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Interreg

European Territorial Cooperation

ADRIATIC-IONIAN

Programme 2014-2020

Results of the stakeholders consultation

July 2014

SUMMARY of CONTENTS

Introduction

The survey has been launched on July 2nd until 18th of July (16 days) thought the online tool provided from SogesSolution. After a general introduction, the survey grid included 4 main sections

- 11 TOs RANKINGS (from strategic > to not relevant)

- 9 Pre-selected IPs Ranking with the option to propose some eligible actions for the IPs selected as strategic and relevant

- Suggestion for the next CP improvements

- Tools for EUSAIR

The invitation was sent to 2611 stakeholders. The mailing list has been based upon both the inputs received from the TF members, on the SEE database and on the online registration.

- Only 62 opted out and 160 uncompleted answers

- The mean time for completing the survey has been of 12 m

- Among the respondents, 25% has been reached through the publication of the news on the national and regional websites.

- More than 30% of answers has been collected in the last 2 days of the consultation, after the automatic 2nd reminder
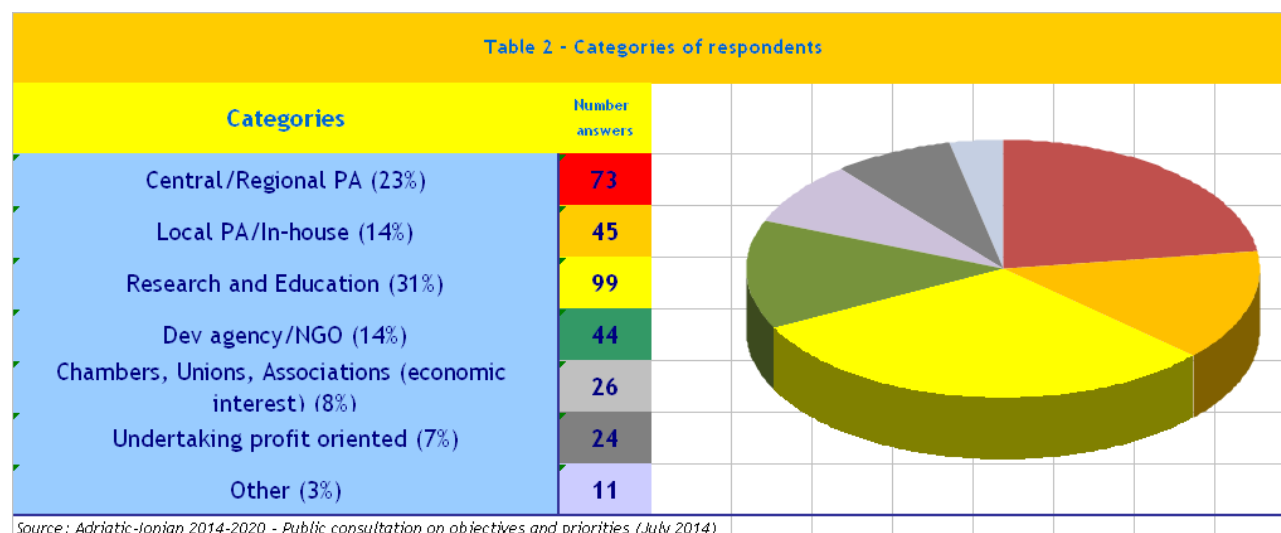
Participation assessment (return rate)

An invitation to the public consultation on the AIO programme was sent to 2611 stakeholders. The return rate is on average considering a rather short timeframe: 322 recipients answered the survey, that is about 12 %. The ratio respondents/population of the eligible regions confirms the overall balance within the eligible area in terms of participation.

Table 1

Table 1 - Geographical origin of respondents	
Countries	**Number answers**
Croatia	41
Greece	32
Italy	122
Slovenia	38
Albania	8
Bosnia and Herzegovina	16
Montenegro	19
Serbia	34
TOTAL (plus "out of area")	**322**

When it comes to participation rates per category of respondents (table 2), 31% are from research and education bodies, 23% from central/regional PA, 14% from local public authorities, 13% from development agencies/NGOs, 8% from chambers, unions and associations, 7% are undertaking profit oriented and finally 4% represent respondents from outside the Programme area. The overall balance of return rate per category ensures that data can be fairly compared but The high percentage of Central/Regional PA (TO6) and Research and education institutions (TO1) has certainly influenced the ranking of the TOs and IPs.

Table 2

Table 2 - Categories of respondents		
Categories	Number answers	
Central/Regional PA (23%)	73	
Local PA/In-house (14%)	45	
Research and Education (31%)	99	
Dev agency/NGO (14%)	44	
Chambers, Unions, Associations (economic interest) (8%)	26	
Undertaking profit oriented (7%)	24	
Other (3%)	11	

Source: Adriatic-Ionian 2014-2020 - Public consultation on objectives and priorities (July 2014)

Thematic objectives

The ranking of thematic objectives (table 3) is overall in line with the pre-selection of the Task Force, **TO1 (research), TO6 (environment) being considered more than highly relevant for the AIO area**, followed by **TO10 (education) and TO7 transports which are ranked 3rd and 4th. TO4 (low-carbon) is positioned as 7th** objective but it is even so considered more than relevant by the respondents. It should be noted that, although TO9 (social inclusion) is the last ranked, the spread between the top and the bottom of the list is about 5% as no thematic objective is deemed as scarcely relevant or useless.

- **About TO 11 GOVERNANCE ranked 5th**, when we come to the proposed actions we notice that few themes have been identified such as "*improvement of administrative and governance capacity*" or "*strengthening of thematic clusters role*" and enhancing the multilevel governance for a total of 16 specific inputs.

- **The CRPM provided outside the survey (for technical reasons) a well structured input to be shared with SI but not included in the Ranking**

Table 3

Table 3 – Ranking of Thematic Objectives		
ETC Thematic Objectives	**Rank**	
TO 1 – Resarch	1	
TO 2 – IT	8	
TO 3 – Competitiveness	5	
TO 4 – Low Carbon economy	7	
TO 5 – Climate change	6	
TO 6 – Environment	2	
TO 7 – Trasnport	4	
TO 8 – Employment	10	
TO 9 – Social inclusion	11	
TO 10 – Education	3	
TO 11 – Governance	9	

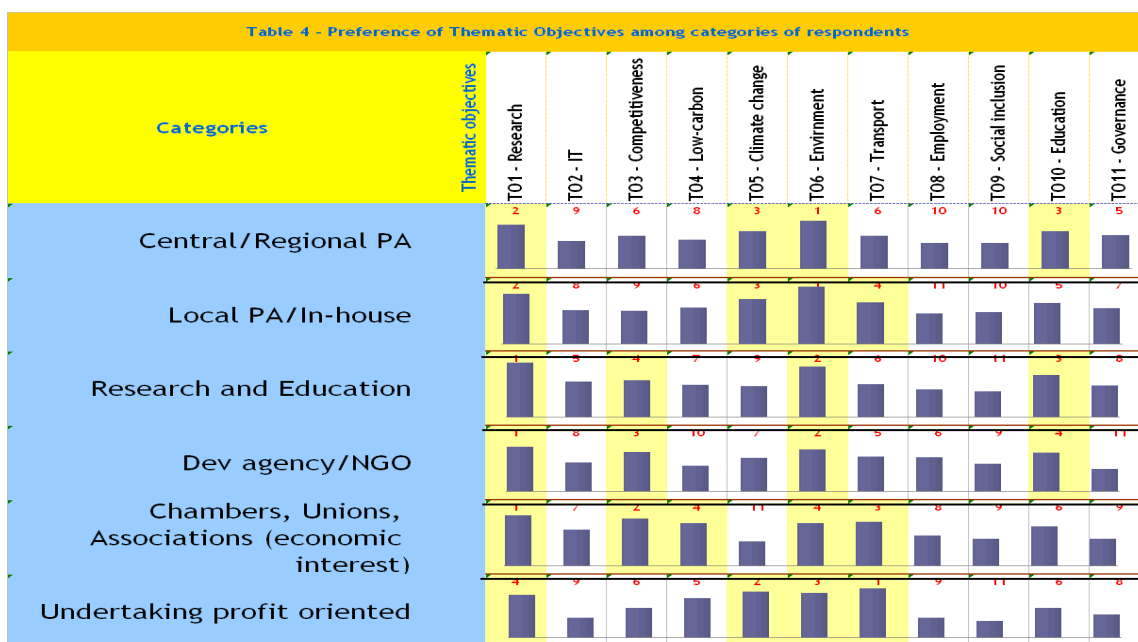*Source: Adriatic-Ionian 2014-2020 - Public consultation on objectives and priorities (July 2014)*

A closer look at **the categories of respondents** shows that:

- **TO1 – research (1st ranked)** was mainly selected by stakeholders outside the AIO eligible area, that is national, supranational or Brussels based bodies (other) and by respondents from research and education entities. Interestingly, within the TO1 internal ranking, profit-oriented bodies tend to view the "research" objective as less strategic than other categories of respondents. This finding is worth being explored in the near future during the programme implementation and taken into account as a baseline for future ongoing evaluations when it comes to assessing the R&I needs and expectations of profit oriented bodies. Research is also the first choice TO choice for chambers, unions and associations and for respondents from development agencies/NGOs.

- **TO6 – environment (2nd ranked)** was foremost chosen by local public authorities (or in-house) and it is the top rated TO within the whole list for this category, together with undertaking profit oriented and central/regional PA.

- **TO10 – education (3rd ranked)** was mainly identified as more than highly relevant by respondents outside the programme area, followed local public authorities.

- **TO7 – transport (4th ranked)** was chiefly selected by the profit-oriented category and by chambers, unions and associations whilst it's one of the last choices for central/regional authorities after social inclusion and governance.

- **With regards to TO4 – low carbon**, which falls into the Task Force pre-selected TOs, it was foremost chosen by chambers, unions and associations and local PA, while development agencies and central/regional authorities ranked it as relevant, but not strategic.

The 1st choice per category of respondents, as shown by table 4, are the following:

- Central/regional public authorities: TO6 – environment
- Local PA/in house: TO6 – environment
- Research and education: TO1 – research
- Development agencies/NGOs: TO1 – research
- Chambers, unions and associations: TO1 – research
- Undertaking profit-oriented: TO6 – environment and TO7 transport
- Other: TO1 – research

Table 4

Table 4 - Preference of Thematic Objectives among categories of respondents

Investment priorities

As for IPs preferences, the results per category are overall consistent with the choices made through the first question (choice of TOs):

TO1 - Research: **IP 1a) and 1b)** : apart from respondents from the category "other", innovation is ranked first by all, research and education and development agencies/NGOs in particular. The spread between the two investment priorities is limited (8% on average).
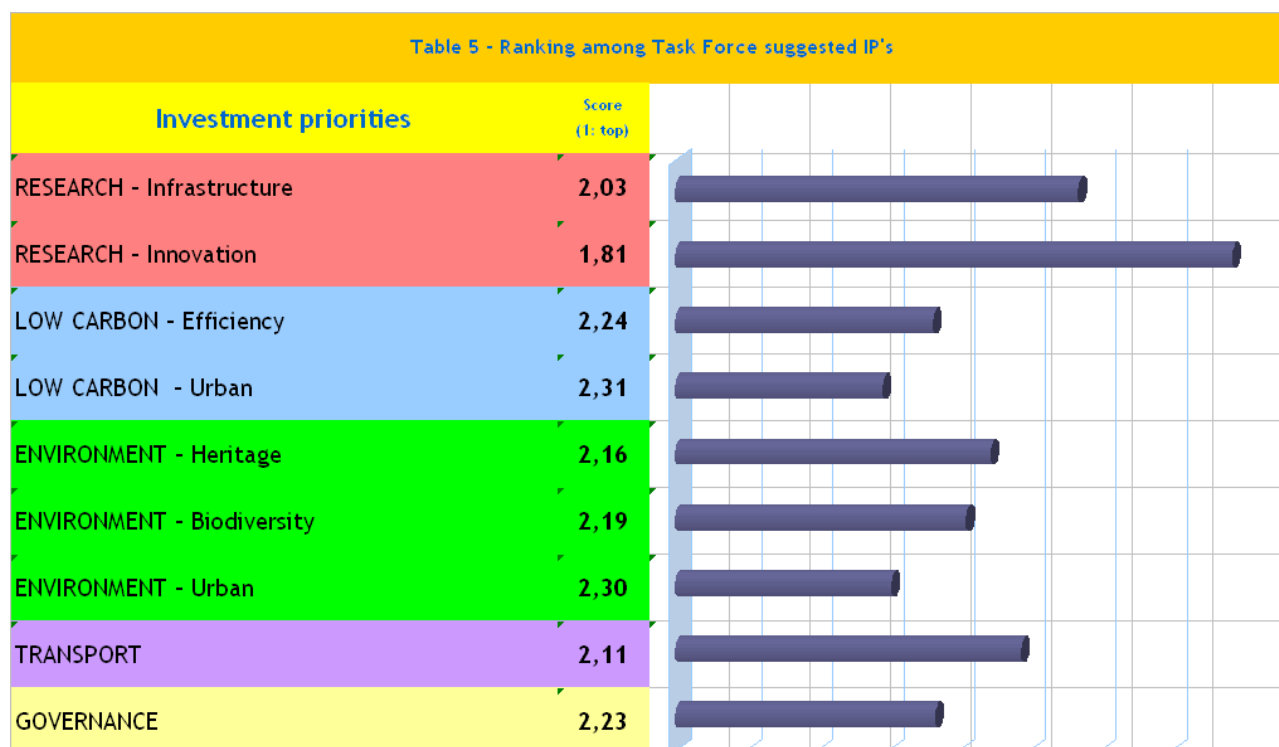
TO4 – Low carbon: IP 4c) and 4e) Results are a little bit more varied. Efficiency is ranked first compared to the urban investment priority, but a few differences are detected among the categories of respondents as profit-oriented respondents considered, on average, the urban investment priority as more relevant than the efficiency one and for respondents outside the programme area the two investment priorities are equally relevant.

TO6 – Environment : IP 6c) 6d) and 6e) : Respondents equally lean on the heritage and biodiversity investment priorities, while urban environment is ranked second. Local PA, research and education and chambers, unions and associations privileged the heritage IP while central/regional PA, development agencies/NGOs, profit-oriented and other respondents rather selected the biodiversity priority. Urban investment priority is never ranked first among the three available choices but local PA and research and education bodies classed it second soon after the heritage priority.

TO 7 – transport: **the investment priority related to TO7 7c**) is deemed more than highly relevant by almost all the categories of respondents apart from those from central/regional authorities and research and education area, which consider it relevant.

Overall, as reported in table 5, the top 3 investment priority list is composed by **<u>IP 1b) innovation (TO1), IP 1a) infrastructure (TO1) and transport IP 7c) (TO7)</u>** although the single priority under TO7 might partially bias the ranking as a single choice was available.

Table 5

Table 5 - Ranking among Task Force suggested IP's		
Investment priorities	**Score (1: top)**	
RESEARCH - Infrastructure	2,03	
RESEARCH - Innovation	1,81	
LOW CARBON - Efficiency	2,24	
LOW CARBON - Urban	2,31	
ENVIRONMENT - Heritage	2,16	
ENVIRONMENT - Biodiversity	2,19	
ENVIRONMENT - Urban	2,30	
TRANSPORT	2,11	
GOVERNANCE	2,23	

Suggested actions per investment priority

Within TO1 – research – infrastructure IP 1a), the following actions are suggested as most relevant:

- Creation of innovation and research centres, as well as centres developing skills and competences for highly skilled SMEs. Research and competence centres should have high potential for territorial spin-offs
- Creation of Scientific-Technological Parks and Business Incubators and pre-incubators, particularly in rural areas with strong links with territorial needs
- Activities directed towards the consolidation and capitalization of transboundary research efforts in order to advance the understanding, monitoring and predictive capabilities in targeted sectors (e.g. health, coastal management etc…)
- Develop integrated local, regional and transnational development strategies and plans strongly based on research and innovation

Within TO1 – research – innovation IP 1b), the following actions are suggested as most relevant:

- Measures supporting technological transfer in different sectors (e.g. public services)
- Actions promoting high-tech and science-based entrepreneurship to develop innovative enterprises
- Development of strategies and schemes supporting social innovation, clusters of innovative social enterprises;
- Measures to improve circular knowledge management among different actors towards innovative industrial concepts
- Actions supporting multilevel accessibility to innovation and technology

*Actions suggested within **TO4 – low carbon economy** – reflect the relatively low interest in the objective, which might be due, considering the results of the survey, to the general complexity of the topic and a narrow discourse surrounding carbon economy.*

With regards to the **efficiency IP 4c)**, the following actions are suggested as most relevant:

- Measures supporting vocational training in energy efficiency and renewable energy use
- Strategies, frameworks and tools to foster market demands for low-impact construction materials

With regards to the **urban IP 4e)**, the following actions are suggested as most relevant:
- Integrated action plans to reduce pollution in urban environments
- Measures fostering sustainable urban mobility strategies, attitudes and actions
- Action integrating urban agriculture into urban systems

Within TO6 – environment- **heritage IP 6c)**, the following actions are suggested as most relevant:
- Develop management strategies based on innovative approaches to protection (e.g. innovative renovation strategies involving young people) and innovative products (BAT technologies. Implementation of the programs for the restoration and revitalization of the cultural heritage.
- Creation of cultural cluster, dynamic cultural parks
- Actions targeting environmental risks for cultural heritage

Within TO6 – environment- **biodiversity IP 6d)**, the following actions are suggested as most relevant:
- Developing innovative schemes to increase social responsibility and foster responsible management of resources and heritage

Within TO6 – environment- **urban IP 6e)**, the following actions are suggested as most relevant:
- Actions targeting the regeneration of brownfield areas according to the new economies' principles (green and social solidarity, knowledge economy, creative economies)
- Development of a suitable legal, economic and administrative environment for zero growth strategies and projects
- Actions developing life-cycle analysis in the urban environment

According to the respondents, **within TO7 IP 7c) – transports** – the selected IP should be implemented through the following actions:
- Development of strategies and initiatives to increase a sustainable culture and sustainable attitudes in transports through training, skills development, effective communication
- Promotion of multimodality in historic centres
- Activities re-integrating ports into urban transport systems and into transport economy
- Strategic investments to update and upgrade transport infrastructures
- Actions strengthening the business environment of cruises and sailing sector
- Strategies to integrate, improve and widen the "Blue Flag Agreement"
- Developing strategies, plans and actions including individual mobility into wider transports policies
- Development of e-systems for full integration of planning and management of transport operations (e.g. e-navigation)

The complete list is annexed to the report.

Suggestions for improved management of AIO programme

It's worth noting that, on average, respondents do not "completely agree" with none of the suggestions included in the survey. Preferences are overall average placed; a few exceptions are detected as some categories tend to disagree with some suggestions, which will be further illustrated below (Table 7).

Optimistic expectations on the future of the programme might be inferred by the survey as the respondents confirmed their interest in participating to future calls for proposal, particularly those from local public authorities and chambers, unions and associations. Furthermore, respondents tend to partially disagree with the statement related to the accessibility of the management systems of INTERREG programmes.

5% advance payment is positively welcome by the respondents (particularly those outside the programme area – other – and local authorities) but there's no full agreement on the suggestion neither among public authorities and public/NGO bodies, nor private entities.

Suggestions for changes in the time schedule of the call for proposal cannot be drawn as judgments are in the middle and indicate that either there are no major opinions on the issue or the question should be further explored. Likewise, apart from the positive assessment of central/regional PA and supra national/central/supra-regional bodies ("other"), large and strategic projects are only partially welcome. In particular, development agencies/NGOs and chambers, unions and associations tend to disregard this strategy, which might be related to the size of development agencies and thus, to their opportunity to participate in larger projects.

Table 7

Table 7 - Suggestions for programme management				
Suggestions	**Rank**	**YES**	**?**	**NO**
I think that my structure will partecipate in preparing project in calls	1	56%		25%
I think that the programme should foresee several calls open for at least 6 months	2	56%		28%
I think that the programme should have strong link to the EUSAIR strategies	3	49%		20%
I think that a 5% of advance payment as of the start of the programme will help to avoid delays or decommitments	4	52%		30%
I think that the programme should have different calls for each OT or IP	5	45%		24%
I think that the programme should concentrate in large and strategic projects	6	44%		27%
I think that INTERREG control and audit systems will ensure a capacity building of my organisation, despite the admin burden	7	37%		25%
I think that my structure will not partecipate as the management and control system of INTERREG are too complex	8	28%		42%

Tools to implement EUSAIR

When consulted on the tools to implement the thematic objectives with a view to the EUAIR strategy, respondents suggested feasibility studies as most suitable tool, followed by high level seminars, learning platforms, annual forum and, finally, publication (table 5). Interestingly, all the categories of respondents agree on their first choice (feasibility studies) and second choice (high-level seminars), while the following choices are varied, consistent with the nature and competences of the respondent.

Table 6

Table 6 - Tools for implementation of EUSAIR							
Tools	Rank	I	II	III	IV	V
Feasibility studies for strategic projects (infrastructures, tourism plans, ...)	1					
High level Seminars	2					
Learning Platforms	3					
Annual Forums	4					
Publications	5					

Source: Adriatic-Ionian 2014-2020 - Public consultation on objectives and priorities (July 2014)