

Decommitment and strategies to speed up spending rates of 2014-2020

Context

Implementation of the 2014-2020 programmes was delayed by the late adoption of legal documents and new requirements (e.g., designation process). Covid-19 pandemic, ongoing war of Russia in Ukraine, surging inflation and the energy crisis had a significant impact on lower absorption rates of EU funds in 2014-2020. Although up till the end of 2022, the decommitment risk has affected only a few, some programmes still need to actively speed up their spending rates to avoid decommitment of funds.

The EC introduced several measures (e.g., CRII, CRII+, CARE, FAST CARE, Regulation 2022/219 for ENI programmes, notions on non-functioning and phased operations) to help programmes recover. Programmes have also been actively working on their contingency strategies to speed up spending, like overcommitment of programme funds, reserve lists, evaluations, ongoing projects modification, additional reporting, close monitoring and so on.

To ensure high spending rates, programmes should consider a good mix of different measures. Only 3 Interreg programmes are planning on an early closure of the 2014-2020 programmes (closing with the current accounting year; i.e., 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023).

Group work

Discuss topics:

- Has your programme faced any decommitment challenges? Will there be any decommitment risk for your programme in the last year of programme implementation?
- If so, what was the major reason(s) for that? What is the value of EU funds that could potentially be decommitted?
- What was/is the programme strategy to speed up the spending and to prevent decommitment?
- Have you already discussed within your programme how to understand/implement provisions of Article 129 of 'old' CPR (Regulation 1303/2013)?¹
- Other concerns/ questions related to decommitment and speeding up spending rates

¹ The Member State shall ensure that by the closure of the operational programme, the amount of public expenditure paid to beneficiaries is at least equal to the contribution from the Funds and the EMFF paid by the Commission to the Member State.