



Evaluation plan

2021-2027 Interreg Alpine Space Programme

Approved by the PC on 19 May 2023

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Part 1: Objectives, coverage, coordination

Objectives

The evaluation plan of the Interreg Alpine Space programme is a **strategic document**, which sets out the priorities and needs for evaluation in the 2021-2027 period.

The document is designed to help programme bodies in planning evaluations and to ensure that evaluations are implemented in high quality. This entails:

- Planning and carrying out evaluations in a timely fashion on the basis of the programme implementation and data availability;
- Allocating adequate financial resources;
- Assigning appropriate human resources with clear responsibilities;
- Identifying relevant focus and clear objectives for the evaluations;
- Implementing follow-up and communicating measures related to evaluations findings and/or results.

The plan describes the framework for implementing the evaluation activities whose types, scopes and timelines are indicative. This is intentional as the plan is conceived as a **living document**. Adjustments and refinements might be needed throughout the programme period in accordance with the needs and circumstances.

The plan is related to the Interreg Programme (IP) of the current period 2021-2027. The cooperation programme (CP) and the evaluation plan and experiences of the previous programming period have also been considered in the preparation. The following documents set out the **legal requirements**, in terms of what to provide, when and how:

- Article 35 of the Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments (hereafter referred to as Interreg Regulation);
- Article 18 of the Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy, so-called Common Provisions Regulation (hereafter referred to as CPR);

- Commission Staff Working Document (SWD(2021) 198 final): Performance, monitoring and evaluation of the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund, and the Just Transition Fund in 2021-2027 (hereafter referred to as SWD).

Coverage and rationale

The evaluation plan covers the Interreg Alpine Space programme whose budget stems from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as well as match funding from five Member States (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia) and two partner countries (Switzerland, Lichtenstein). The plan covers the 2021-2027 period and takes into account the fact that the impact evaluation, as noted in Article 35 of the Interreg Regulation, needs to be completed by 30 June 2029.

The programme area overlaps with other transnational and cross-border programmes. This fact however is not regarded as sufficient to consider a joint evaluation plan or joint evaluation exercises, as geographical and thematic overlaps with other programmes are only partial and the intervention logics, which these programmes apply, differ.

The **main rationale** of the planned evaluations is to:

- Enable revising, adjusting and further planning the programme performance framework and the service of the programme bodies, ensuring customer orientation, efficiency and effectiveness;
- Draw evidence-based lessons and anticipate future developments that will need to be taken into account in view of the next programming period, such as thematic focus, target groups or operational aspects;
- Analyse the immediate effect(s) of the projects to the direct addressees or organisations and derive the aggregate programme impact with respect to other key criteria, as defined in Article 35 of the Interreg Regulation, namely relevance, coherence and Union added value.

Analysis of relevant evidence

The plan takes into account some of the evaluations conducted by the Interreg Alpine Space programme in the 2014-2020 period, namely the evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness, the mid-term monitoring of the Strategic Impact Assessment (SEA), and the programme impact assessment (phase 1 and 2). These evaluations provide pieces of evidence as to where the evaluation efforts should be most concentrated.

In preparation of the Interreg Alpine Space 2021-2027 Programme, the Managing Authority (MA) awarded several service contracts to external experts who delivered the following studies:

- Comprehensive analysis of the main territorial challenges, needs and transnational cooperation potentials, including a strategy building process for the renewed Interreg Alpine Space programme;
- SEA, as indicated in Directive 2001/42/EC;
- Input paper with concrete proposals in support of new programme structures, rules and procedures.

These studies and evaluation exercises provided a wealth of conclusions and recommendations to deliver better programme procedures and shape the 2021-2027 programme. The following considerations stem from this work and serve as reminders for the evaluations to be carried out in the 2021-2027 period:

- In the 2014-2020 period, the **result indicators** did not refer to the direct programme beneficiaries, but covered the whole population of the different target groups in the area. Therefore, changes in these indicators could only partly be linked to the programme intervention, but were to a great extent dependent on other factors outside the programme's influence. In the 2021-2027 period, the result indicators measure the programme achievements directly on the level of target groups of the projects. This will make the evaluation of the programme achievements more rational and reliable than in the previous period;
- In the 2014-2020 period, the evaluation of efficiency and effectiveness confirmed that the support to applicants is effective. The same applies to the **application and selection procedures**. The coordination between the Joint Secretariat (JS) and Alpine Space Contact Points (ACP) network requires further attention. In the 2021-2027 period, the programme will make various measures to address the issue, such as regular exchanges between the MA/JS and ACPs;
- In the 2014-2020 period, the programme impact assessment (phase 1) was launched early enough to allow the programme to take responsive actions and create evidence for preparing its successor. In the 2021-2027 period, the programme will adopt the same approach;
- In the 2014-2020 period, the programme impact assessment (phase 2) confirmed that the transferability of outputs is generally efficient, but there are differences on the delivery of tangible results. In the 2021-2027 period, the programme attaches a great deal of importance to transferability and durability, as some of the outputs and results do not fit into the **common output and result indicators**, as set out in Annex 1 to SWD. The same applies to the **programme-specific result indicator** under priority 4 whose purpose is to count the number of organisations with increased institutional capacities due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders. Both the

performance and the impact evaluations should reflect upon the transferability and durability of output and result indicators;

- In the 2014-2020 period, the programme contributed to EUSALP at multiple levels, from cross-fertilisation to awareness raising. The funding provided by the programme has helped consolidate the role of the governance bodies in the implementation of the strategy. In the 2021-2027 period, the support to the realisation of the EUSALP objectives is considered as an **operation of strategic importance**, which means that the PC will have to examine the progress of its implementation, as noted in Article 40(1) of the CPR. This commitment is reflected the “Support EUSALP” project under priority 4 of the IP whose funds will help improve the coordination between and within EUSALP governance bodies, but also support bottom-up activities to ensure local ownership. The project started in January 2023, and it is to be completed in December 2025;
- In the 2014-2020 period, the programme provided funding through projects whose duration could not exceed 36 months. In the process of designing the new programme, stakeholders welcomed the proposal to introduce **small-scale projects** (SSPs) to attract newcomers. In the 2021-2027 period, SSPs are an entry point to “roll-out” and upscale solutions or “set-the-scene” on disruptions and trends that affect the programme area. SSPs are intended to be shorter and focused with simplified application procedures and implementation rules.

Coordination and exchange

The programme aims to coordinate and use synergies with:

- Other transnational and cross-border Interreg programmes;
- EUSALP governance bodies;
- The Alpine Convention;
- EU-wide programmes, initiatives and funds, such as Horizon Europe, the LIFE programme or the European Bauhaus initiative.

The MA/JS staff will seek regular exchanges with other neighbouring Interreg programmes on matters that require coordination, such as evaluation methodologies and evaluation findings. The same applies with EUSALP whose thematic concentration is aligned with the one of the programme.

The programme will also exchange with thematically relevant EU-wide programmes for synergies, e.g. through the National Contact Points for Horizon Europe, direct exchange of MA/JS staff with representatives of such programmes or involvement of MA/JS staff in diverse exchange platforms. In addition, the MA/JS will actively contribute to the exchange and

sharing of information with other transnational and cross-border programmes via the evaluation network, which is facilitated by Interact.

Part 2: Evaluation framework

Responsibilities and evaluation process

The responsibilities and functions are set out in the Interreg Regulation. According to Article 35, the MA is responsible for the design and delivery of the plan while the Programme Committee (PC) takes over the supervisory function, as indicated in Article 30.

The MA/JS will carry out the operational work related to the implementation of the plan, including the preparation and follow-up of meetings, the implementation of public procurements for external expert support, and the coordination with stakeholders. The MA/JS will inform and involve the PC in the evaluations throughout the programme period. Two MA/JS staff members – one for each programme body – will be in charge of the preparation and implementation of the plan. Additional MA/JS staff members may be involved if required.

The PC will take the main decisions in relation to the evaluations, including the approval of the evaluation plan as well as of changes of the plan, decide on the focus of the external evaluations, confirm the selection of external evaluators and approve the evaluation reports and ensure appropriate follow-up to evaluation findings.

Unlike the solution adopted in the previous period in which the PC agreed to establish an evaluation steering group (ESG), the implementation of the evaluation plan in the 2021-2027 period will count with ad-hoc working groups for each evaluation activity. This option is foreseen under rule 2(1) of the rules of procedure of the 2021-2027 programme and will help deliver better results compared to a permanent structure like the ESG, as its members will feel more engaged if designated for a specific mission in their field of expertise over a limited period, which would not be the case for a permanent structure as its mandate runs for several years and activities do not follow a fixed calendar. Ad-hoc working groups shall fulfil the following functions:

- Represent programme stakeholders and allow their participation in the implementation of the evaluation plan;
- Provide expertise in support of the implementation of evaluation activities by, for instance, reviewing evaluation questions, fine-tuning the specification of services (especially the evaluation objectives and questions), facilitating access to data of relevance to the external evaluators, reviewing evaluation reports, proposing follow-up measures to evaluation findings and inform the PC via the MA/JS.

The composition of the ad-hoc working groups shall be decided by the PC who will nominate its representatives on the basis of the needs of the evaluation activity. The members should bring experience and expertise in the policy fields covered in the IP and in the planned evaluation.

Other stakeholders from partner countries may also be invited as observers to ad-hoc working groups as long as their presence is meaningful and relevant to the evaluation activity. This includes programme beneficiaries, thematic experts, or representatives of the EUSALP and the Alpine Convention or even representatives of other programmes.

Ad-hoc working groups will be dissolved once the evaluation activity for which they were set up for, is complete.

Source of evaluation expertise

The evaluation expertise relies on external evaluators who will be contracted by Land Salzburg, as MA/JS, according to the Austrian procurement law. This means that all evaluations will be carried out by external evaluators based on specifications of services, which set out the requirements to deliver a quality work and will contain indicative evaluation questions. Before the evaluation kicks-off, the MA/JS will provide the PC with a proposal on objectives, timeframe, estimated budget, indicative evaluation questions and requirements as regards the involvement of the ad-hoc group. Once established, the ad-hoc group will fine-tune the specification of services as set out above. The MA/JS will select the best offer and ask the PC for confirmation of the selected experts—this task could be delegated by the PC to the ad-hoc group when setting it up. The role of the selected external evaluators is to come up with a concrete methodology, a proposal for further evaluation questions, an interim and final report setting out the findings and answers to evaluation questions. During evaluation work, the MA/JS and if necessary the ad-hoc group will provide the experts with relevant programme data and/or facilitate access to data on national/regional level. The MA/JS will carry out quality checks and will ensure that the service complies with the requirements outlined in the specification of services whose final version is reviewed by the ad-hoc working group in charge of the evaluation activity. After the final report has been approved by the ad-hoc group and follow up measures have been set out by this group it will the PC to approve the evaluation findings and proposal for follow-up measures and to monitor them.

Maintaining MA/JS expertise for managing evaluations

The MA/JS have considerable institutionalised knowledge and expertise in planning, coordinating and managing evaluations. This expertise has been built up through the

experience of evaluations during the previous programmes. This will be used in relation to the evaluations in the 2021-2027 programme period as well.

The MA/JS staff in charge of evaluations are informed about evaluation requirements from the regulations and the guidance documents from the European Commission (EC). Moreover, they are in constant exchange with colleagues of fellow programmes, participate in training events and workshops organised by Interact, and they are part of the community “Thematic network on results and evaluation”, which is facilitated by Interact. Furthermore, they take part in trainings and seminars to increase capacity building of managing authorities offered by the EC.

Use and communication of evaluations

Outcomes of evaluation activities will be used to guide and address the needs of the programme bodies and the EC.

The MA/JS and the PC will make use of the evaluation findings to update or revise the programme management procedures. The outcome of planned performance evaluations will help preparer the eventual next programme period.

The EC will use evaluation outcomes to collect evidence from all programmes for policy-making purposes.

All evaluation reports will be published on the programme website once approved by the PC. The impact evaluation will be transmitted to the EC via the SFC support portal by 30 June 2029. On top of this, the JS will share the evaluation findings with relevant stakeholders through various communication channels. Dissemination activities will be tailored to the needs of the groups for which they are relevant.

Overall resources

The overall budget allocated for implementation of the plan is EUR 250.000. This figure is indicative and based on the evaluations carried out by the predecessor programme. Final amounts may vary depending on the scale of each evaluation activity.

The purpose of the budget is to contract external evaluators who will support the programme in the delivery of evaluation activities as defined in the plan. Other costs may also be incurred in addition to the services commissioned to external evaluators, such as data collection or training for MA/JS staff dealing with evaluation (e.g. seminars, workshops).

The budget for the evaluation plan is reserved under the technical assistance budget of the programme. The same applies to all activities performed by the MA/JS, from coordination to communication.

For further details on the subdivision of the budget per evaluation, please refer to the overview of planned evaluations in Annex 1.

Part 3: Planned evaluations

Overview of planned evaluations

This section provides an overview of evaluations that are planned to be undertaken during the programme period. In view of this planning, the MA/JS considered the requirements set out in the regulations. In addition, the main characteristics of the 2021-2027 programme were taken into account and methodological considerations were made. All these considerations are explained below.

The following regulations were considered, in view of ensuring that the requested evaluations are planned and that these comply with the set requirements, namely:

- Article 35(1) and (2) of the Interreg regulation sets inter alia the following:
 - “1. The Member State of the managing authority shall carry out evaluations of the programmes related to one or more of the following criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and Union added value, with the aim to improve the quality of the design and implementation of programmes. Evaluations may also cover other relevant criteria, such as inclusiveness, non-discrimination and visibility, and may cover more than one programme.”
 - 2. In addition to the evaluations referred to in paragraph 1, an evaluation for each programme to assess its impact shall be carried out by 30 June 2029.”
- Article 18 of the CPR sets inter alia the following:
 - “1. For programmes supported by the ERDF, [...] the Member State shall review each programme, taking into account the following elements: [...] (f) the progress in achieving the milestones, taking into account major difficulties encountered in the implementation of the programme; [...]
 - 2. The Member State shall submit an assessment for each programme on the outcome of the mid-term review, [...] to the Commission by 31 March 2025.”

The MA/JS considered the main characteristics of the programme in defining the specific scope of the evaluations, meaning the aspects to be assessed. The following aspects were deemed as the most relevant:

- Transnationality is the key characteristic of the programme, which entails cooperation between stakeholders across the programme area on common challenges and pressing issues, as defined in the IP;

- The 2021-2027 programme features a number of programme objectives that are thematically close to the objectives of its predecessor, such as R&I, energy efficiency, or multi-level governance. The evaluation of these thematically close objectives should entail consideration of the evaluation findings from the 2024-2020 period. In the case of multi-level governance, the 2021-2027 programme provides tailor-made options to deepen and evolve cooperation and governance structures in the Alpine region, namely the funding of the Technical Support Structure (TSS) whose staff provides advocacy, capacity building and facilitation services to EUSALP;
- The 2021-2027 programme will capture its achievements and effects through output and results indicators, respectively. These indicators are based on the SWD but in some cases it is expected that projects do not contribute to these indicators, which will require an analysis to understand how the project's achievements and effects have contributed to the programme objectives;
- The 2021-2027 programme introduces novelties compared with its predecessor in terms of project types and structure (e.g. small-scale projects, simplified cost options).

Alongside the scope of the evaluations, there are also methodological considerations and data availability needs:

- For what concerns the methodology of impact evaluations: in general, the qualitative approach seems more feasible than the quantitative approach. Theory-based impact evaluation seems more feasible than counterfactual impact evaluation. Nevertheless, statistical data on indicators will provide quantitative data as proof to support the qualitative analysis of the impacts of operations;
- For what concerns data availability: key data will be available in the joint electronic monitoring system, or Jems, which is the programme monitoring system. Jems is the primary tool for programme beneficiaries to report activities, including quantitative and qualitative data on project's outputs, results and relevant achievements. The datasets are particularly relevant for the performance and impact evaluations. In addition, relevant data is available from previous evaluations. Besides, it is also very likely that external evaluators will collect data through tailor-made interviews, surveys or questionnaires to project partners and target groups. The respondents' input will enrich and validate the analysis and evaluation of options of improvement. Concerned projects will be asked to support external evaluators in data collection and demonstrate availability to take part in research methods.

Based on all these considerations, Annex 1 provides a description of the planned evaluations. The plan is structured around impact and performance evaluations. The latter type of evaluation is designed to increase the knowledge of what works and what does not, and in which context in order for programme bodies to make timely decisions about the delivery of

the programme and draw conclusions for future action. This also means that the results that come out of performance evaluations are useful in rather early stages of the programme implementation. The performance evaluation is divided into tasks whose order is not binding. In turn, the impact evaluation will take place at a later stage when enough evidence is available to capture the effects of the programme priorities.

The overview of evaluations is indicative. As noted elsewhere, different needs may arise in the course of the programme implementation and the evaluation plan might be, consequently, subject to revision. Furthermore, the actual approach and questions of each evaluation will be defined more in detail at a later stage, once their planning will start. Another relevant consideration is the need to adjust the focus and questions of evaluations to the methodological approach of the external evaluators. The timetable of evaluations set out in Annex 1 is as follows:

Evaluations	2023		2024		2025		2026		2027		2028		2029	
	S1	S2	S1	S2	S1	S2	S1	S2	S1	S2	S1	S2	S1	S2
Mid-term review of milestones*														
Performance evaluation														
Impact evaluation**														

Note: deadline for submission to the EC is 31 March 2025 (*) and 30 June 2029 (**) respectively.

Quality management strategy

The MA/JS are responsible for the coordination and steering of the programme evaluations and ensure a sound quality management for carrying out the entire evaluation process from its planning to the communication and follow-up of its findings. The MA/JS will safeguard that the evaluations are conducted in a professional and ethical manner in compliance with the principles of impartiality and independence of evaluators.

Annex 2 lists further elements and considerations in order to ensure the good quality of the evaluation work and evaluations themselves. These considerations build on the experience gained by the programme in previous programming periods. The ultimate purpose is to guide the MA/JS work throughout the various stages of the evaluation cycle.

Annex 1: Overview of planned evaluations

Nr	Title	Subject and rationale (type of evaluation, scope, criteria, evaluation questions)	Methods (expertise and data)	Timing (schedule and duration)	Budget
1	Mid-term review of milestones	<p>Examination of achievements of milestones for all output indicators against the targets set by the mid-term (According to the Article 18 of the CPR)</p> <p>Criteria: Relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency</p>	<p>Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-house data on output indicators, derived from Jems 	15 months (from January 2024 to March 2025), including the time to set up the ad-hoc group. Deadline for submission to the EC is 31 March 2025	EUR 15.000
2	Performance evaluation (divided into 2-3 thematic evaluations in which one or more tasks are combined. The order of the tasks is not binding)	<p>Draw evidence-based lessons for the next programming period</p> <p>Criteria: Relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and Union added value</p>		24 months (from January 2025 to December 2026), including the time to set up the ad-hoc group	
		<p>Task 1 Assess the relevance of the programme objectives' thematic focus</p> <p>Indicative questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which benefits does the programme bring to the cooperation area? If so, how are benefits distributed across territories, from cities to rural 	<p>Data and external expertise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-house data on output indicators, derived from Jems Surveys, questionnaires and interviews with beneficiaries and experts 		EUR 55.000

Nr	Title	Subject and rationale (type of evaluation, scope, criteria, evaluation questions)	Methods (expertise and data)	Timing (schedule and duration)	Budget
		<p>areas? Which organisations demonstrate interest in making use of the outputs? What is the potential in the area for new project partners? Does the programme deliver a contribution to EU strategies, such as the Territorial Agenda 2030 or Green Deal and if yes of which nature is it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and to what extent has the programme influenced policy-making? • Which benefits does the programme bring to the environment? How possible negative effects are avoided? <p>Focus on output indicators and performance of projects in all programme objectives, in all project types, throughout the 2021-2027 period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCO 84 “Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects” • RCO 116 “joint developed solutions” • RCO 118 “Organisations cooperating for the multi-level governance of macro-regional strategies” • Outputs that do not contribute to RCOs 84, 116 (for projects on priorities 1-3) and 118 (for projects on priority 4) 	<p>to complement in-house data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies to complement in-house data and interviews 		
		Task 2	External expertise		EUR 30.000

Nr	Title	Subject and rationale (type of evaluation, scope, criteria, evaluation questions)	Methods (expertise and data)	Timing (schedule and duration)	Budget
		<p>Assess the new programme features for projects, particularly small-scale projects (SSPs), simplified cost options (SCOs)</p> <p>Indicative questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the performance of SSPs compared to classic projects? In which topics do SSPs work well and in which do not? How did SSPs attract different type of organisations and newcomers compared to classic projects? • Which impact did SCOs make to reduce the workload on the project and the MA/JS? Which impact did SCOs make on the activities and tangibility of outcomes in SSPs? • What was the impact of SCOs on the budget adequacy of classic projects? How SCOs influence the participation in the projects, from classic to small-scale? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys, questionnaires and interviews with beneficiaries and experts to complement in-house data 		
		<p>Task 3</p> <p>Assess the support to the EUSALP implementation and governance</p> <p>Indicative questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the “Support EUSALP” project succeed in providing facilitation services to EUSALP governance bodies? Did the “Support EUSALP” project help enhance the institutional capacities of the EUSALP governance bodies? • How the cooperation between the TSS and the 	<p>Data and external expertise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUSALP Executive Board evaluation of the “Support EUSALP” project, which is due in June 2025 • Surveys, questionnaires and interviews with beneficiaries and experts to complement in-house 		EUR 35.000

Nr	Title	Subject and rationale (type of evaluation, scope, criteria, evaluation questions)	Methods (expertise and data)	Timing (schedule and duration)	Budget
		<p>MA/JS has worked in practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which contribution did AS projects make to EUSALP AGs both in terms of governance (priority 4) and implementation of their work plans (priorities 1-3)? How and to which extent the “Support EUSALP” project contributed to the establishment of thematic and cross-cutting synergies among EUSALP AGs? Which measures have been adopted to establish links between AS projects and EUSLAP throughout the project lifecycle? 	data		
		<p>Task 4 Assess selected programme implementation procedures and tools Indicative questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there any elements of the application process which could be improved? How to make the monitoring process more efficient? Is the monitoring system effective in measuring outputs and results? 	<p>Data and external expertise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-house data on output indicators, derived from Jems Surveys, questionnaires and interviews with beneficiaries and experts to complement in-house data 		EUR 30.000
		<p>Task 5 Assess the programme communication strategy and its implementation Indicative questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the programme contribute to increase the capacity of projects to communicate their own achievements? 	<p>External expertise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys, questionnaires and interviews with beneficiaries and experts 		EUR 20.000

Nr	Title	Subject and rationale (type of evaluation, scope, criteria, evaluation questions)	Methods (expertise and data)	Timing (schedule and duration)	Budget
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the communication strategy contribute to awareness raising about the programme? Did decision-makers and other key stakeholders consider the programme useful? 			
3	Impact evaluation (possibly divided into two thematic evaluations in order to contribute to the next programming period)	<p>Impact evaluation of the programme (According to Article 33 of the Interreg Regulation)</p> <p>Criteria: Relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and Union added value</p> <p>Focus on result indicators and performance of projects in all programme objectives, in all project types, throughout the 2021-2027 period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCR 104 “Solutions taken up of up-scaled by organisations” (for projects across all priorities) PSR 1 “Organisations with increased institutional capacities due to their participation in cooperation activities across borders” (for projects in priority 4) Other results that do not contribute to RCR 104 or PSR 1 (for projects across all priorities) <p>Indicative questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In which topics were the result indicators achieved? In which topics were the results not achieved? Moreover, which are the reasons that 	<p>Data and external expertise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-house data on output indicators, derived from Jems Surveys, questionnaires and interviews with beneficiaries and experts to complement in-house data 	24 months (from July 2027 to June 2029), including the time to set up the ad-hoc group. Deadline for submission to the EC is 30 June 2029	EUR 50.000

Nr	Title	Subject and rationale (type of evaluation, scope, criteria, evaluation questions)	Methods (expertise and data)	Timing (schedule and duration)	Budget
		<p>explain the non-achievement of results?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which solutions have the highest change to get up-scaled? And by whom? What influences the process? • Which type of results did the projects generate that do not contribute either RCR 104 or PSR 1? <p>Focus on the long-term effects of the interventions from the previous programme period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the project in 2021-2027 consider and make use of the outputs and results of project from 2014-2020? <p>Note: The list of questions will be complemented based on the mid-term performance evaluation and needs aroused during the programme implementation</p>			

Annex 2: Quality assurance considerations

Evaluation cycle stage	Element	Considerations for quality assurance
Planning	Expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer-to-peer learning within the MA/JS, in which MA/JS staff with experience on evaluations pass on the knowledge to other MA/JS staff • MA/JS staff participation in Interact working groups, EC trainings on capacity building and exchanges with other neighbouring Interreg programmes on matters that require coordination, such as evaluation methodologies and evaluation findings. The same applies to EUSALP representatives
	Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear allocation of evaluation tasks and responsibilities within the MA/JS staff • Adequate schedule of evaluations during the programme period and adequate time allocation for their duration
	Scope and relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary exchanges between MA/JS and ad-hoc working groups for clear definition of the specification of services (SoS) for external experts • SoS will define the objectives of the evaluations, the role and responsibilities of the evaluators, the description of the evaluation assignment and work flow, the duration of the contract and resources to be allocated to the evaluation activity • SoS will set out clear quality requirements and award criteria. Thematic expertise and knowledge of the programme area are key requirements for the selection of the evaluators • PC will check and approve SoS before publication
	Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate assessment of the tenders in line with the applicable public procurement rules • Accurate documentation of the process of assessing and selecting external evaluators
	Appropriate design and methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise calls for tenders through various communication channels
Implementation	Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular exchanges within the MA/JS on ongoing evaluation work
	Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA/JS staff will inform both the ad-hoc working groups and the PC of each other's work for coordination purposes • Open communication on MA/JS, PC and external

Evaluation cycle stage	Element	Considerations for quality assurance
		evaluators with stakeholders involved in the evaluations (e.g. beneficiaries taking part in surveys)
	Data reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-functioning online monitoring system and accurate MA/JS monitoring of data inserted in the system by projects • Reliability of sources of further data and information (e.g. surveys, interviews)
	Sound analysis and credibility of conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability and adequacy of sources of data and information • Transparent methods of analysis • Appropriate timing for data collection, analysis and planning of responses • Impartiality in drawing conclusions from findings (no bias, sound judgement) • Clear and sound arguments justifying the conclusions and recommendations
	Efficiency of collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and clear communication with the external evaluators on evaluation tasks, expectations, or data requirements • Expected outputs from evaluations consist of the following: inception report, intermediate (progress) report and final evaluation report • All evaluation reports will be first made available to the ad-hoc working group in charge of the evaluation activity to discuss preliminary results and collect feedback • Once validated, all evaluation reports will be presented to the PC and require their approval • Acceptance of any report on the part of the MA as a contracting body, as well as any payment is conditional on its approval by the PC
Use and communication	Clearness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear evaluation findings with specific conclusions and recommendations on follow-up actions whose monitoring will be done on a regular basis
	Dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely communication about evaluation findings through various communication channels
	Commitment to follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely discussion and clear plan for follow-up actions among MA/JS and the PC