

Associated Strategic Partners (ASP)

WHO ARE THE ASSOCIATED STRATEGIC PARTNERS (ASP)?

An ASP is usually an institution relevant for achieving the project results that cannot bear the financial burden of a full financed partner. ASPs are involved in the project **without directly receiving funds** from the Programme (without own budget), but “sponsored” by an ERDF partner.

Associated Strategic Partners may be organisations which are relevant for the project in terms of area of expertise and at the same time which are interested in providing professional or political support to the project and are able to offer valuable input for the development of project outputs. Thus, Associated Strategic Partners may bring a significant contribution to the sustainability of the project outputs.

Examples:

- ❖ Ministries
- ❖ International organisations/ networks (e.g. ICPDR, Enterprise Europe Network, World Tourism Organisation etc.)
- ❖ Municipalities, regions etc.
- ❖ Associations, Clusters etc.



ASP IN PRIORITY 1: 70



ASP IN PRIORITY 3: 120



ASP IN PRIORITY 2: 121



ASP IN PRIORITY 4: 51

**362 ASSOCIATED
STRATEGIC PARTNERS**

IN THE FIRST CALL FOR PROPOSALS

WHY INVOLVING ASP?

ASPs' involvement must be **crucial** for developing, implementing and sustaining the outputs of the projects.

The benefit of involving ASPs has to be demonstrated from the application phase by explaining their involvement in the project activities and the overall added value for the project.

As in general ASPs are representing the policy making level or are institutions having a wide network behind them, it is important that they are **strongly involved in the development of the outputs** in order to ensure the ownership after the project end, and thus guaranteeing the durability and ensuring the leverage effect of the project outputs and result.

Examples:

- ❖ A Ministry that will ensure practical implementation of policy recommendations
- ❖ A cluster that will ensure through its members the use of a tool developed by the project
- ❖ A Municipality on whose territory a pilot is implemented that will ensure the up-take of the pilot results in the daily life/ work

Lead Partners are expected to ensure the coherence of the entire partnership, including the ASP, in relation to the addressed topic.

WHAT COSTS ARE ELIGIBLE AND WHO REIMBURSES THEM?

- ❖ **Only travel and accommodation** costs for participation in project meetings can be reimbursed
- ❖ Only the “sponsoring” ERDF partner can claim and is reimbursed these costs under travel and accommodation budget line
- ❖ Daily allowances are eligible for ASPs provided that the applicable internal rules of the “sponsoring” ERDF Partner’s institution allow such payment

HOW ARE ASP-RELATED COSTS REIMBURSED?

GENERAL RULES:

- ❖ Travel costs of the Associated Strategic Partners (ASPs) are eligible, where the **invoice** and/ or the relevant accounting document is **addressed to the “sponsoring” ERDF Partner** and it is directly paid or reimbursed by the ERDF Partner before submitting the expenditure for validation to the Controller (e.g. the travel costs of the ASP partner can be externalised and the ERDF sponsoring partner pays directly to a travel agency).
- ❖ The controller of the “sponsoring” ERDF partner has to be able to validate the expenditures according to the national rules of the ERDF “sponsoring” partner. Therefore, the requirements of the first level control of the “sponsoring” ERDF partner have to be complied with.



Number of ASP per country in the Danube region

WHAT TO KNOW TO BECOME AN ERDF “SPONSORING” PARTNER

- ❖ Check if the **internal rules** of your institution allow paying travel and accommodation for non-staff individuals
- ❖ Check what types of **internal documents** are necessary in order to ensure the travel and accommodation for non-staff members (e.g. contract with the ASP institution etc.)
- ❖ Check with the first level control what are the national requirements in terms of validation of ASP costs
- ❖ Plan carefully the costs for ASPs in the budget: travel and accommodation costs of the ASPs are part of your budget and need to be co-financed

WHAT TO KNOW TO BECOME AN ASP

- ❖ Ensure the **commitment** of your institution to participate in the project
- ❖ Allocate appropriate human resources for participation in the project meetings and thus ensuring a real contribution to the project
- ❖ Check if your institution is allowing travels paid by other organisations
- ❖ Check the compatibility between the internal rules and the rules of the “sponsoring” ERDF partner in terms of travel and accommodation
- ❖ Decide and agree in advance with the “sponsoring” partner on the **rules to be followed** in order for the latter to be able to validate the costs and be reimbursed by the programme