

Rules of Procedure of the Monitoring Committee (MC) for the implementation of the Interreg Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme 2021-2027

Preamble

The Member State programme partner countries Finland, Ireland and Sweden, based on

- Regulation (EU) 1060/2021 of the Parliament and the Council (hereafter referred to as the CPR Regulation)
- Regulation (EU) 1058/2021 of the Parliament and the Council (hereafter referred to as the ERDF Regulation),
- Regulation (EU) 1059/2021 of the Parliament and the Council (hereafter referred to as the Interreg Regulation), in particular articles 28-30 thereof,
- The cooperation programme "Northern Periphery and Arctic" CCI No 2021TC16FFT005 (hereafter referred to as the programme)
- The decision of the European Commission according to article 29(4) Regulation (EU) 1060/2021 approving the programme, Decision No C (2022) 6575

and in consultation with the Non Member States Norway, Iceland, Faroe Islands and Greenland (hereafter known as the programme partner countries),

have agreed to establish a Monitoring Committee (hereafter referred to as the MC) for the Interreg Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme. The Managing Authority (hereafter referred to as the MA) has, after consultation with the programme partner countries, set up a Joint Secretariat (hereafter referred to as the JS). The Monitoring Committee will be supported by the Joint Secretariat in their tasks.

Rule 1 – Name and Location

The Monitoring Committee shall be known as the Monitoring Committee for the implementation of the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme 2021-2027.

The official location of the MC will be at the JS in Copenhagen hosted by the Faroese Mission in Denmark. This shall not prejudice the places of the meetings of the MC, which will be fixed by the MC.



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Rule 2 - Functions

The MC shall function in accordance with Article 22, 30 and 52 of the Interreg Regulation.

The principal function of the MC is to ensure the quality and effectiveness of implementation and accountability of the programme implementation.

The main tasks of the MC conducting this principal function will be:

1. To examine the progress in programme implementation and in achieving the milestones and targets (article 30(1) Interreg);
2. To examine any issues that affect the performance of the programme and the measures taken to address these issues (article 30(1) Interreg);
3. To approve the evaluation plan and any amendment thereto and to examine the progress made in carrying out evaluations, syntheses of evaluations and any follow-up given to findings (article 30 Interreg);
4. To examine the implementation of communication and visibility actions (article 30(1) Interreg);
5. To examine the progress in implementing operations of strategic importance (article 30(1) Interreg);
6. To approve the methodology and criteria for selecting the operations financed by the programme, including any changes thereto (article 30(2) Interreg).
7. In the selection of operations, to promote non-discrimination, accessibility for persons with disabilities, gender equality and take account of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU and the principle of sustainable development and of the Union policy on the environment in accordance with Article 11 and Article 19(1) TFEU (article 22(2) Interreg).
8. To select – in accordance with the programme’s strategy and objectives - the operations to be supported. In cases when all or part of an operation is implemented outside the programme area or involves one or several partners located in countries not represented in the Monitoring Committee, the selection of that operation shall require the explicit approval by the Managing Authority (article 22(1) Interreg).
9. To approve any proposal by the Managing Authority for the amendment of the programme, including the rules on eligibility of expenditure (article 30(2) Interreg);
10. To approve the final performance report (article 30(2) and 33(1) Interreg)

11. To define obligations regarding recoveries (article 52 Interreg)

Further tasks of the MC might derive from the agreement on the Management and Control System of the programme as well as from the Programme Manual.

Rule 3 - Membership

The composition of the MC shall be agreed by the programme partner countries. The MC shall include relevant representatives of those programme partner countries.

More specifically, the MC shall be composed of:

One national and one regional representative and a regular deputy for each from each programme partner country may be nominated by the national authorities responsible for the implementation of the programme.

Members or deputies can be replaced by an ad hoc deputy in case a member and its regular deputy are prevented from attending a meeting.

The MC will have the following permanent observers:

- One representative from Scottish Government
- One representative from Northern Ireland Executive¹
- One representative from the Government of Canada
- One representative from the Nordic Youth Council²
- One representative from the Arctic Youth Network³
- One representative from the Nordic Atlantic Cooperation
- One representative from the Territorial Council of Saint-Pierre-and-Miquelon

The MC Chair has the option to invite additional observers in line with the partnership principle, such as stakeholder representatives, from the country of the Chair. These observers rotate in line with the rotation of the Chair.

The MA/JS shall be provided with the names and contact details of the representatives and their deputies. Any change of representatives shall be notified to the MA/JS as soon as possible, no later than the day prior to the next meeting.

A gender balance should be strived for in all nominations. For nominations to the MC, the programme partner country may, where relevant, indicate both a woman and a man in which case the MA will make the selection based on the overall composition.

¹ A decision in principle to include Northern Ireland Executive was taken by the MC. The MA is looking forward to a formal letter of interest.

² The membership shall be rotating yearly between the Nordic Youth Network and the Arctic Youth Network, as of 2024.

³ See footnote 2

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The chair of the MC can also invite others to attend the meetings such as observers and guests. Each participating country may have one observer at the meetings. However, prior notification for the chair and for the JS is needed.

The European Commission will be represented in an advisory capacity.

Representatives of the County Administrative Board of Västerbotten (MA) and the JS shall take part in the MC meetings.

The list of the members of the MC shall be published on the NPA 2021-2027 website.

Rule 4 – Chairing and Meetings

The MC shall have a chair and a co-chair, nominated by the national authorities responsible for the implementation of the programme. The respective programme partner country shall appoint them for one year at a time as follows:

Year	Chair	Co-chair
2022	Ireland	Sweden
2023	Sweden	Finland
2024	Finland	Norway
2025	Norway	Faroe Islands
2026	Faroe Islands	Ireland
2027	Ireland	Sweden
2028	Sweden	Finland
2029	Finland	Norway
2030	Norway	Faroe Islands

The Chair shall:

- Convene the MC at least once each year, altering between the programme partner countries and Copenhagen, but meetings can also be held online.
- Convene the MC at the written and duly justified request of one or more of its members, the MA or the Commission.
- Endorse meeting agendas, which shall be sent out by the JS together with the invitation and the necessary documents to the members of the MC at least ten (10) working days in advance;
- Perform Chair's duties during the meetings e.g. declare the opening and closing of each meeting, direct the discussion, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote, announce the decisions, rule on points of order, and pursuant to these Rules, have control of the proceedings;
- Be responsible for the proper functioning of the MC.

In preparing the meetings, the Chair shall co-operate closely with the Co-chair. If they so

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agree, the Chair and the Co-chair may share some of the Chair's duties during meetings.

The meeting of the MC other than the ones in Copenhagen or online shall, unless otherwise decided by the MC, be hosted by the country chairing the MC. The hosting country will be responsible for all practical arrangements. At the request of the hosting country, the JS can also assist with practical arrangements for meetings.

Draft minutes shall be sent out for comments to members of the MC within three weeks after a meeting. The members of the MC have ten (10) working days to comment the draft minutes. The JS and the Chair have ten (10) working days to compile, edit and circulate the final minutes for the MC members.

Costs for the MC meetings shall be covered by the Technical Assistance budget. Travel costs for the MC members in connection with the meetings shall be covered by the programme partner countries.

Rule 5 – Decision-Making

At any meeting of the MC no less than four delegations of programme partners must be present (two of which must be Member State delegations).

All members of the MC as well as others listed in Rule 3 or invited by the chair shall have a right to speak at meetings. Only members of the MC have the right to vote.

Decision-making in the MC shall strive for consensus among the delegations of the abovementioned programme partner countries (one vote per delegation). In case consensus is not reached, the Chair will decide if the motion is either postponed or defeated. In cases where consensus is not reached and a MC decision cannot be postponed, a majority vote rule can be applied at the Chair's discretion.

If a decision needs to be taken before the next MC meeting, the Chair can initiate a decision-making process in writing. In this case the Chair, or the MA/JS on behalf of the Chair, shall send the draft decision to all members electronically. Delegations of the participating states shall have ten working days from dispatch of the proposal to respond in writing.

If a written objection to the procedure or to the draft decision is raised the matter shall be placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the MC. Delegations of the participating states can withdraw their objection at any time.

If no written objection to the procedure or to the draft decision has been received by the specified time the decision is deemed to be taken by the MC.

In any case, after the time limit for the written decision-making process has expired, the JS shall immediately inform all members on whether the decision is deemed to have been taken or what objections have been raised.

Rule 6 – Complaint Procedure

In accordance with Article 69 of the CPR regulation, arrangements are set up to ensure an effective examination of complaints concerning the implementation of the NPA programme, as described in detail in the Management- and control system description.

Complaints cover any dispute between potential and selected beneficiaries with regard to the proposed or selected operation and any disputes with third parties on the implementation of the programme or operations thereunder.

The MA or JS shall examine and answer to any complaints. If needed, or in relation to complaints of more principal character, the complaints will be examined and answered jointly by the chair of the MC and the MA or JS. The chair may decide to refer back a complaint to the MC, should s/he judge it necessary. An overview of complaints examined and answered by the chair of the MC and MA or JS will be provided to the MC in the following meeting.

The complaint procedure is without prejudice to any mechanism or replacements for legal processes and legal framework at national level.

Rule 7 – Conflict of Interest

When members of the MC have a direct personal or organizational interest in a decision, they must declare this interest and not take part in the discussion, assessment and decision-making process. The same principle applies for decision-making in written procedures.

Rule 8 - Transparency

The rules of procedure of the MC as well as a summary of data and information shared with the MC and decisions shall be published on the programme website in accordance with Article 28(4) of the Interreg regulation. Exceptions can be made where Union law or national law excludes such publication for reasons of security, public order, criminal investigations, or protection of personal data in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

Rule 9 - Task Forces and Advisory Groups

Regional Contact Points

Due to the large programme area, Regional Contact Points (hereafter know as RCPs) shall be established to assist the JS with its information, promotion and advisory tasks. The RCPs shall also provide technical support to the Regional Advisory Groups (see below) in assessing main project applications within the framework established by the MC.

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The RCPs will be located in the programme area. They will form a network that will work in close cooperation with the JS and the JS shall be responsible for issuing guidelines and terms for the work of the RCPs.

The RCPs are appointed by the national authority responsible for the implementation of the Programme and will be partially funded from the Technical Assistance budget depending on availability of resources. Terms of reference for the RCPs will be agreed by the MC.

Regional Advisory Groups

In line with the partnership principle and multi-level governance principle as outlined in Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 2021/1060, programme partner countries shall involve partners from regional and local authorities with relevant expertise in relation to the priorities of the NPA 2021-2027 in the implementation of the programme. Regional Advisory Groups (RAGs) shall be established to assist the Monitoring Committee in assessing project applications. The RAGs are appointed by national authorities in the programme partner countries. The Terms of Reference for the RAGs will be decided by the MC.

Rule 10 - Delegation of Tasks

The MC may decide to set up other advisory groups than mentioned above or decide on other organisational arrangements as well as to delegate certain decisions to the MA/JS or to other groups in order to support the implementation of the programme.

Rule 11 - Secretariat

The MC will be supported by the Joint Secretariat.

The MC can be contacted through the secretariat:

Interreg Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme Secretariat
Strandgade 91, 4th floor
DK-1401 Copenhagen K
Denmark

Phone: +45 32 83 37 84

E-mail: secretariat@interreg-npa.eu

www.interreg-npa.eu

Rule 12 - Official Languages

The official language of the MC shall be English. This rule applies for the official documents of the MC as well.



Rule 13 - Concluding Provisions

At the meeting of the MC in Monaghan, Ireland, on 28th September 2022, these Rules of Procedure were adopted by the members of the MC unanimously.

These rules of procedure will remain valid until the closure of the programme but may be amended by decision of the MC