

04/03/2020, Lille (France)

Dear project partners,

Subject: COVID-19 epidemic - guidance for Interreg 2 Seas projects

We received several questions on how to handle the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on meetings and events that you plan to organise or attend in the near future in the context of your Interreg 2 Seas project.

We are providing hereafter some general guidance that you are invited to consider and to communicate as well to your respective FLCs.

We recommend you:

1. To assess the situation based on the recommendation from the [World Health Organisation's](#) (WHO), [European Commission](#), embassies, national health organisations' and partner organisations.
2. To cancel meetings or avoid travelling in case one or several of the following cases occur:
 - There is an official travel ban or travel warning for the region where the event/meeting takes place and/or where your participants are coming from
 - Your organisation has a formal written policy that restricts travels and/or attendance to meetings
 - For other justified medical conditions (e.g. personal medical certificate recommending a restriction of travelling).
3. To apply [preventive measures as suggested by the WHO](#) and similar organisations and to discuss them also with meeting places (e.g. to make hand sanitizers available at the meeting rooms and to carry out a careful daily alcohol-based disinfection).
4. As the situation is not stable, to consider buying flexible tickets / contract suppliers with flexible conditions (e.g. for venues, hotels, etc), providing this is in line with your organisation internal rules

Should the event have to be cancelled, postponed or if partners/stakeholders could not attend for the reasons as mentioned above, we recommend you:

- To consider together with the partners involved whether carrying out the meeting by other means such as videoconferences is a suitable option in order to minimize the impact on the workplan.
- To seek reimbursement (e.g. for venue, catering, travel tickets) timely and depending on contractual terms
- For any irrecoverable costs : the Joint Secretariat view is that in case any of the circumstances as listed under point 2 above apply, irrecoverable costs should be eligible, provided that the necessary documentation and justification is available. This stays of course only the JS view and is without prejudice to the prerogative of first level controllers and auditors. When possible, it can be a good practice to discuss any of those circumstances with your first level controller before you take any decision.

Best regards,
The 2 Seas JS team