

Let's brainstorm!

Evaluation specials:
Europe Closer to Citizens (PO5)
Small Project Fund (SPF)
Strategic Projects (OSI)

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Interreg

Agenda

01

Setting the scene
and initial
thoughts

02

Specificities in
evaluation:
Exchange &
brainstorming

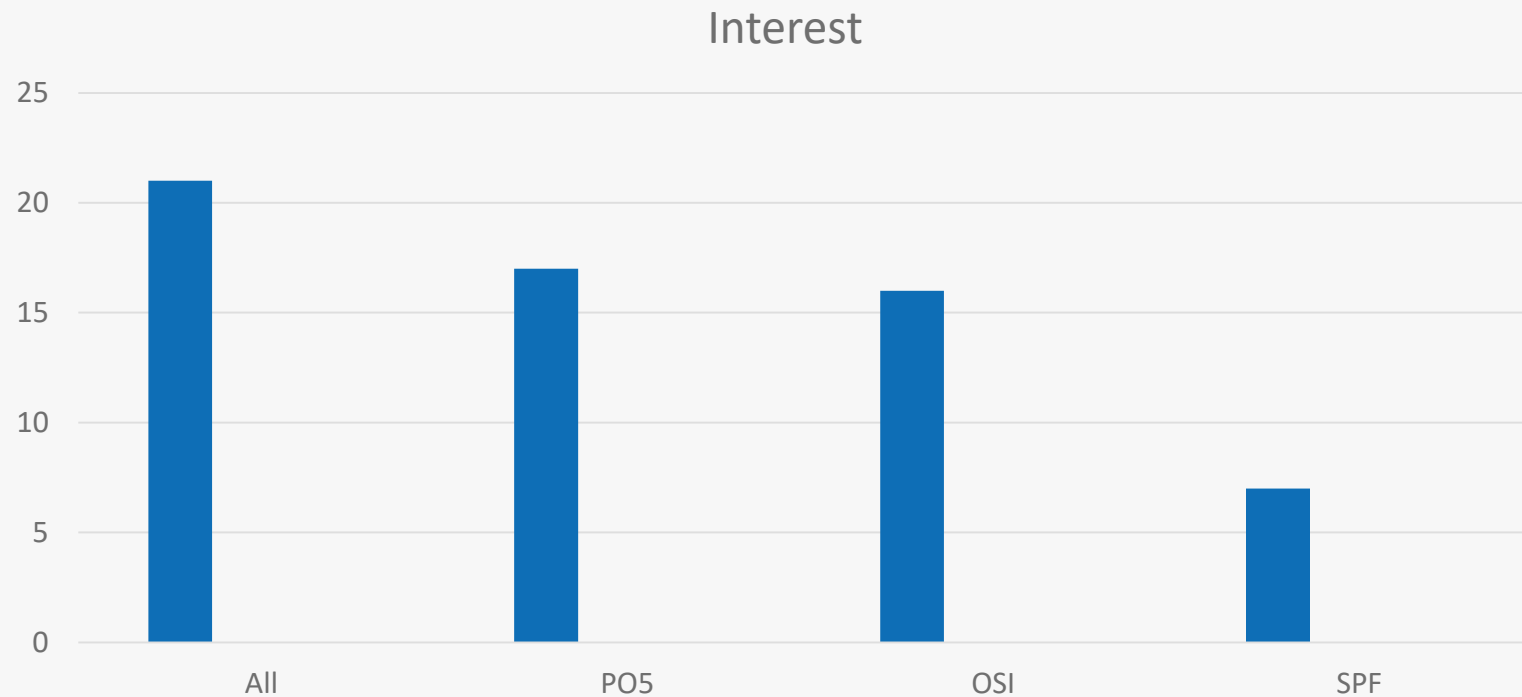
03

Distilling key
ideas

04

Wrap up

Registration feedback (main interest PO5, SPF, OSI)



Registration: **Key questions** – 1/3

Why these three topics are seen as needing special attention?

Small Project Fund (SPF)

- *What should be the main aspect in evaluation?*
- *What is the level of detail for follow up on small projects within an SPF?*
- *How to evaluate the impact of an SPF?*
- *Evaluation of several SPF's in one programme*

Registration: Key questions – 2/3

Operation of Strategic Importance (OSI)

- *What needs to be evaluated with regard to OSI? Key compulsory topics to be included? Is it wise to focus evaluation on OSI and communication?*
- *How to set up OSI evaluation? COM expectations?*
- *How to evaluate OSI without additional burden for the project staff?*
- *Approach to OSI evaluation across different Interreg programmes?*
- *How to ensure capturing the impact of strategic projects that have a long implementation period?*

Registration: Key questions – 3/3

Policy Objective 5 (PO5)

- *How to design the evaluation plan according to the specificities of PO5?*
- *How is the evaluation of the territorial strategies to be organized - for example by commissioning external experts or by using own expertise?*
- *Where exactly is that thin line between evaluating the programme and evaluating the integrated territorial strategy? How deep should the analysis at project level be for PO5?*
- *How to approach the evaluation process for the Programme and the one for the Strategy (ITS)? How to create links between the two evaluations, how to plan them?*
- *Considering the pros and cons of conducting the mid-term evaluation of the Strategy in parallel with the mid-term evaluation of the respective program*

The M.O.T. is currently working for the Agence Nationale de Cohésion de Territoires (ANCT) on an overview of the PO5 approaches at France's borders.

Experience in evaluating **PO5, SPF, OSI** so far

Specificities

A Europe closer to Citizens –



Sustainable and integrated development of urban, rural and coastal areas through local initiatives

- Participative process focussing on the active involvement of local and regional stakeholders in developing ...
- Multi-sectoral strategy for the integrated development of cross-border territories and new players come in
- Strategy Board takes decision on projects
- Strategy Implementing Body manages, animates and facilitates the process

Examples: PO5

Interreg Austria-Bavaria

Strategy for tourism at programme level – impacting selection criteria. 6 Euregios have set up their strategies. Focus of strategies varies across the Euregios. The Euregios are entitled to decide on small and small-scale projects (up to 35 000 EUR) on their own. Use of draft budget.

Interreg Romania-Bulgaria

Integrated tourism development along the Eurovelo 6 (Danube). The first set of projects is collected and incentivised during the process of strategy development (ongoing but about to close). NB : Parts of the cycle route network is financed under RRF.

Small Project Fund (SPF)



- a) A project delivering its results via small projects
- b) Can be a tool for various purposes (p2p, clustering, complementarity, innovation, new partnerships...)
- c) High number of small actions aiming at visibility on the ground

Examples: SPF

Interreg Italy – Slovenia

European Capital of Culture Nova Gorica- Gorica 2025

The main objective of the SPF (managed by EGTC GO) is to prepare the cross-border territory for the European Capital of Culture Nova Gorica-Gorizia 2025. SPF is open for small individual or partnership projects run by business, associations, municipalities and other potential partners.

Interreg IPA Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro

Support for SMEs

A special local SME development scheme will be organized through SPF, fostering development of local SMEs with strong focus on introducing product or process innovation, developing pilot actions and new business solutions, while simultaneously enhancing their cross-border business cooperation.

Interreg Alps – Lake Constance – Upper Rhine: EGTC Science Alliance in Region 4
SPF on science & SME cooperation

SPF promotes the development of new approaches and innovations from research into practice, the transfer of knowledge and technology, innovative teaching formats and dialogue with society. Target groups are primarily EGTC member universities, but also potential project partners from business, society and politics.



Operation of strategic importance

An operation which provides a significant contribution to the achievement of the objectives of a programme and which is subject to particular monitoring and communication measures.

CPR, art. 2.5



The core thing is: go back to the definition in the CPR! ... The whole idea was to help a programme focus on its best projects for showing off. The programme identifies the projects which make a difference! It is simply about identifying those

Moray Gilland, Interact webinar,
April 14, 2021

Examples: OSIs

IPA South Adriatic:
Good Governed (ISO1)

Capacity-building project: Enhancement of operational competencies in public institutions, in line with the digital agenda, with training actions in ICTs and measures for e-government in the field of control / monitoring of the territories etc.

Interreg RO-BG:
Danube RISK - Danube Risk Prevention (PO2)

Flood, water and environmental management project for Danube as shared border river.

Interreg Grande Région:
Cross Border health needs assessment and monitoring (PO4)

Continuation and deepening of cross-border cooperation on health services.

Examples: OSIs on PO5 and SPF

Interreg POCTEFA
(FR-ES-Andorra),
Interreg Grande Region
(DE-FR-LU-BE):
*Governance projects in
PO5*

Dedicate projects to fund the five Strategy Implementing Bodies for PO5 (partly EGTCs, partly other structures)

Interreg CZ-PL:
SPFs (ISO 1, PO4.5)

Shows the importance of Small Project Funds in this programme (about 3 000 small projects in 2014-2020!)

Use of the evaluation criteria

Principles to use evaluation criteria

Principle 1

- **The criteria should be applied thoughtfully to support high quality, useful evaluation.** *They should be contextualized – understood in the context of the individual evaluation, the intervention being evaluated, and the stakeholders involved. The evaluation questions (what you are trying to find out) and what you intend to do with the answers, should inform how the criteria are specifically interpreted and analysed*

Principle 2

- **The use of the criteria depends on the purpose of the evaluation. The criteria should not be applied mechanistically.** *Instead, they should be covered according to the needs of the relevant stakeholders and the context of the evaluation. [...] Data availability, resource constraints, timing, and methodological considerations may also influence how (and whether) a particular criterion is covered*

Operational evaluation



Operational evaluation

In general

Recommended to:

- Do it at an early stage where mitigation and repair still makes sense
- Consider to use external expertise to get proper tools and do regular structured reflection rounds (to support ongoing adjustment of procedures if required)
- Consider project-based evaluations as requirement for large projects (stop and go decision)

Evaluation criteria

Operational evaluation

Criterion	PO5	SPF	OSI
Effectiveness			
Efficiency			
Relevance			
Coherence			
Union added value			

Criteria acc. Interreg Regulation, Art. 35(1)

Europe closer to citizens (PO5)

- a) Materials and expertise from Leader
- b) Project generation is key!
- c) Investment in lasting structures to animate, facilitate, mobilise on the territory

Key evaluation criteria:

- **Effectiveness of the approach**
- **Relevance for / of the strategy**

PO5: Operational aspects

Aspect	Dimension & approach	Method & data
Fostering local and regional involvement, participative approach	<p><i>Effectiveness and relevance:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Outreach, animation and mobilisation actions</i> • <i>Language check</i> • <i>Impact on project generation</i> 	<p><i>Qualitative methods:</i></p> <p><i>Desk research</i></p> <p><i>Interviews with stakeholders</i></p> <p><i>Focus groups</i></p>
Safeguarding contribution to the Strategy	<p><i>Effectiveness and relevance:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Approach to guidance for project generation</i> 	
Capacity-building	<p><i>Capacity-building actions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>for local and regional stakeholders</i> • <i>for Strategy Implementing Bodies</i> 	

Small Project Fund (SPF)

- a) Lean management is key!
- b) Coherence of approaches in case of several SPFs (fair, transparent treatment of applicants / recipients)

Key evaluation criteria:

- **Efficiency & effectiveness of the management system**

SPF: Operational aspects

Aspect	Dimension & approach	Method & data
Interesting new applicants	<p><i>Effectiveness:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Outreach, animation and mobilisation actions</i> • <i>Impact on project generation</i> 	<p><i>Qualitative methods:</i></p> <p><i>Desk research</i></p> <p><i>Interviews with stakeholders</i></p> <p><i>Focus groups</i></p>
Lean management approach	<p><i>Efficiency:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Customer-friendly approach</i> • <i>Quick pathway from idea to decision</i> • <i>Proportionate arrangements for monitoring, check of results and management verification</i> 	

Strategic project (OSI)

- a) Ensuring commitment of a wider group of stakeholders beyond the project partnership
- b) Capacity building
- c) Support measures taken by the programme management

Key evaluation criteria:

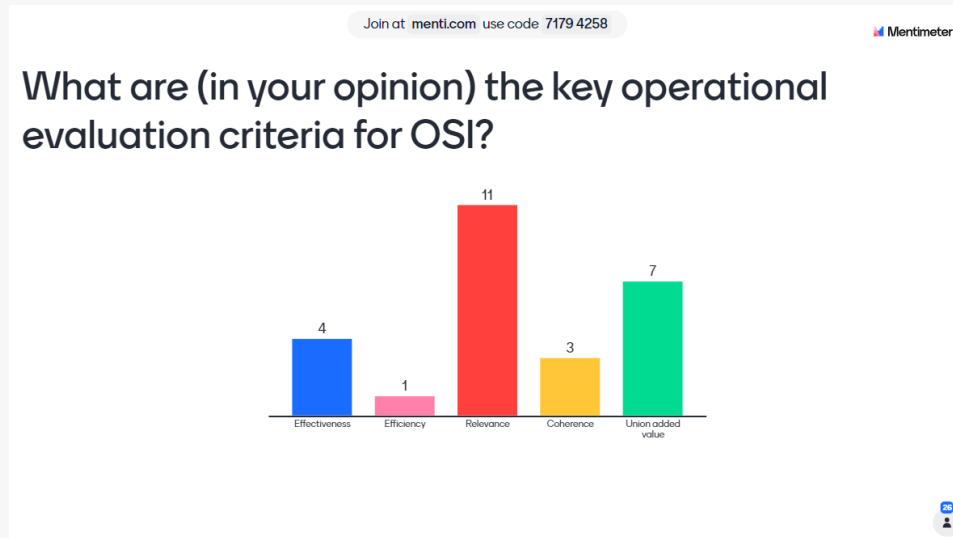
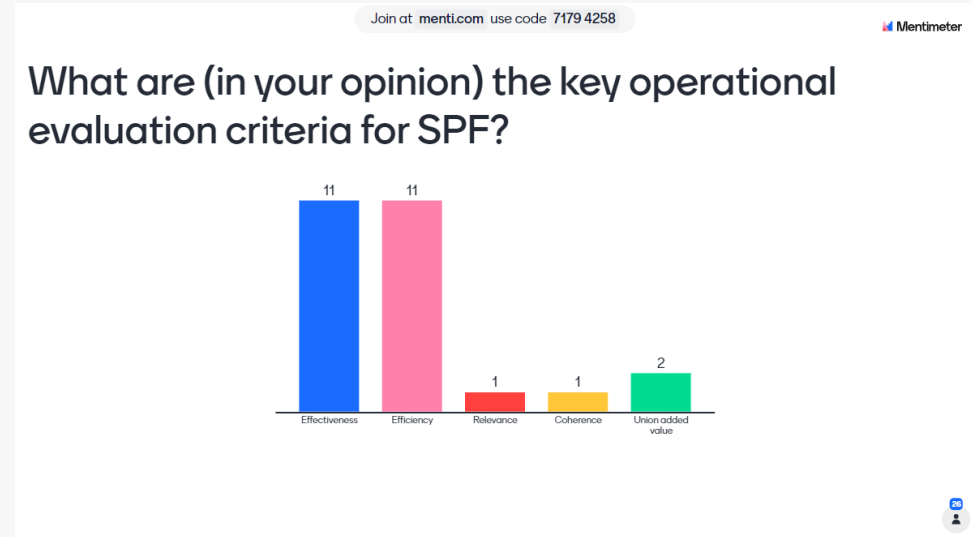
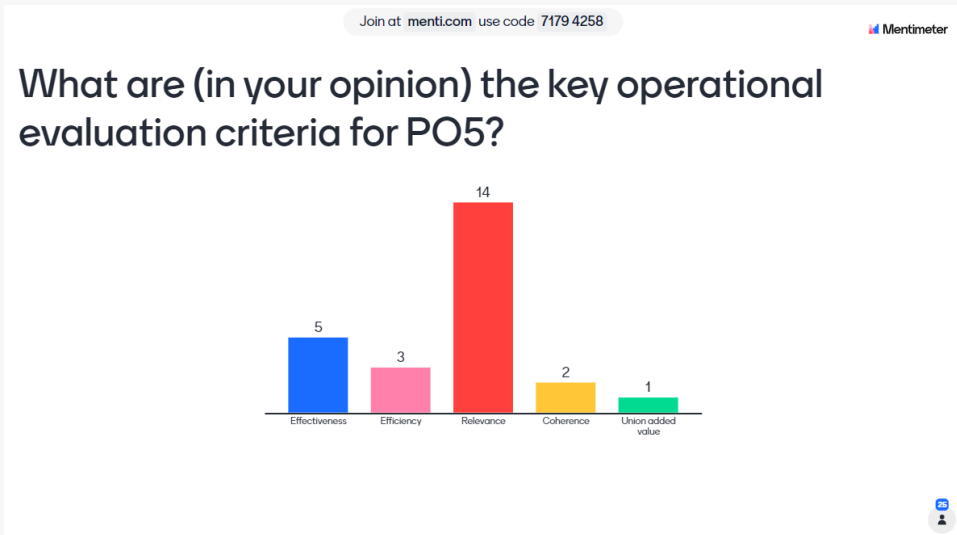
- **Effectiveness of communication, capacity building**
- **Relevance of actions to position project as key element of a wider strategy**

OSI: Operational aspects

Aspect	Dimension & approach	Method & data
Committment	<p><i>Effectiveness:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Outreach, animation and mobilisation actions to wider stakeholders ensuring strategic levers</i> 	<p><i>Qualitative methods:</i></p> <p><i>Desk research</i></p> <p><i>Interviews with stakeholders</i></p> <p><i>Focus groups</i></p>
Capacity-building	<p><i>Effectiveness and relevance:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Capacity-building needs ensuring the strategic dimension</i> 	
Programme support	<p><i>Effectiveness:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Accompanying measures in terms of communication</i> 	

Audience voice

Evaluation criteria - Operational evaluation



Evaluation criteria

Operational evaluation

Criterion	PO5	SPF	OSI
Effectiveness	X	X	X
Efficiency		X	
Relevance	X		
Coherence		X if several	
Union added value			

Criteria acc. Interreg Regulation, Art. 35(1)

! Please note that there is no universally correct or incorrect method for assessing the criteria related to PO5, SPF, OSI during the evaluation. This simply represents our deliberation on the matter.

Impact evaluation

Impact

What difference does the intervention make?

The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.

Impact addresses the ultimate significance and potentially transformative effects of the intervention. It seeks to identify social, environmental and economic effects of the intervention that are longer term or broader in scope than those already captured under the effectiveness criterion. Beyond the immediate results, this criterion seeks to capture the indirect, secondary and potential consequences of the intervention. It does so by examining the holistic and enduring changes in systems or norms, and potential effects on people's well-being, human rights, gender equality, and the environment.

Impact: Exemplary questions

- *Has the intervention caused a significant change in the lives of the intended target groups?*
- *How did the intervention cause higher-level effects (such as changes in norms or systems)?*
- *Did all the intended target groups, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, benefit equally from the intervention?*
- *Is the intervention transformative – does it create enduring changes in norms – including gender norms – and systems, whether intended or not?*
- *Is the intervention leading to other changes, including “scalable” or “replicable” results?*
- *How will the intervention contribute to changing society for the better?*



Impact evaluation In general

Recommended to:

- Consider results from 2014-2020 period (similar projects, evaluation results) – use model impact pathways
- Start working on impact pathways early
- Integrate capitalisation dimension into evaluation work

Evaluation criteria

Impact evaluation

Criterion	PO5	SPF	OSI
Effectiveness			
Efficiency			
Relevance			
Coherence			
Union added value			
<i>Sustainability</i>			

(X) = less important

X! = very important

Europe closer to citizens (PO5)

- a) Impact along progress in strategy implementation
- b) Coherence with the strategy and integrated approach
- c) Achievements in building lasting cross-border structures

Key evaluation criteria:

- **Relevance + effectiveness**
- **Coherence**
- **Sustainability**

Small Project Fund (SPF)

- a) Visibility on the ground; diversity of projects and recipients
- b) Achievements in terms of outreach (new recipients, number of participants)
- c) Achievements along specific targets (if existing)
- d) Efficiency review (ideally client feedback)

Key evaluation criteria:

- **Relevance + effectiveness**
- **Union added value** (civic society involvement in CBC matters, visibility on the ground in border regions, work on CB obstacles etc.)

Strategic project (OSI)

- a) All targets met? (i.e. immediate results and (contribution to) wider strategic objectives)?
- b) Clear impact along wider EU priorities (e.g. preservation of nature and containment of risks, support to candidate countries, synergies for public services across border)
- c) Sustainable building block triggering further developments

Key evaluation criteria:

- **Relevance + effectiveness**
- **Sustainability**
- **Union added value** (contribution to wider (EU) strategic frameworks, clear added value of CBC, TNC related to subject)

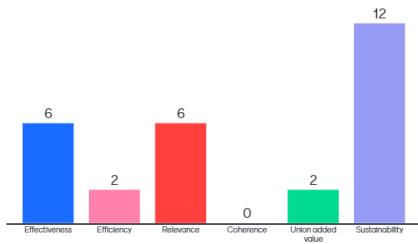
Audience voice

Evaluation criteria - Impact evaluation

Join at menti.com use code 7179 4258

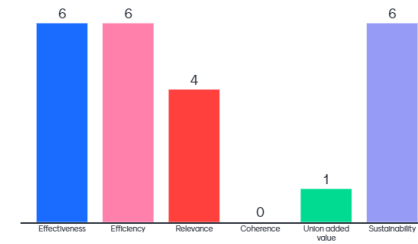
Mentimeter

What are (in your opinion) the key impact evaluation criteria for PO5?

Join at menti.com use code 7179 4258

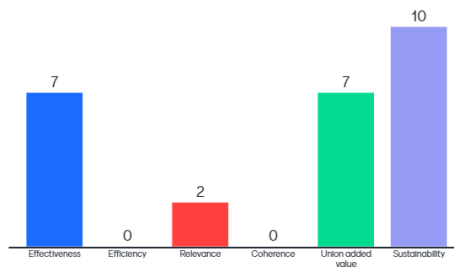
Mentimeter

What are (in your opinion) the key impact evaluation criteria for SPF?

Join at menti.com use code 7179 4258

Mentimeter

What are (in your opinion) the key impact evaluation criteria for OSI?



Evaluation criteria

Impact evaluation

Criterion	PO5	SPF	OSI
Effectiveness	X	X	X
Efficiency		(X)	
Relevance	X!	X	X
Coherence	X!		(X)
Union added value	(X)	X	X!
<i>Sustainability</i>	X!		X!

(X) = less important X! = very important

! Please note that there is no universally correct or incorrect method for assessing the criteria related to PO5, SPF, OSI during the evaluation. This simply represents our deliberation on the matter.

Brainstorm in Breakout

Group work on PO5, SPF, OSI

Let's share:

- a) Questions
- b) Concerns
- c) Ideas for approaches, for evaluation questions etc.

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PO5: Discussion points – 1/2

General considerations

- *Operational evaluation could be important as „quality control“ if procedures are suitable e.g. for an effective and inclusive participatory approach*
- *Mid-term evaluation related to performance (along the strategy and programme funds) is important for programme management to take an eventual decision: if the performance is lagging part of or the funds allocated to (one) strategy might be redirected to other Strategies (If several) or to another PO. This might also be anchored in the contract with the Strategy Implementing Body*

PO5: Discussion points – 2/2

Interreg RO-BG

- *The programme plans to do an ex-ante evaluation of the Strategy prior to the approval of the Strategy in the MC; it is planned as in-house evaluation done by MA/JS*
- *Key points in an ex-ante evaluation could be relevance of the strategy related to the needs of the territory; coherence and consistency. Coherence might be considered having two dimensions:*
 - *external dimension - i.e. coherence with programme and other funding sources and*
 - *an internal one, i.e. synergies in the sense of a multi-sectoral approach*

Evaluation specials

Small Project Fund (SPF)



- *What should be the main aspect in evaluation?*
- *What is the level of detail for follow up on small projects within an SPF?*
- *How to evaluate the impact of an SPF?*
- *Evaluation of several SPF's in one programme*

Operation of strategic importance (OSI) - Main discussion points

- Many Interreg programmes have just begun to explore ideas for evaluation of OSI(s);
- Some of the programmes have already made arrangements to incorporate OSI analysis/evaluation into their impact assessment, such as in the case of the Baltic Sea Region programme (OSI focuses on capacity building across all the three priorities);
- Some programmes consider to include criteria to evaluate OSI(s) during the operational evaluation with a focus on effectiveness and efficiency;
- It could be of interest to integrate evaluation criteria related to OSI(s) with criteria related to communication and visibility. For instance, by exploring how OSI(s) functions as a flagship by examining the quality of procedures and processes related to communication objectives.

Upcoming evaluation events

**Cross-
programme
evaluation**

**Update of the
methodology
paper**

**Evaluation
Training
programme**

Wishes???

Upcoming events

SPF, OSI, PO5

SPF

Examples

Online, 9Nov

OSI

Climate resilience of
infrastructure

Online, Oct/Nov

PO5

example AT-Bavaria

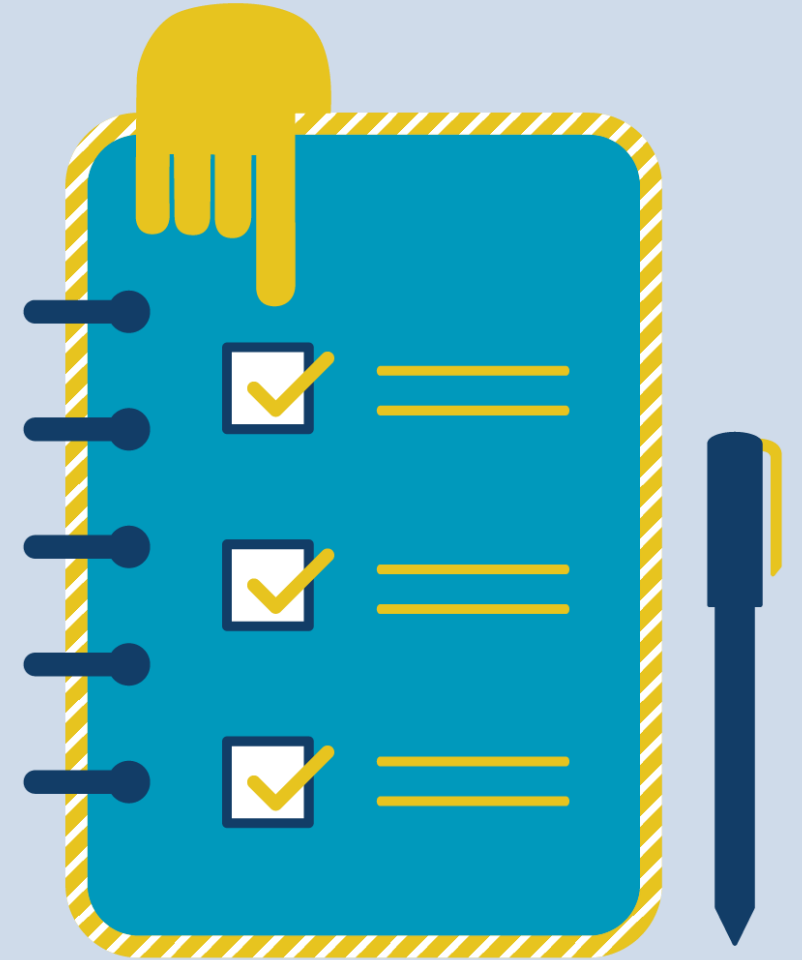
Online, Oct/Nov

Wishes???

Evaluation survey

Please fill in our evaluation survey.

Thank you very much in advance!



Cooperation **works**

All materials will be available on:

Interact connections / MC community