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ANNEX

**Work programme for 2021 in the framework of the European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund for the use of technical assistance**

**1. Introduction**

On the basis of the objectives given in the future CPR and Regulation (EU) No 2013/1303, this work programme contains the actions to be financed and the budget breakdown for the year 2021 as follows:

- a) for grants, implemented under direct management: point 2,
- b) for prizes, implemented under direct management: point 3
- c) for procurement, implemented under direct management: point 4,
- d) for actions implemented under indirect management: point 5,
- e) for contributions to trust funds: point 6: N/A
- f) for financial instruments: point 7: N/A
- g) for contributions to blending facilities: point 8: N/A
- h) for other actions or expenditure: point 9: AMI-list experts and administrative agreements.

Legal bases

The future CPR, and in particular Article 29 thereof.

Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and in particular Articles 58(2) and 92a thereof.

The implementation of the work programme is subject to:

- the final adoption and entry into force of the future CPR by the legislative authority without significant modifications,
- the availability of the appropriations as provided for in the general budget of the Union for 2021.

In relation to appropriations attributed as external assigned revenue under Article 3(1) of Regulation (EU) 2020/2094 and Article 92a of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the implementation of this Decision is also subject to:

- the entry into force of Council Decision (EU, Euratom) 2020/2053,
- the availability of the corresponding external assigned revenues.

Budget lines

**05 02 02 00** - ERDF - Operational technical assistance

**05 03 02 00** – Cohesion Fund - Operational technical assistance

**05 02 05 02-NGEU** - ERDF - Operational technical assistance - Financing under REACT-EU

## Objectives pursued

At the initiative of the Commission, technical assistance may support preparatory, monitoring, control, audit, evaluation, communication including corporate communication on the political priorities of the Union, visibility and all administrative and technical assistance actions necessary for the implementation of the future CPR and, where appropriate with third countries.

## Expected results

Technical assistance will result in

- Active contribution to deliver Commission priorities (Jobs, Growth and Investment, Digital Single Market, Energy Union, etc.)
- Development of Cohesion policy and establishment of close links to other EU policies
- Demonstration and dissimulation of the EU added value of Cohesion policy
- Territorial cohesion in Europe
- Sound management of the Funds
- Improvement of the performance of the internal processes

## Climate and biodiversity mainstreaming

In accordance with Article 4(1) of the future CPR, the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund shall support the policy objective ‘a greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable urban mobility’.

Member States should contribute an important part of the Union contribution of the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund allocation to expenditure related to the achievement of the climate objectives set for the EU budget and contribute to mainstream biodiversity action in the Union policies.

As the actions of technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission, in accordance with the future CPR, are designed to support the implementation of the Funds, in combination with the objectives of the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund as mentioned above, they will contribute to the establishment of climate and biodiversity mainstreaming.

## 2. Grants

The global budgetary envelope reserved for grants under this work programme is EUR 45 950 000 of which EUR 24 350 000 will be supported from ERDF operational budget line 05 02 02 00; EUR 18 000 000 will be supported from ERDF operational budget line REACT-EU 05 02 05 02-NGEU and EUR 3 600 000 will be supported from Cohesion Fund operational budget line 05 03 02 00.

### *Climate and biodiversity mainstreaming*

As the actions of technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission, in accordance with the future CPR, are designed to support the implementation of the Funds, in combination with the objectives of the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund as mentioned above, they will contribute to the establishment of climate and biodiversity mainstreaming.

The activities under this chapter will contribute significantly to these objectives and will help meet the relevant climate concerns.

### 2.1. Media Call 5.0

Type of applicants targeted by the call for proposals

Beneficiaries will be media organisations/ news agencies, non-profit organisations, universities and educational institutions, research centres and think-tanks, associations of European interest, private entities and public authorities (national, regional and local), with the exception of the authorities in charge of the implementation of Cohesion policy.

Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals

Call for proposals for funding information measures promoting how Cohesion policy, including via the Just Transition Fund, contributes to just transition to carbon neutrality and the recovery plan for Europe, in particular for reporting/broadcasting about regional policy projects and results.

The main aim is to provide support for the production and dissemination of information and content linked to EU Cohesion policy, while respecting complete editorial independence of the actors involved.

Implementation

This Action will be implemented directly by DG REGIO.

### 2.2. EU and cohesion policy course for journalism schools

Type of applicants targeted by the call for proposals

Grants will be awarded to accredited journalism schools from EU Member States.

Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals

The action will finance the following activities:

- Developing a strategy for rolling out a course on the EU and on Cohesion policy within the grant winner and its partner universities' offer of courses;
- Preparing and producing a curriculum and teaching materials on the EU and on Cohesion policy that can be used in journalism schools throughout the EU during and after the implementation period of the project;
- The teaching materials include textbooks, presentation materials, web resources or any other relevant materials for teaching in an academic environment;
- Integrated practical learning experiences for students enrolled in the course;
- Implementing the above mentioned curriculum for the course on the EU and on Cohesion policy within the beneficiary and its partner universities;
- Setting up a network of journalism schools dedicated to advancing EU and Cohesion policy studies in journalism, with a long functioning period;
- Increasing the number of journalism graduates with a basic understanding of how the EU works and how it invests in regions and cities.

#### Implementation

This Action will be implemented directly by DG REGIO.

### 2.3. Eurostat data collection at the national level

#### Type of applicants targeted by the direct award

Grants will be provided to National Statistical Institutes or other national authorities in accordance with Article 5 of Regulation (EC) 223/2009<sup>1</sup>.

The grants will be awarded without a call for proposals on the basis of point (d) of Article 195 of the Financial Regulation, i.e. awarded to bodies identified by a basic act, within the meaning of Article 58 of the Financial Regulation, as beneficiaries or to bodies designated by Member States, under their responsibility, where those Member States are identified by a basic act as beneficiaries.

#### Description of the activities

The grants will support a variety of actions including:

- the collection of geospatial data sets, such as those related to schools, hospitals and other important public services;
- the collection updated indicators for cities and functional urban areas covering a range of demography, social and economic issues;
- the collection of regional poverty data and

<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on European statistics and repealing Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1101/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the transmission of data subject to statistical confidentiality to the Statistical Office of the European Communities, Council Regulation (EC) No 322/97 on Community Statistics, and Council Decision 89/382/EEC, Euratom establishing a Committee on the Statistical Programmes of the European Communities (Text with relevance for the EEA and for Switzerland).

- a new regional crime data collection.

## Implementation

The grants will be implemented by DG ESTAT via a co-delegation Type II, according to the draft Commission Decision on the revised Annex 1 of the Internal Rules 2021 on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Union (European Commission section) for the attention of the Commission departments.

## Justification for the exceptional retro-activity of eligible costs, starting 01/01/2021

The EU-SILC (EU Statistics on Income and living Conditions) is being modernised with the implementation from 2021 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 October 2019 establishing a common framework for European statistics relating to persons and households.

The associated actions to be implemented in 2022 (including the 2022 modules) would require preparatory work to start as of 1 April 2021.

For proposals under this action, exceptionally costs incurred as from 1 April 2021 are eligible and may be declared even if the related activities have been implemented prior to proposal submission.

## 2.4. Regional Justice analysis

### Type of applicants targeted by the direct award

The World Justice Project is a global, leading NGO that has developed and applied independent assessments of judicial system at the national and regional level using a unique methodology that they have developed.

The unique method to measure the regional variation in the judicial system has been developed by the World Justice Project and applied to Mexico. It requires a high level of specialisation, technical competence and experience to apply this method. Another organisation could not replicate this method. As a result, only the World Justice Project can do this work.

The grant will be awarded without a call for proposals on the basis of point (f) of Article 195 of the Financial Regulation, i.e. awarded for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative powers, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals.

### Description of the activities

The aim of this grant is to assess the regional variation in quality of the judicial system by the World Justice Project, i.e. produce, publish, and present a report and an online platform containing disaggregated information and quantitative profiles reflecting citizens' views on the status of justice and the rule of law in NUTS 1/NUTS 2 regions across all Member States.

## Implementation

This Action will be implemented directly by DG REGIO.

### 2.5. 30th Homologues Group Meeting

#### Type of applicants targeted by the direct award

Because of the treatment and exchange of confidential and sensitive information during the meeting of the Homologues Group between the representatives of the Ministries of Finance of the Member States, the European Court of Auditors and the European Commission, the organisation of this meeting is limited to the national bodies of control and audit. These entities have decided to designate annually (during the meeting of year n-1) the body amongst them that will ensure the organisation of the meeting for year n.

The host country for the 30<sup>th</sup> Homologues Group Meeting should be confirmed at the 29th Homologues Group meeting to be held 16-18 May 2021 in Cyprus. This 29th Homologues Group meeting was originally scheduled for 2020 but postponed due to COVID-19.

The grant will be awarded without a call for proposals on the basis of point (c) of Article 195 of the Financial Regulation, i.e. awarded to bodies with a de jure or de facto monopoly or to bodies designated by Member States, under their responsibility, where those Member States are in a de jure or de facto monopoly situation.

#### Description of the activities

This grant will finance the 30th Annual Meeting of the European financial controllers and auditors "Homologues Group". It is the annual gathering of representatives of Member States and the Commission, so as to discuss issues relating to controls of the management of the Structural Funds, such as examine the annual control report, the audit opinion and the audit strategy, and to exchange views on issues relating to improvement of the management and control.

## Implementation

This Action will be implemented directly by DG REGIO.

### 2.6. EUSALP Annual Forum

#### Type of applicants targeted by the direct award

The grant will be awarded to the *Agence nationale pour la cohésion territoriale*, France.

France has, upon request by the other partner states, agreed to extend its presidency for one more year, covering both 2020 and 2021, due to the extraordinary circumstances.

The grant will be awarded without a call for proposals on the basis of point (c) of Article 195 of the Financial Regulation, i.e. awarded to bodies with a de jure or de facto monopoly or to bodies designated by Member States, under their responsibility, where those Member States are in a de jure or de facto monopoly situation.

## Description of the activities

The Annual Fora are being held on a rotating basis between the partner states of the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP). The current presidency is always determined by a political vote in the General Assembly, mandating one partner state in EUSALP to host the Annual Forum and to organise meetings, including setting the agenda.

The grant will contribute to the organisation of the EUSALP Annual Forum in 2021.

## Implementation

This Action will be implemented directly by DG REGIO.

### **2.7. Support for the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)**

#### Type of applicants targeted by the call for proposals

The grant will be awarded to public administrations: the technical support structure (TSS) should be hosted in one of the partner regions of EUSALP, by either a national, regional level or sub-regional level authority, e.g. municipality.

#### Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals

The activities to be financed under this actions are:

- establishment and management of a Technical Support Structure, including staff, office rent, equipment and expenses. The structure will operate as a link between the different governance levels and stakeholders involved in the implementation of the strategy;
- establishment and management of a fund for project development, to enhance the implementation of the strategy, in line with the EUSALP Action Plan, the Work Plans of the Action Groups and the EU's political priorities;
- administrative support to networks of managing authorities of mainstream ERDF programmes operating in the Alpine region;
- support to stakeholder involvement with development of a platform, youth involvement, and capitalisation for other mountainous regions.

## Implementation

This Action will be implemented directly by DG REGIO.

### **2.8. Interreg Volunteer Youth**

#### Type of applicants targeted by the direct award

The grant will be awarded to the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR).

The AEBR is a registered association with the exclusive and direct purpose to promote cross-border cooperation in Europe. The AEBR is a civil society body capable of conducting and

promoting projects in the intended shape and scope. Its members are European border and cross-border regions in Member States of the European Union or the Council of Europe. Since its creation in the early 1970s, the AEER has been establishing and refining a general network of border and cross-border regions, which is not limited to the members of the AEER or the European Union, with significant expertise and experience.

The AEER Secretariat's reputation, knowledge, quality control and administrative capacity to coordinate and manage cross-border cooperation pilot projects coupled with the cross-border specific knowledge can ensure successful implementation of this project.

The actions proposed by this project to offer the possibility to young Europeans aged 18-30 to serve as volunteers in Interreg programmes and projects, have specific characteristics that require the expertise of the AEER, in particular: a type of body on account of its reputation, independence, accountability, technical competence, its high degree of specialisation and its administrative power. Thus, the AEER is the only civil society body capable of conducting the actions of the project in the intended shape and scope.

The grant will be awarded without a call for proposals on the basis of point (f) of Article 195 of the Financial Regulation, i.e. awarded for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative powers, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals.

#### Description of the activities

The Interreg Volunteer Youth initiative is a part of the broader European Solidarity Corps Initiative launched by the European Commission. This initiative offers the possibility to young Europeans aged 18-30 to serve as volunteers in Interreg programmes and projects. The aim is to promote concrete achievements of Interreg programmes and projects, also via Citizens' Engagement Activities.

The overall objective of the activities of the volunteers is to enhance the visibility of Interreg, Cohesion policy and the EU. The grant will continue to contribute to setting up a scheme encouraging young people to participate actively, on a voluntary basis, to Interreg projects or on the promotion of these projects.

There are two types of volunteers: *Interreg reporters*, who support Interreg programmes in promoting concrete results of Interreg projects, and *Interreg project partners*, who are deployed in projects depending on their competences in the field of the project. Often, the volunteers help with communication activities in the projects as well. Young volunteers can as "outsiders" come in with new, innovative ways of communication.

#### Implementation

This Action will be implemented directly by DG REGIO.

### 2.9. B-solutions - pilot project to tackle specific border obstacles

#### Type of applicants targeted by the direct award

The grant will be awarded to the Association of European Border Regions (AEER).

The AEER is a registered association with the exclusive and direct purpose to promote cross-



border cooperation in Europe. The AEBR is a civil society body capable of conducting and promoting projects in the intended shape and scope. Its members are European border and cross-border regions in Member States of the European Union or the Council of Europe. Since its creation in the early 1970s, the AEBR has been establishing and refining a general network of border and cross-border regions, which is not limited to the members of the AEBR or the European Union, with significant expertise and experience.

The AEBR Secretariat's reputation, knowledge, quality control and administrative capacity to coordinate and manage cross-border cooperation pilot projects coupled with the cross-border specific knowledge can ensure successful implementation of this project.

The actions proposed by this project have specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its reputation, independence, accountability, technical competence, its high degree of specialisation and its administrative power. Thus, the AEBR is the only civil society body capable of conducting the actions of the project in the intended shape and scope.

The grant will be awarded without a call for proposals on the basis of point (f) of Article 195 of the Financial Regulation, i.e. awarded for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative powers, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals.

#### Description of the activities

This grant will encourage EU cross-border regions to develop and share pilot solutions to reduce legal and administrative border obstacles in various areas such as mobility, taxation, employment etc. It will seek, where relevant, to liaise with the EURES cross-border cooperation projects managed by DG EMPL.

The b-solutions initiative helps tackle specific border obstacles by developing pilot solutions focussed on a number of topics selected for their reproductibility character (applications from regional institutions). This is the third phase of the already successful b-solutions initiative. More than 40 obstacles have been identified and formulated under the first stage. The second stage has been launched in summer 2020. A compendium summarising the first stage is available.

#### Implementation

This Action will be implemented directly by DG REGIO.

### **2.10. Seed funding for targeted mainstreaming of Integrity Pacts**

#### Type of applicants targeted by the call for proposals

Managing authorities of 2021-2027 programmes

#### Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals

This action will fund training and capacity building activities for beneficiaries planning to implement an Integrity Pact in their country or for civic monitoring initiatives related to key

projects.

An Integrity Pact is a civil society monitoring tool to increase transparency and accountability, enhance trust in authorities and government contracting, contribute to a good reputation of contracting authorities, improve administrative capacity and skills in public procurement, bring cost savings and improve competition through better procurement.

The Integrity Pacts include:

- an agreement between the contracting authorities, bidders/contractors and the independent civic monitor, and
- a monitoring mechanism introducing an independent civic monitor from civil society in the procurement procedure.

Integrity Pacts bring citizens closer to the public administration and the management of public and European funds and provide the contracting authority and bidders/contractors with the point of view of the civil society.

Implementation

This Action will be implemented directly by DG REGIO.

## **2.11. Innovative implementation of partnership principle**

Type of applicants targeted by the call for proposals

The grant will be awarded to an intermediary body which should be an organisation with a strong transnational network, proven experience in grant management and with expertise in the field of cohesion policy implementation, civil society groups, management of calls for proposals and monitoring of projects.

Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals

The aim of the action is to incentivise more meaningful implementation of the partnership principle and to promote innovative ways for civil society and citizens (including young people and minorities) to actively work together with managing authorities in the implementation of Cohesion policy.

The activities to be funded under this call are the launch and management of calls for projects, their selection and their financing with a cascading grant system. The activities will involve the operational and financial monitoring of the selected partners' activities, reporting on progress, production of recommendations to the Commission on lessons learnt and good practices, and production of communication material.

Implementation

This Action will be implemented directly by DG REGIO.

## 2.12. JASPERS 2021

Type of applicants targeted by the call for proposals

In the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027, JASPERS, implemented by the EIB, will pursue the following strategic objective: assisting in the quality and timely delivery of projects in the Cohesion policy.

Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals

JASPERS will provide targeted, advisory support to Managing Authorities and project beneficiaries during the whole life cycle of projects starting from identification, selection, development and approval of ESIF projects; as well as for the financial closing of projects and their subsequent implementation and completion.

Implementation

This Action will be implemented directly by DG REGIO.

Justification for the exceptional retro-activity of eligible costs, starting 1 January 2021

JASPERS is providing the independent quality review for major projects in accordance with Article 102(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013. In addition, JASPERS is assisting the Commission in the appraisal of the applications for major projects transmitted in accordance with Article 102(2) of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, and the Member States in general to prepare mature project pipeline.

These services should continue without interruption, despite the delayed entry into force of the legal basis (future CPR) to ensure the preparation and implementation of the Cohesion programmes and the major projects in particular.

For proposals under this action, exceptionally cost incurred as from 1 January 2021 are eligible and may be declared even if the related activities have been implemented prior to proposal submission.

### 3. Prizes

The global budgetary envelope reserved for contests under this work programme is EUR 1 000 000 to be supported from ERDF operational budget line 05 02 02 00.

*Climate and biodiversity mainstreaming*

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### 3.1. Prizes to support the New European Bauhaus

#### Description

The New European Bauhaus is an initiative launched by President von der Leyen in her address on the State of the Union on 16 September 2020. The initiative has the ambition to make the Green Deal a cultural, human-centred and positive, tangible experience and accelerate a sustainable greening of the built environment. More specifically, its objective is to articulate, in an innovative way, three key dimensions:

- sustainability (including circularity),
- aesthetics (and other dimensions of the quality of experience beyond functionality),
- inclusion (including accessibility and affordability).

The 2021 prizes will be part of and represent the culmination of the design phase of the New European Bauhaus initiative, as the prizes will bring together those excellent examples and new ideas that could inspire the project and contribute to the shaping of the concept.

The prizes will reward concrete and inspirational illustrations (strand A) or ideas (strand B) related to the New European Bauhaus in line with the political guidelines and the input to be prepared by JRC (coordinator of New European Bauhaus at European Commission level) and the Commission Services.

The prizes will recognise and celebrate existing achievements and support the younger generation to further develop emerging concepts and ideas. They will give visibility to examples and concepts that illustrate how the triangle of sustainability, aesthetics and inclusion has already been translated in our territories, our communities and in our practices, or that pave the way to the future in our universities or in young professionals' portfolios.

#### Type of participants targeted by the contest

Natural persons, private and public organisations with inspirational examples or ideas/concepts for the New European Bauhaus that represent the concretisation of the triangle of sustainability, aesthetics and inclusion (accessibility, affordability).

The applications shall demonstrate how the core values of sustainability, aesthetics and inclusion may be combined in relation to the specific category (exemplary character), the innovative dimension, results achieved, citizens' engagement and involvement, potential for transferability to different contexts, based on clear documentation and communication of methodology and principles.

#### Implementation

This Action will be implemented directly by DG REGIO.

#### 4. Procurement

The global budgetary envelope reserved for procurement contracts in 2021 is EUR 89 819 893 of which EUR 45 172 047 will be supported from ERDF operational budget line 05 02 02 00; EUR 38 004 978 will be supported from ERDF operational budget line REACT-EU 05 02 05 02-NGEU and EUR 6 642 868 will be supported from Cohesion Fund operational budget line 05 03 02 00.

##### *Climate and biodiversity mainstreaming*

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#### 4.1. Service contracts

General description of the contracts envisaged

The procurement budget will be used to implement service contracts (both direct and specific under framework contracts) that will cover:

- Audit
- Communication and Publication
- Evaluation
- Informatics (IT)
- Meetings and Conferences
- Studies, statistics and data collection
- Technical and other administrative assistance to Member States
- Translations (externalised)
- Trainings (externalised)

These procurement contracts, following several open and negotiated procedures, may support preparatory, monitoring, control, audit, evaluation, communication including corporate communication on the political priorities of the Union, visibility and all administrative and technical assistance actions necessary for the implementation of the future CPR and, where appropriate, with third countries, at the initiative of the Commission.

#### Implementation

Part of the procurement budget dedicated to *Audit* will be co-delegated to **DG EMPL** via a co-delegation Type II, according to the draft Commission Decision on the revised Annex 1 of the Internal Rules 2021 on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Union (European Commission section) for the attention of the Commission departments, to contribute to the ARACHNE project that is developing, testing and implementing a risk

scoring tool and to perform audits on direct grants.

Part of the procurement budget dedicated to *Communication and Publications* will be co-delegated to the **Publications Office** via a co-delegation Type II, according to the draft Commission Decision on the revised Annex 1 of the Internal Rules 2021 on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Union (European Commission section) for the attention of the Commission departments, for publications and printing services; another part will be co-delegated to **DG COMM** via a co-delegation Type II, according to the draft Commission Decision on the revised Annex 1 of the Internal Rules 2021 on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Union (European Commission section) for the attention of the Commission departments, for contributions to the Corporate Communication<sup>2</sup>.

Part of the procurement budget dedicated to *IT* will be co-delegated to **DIGIT** via a co-delegation Type II, according to the draft Commission Decision on the revised Annex 1 of the Internal Rules 2021 on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Union (European Commission section) for the attention of the Commission departments, for the hosting of SFC, the contributions to corporate IT and platform for anti-fraud e-learning tool; another part will be co-delegated to **DG BUDG** via a co-delegation Type II, according to the draft Commission Decision on the revised Annex 1 of the Internal Rules 2021 on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Union (European Commission section) for the attention of the Commission departments, for ABAC DBD links; another part will be co-delegated to **DG EMPL** via a co-delegation Type II, according to the draft Commission Decision on the revised Annex 1 of the Internal Rules 2021 on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Union (European Commission section) for the attention of the Commission departments, for IT audit tool MAPAR; another part will be co-delegated to **OIB** via a co-delegation Type II, according to the draft Commission Decision on the revised Annex 1 of the Internal Rules 2021 on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Union (European Commission section) for the attention of the Commission departments, for printshop services.

Part of the procurement budget dedicated to *Meetings and conferences* will be co-delegated to **DG SCIC** via a co-delegation Type II, according to the draft Commission Decision on the revised Annex 1 of the Internal Rules 2021 on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Union (European Commission section) for the attention of the Commission departments, for the organisation of conferences.

Part of the procurement budget dedicated to *Statistics and Data Collection* will be co-delegated to **DG ESTAT** via a co-delegation Type II, according to the draft Commission Decision on the revised Annex 1 of the Internal Rules 2021 on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Union (European Commission section) for the attention of the Commission departments, for access to road network data and regional boundaries data.

Part of the procurement budget dedicated to *Technical and other administrative assistance to Member States* will be co-delegated to **DG AGRI** via a co-delegation Type II, according to the draft Commission Decision on the revised Annex 1 of the Internal Rules 2021 on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Union (European Commission section) for the attention of the Commission departments, for running the Brussels based Facility for Broadband Competence Offices.

<sup>2</sup> Communication to the Commission from President Von Der Leyen and Commissioner Hahn - Corporate communication action in 2021-2023 under the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 - 'Communicating a Union that strives for more' - C(2020) 9390, 18.12.2020.

The procurement budget dedicated to *translation* will be co-delegated to **DGT** via a co-delegation Type II, according to the draft Commission Decision on the revised Annex 1 of the Internal Rules 2021 on the Implementation of the general budget of the European Union (European Commission section) for the attention of the Commission departments.

The rest of the budget will be implemented directly by DG REGIO.

## 5. *Actions implemented under indirect management*

The global budgetary envelope reserved for actions to be implemented under indirect management in 2021 is EUR 64 530 000 of which EUR 22 118 000 will be supported from ERDF operational budget line 05 02 02 00; EUR 38 342 500 will be supported from ERDF operational budget line REACT-EU 05 02 05 02-NGEU and EUR 4 069 500 will be supported from Cohesion Fund operational budget line 05 03 02 00.

### *Climate and biodiversity mainstreaming*

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## 5.1. **Co-operation with the World Bank**

### Implementing entity

The World Bank Group works in every major area of development. They provide a wide array of expertise and technical assistance, and help countries to share and apply innovative knowledge and solutions to the challenges they face.

Agreements with the World Bank will be signed and implemented under indirect management, based on existing work and results from earlier contracts with the Bank and its required contacts, technical competence and legitimacy to implement these projects.

With 189 member countries, staff from over 170 countries, and offices in over 130 locations, the World Bank Group is a unique global partner that can achieve results in the intended areas of technical assistance (see below) more efficiently and effectively than any other organisation.

### Description

#### - Sub-national doing business report

This concerns a second round of sub-national doing business reports. DG REGIO and the World Bank are working together to produce these sub-national doing business reports for each Member State with a population of at least 1 million inhabitants. The sub-national doing business surveys measure the costs of business regulations in countries and regions to firms. The survey looks at factors such as ease of setting up a company, paying taxes, obtaining planning permission etc.

- Regional enterprise survey, second round

This action will finance a second round of the regional enterprise survey in the Member States to assess what is holding enterprises back. It measures topics including access to finance, corruption, infrastructure, crime, and competition and performance measures. The action will also finance a report analysing the results of the first round.

- Study on poverty mapping indicators

This study will provide recommendations for methodologies of poverty mapping based on the lessons learned from current country-specific methodologies and mapping developed by the World Bank and ESPON in 2014. The recommendations will refer to different types of available databases, indicators at NUTS 3 level and beyond, practical examples. The study should also assist national and regional authorities how to implement these methodologies in the scope of Cohesion policy support. Taking into account the COVID-19 challenges, the study can potentially also address their impact on territorial inequalities. As a result, it should contribute to the policy developments in the urban and territorial dimension, in particular sustainable urban development, ITI, CLLD, the long-term rural vision.

- Analytical support for policy objectives

The purpose of the action will be to provide analytical support to the development and delivery of policy objectives in thematic fields where specific expertise is required to support the programme preparation, implementation, performance audits, review existing strategies and plans, pilot actions, etc., focusing primarily on priorities and actions bringing the greatest added value in relation to smart and sustainable growth and connectivity.

- Support to accelerate digital and green transition under REACT-EU

The action will aim at developing a technical assistance facility to provide rapid support to Member States in areas where there is scope to improve or scale up existing capacity. The work will focus on adapting and/or scaling up existing schemes, greening/digitalising support to SMEs and accelerating expenditure in areas, which have been slowed during the crisis (for example due to diversion to CRII).

- Pilot projects for improving the business environment in municipalities in Southern Italy and in the inner areas throughout Italy

The action will aim at providing assistance to establish and implement a strategy to improve the administration of municipalities via e.g. digitalisation, training and simplification of procedures with a view to increasing their attractiveness for business investments. The pilot projects will deliver good practices, which can be implemented in other operational programmes.

## 5.2. Cooperation with the OECD

### Implementing entity

Agreements with the OECD are based on the technical competence and high degree of specialisation present in the Organisation. Together with governments, policy makers and citizens, the OECD works on establishing international norms and finding evidence-based solutions to a range of social, economic and environmental challenges. From improving economic performance and creating jobs to fostering strong education and fighting international tax evasion, the OECD provides a unique forum and knowledge hub for data and analysis, exchange of experiences, best-practice sharing, and advice on public policies and global standard-setting. No other organisation can implement the actions in a more



efficient and effective way.

#### Description

- Analytical support for policy objectives

The purpose of the action will be to provide analytical support to the development and delivery of policy objectives in thematic fields where specific expertise is required to support the programme preparation, implementation, performance audits, review existing strategies and plans, pilot actions, etc. focusing primarily on priorities and actions bringing the greatest added value in relation to smart and sustainable growth and connectivity.

- Sub-national finance

This action will develop, collect and analyse a new data set on public expenditure, including for individual regions and municipalities.

- Cohesion policy support for depopulated areas

Demographic change is a major policy challenge in Europe. Depopulated areas are confronted with several obstacles in terms of economic development and access to services that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis. Cohesion policy plays an important role in order to support the development of depopulated areas and the post-2020 programming period offers several instruments to build sustainable and integrated strategies for these areas. In order to improve both the programming and the management of the post-2020 funds, it is necessary to assess the bottlenecks and achievements of the 2014-2020 programming period, provide advice to DOs in geo units and relevant tools for regional and local authorities to address the challenges related to depopulation.

- Support to designing regional recovery strategies

The action will assist regions in southern Europe to develop their recovery strategies, notably by analysing their place in international value chains.

- Analysing settlement networks

This action will produce a report on the role of cities, towns and villages in promoting regional development.

### 5.3. Cooperation with the EIB – JASPERS 2022

#### Implementing entity

In the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027, JASPERS will be implemented by the EIB and will pursue the following strategic objective: assisting in the quality and timely delivery of projects in the Cohesion policy.

#### Description

JASPERS will provide targeted, advisory support to Managing Authorities and project beneficiaries during the whole life cycle of projects starting from identification, selection, development and approval of ESIF projects; as well as for the financial closing of projects and their subsequent implementation and completion.

#### 5.4. Cooperation with the EBRD

##### Implementing entity

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) was established to help build a new, post-Cold War era in Central and Eastern Europe. It has since played a historic role and gained unique expertise in fostering change in the region - and beyond - investing more than EUR 145 billion in a total of over 5 700 projects.

The EBRD is committed to furthering progress towards ‘market-oriented economies and the promotion of private and entrepreneurial initiative’. Financial institutions are vital for a market economy. The EBRD aims to foster resilient and integrated financial systems in the countries where they invest through the use of innovative products and by supporting sector reform and local regulatory and legislative initiatives.

##### Description

- Identifying new types of financial products to support enterprises for the green and digital transitions as well as the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

The action will explore how new financial products under shared management financial instruments to enterprises, can support the green and digital transitions as well as the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. This will include

- (1) identifying existing funding gaps and market failures with regard to green and digital transitions as well as new gaps and failures caused by the COVID-19 crisis;
- (2) identifying and designing new types of financial products addressing these gaps and failures (e.g. green /social bonds, green/social loans, solvency support);
- (3) identifying potential implementation challenges of these new types of products (with possible remedies).

- Capacity building in the area of financial engineering

Analysing capacity strengths and weaknesses in setting up and implementing financial instruments, diversifying between those targeting SMEs, energy efficiency etc.

#### 5.5. Cooperation with the European Environmental Agency

##### Implementing entity

The European Environment Agency has a broad and deep knowledge on sustainability transitions, is closely linked to the academic community specialised in this topic and has extensive experience in monitoring and measuring environmental and climate policy.

##### Description

- Producing regional and territorial environmental indicators

This project will produce a range of regional and territorial environmental indicators and update them regularly. It will cover areas such as air quality, land use and waste water treatment. The European Environmental Agency plays a unique role in collecting, improving and disseminating environmental information for 32 countries, including all EU Member States.

## 5.6. Cooperation with UN-Habitat

Implementing entity

UN-Habitat does research on urbanisation, supports capacity-building, sets standards, proposes norms and principles, shares good practice, monitors global progress and supports formulation of policies related to sustainable cities and human settlements. They collaborate with governments, intergovernmental agencies, UN agencies, civil society organisations, foundations, academic institutions and the private sector to achieve sustainable results in addressing the challenges of urbanisation. As a result, they are the best placed agency to support countries to apply the degree of urbanisation and produce indicators using this classification.

Description

- Supporting the Degree of Urbanisation

This action will provide training and support to 10 developing countries (specific countries still to be determined) to apply the Degree of Urbanisation and produce indicators using this classification. It will also modify the methodology of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators that fall under the responsibility of UN-Habitat to include the Degree of Urbanisation.

## 6. *Trust funds*

Not applicable

## 7. *Financial instruments implemented in direct or indirect management*

Not applicable

## 8. *Contribution to blending facilities*

Not applicable

## **9. Other actions or expenditure**

### *Climate and biodiversity mainstreaming*

As the actions of technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission, in accordance with the future CPR, are designed to support the implementation of the Funds, in combination with the objectives of the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund as mentioned above, they will contribute to the establishment of climate and biodiversity mainstreaming.

The activities under this chapter will contribute significantly to these objectives and will help meet the relevant climate concerns.

#### **9.1. Experts contracts – AMI list**

##### Amount

The amount of EUR 3 544 600 of which EUR 1 509 500 will be supported from ERDF operational budget line 05 02 02 00; EUR 1 851 005 will be supported from ERDF operational budget line REACT-EU 05 02 05 02-NGEU and EUR 184 095 will be supported from Cohesion Fund operational budget line 05 03 02 00.

##### Description

This action covers expenses for technical assistance provided by experts through simplified experts contracts based on the DG REGIO AMI-list<sup>3</sup>.

Experts will mainly give advice on the preparation of post-2020 and on the negotiations with the Member States.

#### **9.2. Administrative agreements with the JRC**

##### Amount

The amount of EUR 3 970 000 of which EUR 2 269 500 will be supported from ERDF operational budget line 05 02 02 00; EUR 1 300 000 will be supported from ERDF operational budget line REACT-EU 05 02 05 02-NGEU and EUR 400 500 will be supported from Cohesion Fund operational budget line 05 03 02 00.

<sup>3</sup> Call for expressions of interest 2018/S 066-146033 for external experts to support the implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds.

## Description

- Analytical support for policy objectives

The purpose of the action will be to provide analytical support to the development and delivery of policy objectives in thematic fields where specific expertise is required to support the programme preparation, implementation, performance audits, review existing strategies and plans, pilot actions, etc. focusing primarily on priorities and actions bringing the greatest added value in relation to smart and sustainable growth and connectivity.

- LUISA modelling

This action will fund three years of work on regional and territorial analysis and modelling.

- Regional and Urban Transport analysis

This action provides regional and territorial analysis of road and rail passenger transport.

- Demographic analysis

This action will support the production of local demographic projections and demographic analysis in the EU and for the world.

- RHOMOLO analysis of Member States

This action would provide JRC support to requests from geographic units for a dedicated analysis using RHOMOLO.

- Support to technology transfer and business development in the R&I area

The action would envisage hands-on support to Member States on two strands:

(1) the development of “local research and innovation ecosystems” in particular “technology transfer” know-how, targeted to the local needs, and

(2) specific support to identification or scaling up of flagship projects and their long-term sustainability (e.g. ELI -Extreme Light Infrastructure- in Romania, Sofia Tech Park etc.). It will also support existing R&I Centres of Excellence and Centres of Competences, co-financed by Cohesion policy in strengthening their business dimension and long-term sustainability.

- Data gathering and analysis of regional disparities in Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Slovenia

The action will envisage data gathering and analysis of regional disparities in Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Slovenia in order to inform the policy choices and support the preparation of the new investment programmes. Relying on granular data is becoming increasingly important, especially in the context of the green and digital transitions and the European Semester process. More targeted support to geographic units is necessary and would cover the socio-economic dimensions of regional disparities in the Member States, collecting data at NUTS-3 level as well as performing simulations in order to formulate recommendations for future development strategies and investment targets.

- Smart and Sustainable Specialisation CORE support for enabling conditions

The action builds on the activities under five consecutive administrative agreements with the JRC on the support to national and regional authorities for the implementation of smart specialisation strategies through the S3 Platform.