

## **Joint Action Plans (JAP)**

### **Article 93: Scope**

1. A joint action plan is an operation defined and managed in relation to the outputs and results which it will achieve. It comprises a group of projects, not consisting in the provision of infrastructure, carried out under the responsibility of the beneficiary, as part of an operational programme or programmes. The outputs and results of a joint action plan shall be agreed between the Member State and the Commission and shall contribute to specific objectives of the operational programmes and form the basis of support from the Funds. Results shall refer to direct effects of the joint action plan. The beneficiary shall be a public law body. Joint action plans shall not be considered as major projects.
2. The public support allocated to a joint action plan shall be a minimum of EUR 10,000,000 or 20 % of the public support of the operational programme or programmes, whichever is lower.

### **Article 94: Preparation of joint action plans**

1. The Member State, the managing authority or any designated public law body may submit a proposal for a joint action plan at the same time as or subsequent to the submission of the operational programmes concerned. It shall contain all the elements referred to in Article 95.
2. A joint action plan shall cover part of the period between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2022. The outputs and results of a joint action plan shall give rise to reimbursement only if attained after the date of the decision of approval of the joint action plan and before the end of the implementation period defined.

### **Article 95: Content of joint action plans**

The joint action plan shall contain:

1. An analysis of the development needs and objectives justifying the joint action plan, taking into account the objectives of the operational programmes and, where applicable, the country-specific recommendations and the broad guidelines of the economic policies of the Member States and of the Union under Article 121(2) and the Council recommendations which the Member States shall take into account in their employment policies under Article 148(4) of the Treaty;
2. The framework describing the relationship between the general and specific objectives of the joint action plan, the milestones and the targets for outputs and results, and the projects or types of projects envisaged
3. The common and specific indicators used to monitor outputs and results, where relevant, by priority axis
4. Information on the geographic coverage and target groups of the joint action plan
5. The expected implementation period of the joint action plan
6. An analysis of the effects of the joint action plan on the promotion of equality between men and women and the prevention of discrimination
7. An analysis of the effects of the joint action plan on the promotion of sustainable development, where appropriate
8. The implementing provisions for the joint action plan, including the following:
  - (a) the designation of the beneficiary responsible for the implementation of the joint action plan, providing guarantees of its competence in the domain concerned as well as its administrative and financial management capacity
  - (b) the arrangements for steering the joint action plan, in accordance with Article 97
  - (c) the arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the joint action plan including arrangements ensuring the quality, collection and storage of data on the achievement of milestones, outputs and results

- (d) the arrangements ensuring the dissemination of information and communication on the joint action plan and on the Funds
9. The financial arrangements of the joint action plan, including the following:
- (a) the costs of achieving milestones, outputs and result targets with reference to point (2), based on the methods set out in Article 57(4) and in Article 14 of the ESF Regulation
  - (b) an indicative schedule of payments to the beneficiary linked to the milestones and targets
  - (c) the financing plan by operational programme and priority axis, including the total eligible amount and the public support

The format for the joint action plan shall be set up in accordance with the model adopted by the Commission, by means of implementing acts. Those implementing acts shall be adopted in accordance with the advisory procedure referred to in Article 143(2).

#### **Article 96: Decision on the joint action plan**

1. The Commission shall appraise the joint action plan on the basis of the information referred to in Article 95 in order to determine whether support from the Funds is justified. Where the Commission, within three months following the submission of a joint action plan proposal, considers that it does not meet the appraisal requirements, it shall make observations to the Member State. The Member State shall provide to the Commission all necessary additional information requested and, where appropriate, revise the joint action plan accordingly.
2. Provided that any observations have been satisfactorily taken into account, the Commission shall adopt a decision approving the joint action plan no later than 6 months after its submission by the Member State but not before the adoption of the operational programmes concerned.
3. The decision referred to in paragraph 2 shall indicate the beneficiary and the objectives of the joint action plan, the milestones and targets for outputs and results, the costs of achieving these milestones, outputs and result targets, and the financing plan by operational programme and priority axis, including the total eligible amount and the public contribution, the implementation period of the joint action plan and, where relevant, the geographical coverage and target groups of the joint action plan.
4. Where the Commission refuses to allow support from the Funds to be given to a joint action plan, it shall notify the Member State of its reasons within the period laid down in paragraph 2.

#### **Article 97: Steering Committee and amendment of the joint action plan**

1. The Member State or the managing authority shall set up a steering committee for the joint action plan, distinct from the monitoring committee of the operational programmes. The steering committee shall meet at least twice a year. Its composition shall be decided by the Member State in agreement with the managing authority, respecting the principle of partnership. The Commission may participate in the work of the steering committee in an advisory capacity.
2. The steering committee shall carry out the following activities:
  - (a) review progress towards achieving the milestones, outputs and results of the joint action plan
  - (b) consider and approve any proposal to amend the joint action plan in order to take account of any issues affecting its performance
3. Requests for amendment of joint action plans submitted by a Member State shall be duly substantiated. The Commission shall assess whether the request for amendment is justified, taking account of the information provided by the Member State. The Commission may make observations and the Member State shall provide to the Commission all necessary additional information. The Commission shall adopt a decision on a request for amendment no later than three months after its formal submission by the Member State, provided that any observations made by the Commission have been satisfactorily taken into account. The amendment shall enter into force from the date of the decision, unless otherwise set out in the decision.

**Article 98: Financial management and control of the joint action plan**

1. Payments to the beneficiary of a joint action plan shall be treated as lump sums or standard scales of unit costs. The ceiling for lump sums set out in Article 57(1)(c) shall not apply.
2. The financial management, control and audit of the joint action plan shall aim exclusively at verifying that the conditions for payments defined in the decision approving the joint action plan have been fulfilled.
3. The beneficiary and bodies acting under its responsibility may apply their accounting practices for the costs of implementing operations. These accounting practices and the costs actually incurred by the beneficiary shall not be subject to audit by the audit authority or the Commission.