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| Author | Event/Date/Location |
| DaH/MaS | 4th meeting of the HIT Core Group, 3-4 March 2020, Prague (Czech Republic) |
| Participants | |
| Around 40 participants from different TN, CBC, ENI CBC programmes, as well as Interreg Europe.  From Interact: Polona Frumen & Mattias Assmundson for HIT, Aija Prince & Genia Ortis for eMS | |
| Agenda | |
| See [event folder](file:///L:\00_Common\04_Travel%20+%20event%20reports\2020\2020.03.03-04_4th%20HIT%20CG_Prague_DaH_MaS) | |
| Documents | |
| See [event folder](file:///L:\00_Common\04_Travel%20+%20event%20reports\2020\2020.03.03-04_4th%20HIT%20CG_Prague_DaH_MaS) for: Agenda, draft HIT, results of the questionnaire conducted by Interact prior to the meeting  Presentations and further documents will be saved in the folder once they have been provided by Interact. | |
| **Relationship to programme’s tasks** | |
| The HIT process (harmonised implementation tools) is run by INTERACT to simplify and make programme management more efficient. The process started in Dec 2018 with the set-up of a core group of programmes. Interreg BSR is one of the core group programmes. The process deals with application tools (2019-2020) and reporting tools (2020). | |
| Summary of the meeting | |
| **General**  Interact provided updates on several activities that are related to HIT.   * **eMS**: Aija Prince and her new colleague Genia Ortis (earlier: Austria-Slovakia) introduced recent developments. Claudia Pamperl from Central Europe currently supports the eMS team and a new person will start in April. The programmer will start development of first user cases and source code in April. PL-DE withdrew from the eMS Core Group and Italy-Albania-Montenegro joined instead. Only five of the HIT Core Group programmes will not use eMS (among others North Sea, Baltic Sea, Danube). * **Small projects:** Interact clarified that the term was changed to “**micro projects**” which are perceived as people-to-people projects. They are directly managed by the MA/JS and have a budget of up to EUR 100,000. Micro projects neither cover seed money projects, nor preparation projects. A separate HIT application will be developed for them based on the regular HIT application.   **Project relevance, intervention logic and work plan**  The session aimed at agreement on all outstanding “content” elements of the application form. Please find below summary of the discussion (mostly for colleagues that will prepare our future application, other colleagues please feel free to skip this part):   * **Output and deliverables:** It was decided that HIT tools will stick to the terms: outputs and deliverables (which mean intermediary project products feeding to the outputs like e.g. an analysis of stakeholder involvement used during development of a strategy but do not include minor products like minutes from an event). * **Target groups and end users:** We had long discussion if to distinguish between target groups and end users of the project activities. The definition in HIT glossary will be revised but will be rather broad to cover both. The programmes decided against asking applicants for quantification of their target groups in the application form. * **Intervention logic:** The HIT application will be constructed to collect the output indicators on the level of work package. We see it as potentially problematic for project types corresponding to our current Priority 4. In the application form the output/output indicators and results/result indicators will only be linked through an automatically generated overview table. Inputs to this table will come from separate sources. This approach did not seem very handy to us but appeared to be anchored very much in the previous HIT. For the same reason we decided to do differently then. * **Information about partners:** The HIT application will include a summary of the partnership like in our current application (new element in HIT) and a catalogue of possible questions that could be asked per partner or skipped completely. Information about involvement of single partners will not be collected on the activity level anymore. * **Communication**: The HIT application will contain a communication objective on the level of each WP. The communication will be fully integrated into other activities like in case of our application. * **Project relevance:** For this sectionthere will be a catalogue of questions from which programmes can choose. The question on types of territorial approach will be deleted. It was considered as very artificial. Information on complementary projects and relevant strategies will require separate description per each project/strategy to make sure that applicants provide specific enough information that can be used for assessment.   **Investments**  In the questionnaire conducted prior to the meeting seven different definitions of investments have been given (for those interested: the complete set of questions and answers can be found [here](file:///L:\00_Common\04_Travel%20+%20event%20reports\2020\2020.03.03-04_4th%20HIT%20CG_Prague_DaH_MaS\2020.02.17_IN_HIT%20after%20comments\200210%20Feedback%20form%20-%20all%20programmes.xls)). Thus, Interact intended to harmonise the definition of investments by basing it on the capital expenditure (CAPEx) definition. Capital expenditure is the money an organisation spends to buy, maintain, or improve its fixed assets, such as buildings, vehicles, equipment, or land. However, an agreement on the definition has not been achieved as the group turned the effort down and forced to concentrate on how investments are displayed in the application. As a result the discussion was steered by different demands resulting from different understanding of investments. The final solution does not seem fully appropriate for our needs: Investments shall be entered on work package level with no link to activities or outputs. Special questions (e.g. on ownership, location) will be coming with it. It was not decided how to link expenditure to investments. For Interreg BSR we see a need to deviate (link it to outputs) and to improve the investment definition and budgeting. Currently our investment definition is unclear and leads to different treatment of project outputs. For example, an ICT platform (main output) for which no server was purchased has different requirements to durability than an ICT platform for which a server was purchased. Only the latter is regarded as an investment and has to be kept for five years after the project end. We will discuss further internally and also encourage Interact to continue efforts to harmonise the investment definition.  **Reporting**  In order to start discussions for the HIT meeting in June, options other than standard reporting (3 months after reporting period including activities and finances) were presented. The aim of the options is to speed up spending. Options were: disentangled activity and financial reporting (with light and full reports) and continuous reporting (with finances being reported continuously and activities only at certain milestones (e.g. mid-term and closure)). Alpine Space and Baltic Sea (in IIIB) made bad experience with disentangled reporting. 2Seas and Romania-Serbia made good experience with continuous reporting. 2Seas is using a performance co-efficient based on which financial corrections are made if the achievement is below 65% for two years in a row MC. Many programmes expect a faster spending due to simplification and less involvement of FLC. Furthermore, dependencies between reporting and application need to be observed. Continuous reporting might make changes of the application more difficult.  The future HIT reporting form will accommodate all three reporting options. Further discussion within and between the programmes will be needed. | |
| Stories from the event for our programme communication | |
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| Follow-up meeting | |
| 22.-23.04.2020 – HIT Q&A event in Brussels for programmes outside the HIT Core Group. Due to the Corona Virus the meeting will be most likely be replaced by series by webinars.  16.-18.06.2020 – 5th meeting of the HIT Core Group in Stockholm covering reporting, 1st step application, micro project application, small project fund and State aid. A Doddle will be set up to agree on alternative dates.  End Nov. 2020 – 6th meeting of the HIT Core Group (continuation of reporting)  January 2021 – 7th meeting of the HIT Core Group (incl. FLC) | |
| Other personal remarks | |
| DaH: Compared to the event in Amsterdam, the spirit in Prague was rather negative. It became apparent that Interact colleagues managing HIT are forced to serve eMS. As a result, Interact tried to reduce optional fields in the application to a minimum. Many programmes feared to lose flexibility and freedom, thus were running heated discussions. Polona tried her best to manage the situation, but was not able to cover all issues in the end. It is unclear whether all participants understood final agreements and consequences, especially for the link between activities, outputs and results, as well as investments and investment expenditure.  MaS: I was astonished by the discussion “culture” of some programme representatives and do not envy colleagues from Interact this particular task. It is also interesting to observe that we took years ago some decisions not to follow previous HIT application (e.g. with regards to communication, information about partners etc.) and now the new HIT community is ready to apply these approaches. | |