



FactSheet

No. 4.6

Project changes

Projects are implemented according to the approved application form (AF), which is a binding document. During their implementation, however, projects might face the need to modify some elements to adapt to actual developments. Interreg Alpine Space has defined standardised rules for changes of approved projects (articles 8, 9 and 10 of the subsidy contract). This factsheet provides guidance on the type of changes allowed within an approved project and the relevant steps and procedures to be followed. Projects are invited to take contact with the JS in case questions arise or further guidance is needed.

Type of changes

Changes may have a minor or major impact on a project. Changes to elements such as contact details, deliverables, or the location of a conference are considered as minor and can be reported to the programme through the reporting procedures. When changes concern a core element of the project (e.g. output indicators, main activities, partnership), they require a formal request for change to be submitted to the JS as well as the prior approval of the relevant programme body (see below). The basis for the project changes is the latest approved AF. The programme distinguishes between:

- changes in the project content,
- changes in the budget,
- changes in the project's duration,
- changes in the partnership.



Changes in the project content

Changes of minor entity to the content of a project (e.g. the rescheduling of activities, changes in the communication tools used, etc.) can be made by providing information and a justification on the reasons for change in the relevant project report.

Major changes in the project's activities, outputs and/or results require the prior approval of the programme committee (PC). These changes have to be justified in a formal request for change.

Changes in the budget

Changes in budget are allowed as long as the maximum amount of ERDF co-financing awarded to the project is not exceeded and certain conditions are also fulfilled, as described below.

Projects are allowed flexibility in the spending of their ERDF budget up to a maximum of EUR 10,000 or 20% (whichever is greater) of the project work package, budget line or project partner ERDF budget, as stated in the latest approved version of the AF. To this end they are requested to report and justify these deviations in the relevant project report. It remains the duty of the lead partner (LP) to monitor compliance with the above mentioned thresholds and the overall ERDF co-financing.

Examples	ERDF amount approved in AF (latest approved version)	Flexibility rule: max EUR 10,000 or 20% of original amount (project ERDF not exceed)
Work package X	EUR 200,000	max EUR 240,000
Budget line Y	EUR 0	max EUR 10,000
Partner Z	EUR 160,000	max EUR 192,000

Reallocations exceeding these thresholds are only allowed once during the project duration or in duly justified cases. They require prior approval of the JS (on behalf of the managing authority (MA)). In this case, the LP has to timely submit a request for changes to the JS.

Projects should be aware that changes to the budget allocation per period are not allowed as this is the basis for the programme spending targets towards the European Commission; failing to meet such forecast would entail a budget reduction for the programme (for further details, please refer to factsheet 3.3 "Decommitment of funds"). This is why the budget allocation per period cannot be changed at project level.



Changes in the project's duration

Projects should put their efforts in completing their activities successfully and within the time set in the AF. To this end, measures should be put in place by the LP and project partners to identify and tackle possible delays at an early stage. Projects are also requested to inform the JS in case of difficulties that may lead to significant delays in the delivery of activities (e.g. through the project reports, direct contact with the JS).

If, despite this, projects are not in the position to comply with the approved end date, they may request an extension of the project duration through a request for changes. The request for changes in project duration requires prior approval by the JS. Projects should be aware that extensions of project duration are limited to exceptional and well justified cases and in any case cannot exceed six months. They cannot exceed the programme duration, either. Therefore, projects approved towards the end of the programme must pay particular attention to a timely delivery of their activities.

Changes in the partnership

The partnership is a core element of a project and changes to its composition should therefore be limited as much as possible. They are anyway always subject to a request for change procedure and the prior approval of the relevant programme body. In addition, the programme has set minimum requirements for the composition and number of project partners (see factsheet 1.2 "Who can participate"). Stricter partnership requirements may also be stated in the terms of reference of a specific call for proposals. Projects should be aware that if the minimum number of partners is no longer ensured, the MA is entitled to withdraw from the SC.

Changes in partnership may concern:

- the withdrawal of a partner
- the integration of a new partner

In case a project partner withdraws from the project, the remaining partners should undertake all possible measures to find a rapid and efficient solution to ensure the further proper implementation of the project. They should ensure that the responsibilities and project tasks of this partner are taken over by a new partner (ideally from the same country) or are reallocated within the existing partnership. Projects should take contact with the ACP network, which can help in searching for a new project partner.



A project may also request the inclusion of an additional partner (without any partner withdrawal). This is in principle possible where the added value for the implementation of the project is demonstrated.

All changes to the project partnership (a simple change in the name of a partner is not considered as a partnership change whenever the competences and legal status remain the same) require the submission of a request for change describing the new allocation of activities and budget. The LP has also the responsibility of informing the JS in a timely manner of the eventuality of such changes. The request for change is checked by the JS, in coordination with the ACP where relevant; its approval is a competence of the PC. Any modification to the partnership agreement (PA) has to be sent to and approved by the MA.

In case of withdrawal, the costs of a project partner are only eligible and can be co-financed until the date of its withdrawal as communicated by the LP to the JS; the eligibility of these costs is also subject to the confirmation from the LP and assessment from the JS that the contribution of this partner can be used for the project by the remaining project partners. Despite its withdrawal, a project partner still has the obligation of keeping all relevant files, documents and data for the audit trail (see factsheet 1.4 “What can be co-financed”).

Request for changes

All changes in the table below are subject to a request for changes procedure. As a first step, the LP has to timely inform the JS via e-mail of the upcoming project change. This is checked by the JS and if the proposed changes are deemed acceptable in principle, the following steps are dealt through the programme electronic monitoring system (eMS). Through the eMS, the JS will open for the LP the possibility of describing the necessary changes and adapting the AF accordingly. Once completed, the LP will have to submit its request for changes (including the revised AF) through the eMS. The request is checked by the JS, in coordination with the ACP where relevant (i.e. in case of integration of a new partner).

Type of change	Body in charge of approval
Major changes in the project’s content	PC
Changes in ERDF budget, beyond the flexibility rule of EUR 10,000/20%	JS on behalf of MA
Changes in project duration, up to max. 6 months	JS on behalf of MA
Partnership changes	PC



All these changes, require prior approval, and will therefore only enter into force after the approval from the relevant programme body has been received. However, once approved they are valid retrospectively starting from the date when a written request was submitted to the JS.

Reference Documents

- Subsidy contract
- Partnership agreement
- Factsheet 1.2 “Who can participate”
- Factsheet 1.4 “What can be co-financed”
- Factsheet 3.3 “Decommitment of funds”