



Ljubljana, 22.1.2015

## **Action Plan for the Accelerated Implementation of ERDF and CF in Slovenia**

On the initiative of the European Commission and in agreement with the Slovene Government Office for Development and Cohesion Policy (GODC) the Implementation Task Force held a meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2015 in Ljubljana.

There are currently over 50 projects being carried out within the frame of OP DETI which will ensure a continuation of the same implementation and absorption trend as in 2014. The list of current on-going projects, with both the amounts allocated and the amounts already paid out per project is updated monthly and can be found on the GODC website:  
[www.svrk.gov.si/si/kako\\_crpamo\\_eu\\_sredstva](http://www.svrk.gov.si/si/kako_crpamo_eu_sredstva).

After a review of the current situation and possible actions that could be taken, the following actions were agreed on to be implemented in order to speed up the implementation of 2007 – 2013 programmes and to be better prepared for the 2014 – 2020 period.

| Action  | Timing                              |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Reprogramming OP DETI  |                                     |
| a. Informal Consultation with Commission services                               | April                               |
| b. Approval of changes at MC  | June                                |
| c. Submission to the EC   | July                                |
| 2. Reprogramming OP SRDP (if needed including FI)                               | July                                |
| 3. Quarterly reporting to the Government, Parliament and DG REGIO               | January<br>April<br>July<br>October |
| 4. Secured financial allocations in adopted budget for 100% disbursement of OPs |                                     |
| a. For 2015   | April                               |
| b. For 2016   | December                            |
| 5. Administrative Capacity  |                                     |
| a. For 2007-2013  | April                               |
| b. For 2014-2020  | June                                |
| 6. EIA Assessment of OP DETI projects   | March                               |
| EIA Assessment of OP SRDP projects  | September                           |

### Action descriptions

#### **First action to be taken: Reprogramming OP DETI**

In accordance with the Article 33 of Regulation 1083/2006 due to »**implementation difficulties**.« Managing Authority will in the year 2015 propose modification of OP DETI.

Following steps are necessary to reprogram the OP DETI.

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Review of implementation of projects under OP DETI with both line ministries          | by March 2015 |
| Informal Consultation with Commission services – submission of draft modified version | by April 2015 |
| EIA Screening of modified OP DETI   | by May 2015   |
| Approval of changes at MC   | by June 2015  |
| Official Submission to the EC   | by July 2015  |

#### **Second action to be taken (only if needed): Reprogramming OP SRDP**

In assessment of the Operational Programme for Strengthening Regional Development Potentials (OP SRDP) implementation Managing Authority (MA) predicts possible discrepancies between planned payments from the Union to the priority and the effective Funds implementation under that priority could occur. The latter largely derived from performance of financial corrections as a result of corrective measures after the checks or audits instruction and in this context especially under OP SRDP priority no. 1. The financial corrections under this priority, taking into account checks and audits in the field of development centres of the Slovenian economy, could be in the range of 40 mio EUR.

In the case of unforeseen circumstances, that in advance it was not possible to predict, MA leaves the possibility of OP SRDP revision.

#### MILESTONES

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| Review of implementation of projects under OP SRDP with line ministries  | by May 2015  |
| If reprogramming will be needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• informal Consultation with Commission services – submission of draft modified version</li><li>• EIA Screening of modified OP SRDP</li><li>• Approval of changes at SRDP</li><li>• Official Submission to the SRDP</li></ul> | by June 2015<br>by July 2015<br>by July 2015<br>by July 2015 |

#### **Third action to be taken: Quarterly Reporting**

Slovenia has standardised quarterly reporting on the 2007-2013 EU Cohesion Policy funds absorption.

The Quarterly Report on the 2007-2013 EU Cohesion Policy funds absorption presents the state of pay in terms of the 2007-2013 EU Cohesion Policy funds absorption for the quarterly period under the Operational Programme for Strengthening Regional Development Potentials for the Period 2007–2013 (OP SRDP), the Operational Programme for Human Resources

Development for the Period 2007-2013 (OP HRD) and the Operational Programme for Development of Environmental and Transport Infrastructure for the Period 2007-2013 (OP DETI).

The report is prepared on the basis of data of the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy (GODC) as well as the ministries, participating the EU Cohesion Policy implementation, namely the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Public Administration, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Ministry of Economic Development and Technology and the Ministry of Finance.

**Fourth action to be taken: Secured Financial Allocations in Adopted Budget for 100% Disbursement of OPs**

Slovenia has been struggling with modest economic growth just like many other Member States; however, according to the latest indicators, this economic growth has been very unstable in largest markets which are of substantial importance for Slovenia's trade. Slovenia and its EU counterparts are obliged to adhere to the Stability and Growth Pact which ensures fiscal discipline and sets reference values for national budget deficit and public debt. Economic and financial crisis in Slovenia, just like everywhere else, caused a huge slowdown and compromised spending of cohesion policy funds (especially Cohesion Fund) in the past years, but Slovenia was able to take measures that enabled quite a substantial improvement, especially what regards cohesion policy area through accelerating investments in the environmental and transport sector (especially in 2014).

To go ahead with the investment cycle and therefore with the positive effect it is of crucial importance that there are sufficient EU funds planned in the 2015 state budget which will enable the investment cycle to continue and result in full absorption of EU Funds for the 2007-2013 financial perspective.

**MILESTONES**

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|--|-----------------------------|
| Secured financial allocations in adopted budget for 100% disbursement of OPs<br>a. For 2015<br>b. For 2016 | April 2015<br>December 2015 |
|--|-----------------------------|

**Fifth action to be taken: Administrative Capacity**

A part of the above-mentioned Action Plan was also the optimisation of Technical Assistance priorities under all the Operational Programmes. These budgets were under-spent because of the austerity measures in the framework of the state budget. The Action Plan enabled stakeholders (ministries and other public authorities) to reinforce a number of civil servants with management and implementation tasks under the Cohesion Policy programmes.

The Managing Authority approved additional 32 employments for the OP DETI and 9 for the OP SRDP for the period up to 30 November 2015. The hiring of new staff is in its final stages.

Overview of the current distribution of public servants employed under technical assistance per MA, IBs, AA and CA.

To secure a stable administrative structure for the finalization of the 2007-13 OPs it is necessary to:

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|---|--|
| Prolong employment contracts for 290 public servants that have validity of the contract until 30 June 2015 until 30 November 2015: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• check the legal procedure for prolongation of employment contracts,</li> <li>• prolongation of contracts until November 2015</li> </ul> | by April 2015<br><br>February 2015<br><br>April 2015 |
| Employment from the TA in the OP 2014-2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to agree the implementation structure and assess the human resources needs for 2014-2020</li> <li>• employment of public servants as per agreed distribution among implementing institutions</li> </ul>                        | by March 2015<br><br>by July 2015                    |

#### Sixth action to be taken: EIA Assessment

- The EIA Working Group is an inter-ministerial group of environmental experts which was established in April 2014 by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia in order to assess the compliance of the projects that received the European cohesion policy support under the programmes OP DETI and OP SRDP with the EIA Directive requirements.
- The whole screening process will concern approximately 60 projects under OP DETI and approximately 125 projects under OP SRDP.

#### MILESTONES

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|---|--------------|
| Deadline for the assessment of all identified OP DETI projects and preparation of the assessment report by external experts   | February 15  |
| Preparation of the final report by the Working Group including a summary of findings and remedial measures, where relevant. Prior to submission to the EC, the report should also be harmonized with JASPERS representatives  | March 15     |
| Deadline for the assessment of all identified OP SRDP projects and preparation of the assessment report by external experts.  | July 15      |
| Preparation of the final report by the Working Group including a summary of findings and remedial measures, where relevant. Prior to submission to the EC, the report should also be harmonized with JASPERS representatives. | September 15 |