

FactSheet

NO. 6.10b



Pilot activities

➔ Background Information

Pilot Activities (PA) are practical measures implemented in the context of a transnational project that aim at testing or 'piloting' strategies and tools in the partner regions. Therewith, PA are a way of lifting project activities from the analysis level to the implementation level and thereby increasing the territorial impact.

The set up and number of Pilot Activities is unique to the specific content and objectives of each project, and its positioning the policy cycle (see factsheet 2.6). PA are not compulsory but if such actions are implemented as part of a project, these projects are required to report on the planned and achieved PA together with their progress reports (PR), in order for the project and the Programme to be able to monitor the advancement of the PA.

The following guidance describes the Programme's expectations with regards to Pilot Activities as well as the reporting requirements. Examples of successful PA from realised and running projects shall illustrate the good practices in terms of PA implementation.

➔ Guidance

1 What is a Pilot Activity?

Pilot Activities are embedded in the project's transnational framework and are implemented at the local level in the partner regions in order to test the use of a particular methodology, technology, concept, model or tool that was developed within the project. PA therefore have the ability to link theoretical concepts with actual practice and implementation.

Pilot Activities should be concrete, of transnational relevance and innovative

Concreteness

Pilot Activities are practical implementation activities. Joint analyses, tools, strategies, etc. are important but only the first step. Real impact can only be generated once they are implemented in the territories in a regional/local setting. PA should build up on the results of analyses and implement the results through practical actions. PA should ideally be able to trigger new investments, contribute to local development plans in a specific sector and foster the development of businesses.

Transnational relevance

Pilot Activities are important in order to ensure that the project results are both implementable and transferable. PA should have a transferrable character and be relevant to the other partners as well as to regions beyond the project. They should not be stand-alone actions but should be part of an overall transnational strategy.

In order to ensure transnational relevance, projects often choose to implement similar/complementary pilots in their partner regions, based on a common strategy. This enables great transnational learning and joint development options.

Innovation

Pilot Activities should demonstrate an innovative element. This means that no well-known actions should be repeated but new transnational strategies that contribute to the project objectives through concrete actions should be tested.

2 Setting-up the Pilot Activities

Pilot Activities should be planned during the early preparation phase of a project. Timing and budget need to be allocated towards these activities. As the Programme bodies are, however, aware that regional testing activities might be subject to political decision making processes and feasibility preparations, only a mentioning of PA (together with the approximate location and objective) is required in the Application Form (AF). However, the investments to be made during the implementation of PA have to be specifically mentioned in the AF and approved by the Programme Committee. Many projects choose to set up a special Work Package (WP) for PA, other projects link PA to several content related WP.

3 Reporting the Pilot Activities

- + First report: With the first PR, all approved projects that had anticipated PA in their AF will be required to submit a detailed list of PA (Excel template) as well as information on the planned activities (Word template). These documents should work as a reference for all further PA implementation and represent an extension of the AF. If needed, updates can be provided with PR2 but at the latest with PR3, the final set up of PA is required.
- + With PR3, PR5, the last PR, and upon request by the Joint Technical Secretariat, projects are asked to report on the state of advancement of their PA by completing the Word template on PA. This shall serve the purpose of project and Programme monitoring of the Pilot Activities. When a PA has finished, projects are asked to provide information on activities carried out up until closure, give a closure date, and clearly indicate that the PA is “closed”.
- + With the last regular PR, in addition to the information provided in the Word template, projects are asked to complete the Excel template again to report on the actual implementation/achievements.

➔ Frequently asked questions

Why do I have to report on PA?

Pilot Activities often form a substantial part of projects. In order for the Programme to monitor the implementation of activities and the expenditure of budget according to the objectives as set out in the approved AF, reporting on PA is essential. In addition, PA reporting should be used for progress monitoring within the project and as a basis to facilitate synergies and joint working between partners. The Programme may also make use of the information in order to promote information on regional activities (NUTS 3 level) in the Alpine Space.

How many PA should a project have?

The set up and number of Pilot Activities is unique to the specific content and objectives of each project, and its positioning the policy cycle (see factsheet 2.6). It is up to each project to decide whether planning PA is relevant or not. A common choice is 1-2 pilots per partner region.

What if changes to my PA become necessary during the project?

The Programme is well aware that regional testing of activities may be subject to political decision making processes and feasibility preparations, therefore only a mentioning of the foreseen PA is required in the AF. While an outline of activities should be provided with PR1, the final description of PA is required with PR3. Only necessary and well justified changes to PA will be accepted by the Programme bodies throughout project implementation.

Good practice

The following Pilot Activities from realised and running Alpine Space projects shall illustrate the good practices in terms of PA implementation, accordingly to the above-mentioned criteria.

- + Set up and test of a prototype Virtual Power System (VPS) in pilot region Allgäu: based on an extensive regional analysis and a comprehensive conception and business plan, the project partner and its regional partners set up a prototype VPS consisting of renewable energy production facilities and a few hundred consumers. The experiences and data gained with the system will be evaluated.
- + Application of early warning system to predict water shortage in pilot region Piave catchment: the aim is to establish an early warning system, which involves stakeholders from the local, regional and national level as well as water managers. Synergies with FP7 or Alpine Convention projects can be developed.
- + In the pilot region, one or two communities are selected as cooperation partners and are subject to an analysis. Single buildings will be designated for pilot renovations. In this way, the renewal of the alpine building stock will be integrated into local and regional development perspectives, and the comprehensive approach to renovations will be practically tested. Elements that prove successful will be made available for all regions of the Alpine Space.
- + Developing new railway services: the main task of the project cooperation is the development of new railway services. These services in unaccompanied combined transport are to connect terminals between Northern Italy and Southern Germany. The idea behind is a shorter and more competitive transport route for intercontinental goods traffic especially in maritime transport.
- + Designing of an open innovation platform: design and pilot transnational initiatives for technology transfer, vocational training and knowledge management in the field of plastics. Thus enabling to steer strategic innovation of SMEs towards competitiveness.

Reference documents

- + Guidance Progress Report
- + Guidance Pilot Activities List