Q&A: Horizontal principles 2021-27

Summary of the Interact event on horizontal principles (December 2, 2021)

Horizontal issues have become increasingly important in the period 2021-27. Everyone agrees to the principles but in practice, it turns out challenging to develop pragmatic and efficient pathways for a visible integration of the principles in the programme and project life cycles.

In close cooperation with colleagues from DG Regio we went through the horizontal principles and issues to support your final steps in programming.

*[**Disclaimer**: This document has been prepared by Interact following discussions with the colleagues of DG Regio. this is not an official document of the European Commission or an official position of the EC.]*

Contents

1. EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, gender equality, non-discrimination including accessibility, sustainable development

Presentation and video by Maeva Roulette (DG EMPL)

Q: How should the programmes differentiate between different legal texts in the Interreg programme template?

A: For the IP the source of the obligation doesn't matter. I does not matter whether it's on the basis of article 22.2 of the Interreg regulation or on the basis of article 9 in the CPR: we don't ask you to include such reference. We just ask you to tell us how you will check, or how you will ensure the compliance with this horizontal principle in your programme.

Q: Would Interact organise a training on the UN Sustainable Development Goals?

A: Yes, we will do so!

Q: The inclusion of the requirements presented today, for the programmes already designed, means a revision of the whole document, how to effectively secure it?

A: It is clear that the statements in response to the horizontal requirements can be concise and short. In very technical terms referring to the character limits of the IP template and SFC: It is not possible to expand the number of characters in the text fields.

2. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA); Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) principle; Contribution to climate and biodiversity objectives

Presentation and video by Máté Tas (DG Regio)

Q: 30% climate contribution target of the ERDF - at programme or at Member State level?

A: The 30% climate target is for the ERDF as a whole, so at fund level. In addition, a climate contribution target needs to be established for each Member State: in operational terms, we request from each Member State that they dedicate at least 30% of their ERDF allocation to climate objectives. However, when it comes to Interreg programmes, we cannot refer to the level of Member State.

For Interreg, we will check it programme by programme. In line with the overall target for the ERDF, we expect Interreg programmes to aim for a climate target contribution of 30%. In case the climate related expenditure target is not reached at programme level (i.e. 30% for ERDF), it should be justified.

This is valid also for Interreg programmes with external borders, which are co-financed also by other external financing instruments, as the 30% climate target is applicable to the total amount of expenditure from the overall Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-27.

Q: Is an additional chapter within SEA on the DNSH compliance sufficient to meet the EC requirement or is the specific assessment using part 1 and part 2 of the RRF technical guidance checklist still required?

A: If an additional chapter of the SEA is used to demonstrate and to evidence the DNSH compliance, this should include specific considerations on how the DNSH principle was complied with, in the light of the information and assessment under the SEA report. As in all other cases, the assessment shall be carried out at the level of types of actions in the programme. In this case there is no need to follow part 1 and part 2 of the RRF technical guidance checklist. Statement in the programme, **fourth option**: "The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle, since they have been assessed as compatible according to Member State's methodology." (For Interreg this can refer to a methodology of one of the participating Member States.)

Q: How to assess if the actions are compatible with the DNSH principle? The four options presented are not very adapted to Interreg programmes.

A: Information on how to carry out the DNSH assessment is set out in a Commission explanatory note (available at Interact | cooperation works | Horizontal principles in 2021-27 (interact-eu.net). Some of the options proposed in the note may indeed not be expected to be widely used for Interreg progammes, while others may correspond better to the types of actions in many Interreg programmes.

As mentioned in the explanatory note, we recommend to follow the approach taken under the RRF.

The methodology in the RRF DNSH technical guidance is a two-step approach: (1) screening, (2) substantive assessment. Step 1 corresponds to Part 1 of the checklist provided in the technical guidance, filtering the six environmental objectives to identify those that require a substantive assessment. Step 2 corresponds to Part 2 of the checklist, providing a substantive DNSH assessment for those environmental objectives that require it (following the results of the screening).

- For “soft” actions (e.g. actions contributing to ISO 1) where the RRF approach is followed, the screening (step 1 in the RRF guidance) is likely provide the result that no substantive assessment is necessary. Short justification necessary why no substantive assessment is necessary (i.e. by filling Part 1 of the checklist). Statement in the programme, first option: “The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle, since they are not expected to have any significant negative environmental impact due to their nature.” (If another assessment methodology is followed (not the RRF one), it also needs to state the reasons justifying the choice of this statement in the programme.)
- This does not apply automatically to these types of action, the screening has to be carried out, and its results will determine the way to proceed. If step 1 results in a need to go on to step 2, the programme should fill Part 2 of the checklist (if the RRF approach is followed). Statement in the programme, third option: “The types of actions have been assessed as compatible with the DNSH principle, since they have been assessed as compatible under the RRF DNSH technical guidance.”

With regard to the second option (type of action already assessed compatible under the RRF), note also that for Interreg it can be sufficient that this assessment has been carried out for only one of the participating Member States.

With regard to the fourth option (use of Member State’s methodology), for Interreg this can refer to a methodology of one of the participating Member States.

Interreg programmes with neighbourhood countries (Interreg Cross-Border Cooperation programmes between Member States and neighbourhood countries – NEXT; Interreg Transnational programmes with neighbourhood countries) or third countries (Interreg programmes between Outermost Regions and third countries), instead of any of the four options mentioned above, can include the following sentence in section 2.1.2 of the Interreg programme:

“The objectives of the programme take into account the “do no significant harm” principle.”

As the EU law and the related principles are not applicable to these countries, if not established in a specific agreement, this sentence does not oblige the programmes to make the assessment. However, at the same time it is in line with Art. 9(4) CPR, as it states that “The objectives of the Funds shall be pursued in line with the objective of promoting sustainable development as set out in Article 11 TFEU, taking into account the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement and the "do no significant harm" principle”.

Because of the same reasoning, this option is NOT applicable to Interreg programmes with enlargement countries (Interreg IPA Cross-Border Cooperation programmes between Member States and enlargement countries; Interreg IPA Transnational programmes with enlargement countries, Interreg IPA Interregional programme with enlargement countries). Actions under IPA III should be consistent with the principle of ‘do no harm’ and should comply with Union taxonomy to the extent possible, in particular to ensure the sustainability of investments in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

Q: What does it mean to “document” the DNSH assessment? What document is proof for the EC in this sense?

A: We emphasize the fact that the assessment needs to be documented as we except that the Commission will be frequently asked how the principle is applied under EU Cohesion Policy.

If the programme only includes the related statements, it may seem to be sufficient to adopt the programme.

We assume that this principle will become even more prominent in the future. We can expect close attention on the subject, especially from the European Parliament and the European Court of Auditors. Thus, a sound documentation is of utmost importance and it should be developed during the programming stage. It allows demonstrating at a later stage that the DNSH principle was taken into account.

We recommend to follow the approach taken under the RRF. For the time being, this is the only methodologically sound and consistent approach we have seen and we know that it works. Nevertheless, programmes are free to apply another methodology which is compatible with the approach in the RRF guidance, and thus draft alternative documentation. See also the answers to the DNSH-related questions above.

Q: As regards biodiversity: How will this be looked at when analysing the programmes? Is there a "threshold" that will lead to refuse the programme?

A: While there is no specific benchmark or target at individual programme level, the programme is expected to indicate how it intends to address the ambition set in recital 11 of the CPR. We expect the programme to provide information on the programme's contribution to biodiversity objectives, i.e. percentage share based on the tracking methodology together with a brief comment. In particular, if there is no contribution to biodiversity or only very limited contribution, it should be briefly explained why.

This is valid also for Interreg programmes with external borders, which are co-financed also by other external financing instruments, as the ambition is set for the overall Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-27.

One of the pertinent questions was: What if an Interreg programme does not invest under specific objective 2.7 (since intervention fields 78, 79, 80, which would generally fall under that SO, will likely count as 100% contribution)? It is very likely that we will have programmes like that. Obviously, those Interreg programmes will have a lower contribution to the biodiversity objectives. The contribution to biodiversity is not a target, it is an ambition and it refers to the whole EU budget. Many programmes are contributing significantly to it. Other programmes may have a different profile and different priorities. We will be flexible at programme level.

As a more general comment, the Interreg programmes as a whole made an important contribution to biodiversity objectives in 2014-2020 and we expect this to be the case also in 2021-2027.

Q: When will the biodiversity coefficients per intervention fields 2021-20217 be ready?

A: The climate coefficients are in the CPR in Annex 1. Biodiversity coefficients are not yet finalized. However, the current draft document on biodiversity coefficients can be shared with programming authorities (available at Interact | cooperation works | Horizontal principles in 2021-27 (interact-eu.net).

Q: If a programme has elaborated an SEA providing a lot of information, can the MA/JS do the assessment along the types of actions internally?

A: That would be perfectly fine for us. There is no specific requirement that this would require external expertise. The quality of the assessment is decisive.

Q: What to do if the SEA is not ready upon programme submission?

A: When an SEA has been carried out, the environmental report in accordance with Directive 2001/42/EC (SEA) should be prepared and published. In order to assess the compliance with the SEA Directive, the Commission will need the following information:

- The non-technical summary of the information provided in the environmental report, as foreseen by Annex I(j) of the Directive;
- Information on the consultations with the public and the environmental authorities concerned (Article 6 of the Directive);
- The description of the measures decided concerning monitoring foreseen in Articles 9(1)(c) and 10 (monitoring);
- The final statement summarizing how environmental considerations and the opinions expressed were taken into account in the final decision. Remark: If the final statement required under Article 9(1) is not ready, the programme can provide a summary of how the environmental considerations and opinions have been taken into account pending the publication/issuance of the statement.

When only a screening procedure has been carried out, concluding that there is no need for an SEA, the related documents should be transmitted to the Commission. Note also that if the screening procedure concludes that no SEA is necessary, the reasons for this should be made public.

During the formal dialogue, the Commission could only in exceptional cases engage in assessing an incomplete programming file including only draft SEA. In any case, the programme amended in line with the Commission observations should not be re-submitted to the Commission before the SEA is finalised, as the Commission cannot proceed with the adoption process with this element missing.

Q: What requirements must an economic activity meet in order to be considered environmentally sustainable according to the Taxonomy Regulation?

A: It is important to emphasize that the technical screening criteria in the delegated acts of the Taxonomy Regulation are not applicable to Cohesion Policy. Those delegated acts consist of several hundred pages including explicit criteria for when an economic activity can qualify as sustainable. It is not required to follow those criteria for Cohesion Policy investments. The simple reason for that is that the reference to the DNSH principle in the Cohesion Policy context refers specifically to Article 17 of the Taxonomy Regulation on significant harm to environmental objectives, but not to the delegated acts. Therefore, the principle has to be understood or applied in its broader context, following only the definition of the six objectives according to the DNSH principle.

3. New European Bauhaus (NEB)

Presentation and video by Sylwia Borkowska (DG Regio)

Q: What is the difference between addressing the sustainable development under the 2030 sustainable development Agenda, UN goals and addressing it under Bauhaus?

A: The difference is that the New European Bauhaus (NEB) is about combining all three aspects: it's not only about sustainability, but it also should include citizens or different groups to make the investment and the process inclusive. The third aspect is the aesthetics, so that the sustainable investments also bring a positive experience to their users. The new European Bauhaus movement proposes a new way of delivering sustainable development bringing the positive experience, closer to citizens. It should be affordable, accessible and co-created with people.

Q: How can the four thematic axes of the Bauhaus be transposed into selection criteria, considering their wide scope and the limited budget of Interreg projects?

A: There is no robust legal obligation, but the Commission is very keen to see that all programmes at least consider the invitation to include Bauhaus values in their activities. We encourage you to learn about the New European Bauhaus to consider the relevance of it values for your programmes. The programmes can get inspiration from all sorts of sources outlined in the presentation.

Interreg programmes are encouraged to include Bauhaus, wherever it makes sense e.g. to mention it in the general development strategy, within particular objectives, to add the selection criteria that are related to the Bauhaus or to launch dedicated calls. It all depends on the type and scope of the intervention the programmes are planning, e.g. sometimes it can be easily applicable with projects, which are sustainable, aesthetic and inclusive. We expect a brief reference in the programmes and explanations how the programmes can contribute to the Bauhaus values. However, it is not necessary to include selection criteria related to all of the thematic axes into every programme.

Q: How is the selection process for the prizes organised?

A: At the moment the Prizes are only open for the internal Interreg programmes, but not open to Interreg IPA and Interreg NEXT programmes. We hope that in 2023 it will be different.

Q: Should the Interreg programmes with external component consider as well NEB?

A: Talking about the projects that will be financed by the next generation of external programmes you should definitely consider the Bauhaus initiative. It is obviously not always applicable, but to the extent possible, we would encourage you to include the Bauhaus dimension in your future calls/programmes.

4. E-cohesion

Presentation and video by Ester Hortet Tarroja (DG Regio)

Q: Electronic signature should be mandatory also for external partners located outside EU?

A: Article 69 (8) CPR 2021-2027 sets the obligation for Member states to ensure that all exchanges of information between beneficiaries and the programme authorities are carried out by means of electronic data exchange systems in accordance with Annex XIV of the same Regulation. Annex XIV.2 provides the responsibilities of programme authorities regarding the modalities for transmission of documents and data for all exchanges and these responsibilities include ensuring the use of electronic signature compatible with one of the three types of electronic signature defined by Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council (1)

As Article 69(8) refers to the responsibilities (obligations) of the managing authorities and Annex XIV.2 requires that the Managing authorities foresee the use of one of the three types of electronic signatures, these provisions are fully applicable to programmes on the external borders (Interreg NEXT and IPA).

On e-signature:

DG CONNECT confirms that there are various types of electronic signatures and numerous standards related to the formats of these signatures. This is why the eIDAS Regulation has set out certain rules regarding advanced electronic signatures in public services and so-called qualified electronic signatures.

- Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market and repealing Directive 1999/93/EC - EUR-Lex - 32014R0910 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)

However, both advanced electronic signatures and qualified electronic signatures rely on the availability of standards. eIDAS created standards for the use of electronic signatures so that they could be used in a secure manner when conducting business online, such as an electronic fund transfer or official business across borders with EU Member States.[2] The advanced electronic signature is one of the standards outlined in eIDAS.

For an electronic signature to be considered as advanced, it must meet several requirements:

- The signatory can be uniquely identified and linked to the signature
- The signatory must have sole control of the signature creation data (typically a private key) that was used to create the electronic signature
- The signature must be capable of identifying if its accompanying data has been tampered with after the message was signed
- In the event that the accompanying data has been changed, the signature must be invalidated

Advanced electronic signatures that are compliant with eIDAS may be technically implemented through the Ades Baseline Profiles that have been developed by the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI).

In cases related online public services, Article 27 of the eIDAS Regulation says that:

1. If a Member State requires an advanced electronic signature to use an online service offered by, or on behalf of, a public sector body, that Member State shall recognise advanced electronic signatures, advanced electronic signatures based on a qualified certificate for electronic signatures, and qualified electronic signatures in at least the formats or using methods defined in the implementing acts referred to in paragraph 5.
2. If a Member State requires an advanced electronic signature based on a qualified certificate to use an online service offered by, or on behalf of, a public sector body, that Member State shall recognise advanced electronic signatures based on a qualified certificate and qualified electronic signatures in at least the formats or using methods defined in the implementing acts referred to in paragraph 5.
3. Member States shall not request for cross-border use in an online service offered by a public sector body an electronic signature at a higher security level than the qualified electronic signature.
4. The Commission may, by means of implementing acts, establish reference numbers of standards for advanced electronic signatures. Compliance with the requirements for advanced electronic signatures referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article and in Article 26 shall be presumed when an advanced electronic signature meets those standards. Those implementing acts shall be adopted in accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 48(2).

See also the implementing act referred to in 27.4: Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2015/1506 of 8 September 2015 laying down specifications relating to formats of advanced electronic signatures and advanced seals to be recognised by public sector bodies pursuant to Articles 27(5) and 37(5) of Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market

The obvious challenge is that the eIDAS Regulation does not mandate the use of electronic signatures and formats in other cases then referred to above.

Q: Is it possible to have two separate monitoring systems for different types of projects?

A: There should be one system as source for electronic data exchange with the Commission as required by the Regulation. The use of two monitoring systems implies additional work since data consistency between the systems is required.

Q: Has the eMS already been evaluated?

A: The eMS system will be included as one of the systems to be analysed in the evaluation of e-cohesion that the Commission services are undertaking. When the evaluation will be finalized, it will be published on line so all interested persons can have access

Q: If we are going to use JeMS - are we fulfilling the e-cohesion requirements?

A: Programme authorities are invited to provide information to the Commission services on two questions regarding e-cohesion when presenting their draft 2021-2027 operational programmes: a) 1. Has the programme set up a system to ensure that all exchanges are carried out between beneficiaries and all the programme authorities by means of electronic data exchange in accordance with Annex XIV of the CPR 2021-2027 ?2. Is the electronic data exchange system set between beneficiaries and all the programme authorities fully functional?

According to Interact secretariat, JeMS is fulfilling clearly the requirements of Annex XIV of the CPR as otherwise, there would be no point in developing JeMS as an overarching monitoring system, inviting all Interreg programmes to use it. In any case, programme authorities will have to provide information to the two above-mentioned questions when submitting their programmes.

5. Public procurement

Presentation and video by Ieva Cerniute (DG Regio)

Q: In Interreg programmes, the beneficiary used to follow national rules on public procurements, how to integrate strategic public procurement in such type of programmes?

A: The EU 2014 directives on public procurement opened wider opportunities for the integration of strategic elements into public procurement process. While transposing these directives member states adjusted national public procurement legal frameworks accordingly.

Therefore, following national public procurement laws, it should be possible for the beneficiaries to incorporate strategic elements of public procurement. There should be no legal obstacles, nevertheless in some situations we should still overcome the reluctance to change the usual practices.

Q: Green procurement in this sense is recommended to be part of the programme rules and become a formal requirement?

A: Green public procurement is recommended to be a part of the programmes. Many member states developed National Action Plans on Green Public Procurement (NAPs on GPP) including ambitious aims for the use of green public procurement, therefore our programmes and our investments could contribute to achievement of those aims.

Q: What about procurements in Interreg NEXT programmes (e.g. with Russia)?

A: Where there is a possibility for the economically most advantageous tender, there is a possibility to include sustainability criteria, innovation incentives and similar features. The most important pre-condition is the step before procuring -when we reflect on the actual needs, technical specifications and the most adequate procurement procedure. Even in countries with no clear legal framework on GPP careful ex-ante needs assessment and sound procedures will help to mitigate the overall effect on the environment.

Article 58 of Interreg Regulation regulates the application of procurement rules in non-EU countries. It specifies that the applicable rules will be: 1) for public beneficiaries coming from non-EU countries providing co-financing to the Managing Authority there will be an option to use national rules if they are in line with general principles of public procurement; 2) in other cases concerning non-EU beneficiaries the rules will be defined in the Financing Agreements, based on the relevant provisions of Financial Regulation.

Q: Public procurement is defined at the national level – how can Interreg influence at this level?

A: True, public procurement legal framework is defined at national level. Nevertheless, it is implemented by the contracting authorities – this means, by the beneficiaries and the MAs, which are mostly public institutions. Therefore, public procurement is a powerful tool in their hands that can strategically be used for economic as well as wider environmental and social policy purposes.

Q: Private partners do not have to comply with public procurement: why the Managing Authorities are requested to act only on public procurement and not on procurement in general?

A: That is correct. Nevertheless, for any entity it is useful to buy the better products or services in a smarter way. Fundamental issues such as highlighting economy and efficiency in the long run could be stressed as overarching principles. Then purchases backed up by a life-cycle-cost-analysis will become the smarter approach - in particular for private partners who often provide significant own contributions. That is the intended shift of paradigm: It should become self-evident to act like this.

Q: How to encourage beneficiaries to use strategic public procurement? If even green procurement is not mandatory ....

A: Let's raise the awareness, let's showcase the good examples of the neighbours, of the other beneficiaries in a similar situation. Let's demonstrate that it's worth doing it since it is more efficient, cost-effective, gives more users' satisfaction and contributes to a positive change in the economy.

Q: We need EC support in talking with Audit Authorities (AA).

A: If you need our support, please contact us and we will support you. If you think that some platform to speak with audit authorities, be it Interact or another interlocutor would be useful - we are ready to help you.

Q: The fulfilment of those requirements are checked at national level, how to ensure that procurement is done strategically?

A: It depends on how you monitor your public procurement processes at the level of beneficiary. In some countries, the managing authorities are doing ex-ante checks, and then there are ex-post controls in the framework of the management verification. In other countries, there is no ex-ante controls and it is mostly up to the beneficiaries to launch and run public procurement procedures. Nevertheless, when monitoring implementation of the project and/or public procurement, it is important to raise the awareness asking right questions. In particular during the ex-ante controls: ask about the tender specifications, expected quality of the final product, considerations of innovative, sustainable or/and social elements of the product/services and cost-efficiency. It is more about promotion, it's more about convincing people that it's worth doing for their own benefit, for the quality of their own final product or service.

Q: If is not mandatory how we can use it in the evaluation grids for projects?

A: It is not mandatory, however preferable, therefore there are different options how to promote it – one of them, for example, is giving additional points for those projects who take strategic procurement into account. This can be be highlighted in the guidance for applicants, etc.

Q: Strengthening the capacity: Does it mean actions towards MA and beneficiaries including guidance? Is there an adaptation period?

A: Yes, it means capacity at all levels, showcasing good examples and making beneficiaries aware on how it can work. For example we have 71 cases of how socially responsible criteria were integrated in procurements. There are number of ideas for innovation incentives and green public procurement. (https://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/case_group_en.htm)

It might be good to deepen the knowledge about good practices of the peers. One example is the city of Harlem working a lot with circular and innovative procurements. (https://procuraplus.org/public-authorities/haarlem/)

For further reading, please find below the link to the Commission's Action Plan on Public Procurement:
https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/how/improving-investment/public-procurement/

Q: How do we reconcile "restrictive criteria" with strategic public procurement criteria not being mandatory from the legal perspective?

A: There should be a proper justification explaining the rationale behind the policy choice. Strategic procurement does not "automatically" means "restrictive criteria", it is rather encouraging bidders to compete (proposals being evaluated) on the aspects that are important for the policy, rather than on the price criteria only.

6. Durability of results

Presentation by Witold Willak (DG Regio)

Q: Should durability be included in the selection of projects and be followed in the evaluation procedure?

A: This will depend on the type of operations (public/private) and their risk profile. Durability is desirable but we have to be careful not to overregulate the system and to actually prevent innovative projects from taking place. You have to look at the specific intervention logic, what kind of effects you intend to generate and then you have to adjust the weight of durability in your criteria. You can of course propose the selection criteria favouring projects providing effects at a later stage (in the longer term), meaning that in the end the overall benefits of the projects will be larger than normally expected within the programme time horizon. For each type of action you need a good business case and understanding of the intervention logic to develop your approach.

For productive investments you have a choice to shorten the durability period to 3 years; but this should be considered taking into account the type of support offered in the programme, type of recipients (microenterprises, or rather medium size) etc. Ideally, we would like to see this justification if the shortening of durability period is applied in line with the CPR.

We should not ask the beneficiary for a simple statement that your project is going to be durable, but rather to have this in mind while analysing various elements that are supposed to be provided anyway, like for instance the fact that projects have to be financially sustainable. You need to prove that you have the financial resources to cover the operating cost of the project in the long run. It is not a single criterion. There are several other aspects to be considered when it comes to durability: for example, you have to show that infrastructure is resilient to climate change, that projects partnerships are able to induce lasting policy changes in soft projects etc.

In short: it is not a simple one-tick criterion but it is a comprehensive perspective taking various elements into account. This is the angle you should consider when you are selecting projects for EU financing.

7. Further reading

EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, gender equality, non-discrimination including accessibility, sustainable development

- Commission Notice, Guidance on ensuring the respect for the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union when implementing the European Structural and Investment Funds ('ESI Funds') (2016/C 269/01)
  https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/esiflegislation/display/ESIFLEG/GN0043+-+Guidance+on+ensuring+the+respect+for+the+Charter+of+Fundamental+Rights+of+the+European+Union+when+implementing+the+ESIF

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA); Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) principle; Contribution to climate and biodiversity objectives

- Commission explanatory note, Application of the "Do No Significant Harm Principle under Cohesion Policy" - European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund Plus, Cohesion Fund, Just Transition Fund, EGESIF_21-0025-00 27/09/2021
- Commission Notice, Technical guidance on the application of "do no significant harm" under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) Regulation, Brussels, 12.2.2021, C(2021) 1054 final
  https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/meetings/consult?lang=en&meetingId=29018&fromExpertGroups=true

E-cohesion, public procurement

- Public Procurement Guidance for Practitioners (2018)
  https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/guidelines/2018/public-procurement-guidance-for-practitioners-2018

Durability of results

- European Court of Auditors (ECA), Special report no 08/2018: EU support for productive investments in businesses - greater focus on durability needed (europa.eu)
  https://eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/DocItem.aspx?did=45388