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II

*(Information)*INFORMATION FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES
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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

COMMISSION NOTICE

**Guidelines on the closure of operational programmes adopted for assistance from the Fund for
European Aid to the Most Deprived (2014-2020)**

(2021/C 522/01)

DISCLAIMER:

This is a working document prepared by the Commission. On the basis of applicable EU law, it provides technical guidance for colleagues and bodies involved in the closure of the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived. This guidance is without prejudice to the interpretation of the Court of Justice and the General Court.

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The operational programmes under the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived for the programming period from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020, including those benefiting from REACT-EU, must be closed on time and efficiently. This calls for guidance on how to close those programmes in line with Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾ and the legal acts of general application adopted on that basis.

The guidelines take into account the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis in 2020 and 2021 and its impact on programme implementation.

The guidelines aim to help Member States with the closure process by explaining how it works. They cover the financial settlement of the EU's outstanding budgetary commitments by paying to the Member State any final balance under a programme; decommitting or recovering the sums unduly paid by the European Commission to the Member State; and/or decommitting any final balance.

The system of annual examination and acceptance of accounts, has simplified the closure procedure significantly. As a result, programme closure should be based only on documents relating to the final accounting year and the final or most recent annual implementation report.

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

These guidelines apply to the closure of programmes under the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) in accordance with the FEAD Regulation for the 2014-2020 programming period ⁽²⁾.

Programme closure encompasses the financial settlement of the EU's outstanding budgetary commitments through payment of any final balance to the Member State ⁽³⁾ in respect of a programme and/or decommitment or recovery of the sums unduly paid by the Commission to the Member State. The closure of programmes is without prejudice to the Commission's power to impose financial corrections.

2. POSSIBILITY OF EARLY CLOSURE

Member States may request early closure of a programme provided that they have carried out all the activities related to the implementation of the programme. For this purpose, an earlier accounting year than the one running from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 should be considered as the final accounting year of the programme. If the Commission accepts such a request, the Member State must submit the closure documents set out in Article 52 of the FEAD Regulation (the 'closure documents') by 15 February of the year following the accounting year considered. Early closure should follow all rules established for closure.

For food and/or basic material assistance programmes (i.e. type I operational programmes), the final structured survey has to be carried out in 2022. However, if the Member State implemented all of the programme's actions before 2022, it does not need to conduct the structured survey in 2022. In this case, the commission recommends conducting the survey in the last year in which food and/or basic material assistance is distributed.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (OJ L 72, 12.3.2014, p. 1).

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (OJ L 72, 12.3.2014, p. 1).

⁽³⁾ According to Article 138(1) of the Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community (OJ C 384I, 12.11.2019, p. 1), in respect of the implementation of the Union programmes and activities committed under the MFF 2014-2020 or previous financial perspectives, applicable Union law, including the rules on financial corrections and on clearance of accounts, will continue to apply to the United Kingdom after 31 December 2020 until the closure of those Union programmes and activities, unless technical measures have been adopted by Joint Committee in line with Article 138(5) of the Withdrawal Agreement. However, it should be noted that the provisions of these guidelines relating to REACT-EU resources do not apply to the United Kingdom, as per the fifth subparagraph of Article 154 of the CPR, as amended by Regulation (EU) 2020/2221 of 23 December 2020.

3. DEADLINE FOR AMENDING PROGRAMMES

To ensure proper implementation of programmes and timely preparation of closure, Member States should submit requests for programme amendments ⁽⁴⁾, including amendment of the financing plan, by September 2023. This will permit decisions to be adopted before the final date of eligibility, 31 December 2023. The only exception is the submission of a revised financial plan reflecting, for the financial year 2020, a reduced amount of funding following application of the automatic decommitment rule set out in Article 59(1) of the FEAD Regulation. In this case, the request for programme amendment must be submitted to the Commission by 30 June 2024 ⁽⁵⁾.

Member States should notify the Commission of any decision to modify the elements referred to in the first subparagraph of Article 9(4) of the FEAD Regulation ⁽⁶⁾ before the final date of eligibility, i.e. 31 December 2023.

4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

4.1. Decommittment

The automatic decommitment rule set out in Article 59(1) of the FEAD Regulation applies to all budget commitments, including those related to the last year of the programming period (2020).

The commitments still open by 15 February 2025, or 1 March 2025 if the Commission extends the deadline ⁽⁷⁾, will be decommitted if any of the closure documents have not been submitted to the Commission by then.

Under Article 6a(1) of the FEAD Regulation ⁽⁸⁾, the last year of the programming period for the FEAD programmes to which the Member States can allocate additional REACT-EU resources is 2021 or, where applicable, 2022. In accordance with Article 6a(3) of same Regulation, unused commitments related to additional resources will be decommitted in the course of closure.

4.2. Clearance of pre-financing

The Commission will clear the pre-financing paid to Member States not later than when the programme is closed ⁽⁹⁾. This also applies to additional pre-financing paid from the REACT-EU resources ⁽¹⁰⁾.

Amounts paid as pre-financing must be justified by eligible expenditure declared at programme closure at the latest. However, clearance of pre-financing may start as soon as the programme has received the maximum FEAD contribution set out in the Commission decision approving the programme. In this event, the Commission will use the eligible expenditure included in the request for payment to clear the pre-financing. Clearance will only be finalised after acceptance of the accounts.

4.3. Calculation of the final balance

For the final accounting year, as for any other accounting year, the Commission will reimburse 90 % of the amount claimed by a Member State as interim payment application, by applying the co-financing rate to the eligible public expenditure included in the payment applications, provided there are available commitments in the programme. The impact of REACT-EU in the co-financing rate will be taken into account at the moment of the closure calculation.

The Commission will determine the amount chargeable to the Fund for the final accounting year as described in Article 50 of the FEAD Regulation. Article 50(6) of the FEAD Regulation states that the Commission calculates the amount chargeable to the Fund for the accounting year based on the accepted accounts, taking into account both the amounts in the accounts and the total payments made by the Commission during the accounting year.

⁽⁴⁾ Article 9 of the FEAD Regulation.

⁽⁵⁾ Article 61(4) of the FEAD Regulation.

⁽⁶⁾ As amended by Regulation (EU) 2020/559 of 23 April 2020.

⁽⁷⁾ Article 59(2) of the FEAD Regulation.

⁽⁸⁾ As amended by Regulation (EU) 2021/177 of 10 February 2021.

⁽⁹⁾ Article 44(4) of the FEAD Regulation.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Article 6a(4) of the FEAD Regulation, as amended by Regulation (EU) 2021/177 of 10 February 2021.

Once the Commission has calculated the amount chargeable to the Fund, it will clear the remaining pre-financing balance.

In line with Article 40(2) of the FEAD Regulation, the amount of the final balance paid from the Fund must not exceed the maximum possible amount of contribution from the Fund, as set out in the Commission decision approving the operational programme.

The resulting amount due to be paid/recovered calculated in accordance with the rules explained above will constitute the final balance for the programme.

4.4. Overbooking

Overbooking is the Member State practice of declaring to the Commission eligible expenditure in excess of the maximum Fund contribution set out in the Commission decision approving the programme.

As payment applications are cumulative only within a given accounting year, if a programme reaches the maximum Fund contribution set out in the Commission decision approving it before the final accounting year, expenditure declared to the Commission in excess of this maximum Fund contribution will not be carried over to the next accounting year.

Certifying authorities may therefore decide that amounts entered in their accounting system in an accounting year are declared to the Commission in a subsequent accounting year or indeed in the final accounting year.

Taking the above into account, and should Member States wish to have overbooked expenditure available in the final accounting year, they could refrain from declaring overbooked expenditure to the Commission in any accounting year before the final accounting year, and use this expenditure to meet the programme's needs. Member States may consider declaring overbooked expenditure only in the final accounting year, unless they need to declare it in an earlier accounting year to replace irregular amounts detected (within the limit of the Fund contribution).

If overbooked expenditure is not needed before the final accounting year, Member States should declare it to the Commission only in the final accounting year, including expenditure incurred and paid during the previous accounting years ⁽¹¹⁾. Overbooked expenditure declared to the Commission in the final accounting year will be considered at and after closure to replace irregular amounts (declared in any accounting year, including the final accounting year) that would be detected later. Without prejudice to Article 56(7) of the FEAD Regulation, the Member States may be able to replace irregular amounts detected after the submission of the accounts of the final accounting year/after closure using overbooked expenditure.

5. REPORTING ON IMPLEMENTATION AT CLOSURE

Under Article 2 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1255/2014 ⁽¹²⁾, the final implementation report issued at closure must include the following items:

- information on the programme's implementation, with reference to the common indicators used for partially or fully completed operation;
- information on and assessment of the actions which take into account the principles set out in Articles 5(6), 5(11) and, where appropriate, Article 5(13) of the FEAD Regulation.

The data in the final implementation report must refer only to what has been distributed by operations supported under the programme by 31 December 2023. Any food or basic material assistance purchased but not distributed by the end of 2023 should not be included in the final implementation report.

In addition, the Member States in which social inclusion of the most deprived persons operational programmes (Operational Programme type II) are implemented should provide:

- data on programme specific indicators and quantified target values,

⁽¹¹⁾ Member States may request early closure if they have carried out all the activities related to the programme's implementation. In such cases, an earlier accounting year (before 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024) will be considered as the programme's final accounting year.

⁽¹²⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1255/2014 of 17 July 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived by laying down the content of the annual and final implementation reports, including the list of common indicators (OJ L 337, 25.11.2014, p. 34).

- information on changes in the result indicators,
- information on and an assessment of the progress towards achieving the programme's specific objectives.

6. IRREGULARITIES

The accounts for any accounting year, including the final year, must include:

- the amounts withdrawn and recovered during the accounting year;
- the amounts to be recovered at the end of the accounting year; and
- the irrecoverable amounts ⁽¹³⁾.

The format for reporting withdrawals and recoveries, amounts to be recovered and irrecoverable amounts is set out in the model in Annex V to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/341 ⁽¹⁴⁾ (Appendices 2, 3, and 4, respectively).

The Member States have to indicate the split of the amounts withdrawn and recovered during the accounting year and pending recoveries as at the end of the accounting year by accounting year of declaration of the corresponding expenditure.

6.1. Treatment of irregularities in the final accounting year

Given that after the final request for an interim payment, which must be submitted by 31 July 2024, no subsequent payment application can be submitted to the Commission, any necessary deductions (notwithstanding the fact that they may refer to expenditure declared in previous accounting years) must be carried out in the accounts of the final accounting year, and reported in Appendix 5 of the model for the accounts.

Under Article 49(2) of the FEAD Regulation, a Member State may decide to exclude expenditure from the accounts of the final accounting year due to an ongoing assessment of the legality and regularity of that expenditure. If such expenditure is subsequently found to be legal and regular, it cannot be re-declared because there will be no subsequent requests for interim payment in which to include it.

6.2. Amounts to be recovered and irrecoverable amounts

In the accounts of the final accounting year, Member States may report amounts to be recovered and irrecoverable amounts relating to the expenditure declared not only in the previous accounting years, but also in the final accounting year ⁽¹⁵⁾. They may also report in the accounts of the final accounting year amounts that have become amounts to be recovered or irrecoverable amounts after the end of the final accounting year but before submission of the closure documents ⁽¹⁶⁾.

The Commission will exclude the amounts reported as to be recovered and irrecoverable from the calculation of the final balance ⁽¹⁷⁾.

The Commission will decide whether to reimburse the reported amounts from the EU budget, based on the outcome of the recovery process and/or of the Commission's assessment of the irrecoverable amounts, carried out in line with the procedure set out in Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1986 ⁽¹⁸⁾. The amounts reported in Appendix 3 and 4 of the accounts and related to expenditure declared in the final accounting year should be included in column A of Appendix 1 of the accounts to allow for their possible future reimbursement from the EU budget, pending the outcome of related procedures or assessments.

⁽¹³⁾ Article 49(1)(b) of the FEAD Regulation.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/341 of 20 February 2015 laying down detailed rules for implementing Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the models for submission of certain information to the Commission (OJ L 60, 4.3.2015, p. 1).

⁽¹⁵⁾ In order to allow Member States to make use of the possibility to declare amounts to be recovered as irrecoverable at closure or after closure for the amounts to be recovered relating to the final accounting year of the programming period.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Assurance package for the final accounting year.

⁽¹⁷⁾ This will result in a lesser amount to be paid or cleared in cases of positive final balance or a higher amount to be recovered in cases for which the final balance is a recovery.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1986 of 30 June 2016 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to the conditions and procedures to determine whether amounts, which are irrecoverable, shall be reimbursed by Member States concerning the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (OJ L 306, 15.11.2016, p. 1).

The Member State should inform the Commission of the outcome of the pending recovery process as early as possible.

If a Member State concludes that irrecoverable amounts should be charged to the EU budget, it should submit a request to the Commission to confirm such a conclusion using the form in the Annex to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1986 ⁽¹⁹⁾. The Commission will determine whether the irrecoverable amounts should be charged to the EU budget in accordance with the rules set out in Article 3 of the Delegated Regulation. This concerns irrecoverable amounts included in Appendix 4 ('irrecoverable amounts') of the programme accounts set out in Annex V to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/341 as well as amounts included in Appendix 3 ('amounts to be recovered') of the same Annex as amounts to be recovered and which may become irrecoverable amounts after the accounts for the final accounting year have been submitted.

6.3. Risk of irregularities leading to programme authorities carrying out additional controls of expenditure already declared to the Commission

If a risk of irregularities is detected which leads to additional controls by the programme authorities of expenditure already declared to the Commission, the national authorities need to comply with the following deadlines:

- for expenditure deducted from the accounts of any accounting year preceding the final accounting year under Article 49(2) of the FEAD Regulation, the additional controls must be finalised in time to make it possible to declare the expenditure at the latest in the final application for an interim payment, for which the submission deadline is 31 July 2024;
- in case of a risk of irregularities leading to additional controls of expenditure declared in the final accounting year, the decision about the expenditure's legality and regularity and therefore the decision on whether to keep this expenditure in or deduct it from the accounts of the final accounting year should be taken at the moment of the submission of the accounts, for which the deadline is 15 February 2025, or 1 March 2025 if extended by the Commission.

7. SUBMISSION OF CLOSURE DOCUMENTS

7.1. Deadline for submission of closure documents

Member States must submit the closure documents by 15 February 2025 ⁽²⁰⁾. The Commission may extend this deadline to 1 March 2025, following a request from the Member State concerned, made pursuant to Article 63(7) of the Financial Regulation ⁽²¹⁾.

The Commission will automatically decommit the part of commitments still open if any of the closure documents have not been submitted by the deadline of 15 February 2025 (or 1 March 2025, if extended) ⁽²²⁾. In such cases, programme closure will be carried out based on the available information.

Failure to submit any of the closure documents may be an indication of a serious deficiency in the programme's management and control system, which puts at risk the EU contribution already paid to the programme. In such cases, the Commission may decide to impose a financial correction.

7.2. Modification of the closure documents after the deadline for their submission

Member States may not modify any of the closure documents after the deadline for their submission, except when the Commission requests a modification or in case of clerical mistakes.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1986 of 30 June 2016 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to the conditions and procedures to determine whether amounts, which are irrecoverable shall be reimbursed by Member States concerning the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (OJ L 306, 15.11.2016, p. 1).

⁽²⁰⁾ Articles 48 and 52(1) of the FEAD Regulation and Article 63(5) of the Financial Regulation.

⁽²¹⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1).

⁽²²⁾ Article 59(2) of the FEAD Regulation.

7.3. Availability of documents

In line with Article 51(1) of the FEAD Regulation, the retention period for documents could be interrupted either in the case of legal proceedings or by a duly justified request of the Commission.

8. CONTENT OF CLOSURE DOCUMENTS

8.1. Final implementation report

In line with Article 13(6) of the FEAD Regulation, the final implementation report must contain all the information required under Article 2 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1255/2014 ⁽²³⁾.

The information included in the financial implementation report should be consistent with the final control report, the closure declaration and the final statement of expenditure.

In line with Article 13(5) of the FEAD Regulation, the Commission will examine the final implementation report and inform the Member State of its observations within five months of the date of its receipt. If the Commission does not provide observations within this deadline, the report will be considered accepted.

Member States will be given two months to respond to the Commission's observations on the final implementation report. The Commission may extend this deadline by a further two months, at the Member State's request. The final implementation report will be accepted if the Commission has no observations or if all of the Commission's observations are adequately addressed.

8.2. Accounts

As for any other year, the accounts for the final accounting year must include the information listed in Article 49(1) of the FEAD Regulation. The structure of the accounts is set out in Annex V to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/341 ⁽²⁴⁾.

The examination and acceptance of the accounts of the final accounting year follows the same rules as those for the examination and acceptance of the accounts of any other accounting year.

The Commission will follow the relevant procedures to examine and accept the accounts of the final accounting year and inform the Member State by 31 May 2025 whether it accepts that the accounts are complete, accurate and true ⁽²⁵⁾.

8.3. Management declaration and annual summary

As for all accounting years, the structure of the management declaration for the final accounting year is set out in Annex I to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1386 ⁽²⁶⁾.

8.4. Audit opinion and control report

As for all accounting years, the structure of the audit opinion for the final accounting year is set out in Annex III to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1386.

As for any other accounting year, the structure of the control report for the final accounting year is set out in Annex IV to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1386.

⁽²³⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1255/2014 of 17 July 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived by laying down the content of the annual and final implementation reports, including the list of common indicators (OJ L 337, 25.11.2014, p. 34).

⁽²⁴⁾ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/341 of 20 February 2015 laying down detailed rules for implementing Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the models for submission of certain information to the Commission (OJ L 60, 4.3.2015, p. 1).

⁽²⁵⁾ Article 50 of the FEAD Regulation.

⁽²⁶⁾ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/1386 of 12 August 2015 laying down detailed rules implementing Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the models for the management declaration, the audit strategy, the audit opinion and the annual control report (OJ L 214, 13.8.2015, p. 9).

The control report for the final accounting year should also include:

- information on open findings stemming from the audits carried out by the Commission or the European Court of Auditors, which should be provided in Section 8 of the control report ('Other information');
- assurance on the reliability of the data relating to indicators.

In the control report of the final accounting year, the national audit authorities should conclude that the data relating to indicators are reliable. They should also provide a final assessment on key requirement 6: 'Reliable system for collecting, recording and storing data for monitoring, evaluation, financial management, verification and audit purposes', set out in Table 1 of Annex II to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 532/2014 ⁽²⁷⁾. This final assessment should include in particular a confirmation that the aggregated data reported to the Commission is correct.

9. PAYMENT OF THE FINAL BALANCE

The Commission will pay the final balance no later than three months after the date on which the accounts of the final accounting year are accepted, or one month after the date of acceptance of the final implementation report, whichever date is later ⁽²⁸⁾.

This is without prejudice to the Commission's power to interrupt the deadline for payment of the final balance or suspend such payment.

10. LEGALITY AND REGULARITY ISSUES

The Commission can raise issues related to the legality and regularity of underlying transactions concerning expenditure in the accepted accounts after payment of the final balance and closure of the programme.

Closure of the programme is without prejudice to the Commission's power to impose financial corrections under Articles 55 and 56 of the FEAD Regulation.

⁽²⁷⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 532/2014 of 13 March 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (OJ L 148, 20.5.2014, p. 54).

⁽²⁸⁾ Article 52(2) of the FEAD Regulation.

IV

(Notices)

NOTICES FROM EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS, BODIES, OFFICES AND AGENCIES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Euro exchange rates ⁽¹⁾

27 December 2021

(2021/C 522/02)

1 euro =

Currency			Exchange rate		
Currency			Exchange rate		
USD	US dollar	1,1312	CAD	Canadian dollar	1,4529
JPY	Japanese yen	129,79	HKD	Hong Kong dollar	8,8246
DKK	Danish krone	7,4362	NZD	New Zealand dollar	1,6660
GBP	Pound sterling	0,84330	SGD	Singapore dollar	1,5354
SEK	Swedish krona	10,3250	KRW	South Korean won	1 343,60
CHF	Swiss franc	1,0396	ZAR	South African rand	17,5609
ISK	Iceland króna	147,40	CNY	Chinese yuan renminbi	7,2087
NOK	Norwegian krone	10,0405	HRK	Croatian kuna	7,5025
BGN	Bulgarian lev	1,9558	IDR	Indonesian rupiah	16 081,55
CZK	Czech koruna	25,139	MYR	Malaysian ringgit	4,7318
HUF	Hungarian forint	370,22	PHP	Philippine peso	56,830
PLN	Polish zloty	4,6050	RUB	Russian rouble	83,2088
RON	Romanian leu	4,9498	THB	Thai baht	37,963
TRY	Turkish lira	12,8099	BRL	Brazilian real	6,4157
AUD	Australian dollar	1,5685	MXN	Mexican peso	23,3216
			INR	Indian rupee	84,8105

⁽¹⁾ Source: reference exchange rate published by the ECB.

NOTICES FROM MEMBER STATES

Electronic identification schemes notified pursuant to Article 9(1) of Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market ⁽¹⁾

(2021/C 522/03)

Title of the scheme	eID means under the notified scheme	Notifying Member State	Level of assurance	Authority responsible for the scheme	Date of publication in the Official Journal of the EU
German eID based on Extended Access Control	National Identity Card Electronic Residence Permit eID Card for Union Citizens and EEA Nationals	Federal Republic of Germany	High	Federal Ministry of the Interior Alt-Moabit 140 10557 Berlin DGI2@bmi.bund.de +49 30186810	26.9.2017 14.12.2020
SPID – Public System of Digital Identity	SPID eID means provided by: — Aruba PEC S.p.A. — Namirial S.p.A. — InfoCert S.p.A. — In.Te.S.A. S.p.A. — Poste Italiane S.p.A. — Register S.p.A. — Sielte S.p.A. — Telecom Italia Trust Technologies S.r.l.	Italy	High Substantial Low	AgID - Agency for Digital Italy Viale Liszt 21 00144 Roma eid-as-spida@agid.gov.it +39 0685264407	10.9.2018
	— Lepida S.p.A.				13.9.2019
National Identification and Authentication System (NIAS)	Personal Identity Card (eOI)	Republic of Croatia	High	Ministry of Public Administration, Republic of Croatia Maksimirska 63 10000 Zagreb e-gradjani@uprava.hr	7.11.2018
Estonian eID scheme: ID card Estonian eID scheme: RP card Estonian eID scheme: Digi-ID	— ID card — RP card — Digi-ID — e-Residency — Digi-ID — Mobiil-ID — Diplomatic identity card	Republic of Estonia	High	Police and Border Guard Board Pärnu mnt 139 15060 Tallinn eid@politsei.ee +372 6123000	7.11.2018

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 257, 28.8.2014, p. 73.

Title of the scheme	eID means under the notified scheme	Notifying Member State	Level of assurance	Authority responsible for the scheme	Date of publication in the Official Journal of the EU
<p>Estonian eID scheme: e-Residency Digi-ID</p> <p>Estonian eID scheme: Mobil-ID</p> <p>Estonian eID scheme: diplomatic identity card</p>					
Documento Nacional de Identidad electrónico (DNle)	Spanish ID card (DNle)	Kingdom of Spain	High	Ministry of Interior - Kingdom of Spain C/ Julián González Segador, s/n 28043 Madrid divisiondedocumentacion@policia.es	7.11.2018
Luxembourg national identity card (eID card)	Luxembourg eID card	Grand Duchy of Luxembourg	High	Ministry for Home Affairs BP 10 L-2010 Luxembourg minint@mi.etat.lu secretariat@ctie.etat.lu +352 24784600	7.11.2018
Belgian eID scheme FAS/ eCards	Belgian Citizen eCard Foreigner eCard	Kingdom of Belgium	High	Policy & Support Federal Public Service (BOSA)/ Directorate General Digital Transformation Simon Bolivarlaan 30 1000 Brussel eidas@bosa.fgov.be	27.12.2018
Cartão de Cidadão (CC)	Portuguese national identity card (eID card)	Portuguese Republic	High	AMA – Administrative Modernisation Agency Rua de Santa Marta 55, 3º 1150 - 294 Lisbon ama@ama.pt +351 217231200	28.2.2019
GOV.UK Verify	GOV.UK Verify eID means provided by: — Barclays — Experian — Post Office — SecureIdentity — Digidentity	United Kingdom	Substantial Low	Government Digital Service The White Chapel Building 10 Whitechapel High St London E1 8QS eidas-support@digital.cabinet-office.gov.uk +44 78585008654	2.5.2019

Title of the scheme	eID means under the notified scheme	Notifying Member State	Level of assurance	Authority responsible for the scheme	Date of publication in the Official Journal of the EU
Italian eID based on National ID card (CIE)	Carta di Identità Elettronica (CIE)	Italy	High	Ministry of Interior Piazza del Viminale 1 00184 Roma segreteria.servizi.demografici@interno.it +39 06 465 27751	13.9.2019
National identification scheme of the Czech Republic	Czech eID card	Czech Republic	High	Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic Nad Štolou 936/3 P. O. BOX 21 170 34 Prague 7 eidas@mvcz.cz	13.9.2019
Dutch Trust Framework for Electronic Identification (Afsprakenstelsel Elektronische Toegangsdiens)	Means issued under eHerkenning (for businesses)	Kingdom of the Netherlands	High Substantial	Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations - Logius Postbus 96810 2509 JE Den Haag info@eherkenning.nl	13.9.2019
Slovak eID Scheme	Slovak eID card	Slovak Republic	High	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic for Investments and Informatization Štefánikova 15 811 05 Bratislava eidas@vicepremier.gov.sk +421 220928177	18.12.2019
Latvian eID Scheme	eID karte eParaksts karte eParaksts karte+ eParaksts	Latvia	High Substantial	Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (OCMA) of the Ministry of Interior of Republic of Latvia Čiekurkalna 1. līnija 1 k-3 LV-1026, Rīga rigas.1.nodala@pmlp.gov.lv Latvia State Radio and Television Centre (LVRTC) Ērgļu iela 14 Rīga LV-1012 eparaksts@eparaksts.lv	18.12.2019
Belgian eID Scheme FAS / itsme®	itsme® mobile App	Kingdom of Belgium	High	Policy & Support Federal Public Service (BOSA)/ Directorate General Digital Transformation Simon Bolivarlaan 30 1000 Brussel eidas@bosa.fgov.be	18.12.2019

Title of the scheme	eID means under the notified scheme	Notifying Member State	Level of assurance	Authority responsible for the scheme	Date of publication in the Official Journal of the EU
Danish eID Scheme (NemID)	NemID Key card NemID mobile app NemID token NemID on hardware NemID IVR NemID Magna card (key card)	Kingdom of Denmark	Substantial	Agency for Digitisation of the Ministry of Finance Landgreven 4 1017 Copenhagen K digst@digst.dk +45 33925200	8.4.2020
Chave Móvel Digital (CMD)	Digital Mobile Key (mobile eID)	Portuguese Republic	High	AMA – Administrative Modernisation Agency Rua de Santa Marta 55 3º 1150 - 294 Lisbon ama@ama.pt +351 217231200	8.4.2020
Lithuanian eID Scheme (ATK - <i>Asmens tapatybės kortelė</i>)	Lithuanian National Identity card	Republic of Lithuania	High	The Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania Šventaragio str. 2 Vilnius LT-01510 bendrasisd@vrn.lt +370 52717130	21.8.2020
Dutch eID Scheme (DigiD)	DigiD	Kingdom of the Netherlands	Substantial High	Kingdom Relations - Logius Postbus 96810 2509 JE The Hague logiussecretariaatproductie huis@logius.nl	21.8.2020
Maltese eID scheme (Identity Malta)	Electronic identity card (e-ID Card) Residence document (e-RP Card)	Republic of Malta	High	Identity Malta Castagna Building Valley Road, Msida enquiries@identitymalta.com +356 25904900	10.12.2021
French eID scheme (FranceConnect + /The Digital Identity La Poste)	L'Identité numérique La Poste (La Poste Mobile App)	The French Republic	Substantial	DINUM (Interministerial Digital Direction) 20 avenue de Ségur 75007 PARIS eidas@franceconnect.gouv.fr	10.12.2021

Information to be provided pursuant to Article 5(2) Establishment of a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)

(Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 (OJ L 210, 31.7.2006, p. 19))

(2021/C 522/04)

I.1) Name, address and contact point

Registered name: Muskauer Faltenbogen German-Polish Geopark EGTC Ltd

(Deutsch-polnischer Geopark Muskauer Faltenbogen EVTZ mbH – Polsko-Niemiecki Geopark Łuk Mużakowa EUWT z o.o.)

Registered office: Alte Ziegelei Klein Kölzig in 03159 Neiße-Malxetal, Germany

Contact point: Olaf Lalk

Internet address of the Grouping: <https://www.muskauer-faltenbogen.de/>

I.2) Duration of the Grouping

Duration of the grouping: unlimited

Date of registration: 5 November 2021

Date of publication: 24 November 2021

II. OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of the Muskauer Faltenbogen Geopark EGTC Ltd is to coordinate, facilitate and promote German-Polish cross-border cooperation between its members for sustainable development of the Muskauer Faltenbogen Geopark area. The Muskauer Faltenbogen EGTC Ltd also aims to help strengthen the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the Union by carrying out the following tasks.

The tasks of this EGTC are, within the limits of the financial resources available, to:

- a) fulfil the obligations of membership of the European Geoparks Network (EGN) and Global Geoparks Network (GGN), such as the payment of membership fees, regular reporting and participation in the above-mentioned networks;
- b) present the German-Polish Muskauer Faltenbogen Geopark to the outside world;
- c) develop plans, concepts and strategies for geoscientific and general environmental education, especially for children and young people, and for geotouristic infrastructure;
- d) promote peace for the sustainable development of the Muskauer Faltenbogen Geopark;
- e) carry out public relations work, education work and German-Polish projects in these fields, either independently or in conjunction with third parties, and take part in geological and historical documentation activities for the sustainable development of the Geopark;
- f) participate in the protection of the geological and cultural heritage, landscape and animal and plant life;
- g) acquire financial resources, including applications for and accounting for funding, by the EGTC and its members for the performance of its tasks;
- h) pursue economic activity for the exclusive marketing of the EGTC if and to the extent that the assembly so decides.

III. ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON NAME OF THE GROUPING

Name in abbreviated form or as an acronym:

PL: 'EUWT z o.o. Geopark Łuk Mużakowa'

DE: 'EVTZ mbH Geopark Muskauer Faltenbogen'

IV. MEMBERS

IV.1) **Total number of members in the Grouping:** 14

IV.2) **Nationalities of the members of the Grouping:** PL/DE

IV.3) **Member information**

Official name: Brody Municipality

Postal address: Rynek 2, 68-343 Brody, PL

Internet address: <https://brody.pl>

Type of member: Local authority

Official name: Łęknica Municipality

Postal address: ul. Żurawska 1, 68-208 Łęknica, PL

Type of member: Local authority

Official name: Przewóz Municipality

Postal address: pl. Partyzantów 1, 68-132 Przewóz, PL

Type of member: Local authority

Official name: Trzebiel Municipality

Postal address: ul. Żarska 41, 68-212 Trzebiel, PL

Internet address: <https://www.trzebiel.pl>

Type of member: Local authority

Official name: Tuplice Municipality

Postal address: ul. Mickiewicza 27, 68-219 Tuplice, PL

Internet address: <https://tuplice.pl>

Type of member: Local authority

Official name: Town of Żary

Postal address: Rynek 1, 68-200 Żary, PL

Internet address: <https://www.zary.pl>

Type of member: Local authority

Official name: Żary Municipality

Postal address: al. Jana Pawła II 6, 68-200 Żary, PL

Internet address:

Type of member: Local authority

Official name: Lubuskie Voivodship

Postal address: ul. Podgórna 7, 65-057 Zielona Góra, PL

Internet address: <https://www.lubuskie.pl>

Type of member: Regional authority

Official name: Neiße-Malxetal (Dolina Nysa-Mańska) Municipality

Postal address: Muskauer Straße 8, 03159 Neiße-Malxetal, DE

Internet address: <https://www.neisse-malxetal.de>

Type of member: Local authority

Official name: Felixsee (Felixsowj Jazor) Municipality

Postal address: Forster Straße 8, 03159 Döbern, DE

Internet address: <https://www.amt-doebern-land.de>

Type of member: Local authority

Official name: Spree-Neiße (Wokrejs Sprjewja-Nysa) District

Postal address: Heinrich-Heine-Straße 1, 03149 Forst (Lausitz), DE

Internet address: <https://www.lkspn.de>

Type of member: Regional authority

Official name: Gablenz (Gablōnc) Municipality

Postal address: Dorfstraße 19, 02953 Gablenz, DE

Internet address: <https://gablenz-online.de>

Type of member: Local authority

Official name: Town of Weißwasser/O.L. (Běla Woda)

Postal address: Marktplatz, 02943 Weißwasser, DE

Internet address: <http://www.weisswasser.de>

Type of member: Local authority

Official name: Görlitz (Wokrjes Zhorjelc) District

Postal address: Bahnhofstraße 24, 02826 Görlitz, DE

Internet address: <https://www.kreis-goerlitz.de>

Type of member: Regional authority

Information to be provided pursuant to Article 5(2) Establishment of a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)

(Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 (OJ L 210, 31.7.2006, p. 19))

(2021/C 522/05)

I.1) Name, address and contact point

Registered name: Euregio Connect mbH

Registered office: Innsbruck, Austria

Contact point: Florian Phleps

Internet address of the Grouping: www.tirolwerbung.at

I.2) Duration of the Grouping

Duration of the grouping: Unlimited

Date of registration: 5 November 2021

Date of publication: 5 November 2021

II. OBJECTIVES

The EGTC has legal personality under public law; it is being established to facilitate and promote territorial cooperation, including one or more of the cross-border, transnational and interregional strands of cooperation between its members within the meaning of Article 1(2) of the EGTC Regulation.

The EGTC shall pursue the following objectives in particular: consolidating and developing cross-border cooperation in the planning, management and financing of trans-regional and cross-border projects in the tourism and sports sector, especially the organisation of the 'Tour of the Alps' cycling competition;

III. ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON NAME OF THE GROUPING

Name in English: Euregio Connect

Name in Italian: Euregio Connect

IV. MEMBERS

IV.1) Total number of members in the Grouping: 3

IV.2) Nationalities of the members of the Grouping: Italian, Austrian

IV.3) Member information

Official name: Tirol Werbung GmbH

Postal address: Maria-Theresien-Straße 55, 6020 Innsbruck (AT)

Internet address: www.tirolwerbung.at

Type of member: Public undertaking

Official name: IDM Südtirol – Alto Adige

Postal address: Pfarrplatz 11, 39100 Bozen/Bolzano (IT)

Internet address: www.idm-suedtirol.com

Type of member: Public undertaking

Official name: Trentino Marketing S.r.l.

Postal address: Via Romagnoli 11, 38122 Trient/Trento (IT)

Internet address: www.trentinomarketing.org/it/

Type of member: Public undertaking

V

(Announcements)

OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

INFORMATION NOTICE – PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Geographical Indications from El Salvador to be protected as Geographical Indications in the European Union

(2021/C 522/06)

In the framework of the agreement ⁽¹⁾ establishing an Association between the European Union and its Member States, on the one hand, and Central America ⁽²⁾, on the other hand the authorities of El Salvador have presented an additional geographical indication to be protected under the agreement.

The above-mentioned agreement, in accordance with its article 247, provides for the possibility of adding additional geographical indications for wines, spirits, agricultural products and foodstuffs to be protected on the basis of the rules and procedures established. Following a successful examination by the competent authorities, this additional geographical indication will be included in Annex XVIII (Protected Geographical Indications) in accordance with the relevant rules and procedures for the Association Council.

In the framework of this examination, the Commission invites any Member State or third country or any natural or legal person having a legitimate interest, resident or established in a Member State or in a third country, to submit oppositions to such protection by lodging a duly substantiated statement.

Statements of opposition must reach the Commission within two months of the date of this publication. Statements of opposition should be sent to the following e-mail address: AGRI The Americas@ec.europa.eu

Statements of opposition shall be examined only if they are received within the time-limit set out above and if they show that the protection of the name proposed would:

- (a) conflict with the name of a plant variety or an animal breed and as a result is likely to mislead the consumer as to the true origin of the product;
- (b) be wholly or partially homonymous with that of a name already protected in the Union (under Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs ⁽³⁾) available here:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/food-safety-and-quality/certification/quality-labels/geographical-indications-register/>

or with one of the geographical indications from non-EU countries protected in the EU under bilateral agreements publicly available on GView, available here: <https://www.tmdn.org/giview/> or in the list available here:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/food-farming-fisheries/food_safety_and_quality/documents/list-gis-non-eu-countries-protected-in-eu_en.pdf

⁽¹⁾ Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 346, 15.12.2012, p. 3.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 1.

- (c) in the light of a trade mark's reputation and renown and the length of time it has been used, be liable to mislead the consumer as to the true identity of the product;
- (d) jeopardise the existence of an entirely or partly identical name or of a trade mark or the existence of products which have been legally on the market for at least five years preceding the date of the publication of this notice;
- (e) or if they can give details from which it can be concluded that the name for which protection is considered is generic.

The criteria referred to above shall be evaluated in relation to the territory of the Union, which in the case of intellectual property rights refers only to the territory or territories where the said rights are protected. The protection of these names in the European Union is subject to the successful conclusion of this procedure and the subsequent legal act adding this term to the above mentioned Agreement.

Geographical Indications from El Salvador to be protected as Geographical Indications in the EU for agricultural products and foodstuffs

Name as registered in El Salvador	Short description
CAFÉ ALOTEPEC	Coffee
CAFÉ BÁLSAMO QUEZALTEPEC	Coffee
CAFÉ CACAHUATIQUE	Coffee
CAFÉ CHICHONTEPEC	Coffee
CAFÉ TECAPA CHINAMECA	Coffee
CAMARÓN BAHÍA DE JIQUILISCO	Shrimp
CHAPARRO	Grain-based distilled spirit drink
JOCOTE BARÓN ROJO SAN LORENZO	Fresh fruit
LOROCO SAN LORENZO	Fresh vegetable
PUPUSA DE ARROZ DE OLOCUILTA	Thick griddle flatbread (tortilla) made with rice

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