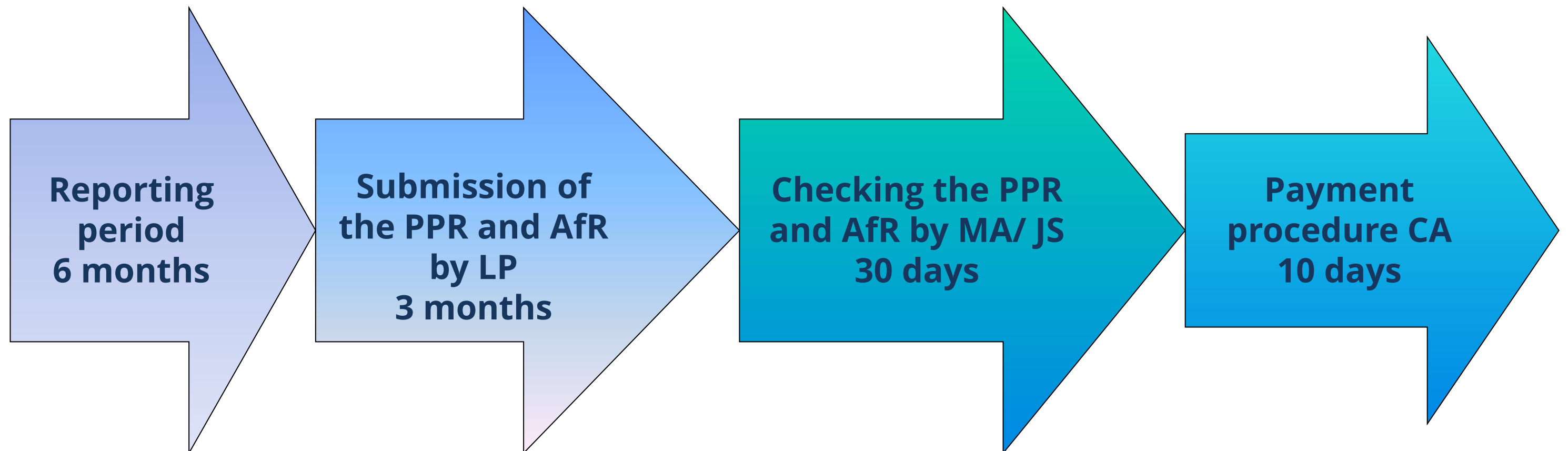
**“The Partnership has the possibility to deviate from the spending forecast** laid down in the SC taking into consideration that in case of underspending (with reference to the original spending forecasts) the MA/JS is entitled to decommit the budget of the project by reducing the original project budget and the corresponding contribution from Interreg Funds (based on the prior decision of the MC).

In case the **LP submits the PPR and the AfR** or the project modification request **with unjustified delays, or more than two completions** of the same PPR and AfR are attributable to the LP, the MA/JS is entitled to apply a proportional **reduction of the total project budget up to 5%** on the basis of the decision of the monitoring committee.”

# Timeframe for management verification

Verification process	Verification timeframe and indicative deadlines		
Preparation and submission of the PR by the project partner to the controller from the end of each reporting period	15 days		
Verification of expenditure and issuing the control certificate by the controller		60 days	
Preparation and submission of the PPR and the AfR for the whole project by the lead partner to the MA/JS			15 days

# Timeframe of reimbursement





# Jems test environment for demonstration

<https://jems.clarmont.hu/>

Just for MA/JS use

Output indicator	Result indicator
RCO82 Participations in joint actions promoting gender equality, opportunities and social inclusion	RCR85 Participations in joint actions across borders after project completion
RCO 83 Strategies and action plans jointly developed	RCR 79 Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations
RCO 84 Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects	ISI <sup>1</sup> : Organisations with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders, other than organisations counted under RCO 87 Organisations cooperating across borders (PPs, etc.) – e.g. organisations external to the partnership
RCO 116 Jointly developed solutions	RCR 104 Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations
RCO 87 Organisations cooperating across borders	ISI: Organisations with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders
RCO118 Organisations cooperating for the multi-level governance of macro-regional strategies	RCR 84 Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion
RCO120 Projects supporting cooperation across borders to develop urban-rural linkages	

# Indicators – points of attention

Please indicate the **progress** made for each **output** and indicate the **status of activities** (not started, in progress, finalised).  
 For finalised outputs upload the output factsheet. In case of multiple files per output please upload them as one zip file.

Please indicate the progress made in achieving the expected project **results** considering the chosen result indicators. Please explain how far the implementation of project activities and outputs has already contributed or led to the expected change compared to the initial situation. Please insert only a quantification if the result is achieved and the respective supporting documents are uploaded. In case of multiple files per result please upload them as one zip file.  
**Double counting** of the same result **has to be avoided**.

## 3 important things to remember when reporting on indicators:

- Number
- Measurement unit
- Description

<sup>1</sup> Interreg specific Indicator developed by the programmes together with INTERACT

## **Indicators – points of attention (2)**

**The achievements of the project Specific Objectives, and outputs must be in line with the plans of the AF.**

**What to do in case of delays?**

**The description of problems must be clear and complete and the adopted/proposed measures must be suitable to overcome the problems.**

**The electronic versions of the outputs, deliverables, completed in the period must be uploaded together with the related Quality Report(s) and Output Factsheet(s).  
No obvious issues/shortcomings regarding the quality of delivered outputs and deliverables must be detected.**

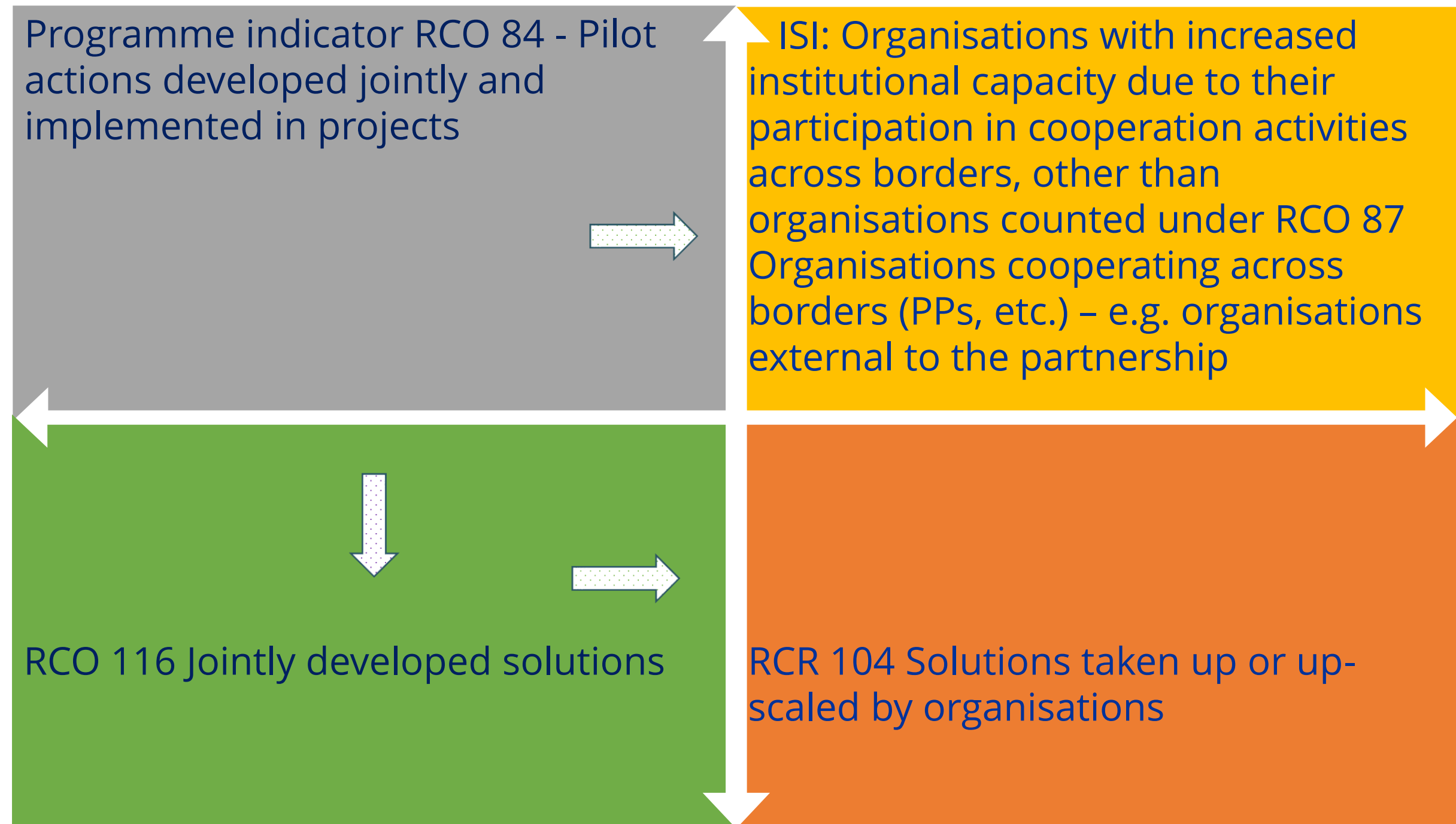


# Mandatory indicator

Output Indicator	Result Indicator
RCO 87 Organisations cooperating across borders	ISI: Organisations with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders

Must be reported in the **last reporting period**.

## How to report on indicators



# Mandatory indicator



## Result indicator

**ISI: Organisations with increased institutional capacity due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders**

### Collection of data:

- **Data** for this indicator is to be **collected via a survey** provided by the programme to the project lead partner.
- The project may decide to **translate the survey into local languages** if necessary. The project **lead partner is responsible** for ensuring that **the survey is completed** by the organisations that participated in project activities. The lead partner is responsible for collecting the responses in an **overview table that it provides to the programme.**
- The programme is responsible for **verifying the consistency of the aggregated data in the overview table** provided by the programme. The programme is not responsible for verifying the accuracy of the data at the level of the individual organisations.

*A template of survey can be found in the Applicants manual:  
<https://interreg-danube.eu/calls-for-proposals/second-call>*

# How to report on indicators – Pilots - solutions

**Solution idea pilot tested (pilot output) → Solution output → Solution result (take up)**

Pilot actions

**Testing of innovative products, methodologies, tools etc.**



In order to be counted by this indicator, **the pilot action needs not only to be developed, but also implemented** within the project and the implementation of the pilot action should be **finalised by the end of the project**.

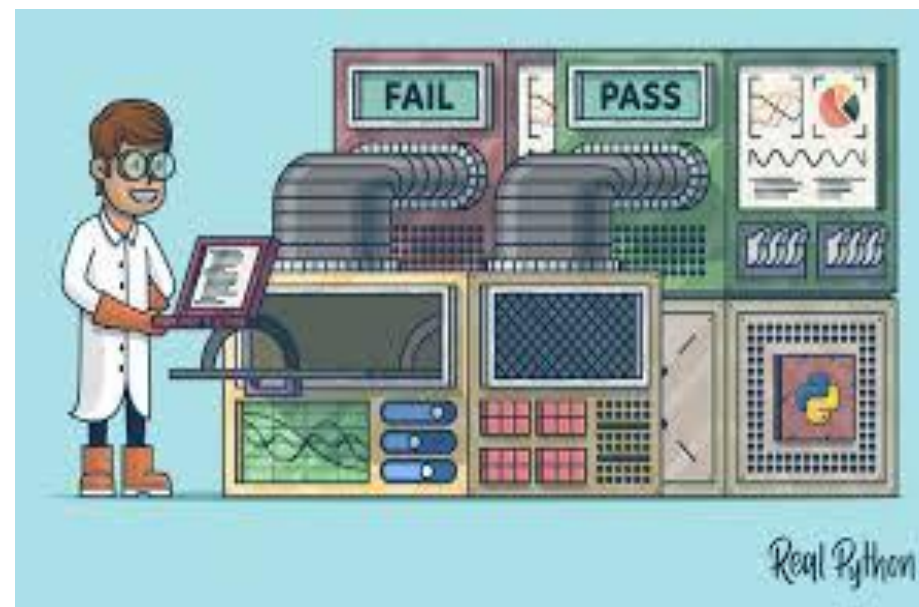
## **Practical implementation of the indicator:**

In order to be counted in the indicator, an identified **solution should include indications of the actions needed for it to be taken up by the target group or to be up scaled**.

Each developed solution of the project shall be counted only once under the respective output indicator.

In case a solution (e.g. a methodology) is jointly developed by the project, but not pilot tested and validated within the project to be feasible and applicable (see RCO84), then that product of the project shall not be counted under this output indicator.

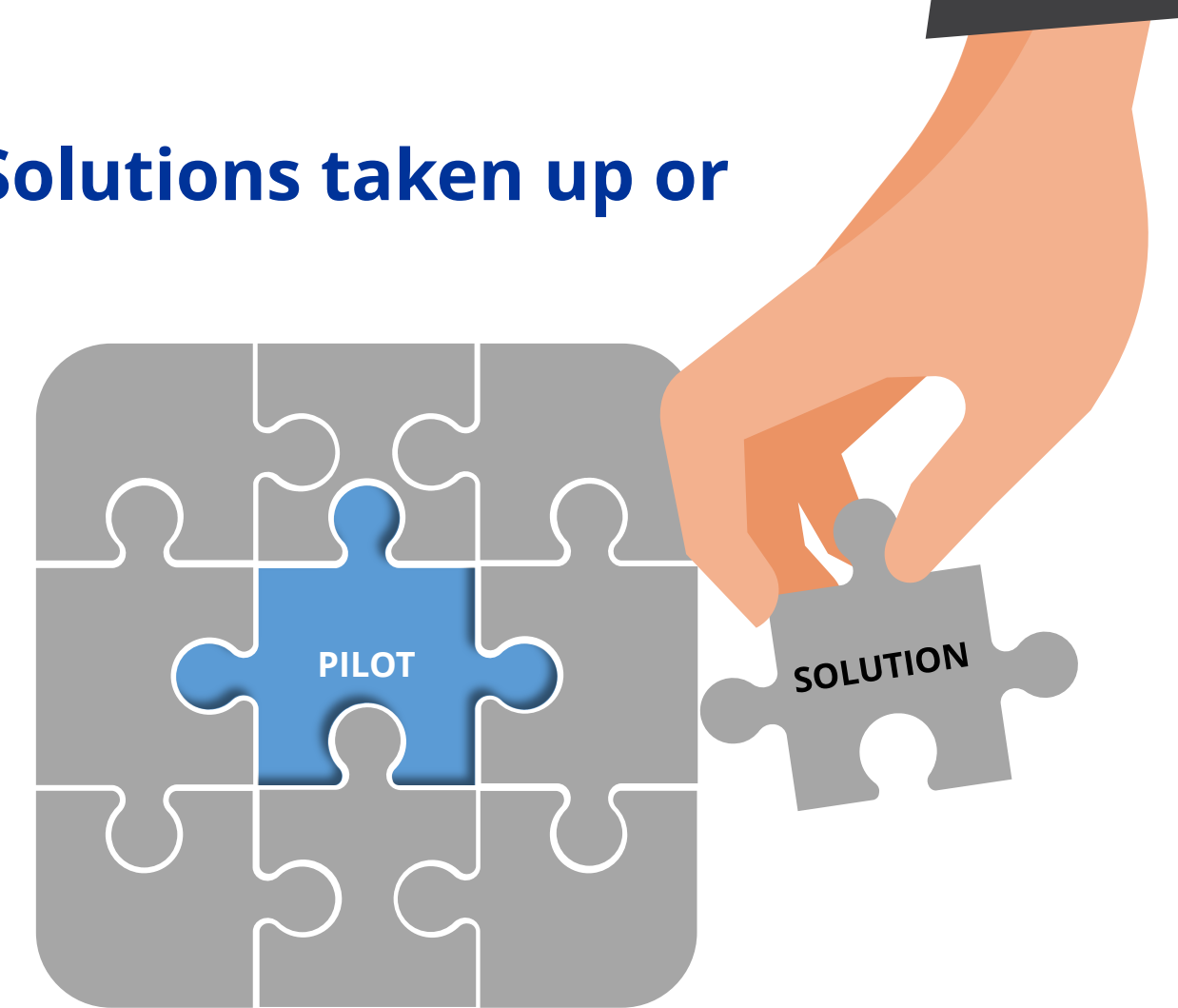
Project management-related tools, like internal communication platforms, templates should not be considered under this output indicator.



# How to report on indicators - Result indicator RCR 104 Solutions taken up or upscaled by organisations

## What it measures?

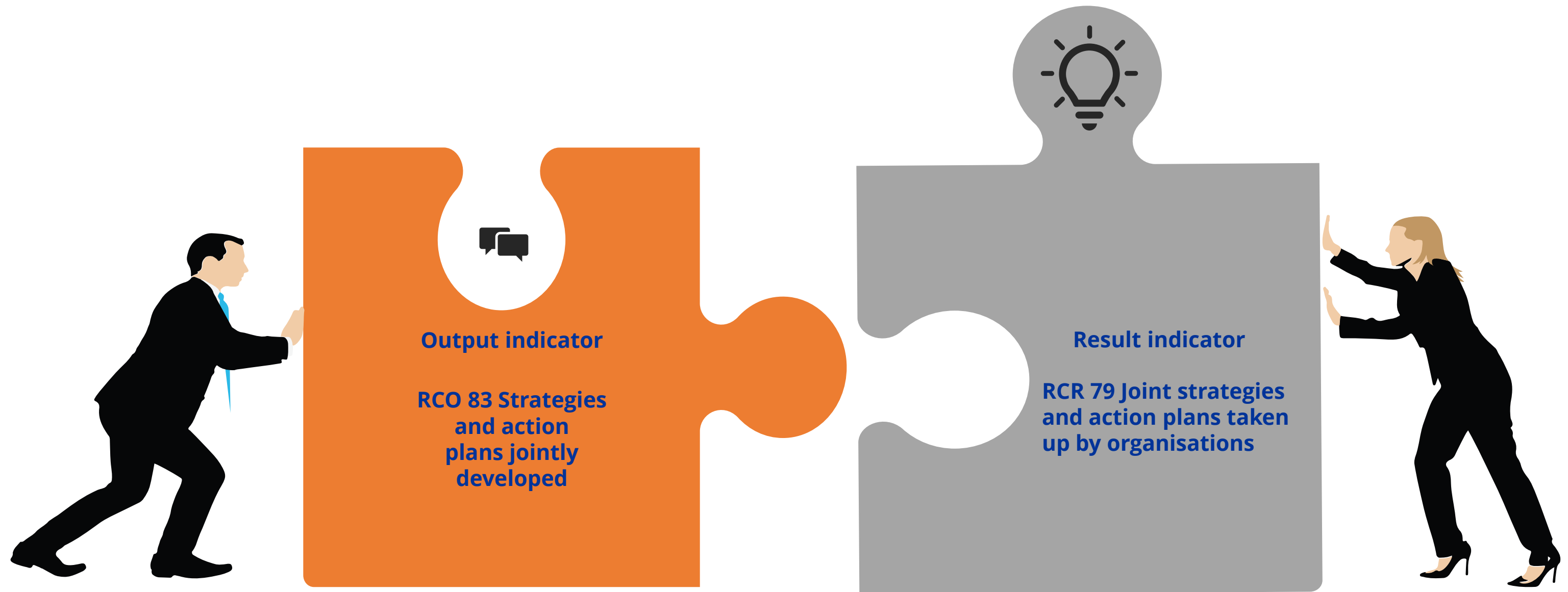
The indicator counts **the number of solutions**, other than legal or administrative solutions, that are developed by supported projects and are taken up or up-scaled **during the implementation of the project or within one year after project completion**



## Definitions: □

- Joint **solutions taken up** by organisations means that the solution **developed** jointly by the partnership is **adopted and applied by its target group** (documented by the adopting organisations in, for instance, strategies, action plans etc.) already **before**, or **until the submission of the final report** (3 months from the end of project implementation).
- In case the solution is finalised at the end of the projects and thus its uptake will happen after project finalisation, **the lead partner shall provide**, together with the last progress report **a time plan for the uptake of the solution in practice** (by organisations within the partnership and or outside the partnership). □
- The organisations **involved in take-up** means those **target groups** who are expected to adopt and apply the developed solution, which organisations may or may not be direct participants (**LP, PP, ASP**) in the supported project.

# How to report on indicators



# How to report on indicators -

**Output** Programme output indicator RCO 83 Strategies and action plans jointly **developed**

## What it measures?

The indicator counts the number of joint strategies or action plans developed by supported projects.

A jointly developed strategy or action plan implies the involvement of organisations from the partnership in the drafting process of the strategy or action plan. The involvement of the relevant stakeholders is also crucial, since the strategy, or action plan shall reflect the needs of these stakeholder groups and ensure its sustainability and future implementation.



**Result** Joint strategies and action plans **taken up** by organisations

## What it measures?

The indicator counts the number of joint strategies and action plans (not individual actions) adopted and implemented by organisations during or after the project completion.

At the time of reporting this indicator, **the implementation** of the joint strategy or action plan does not need to be completed but **effectively started**. □

It is **not necessary** that the implementation of the strategy/ action plan is **fully finalised** in order to count the indicator. □

Together with the **final progress report** the lead partner shall **provide** the MAJS with the **timespan** of strategy/ action plan implementation, **timetable** that should cover **at least one year after the project end**.

**!!! Endorsed and applied by the project's target groups.**



# How to report on indicators –RCO82 - RCR85

## Output indicator

RCO82 Participations in joint actions promoting gender equality, equal opportunities and social inclusion

## Result indicator

RCR85 Participations in joint actions across borders after project completion

Indicators applicable only to Priority 3 SOs 3.1 and 3.2

### What it measures?

**Participations** (i.e. number of persons attending a joint action) are counted for **each joint activity** organised on the basis of **attendance lists** or other relevant means of quantification. □

A joint action is considered an action organised with the involvement of the project partners (from the definition of the content to its practical implementation). □

**For the definition of this indicator, the joint action includes training schemes.**

Joint actions across borders could include, for instance, **exchange activities or exchange visits** organized with participants **from at least three countries** of the programme area.

**Participations** (i.e. number of persons attending a joint action across borders) **are counted for each joint action** organised on the basis of attendance lists or other relevant means of quantification.

Result indicator has to be realistically considered: maybe not all the participants in the study visits during project implementation will continue also after but only e.g. half or three quarters.





**Applicable only to SO 4.2**

Output Indicator (upon project finalization)	Result Indicator
<b>Projects supporting cooperation across borders to develop urban-rural linkages</b>  <b>Target value - 1</b>	<b>No result indicator</b>

The indicator counts the number of projects which aim, as a primary objective, to enhance the cooperation across borders between urban and rural areas.

The indicator should be counted by the project only if by general approach or at least one specific objective of the project is addressing the developing of urban-rural linkages.

# Jems test environment for demonstration

<https://jems.clarmont.hu/>

Just for MA/JS use

# Typical errors in Partner reports

- invoice number not filled in
- invoice date/payment date not filled in
- Reported costs with the payment date after the end date of the reporting period
- description written in national language
- **Registration fees for participation in events** reported under Travel and accommodation (**real cost option**) instead of External expertise cost category
- **Stakeholders' travel and accommodation costs** reported under Travel and accommodation (**real cost option**) instead of External expertise cost category
- **Travel costs of ASP** reported under External expertise instead of Travel and accommodation cost category
- Costs of **stamp, postal services** reported under External expertise instead of Office and administration cost category
- Costs of **spare parts, fuel, oils for equipment** shall not be reported under External expertise and services cost category
- Cost of **renting of the project equipment** (listed in AF under cost category Equipment) shall be reported under cost category Equipment

# Application for Reimbursement (AfR)

**Before generating** please check if:

- List of partner certificates- all wanted Control certificates are included
- Contracting/ partner details- Bank details of lead partner are up-to-date (latest Annex 2 Bank account statement uploaded)
- AF/ B-Project partners/ Contact/ B.1.4 Legal representative data is up-to-date

**Generating AfR**

- Project progress report/ Report exports/ AfR generation

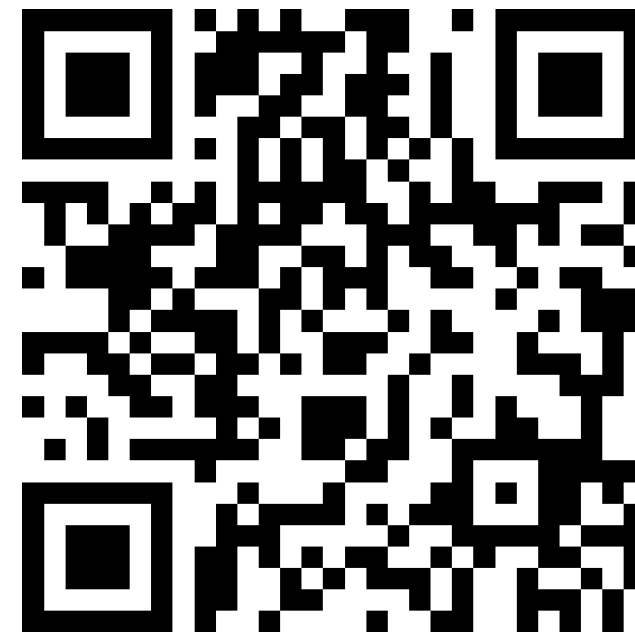
**Project progress report annexes**

- Upload signed AfR

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IT'S TIME FOR



BREAK

# Peers to Peers session

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# First year review

## FYR – April, May, June 2026

*Before the first-year review, no major project modification concerning the budget and activities is allowed.*

The **first-year review** meeting **should be organised well in advance** by the LP, in coordination with the MA/JS PO, who should be informed about the time and location preferably two months before the planned steering committee meeting, or other related project event. **The NCP** of the LP country and the NCP of the country where the meeting is taking place is **invited** to attend the meeting.

The review and the meeting focus on the progress of the activities, their timely implementation and the related verified expenditure, the progress towards the project objectives and output targets, management and communication of the project, potential risks, problems, delays and their possible solutions, a realistic forecast for the rest of the implementation period.

# 1st year review

- Additional early-stage type of monitoring measure
- Carried out in month 12-14 of implementation
- Based on 1st PPR plus additional real-time data (content, financial, partnership communication/management and procurements)
- Face-to-face (or online) set-up including the entire partnership, eventually back-to-back to a SC meeting which would happen anyway
- Follow-up by JS recommendations
- No major modification can be requested before 1st year review!

# What is the purpose and scope of the FYR?

## Purpose

- Monitor Progress
- Ensure Compliance
- Identify Issues Early
- Support Quality Improvement

## Scope

- Administrative & Financial Performance
- Implementation Progress
- Strategic Relevance
- Communication & Dissemination
- Risk Management

# When to plan and how to prepare for the FYR meeting?

- They will take place in April, May, June 2026.
- Start to plan 2 months (circa) before the planned SC
- MA/JS PO will contact you to confirm the date and format
- Involve all the partners, especially SO leads
- Document preparation (send to MA/JS PO at least 10 days before the FYR) :
  - summary of project implementation (Annex D1)
  - monitoring templates used at project level
  - list of procurements
- **Practicalities**

# **What to expect during the FYR? How to structure the meeting?**

- A general presentation of the status of the project by the LP (progress, delays, difficulties in implementation, etc.);
- Presentations of the partners responsible for certain activities and other PPs on specific issues;
- Discussions;
- MA/JS follow up and next steps.

## What is MA/ JS following during the FYR?

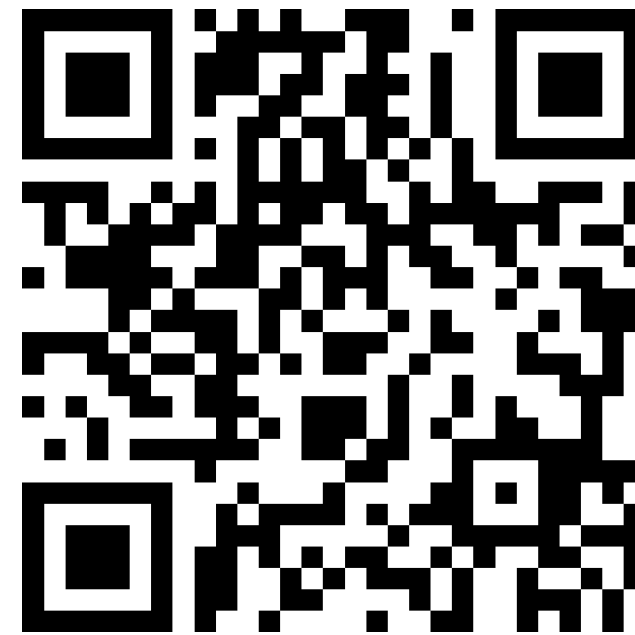
- Project management and coordination
- Project financial management
- Partnership
- Implementation of work plan/activities
- Outputs
- Communication
- Involvement of target groups/stakeholders
- Sustainability and transferability of outputs/results
- Implementation of horizontal principles



# DRP LP seminar – 2nd call projects

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# Project changes

# Categories of project changes

Minor changes	Major changes
Administrative changes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal succession of LP / PP</li> <li>• ASP change</li> </ul>	Change of LP / PP
Minor content change <i>(no significant impact on project implementation; intervention logic; transnational character)</i>	Major content change <i>(substantial deviation)</i>
Shifts between cost categories in PP budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget reallocation among PPs</li> <li>• Decommitment / budget reduction</li> </ul>
	Change of project duration
MA/JS PO confirmation & simpler process	MA/JS approval & <i>complex procedure</i>
Subsidy contract not affected	Subsidy contract modified

# How to manage minor changes? When is Jems updated?

- DRP templates
  - Minor changelog file
  - Minor reallocation tool
- need confirmation of MA/JS PO (most cases)
- Jems not updated directly

# Can the periodic budget allocation be modified?

- Only under certain specific major change circumstances e.g.
  - partner withdrawal/new partner
  - decommitment
  - significant change of content

# Is it possible to modify the originally planned equipment items, or adjust the investment part of the project?

## Basically YES

- must be in line with programme's rules and procedures
- requires prior approval by MA/JS

## Steps

- Prepare a justification
- Consult with MA/JS as early as possible
- depending on the case follow the procedures for minor or major change



## **When to consider project extensions?**

- Prolongation - only once.
- Cannot exceed 6 months.
- The LP has to take into consideration that according to the DRP eligibility rules, all activities within the projects must be completed before 31 December 2028.

# **What if some declared outputs and results cannot be achieved by the project?**

- Not appreciated
- Major content change
- Proportional budget reduction

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IT'S TIME FOR



BREAK

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# Communication





# Communication: basic documents

- ✓ Implementation manual: Information and communication management chapter 3.2
- ✓ Project communication guideline
- ✓ Project brand book

## Project brand book & communication guidelines

Toolkit for regular projects

 Project communication guidelines, version 0.4, July 2024 (Word)

 Project brand book (PDF)

# Responsibilities

- ✓ All partners to follow communication regulations → Otherwise: not eligible cost !
  
- ✓ All partners should be involved in communication coordinated by a communication manager in the project → qualified person in charge of:
  - Planning, coordinating and implementing project communication;
  - Involving all partners;
  - Checking all rules are followed;
  - Contacting JS

# EC Regulation requirements



- Acknowledge support from Danube Region Programme and EU funds in ALL communication activities:
  - Include the project logo in a visible place (other logos smaller) → Also events, social media!
  - Reference to the **Interreg funds!**
- Include in each partners' institution website project logo in full colour, a description of the project's objectives, details regarding financial support from the Interreg Danube Region Programme and a link to project website
- Place a poster (minimum A3) visible in each partner's premises including the EU support
- Permanent plaques or billboards

# Mandatory posters

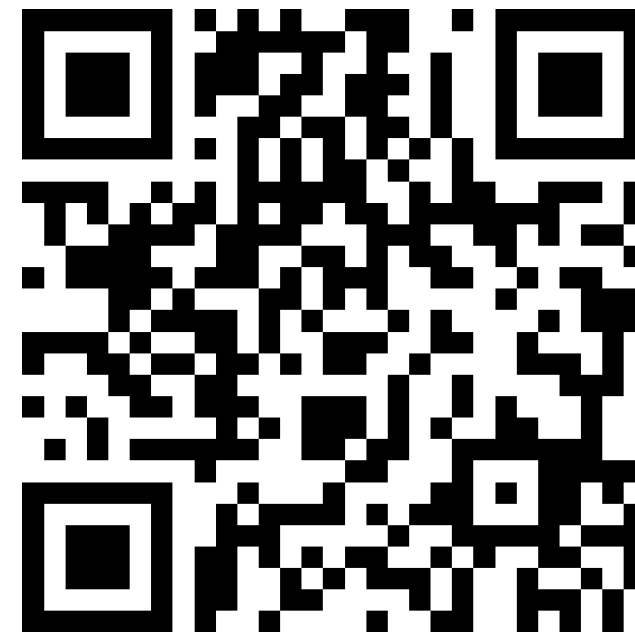


- ✓ Within 6 months after project approval:
- Each project partner to place at least one poster at a location visible to the public (such as the building entrance area)
- To stay visible for the whole project duration
- Minimum size A3

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# **Danube Region Programme**

## **Managing Authority/ Joint Secretariat**

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<https://www.facebook.com/InterregDanube/>

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