Call 9

General Guidance

Version 1, 07/02/2022

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Introduction

This document provides general guidance on Call 9. It may be updated at a later stage. The official call regulation is expected to be published on 10 February. The call regulation is the legally binding document that regulates the Call 9 submissions.

This call is a one-step procedure.

The application forms may be officially submitted in the eMS after the publication of the call regulation. The eMS will be available for the creation of the application forms and for filling them in from 10 February 2022. The official submission can only be done before 15 March 12.00 (noon).

Application forms submitted past the closing deadline of 15 March – 12h00 (noon), will not be considered as eligible.

Call calendar

Submissions

- 10 February – publication of the official call regulation and start for the official submission of the call 8 applications in eMS
- **15 March – 12h00 (noon) – call closure for the submission of proposals**

Decision

- March-April 2021: evaluation of the applications by the MA/JS and regional authorities
- 26 April 2022: meeting of the programme's Monitoring Committee - decision on selection or rejection of projects
- 1 May 2022: Start of projects

After the submission of the final applications, the joint secretariat/managing authority will carry out an eligibility assessment, quality assessment and state aid assessment. Only project applications that fulfil the eligibility criteria will pass to the quality assessment stage. The assessments will then be presented to the programme's monitoring committee. In parallel, a quality assessment will be performed by the regional/national authorities that are member of the monitoring committee. The monitoring committee decides which projects will be selected for approval and for rejection. All lead applicants will be informed about the decision.

Call 9 focus and budget

ERDF financing rate

For this call, the standard maximum programme financing rate is 90% (ERDF).

Application forms can only be submitted under priority axis 4 Territorial development, SO 4.1 Reducing the barrier effect of the border for residents and institutions.

Priority axis	Budget European Regional	Planned allocation	Maximum programme financing rate (ERDF)

	Development Fund		
4.	€ 6,9000,000	Specific objective 4.1 – Reducing the barrier effect of the border for residents and institutions	90%

The projects submitted in the framework of call 9 need to address one of the following topics:

- Water management Cross-border river management and flood prediction/simulation, dam management

- Emergency services and public forces: "outside the norm events" crisis management and climate change impact: plan and material standards network/platform

- Spatial planning for flood mitigation and territorial resilience. Land use planning. Territorial planning: integrated management of new flood zones

When designing the project structure, beneficiaries must be aware of the elements listed in the sections below.

Project outputs & programme indicators
The programme indicators must be linked with the project outputs.

The project outputs are always associated to one or more of the work packages defined.

When describing and quantifying the project outputs and linking them to the programme indicators, please remember that the values listed there need to be achieved within the project lifetime of 20 months. The values inserted must be realistic and feasible to be achieved. The partnership also needs to keep track of the progress made in the achievement of the outputs and provide evidence in this sense with every project report submitted during implementation.

E.g. Defining a project output by which 1.000.000 people potentially affected by flooding will be trained within 20 months by the project partnership, knowing that the training in question is not existent before the start of the project, might be considered as not realistic.

Disregarded from the target value and the realism of it, the partnership must describe a methodology by which they can count and keep track of the people so that they report on them every 6 months in the project report.

From a technical point of view, one project output in the eMS can be linked to maximum two programme output indicators.

Work-packages, activities, deliverables

A strong focus is put on the achievement of concrete results in this call. Therefore, only implementation work-packages must be filled in and the work-packages 'Management' and 'Communication' should remain empty.

Every implementation work-package defined in the eMS must include at least one activity.

Every activity must have at least one deliverable linked to it.

Every activity has an indicative budget that must be filled in by hand in the eMS; this is not automatically done by the system.

For each deliverable, a specific budget line must be created in the budget section of the responsible partner in eMS.

Filling in the AF in the different languages

The applicants can choose between filling in the entire application form in English or filling it in in all 3 languages of the programme.

If the application form is filled in in English, reporting can be done in Eglish.

If the application form is filled in in all 3 languages of the programme, reporting also needs to be done in all 3 programme languages.

When including descriptions in the eMS in the different languages, the same level of information needs to be provided in all the languages.

E.g. Filling in a description in French and then not filling in the text in German or Dutch will result in the application not passing the eligibility check.

Empty text-fields left in the eMS for all the languages that are linked to work packages, activities and deliverables foreseen in the structure of the project will be judged as an incomplete application form that will not pass the eligibility check.

Filling in all these sections in the proper way will ensure that the application form passes the eligibility check.

Regional co-financing

Project partners may request additional co-financing directly from the participating programme regions. The rules and procedures vary according to the regions. Each beneficiary is advised to contact its own Regional Antenna to learn more details on the steps that need to be taken for the request of the regional co-financing.

If a project has requested regional co-financing and the requested regional co-financing is rejected after the application form has been submitted or a smaller amount than what has been

requested is granted, the concerned partners will be asked to submit a co-financing declaration on own means to prove that they are able to co-finance the project.

Co-financing declaration on own means

The co-financing declaration on own means must be submitted within one month from the moment the partner has been officially notified about the rejection or lower regional co-financing amount granted by the participating programme regions.

Failure to provide such a co-financing declaration on own means within the requested timeframe, may result in delays in the issuance of the grant letter or even in the rejection of the project as such.

Belgian Limburg applicants – own means

Belgian Limburg takes a decision on the granting of the regional co-financing after the project has been selected for funding by the programme's monitoring committee. For this reason, applicants from Belgian Limburg are advised to consider that the available funding sources for them are the ERDF provided by the programme and their own means at the moment of the proposal's submission.

These two sources of funding need to be indicated in the *Project Budget/Partner Budget/ Define Contribution section* of the eMS for Belgian Limburg partners. If these two sources are encoded as such in the eMS, there is no need for Belgian Limburg applicants to provide a co-financing declaration on own means.

If at a later stage regional co-financing is granted to the applicants from Belgian Limburg, then the application form will be updated accordingly.

All information on the application procedure for co-financing from the Provincie Limburg can be found on the webportal of the Provincie (https://www.limburg.be/loket?chk=Sub#78911).

Project duration: start and end date

The maximum project duration for call 9 projects is 20 months.

The earliest start date is 1 May 2022. The latest possible end date 31 December 2023.

Communication: project logos

As from Call 5, the programme is providing project logos free of charge to approved projects. Applicants are therefore encouraged not to budget additional costs for the development of their own project logos. The use of the harmonised logo can help projects saving time & money in the start-up phase. It allows projects to comply easier with the EU publicity requirements and also achieve a stronger recognition effect, achieving more impact.

Application form and annexes

The application form has to be submitted via the programme's online system, https://ems.interregemr.eu/

The minimum elements of a complete application form:

1. Application form filled in the eMS in English or in the three programme languages (DE, NL, FR).
2. Annexes (to be uploaded in the eMS):
   a. Budget calculation methodology for the deliverables (MS Excel file)
   b. State-aid self-assessment form – one per partner
   c. Self-declaration on legal status and undertaking not in difficulty for each applicant organisation

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If any of the above mentioned documents is missing when submitting the application form the project will fail the eligibility check (see below).

Templates for the annexes are available for download on the programme's website. Be aware that the programme does not provide a template for the budget calculation methodology for the deliverables.

Partnerships can supply additional annexes with an illustrative character such as maps, flowcharts, pictures, etc., but the existence or absence of such documents will not be assessed.

The Partnership Agreement

The partnership agreement must be provided as one document with all the text and all signature pages in one pdf file. The LPs will avoid submitting separate signature pages in the eMS.

If necessary, some sections of the partnership agreement can be amended in order to fit the specificities of the project. The instructions mentioned on the cover page of the agreement must be respected.

The consortium does not need to provide the partnership agreement filled in and signed in all the languages of the programme.

The partnership is free to choose one of the 4 languages available and use it.

The form available for the associated partners is provided by the programme in 4 languages. The form does not need to be filled in in all the languages.

The filled in form for the associated partners should have the same language as the one of the partnership agreement.

If further associated partners are identified at a later stage, after the project is selected or even during the project implementation, these can be added to the consortium.

If associated partners play a key role in the project implementation they will be mentioned in the project summary and in the descriptions of the work packages where they are active.

The state-aid self-assessment form

The state-aid self-assessment must be filled in and signed **by each project partner individually**, depending on its own status.

This document must not to be filled in just once at project level by the lead partner.

Each partner should have one document presenting their state-aid self-assessment that is duly filled in and signed. The signature page needs to be part of the document.

The LP will not load in the eMS separate signature pages that are not linked to the document they refer to.

This document is only available in English.

It is recommended that the potential partners consult with their legal advisers before filling in this form.

Self-declaration on legal status and undertaking not in difficulty

This form needs to be duly filled in and signed by each project partner.

The date should also be filled in.

The form is only available in English.

It is recommended that the potential partners consult with their legal advisers before filling in this form.

Assessment criteria

Eligibility assessment – eligibility criteria

A project which fails to comply with any of the eligibility criteria will be declared ineligible. Only if a project fulfils all eligibility criteria it will pass to the quality assessment.

1.	The application was submitted on time through the electronic monitoring system (eMS).

2. All mandatory fields in the application form are properly filled in according to the instructions.
3. The application is complete with all compulsory annexes (state-aid self-assessment, legal status form, calculation methodology for the lump sum).
4. The project involves at least 2 public organisations from 2 different member states within the EMR Programme area.
5. The project application is submitted in English or Dutch, French and German.
6. All partners are public bodies.
7. The proposed activities contribute to the achievement of the thematic objectives of the call
8. The maximum ERDF co-financing rate of 90% per partner has not been exceeded.
9. The maximum project duration of 20 months is not exceeded.
10. The project starts not before 1 May 2022
11. The project ends not after 31 December 2023

Quality assessment – selection criteria

There are four selection criteria:

1. **Quality of the partnership**
2. **Cross-border dimension of activities**
3. **Feasibility of the project**

Applicants can score between 1 (insufficient) and 5 (strong) on each of the 4 criteria. A project must score a minimum of 3 under each criterion in order to be recommended.

Selection criterion 1: Quality of the partnership
- Do the organisations have the necessary expertise for the activities described ?   - If one organisation acts as coordinating body: does it have the administrative capacity to perform this role?
Selection criterion 2: Cross-border dimension of activities
- The activities described in the application cover the needs or problems with regard to the flooding prevention or flooding management in at least 2 member states   - The activities/measures/tools of the project will benefit to a large number of citizens and/or organisations in the programme area   - How intensively will partners cooperate to deliver the change envisaged?

Selection criterion 3: Feasibility of the project
• Has the consortium presented a realistic project that can be implemented within the limits in terms of funding and time?

Help & support

The programme will support applicants throughout the application process. Applicants are highly encouraged to contact their responsible regional antenna's for assistance in preparing their draft and final project applications: https://www.interregemr.eu/contact

Further guidance and information is available on the programme website: https://www.interregemr.eu/ Relevant documents can be found in the 'downloads' section. In particular:

- ✓ Cooperation programme
- ✓ Cost catalogue
- ✓ Indicator guidance
- ✓ Regional co-financing procedures
- ✓ State aid guidance
- ✓ Presentation linked to the lump-sum principle

The programme organises webinars and may publish further guidance (FAQ, etc.) throughout the call.