

IMPLEMENTATION REPORT FOR THE EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION GOAL

PART A

IDENTIFICATION OF THE ANNUAL/FINAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

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2. OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (ARTICLE 50(2) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013 AND ARTICLE 14(3)(A) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)

Key information on the implementation of the cooperation programme for the year concerned, including on financial instruments, with relation to the financial and indicator data.

The main achievement of the Cooperation Programme following its approval by the European Commission on the 12 February 2015 are described below.

The Monitoring Committee (MC) was set up on the 12 May 2015 via written procedure with the approval of the Rules of Procedure and the nomination of the members representing the participating countries.

The first MC meeting took place 1-2 June 2015 in Latvia during which the MC decided and approved the documents needed for the invitation to the ESPON EGTC to submit the Operation Proposal, the modules of the e-MS needed for the first year of implementation, the Communication Strategy and Communication Action Plan for 2015 and several individual document for the management and control system description.

In the days following the MC meeting and at the same location, the Managing Authority (MA) organized in accordance with the approved Communication Action Plan a launch event for the Cooperation Programme with the participation of around 120 stakeholders representatives from all over Europe. Before, an invitation was sent to all stakeholders of the programme and the information of the event was published on the ESPON website and on the website of the Managing Authority.

At the same time the MA, with the support of the external company contracted, ensured the online access of the first modules of the online platform the so-call electronic Monitoring System (e-MS) needed for the implementation and management of the programme.

Following the decisions of MC meeting, on the 29 June 2015 the Managing Authority officially invited the ESPON EGTC (Single Beneficiary of the programme) to submit an Operation Proposal by the 28 July 2015 via the e-MS set up for the implementation and management of the Cooperation Programme. The official invitation included the Operation Specification, the Implementation Guidelines, the Grant Agreement template and the link to the online platform for the submission of the Operation Proposal. In the framework of the same invitation the Managing Authority also invited the Single Beneficiary to present, together with the Operation Proposal, the first Annual Work Plan for the period covering June 2015-December 2016.

The Single Beneficiary submitted the Operation Proposal within the set deadline of the 28 of July 2015. The work of the Monitoring Committee from this moment until the end, on the 20 November, of the Written Procedure launched, concentrated on the assessment and approval of the Single Operation. According to the procedures agreed, following an eligibility check implemented by the MA, all MC member were able to assess the Operation Proposal within a set period of time. The MA with the support of

the Assessment Committee (AC) composed of 4 designated MC and the representative of the European Commission, was in charge of consolidating the results and elaborate a draft assessment report. In relation to first Annual Work Plan, only the AC designated MC member and a representative of the European Commission participated in the evaluation.

On the basis of the results of the evaluation process the MA on 2 November 2015 asked the Single Beneficiary to modify the Operation Proposal and the Annual Work Plan submitted so to satisfy the conditions set by the MC in the evaluation process for the its approval and to consider the points for clarifications and the recommendations given.

The revised Operation Proposal and Annual Work Plan were submitted on 6 November 2015 and approved by the MC on written procedure on 20th November 2015 following a compliance assessment made by the MA and the representative of the MC and the EC.

In relation to Priority Axis 1, according to the conditions set in the Operation Specification and the implementation Guidelines, the implementation of the Single Operation could already start in July 2015. Therefore, the Single Beneficiary in the period July-December 2015 launched the first 7 call for tenders related to the applied research projects (SO1). The outcome of the calls will contribute to enhancing the European territorial evidence production through applied research and analysis. In addition, on 23 December 2015 the Single Beneficiary opened the invitation to submit proposals for targeted analysis (SO2). The cut-off date for evaluation of proposal received and the selection of the first three proposals has been set on the 9 March 2016.

During the same month of December 2015 the MA held as well a meeting of the nominated ESPON Contact Points with the aim to present in greater details the modalities for the implementation of the programme and the Single Operation and the roles, in terms of dissemination and outreach, that the ECP network can play in the new context. The Single Beneficiary was also invited to actively participate to the meeting.

In addition to the above, during 2015 the MA continued the efforts for the elaboration of the missing elements of the management control system description and the launch, on behalf of the Audit Authority, of the tendering procedure for the selection of the external auditors implementing the checks of the designation of the programme authorities.

In relation to the communication activities and in addition to the launch event organized in June 2015, the MA organized in July 2015 an information session and a Q&A session for the Single Beneficiary to present the expectations for the Single Operations and the modalities for its submission.

The MA was also present at two main external events, the Interreg 25 Years events in Luxembourg (September 2015) and the Open Days in Brussels (October 2015).

Finally, at its meeting on 8 October 2015 the MC approved some modification to the Cooperation Programme. The two main modifications relates to the inclusion in the document of the quantification of the baseline value for the set of programme indicators (according to the action plan approved by the EC) and a minor modification of the programme budget with the transfer of some funds from the Technical Assistance to

Priority 1. The revised Cooperation Programme was submitted to the EC on 4 December 2015.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRIORITY AXIS

3.1 Overview of the implementation

ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems
P1	Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach	In relation to Priority Axis 1 and as explained in the overview section above, the key activities implemented in 2015 are related to the invitation to the Single Beneficiary to submit an Operation Proposal and the first Annual Work Plan covering the period July 2015 – December 2016.
P2	Technical Assistance	<p>As indicated in the overview section, the Technical Assistance for the year 2015 was focused on the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The set-up of the MC and the ECP network- The finalization of the documents needed for the invitation to the Single Beneficiary to submit the Operation Proposal;- The set-up of the online platform for the implementation and management of the cooperation programme (e-MS);- The organization of an information event announcing the approval of the cooperation programme and explaining to the main stakeholders the main objectives and the new implementation setting;- The implementation of the communication activities, including two information sessions for the

ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems
		Single Beneficiary.

3.2 Common and programme specific indicators (Article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Priority axes other than technical assistance

Priority axis	P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach
Investment priority	11f - Strengthening the evidence base in order to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy and the achievement of the thematic objectives through the analysis of development trends pursuant to point(3)(d) of Article 2 (ETC-IR)

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2015	Observations
F	OI01	Number of applied research outputs produced under SO1	Number	22.00		
S	OI01	Number of applied research outputs produced under SO1	Number	22.00		
F	OI02	Number of targeted analysis activities undertaken under SO2	Number	25.00		
S	OI02	Number of targeted analysis activities undertaken under SO2	Number	25.00		
F	OI03	Number of thematic focus papers produced under SO2 e.g. policy briefs, working papers etc	Number	45.00	2.00	
S	OI03	Number of thematic focus papers produced under SO2 e.g. policy briefs, working papers etc	Number	45.00		

(I)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2015	Observations
F	OI04	Number of ESPON tools maintained and created under S03	Number	8.00		
S	OI04	Number of ESPON tools maintained and created under S03	Number	8.00		
F	OI05	Number of ESPON outreach events held under SO4	Number	40.00	1.00	
S	OI05	Number of ESPON outreach events held under SO4	Number	40.00		
F	OI06	Number of ESPON outreach publications produced under SO4	Number	20.00		
S	OI06	Number of ESPON outreach publications produced under SO4	Number	20.00		
F	OI07	Establishment of the ESPON EGTC implementing the single operation	Number	1.00	1.00	
S	OI07	Establishment of the ESPON EGTC implementing the single operation	Number	1.00	1.00	

(I)	ID	Indicator	2014
F	OI01	Number of applied research outputs produced under SO1	
S	OI01	Number of applied research outputs produced under SO1	
F	OI02	Number of targeted analysis activities undertaken under SO2	
S	OI02	Number of targeted analysis activities undertaken under SO2	
F	OI03	Number of thematic focus papers produced under SO2 e.g. policy briefs, working papers	

(1)	ID	Indicator	2014
		etc	
S	OI03	Number of thematic focus papers produced under SO2 e.g. policy briefs, working papers etc	
F	OI04	Number of ESPON tools maintained and created under S03	
S	OI04	Number of ESPON tools maintained and created under S03	
F	OI05	Number of ESPON outreach events held under SO4	
S	OI05	Number of ESPON outreach events held under SO4	
F	OI06	Number of ESPON outreach publications produced under SO4	
S	OI06	Number of ESPON outreach publications produced under SO4	
F	OI07	Establishment of the ESPON EGTC implementing the single operation	
S	OI07	Establishment of the ESPON EGTC implementing the single operation	

Priority axis	P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach
Investment priority	11f - Strengthening the evidence base in order to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy and the achievement of the thematic objectives through the analysis of development trends pursuant to point(3)(d) of Article 2 (ETC-IR)
Specific objective	SO1 - Enhanced European territorial evidence production through applied research and analyses.

Table 1: Result indicators

	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	Observations
RI01	Number of potential users within selected target groups affirming use of ESPON applied research outputs and results in policy and programming processes.	% Change	0 - Baseline to be determined through an Action Plan	2015	Increase by 15-25 %		59%	

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
RI01	Number of potential users within selected target groups affirming use of ESPON applied research outputs and results in policy and programming		

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
	processes.		

Priority axis	P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach
Investment priority	11f - Strengthening the evidence base in order to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy and the achievement of the thematic objectives through the analysis of development trends pursuant to point(3)(d) of Article 2 (ETC-IR)
Specific objective	SO2 - Upgraded knowledge transfer and use of analytical user support.

Table 1: Result indicators

	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	Observations
RI02	Number of potential users in selected target groups affirming they are satisfied with ESPON knowledge transfer and analytical user support.	% Change	0 - Baseline to be determined through an Action Plan	2015	Increase by 15-25 %		83%	

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
RI02	Number of potential users in selected target groups affirming they are satisfied with		

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
	ESPON knowledge transfer and analytical user support.		

Priority axis	P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach
Investment priority	11f - Strengthening the evidence base in order to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy and the achievement of the thematic objectives through the analysis of development trends pursuant to point(3)(d) of Article 2 (ETC-IR)
Specific objective	SO3 - Improved territorial observation and tools for territorial analyses.

Table 1: Result indicators

	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	Observations
RI03	Number of potential users in selected target groups affirming use of ESPON territorial observations and tools for territorial analyses in policy and programming processes.	% Change	0 - Baseline to be determined through an Action Plan	2015	Increase by 15-25 %		40%	

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
RI03	Number of potential users in selected target groups affirming use of		

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
	ESPON territorial observations and tools for territorial analyses in policy and programming processes.		

Priority axis	P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach
Investment priority	11f - Strengthening the evidence base in order to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy and the achievement of the thematic objectives through the analysis of development trends pursuant to point(3)(d) of Article 2 (ETC-IR)
Specific objective	SO4 - Wider outreach and uptake of territorial evidence.

Table 1: Result indicators

	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	Observations
RI04	Total number of potential users within selected target groups participating at ESPON events.	% Change	0 - Baseline to be determined through an Action Plan	2015	Increase by 15-25 %		50%	
RI05	Total number of potential users within selected target groups making use of ESPON publications.	% Change	0 - Baseline to be determined through an Action Plan	2015	Increase by 15-25 %		62%	

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
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ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
RI04	Total number of potential users within selected target groups participating at ESPON events.		
RI05	Total number of potential users within selected target groups making use of ESPON publications.		

Priority axis	P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach
Investment priority	11f - Strengthening the evidence base in order to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy and the achievement of the thematic objectives through the analysis of development trends pursuant to point(3)(d) of Article 2 (ETC-IR)
Specific objective	SO5 - Leaner, and more effective and efficient implementation provisions and more proficient programme assistance.

Table 1: Result indicators

	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	Observations
RI06	Total number of potential users within selected target groups affirming dissatisfaction with the implementation provisions of ESPON 2020 Programme	% Change	0 - Baseline to be determined through an Action Plan	2015	Reduce by 35-50%		32%	

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
RI06	Total number of potential users within selected target groups		

ID	Indicator	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
	affirming dissatisfaction with the implementation provisions of ESPON 2020 Programme		

Priority axes for technical assistance

Priority axis	P2 - Technical Assistance
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Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2015	Observations
F	OI08	Guidance documents elaborated for the Single Beneficiary	Number	1.00	1.00	
S	OI08	Guidance documents elaborated for the Single Beneficiary	Number	1.00	1.00	
F	OI09	Computerised system set	Number	1.00	0.00	
S	OI09	Computerised system set	Number	1.00	0.00	
F	OI10	Communication strategies elaborated	Number	1.00	1.00	
S	OI10	Communication strategies elaborated	Number	1.00	1.00	
F	OI11	Evaluations carried out	Number	2.00	0.00	
S	OI11	Evaluations carried out	Number	2.00	0.00	

(1)	ID	Indicator	2014
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(1)	ID	Indicator	2014
F	OI08	Guidance documents elaborated for the Single Beneficiary	
S	OI08	Guidance documents elaborated for the Single Beneficiary	
F	OI09	Computerised system set	
S	OI09	Computerised system set	
F	OI10	Communication strategies elaborated	
S	OI10	Communication strategies elaborated	
F	OI11	Evaluations carried out	
S	OI11	Evaluations carried out	

Table 1: Result indicators

3.4. Financial data

Table 4: Financial information at priority axis and programme level

As set out in Table 1 of Annex II to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1011/2014 (Model for transmission of financial data) and table 16 of model for cooperation programmes under the European territorial cooperation goal

Priority axis	Fund	Calculation basis	Total funding	Co-financing rate	Total eligible cost of operations selected for support	Proportion of the total allocation covered with selected operations	Public eligible cost of operations selected for support	Total eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries to the managing authority	Proportion of the total allocation covered by eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries	Number of operations selected
P1	ERDF	Total	45,758,109.00	85.00	45,758,109.00	100.00%	45,758,109.00	0.00	0.00%	1
P2	ERDF	Total	2,920,742.00	85.00	2,920,742.00	100.00%	2,920,742.00	0.00	0.00%	1
Total	ERDF		48,678,851.00	85.00	48,678,851.00	100.00%	48,678,851.00	0.00	0.00%	2
Grand total			48,678,851.00	85.00	48,678,851.00	100.00%	48,678,851.00	0.00	0.00%	2

Where applicable, the use of any contribution from third countries participating in the cooperation programme should be provided (for example IPA and ENI, Norway, Switzerland)

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Table 5: Breakdown of the cumulative financial data by category of intervention

As set out in Table 2 of Annex II to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1011/2014 (Model for transmission of financial data) and tables 6-9 of Model for cooperation programmes

Priority axis	Fund	Intervention field	Form of finance	Territorial dimension	Territorial delivery mechanism	Thematic objective dimension	ESF secondary theme	Economic dimension	Location dimension	Total eligible cost of operations selected for support	Public eligible cost of operations selected for support	The total eligible expenditure declared by eneficiaries to the managing authority	Number of operations selected
P1	ERDF	096	01	07	07	11				45,758,109.00	45,758,109.00	0.00	1
P2	ERDF	121	01	07	07	11				2,695,742.00	2,695,742.00	0.00	1
P2	ERDF	122	01	07	07	11				120,000.00	120,000.00	0.00	1
P2	ERDF	123	01	07	07	11				105,000.00	105,000.00	0.00	1

Table 6: Cumulative cost of all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area

1. Operation (2)	2. The amount of ERDF support(1) envisaged to be used for all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area based on selected operations	3. Share of the total financial allocation to all or part of an operation located outside the Union part of the programme area (%) (column 2/total amount allocated to the support from the ERDF at programme level *100)	4. Eligible expenditure of ERDF support incurred in all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area declared by the beneficiary to the managing authority	5. Share of the total financial allocation to all or part of an operation located outside the Union part of the programme area (%) (column 4/total amount allocated to the support from the ERDF at programme level *100)
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(1) ERDF support is the Commission decision on the respective cooperation programme.

(2) In accordance with and subject to ceilings set out Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013.

4. SYNTHESIS OF THE EVALUATIONS

No evaluations have been implemented during the previous financial year.

5. ISSUES AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND MEASURES TAKEN

(a) Issues which affect the performance of the programme and the measures taken

At this early stage of implementation no issue that can affect the performance of the programme can be detected.

(b) OPTIONAL FOR LIGHT REPORTS, otherwise it will be included in point 9.1. An assessment of whether progress made towards targets is sufficient to ensure their fulfilment, indicating any remedial actions taken or planned, where appropriate.

At this early stage of programme implementation the selection and approval of the Single Operation seems to be a sufficient progress to ensure the fulfilment of the programme outputs and results targets. However, the Managing Authority and the Monitoring Committee will closely follow up and support the Single Beneficiary in the future years in order to ensure that the targets are fulfilled.

6. CITIZEN'S SUMMARY (ARTICLE 50(9) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013)

A citizen's summary of the contents of the annual and the final implementation reports shall be made public and uploaded as a separate file in the form of annex to the annual and the final implementation report

You can upload/find the Citizen's summary under General > Documents

**7. REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS
(ARTICLE 46 OF REGULATION (EU) No 1303/2013)**

8. PROGRESS IN PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MAJOR PROJECTS AND JOINT ACTION PLANS (ARTICLE 101(H) AND ARTICLE 111(3) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013 AND ARTICLE 14(3)(B) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)

8.1. Major projects

Table 7: Major projects

Project	CCI	Status of MP	Total investments	Total eligible costs	Planned notification/submission date	Date of tacit agreement/approval by Commission	Planned start of implementation	Planned completion date	Priority Axis/ Investment priorities	Current state of realisation — financial progress (% of expenditure certified to Commission compared to total eligible cost)	Current state of realisation — physical progress Main implementation stage of the project	Main outputs	Date of signature of first works contract (1)	Observations

(1) In the case of operations implemented under PPP structures the signing of the PPP contract between the public body and the private sector body (Article 102(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013).

8.2. Joint action plans

Progress in the implementation of different stages of joint action plans

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Table 8: Joint action plans (JAP)

Title of the JAP	CCI	Stage of implementation of JAP	Total eligible costs	Total public support	OP contribution to JAP	Priority axis	Type of JAP	[Planned] submission to the Commission	[Planned] start of implementation	[Planned] completion	Main outputs and results	Total eligible expenditure certified to the Commission	Observations
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Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them

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9. ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (ARTICLE 50(4) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013 AND ARTICLE 14(4) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)

9.1 Information in Part A and achieving the objectives of the programme (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Priority axis	P1 - Territorial Evidence, Transfer, Observation, Tools and Outreach
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In relation to Priority Axis 1 and as explained in the overview section above, the key activities implemented in 2015 are related to the invitation to the Single Beneficiary to submit an Operation Proposal and the first Annual Work Plan covering the period July 2015 – December 2016.

The Operation Proposal and the first Annual Work Plan, as modified according to the conditions set by the Monitoring Committee and resulting from the evaluation process, were approved by the MC in December 2015.

However, and according to the conditions set in the Operation Specification and the Implementation Guidelines, the implementation of the Single Operation could already start in July 2015. During the first half year the essential work continued on setting up the basic, renewed infrastructure and internal procedures for the implementation of the Single Operation

The following is a general overview of the key activities undertaken during this reporting period in relation to Priority Axis 1 which mainly related to the implementation of the Single Operation.

Regarding the Single Beneficiary in the first six month of implementation of the Single Operation developed the The outcome of the calls will contribute to enhancing the European territorial evidence production through applied research and analysis. The selected themes for the first calls are the following:

- The Geography of New Employment Dynamics in Europe
- The World in Europe, global FDI flows towards Europe
- Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in European Regions and Cities
- Territories and low-carbon economy
- Inner Peripheries: national territories facing challenges of access to basic services of general interest
- Possible European Territorial Futures
- Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe

Regarding SO2 the digital template and guidelines for inviting targeted analyses

proposals was developed. The invite was opened on the 23rd of December 2015. The cut-off date for evaluation of proposal received and the selection of the first three proposals has been set on the 9 March 2016.

Furthermore, investigation of Policy Brief demand from the forthcoming EU Presidencies of The Netherlands and Slovakia were undertaken and two policy briefs (on the basis of the results of the ESPON 2013 Programme) produced: ‘Territorial Scenarios for Europe towards 2050’ (Policy Brief 1 - September 2015) on the development of metropolitan regions, cities and regions towards 2050 and ‘Territorial and urban aspects of migration and refugee inflow (Policy Brief 2 - November 2015).

Regarding SO3, terms of reference were developed for the ESPON Database project, Data Update 1 (Basic Data) and the MapKits.

Regarding SO4 a seminar was organized in Luxembourg and ESPON territorial evidence was promoted as speaker at 27 events different events targeting stakeholders at all administrative level and as well the scientific community.

Furthermore, the terms of reference for the Transnational Outreach Project were developed.

The main challenges related to the implementation of Priority Axis 1 was the approval of the Operation Proposal and the first Annual Work Plan later than foreseen. The Monitoring Committee in fact, following a number of exchanges of views on the results of the evaluation, set up a series of conditions for the approval of the Single Operation.

The two main issues in question related to the provisions set for the “Senior Quality Management” and the fulfillment of the cooperation objectives in the framework of the implementation modalities of the Single Operation.

The modified and resubmitted Operation Proposal successfully addressed all issues raised. However, this delayed the launch of the first procurement procedures and the invitation for the proposals for targeted analysis.

Priority axis	P2 - Technical Assistance
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As indicated in the overview section, the Technical Assistance for the year 2015 was focused on the following key points:

- The set-up of the MC and the ECP network
- The finalization of the documents needed for the invitation to the Single Beneficiary to submit the Operation Proposal;
- The set-up of the online platform for the implementation and management of the cooperation programme (e-MS);
- The organization of an information event announcing the approval of the

cooperation programme and explaining to the main stakeholders the main objectives and the new implementation setting;

- The implementation of the communication activities, including two information sessions for the Single Beneficiary.

The MA during 2015 and in order to ensure the involvement of the MC at the key moment of this first year of programme implementation has organized three MC meeting and launched 4 written procedure. An ECP meeting was also organized in December 2015.

With the last Written Procedure of the year the MC nominated the Project Support Teams that will accompany the implementation of the applied research projects from the tendering until the final delivery.

All foreseen activities could be implemented without major problems or delays with exception of few activities. In particular, the Management and Control System Description could not be finalized as foreseen by the end of 2015 and some of the modules of the e-MS foreseen for deployment by December had to be postponed. The dedicated pages on the ESPON Cooperation Programme at the MA website could also not be implemented as foreseen.

The delays were mainly depending on the heavy workload represented by the setting up of the new programme which was further increased by the two rounds of evaluations that were needed for the approval of the Single Operation. In addition, the recruitment of the additional staff to support the MA in its secretarial function was concluded in early December 2015. In addition, the available staff (paid by the Managing Authority) was during the second half of 2015 also extremely busy with the preparation of the closure of the ESPON 2013 Programme.

9.2. Specific actions taken to promote equality between men and women and to promote non-discrimination, in particular accessibility for persons with disabilities, and the arrangements implemented to ensure the integration of the gender perspective in the cooperation programme and operations (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 2, (d) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

An assessment of the implementation of specific actions to take into account the principles set out in Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 on promotion of equality between men and women and non-discrimination, including, where relevant, depending on the content and objectives of the cooperation programme, an overview of specific actions taken to promote equality between men and women and to promote non-discrimination, including accessibility for persons with disabilities, and the arrangements implemented to ensure the integration of the gender perspective in the cooperation programme and operations

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9.3.Sustainable development (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 2, (e) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

An assessment of the implementation of actions to take into account the principles set out in Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 on sustainable development, including, where relevant, depending on the content and objectives of the cooperation programme, an overview of the actions taken to promote sustainable development in accordance with that Article

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9.4. Reporting on support used for climate change objectives (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

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9.5 Role of partners in the implementation of the cooperation programme (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 1, (c) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Assessment of the implementation of actions to take into account the role of partners referred to in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, including involvement of the partners in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the cooperation programme

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10. OBLIGATORY INFORMATION AND ASSESSMENT ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 14(4), SUBPARAGRAPH 1 (A) AND (B), OF REGULATION (EU) No 1299/2013

10.1 Progress in implementation of the evaluation plan and the follow-up given to the findings of evaluations

No evaluations have been implemented during the previous financial year.

10.2 The results of the information and publicity measures of the Funds carried out under the communication strategy

The Managing Authority (MA) organized in accordance with the approved Communication Action Plan a launch event for the Cooperation Programme with the participation of around 120 stakeholders representatives from all over Europe. Before, an invitation was sent to all stakeholders of the programme and the information of the event was published on the ESPON website and on the website of the Managing Authority.

11. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH MAY BE ADDED DEPENDING ON THE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (ARTICLE 14(4), SUBPARAGRAPH 2 (A), (B), (C) AND (F), OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)

11.1 Progress in implementation of the integrated approach to territorial development, including sustainable urban development, and community-led local development under the cooperation programme

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11.2 Progress in implementation of actions to reinforce the capacity of authorities and beneficiaries to administer and to use the ERDF

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11.3 Contribution to macro-regional and sea basin strategies (where appropriate)

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11.4 Progress in the implementation of actions in the field of social innovation

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13. SMART, SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Information and assessment of the programme contribution to achieving the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

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14. ISSUES AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND MEASURES TAKEN — PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK (ARTICLE 50(2) OF REGULATION (EU) No 1303/2013)

Where the assessment of progress made with regard to the milestones and targets set out in the performance framework demonstrates that certain milestones and targets have not been achieved, Member States should outline the underlying reasons for failure to achieve these milestones in the report of 2019 (for milestones) and in the final implementation report (for targets).

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Documents

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent By
ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme - Implementation Report Summary 2015	Citizens' summary	26-May-2016			ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme - Implementation Report Summary 2015		