**«CAPITALISATION TAILORED SUPPORT» 2022**

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Setting up of thematic communities

**15 June 2022**

1. Introduction

During the 2014-2020 programming period, the setting up of thematic communities have been supported by ETC programmes in order to improve exchanges of practices between projects and facilitate the mobilisation of various types of actors (project partners, experts, institutions, decision makers, external partners…) in specific intervention fields. This proved to be a quite important dimension of transfer and mainstreaming processes as these communities gave the possibility to bring closer “givers” and “takers” which is one key success condition for transfer and mainstreaming activities.

1. Valuable inputs from 2014-2020 ETC programmes

In the INTERACT capitalisation management guide, it is stated that “capitalisation should be meant as an experience going beyond Interreg and creating a larger community of interested stakeholders from various backgrounds/sectors but also a value chain with different sources of funding” (p.14).

During the 2014-2020 period, some ETC programmes promoted innovative approach of capitalisation with the support to community building. One can mention in particular the INTERREG Europe programme and the MED programme.

### INTERREG Europe

In order to transfer good practices and experiences into regional and Interregional ESF/EFRD programmes, the programme Interreg Europe has implemented a **Policy learning platform** on different topics: research and innovation, SME competitiveness, low-carbon economy, environment, and resource efficiency.

Each platform is a service for project partners and for all other organisations involved in regional policy around Europe to promote continuous policy learning and capitalisation of good regional policy practices. The platform provides a knowledge and education centre, networking and partnering opportunities, and expert helpdesk for policy advice and expert support.

**Peer-reviews** has been one of the most iconic services of the platform. The platform launched yearly calls for expression of interest to **identify potential "receiver"** according to a potential need/challenge. The selection criteria were the following:

* the potential "receiver" is responsible for the implementation of the targeted public policy,
* the relevance of the topic, i.e., correspondence with the topics covered by the four-priority axis of the programme,
* motivation from the hosting organisation and other stakeholders covered by the topic,
* potential political impact.

A background paper was drafted by the hosting organisation with key issues and questions to be tackled. On this basis, the **thematic expert from the platform** identified up to 6 relevant peers **among its thematic community** and organised the 2 days peer review in the territory of the hosting organisation.

The exchange of ideas and brainstorming sessions led to the drafting of a **recommendation paper** for the hosting organisation with **operational actions to be implemented** jointly with the key stakeholders.

This service has delivered real added value for both hosting organisations as well as peers that very often went back with inspiring ideas for an improved public policy.

### MED Programme

From the start of 2014-2020, the architecture of the programme had foreseen the implementation of “**Horizontal projects**” whose purpose was to **animate communities of “modular projects”** implemented all over the programming period in the priority axes of the programme: blue growth; green growth; social and creative; efficient buildings; renewable energy; urban transports; sustainable tourism; biodiversity protection.

These horizontal projects have been selected and implemented over two successive periods (2016-2019 and 2019-2022) with the objective to **help modular projects cooperate with both the programme and others individual projects**, concentrating and developing information and deliverables for each priority axis. Horizontal projects did not have to implement and achieve their own territorial objectives but to **gather results and facilitate transfer from modular projects to other communities** (i.e., other ETC or thematic programmes, European commission, member States, thematic and/or institutional networks…).

The horizontal project had to work in three parallel directions:

1. community building
2. joint communication
3. joint capitalisation/transfer.

Concrete activities implemented included:

1. Ensuring the networking of the modular projects within the same objective for which they have applied, by proposing a joint method of work;
2. Facilitating synergies between the projects belonging to the same specific objective/priority: coordination of working groups and structured exchange between the modular projects;
3. Contributing, in collaboration with Joint Secretariat, to the technical development and transferability of project results identifying appropriated actors and targets;
4. Ensure the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the main joint deliverables of the ‘community’ of modular projects;
5. Animating and regularly updating the thematic sections of the programme website (among others by transferring information from project and programme level);
6. Organising thematic and capitalisation events for the “community” of modular projects;
7. Representing the “modular projects community” in any relevant transnational seminar of the Interreg MED Programme, Interact or other ETC and / or thematic programmes.
8. Cooperating with the Interreg MED Programme to coordinate communication activities of all horizontal projects on an annual basis.

Horizontal projects were composed of partners able to manage networks of projects, to share and capitalise results, to setup and implement communication strategies, etc. For this reason, they involved transnational thematic networks, universities, specialised agencies, associations and foundations, international organisms, public authorities – etc.

The setting up of these thematic communities has been considered as one of the main added values of the 2014-2021 period. For 2021-2027, it has been decided to pursue in this direction with on the one hand the launch of classical thematic projects and on the other hand with the launch of “governance projects” (innovation, environment, green living areas and sustainable tourism) that will ensure a coordination and capitalisation role in the continuity of former horizontal projects.