Kolarctic CBC – Programme 2014-2020

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

2022-2023

Approved by the JMC in its 13th meeting
[10.06.2022]

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1. Management of the monitoring and evaluation plan

The Kolarctic Cross Border Cooperation (CBC) 2014–2020 Programme (the Programme hereinafter) complements national cross-border activities by focusing on cooperation between the European Union Member States (Finland and Sweden) and Norway and Russia. Within the Programme context, Norway participates as an EEA and Schengen country and has an equal status with the EU Member States of Finland and Sweden. The CBC is a practical implementation of the strategic partnership between the European Union and the Russian Federation, who share a long common border.

Cross-border cooperation is oriented on principles such as multi-annual programming, equal partnership and co-financing. Furthermore, the Programme is based on the experiences and best practices gained during the implementation of its predecessors, Kolarctic Neighbourhood Programme during the 2004–2006 and Kolarctic ENPI CBC Programme 2007–2013. As in the previous programmes, Norway is contributing national funding equal to the community funding for Norwegian project activities.

Programme monitoring and evaluation is a process of continued gathering of information and its analysis, in order to determine whether progress is being made towards specific objectives and expected results. It aims at improving the quality of the Programme design and implementation, as well as at assessing and improving its consistency, effectiveness, efficiency and impact. The findings of monitoring and evaluations are taken into account in the programming and implementation cycle to ensure adequate risk management and informed decision-making for efficient delivery of the programme.

The Programme's monitoring and evaluation processes, roles and responsibilities, as well as Indicative Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the Programme duration, are described in the Joint Operational Programme (JOP), chapter 5.6. In addition, the Managing Authority makes and implements Annual Monitoring and Evaluation plans that complement and specify the Indicative Plan.

The main objective of the Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (M&E Plan) is to provide a systematic framework that enables implementation of relevant monitoring and evaluations activities and tools in each specific point of the programme cycle. It is also relevant for allocating necessary resources for these activities, and therefore contributes to efficient Programme management.

The Annual M&E Plan is expected to:
- Reflect the monitoring and evaluation activities implemented in the previous year
- Present the internal monitoring activities and lessons learned for the relevant Programme actors and stakeholders
- Define the objectives for the year to come, taking into account the results of previous M&E activities and the stage of Programme implementation.
- Suggest the best tools and methods to achieve the objectives and allocate sufficient resources for using them.

In addition, the description of Monitoring and Evaluation processes, methods, tools and concepts
- gives on overview of the Monitoring and Evaluation framework for Programme actors, projects and other relevant stakeholders;
- specifies and describes the monitoring and evaluation methods to be used (e.g. frequency and responsibilities);
- serves as a guideline for collecting data on specified indicators.

The Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Plan follows the principles laid out in ENI CBC Implementing Rules, Joint Operational Programme, DG NEAR Guidelines on linking planning / programming, monitoring and evaluation; and Description of management and control systems.

1.1. Monitoring and Evaluation plan in the Programme control systems

An effective annual M&E Plan is part of the mandatory documentation produced for each budget year in the Managing Authority. Specifying the annual Work Plan, the M&E Plan describes the current situation and findings of previous monitoring and evaluation activities, addresses possible challenges, and lays out a plan for the monitoring and evaluation process to be carried out during the following budget year. The Managing Authority is responsible for making the annual Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, allocating sufficient resources for its implementation, and ensuring the monitoring and evaluation activities are carried out according to the plan.

The Joint Monitoring Committee checks that the plan is adequate for providing information about the progress and direction of the programme, and thus enables informed decision-making about the course of the Programme. Joint Monitoring Committee approves the annual Monitoring and Evaluation plan, which is then submitted to the European Commission by the 15th of February.

1.2. The roles of implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The Managing Authority, Branch Offices, Project Beneficiaries, Committee Members, auditors, evaluators, European Commission and other relevant stakeholders participate in implementation of tasks laid out in the M&E Plan. Since the suspension of Financing Agreement between the European Union and the Russian Federation, the Russian Branch Office has not participated in the implementation of the plan.

The Managing Authority is responsible for organization and implementation of internal monitoring systems on project and programme levels, as well as providing information for external monitoring and evaluation activities (including external experts and auditors) on the programme. The Managing Authority is to provide Programme decision-makers relevant and verified data and information to evaluate the status of the Programme.

The Branch Offices participate actively in organisation of monitoring and evaluation activities and collection of information both on project and programme levels. The Branch Office in Russia is not participating during the suspension of the Financing Agreement.

Project Lead Beneficiaries are obliged to set up a monitoring and evaluation processes for their projects in order to collect information about the projects' progress and achieved results, and report the progress to the Managing Authority. The processes include both quantitative and qualitative aspect, as well as external auditing. The Managing Authority lays out the necessary conditions and principles for reporting, and is responsible for compiling the reported data on the Programme level.

External experts and evaluators carry out external monitoring and evaluation activities for the Programme. External monitoring provides information about the Programme's progress in delivering the intended activities, and evaluations produce organised and analysed data, which allows the Programme to incorporate the lessons learned into decision-making processes.

The European Commission and the Russian Federation can launch at any moment evaluation or monitoring of the Programme or of a part thereof.

2. Overview of the project and Programme monitoring and evaluation activities in 2021-2022

The reporting period 2021-2022 started with a gradual lifting of COVID-19 related restrictions, allowing some level of face-to-face activities to take place, and more reliable planning and scheduling of Programme and project implementation. However, the Russian military aggression to Ukraine, starting in 24.2.2022, and consequential suspension of Financing Agreement between the European Union and the Russian Federation (hereafter Financing Agreement), caused a big shock to Programme implementation and monitoring and evaluation activities both on project and Programme levels.

Project level monitoring and evaluation

Day-to-day monitoring of project activities is being carried out continuously. As a standard practice during the pandemic, email, online meetings and phone calls as well as participation in online events have been the main means of contacting the projects. However, some projects were able to resume some face-to-face local activities and events. The Managing Authority made an effort to obtain information from project events by introducing an online form for submitting data on upcoming events and activities. The reporting period 2021-2022 was expected to be busy with project final seminars and dissemination of results, but plenty of events and activities were cancelled after the end of February 2022. Towards the summer, project activity seems to be resuming.

The suspension of Financing Agreement between the European Union and the Russian Federation, and the following suspension of payments to, and implementation of projects in Russia has increased the need to communicate with projects on one-to-one basis. In discussions, the MA has received information about current status of activities, problems caused by suspension of project activities in Russia, as well as other concerns. The Managing Authority has attempted to give instructions according to their best understanding.

Branch Offices have been in touch with, and contacted by, project partners in their respective countries, and offered valuable guidance in practical issues of project administration and communication. Branch Offices support Managing Authority also by informing about challenges the partners face. Russian Branch Office's operations were suspended in March 2022, which has in turn hampered the Managing Authority's capacity to receive information regarding the status of project implementation and yet unreported data regarding past project activities in Russia. Direct contacts with Russian partners have increased to some extent, as beneficiaries have asked guidance directly from the Managing Authority. Besides some voluntary reporting from directly from Russian partners, the MA does not have practical means to collect information about unreported project activities in Russia.

Interim reports have proven to be important checkpoints in monitoring ongoing project's progress, spending, possible delays and accumulation of indicator values. Some projects continued having difficulties in submitting the interim reports or some specific compulsory annexes within three months from the end of implementation period. Usually the delays were related to complications in audit process. The Managing Authority, together with the Branch Offices took effort to tackle the previously notified issue of Interim Report processing times. The situation was analyzed, and measures were taken to intensify cooperation between the MA and BOs in checking the reports, and informing the applicants about requirements of the reports. The Managing Authority has also hired an additional financial officer.

Since the beginning of March, the suspension of project activities in Russia has resulted in disturbances in the reporting practices, as the reporting requirements for Russian partners, payment conditions and eligibility issues remain unclear. This has caused new delays for project reporting, as well as Managing Authority's checks. However, the reporting processes from the

part of EU and Norwegian partners, as well as checking the reports in the Managing Authority, have been adapted and are running.

6 micro projects have started their operations between 1.7.2021 and 30.6.2022. In the course of Grant Contract negotiations, the contact persons asked the projects draft an indicative description of monitoring and evaluation methodology for the project implementation time. The relevance of chosen indicators was checked, and target values revised when necessary. Contact persons in the MA and Branch Offices have participated in project kick off meetings and events, and provided information and practical guidance regarding the Programme requirements. Contracting of three micro projects from the reserve list was started, but the Managing Authority was unable to sign Grant Contracts with them due to the suspension of the Financing Agreement.

By 13.5.2022, implementation time of 25 projects ended (estimated: 29 projects by 30.6.2022). The Managing Authority revised and enhanced the final reporting processes, and created needed templates for reporting indicator data, project summaries and contact details. Two online events were organized to support projects in reporting, with a purpose to ensure good quality data about project implementation. The financial officers instructed both micro and standard projects in filling in financial documentation to the report. By the date 13.5., the Managing Authority has received 10 final reports in PROMAS, and started checking them. According to first experiences, final reports are serving their purpose well. It has to be noted, that in spring 2022 rather many projects have been asking for extension to the final reports' submission date. Due to the prevailing circumstances, including open questions regarding Russian partners' contribution, the Managing Author has granted the asked extra time.

The Managing Authority has previously noted challenges with projects' output (thematic) and result indicators. The challenges are related to indicator definitions and varying methodologies used for calculating them. As a result of MA's efforts to communicate about indicators, the projects seem to be more aware of the requirements regarding collection and reporting of indicator data, and the MA has developed its practices for collecting and checking the data (final report annex for indicators). While these actions may not necessarily lead to increased values, the quality of reported data can be assumed to be more reliable than previously.

On-the-spot verifications for projects continue being delayed due to the travel and meeting restrictions in place. The planned cooperation with the Russian Branch Office did not realize before the suspension of Branch Offices and project operations in Russia in March 2023. The MA has updated the schedule for the on-the-spot verifications (Annex 3 and 4), and plans the implementation for the year 2022-2023 with Branch Offices in Norway and Sweden.

Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) for projects continues. Three projects are currently in the process, while four ROM exercises have been completed. The ongoing ROM processes are restricted to project beneficiaries in EU countries and Norway, and the process has been adapted to the changed operational environment in the spring 2022.

The MA has developed a flag system for assessing the risks related to micro project implementation (see page 17). The criteria were matched to projects with limited implementation time and budget, and current and possible travel and meeting restrictions were taken into account. In addition, a risk assessment tool for ongoing projects is in use (see page 18 and Annex 5).

The European Commission's DG Regio launched a review of large infrastructure projects financed with ENI CBC in late 2021. From Kolarctic Programme KO3001 ROKK and KO3002 Raja-Jooseppi projects participated. The purpose of the review were to draw conclusions and recommendations for improving the performance and sustainability of projects; and collecting practices and lessons learned for future programmes. The interviews and site visits were carried out in early 2022, and the review report is under progress. Preliminary feedback concerned a need to establish a more systematic indicator collection in the projects, and need to enhance cross-border

component (in Raja-Jooseppi project). In addition, permanent plaques were missing from both project sites in the time of review.

In 2021-2022 the Managing Authorities of the Karelia, Kolarctic and South-East Finland – Russia CBC Programmes have launched an evaluation of five border crossing point development projects implemented by the programmes with an outside service provider. The tendering of this evaluation was carried out in accordance with current EU legislation. Article 34 of the Financial Regulation states that all programmes and activities which entail significant spending shall be subjective to evaluation, which shall be proportionate to the objectives and expenditures. The evaluations of the development projects financed under the Karelia, Kolarctic and SEFR CBC programmes are carried out to provide an overall independent assessment about the effectiveness and impacts of the implementation of these projects. The evaluation is expected to help and facilitate key programme stakeholders on both national and regional levels. From Kolarctic CBC Programme, Raja-Jooseppi project (KO3002) is involved.

Programme level monitoring and evaluation

Programme progress is monitored with Progress indicators (see the table 5 pp. 24-29). The Progress indicator table with data from 2021-2022 will be included in the Annual Report. Programme outputs are monitored by compiling reported output indicator data from approved interim reports. Some data may not be available due to closure of Russian Branch Office in the spring 2022. Kolarctic CBC projects have been finalized by the end of 2020-2021 period, so final data about output indicators is not yet available.

Compilation of output indicators on the Programme level has been started. The data is compiled from project final reports (indicator specification template), and other material from day-to-day project monitoring. As mentioned earlier, the method for data collection in the interim and final reports has been developed further to support further data accumulation and processing on Programme level. In addition, the indicator grid will be complemented with additional information in order to get as realistic picture as possible with the chosen set of indicators, and not to miss important project achievement.

The Managing Authority conducted preliminary analysis on Result Indicator calculation methodology due to outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic and consequent changes in operating environment. It was concluded that result indicators are defined on such a general level, that impact of ongoing projects would not be visible in statistics (see result indicators in chapter 4.6 Programme results). It was also noted, that in some cases the methodology of calculation cannot be repeated to get reliable data for comparison. Therefore, a qualitative approach was taken to recognize the intervention fields which are most likely impacted by COVID-19 pandemic (youth employment, tourism flows, ICT service level), and the projects contributing to the fields. It was decided that Programme level result indicator data will be checked after the Programme implementation to the extent possible. Result indicator data from projects will be compiled, and presented in qualitative manner, as the data is not comparable across the projects.

Observations and lessons learned

The suspension of the Financing Agreement has been a major challenge, stirring up and somewhat delaying both project implementation and standard monitoring processes. However, rather many processes, e.g. reporting of EU and Norwegian partners, checking the reports and ROM exercise, have continued with rather small modifications. Despite active day-to-day monitoring practices already in place, the exceptional situation has increased the need of individual consultation with each project, and discussions about the status of project implementation. Project risk management tools in place (flag system, ongoing risk monitoring) have not been able to predict the current situation and project's performance. In the current crisis, active cross-border cooperation, interdependence of activities, small consortium and

Russian lead beneficiary role seem to cause project vulnerability more than any other risk factor recognized before.

By the end of May 2022, the instructions to projects have been rather reactionary due to changing circumstances, and lack of information regarding the impact of FA suspension to Grant Contracts, and especially eligibility of Russian beneficiaries' costs. As audit and reporting costs of Russian beneficiaries are not eligible since March 2022, it is very likely that a great deal of monitoring data from project implementation and expenditure will remain missing. A systematic approach to how indicator collection and compilation on Programme level, for example, will be done does not yet exists, as the reporting practices, possibilities for data verification and approval from Russian partners, remain open to the date.

Close communication with projects is currently vital. Many Kolarctic projects finalize their operations during the spring 2022. Russian war in Ukraine and consequent changes to project implementation disturbed especially dissemination and capitalization efforts. With the remaining ongoing projects, it is important to encourage projects to find new approaches to produces outputs and outcomes, and encourage dissemination and capitalization of the part of the project results that has been achieved and can be of relevance.

Micro projects have limited implementation time, small consortia and tight budgets. Many of them finalized operations by early 2022, but those still running face challenges from delays in activities (overall uncertainty), administrative issues, and reorganization of activities (substantial parts of the projects were carried out in Russia). Especially projects that have had Russian lead beneficiary, face the situation where more contractual and administrative obligations of a lead partner has to be carried out in another organization in order to get project costs and activities reported and approved. In micro projects with limited budgets, especially in reporting stage, this at times means that the extra work cannot be compensated from the Programme. In standard projects, many have savings in travel budgets, which can mitigate the risk of running out of project resources due to changes in project consortia.

The changes during the Programme implementation have been very big, and it will have an impact on evaluation of Programme and project outcomes.

3. Overview of the project and programme monitoring and evaluation activities in 2022-2023

The project level monitoring and evaluation will continue with the ongoing projects. Checking reports, discussions with lead partners and participation in project events are the main ways of collecting information about the projects' progress. Depending on the resolution on Russian project partners' costs' eligibility, new reporting processes may have to be developed in order to obtain information from Russian project expenditure and activities between latest approved reports and the end of February 2022. This will be a major challenge for financial monitoring also on programme level. Other project partners will continue reporting in their planned schedule.

Some projects may still apply for short prolongations to their implementation time, but major share of projects will end their operations by the end of the year 2022. It is expected that some budget changes will be requested due to modifications in project plans following the project activities in Russia. Many projects will not reach their targets in full, and will have to drop some activities. As most projects are in final stages of implementation, is expected that major changes to project implementation will not be made, but the focus is rather on successful completion of ongoing actions, as well as reporting. In projects with substantial activities ahead, a project update or update of project plan in PROMAS may be a good option for establishing a more structured plan for the remaining activities, and more reliable framework for project monitoring in the MA.

The MA, together with SE and NO BOs continue carrying out on-the-spot verification in EU countries. The financial unit of the MA has developed the plan and process of on-the-spot verifications. The MA has selected the projects for on-the-spot verifications according to the criteria described in the chapter 4. In addition, MA can carry out partial or complete on-the-spot verifications for projects outside the list when necessary.

The Result-Oriented-Monitoring for remaining projects in the 3rd call for proposals will be finalised by the end of 2022. The Managing Authority is hoping the process to give valuable information on how the projects currently see the relevance of their results.

Checking project's final reports will continue in 2022-2023 alongside with project closure activities. However, it remains unclear whether the MA will be able to close projects, as the situation with recoveries from, and final payments to Russian partners remains unclear.

Table 1 Project level monitoring, indicative timeline

PROJECT LEVEL	Timing	Comments	Responsible actor
Day-to-day monitoring of projects	Ongoing, continuous	Plenty of requests for change (implementation time, budget) are expected.	MA contact person
Checking the interim reports	According to the projects' reporting schedule	Focus on: fluency of the process and avoidance of delays, verifiable indicator data, communication of project results to target groups, quality of cooperation with target groups / final beneficiaries; quality of cross-border cooperation and border-crossing impact. Checking process and approving costs for Russian partners is unclear.	MA contact person
Participating in project events and steering group meetings	Ongoing, continuous	Focus on final events and possibilities to find relevance in project results; new approaches to capitalization.	MA contact person, Branch Offices
Meetings with Lead partners	Ongoing, continuous	Preparation for closure of first projects; guidance of micro projects; Guidance of partners taking over lead partner obligations from Russian Lead Partners.	MA contact person
Project updates	When necessary	Under consideration: project updates after suspension of FA if needed	MA contact person
Project closure	2021-2023	Project closure expected to be delayed due to pending payments to Russian beneficiaries, recovery	MA contact person

		processes and process of drafting the self-standing legal act.	
Risk assessment / flagging the micro projects	Spring 2022 (flags); continuous	Filling in risk assessment table for ongoing projects; brief lessons-learned evaluation of the current risk assessment system.	MA
Result-Oriented-Monitoring (ROM)	2020 – 2022		
Preparation of the selection process	Spring and autumn 2022 for the projects contracted in the 3rd CfP	Questionnaire slightly adapted after suspension of project implementation in Russia; ROM restricted to EU and NO beneficiaries only.	MA
Design of the ROM process	Revision of the project in the spring 2022		MA, CBC Coordinator
ROM executed on the selected projects	2021-2023		CBC Coordinator

On Programme level, the MA will continuously collect data for progress indicators. The information on the Progress Indicators is reported to the JMC and to the European Commission annually (Annual Report).

Data about completed project outputs, activities and results will be compiled on programme level. In the autumn 2022, cumulative indicator target values from all contracted projects will be checked against the Programme targets. For the first time, data will be available from projects that have finalised their activities. Further, the MA will continue monitoring the progress towards the targets by summarising reported indicator values, and comparing them to the programme level target values. However, it is yet unclear how the indicator data will be affected by the suspension of project activities in Russia.

Table 2 Programme level monitoring, indicative timeline

PROGRAMME LEVEL	**Timing**	**Comments**	**Responsible actor**
Programme progress monitoring	Ongoing, continuous		MA, BOs
Collecting data and reporting the progress indicators	Ongoing, continuous	Reported annually in Annual Report. Availability of indicator data from Russia is under question.	MA
Monitoring of programme outputs	Ongoing, continuous	Most projects will finalise their operations by the end of year 2022.	

Continuing analysis of output indicators (Programme target values and projects' cumulative target values)	Ongoing, continuous	Micro projects and revised standard & large infrastructure projects taken into account. More attention paid to the projects' description of the methodology for collecting and calculating values. Drafting sub-categories for programme-level compilation of data to ensure reliable programme level reporting. It is yet unclear, how the lack of data from Russian partners will impact the indicator outcome on Programme level, and how the data should be displayed.	MA
Compilation of reported indicator data from project's final reports	2022-2023	Elimination of double-calculation, ensuring reliability of compiled data, using sub-categories of output indicators to better match them to programme result indicators.	MA
Monitoring of programme results	2022-2023	Collecting information on projects results and indicator data in final reports	MA
Ex-post evaluation of the Kolarctic CBC Programme	2022-2024	Preparation of the evaluation process to be started in spring 2023	MA

As stated in the Joint Operational Programme (page 78), "The Programme will perform ex-post evaluations on both the Programme priorities as well as on thematic objectives and the Programme as a whole. These evaluations will be carried out by external experts and will focus on relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of benefits. The evaluation of the entire Programme will produce information that can be used both for the preparation of the future Programme and the improvement of the existing one." The Managing Authority will start the planning and first phases of ex-post evaluation in the spring 2023. As the preparation of new Programme is suspended, the focus of evaluation will be revised accordingly.

4. Monitoring and evaluation tools

The purpose of monitoring and evaluation is to allow decision-makers access to relevant information, take appropriate measures in solving possible problems and ensure impact and sustainability of results. Monitoring is carried out continuously and systematically, and it includes collection of data on specified indicators. Its focus is on the input, activities, outputs and outcomes levels, and by giving information about what the intervention is doing, it aims at identifying implementation problems, and measuring progress in relation to expected outputs, outcomes and impact.

Evaluation, in turn, is systematic and objective assessment of activities, outcomes and impacts, and it aims at determining the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Evaluation is done in specific moments of the intervention's cycle. Evaluation produces credible and useful information for incorporating lessons learned into decisions-making processes.[1]

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[1] DG NEAR Guidelines on linking planning/programming, monitoring and evaluation pg. 5 and 15

(https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-
enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/financial_assistance/phare/evaluation/2016/20160831-dg-near-guidelines-on-linking-
planning-progrming-vol-1-v-0.4.pdf)

4.1   Internal project monitoring

Detailed description and guidance for setting up internal project monitoring and evaluation processes are included in the Project Implementation Manual. Monitoring activities should provide the mechanism, by which relevant information is provided to the right people at the right time to help them make informed decisions. The main task in this process is to point out those areas that are in need of monitoring:

• Operational progress (activities undertaken and results achieved);
• Financial progress (budget and expenditure);
• Preliminary response by target groups to project activities

Monitoring should highlight strengths and weaknesses in project implementation and enable responsible people to deal with problems, improve performance, build on successes and adapt to changing circumstances. Monitoring is an effective way to, for example, provide constant feedback on the extent to which the projects are achieving their goals; identify potential problems at an early stage and propose possible solutions; monitor the accessibility of the project to all sectors of the target group(s); monitor the efficiency with which the different components of the project are being implemented and suggest improvements; and improve project design.

Depending on the results of monitoring activities, the project management may initiate, for example, rescheduling of the project or some of its indicators and revision of the relevance of planned activities and set objectives. The Lead Partner always negotiates possible changes of the project plan with the MA.

When the projects' operational environment changes, the reported values of indicators are not in line with the Programme's target values, or otherwise necessary, the MA can encourage the project to revise their monitoring and evaluation systems and the Programme's expectations.

4.2.   Day-to-day monitoring by the MA and BOs

In their day-to-day monitoring activities, the staff of the MA and BOs review project progress through the analysis of the reports submitted, have regular contacts with the lead partner (for BOs also partners in their respective countries) by e-mail, online meetings and telephone and, whenever possible, attend important project events. In this process, the other project partners must be kept adequately informed. The MA and BO staff will manage all requests for project modifications and perform desk reviews and on the spot checks, when needed, in relation to the payment claims of the beneficiaries and to verify the respect of the grant contract provisions.

Projects are obliged to report regularly on the effects and tangible results of their activities. Monitoring is based on regular reports from the ongoing projects. The Managing Authority collects and compiles the reported data in order to facilitate conclusions on the Programme level. The data consist of qualitative part (Project Qualitative Monitoring, PQM), and quantitative indicators. PQM monitors the progress of a project against time, resources and performance schedules during the projects implementation. It also helps to identify areas/problems requiring attention and action; and allows improving project's implementation process towards projects' objectives and delivering planned results.

PQM system is performed as the Questionnaire, which is framed within the four quality criteria:

- Relevance - the appropriateness of project objectives to the problems which it was supposed to address (e.g. is the project plan still feasible and relevant?)

- Efficiency - the cost-effectiveness with which inputs and activities were transformed into results and the quality of the results achieved. Actual schedule compared with the activities from the work plan (e.g. have the project activities been implemented in accordance with the action plan (activities schedule)?
- Effectiveness - the monitoring of the contribution made by results to achievement of the specific objectives of the project, and how assumptions have affected project achievements (e.g. are there any possible risks that might prevent the implementation of the project activities or the achievement of the expected results?)
- Sustainability - possibility of continuation of benefits produced by the project after the project ends (e.g. have any activities been implemented to enhance the sustainability of the project impact after the project end).

Output indicators

The Programme specifies a set of indicators for monitoring project outputs. Both Priority Axis of the programme have their own set of indicators. Output indicators are Common Output Indicators (COIs, originating from EU Commission) and Specific Output Indicators (developed especially for the Programme). The table below in included in the Project Implementation Manual (updated on Jan 2020). The comment column is meant to clarify points that may be unclear, and can therefore be used also in the training materials produced for the projects.

Table 3 Output indicators for Priority Axis 1

Indicator PA1	Description	Comments
SOI 1. Number of participating institutions/organizations cooperating across borders for viability of Arctic economy, nature and environment	**Number of organizations or enterprises that have cooperated or started cooperation** across borders with the help of your project's support during your project time. The outcome of cooperation is expected to enhance viability of Arctic economy and / or nature and environment	The support can mean, for example: Organizing a networking event, networking activities or networking platform Organizing workshops / seminars /conferences where participants from different organizations find ways to enhance viability of Arctic economy and / or nature and environment and solve economic or ecologic problems. Beneficiary organisations (lead partner and partners) can be counted in.
SOI 1.1 Number of males	…working or participating in the project activities	Persons should be counted as participants when they: Actively participate in the project's cooperation events or activities that enhance viability of Arctic economy and/or ecology; Are engaged in cross-border cooperation in the framework of your project.
SOI 1.2 Number of females	…working or participating in the project activities	
SOI 2. Number of participating young entrepreneurs/SMEs cooperating across borders for	**Number of SMEs or new entrepreneurs** participating in cross-border	By new/young entrepreneur we refer to entrepreneurs who have been running their

business cooperation and development	cooperation with the support of you project activities.	business for maximum three years, and persons who are firmly committed to starting a business and are working on a concrete business plan. SME refers to small and medium size enterprises. We refer to the definition of EC source: https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en
COI 2. Number of enterprises substantially and actively involved in projects as final beneficiaries	**Number of enterprises** directly involved as final beneficiaries in cross-border activities organized by the project. **Substantial and active involvement:** To be counted as an enterprise "substantially and actively involved" in the activities produced by the projects, the enterprise belongs to the target group of the project and/or has been a direct beneficiary of support of any kind (incl. all forms of non-financial support such as such as guidance, consultancy, etc).	Enterprises are final beneficiaries, when they benefit from the project's support, activities and / or outcomes. Enterprises taking passively and/or occasionally part in smaller training or information events, business fairs, networking occasions, receiving leaflets, and other similar intermittent engagement, are not to be considered.
SOI 3. Number of participants in cross-border activities implemented by projects enhancing the culture and/or traditional livelihoods of indigenous people	**Number of participants** in project-organized cross-border activities that enhance the culture and/or traditional livelihoods of indigenous people to strengthen their competence, maintain and develop their traditional livelihoods and create new source of income.	Participation implies active involvement in the activities produced by the projects. Persons with indirect involvement (e.g. receiving e-mails or leaflets, visiting websites, and other similar engagement) are not to be considered.
SOI 4. Population benefiting from cross-border activities in the field of renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions	Indicator covers the **population of a certain area** expected to benefit from carried out cross-border activities in the field of renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions. **The cross-border activities in the field of renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions must be a direct consequence of the Programme support**.	For collecting the information: Please think what is the area / unit that your solution covers. For counting the population, please focus on the project´s target group: if the project focuses on energy efficiency of a residential block, the population in question would be the inhabitants and possible commercial tenants of the buildings. If the solutions concern mining technology, please count the users of the technology rather than the

		residential population of the municipality.
COI 16. Surface area (km2) covered by improved shared environmental monitoring capacity or joint monitoring actions	**Surface area covered by joint monitoring actions, or actions and leading to an improved capacity in joint monitoring as a direct consequence of the support.** May e.g. include setting up compatible data, information exchange systems, new equipment, etc., in the fields of biodiversity loss, pollution, environmental risks, climate change and ecosystems transformation.	For collecting information: As activities in this field vary, please indicate the calculation method and the type of monitoring action / activity that enables monitoring in the future. Please focus on the areas that are directly being monitored or documented in your project.
COI 17. Number of persons actively participating in environmental actions and awareness raising activities	**Number of citizens/students/pupils etc. actively participating in environmental actions and awareness-raising activities** (e.g. promotion of energy efficiency) that are organised with the Programme support / organised by the programme.	Participation implies active involvement in the activities produced by the projects. Persons with indirect involvement (e.g. receiving e-mails or leaflets, visiting websites, and other similar engagement) are not to be considered.

Table 4 Output indicators for Priority Axis 2

Indicators PA2	**Description**	**Comments**
SOI 5. Number of participating institutions/organizations cooperating across borders	**Number of institutions, organisations or enterprises have cooperated or started cooperation across borders** with the help of your project's support during your project time. The outcome of cooperation is expected to enhance viability of Arctic economy and / or nature and environment.	The support can mean, for example: Organising a networking event, networking activities or networking platform; Organising workshops / seminars /conferences where participants from different organisations find ways to enhance viability of Arctic economy and / or nature and environment and solve economic or ecologic problems; Organising / planning consulting activities, training programmes that lead to cooperation on abovementioned themes. Beneficiary organisations (lead

		partner and partners) can be counted in.
SOI 5.1 Number of males	…working or participating in the project activities	Persons should be counted as participants when they: Actively participate in the project's cooperation events or activities. Are engaged in cross-border cooperation in the framework of your project
SOI 5.2 Number of females	…working or participating in the project activities	Persons should be counted as participants when they: Actively participate in the project's cooperation events or activities. Are engaged in cross-border cooperation in the framework of your project
COI 27. Total length of reconstructed or upgraded roads, km	**The length of roads** where the capacity or quality of the road (including safety standards) was improved as a direct consequence of the support.	
SOI 6. Population covered by developed transport and communication networks as the direct consequence of the Programme support, number of persons	**Population of a certain area that benefit from cross-border activities** targeted to development of transport and communication networks. **The developed transport and communication networks must be a direct consequence of the Programme support.** Indicator includes improvement of existing transport and communication networks or introduction of new transport and communication networks as a direct result of activities.	For collecting the information: Please think what is the area / unit that your solution covers. For counting the population, please focus on the project´s target group and population for whom the concrete solution your project has provided is available.

COI 29. Number of additional ICT based tools developed supporting cross-border cooperation	**ICT based tools developed to support cross-border cooperation.** May include new joint databases, information exchange portals, other joint logistics or decision-support systems, etc. The developed tools must be a direct consequence of the Programme support.	
SOI 7. Number of participants in cross-border activities implemented by projects improving the border management and border security, mobility and migration management	**Number of participants in cross-border activities** that aim to improve the border management and border security; mobility and migration management;	May, for example, include activities aimed at development of border crossing corridors and joint networks between authorities.
COI 35. Number of border crossing points with increased throughput capacity	**The number of border crossing points with increased throughput capacity** as a result of new or improved efficiency and security measures, improvement of infrastructure and/or equipment at the border crossing points, improvement of border management operations, customs and visas procedures, etc. Also includes newly constructed border crossing points.	
COI 36. Increased throughput capacity of private cars on land border crossing points	**Estimated additional increase of the throughput capacity of private cars** during 24 hours. The indicator measures the additional estimated theoretical maximum 24 h capacity and not actual traffic flows. The increase in capacity must be a direct consequence of the support.	Increased capacity in two directions over a border should be reported as summated throughput capacity increase for the entire crossing point.
COI 38. Increased throughput capacity of persons on land border crossing points	**Estimated additional increase of the throughput capacity of persons during 24 hours.** The indicator measures the additional estimated theoretical maximum 24 h capacity and not actual flows of persons. The increase in capacity must be a direct consequence of the Programme support.	Increased capacity in two directions over a border should be reported as summated throughput capacity increase for the entire crossing point.

4.3. Project risk evaluation

Flag system

In the Programme, a flag system is used in the project risk analysis. The flag system can be employed since the very beginning of the project, and thus allows the MA to plan the overall monitoring activities on individual project and portfolio level accordingly.   Each selected project is given a flag: red, yellow or green, based on the certain criteria. The flag system is easy and efficient at the same time. By giving a flag with particular colour, it provides a snapshot on the result of the risk analysis: red (risk is high); yellow (risk is average), green (risk is low).

The criteria for flagging standard projects:

- Size of budget:

over 2 000 000 €	1 000 000 - 2 000 000 €	under 1 000 000 €

- Justification: large budget implies many activities within the project and/ high cost value of activities, that in turn require smooth coordination and financial follow up of the Lead partner

- Number of Partners (including lead partner):

over 10	5-10	2-4

Justification: The more partners, the more attention must be paid to coordination and communication

- Duration (months):

31-36	19-30	up to 18

The criteria for micro projects (new):

- Number of beneficiaries (including lead partner)

5	4	3

Justification: Micro projects have a limited budget and duration. Higher number of beneficiaries means more administration and coordination of tasks, as well as more work in compiling report. Higher share of the project financing may go to administration, which can reduce the resources of other project activities. Extra attention must be paid to project timetable and progress.

- Number of new beneficiaries in Kolarctic CBC 2014-2020

3 or more	1-2	0

Justification: New partners and lead partners do not have previous experience in Programme specific rules and requirements. Extra attention must be paid to day-to-day monitoring and guidance.

- Project results' dependency on physical meetings / access to field sites / laboratories / commitment of non-beneficiary organisations:

Project objective and important results are difficult to achieve without physical meetings / access to laboratories / field sites / strong commitment from outside stakeholders	Some of the project results may not be fully reached without access to laboratories, field sites or such, or require face-to-face meetings / engagement of external stakeholders.	Project consists mainly of deskwork and workshops for exchanging knowledge and generating new ideas. It is expected that major part of the project activities can be carried out online.

Justification: A criterion specific to pandemic times, keeping an eye on possible restrictions. Methodology: Grouping the types activities and outputs listed in the project's activity plan, as well as their significance to the project's expected results and objective.

General risk assessment for all micro projects:

- No interim reporting – monitoring of project implementation as they are being carried out has a central role in ensuring the right scope of activities and correct project (financial) management practices.
- No possibility for extending the implementation time – high risk of running out of time with activities. COVID19 may increase the risk
- Limited budget – relatively small budget for personnel costs: time mangament in the project management.
- Quite many new partners are involved: competence
- Many pre-projects at the end of the programme: sustainability of project results

Risk evaluation for ongoing projects

Risks associated with ongoing projects are monitored with a template designed for the purpose (Annex 5). Each project has its own sheet for observations made from interim reports (including notions covered in checklists for narrative and financial reports) and day-to-day monitoring, and a summary of project risks will be displayed on a separate sheet (risk categories). The risk assessment template measures risks related to completion and quality of project activities, spending (realisation of budgeted costs related to activities), project management practices, and communication and dissemination. The template can be updated to correspond the specific needs of different moments in project cycle, and to accommodate observed project-specific needs in day-to-day monitoring. In addition to observation and their classification by the risk level, the template has room for planning further monitoring and follow-up measures for risk mitigation.

4.4. On-the-spot verification

On-the-spot verification processes in Russian Federation cannot be carried out during the suspension of the Financing Agreement and current travel recommendations. The process of verifications will be adapted to the new conditions.

According to the implementing Rules (IR) Article 32 and Article 26, MA shall verify that services, supplies or works which have been performed, delivered and/or installed. MA shall put in place effective and proportionate anti-fraud measures taking into account the identified risks. One element to detect the irregularities is on-the-spot verifications.

The frequency and coverage of the on-the-spot verifications shall be proportionate to the amount of the grant to a project and the level of risk identified by these verifications and audits by the Audit Authority for the management and control systems as a whole.

On-the-spot project verifications may be carried out on a sample basis. They are carried out in order to check the reality of the activities and the delivery and installation of the purchased products or services. It is also used to check the compliance of the agreements to the deliveries and payments as well as to check that programme´s visibility requirements have been fulfilled.

On-the-spot checks based on the documents provided by the beneficiaries are mainly conducted in their own premises or any other project-related sites. Check shall be planned beforehand in order to conclude it efficiently. MA shall inform the beneficiary about the coming on-the-spot check at least two weeks beforehand to ensure that persons who are responsible of the activities and needed documentation are available during the visit.

The timing of the check depends of the nature of the project and possible risks which MA has identified. A proper time for the on-the-spot check is during the implementation of the project when main activities are still ongoing and purchases have been done. Thus, if problems raise up during the check, beneficiaries have time to make corrections to procedures. When the project plan includes big investments or purchase of expensive items and if the implementation period is several years, MA may carry on several on-the-spot checks.

In the case when the sustainability regulations (IR Article 39, 3.) shall be obeyed, an additional visit might be needed after the project has been closed.

On-the-spot verifications are also connected to the Risk Management Plan of the programme. The projects with the high risk can be checked even though other criteria does not apply. On-the-spot verification described in this M&E Plan concerns Finland, Sweden and Russia. Norwegian BO will conduct needed verifications to the project activities implemented by Norwegian partners and financed from the Norwegian Kolarctic funds, thus not included in this plan.

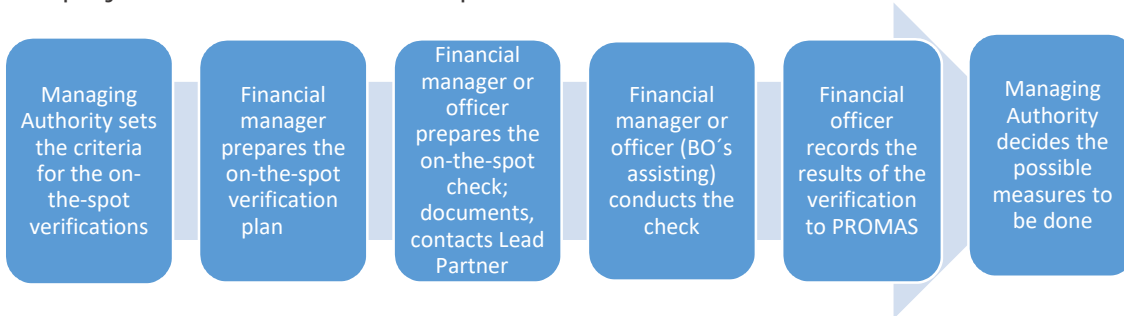The projects selected for on-the-spot verification is enclosed in Annex2.

| Managing Authority sets the criteria for the on-the-spot verifications | Financial manager prepares the on-the-spot verification plan | Financial manager or officer prepares the on-the-spot check; documents, contacts Lead Partner | Financial manager or officer (BO´s assisting) conducts the check | Financial officer records the results of the verification to PROMAS | Managing Authority decides the possible measures to be done |

Figure 1 On-the-spot verification process

Method for the sampling

MA shall describe the principles and the criteria that it will use when selecting the projects for on the spot verifications. Beside the beforehand set criteria, MA can conduct on-the-spot check whenever it considers it necessary. On-the-spot checks shall cover all thematic objectives and all types of beneficiaries (public, private, NGOs etc.). Checks shall cover all countries of the Programme area. The small size of the project or partner budget may not be exclusive criteria. As the number of the projects and beneficiaries is quite small in Kolarctic CBC Programme, less than 30 projects including 3 LIP projects, any sample method alone is not relevant way to choose projects for the checks. The sample method based on the clear facts does not take in notice all relevant information.

Based on the earlier experience the MA can consider that the risk of the individual partner is high even though the sampling method does not meet any risk. Expenditure verification reports may also highlight issues that demand on-the-spot verification. If the auditor during the first level control has made a notification of the suspected or established fraud, on-the-spot verification will take place immediately. In practice MA will conduct on-the-spot verifications after the Lead partner has submitted the first audited financial report. The check can be done before the approval of the report and expenditures or after that. On-the-spot checks included to the annual plan shall be finalized before the project´s final report is approved.

Criteria for the on-the-spot verification sampling shall be clear and simply to ensure that relevant project and activities are selected for checking. As the population of the projects is very limited, sampling method with several criteria does not work properly. MA will use selective method with basic criteria for sampling, all project fulfilling these criteria will be verified on-the-spot.

Basic criteria apply to project level figures
- The amount of grant (EU-grant+Finnish and Russian state co-financing) is over 1,5 M€ or the amount of EU-grant alone is over 1 M€ or
- Amount of the supplies (budget line 3 Equipment and purchases) is more than 30% of the direct EU-eligible costs or
- Amount of the external services (budget line 5 External services, sub-contracting) is more than 30% of the direct EU-eligible costs or
- Project has infrastructure component (budget line 6 Infrastructure investments)
-
Additional criteria which may be used:
- Partner level criteria for sampling
  - "New partner", no earlier experience in CBC projects or
  - Supplies and/or external services constitute the main part (>80%) of partner´s individual budget even though in project level 30% does not exceed

Partner level budgets are not official and not followed automatically. Using that method means that the data shall be collected manually by checking each partner budgets. The most fluent way is to do this within the interim reports and then decide of the needed checks.
With the sampling method, the Managing Authority can make the first level selection of the projects that it will check on-the-spot. In addition, more pro-jects/partners may be selected during the project implementation, based on the narrative and financial reports and audit reports. MA will also utilize other monitoring results and its earlier experience of the beneficiaries when estimating the possible risks that may exist. MA shall annually review the sampling method and the record of the projects selected for verification.

Annual Plan for On-the-spot Verifications

The annual plan for the on-the-spot verifications is based on the list of projects which were selected to the check using the criteria set up in this plan. The timing of the check is based on the project´s expenditure reports and incurred costs. In the period 2021-2022 the MA with the support of BOs will conduct the first on-the-spot check to almost all standard projects and to LIP projects. The checks are conducted on site and in also many cases partly or fully online, due to the restrictions of pandemic.

Annual verification plan (Annexes 3 and 4) is the frame and can be completed during the period.

Planning of the visit

Programme requires that reported expenditure are verified by an external auditor. The verification report shall be included to each interim report and to final report together with other reporting documents as general ledger specifications and list of equipment. The verification rate shall be at least 65 % of the costs and the auditor shall mark verified receipts to the general ledger specification. The MA´s approval of the financial report is based on the verification report and its own findings from the reporting material.

General ledger specifications provide basic information of the purchases and outcomes the project and can be utilized when planning the on-the-spot field visit.

Financial manager of the MA contacts the Lead partner at least two weeks before the planned visit and agrees the preliminary timetable. If the MA needs to check several partners, in most cases several checks are needed in different places. The Lead partner coordinates the visit plan from project´s side and informs MA of the possible timetable. Financial manager coordinates the visits on Programme´s side and the Financial officer plans practical issues; places, items to be verified, timeframe, distribution of the work between MA and BO staff etc. The working hours before the check and during it shall be estimated as well as needed travelling routes. When possible, on-the-spot verifications to several projects are conducted within one visit.
MA can conduct the visit without informing the project beforehand in the case when informing could risk the validity and reliability of the check.

Partners' responsibilities

Partners shall ensure that the financial reports submitted to the Managing Authority can be easily and properly reconciled to the accounting systems and reported invoices are available in the accounting systems. The partners shall allow access to the sites and premises and provide assistance during the verification. They shall allow to examine and take copies of the accounting records and other documents concerning the financial and operational management of the project. Partners shall organize that items under the checking are easily reachable.
Lead partner shall coordinate the on-the-spot check from project´s side. If any additional inquiries is needed, MA contacts Lead partner and it shall ask the clarifications from other partners.

Verification procedure

Financial manager of the MA is responsible for preparing the plan for on-the-spot checks and the Financial officer responsible for conducting the checks. Staff of the Managing Authority and Branch offices can assist in practical issues. If the check requires for example special technical expertise MA can outsource the task.

On-the-spot check includes both the checks of purchased items or outcomes and checks of the supporting documents. MA shall check that purchased products or services really exist, made contracts comply with the delivered and invoiced amounts, beneficiary have used purchased materials to the purposes they are meant. MA shall verify that beneficiary has obeyed Programme´s visibility requirements by checking visibility materials. If the verification is carried to ensure the existence of physical items, the check shall be done on the spot. If the verification is aimed to immaterial or electronic items or documents, the check can be conducted desk-based. On-the-spot verifications should verify the method and routines of collecting the data for indicators and the correctness of the indicator values the beneficiaries have reported to the Managing Authority if that can´t be verified from the reporting documents.

Project´s auditor checks the procurement within the first level control. During the on-the-spot verification MA will not check the procurement documentation systematically but mainly check

that the method of tender reported to the MA has taken place in practice. Procurement over national thresholds may need more detailed check and for that the assistance of the Control Contact Points (CCP) is relevant.

If the inspector identifies problems during the verification, it should increase the size of the checked items in order to determine the existence of similar problems in unchecked materials and to find possible systematic error.

If the MA does not succeed to finalize the check because of the missing documents or the partner disallow the access to needed documents or sites, it shall be documented to the checklist and verified with partner´s signature.

Documentation

The inspector records the findings of the on-the-spot verification the standard template (not yet available) and countersigns it. The results of the visit and the scanned report are recorded to the PROMAS. If any findings demand additional inquiries, the Financial manager or Financial officer contacts Lead partner and starts to investigate possible errors and exceptions. All correspondence shall be documented.

Handling the findings

If irregularities are found as a result of the verification, MA shall take necessary financial corrections and recover the unduly paid amount. The amount of the ineligible costs can be deducted from the project budget in order not to allow re-use.
If MA finds errors or exceptions during the visit, it shall provide the partner a possibility to give clarification. In the case of the partner´s accidental mistakes or technical error in reporting, the MA recovers the unduly paid grant or deducts it from the next payment and no other consequences follows. If the systematic error occurs, MA request the Lead partner to correct the deficiencies within set time limit and report the corrections to the MA. An additional on-the-spot visit may occur.

In the case when findings include serious, intentional irregularities, fraud or breach of obligations, the MA shall document the case and inform project´s Lead partner. Unduly amount is recovered and the case re-ported to appropriate bodies as described in the Description of the Management and Control system and indicated in the programme regulations.

All correspondence between Managing Authority and Lead partner (Partners) is done in written and documented.

4.5. Result Oriented Monitoring

The interview template of Result-Oriented Monitoring has been slightly revised in the spring 2022 to adapt the process in new circumstances, and take into account that a substantial part of project results may not be reached due to suspension of project activities in Russia. The monitoring will take place only in EU countries and Norway.

Result-Oriented-Monitoring (ROM) done by the Managing Authority to the projects, allows for a quick look into how the projects are doing. The purpose of the project Result-Oriented-Monitoring is to make a quick review of the situation of the project and to formulate conclusions and recommendations that contribute to the improvement of the project and to the overall

programme performance. In simpler terms, the ROM review offers a snapshot of the project, a conclusion, and finally recommendations for improvement.
Phases of Result-Oriented-Monitoring;

1. Project selection

Projects are selected for the ROM based on the risk analysis, which is based on the risk criteria. The risk criteria are the following:
• Projects having implementation problems or high operational risks;
• Projects covering topics for which there is a lack of sector expertise at the MA/BOs;
• Innovative projects

The risks criteria can additionally be supplemented with additional risks[2].

2. Preparatory phase and desk work

This phase includes looking at the materials that the projects have produced. These materials could be e.g. interim reports, project proposals, grant contracts, budget, logical framework, comparison of programme requirements and project results.

3. Field work and interviews

After looking into project materials and reports, the next step in Result-Oriented-Monitoring is fieldwork. Fieldwork would include interviewing the project lead partner, project partners, target groups for the project, and different stakeholders.

4. Reporting and a short summary of the project

After all the above mentioned steps have been done, the final step is to make conclusions and recommendations based on the findings during the Result-Oriented-Monitoring. The final report and conclusions are based on a checklist and a report template, which will ensure that the outputs are consistent. Each criteria is scored on a scale 1-3, these scores are justified and the recommendations on how to improve the performance are provided per criteria.

Additional information on the Result-Oriented-Monitoring for projects can be found from ROM factsheet[3]

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[2] ROM factsheet, TESIM (https://tesim-enicbc.eu/download/factsheet-on-result-oriented-monitoring-rom/)

[3] ROM factsheet, TESIM (https://tesim-enicbc.eu/download/factsheet-on-result-oriented-monitoring-rom/)

Figure 2 Result Oriented Monitoring process

4.6. Programme level monitoring

Programme Progress

The Managing Authority has monitored the quality of the Programme implementation by collecting data on Progress Indicators. The indicators measure how the Programme Management (Including MA and BOs) carries out activities in general administration, calls for proposals, assessment and selection of applications, management of ongoing projects, as well as finances. The activities listed above are also known as critical points, which are all interconnected.

The purpose of the progress indicators is to measure what happens in programme implementation from the angle of each critical point and to focus on the results achieved in the programme implementation. Data for the progress indicators is collected once a year and the results are presented to the JMC. The progress indicators offer JMC a look into the Programme progress and if it is needed to change or modify the programme implementation to the right direction. These results shall also be reported in the annual report according to the implementation regulation.

The purpose of progress indicators is to:

- Alarm whether Programme implementation is improving or not
- Help to define priority activities
- Make Programme progress measurable and easy to measure by JMC
- Help JMC to make decisions
- Assist National Authorities with data for internal reporting on the Programme implementation
- Help Programme bodies to define the ownership of the performance (responsible body).

Internal programme monitoring is done by a designated team comprised of representatives of the Managing Authority and Branch Offices. Data gathered from internal monitoring, including Programme level Output and Progress indicators in terms of progress made towards the set indicator target values, will be aggregated in the Annual report and delivered on a regular basis to the Joint Monitoring Committee as well as to the EC and the Government of the Russian Federation to be examined and approved.

Progress indicator table (values from 2010-2021):

Table 5 Progress indicators

Objective	Progress Indicator	Baseline / Target values	Values 2020-2021	Owner
Critical point: administrative issues				
Well-coordinated decision-making process	Number of the physical JMC meetings (at least 1 meeting per year)	2018: 5 Cumulative data from 2018 till the end of June 2020: 3 physical meetings and 3 online meetings 2022: 10 meetings	Due to pandemic situation no physical meetings. 2 online meetings	JMC, MA&BOs
	Number of the JMC Written procedures	2018: 7 WPs Cumulative data from 2018 till the end of June 2020: 5 WPs 2022: 14 WPs	4 Written Procedures	
Well-coordinated MA and BOs work: meetings on regular basis, exchange of information, etc	Number of the MA and BOs meetings	2019-2020: 15 meetings, since 2018 cumulative 23 meetings Target: 20 meetings by 2022(4 meetings a year)	2020-2021 14 online meetings	MA&BOs

Objective	Progress Indicator	Baseline / Target values	Values 2020	Owner
Critical point: Calls for proposals				
All planned Calls for Proposals are launched	Number of Calls for Proposals	LIPs contracted 2022: 3 CfP	Altogether, 4 Calls for Proposals have been organised	JMC, MA&BOs
Efficient dissemination of information about the Programme (overall info about the programme is provided to the audience during relevant events)	Number of events covering the needs and requests of applicants per country (other events)	2018: 41 2022: 50	NO BO: 2 Representation of the Programme in Norwegian-Russian cross-border forum; A stakeholder seminar in Norway January 27th in cooperation with Interreg North and NPA gathered over 100 participants. It covered the plans for a Next program RU BO: 1 event for commenting stakeholder analysis SE BO: 4 MA: 10 events for Programme stakeholders and 3 webinars for beneficiary organisations	MA&BO
	Number of participants of events covering the needs and	2018 160 2019-2020 (4th CfP)		

	requests of applicants per country	RU 66 participants SE 30 participants FI only individual consultations 2022: 220	(Kick off webinar for micro projects; focus on indicators micro projects; focus on indicators standard projects)	
	Number of applications received	During open calls for proposals: 168 (Per CfPs: 34; 25; 57; 52) 2018: 70 2019-2020: 9 494 users 2022: 95	No calls for proposals open 2020-2021. Current actors inquire regularly about the new programme. NO BO: No active applicants served in the period, but around 5 interested parties in future projects	
	Number of visitors on the website		No Call for Proposals organised during the reporting period	
	Number of followers on social media	Facebook: July 2018 – June 2020: 417 per month Twitter: Twitter at the end of the last reporting period 398 Instagram: the account was established in June 2020. No statistics informed in the previous report	kolarctic.info 2020-2021: 12 254 users 4500 external visits per year on kolarctic.no Facebook: July 1st 2019: 309 June 30th 2020: 372 June 30th 2021: 436 Twitter: 450 Instagram: 141 followers by the end of June 2021	
Consultations on the Call for proposals for potential applicants	Number of implemented consultations by MA (discussion about the project)	2018: 20 2022 target: 30 2018: RU 20, SE 20, NO 20 2019-2020: RU: 90 2022: RU 20, SE 20, NO 20	2021: No consultations for applicants, because no CfPs. Multiple daily consultations on project implementation for ongoing projects. 2021: No consultations for applicants, because no CfPs. Multiple consultations on project implementation for ongoing projects.	MA&BOs
	Number of implemented consultations by BOs per country			
Critical point: applications				
Increased Cross-border cooperation relevance of the applications	Average score for the Cross-border cooperation relevance in the project quality assessment of the received applications (the Evaluation Grid is used)	2018: 3.43 / weighted 6.9 2020: 3.47 weighted: 6.9 Target: 2022: 3.43 / weighted 6.9	No updates to 2020 data	MA&BOs
Involvement of organisations that have not participated in the Kolarctic programme previously in the approved applications	Number of new (to the programme) organisations acting as applicants or partners in the approved applications	2018: 45 In the 4th Call for Proposals: 25 new beneficiary organisations in approved projects 2022: 48	No updates to 2020 data	MA&BOs
Critical point: assessment and selection process				
Efficient project assessment process	Time from after the Call is closed to the award decision (max 4 months)	2018: 2,8 months 2022: 2,8 months (on-time scheduled assessment	No Call for Proposals organised during the reporting period.	JMC, RAGs, MA&BOs

Objective	Progress Indicator	Baseline / Target values	Values 2020	Owner
		according to the work plan)		MA&BOs
Efficient contracting process	Duration of GC negotiation	2018:2 mos 2019 9 months 2022: 2 mos	2020-2021 Up to 12 months and over, depending on project's proposed schedule (multiple projects asked to postponed due to the COVID 19 situation)	MA&BOs
The projects with high RAGs score and ready to be selected for financing by JMC have got the national co-financing approval	Number of applications that have not been selected by the JMC to be financed due to the lack of national co-financing	2018: 3 2022: 0	No selection processes during the year	NA, JMC, MA&BOs
Visibility of decision making process of JMC	Number of applications that have got high RAGs scores and available national co-financing but have not been selected by JMC due other justified reasons	2018: 4	N.A.	JMC

Objective	Progress Indicator	Baseline / Target values	Values 2020	Owner
Critical point: ongoing standard projects and LIPs				
Efficient implementation of the ongoing projects	Number of ongoing projects implemented without delay	2018: 0 2022: 19	2020-2021: 11 projects applied for extension to implementation time	MA&BOs, AAs
	Number of projects (per country and total) marked with "red flag" (projects with risks of not delivering results) during the risk assessment	2018: 0 2022: will be set in the autumn 2020	9 standard & LI projects have a red flag (4 FI LP, 1 SE LP), 4 micro projects have a red flag (micro projects have own flag criteria).	
	Number of projects with amendment in regards of declared project results in the application form	2018: 0 2022: will be set later 2018: 0 2022: 3	Addenda concern partners, and budget changes. Minor changes have been made on work package level due to COVID 19 adaptation or long period between contracting and project launch (1st CfP projects). These have impact on output level, basic purpose of projects are not changing, and have not required a contract addendum.	
	Number of LIPs implemented without delay	2018: 0 2022: 3	3 By 072021 We did not received requests for extension (10/21 1 request for prolongation received)	
	Number of LIPs marked with "red flag" during the risk assessment		3 LIPs flagged as red	
Improved synergy of financed projects by the Kolarctic Programme between projects of other Programmes in the Barents region	Number of ongoing projects with potential for synergy effects with projects of other Programmes	2018: 12 2022: 15	CfPs 1-3: 12 Cfp 4: 4 (RDF and NPA)	MA&BOs
All ongoing projects have been finalised	Number of on-time finalised standard and micro projects	2018: 0 2019-2020:0	2020-2021: 0; 1 standard project finalised after prolongation.	MA&BOs
	Number of standard project with extended implementation period	2022: 19 micro projects; 17* Standard projects (revised from original estimate of 10)	2020-2021: 6 projects were granted an extension. *The estimation for 2022 includes a high level of	

	Number of finalised LIPs	2018: 0 2022: 3	uncertainty due to the pandemic situation. 2019-2020 0	
On-time delivered interim reports (narrative and financial parts)	Percentage of on-time delivered narrative reports of ongoing projects	2018: 0 2019- 2020: 100% 2022: 70%	48 %, of which 11 delayed for more than 1 week, 7 with minor delays (1-7 days). For most delayed reports the projects have applied for more time.	MA&BOs
	Percentage of on-time delivered narrative reports of LIPs	2018: 0 2022: 70%	2/3 LIP reports on time, 1 delayed for less than 1 week.	
Critical point: financial issues				
Payments to projects is efficient	How soon the payment order is made after the payment request has been received and the report approved	2018:0 2022: max 30 days	No unexpected delays, payments done within the time limits from reports' approval.	MA, BO Norway
Projects recoveries are paid	Amount of the recoveries related to the payments	2018: 0 2022: Less than 1% of the payments	No recoveries until end of June 2020.	MA, BO Norway
TA budget is used in accordance with the sound financial management	The relation of the estimated TA budget to the incurred costs	2018: Realized costs vs. budget, less or equal to 100 % 2022: Realized costs vs. budget, less or equal to 100 %	70% of the total TA budget was used by end of 6/2021. Some savings from travel costs; expenditure reserved for purchases related to the next Kolarctic programme work has been moved to period 2021-2022 (SEA; monitoring system)	JMC, MA, BO Norway
Level of the use of financing in the projects related to the budgeted	How well the costs are estimated and approved budget is realistic	2018: 0 2022: 100% (or over 95 %)	Approved costs (13.10.2021) 42 % of the budgeted (only RU, FI, SWE budgets & approved included, NO costs are not audited mid-projects and are thus left out from comparison)	MA, BO Norway
Level of the needed budget amendments	How well the estimated budget relates to the activities	2018: 0 2022: max 1 per project	Total number of contract addendums due to the budget changes by 30.6.2020: 3 (in three projects) By 30.6.2021: 7 addenda.	MA, BO Norway

Programme results

Defined **result indicators** measure the broader societal impact of priorities and correspond with the expected results of the Programme. They span beyond the direct beneficiaries of the support and cover a wider group of society. Defined result indicators to a certain extent are affected by the outputs of the Programme, but in general, they are also affected by other external factors that lay beyond the activities of the Programme. There is a causal link between the output and

the result indicator, meaning that changes in the output indicator exert effect on its corresponding result indicator.

It may be necessary to complement the output indicator data with specifying sub-categories and qualitative data to fully demonstrate the link between the output and result indicators. Further, collecting analogous information in the field of Result Indicators (e.g. youth unemployment rate vs. RI2 Number of young people employed) may be needed to get an overview of the status of programme region, and understand the points where programme results may serve as positive intervention.

Result indicators for Priority 1

(Tables were missing from the 2 previous annual plans; content of the tables unchanged). The following section provides the measurement unit, baseline value and target value[4] of each RI that has been identified for Specific Objective and Expected Results under the Priority 1. Viability of Arctic economy, nature and environment and related TO1 Business and SME development and TO6 Environmental protection, climate change mitigation and adaption. The method of defining baseline and target value of each RI is described in the Final Report of Nordregio, dd. 08.09.2016.

Table 6 Result Indicator 1

RI1. *Expert panel statement on the cooperation between economic and environment fields within common interest*	
Measurement unit	Discussion points score average - on a scale of 1 to 5 (*5-best; 1-worst*), the experts were asked to assess the current state of the cooperation between economic and environment fields with common interest.
Baseline value *(2016)*	2.50
Target value *(At the end of the Programme period)*	2.75
Method	The selection of panel experts has been carried out in a way that ensures the variety of perspectives, backgrounds and interests relevant for the task. Discussion points were selected from the Kolarctic CBC Programme 2014-2020, reflecting priority axes of the Programme5. The joint Expert Panel Meeting took place in Helsinki, June 22nd, 2016. The experts produced a consensus report on 13 discussion points, signed it and delivered it to the Managing Authority of the Kolarctic CBC 2014-2020 Programme. The same Reporting Template will be used in the Mid-term Evaluation of the Programme6 and in the Evaluation of the Programme after the Programme period 2014-2020. The baseline value was determined by averaging the scores of 13 discussion points (list of discussion points and additional expert comments are presented in Annex 1). The experts also indicated on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 5-best; and 1-worst) that a certain improvement should be expected by 2020. Based on experts panel discussion, about

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[4] The Nordic Centre for Spatial Development Nordregio has been outsourced to set the baseline and target values for nine result indicators of the Kolarctic CBC Programme 2014–2020.
5 The Kolarctic CBC Programme 2014-2020

6 See Programme document (p. 78) Indicative Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

	0.25 of improvement (given a scale of 1-5) should be expected by the completion of the Programme.
Measurement unit	Discussion points score average - on a scale of 1 to 5 (5-best; 1-worst), the experts were asked to assess the current state of the cooperation between economic and environment fields with common interest.

Context: The Programme specific objective corresponds with the Programme Strategy is to identify the regional needs of the Kolarctic CBC Programme area which shall be implemented by the strategic objectives of the Programme. An essential factor in the future development of the North-Calotte and the North-West Russia is viability and attractiveness of the area with respect to the economy and the arctic nature. Prerequisite for multispectral development of the viability within the Programme area is promotion and utilizing the existing arctic knowledge, as well as cooperation between business sector and environmental authorities and NGOs via seeking to common interests and implementation of sustainable development activities in the area.[7]

Table 7 Result Indicator 2

RI2. *Number of young people employed in the Programme area*	
Measurement unit	Employed persons aged 15–24
Baseline value *(2013)*	481 841
Target value *(At the end of the Programme period, using the latest data available)*	491 478

Context: The Programme aims to promote better employment opportunities for young people in the Programme area by providing support of cross-sector innovations in cross-border business; young entrepreneurship and SMEs[8]; cross-border business development, including public-private partnership; business enhancing the cultures and/or traditional livelihoods of indigenous people; entrepreneurship in creative industries.

The output indicators identified under **Priority 1.** Viability of Arctic economy, nature and environment (**TO 1**) and corresponded with **RI 2** are **SOI 1.** Number of participating institutions/organizations cooperating across borders for viability of Arctic economy, nature and environment; **SOI 2.** Number of participating young entrepreneurs/SMEs cooperating across borders for business cooperation and development; **SOI 3.** Number of participants in cross-border activities implemented by projects enhancing the culture and/or traditional livelihoods of indigenous people; and **COI 2.** Number of enterprises substantially and actively involved in projects as final beneficiaries.

Table 8 Result Indicator 3

RI3: *Electricity production in GWh of facilities using renewable energy and energy efficient solutions*	
Measurement unit	GWh

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[7] The Kolarctic CBC Programme 2014–2020 Joint Operational Programme
[8] Commission Recommendation of 6 May 2003 concerning the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (http://eur lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:124:0036:0041:EN:PDF)

Baseline value *(2011)*	39 097
Target value *(At the end of the Programme period, using latest data available)*	41 052

Method	Given the lack of reliable regionally disaggregated data on renewable energy production *per se*, the total renewable energy in electricity production was used for this result indicator. Eurostat defines renewable energy as *'wind power, solar power (thermal, photovoltaic and concentrated), hydroelectric power, tidal power, geothermal energy, biomass and the renewable part of waste (Eurostat)'*. Electricity does not reflect the whole energy system yet it provides a good overview of renewable energy capacity for the regions covered by the Programme. All data were collected from official statistical sources. For Sweden, all calculations were based on the table: *Elproduktion och bränsleanvändning (MWh) efter tid, region, produktionssätt och bränsletyp (2011)* from SCB, except for the wind power data which is taken from Vindkraftsstatistik 2012 produced by Energimyndigheten and recalculated to GWh. As regards Finland, all data came from the table "*Elproduktion efter landskap*" from Energiateollisuus except for the calculation for "other renewable" and "thermal" that was made with data from "*Fuel energy consumed in DH production and CHP production*", also from Energiateollisuus. Calculations were made to get the percentage of CHP/district heating that came from "other renewable" and "thermal": a. First the "CHP / industry" and "CHP /district heating" was added together to get the total CHP production. (Using "elproduktion efter landskap"). b. Then the percentage of renewable sources that was used to produce the electricity was calculated using the "fuel energy consumed in DH production and CPH production". To get the percentage of renewable the categories "forest fuel", "industrial wood residues, "other biomass" and "Biogas" were added together and then divided with the sum. The other categories were added and dived with the sum to get the percentage that was "thermal". c. These percentages were then multiplied with the total CHP production. Renewable and Thermal seperatly. d. Lastly the total Thermal power was calculated by adding the non-renewable CHP production with "seperate Thermal power". Data for Norwegian regions were collected from Statistics Norway. The baseline value was set by adding up total renewable energy in electricity production for the regions that are covered by the programme namely Lappi (FI); Norrbottens Län (SE); Nordland, Troms and Finnmark (NO). The establishment of the target value was based on global trends and forecasts regarding continued growth of renewable energy sources in power generation; however, given strong vulnerability of the renewable energy sources to weather and other climate occurrences, Nordregio envisages approximately 5% increase in electricity production of facilities using renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions.

Context: The Programme aims to develop environmental innovations, technologies and services by joint activities that relate to support environmental innovations, technologies and services in the fields as *energy efficiency, renewable energy waste and waste water management, cleansing and improvement of the quality of drinking water, low carbon economy, eco-efficient development of industries, bioeconomy, etc.* towards sustainability and environmental impact reduction. Additionally, joint activities to provide information and/or education on environmental issues to local population are an essential part to explain of using the energy-saving appliances. The output indicator identified under Priority 1. Viability of Arctic economy, nature and environment (**TO 6**) and corresponded with **RI 3** are **SOI 4.** Population benefiting from cross-border activities in the field of renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions; **COI 17.** Number of persons actively participating in environmental actions and awareness raising activities.

Table 9 Result indicator 4

RI4: *Number of synchronized interregional practices on the example of oil spill response system*	
Measurement unit	Number of practices
Baseline value *(2016)*	0
Target value *(At the end of the Programme period, using the latest data available)*	1
Method	To obtain data on synchronized interregional practices on the example of oil spill response system, Nordregio has contacted Daria Izmailova (OOO Storvik Consult), to provide an input on issue related to oil response systems. According to information provided, none of synchronized interregional practices are currently running in the Programme area. The following definitions were used in developing of this indicator: 1. Practice – an activity that was going for the past half a year and will continue for some time. 2. Synchronized means that at least two countries are involved in this activity. According to information obtained from Daria Izmailova, only a few synchronized interregional practices like NPA Arctic have been already completed in the Programme area and currently no new initiatives have been undertaken. Nordregio envisages the establishment of no more than one (significant) synchronized interregional practice in the area during the Programme period.

Context: The Programme aims to develop environmental innovations, technologies and services by joint education and research activities supporting sustainable development and environmental activities; joint activities towards sustainable management of arctic natural resources; joint activities towards nature/environmental protection.

The output indicator identified under Priority 1. Viability of Arctic economy, nature and environment (**TO 6**) and corresponded with **RI 4** is **COI 16.** Surface area covered by improved shared environmental monitoring capacity or joint monitoring actions.

Priority 2

The following section provides the measurement unit, baseline value and target value[9] of each RI that has been identified for Specific Objective and Expected Results under the Priority 2. Fluent mobility of people, goods and knowledge and related TO1. Business and SME development, TO6. Environmental protection, climate change and adaption, TO7. Improvement of accessibility to the regions, development of sustainable and climate-proof transport and communication networks and systems, TO10. Promotion of border management and border security, mobility and migration management. The method of defining baseline and target value of each RI is described in the Final Report of Nordregio, dd. 08.09.2016.

Table 10 Result indicator 5

RI5: *Expert panel statement on the East West Transport Corridor and communication services*	
Measurement unit	Discussion points score average - on a scale of 1 to 5 (*5-best; 1-worst*), the experts were asked to assess the current state of the East Transport Corridor and communication services.
Method	The selection of panel experts has been carried out in a way that ensures the variety of perspectives, backgrounds and interests relevant for the task. Discussion points were selected from the Kolarctic CBC Programme 2014-2020, reflecting priority axes of the Programme . The joint Expert Panel Meeting took place in Helsinki, June 22nd, 2016. The experts produced a consensus report on 7 discussion points, signed it and delivered it to the Managing Authority of the Kolarctic CBC 2014-2020 Programme. The same Reporting Template will be used in the Mid-term Evaluation of the Programme and in the Evaluation of the Programme after the Programme period 2014-2020. The baseline value was determined by averaging the scores of 7 discussion points (list of discussion points and additional expert comments are presented in Annex 1). The experts also indicated on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 5-best; and 1-worst) that a certain improvement should be expected by 2020 (although with a lesser improvement compared to RI1). Based on the expert panel discussion, about 0.10 of improvement (given a scale of 1-5) could be expected by the completion of the Programme.
Baseline value *(2016)*	2.40
Target value *(At the end of the Programme period)*	2.50

Context: Fluent mobility of people, goods and knowledge are preconditions for the overall development of different sectors in the Programme area, such as business, research, innovations

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and technological development, as well as environmental awareness. Also daily life security and safety on local level in the border regions require fluent In order to facilitate cross-sectoral cooperation within the Programme area, in particular east-west connections and cross-border logistic corridors require investments and development activities. Traffic and cargo flows to and from the Kolarctic programme regions, connected to mining industry and tourism business, for example, have increased remarkably during the past few years. Aim of the priority axis 2 is to facilitate joint activities, which enhance fluent, well-functioning, efficient and safe traffic and logistics, as well as fluent mobility of people, goods and know-how/expertise across the borders within the Programme area.

Table 11 Result Indicator 6

RI6: *Estimation of tourism flows in the Programme area*	
Measurement unit	Overnight stays
Baseline value *(2013)*	8 943 570
Method	To obtain data on tourism flows in the Programme area, Nordregio the expert team has analysed the literature and statistics on tourism flows in the Programme area, and conducted a telephone interview with tourism expert in Lapin liitto. The expert team highlights the following issues to be considered when analysing and comparing various statistics and reports on tourism flows in the Programme area:
• In Finland, Sweden and Norway, statistical data on 'overnight tourist stays' are mainly available at the national statistical offices. A few differing practices on how overnight stays are registered can be observed across countries e.g. in Norway small cottages (i.e. less than 20 beds) registers stays in statistics whereas in Finland the limit is 20 beds or more.
• In Finland, tourists that arrive by air from Helsinki are often registered as domestic visitors (especially when only domestic flight is included in the flight ticket). The Statistical Centre of Finland is currently improving their registration of overnight stays, from national to regional level.
The number of overnight stays in tourist accommodation (by all visitors) was calculated for 2013 and retrieved from the Patchwork Barents website . Data used for calculations were obtained from the official statistical sources: Statistikknett Reiseliv , Lapland Above Ordinary , Statistics Finland, Rosstat, Federal Agency for Tourism, Ministry for Culture of the Russian Federation (Statistical information by regions of the Russian Federation), Statistics Sweden and Tillvaxtverket.
The establishment of the target value was based on the analysis of statistics, recent reports and evaluations of tourism trends in the programme area. There are signs of additional positive development of tourism flows e.g. from Asian countries, but the anticipation of future development of tourism flows is a challenging task with numerous factors having an effect. Based on the information available, the expert team envisages slight aggregate increase in tourism flows in the Programme area (approximately 5%).

Target value *(At the end of the Programme period, using the latest data available)*	9 390 749

Context: The Programme aims to enhance the equal living standards by developed ICT services throughout the Programme area by innovations, joint research and development activities on long-term and relevant transport/logistics solutions in the Programme region; facilitating cross-border mobility in the Programme area.

The output indicator identified under Priority 2. Fluent mobility of people, goods and knowledge (TO 1, TO 6, **TO 7, TO 10**) and corresponded with **RI 6** is **SOI 5.** Number of participating institutions/organizations cooperating across borders towards fluent mobility of people, goods and knowledge.

Table 12 Result indicator 7

RI7: *Estimated travel time on the reconstructed or upgraded roads*	
Measurement unit	Minutes
Method	To estimate the average speed on the reconstructed or upgraded roads in the Programme area, the expert team has considered the following road stretches : 1. the Kola – Verhnetulomsky – BCP Lotta Road (about 70 km long stretch of road) 2. the Kandalaksha – Alakurtti – BCP Salla Road (a 204 km long stretch of road; however only a stretch between 130th and 145th km is covered by the project) 3. the road 82 between Salla center and the Russian border (about 23km long stretch of road) 4. the road Kaamanen – Kirkenes (a 177 km long stretch of road) Using Google Maps (which is an unbiased, transparent, and easy-to-use method for estimating travel time on the reconstructed roads) Nordregiohas estimated driving distances and time and calculated the

	total travel time on the major roads aggregated from submitted project reports . On Tuesday (at 12 pm ± 1 hour), July 5th , 2016 the following estimations were made: 1. the Kola – Verhnetulomsky – BCP Lotta Road (distance – 70,7 km; time spent overcoming distance – 65 min); 2. the Kandalaksha – Alakurtti – BCP Salla Road (distance – 15 km
Baseline value *(2016)*	236
Target value *(At the end of the Programme period, using the latest data available)*	224

Context: The Programme aims to improvement of traffic lanes/roads to cross-border points by joint development activities in order to improve accessibility to and from the region (East-West connections); eliminating bottlenecks in transport and border crossings.

The output indicator identified under Priority 2. Fluent mobility of people, goods and knowledge (TO 1, TO 6, **TO 7, TO 10**) and corresponded with **RI 7 is COI 27.** Total length of reconstructed or upgraded roads.

Table 13 Result Indicator 8

RI8: *Qualitative survey regarding quality of ICT services/infrastructure, conducted among a sample of population in the Programme area*	
Measurement unit	Rating
Methodology	Nordregio has developed and conducted online survey using SurveyGizmo software. The same survey template will be used in the Final evaluation of the Programme. The survey was designed to mainly provide a general overview of ICT services/infrastructure quality in the Programme area (i.e. quality, cost and speed of transmission). Additionally, it also 'uncovers' important issues (for the full list please see Annex 2) that can serve as useful (background) information for policy-makers. The questionnaire was sent out on Thursday, May 26th, 2016 followed up by two reminders on Thursday, June 2nd, 2016 and Friday, June 8th, 2016. By the response deadline on June 17th, 2016, the total response rate was 17% i.e. 50 complete responses out of 294; 4 responses were only partially complete (for full presentation of the survey results please see Annex 2).

Most of respondents gave a score of 3 on a scale of 5-1 (5-best; 1-worst) for the overall quality, cost and speed of transmission in the Programme area. More specifically:

QUESTION	Scale from 5 (best) to 1 (worst)				
	5	4	3	2	1
Quality of transmission	9	13	16	11	1
Cost of transmission	6	14	21	7	1
Speed of transmission	11	10	16	12	1
Σ TOTAL	26	37	53	30	3

The baseline value was determined by adding up all total sums and dividing the amount by the number of responses. Based on the information gained during the evaluation assignment, the Expert Group envisages certain improvement of ICT services and infrastructure. Significant positive changes are not very likely to happen, due to at least two reasons. Firstly, the baseline value is already relatively high so the informants perceive the current situation as relatively good. Secondly, the absolute changes are not always fully reflected in qualitative surveys due to the fact that informants may not only consider improvements in their own region but also attribute the change to some external and global developments in terms of ICT. As regards the target value, the Expert Group envisages only modest aggregate change (approximately 2 %).

Baseline value *(2016)*	3.36
Target value *(At the end of the Programme period, using the latest data available)*	3.45

Context: The Programme aims to support to development of ICT infrastructure, which enhances introduction of remote services in peripheral or sparsely populated areas in relevant fields by peripheral or sparsely populated areas in relevant fields, such as *e-health; e-government; e-learning; e-inclusion; virtual culture services, e-marketing.*

The output indicators identified under Priority 2. Fluent mobility of people, goods and knowledge (TO 1, TO 6, **TO 7, TO 10**) and corresponded with **RI 8** are **SOI 6.** Population covered by developed transport and communication networks as the direct consequence of the Programme support; **COI 29.** Number of additional ICT based tools developed supporting cross-border cooperation.

Table 14 Result indicator 9

RI9: *Annual number of private cars crossing the border as a ration to number of customs personnel directly employed at the border crossing points*

Measurement unit	Ratio of personal cars to custom personnel

Methodology	To obtain annual number of private cars crossing the border, the expert team has used regional statistical data . According to the Finnish Border Guard statistics, a total of 139 867 cars crossed the border (the Salla/Kelloselkä and Raja-Jooseppi border stations as major cross-border check-points between Russia and Finland) in 2014 and 117 682 in 2015. The number of border crossings has decreased during the period of 2014-2015. . It should be noted that factors such as an unexpected increase in immigration inflows have affected border crossings; the very same issue might have a similar effect in the coming years as well, but that is very difficult to predict. According to the Finnish Border Guard, a total of 237 custom personnel were employed at the Border Guard in Lapland in 2014 and 227 in 2015 . The expert team has calculated the average ratio cars/personnel by dividing the total number of personal cars that crossed the border (i.e. Salla/Kelloselkä and Raja-Jooseppi) in 2014 and 2015 by the average number of custom personnel in 2014 and 2015. In determining the target value, the Expert Group has made an estimation largely based on the existing level of cross-border car traffic. Continuous effectivisation of operations may result in slight decrease of personnel at the Border Guard . The expert group envisages approximately a 3 % increase in the target value.
Baseline value *(arithmetic average if 2014-2015)*	555
Target value *(At the end of the Programme period, using the latest data available, arithmetic average of two years)*	572

Context: The Programme aims to improve:
- the functionality of border-crossing points and cooperation and exchange of best practices between border authorities (border guards, customs and other authorities and relevant stakeholders) by facilitation of required veterinary and phytosanitary check point equipment at the relevant border crossing points;
- utilization of modern technology and innovations using ICT;
- enhancing cooperation and networking of the border authorities with professional international rescue teams/ authorities;
- reconstruction of relevant border-crossing points and traffic lanes directing to them;
- joint competence and capacity building projects improvement of customer service skills of the border authorities;
- language trainings for authorities;

- joint education and trainings for border crossing authorities (for example, on cross-border legal framework, preparedness for changes in regulations of visa regime etc.);
- projects, improving the exchange and dissemination of information about custom regulations between authorities and to the public (for example, tourists, cross-border business actors, companies within cross-border transportation and logistics etc.);
- establishing a joint network between relevant authorities (border authorities, customs, search and rescue authorities), NGOs (such as voluntary rescue services), companies and educational institutions in order to improve and develop cross-border tourism safety and emergency preparedness.

The output indicator identified under Priority 2. Fluent mobility of people, goods and knowledge (TO 1, TO 6, **TO 7, TO 10**) and corresponded with **RI 9** are **SOI 7.** Number of participants in cross-border activities implemented by projects improving the border management and border security, mobility and migration management; **COI 35.** Number of border crossing points with increased throughput capacity; **COI 36.** Increased throughput capacity of private cars on land border crossing points; **COI 38.** Increased throughput capacity of persons on land border crossing points.

4.7. External monitoring

External monitoring may be conducted by the European Commission or Russian Federation. External monitoring will yield a twofold benefit: in cases where the projects selected for external monitoring have not undergone internal monitoring, it will increase the total number of monitored projects and will thus provide further assurance about the standard of project management and efficiency. In cases where projects undergo both internal and external monitoring, external monitoring missions provide a second view into the project and will support both the project management and the internal monitoring processes of the Managing Authority.

5. Communicating the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The results of the monitoring and evaluation activities will be delivered by the MA to the JMC as the main decision-making body in order to take needed actions toward delivering Programme objectives. It will be done through reporting in Annual Reports and during JMC meeting on the annual basis.