

# Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme

***September 2023***

***Version 1.0***

## Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary.....	3
2. Evaluation Plan Objectives.....	5
2.1 Introduction – The Programme Context .....	5
2.2 Focus on Evaluations.....	10
3. Evaluation Plan Context .....	12
3.1 Roles and Responsibilities of the Existing Mechanism/Bodies for the Evaluation Process.....	12
3.2 Involvement & Roles of Partners & Stakeholders .....	13
3.3 Independence of Evaluations.....	13
3.4 Training Activities.....	14
3.5 Dissemination & Use of Evaluation Findings .....	15
3.6 Quality Management Strategy .....	15
4. Evaluations.....	17
PART A: Summary and scheduling of evaluations .....	17
4.1 Summary Table .....	17
4.2 Timetable .....	17
PART B: Evaluations’ Analysis.....	18
4.3 Evaluations’ Analysis .....	18
4.4 Evaluations’ Identity Sheets .....	25

## 1. Executive Summary

The current Evaluation Plan relates to **Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme** and it has been prepared by the Managing Authority INTERREG 2021-2027 (Ministerial Decision 3411/16.01.2023, FEK 183/B/18.01.2023), with the support of an External Expert, according to the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 (Interreg Regulation), Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 (Common Provisions Regulation-CPR) and Regulation (EU) 2021/1529 (IPA Regulation).

It has also been based on:

- the SWD (2021) 198 final/08-07-2021 Commission Staff Working Document: «Performance, monitoring and evaluation of the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the Just Transition Fund in 2021-2027»
- the 41662/05-05-2023/EYSSAE and EYSEKT Working Document 4 «Guidelines for Developing the Evaluation Plans of the 2021-2027 Programmes»
- relative documents of the European Commission.

Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme aims in supporting the cross-border regions of Greece and Albania to achieve a smooth and integrated transition to more sustainable economies that can overcome disparities and establish a better cross-border governance.

The Overall Objective of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme is to promote integrated regional development. Through cross-border cooperation, communities located in border areas seek to promote the socioeconomic development of the border area, develop economies of scale and overcome their peripheral positioning. The Programme Strategy emphasizes on specific objectives that can contribute in bridging the gap of regional, social and economic disparities in the Greece-Albania cross-border area and promoting sustainable development.

The EU's Territorial Agenda 2030 underlines the importance of inclusive and sustainable future for all places and people in Europe. Achieving less inequality between regions, better territorial development, transition to climate-neutral and resilient regions, sustainable local economies and sustainable digital and physical connectivity are some of the main orientations provided for the new decade. The EU is committed to deliver results via several strategies focusing on a) digital technology, b) sustainable growth, c) green economy and d) research and innovation.

In order to fulfill all these objectives, Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme is supported by the implementation of **three (3) Priorities**, which are structured into **seven (7) Specific Objectives**. The Programme is co-funded by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) III CBC Fund and by National Funds of the participating countries.

Based on the above, it is proposed that the current Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme should focus:

Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC  
Programme

- on the assessment of the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, coherence, Union added value and impact of the Programme's activities and projects
- on ensuring that the Programme is meeting its objectives and targets
- on ensuring that the Programme is making progress towards its goals
- on the compliance of the Programme with the performance framework
- on the compliance of the Programme with the regulatory framework
- on the preparation for impact assessment
- on improving performance in the implementation of the Programme
- on the specialization or the potential redesign of interventions.

The Evaluation Plan foresees **two (2) Evaluations** in total, one (1) in **2026** and one (1) in **2029**, of a total budget of **70,000 € plus VAT** (or **86,800 € including VAT**), that will be carried out by independent External Experts.

The Managing Authority INTERREG 2021-2027 will be responsible for the coordination and quality management in all phases of the evaluation cycle. The Evaluation Plan and the Evaluations will be published on the Programme website <https://greece-albania.eu>, on the internet and social media, and they will also be presented at various events, in order to reach various stakeholders and the general public. The final evaluation reports will be uploaded to the SFC system as well.

The Evaluation Plan and its amendments, as well as the Evaluations findings will be submitted to the Programme's Monitoring Committee so as to be reviewed and approved.

## 2. Evaluation Plan Objectives

### 2.1 Introduction – The Programme Context

Cross-border cooperation between Greece and Albania has been evolving over the years. The Greece-Albania Programme Area is part of the wider region of the Adriatic-Ionian, spreading from the Ionian Islands in Greece up to the coasts of the Region of Fier in Albania. In comparison to the previous programming period 2014-2020, the eligible cross-border area of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme incorporates the Regional Unit of Kozani from Greece and the Region of Fier from Albania. The inclusion of all four regional units of the Region of Western Macedonia in the eligible programme area contributes to the EU objectives in relation to the establishment of a Just Transition Fund and the Just Transition Plan for the Region of Western Macedonia offering additional supporting tools for transition to a climate-neutral economy and investment in sustainable economic activities. The inclusion of the Region of Fier in the eligible programme area is considered important due to its strategic position in the Adriatic-Ionian corridor, its contribution to the economic activity rates of Albania and its strong historical and cultural presence in the cross-border area.

The Programme area of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme combines a wide variety of geomorphological features. The main characteristics are the extensive coasts, reaching from the north side of Fier to the south of the Regional Unit of Preveza, the insular area of the Ionian islands and the mountain areas in the mainland of the cross-border area.

~~In this new decade EU is setting new goals and instruments in order to lay the foundations for a greener, more digital and more resilient Europe. Recovery and transition are the new concepts that prevail in the programming period 2021-2027, as EU wishes to strengthen its structures and its economic, social and territorial resilience following the damage on growth, societies and businesses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic situation.~~

#### Main joint challenges of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme:

- Demographic trends remain an issue for the Programme area, since both countries are facing a decrease in their population
- In terms of economic development, the total gross labour productivity in the cross-border area is significantly lower than the EU27 average (approximately 25%)
- The Programme area presents low performance levels in the fields of research and innovation
- IT network and connectivity are still weak in the cross-border area, especially for rural areas
- The eligible cross-border area combines a variety of geomorphological features: high mountains, rolling hills and small plains, a long coastal line and a significant number of islands (small and large), rivers, lakes and lagoons
- Regions of the cross-border area are highly vulnerable to the climate change risks, which can also affect their economic activities (agriculture, forestry, tourism)
- Energy efficiency is another common challenge of the Programme area

Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC  
Programme

- Water and waste management
- The geographical features of the cross-border area create challenges arising from territorial fragmentation and discontinuity, as well as difficulties in accessibility
- The Programme area faces high unemployment rates both on total active population and on youths
- Health services are also a field of common challenges and needs
- Educational and vocational training
- Tourism
- Cultural and natural heritage is another territorial asset of the cross-border area, presenting similarities and common challenges when it comes to protection measures, valorization and effective promotion with the scope to strengthen tourism destination branding.

In order to address the above mentioned challenges, Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme Strategy emphasizes on the following **three (3) Policy Objectives**:

**Policy Objective (PO) 2:** A greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable urban mobility;

**Policy Objective (PO) 3:** A more connected Europe by enhancing mobility;

**Policy Objective (PO) 4:** A more social and inclusive Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights;

Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme

Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme is supported by the implementation of **three (3) Priorities**, which are structured into **seven (7) Specific Objectives**:

Priorities & Specific Objectives of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme

Priority	Specific Objective
<b>PRIORITY 1:</b> <b>“Supporting Transition to Greener and More Resilient Cross-border Regions”</b>	<b>RSO 2.4</b> : Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience taking into account ecosystem based approaches
	<b>RSO 2.5</b> : Promoting access to water and sustainable water management
	<b>RSO 2.6</b> : Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy
	<b>RSO 2.7</b> : Enhancing biodiversity, green infrastructure in the urban environment and reducing pollution
<b>PRIORITY 2:</b> <b>“Improving Accessibility in the Cross-border Area”</b>	<b>RSO: 3.2</b> Developing and enhancing sustainable, climate resilient, intelligent and intermodal national, regional and local mobility, including improved access to TEN-T and cross-border mobility
<b>PRIORITY 3:</b> <b>“Fostering Sustainable Cross-border Economic and Social Development”</b>	<b>RSO 4.5</b> : Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care and promoting the transition from institutional to family and community based care
	<b>RSO 4.6</b> : Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation

## Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme

In the framework of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme, cooperation actions at cross-border level are expected to result (according to Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 PROGRAMMING DOCUMENT) in more strengthened capacities and skills in terms of the following (non-exhaustive list):

- Support risk prevention efforts to adapt to the impacts of climate change
- Development of joint solutions in cross-border rural areas, as well as the Ionian Islands, for the improvement of water management and efficient water utilities coverage for local communities
- Foster an efficient use of water resources by citizens, throughout the whole water cycle by promoting water saving and reuse, water-efficient technologies in all sectors, as well as by supporting ecosystem-based measures
- Enhanced addressing of water quantity issues especially in areas dealing with water scarcity, e.g. by supporting hazards prevention and climate-change adaptation measures based on an ecosystem restoration approach in a cross-border context
- Introduction of smart technologies to increase resource efficiency in the water sector and development of cross-border monitoring systems for controlling water supply networks
- Development of joint innovative methodologies and tools for quality monitoring of drinking water and risk prevention in cross-border area
- Design and implement coherent and tailored-made wastewater management plans for improving wastewater treatment in cross-border regions
- Development of cross-border studies and exchange of know-how and technology for wastewater management plants
- Development of joint solutions for water reuse and dealing with water scarcity in the cross-border regions and prevention of water pollution
- Pilot actions on wastewater treatment systems based on environmentally friendly processes
- Integrating climate change aspects into water management strategies on local, regional and cross-border level
- Development of solutions for promoting waste-water re-use for irrigation and measures to increase the water retention capacity of soils and safe water reuse, addressing the challenges caused in sharing of water resources due to climate change
- Joint knowledge development and planning of circular economy solutions
- Building cross-border cooperation networks aimed at waste re-use
- Development and testing of solutions for the separate sorting, storage and treatment of hazardous waste and bio-waste
- Development of circular economy hubs for creating new regional value chains, connecting relevant actors
- Support the promotion of the use of recycled materials as raw materials compliant with the efficiency criteria, compliant with climate adaptations
- Protection and enhancement of natural capital, ecosystems and biodiversity
- Monitoring of biodiversity, genetic sources and protected ecosystems
- Promotion of the use of technologies for environmental protection and preservation



Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme

- Actions for the restoration, protection and efficient management of natural protected areas, with a focus on endangered species
- Support data on natural capital preservation (natural parks, protected and designated areas, etc.)
- Reconstruction of rural and suburban roads in the cross-border area
- Road safety measures in cross-border urban and rural networks, for improving cross-border mobility and reducing accidents rates
- Measures to manage safety risks created in the cross-border road network due to weather conditions and the special geomorphological characteristics of the cross-border area
- Implementation of joint measures and tools (soft actions), including development of cooperation networks for improving accessibility and effectiveness of healthcare and long-term social care services across borders with a focus on vulnerable groups (elderly persons, people with disabilities, population of remote areas, roma, etc.)
- Support of the digitalization in healthcare, including the supply of new and improved equipment for supporting telemedicine services, with a focus on remote and sparsely populated communities of the cross-border area
- Improvement of physical and/or digital accessibility in historical monuments and sites of cultural heritage in the cross-border area, including for remote sites
- Preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, protection and reconstruction of fortresses, museums, archaeological/cultural sites
- Promotion of cross-border cultural initiatives (joint actions for common cultural identity, cultural events, digitalization of cultural content and cultural routes).

### Financing Plan

Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme is co-funded by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) III CBC Fund and by National Funds of the participating countries.

The total financial appropriations per Priority, by Fund and National Contribution, are shown in the following Table:

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Fund</b>	<b>EU Contribution (€)</b>	<b>National Contribution (€)</b>	<b>Total (€)</b>
Priority 1	IPA III CBC	13,085,000.00	3,271,253.00	16,356,253.00
Priority 2	IPA III CBC	3,065,000.00	766,250.00	3,831,250.00
Priority 3	IPA III CBC	10,500,000.00	2,625,000.00	13,125,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>All funds</b>	<b>26,650,000.00</b>	<b>6,662,503.00</b>	<b>33,312,503.00</b>

## 2.2 Focus on Evaluations

The current Evaluation Plan relates to Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme and it has been prepared by the Managing Authority INTERREG 2021-2027 (Ministerial Decision 3411/16.01.2023, FEK 183/B/18.01.2023), with the support of an External Expert, according to the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 (Interreg Regulation), Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 (Common Provisions Regulation-CPR), Regulation (EU) 2021/1529 establishing the Mechanism for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III/IPA III).

It has also been based on:

- the SWD (2021) 198 final/08-07-2021 Commission Staff Working Document: «Performance, monitoring and evaluation of the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the Just Transition Fund in 2021-2027»
- the 41662/05-05-2023/EYSSAE and EYSEKT Working Document 4 «Guidelines for Developing the Evaluation Plans of the 2021-2027 Programmes»
- relative documents of the European Commission.

Also, during the conduct of the Evaluations, the findings and conclusions of the following Evaluations of Interreg IPA CBC Programme Greece - Albania 2014-2020, should be taken into account:

- First evaluation of implementation and impact of the Interreg IPA CBC Programme Greece – Albania 2014-2020 - 5<sup>th</sup> Deliverable: Final Evaluation Report [**May 2019**]
- 4<sup>th</sup> Deliverable: Final Evaluation Report Update of the first evaluation of implementation and impact of the Interreg IPA CBC Programme Greece – Albania 2014-2020 [**April 2021**].

More specifically, the **First evaluation of implementation and impact of the Interreg IPA CBC Programme Greece – Albania 2014-2020 - 5<sup>th</sup> Deliverable: Final Evaluation Report [May 2019]** has identified the following:

- Better structuring and consistency of the applicant's package – tools, such as the Application Form and the Specification of Budget Form
- Reducing the administrative burden for project implementation: there is a number of suggestions for improvement, for example, with extensive management verifications (first level control) to be replaced by risk-based verifications on beneficiary's expenditure
- Harmonization of eligibility rules should be further strengthened
- Needs and benefits to use modern communication tools (e.g. Skype, Webinar software, etc.) should be further explored, live Webinars to better advice applicants on a daily basis in a resource-efficient manner. Concerning social media, an analysis of target groups could be done in order to understand their most preferred social media tools to keep informed

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- The MA/JS should organise Info Days more often in accordance with the recognised needs to efficiently and effectively address identified issues also in the programme implementation.

The **4<sup>th</sup> Deliverable: Final Evaluation Report Update of the first evaluation of implementation and impact of the Interreg IPA CBC Programme Greece – Albania 2014-2020 [April 2021]** has identified the following:

- there is some room for optimizing the tools and procedures of the Programme, as well as the communication tools and those that can ensure a continuous and consistent workflow
- high level of satisfaction was expressed in relation to the support provided by MA/JS during the preparation of the proposals
- projects that met the required conditions were selected, as the application selection procedures and the information provided to the JMC members were appropriate
- there were problems mainly due to bureaucratic procedures and also delays due to the fact that the Albanian beneficiaries had to pay part of the pre-financing with their own resources, while another important reason for delays in the timely implementation of some of the planned actions is due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic effects
- the beneficiaries throughout the implementation and administration of the projects express high satisfaction with their cooperation with JS, even expressing satisfaction with the adequacy of the guidelines for the submission of the progress report
- in order to submit verification requests, there appears a need to improve the procedures provided, even though the MA has already established specific flexibility rules for verifications while through the COVID-19 pandemic situation
- need for increased use of manuals and guides during the implementation of the projects, as well as the information provided through the info-days.

From all of the above, it appears that the current Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme should focus:

- on the assessment of the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, coherence, Union added value and impact of the Programme's activities and projects
- on ensuring that the Programme is meeting its objectives and targets
- on ensuring that the Programme is making progress towards its goals
- on the compliance of the Programme with the performance framework
- on the compliance of the Programme with the regulatory framework
- on the preparation for impact assessment
- on improving performance in the implementation of the Programme
- on the specialization or the potential redesign of interventions.

### 3. Evaluation Plan Context

#### 3.1 Roles and Responsibilities of the Existing Mechanism/Bodies for the Evaluation Process

According to the provisions of:

- the Greek Ministerial Decision 3411/16.01.2023, FEK 183/B/18.01.2023
- Law 4914/2022 (FEK A 61/21.3.2022) “Management, control and implementation of development interventions for the Programming Period 2021-2027, and other provisions”
- Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 (Interreg Regulation),

the evaluation process and the management process of the evaluation cycle throughout the life of the Programme are the responsibility of the following bodies/mechanisms:

Managing Authority INTERREG 2021-2027 (MA) & Joint Secretariat (JS) of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme

The Managing Authority INTERREG 2021-2027 (MA) is responsible for the overall management & implementation of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme.

In particular, MA carries all Evaluations of the Programme, according to the provisions of Article 35 of Interreg Regulation, based on the Evaluation Plan, which has to be drawn up and submitted to the Programme’s Monitoring Committee, so as to be reviewed and approved no later than one year after the approval of the Programme.

MA is also responsible for the preparation and submission to the Programme’s Monitoring Committee of possible subsequent Amendments and Revisions of the Plan, while it ensures the implementation of the Evaluations according to what’s foreseen in the Evaluation Plan.

MA provides to the European Commission all information necessary to review the Programme’s performance, according to Article 31 of Interreg Regulation, on the basis of the most recent data available regarding the Programme’s implementation. In this framework, the MA follows-up issues raised by the European Commission and informs the European Commission, within three months of the date of the review, of the measures taken.

The MA is responsible for the coordination and quality management in all phases of the evaluation cycle.

Finally, the MA is responsible for the publication of all Evaluations on the Programme website <https://greece-albania.eu>, on the internet and social media. The final evaluation reports will be transmitted through the SFC system as well.

## Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme

In all of the above, the MA is supported by the Joint Secretariat (JS) of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme. In general, the JS assists the work of the MA and of the Committees related to the Programme's implementation.

Both the Managing Authority INTERREG 2021-2027 (MA) and the Joint Secretariat (JS) of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme are based in Thessaloniki (Greece), 65, Leoforos Georgikis Scholis, 57001.

### Monitoring Committee (MC) of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme

The Monitoring Committee (MC) of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme, representing the Partners States, has a steering and deciding role regarding the development & implementation of the Programme's Evaluation Plan. The MC examines, approves and reviews the Evaluation Plan and possible subsequent Amendments and Revisions of the Plan. The MC also examines the progress made in the implementation of the Evaluation Plan and the follow up given to the findings of the evaluations.

### European Commission

In compliance with the Rules of Procedure of the Programme, the European Commission (EC) will have an observer role and can therefore be consulted at all stages of the evaluation process throughout the entire programming period 2021-2027.

## 3.2 Involvement & Roles of Partners & Stakeholders

In compliance to the principle of partnership, the Programme promotes the engagement of its stakeholders in the design and implementation of the evaluation of the Programme. In the frame of the evaluation, the Programme seeks the contribution of its stakeholders. The Programme will also explore other forms of consultation and exchange. Finally, stakeholders will be the target of the Programme's dissemination and communication activities with regard to the evaluation results. Specifically, relevant partners as Regional and Local Authorities, the Certifying and Verifying Authority, etc., shall be involved in the evaluation of Programme within the framework of the Monitoring Committee meetings. Therefore, the involved partners shall examine the progress made in the implementation of the evaluation plan and the follow-up given to the findings of evaluations. Within the same framework, the partners shall also be consulted on the Final Performance Report of CP 2021 – 2027, to be submitted by 15/02/2031 (Article 33, paragraph 1 of Interreg Regulation).

## 3.3 Independence of Evaluations

According to Article 35 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 (Interreg Regulation), Evaluations shall be entrusted to internal or external experts who are functionally independent from the

authorities responsible for Programme evaluation, in order to avoid any potential conflict of interests.

The Managing Authority (MA) is responsible for the tendering and selection of independent external Evaluators, through public procurement(s). The MA drafts the Terms of References (ToR) and the award criteria of each procurement procedure for the contracting of external evaluators. Emphasis should be put on the quality of methodological approaches and mix of knowledge in the thematic fields of the Programme, skills and experience. The MA coordinates the internal activities related to the evaluation. The JS is in charge of monitoring and collecting data on project and Programme level and supports the whole evaluating procedure by providing to the External Evaluators all necessary information, in order to perform their evaluation activities. The External Evaluators will carry out –independently– the evaluation and will involve all relevant Stakeholders in the process, via Desk Research & Literature Reviews, Data Analysis, Case Studies, Focus Groups, Surveys and Interviews.

### 3.4 Training Activities

The option of organizing training activities in support of the evaluation process (for the MA, the JS and the MC representatives as well as for Partners/Beneficiaries and relevant stakeholders representatives) may be considered, if deemed necessary.

Such training activities may refer to the following indicative fields/subjects:

- Planning & Managing the Evaluation Process [Training Programme A1]
- Quality Control of the Evaluation Reports [Training Programme A2]
- Qualitative & Quantitative Evaluation Methods [Training Programme A3]
- Methods for Impact Assessment [Training Programme A4]
- Training of Final Beneficiaries/Partners representatives for Effective Participation to Various Evaluation Processes [Training Programme B].

The costs of participation to the respective Training Programmes can be covered by the Programme's Technical Assistance Resources. The above mentioned Training Programmes are estimated to have the following indicative budget:

- **5,000 € plus VAT for Training Programme A** (addressed to the MA, the JS and the MC representatives).
- **7,000 € plus VAT for Training Programme B** (addressed to the Final Beneficiaries/Partners representatives).

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### 3.5 Dissemination & Use of Evaluation Findings

The whole Evaluation process is pointless if the findings and the results of the evaluation are not properly used and disseminated. The Evaluations findings are essential for the following two reasons:

- To Improve the Programme Implementation: the evaluations findings will serve as a tool to improve the Programme's implementation mechanisms by focusing on their effectiveness and efficiency.
- To show-case remarkable achievements and to disseminate the results: according to EU regulations, all evaluations results, findings & recommendations will be communicated to the Programme's Stakeholders and will be published on the Programme website <https://greece-albania.eu>, on the internet and social media. The final evaluation reports will be transmitted through the SFC system as well.

### 3.6 Quality Management Strategy

The Quality Management Strategy is a key element in the process of each evaluation and throughout its life cycle since it ensures the preparation of high quality evaluations, the best use of assessment conclusions and the maximum dissemination of the results to all stakeholders and users.

The Quality Management Strategy, as part of the evaluations that will be elaborated in the 2021-2027 Programming period, will ensure the following principles:

Objectivity/Independence: As already described in Chapter 3.3: Independence of Evaluators, the evaluations will be carried out by Independent External Evaluators, based on reliable data and without any political interferences and influences.

Transparency: Transparency enhances confidence in the bodies/authorities participating in the evaluation process and establishes the appropriate conditions in order to get them involved and to take into account and make use of the evaluations conclusions, findings & recommendations. It is therefore necessary for all evaluations to be made public and to be accessible to the general public, as already stated in Chapter 3.5: Dissemination & Use of Evaluation Findings.

Ethics: Throughout the life cycle of an evaluation, all ethical issues that may arise, should be taken into account and resolved. Evaluations and evaluators should respect the rights and dignity of all stakeholders, while all the participants in the evaluation process should not be subject to external pressures and evaluations should not reflect personal or other interests.

Quality: The quality of each evaluation can be ensured at two separate phases: at the phase of specification of the Terms of References (ToRs), and at the phase of the approval of each



evaluation deliverables (with the setting up of minimum requirements for quality assurance of the deliverables), as already described in Chapter 3.3: Independence of Evaluators.

Utility: All evaluations should focus on specific user groups providing them with adequate & understandable information, in order to respond to issues of interest to them and to be relevant to the questions asked for decision making. The principle of Utility will be enhanced through the identification and specification of the user groups within each evaluation and through the dissemination of the evaluations conclusions/recommendations to all user groups.



## 4. Evaluations

### PART A: Summary and scheduling of evaluations

#### 4.1 Summary Table

The following summary Table lists all Programme's planned evaluations until 2030. Each evaluation is indicated with title, indicative completion date and estimated budget.

Table 1: Summary Table of Programme's evaluations

α/α	Evaluation title	Indicative completion date	Estimated budget (€)
1.	Evaluation during the Implementation of CP 2021-2027 including communication activities	10/2026	30,000 € plus VAT (or 37,200 € including VAT)
2.	Impact Evaluation of CP 2021 – 2027	6/2029	40,000 € plus VAT (or 49,600 € including VAT)

The total budget of the Evaluations that are included in the Evaluation Plan amounts to **70,000 € plus VAT (or 86,800 € including VAT)**.

It must be noted that according to Article 33 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059, a **Final Performance Report** is required to be submitted to the Commission until **15 February 2031**. In the context of the contents of this Report (as these will be specified in the template referred in paragraph 1 of the above Article) the necessity of an updated implementation evaluation may arise. In this case, a modification of the current Evaluation Plan will be required, in order to describe and specify its contents in detail.

#### 4.2 Timetable

The next figure depicts the timetable of evaluations helping in the decision-making process during the various stages of implementation of the Programme:

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
<b>REPORTING OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION</b>									
Final Performance Report									15/2
<b>PROPOSED EVALUATIONS</b>									
Evaluation during the Implementation of CP 2021-2027 including Communication Activities				31/10					
Impact Evaluation of CP 2021 – 2027							30/6		

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## PART B: Evaluations' Analysis

### 4.3 Evaluations' Analysis

#### *4.3.1 Evaluation during the implementation of CP 2021-2027 including communication activities*

It will include two (2) Reports:

- a. Evaluation of the implementation
- b. Evaluation of the communication activities.

The evaluation will be prepared by an external evaluator, with a budget of **30,000 € plus VAT** and estimated date of completion in **10/2026**.

Evaluation methods that may be used:

According to the evaluation subject, different methods may apply. The indicative methods and tools to be applied for evaluations are listed below. They will be further specified in the Terms of References (ToR) of each procurement procedure for the external evaluator and in the inception report of the external evaluator.

- Desk research and literature reviews (e.g. Programme documents such as Cross Border Cooperation Programme, internal procedures, Programme and Project Manual, etc.);
- Data analysis (e.g. information collected through the Programme monitoring systems such as data on applicants and project beneficiaries, Programme's result and output indicators, project progress reports, financial and Programme monitoring data, etc.);
- Case studies (e.g. on selected focus groups, types of beneficiaries, thematic achievements, policy impacts);
- Focus groups (e.g. with thematic experts)
- Surveys (e.g. among applicants, addressing project beneficiaries, other stakeholders and target groups, experts etc.);
- Interviews (e.g. with Programme bodies, project beneficiaries, other relevant target groups etc.).

For the above mentioned methods the following data requirements apply. They will be further specified in the ToR of each procurement procedure for the external evaluator and in the inception report of the external evaluator.

#### **Desk research and data analysis**

The information related to the Programme procedures and (monitoring) data is well documented in various Programme documents/manuals, and in the MIS. In particular, the latter contains all information and data related to funding applications - proposals, project selection, project implementation and monitoring of the progress (including indicator system and financial data). These documents and data serve as a solid base for the desk research and data analysis.

#### **Case studies**

The MA/JS are closely monitoring the implementation of the funded projects via project progress reports and when needed through on-the-spot visits. The MIS provides information on the deliverables and outputs from the project monitoring, including progress reports which constitute a very comprehensive information source for the conduction of case studies by the evaluators.

### **Surveys and interviews**

The Programme bodies and in particular the JS dispose of a comprehensive contact data of project beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders which is constantly updated and which can be used for the purposes of the evaluation. The contact data could be sorted according to various criteria allowing targeted communication and selection of addressees for surveys and interviews.

Sources of data are implemented by JS with the approval of the MA and are as noted in the Programme.

#### **a. Evaluation of the implementation**

Its content will be an assessment/evaluation of effectiveness and efficiency of the CP 2021-2027 with the aim to improve the quality of the design and implementation of the Programme.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess whether the objectives set are met at the level of output and result indicators, whether this achievement is satisfactory for the timely attainment of the target values set at the level of the CP and to examine the factors responsible for the good or bad progress in the achievement of objectives set at the level of output and result indicators. At the same time, the purpose of the evaluation is to assess whether all of the implemented interventions are implementing effectively in relation to costs. The evaluation will include the assessment of the capacity of planning bodies, management and implementation of the actions of the CP and resource management capacity and procedures of programme resources.

The objective is the implementation evaluation in order to improve performance in the interim implementation of the Programme and the specialization or the potential redesign of interventions and/or even review of CP. Emphasis will be given to the intervention areas and indicators.

The assessment relates to all of the specific objectives per Priority of the Programme. It covers horizontally all the Specific Objectives and all the intervention areas of the Programme including cross cutting themes, due to strong interactions recorded.

Evaluation criteria will be:

- Effectiveness and
- Efficiency

The key evaluation queries may be the following per SO (non-exhaustive list):

As to effectiveness:

Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC  
Programme

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- To what extent were the targets set achieved?
  - What are the reasons for achieving and not achieving the objective?
  - What can be done so that interventions can be more effective? Is revision needed in order to achieve better results?
  - Which factors influenced the observed results?

As to efficiency:

- To what extent the interventions acted effectively in relation to the cost?
- Have the desired outputs been achieved with less cost?
- To what extent was the available budget appropriate for their implementation?
- Could other interventions resolve the identified problems with less cost?
- To what extent did the procedures and organizational structure for planning, selecting actions, implementing and managing them contribute to achieving better results?

b. Evaluation of the communication activities

Its object will be the Information and Communication measures and its content will be the effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation of the Communication activities.

Evaluation criteria will be:

- Effectiveness and
- Efficiency.

The key evaluation queries may be the following (non-exhaustive list):

- Do the communication activities carried out by the Programme authorities lead to the achievement of the general and specific objectives set out in the Communication Strategy? If not which changes are needed?
- Which communication tools were the most effective in terms of increasing awareness of the Programme?

*4.3.2 Impact Evaluation of CP 2021 – 2027*

The evaluation will be prepared by an external evaluator, with a budget of **40,000 € plus VAT** and estimated date of completion in **6/2029**.

Its content will be an assessment/evaluation of relevance, coherence, Union added value and impact of the CP 2021-2027.

The object of the evaluation is the more specific and in depth evaluation of impacts in order to properly reflect the results of interventions and to assess accurately the benefits of the

co-operation area from actions of the Programme. The Programme and all interventions are assessed with evaluative questions of relevance, coherence, Union added value and impact.

The content of the evaluation will be:

- The evaluation of relevance, coherence, Union added value and impact in the implementation of relevant actions and
- The evaluation of the contribution of the CP in the implementation of the development strategy of the Programme area.

The assessment relates to all of the Specific Objectives per Priority of the Programme. It covers horizontally all the Specific Objectives and all the intervention areas of the Programme including cross cutting themes, due to strong interactions recorded.

Evaluation methods that may be used:

According to the evaluation subject, different methods may apply. The indicative methods and tools to be applied for evaluations are listed below. They will be further specified in the ToR of each procurement procedure for the external evaluator and in the inception report of the external evaluator.

- Desk research and literature reviews (e.g. Programme documents such as Cross Border Cooperation Programme, internal procedures, Programme and Project Manual, etc.);
- Data analysis (e.g. information collected through the Programme monitoring systems such as data on applicants and project beneficiaries, Programme's result and output indicators, project progress reports, financial and Programme monitoring data, etc.);
- Case studies (e.g. on selected focus groups, types of beneficiaries, thematic achievements, policy impacts);
- Focus groups (e.g. with thematic experts)
- Surveys (e.g. among applicants, addressing project beneficiaries, other stakeholders and target groups, experts etc.);
- Interviews (e.g. with Programme bodies, project beneficiaries, other relevant target groups etc.).

For the above mentioned methods the following data requirements apply. They will be further specified in the ToR of each procurement procedure for the external evaluator and in the inception report of the external evaluator.

### **Desk research and data analysis**

The information related to the Programme procedures and (monitoring) data is well documented in various Programme documents/manuals, and in the MIS. In particular, the latter contains all information and data related to funding applications - proposals, project selection, project implementation and monitoring of the progress (including indicator system and financial data). These documents and data serve as a solid base for the desk research and data analysis.

### **Data collection:**

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Data collection is implemented by JS with the approval of the MA.

The monitoring of the progress of the result indicators at different stages of Programme implementation and the comparison with the baseline situation (2021-2022) will provide an important input for the impact evaluation, since it will give evidence of changes, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. This will allow getting a clear and impartial perception on progress made and on results achieved by the Programme compared to the initial situation as described in the baseline. The information gathered for the needs of result indicators monitoring will also contribute to a more in-depth understanding of the changes achieved and will serve as a valuable basis for the impact evaluation.

Other relevant data for the impact evaluation are available from the monitoring of the funded projects which are uploaded in the MIS. The system also includes all deliverables and outputs from the project implementation as well as reported indicators which constitute a very comprehensive information source for analysing the thematic project achievements.

### **Case studies**

The MA/JS are closely monitoring the implementation of the funded projects via project progress reports and when needed through on-the-spot visits. The MIS provides information on the deliverables and outputs from the project monitoring, including progress reports which constitute a very comprehensive information source for the conduction of case studies by the evaluators.

### **Surveys and interviews**

The Programme bodies and in particular the JS dispose of a comprehensive contact data of project beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders which is constantly updated and which can be used for the purposes of the evaluation. The contact data could be sorted according to various criteria allowing targeted communication and selection of addressees for surveys and interviews.

Sources of data as noted in Co-operation Programme.

Evaluation criteria will be:

- Relevance
- Coherence
- Union added value and
- Impact

The key evaluation queries in all SOs may be the following (non-exhaustive list):

As to relevance:

- to what extent does the initial design of the Programme remain current? Is the more specific targeting of the Programme current?
- is the Programme's intervention logic relevant to the needs that have arisen per Priority?

Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC  
Programme

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- to what extent was the planning of the Programme's actions the most appropriate?
  - which needs did the actions respond to?
  - to what extent has the partnership mechanism been integrated into the actions to identify and meet the needs?

As to coherence:

- to what extent was the targeting of the Programme coherent and did it support the overall achievement of the Programme's objectives?
- to what extent was the planning of the actions coherent and did it support the overall achievement of the Programme's objectives?
- where are there significant deviations in the implementation in relation to the initial objectives? What are the root causes? What were the necessary corrective actions?
- is the Programme's intervention logic coherent?

As to Union added value:

- what is the added value from the implementation of the actions of the Programme? what are the identifiable/measurable results of the actions?
- in what way are the experience gained from planning and implementation used in the planning of new actions?
- are any good practices recognized?

As to impact:

- what are the measurable results of the actions? Are they sustainable over time? Are short-term outcomes different from long-term outcomes?
- what substantial changes can be observed in relation to the objectives after the implementation of the actions? are these changes measurable? by what factors are they affected?
- what is the cause-and-effect relationship for the observed change after the actions are completed?
- what are the mechanisms that created the impact? What are the main characteristics of these mechanisms?

#### *4.3.3 Final Performance Report-of CP 2021 – 2027*

According to Article 33 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059, a **Final Performance Report** is required to be submitted to the Commission until **15 February 2031**.

Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC  
Programme

The Final Performance Report shall assess the achievement of Programme Objectives based on the below elements (which will be submitted for review to the Monitoring Committee):

1. the progress in Programme implementation and in achieving the milestones and targets of the CP 2021-2027
2. any issues that affect the performance of the CP 2021-2027 and the measures taken to address these issues
3. the progress made in carrying out evaluations, syntheses of evaluations and any follow-up given to findings
4. the implementation of communication and visibility actions
5. the progress in implementing Interreg operations of strategic importance and, where applicable, of large infrastructure projects
6. the progress in administrative capacity building for public institutions and beneficiaries, where relevant
7. the methodology and criteria used for the selection of operations, including any changes thereto, after notifying the Commission, where requested, pursuant to Article 22(2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059, without prejudice to points (b), (c) and (d) of Article 33(3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060
8. the Evaluation Plan and any amendment thereto
9. any proposal by the managing authority for the amendment of the Interreg programme including for a transfer in accordance with Article 19(5) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059.

In the context of the contents of this Final Performance Report (as these will be specified in the template referred in paragraph 1 of Article 33 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059) the necessity of an updated implementation evaluation may arise.

In this case, a modification of the current Evaluation Plan will be required, in order to describe and specify its contents in detail.



#### 4.4 Evaluations' Identity Sheets

Table 2: Evaluations' identity Sheets

s/n	1
<b>Evaluation title</b>	"Evaluation during the implementation of CP 2021-2027 including communication activities"
<b>Evaluation object</b>	<p>The purpose of the evaluation is to assess whether the objectives set are met at the level of output and result indicators, whether this achievement is satisfactory for the timely attainment of the target values set at the level of the CP and to examine the factors responsible for the good or bad progress in the achievement of objectives set at the level of output and result indicators. At the same time, the purpose of the evaluation is to assess whether all of the implemented interventions are implementing effectively in relation to costs. The evaluation will include the assessment of the capacity of planning bodies, management and implementation of the actions of the CP and resource management capacity and procedures of programme resources.</p> <p>Finally, the evaluation's object will be the Information and Communication measures and its content will be the effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation of the Communication activities.</p> <p>The objective is the implementation evaluation in order to improve performance in the interim implementation of the Programme and the specialization or the potential redesign of interventions and/or even review of CP.</p>
<b>Content</b>	<p>It will include two reports:</p> <p>a. <u>Evaluation of the implementation</u> Its content will be an assessment/evaluation of effectiveness and efficiency of the CP 2021-2027 with the aim to improve the quality of the design and implementation of the Programme.</p> <p>b. <u>Evaluation of the communication activities</u> Its content will be the effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation of the Communication activities.</p> <p>Emphasis will be given to the intervention areas and indicators. The assessment relates to all of the specific objectives per Priority of the Programme. It covers horizontally all the Specific Objectives and all the intervention areas of the Programme including cross cutting themes, due to strong interactions recorded.</p>
<b>Evaluation criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Effectiveness and</li> <li>- Efficiency</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation queries</b>	<p>The key evaluation queries in all SOs may be the following (non-exhaustive list):</p> <p>a. <u>Evaluation of the implementation</u> <u>As to effectiveness:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To what extent were the targets set achieved?</li> <li>▪ What are the reasons for achieving and not achieving the objective?</li> <li>▪ What can be done so that interventions can be more effective? Is</li> </ul>

Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme

	<p>revision needed in order to achieve better results?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which factors influenced the observed results?</li> </ul> <p><u>As to efficiency:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent the interventions acted effectively in relation to the cost?</li> <li>Have the desired outputs been achieved with less cost?</li> <li>To what extent was the available budget appropriate for their implementation?</li> <li>Could other interventions resolve the identified problems with less cost?</li> <li>To what extent did the procedures and organizational structure for planning, selecting actions, implementing and managing them contribute to achieving better results?</li> </ul> <p><u>b. Evaluation of the communication activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do the communication activities carried out by the Programme authorities lead to the achievement of the general and specific objectives set out in the Communication Strategy? If not which changes are needed?</li> <li>Which communication tools were the most effective in terms of increasing awareness of the Programme?</li> </ul>
<b>Methodology</b>	<p>Evaluation methods that may be used:</p> <p>According to the evaluation subject, different methods may apply. The indicative methods and tools to be applied for evaluations are listed below. They will be further specified in the ToR of each procurement procedure for the external evaluator and in the inception report of the external evaluator.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk research and literature reviews (e.g. Programme documents such as Cross Border Cooperation Programme, internal procedures, Programme and Project Manual, etc.);</li> <li>- Data analysis (e.g. information collected through the Programme monitoring systems such as data on applicants and project beneficiaries, Programme's result and output indicators, project progress reports, financial and Programme monitoring data, etc.);</li> <li>- Case studies (e.g. on selected focus groups, types of beneficiaries, thematic achievements, policy impacts);</li> <li>- Focus groups (e.g. with thematic experts)</li> <li>- Surveys (e.g. among applicants, addressing project beneficiaries, other stakeholders and target groups, experts etc.);</li> <li>- Interviews (e.g. with Programme bodies, project beneficiaries, other relevant target groups etc.).</li> </ul>
<b>Data</b>	<p>For the above mentioned methods the following data requirements apply. They will be further specified in the ToR of each procurement procedure for the external evaluator and in the inception report of the external evaluator.</p> <p><u>Desk research and data analysis</u></p> <p>The information related to the Programme procedures and (monitoring) data is well documented in various Programme documents/manuals, and in the MIS. In particular, the latter contains all information and data related</p>

Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme

	<p>to funding applications - proposals, project selection, project implementation and monitoring of the progress (including indicator system and financial data). These documents and data serve as a solid base for the desk research and data analysis.</p> <p><u>Case studies</u></p> <p>The MA/JS are closely monitoring the implementation of the funded projects via project progress reports and when needed through on-the-spot visits. The MIS provides information on the deliverables and outputs from the project monitoring, including progress reports which constitute a very comprehensive information source for the conduction of case studies by the evaluators.</p> <p><u>Surveys and interviews</u></p> <p>The Programme bodies and in particular the JS dispose of a comprehensive contact data of project beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders which is constantly updated and which can be used for the purposes of the evaluation. The contact data could be sorted according to various criteria allowing targeted communication and selection of addressees for surveys and interviews.</p> <p><u>Sources of data</u> are implemented by JS with the approval of the MA and are as noted in Co-operation Programme.</p>
<b>Evaluation Conduct</b>	Direct assignment to an external evaluator.
<b>Duration</b>	<p><b>7 months</b> (net processing time)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Estimated time of launching the tender for assigning the evaluation: <b>12/2025</b></li> <li>- Estimated time of evaluation contracting: <b>4/2026</b></li> <li>- Estimated date of evaluation completion: <b>10/2026</b></li> </ul>
<b>Estimated budget</b>	<b>30,000 € plus VAT</b> (or 37,200 € including VAT)
<b>Key evaluation conclusions</b>	-

Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC  
Programme

<b>s/n</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Evaluation title</b>	“Impact Evaluation of CP 2021 – 2027”
<b>Evaluation object</b>	The object of the evaluation is the more specific and in depth evaluation of impacts in order to properly reflect the results of interventions and to assess accurately the benefits of the co-operation area from actions of the Programme. The Programme and all interventions are assessed with evaluative questions of relevance, coherence, Union added value and impact.
<b>Content</b>	<p>The content of the evaluation of the CP will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The evaluation of relevance, coherence, Union added value and impact in the implementation of relevant actions and</li> <li>• The evaluation of the contribution of the CP in the implementation of the development strategy of the Programme area.</li> </ul> <p>The assessment relates to all of the specific objectives per Priority of the Programme. It covers horizontally all the Specific Objectives and all the intervention areas of the Programme including cross cutting themes, due to strong interactions recorded.</p>
<b>Evaluation criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relevance</li> <li>- Coherence</li> <li>- Union added value and</li> <li>- Impact</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation queries</b>	<p>The key evaluation queries in all SOs may be the following (non-exhaustive list):</p> <p><u>As to relevance:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ to what extent does the initial design of the Programme remain current? Is the more specific targeting of the Programme current?</li> <li>▪ is the Programme's intervention logic relevant to the needs that have arisen per Priority?</li> <li>▪ to what extent was the planning of the Programme's actions the most appropriate?</li> <li>▪ which needs did the actions respond to?</li> <li>▪ to what extent has the partnership mechanism been integrated into the actions to identify and meet the needs?</li> </ul> <p><u>As to coherence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ to what extent was the targeting of the Programme coherent and did it support the overall achievement of the Programme's objectives?</li> <li>▪ to what extent was the planning of the actions coherent and did it support the overall achievement of the Programme's objectives?</li> <li>▪ where are there significant deviations in the implementation in relation to the initial objectives? What are the root causes? What were the necessary corrective actions?</li> <li>▪ is the Programme's intervention logic coherent?</li> </ul> <p><u>As to Union added value:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ what is the added value from the implementation of the actions of the</li> </ul>

Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme

	<p>Programme? what are the identifiable/measurable results of the actions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ in what way are the experience gained from planning and implementation used in the planning of new actions?</li> <li>▪ are any good practices recognized?</li> </ul> <p><u>As to impact:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ what are the measurable results of the actions? Are they sustainable over time? Are short-term outcomes different from long-term outcomes?</li> <li>▪ what substantial changes can be observed in relation to the objectives after the implementation of the actions? are these changes measurable? by what factors are they affected?</li> <li>▪ what is the cause-and-effect relationship for the observed change after the actions are completed?</li> <li>▪ what are the mechanisms that created the impact? What are the main characteristics of these mechanisms?</li> </ul>
<b>Methodology</b>	<p>Evaluation methods that may be used:</p> <p>According to the evaluation subject, different methods may apply. The indicative methods and tools to be applied for evaluations are listed below. They will be further specified in the ToR of each procurement procedure for the external evaluator and in the inception report of the external evaluator.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk research and literature reviews (e.g. Programme documents such as Cross Border Cooperation Programme, internal procedures, Programme and Project Manual, etc.);</li> <li>- Data analysis (e.g. information collected through the Programme monitoring systems such as data on applicants and project beneficiaries, Programme's result and output indicators, project progress reports, financial and Programme monitoring data, etc.);</li> <li>- Case studies (e.g. on selected focus groups, types of beneficiaries, thematic achievements, policy impacts);</li> <li>- Focus groups (e.g. with thematic experts)</li> <li>- Surveys (e.g. among applicants, addressing project beneficiaries, other stakeholders and target groups, experts etc.);</li> <li>- Interviews (e.g. with Programme bodies, project beneficiaries, other relevant target groups etc.).</li> </ul>
<b>Data</b>	<p>For the above mentioned methods the following data requirements apply. They will be further specified in the ToR of each procurement procedure for the external evaluator and in the inception report of the external evaluator.</p> <p><u>Desk research and data analysis</u></p> <p>The information related to the Programme procedures and (monitoring) data is well documented in various Programme documents/manuals, and in the MIS. In particular, the latter contains all information and data related to funding applications - proposals, project selection, project implementation and monitoring of the progress (including indicator system and financial data). These documents and data serve as a solid base for the desk research and data analysis.</p>

Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme

	<p><u>Data collection</u></p> <p>Data collection is implemented by JS with the approval of the MA. The monitoring of the progress of the result indicators at different stages of Programme implementation and the comparison with the baseline situation (2021-2022) will provide an important input for the impact evaluation, since it will give evidence of changes, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. This will allow getting a clear and impartial perception on progress made and on results achieved by the Programme compared to the initial situation as described in the baseline. The information gathered for the needs of result indicators monitoring will also contribute to a more in-depth understanding of the changes achieved and will serve as a valuable basis for the impact evaluation.</p> <p>Other relevant data for the impact evaluation are available from the monitoring of the funded projects which are uploaded in the MIS. The system also includes all deliverables and outputs from the project implementation as well as reported indicators which constitute a very comprehensive information source for analysing the thematic project achievements.</p> <p><u>Case studies</u></p> <p>The JS is closely monitoring the implementation of the funded projects via project progress reports and when needed through on-the-spot visits. The MIS provides information on the deliverables and outputs from the project monitoring, including progress reports which constitute a very comprehensive information source for the conduction of case studies by the evaluators.</p> <p><u>Surveys and interviews</u></p> <p>The Programme bodies and in particular the JS dispose of a comprehensive contact data of project beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders which is constantly updated and which can be used for the purposes of the evaluation. The contact data could be sorted according to various criteria allowing targeted communication and selection of addressees for surveys and interviews.</p> <p><u>Sources of data</u> as noted in Co-operation Programme.</p>
<b>Evaluation Conduct</b>	Assignment to an external evaluator after a tender procedure.
<b>Duration</b>	<p><b>8 months</b> (net processing time)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Estimated time of launching the tender for assigning the evaluation: <b>7/2028</b></li> <li>- Estimated time of evaluation contracting: <b>11/2028</b></li> <li>- Estimated date of evaluation completion: <b>6/2029</b></li> </ul>
<b>Estimated budget</b>	<b>40,000 € plus VAT</b> (or 49,600 € including VAT)
<b>Key evaluation conclusions</b>	-

Evaluation Plan of Interreg VI-A IPA Greece-Albania 2021-2027 CBC Programme

Table 3: Evaluations' Indicative Table

S/N	TITLE	CATEGORY	EVALUATION CRITERIA	SERVICE FOR CONDUCTING EVALUATION	INDICATIVE DATE OF COMPLETION	ESTIMATED BUDGET (€)	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE COVERED	FUND	PRIORITY
1	<b>Evaluation during the implementation of CP 2021-2027 including communication activities</b>	Implementation Evaluation	Effectiveness and Efficiency	Managing Authority INTERREG 2021-2027	<b>10/2026</b>	<b>30,000 € plus VAT</b> (or 37,200 € including VAT)	All	IPA III	All
2	<b>Impact Evaluation of CP 2021 – 2027</b>	Impact Evaluation	Relevance, Coherence, Union Added Value and Impact	Managing Authority INTERREG 2021-2027	<b>6/2029</b>	<b>40,000 € plus VAT</b> (or 49,600 € including VAT)	All	IPA III	All