

Frequently asked questions

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Disclaimer: the information in this document is only certified as far as the TEN-T programme is concerned. Information on other programmes is given for indicative purposes only.

The present document is a living document and will be completed as questions during the time the call for tender is open are received by the Commission.

What is the maximum funding rate for works within a Motorways of the Sea Project?

1) 20 % the MoS being a priority project?

2) or 30 % as cross border?

The maximum funding rate for works in the framework of Motorways of the Sea projects are 20% for the sections that are not cross-border sections of the project and 30% for the cross-border sections of the project. Indeed, even if Motorways of the sea are by definition cross-border, Motorways of the Sea project proposals do not necessarily fully satisfy the criteria of cross-border sections of priority projects as set out in the framework of the TEN-T legislation. Only when these criteria are satisfied (e.g. project requires actions/construction works on at least two sides of the border and are technically and financially indivisible or joint commitment and common structure put in place by Member States concerned), proposals can apply for the maximum funding rate of 30% for the cross-border section of the project.

More information on the criteria for cross-border sections of priority projects can be found by following the link below:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/energy_transport/grants/doc/2007/rte_t/definition_cross_border_sections_en.pdf

Can a project for infrastructure works qualify as Motorways of the Sea project if no new or upgrade of a sea transport service is involved?

No, an infrastructure project without an associated increase in capacity of the maritime service will not induce a modal shift from the road to the sea and cannot qualify as Motorways of the Sea project.

Is it necessary to calculate the modal shift from road that will be induced by the project?

Yes, it is important to make a quantitative calculation of the modal shift that will be induced by the project over a period of at least five years. For this purpose, the methodology of the MARCO POLO programme for calculation of modal shift can be useful (see http://ec.europa.eu/transport/marcopolo/calls/docs/call08_annex3.pdf). The amount of traffic shifted away from the road is an important criterion for award of subsidies to the project.

Can a project involving only ports authorities or operators qualify as a Motorways of the Sea project?

No, Motorways of the Sea projects should at least involve ports and shipping companies. The shipping companies involved are committed to the establishment of an operational link or to the upgrade of an existing link. The extent of commitment from shipping operators and other actors involved in the door-to-door transport chain, the solidness of the consortia formed to implement the project and the solidness of the single or coordinated management structure set up to carry out the action should be well documented and are important factors to assess the maturity of the project.

Is it mandatory for proposed Motorways of the Sea projects to connect to the existing land-based TEN-T network?

No, this is not mandatory but spatial connectivity with other priority projects and with the rest of the network including green corridors is a factor that will be taken into account during the evaluation of the project proposal, as well as the degree of inter-modality or co-modality of cargo and/or passengers using the network, connectivity of systems for tracking and tracing of vehicles using the network (i.e. GPS) and integrity of ITS for infrastructure managing of the network (i.e. RIS, ERTMS, VTMS, etc.) and the possibility of integration with other cost recovery charging systems of the TEN-T network (i.e.

tolling systems of roads). Also in terms of real-time follow up of the transported freight, interconnectivity should be guaranteed meaning the availability of real time and on-line tracking and tracing of ships, of terminal operations and of inland transport (barges, train cars and trucks) along the proposed Motorways of the Sea through the provision of the necessary technical, managerial and administrative arrangements (i.e. LRIT, AIS, GPSS, customs coordination, port authority co-operation etc) as to guaranty a highly service to shippers and all users along the transport chain in order to achieve an efficient, safe and secure use of this section of the TEN-T.

Is there a minimum frequency of maritime service or modal shift to qualify as a Motorways of the Sea?

The minimum frequency is comprised between, at least, one departure per day for the shortest sea distances to one departure per week for the longest sea distances in Europe. The traffic carried by the alternative Motorways of the sea route of a transport chain shall amount, in average per year, to at least several percents of the overall traffic taking place during the same period on the corresponding road leg. This information should be included in the project application.

Do the requirements for quality improvements only concern the maritime services or also the port and hinterland connections?

Indeed, also quality of the service offered by authorities and services in ports are important for Motorways of the Sea, such as waiting time at port arrival or departure, quality, efficiency and price of port services, including storage, parking place and accommodations for accompanying personnel, absence of requirements of unnecessary services, degree of coordination between the various administrations in the port that are involved, including the provision of an electronic single window for document exchange etc.

The ports participating to the Motorways of the Sea shall be connected to its hinterland by sufficient and not-congested links and inland waterways, rail and road pre- or onward connections shall offer high quality service at prevailing market prices.

Is the vade-mecum of the previous Motorways of the Sea call still valid?

The vade-mecum published on the Commission's website (http://ec.europa.eu/transport/intermodality/motorways_sea/projects_call2005_en.htm) accompanying the 2005 TEN-T calls for Motorways of the Sea proposals is still a useful reference document for the preparation of proposals, but it does not make part of the formal documents accompanying this call for proposals.

As far as Motorways of the Sea are concerned, which actions can be funded under the TEN-T programme and which actions can be funded under the Marco Polo programme?

The TEN-T programme is in the first place focussed on (publicly accessible) facilities and infrastructures, and can, for Motorways of the Sea projects, give – in the second place – limited start-up aid to transport operators (e.g. for vessels and dedicated equipment).

Marco Polo on the other hand is in the first place focussed on start up aid of new or upgraded transport services, and can give – in the second place – give limited support for ancillary infrastructure.

Both programmes are therefore complementary although there is also a certain area of overlap, i.e. the start-up aid of TEN-T overlaps with Marco Polo and the support to ancillary infrastructure of Marco Polo overlaps with TEN-T.

The conditions for funding in the overlapping areas for the two programmes are different. As far as start-up aid is concerned, TEN-T limits this to maximum two years of depreciation of duly justified capital costs whereas Marco Polo provides start up aid up to five years. As far as publicly accessible infrastructure and facilities are concerned, TEN-T can co-fund up to 20% or 30% of the total investment costs whereas the Marco Polo programme co-finances ancillary infrastructure up to 35% of depreciation costs over a maximum of five years.

In conclusion, TEN-T is more interesting for and focussed on investments in infrastructure and facilities whereas the Marco Polo programme is more interesting for and focussed on start-up aid to services.

What is a cross-border section for Motorways of the Sea?

For Motorways of the Sea, the definition of cross-border section follows the general definition of cross-border sections of priority projects (see http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/energy_transport/grants/doc/2008/ten_t/common/definition_cross_border_sections_en.pdf).

From which date onwards are the costs for Motorways of the Sea projects eligible for co-financing?

As Motorways of the Sea are part of the TEN-T multi-annual work programme, the costs incurred from 1 January 2008 are eligible for co-financing.

How to introduce joint applications by several Member States?

All applying Member States should fill in forms A1.x, A2.x and B1.x. The full application should be submitted by the coordinating applicant (cf. Form A2.1)

What are the typical components of Motorways of the Sea projects?

Motorways of the Sea projects should aim at establishing operational Motorways of the Sea, including the necessary investments in facilities and infrastructure in ports and hinterland and the establishment of a high-quality seamless sea-based transport service integrated in the door-to-door logistics chain. This can imply features such as efficient hinterland transport and dry port services integrated with the sea-based transport, measures for administrative simplification, a common liability regime for all transport and cargo handling operations involved into the door-to-door logistics chain, favourable treatment of Motorways of the Sea in ports, inter-modal tracking and tracing of cargo, single window for booking and invoicing, measures for safety and security, provisions for energy efficiency and sustainability of the transport solution.

A maximum 2 years depreciation of duly justified capital costs of equipment can be asked, at a ratio of 30% in Motorways of the Sea project proposals.

Does this rule also apply when there are investments in equipment (like cranes, etc) that are publicly accessible? Or does this rule only apply to investments by private partners?

The limit of a maximum of 2 years depreciation of duly justified capital costs in the TEN-T programme finds its basis in the conditions for TEN-T support to start-up aid as referred to in article 12(a)(5) second hyphen of the Community Guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network.

This implies that, as far as investment in equipment is concerned, the limit of two years of depreciation of duly justified capital costs is applicable to all investments by private or public bodies in equipment that is not publicly accessible and for which co-funding from the TEN-T programme is sought. This represents an additional limit to the applicable co-funding rate of up to 20 % for Motorways of the Sea and up to 30% for its cross-border section.

Can MoS projects involve a two member state countries plus a non-member state as, for example: Spain - Italy - Egypt or Spain - France - Algeria or if this kind of project should be included in a Meda Mos Programme. Could the three parts (the non member state country) benefit from the financial support for developing facilities and infrastructures or a market research / commercial study or just studies related with infrastructure developments?

A Motorways of the Sea project must involve at least two Member states. It may also involve links to third countries. However, infrastructure and facilities in third countries are not eligible for TEN-T funding and neither are preparatory studies in relation to such infrastructures and facilities.

It should be noted that the MEDA-MOS project under the MEDA programme which focusses on the MEDA countries is totally separate from the EU's TEN-T programme. There is no link between the requirement for TEN-T Motorways of the Sea project proposals to result from a joint Member States call for proposal for Motorways of the Sea on the one hand and the recent call for Motorways of the Sea pilot projects under the MEDA-MOS project on the other hand. Therefore, Motorways of the Sea project proposals resulting from the MEDA-MOS project are not eligible under the TEN-T programme if they do not result also from a call for Motorways of the Sea project proposals organised jointly by at least two Member States and there is no requirement for TEN-T motorways of the Sea project proposals to be retained in the framework of the recent MEDA-MOS call for pilot Motorways of the Sea.

When a Motorway of the Sea project involves two Member States and is to be implemented by different operators, who should apply for Community aid and who should be indicated as the implementing bodies?

Project proposals resulting from Member state's joint call for tenders can best be submitted jointly by the Member States concerned, indicating all implementing bodies irrespective of whether or not they would receive funding from the TEN-T programme.

When the application is submitted by the implementing bodies, Must there be a coordinating applicant?

In case of application for Motorways of the Sea projects by public or private undertakings, it is advisable to introduce a joint application by the all the undertakings who request co-financing from the TEN-T funds - which should be applicants in the proposal. One of these undertakings should indeed be identified as coordinating applicant. Implementing bodies who do not request co-financing from the TEN-T funds should also be clearly identified in the proposal.

It is important to note that the supporting Member State for each of the applicants should also sign the project proposal in form A2.4.

In cases where a joint application is submitted by the implementing bodies, which bank account should be indicated for payments in form A 2.3?

As regards the bank account, it is advisable to indicate a single bank account, for instance from the coordinating applicant or from the Member State.

Where there are plans to seek further TEN T aid for items to be started after 2013, should these be part of the Global project only or also indicated under the proposed action?

Aid planned after 2013 should indeed be included in the global project.

When attempting to put together one common application for financial aid for the infrastructure investments, a problem appears at the level of form A 3.3 and 3 4 which only makes it possible to describe the situation in one port. Unlike the A 2 Section which can be multiplied to correspond to the number of applicants, Section A 3, and in particular A 3 4 cannot be so multiplied. Does that mean that two separate and complete applications must be made? Or is there a technical possibility to submit a separate A 3 section for one of the ports? Or can two separate A parts refer to a common part B 1 and B 2?

In form 3.3 and 3.4, the information on the different parts of the project should be provided separately. In form 3.3, this can be done by providing the necessary details through the various activities in which the action is broken down. In form 3.4 this can be done by separating where appropriate the information by comma's, e.g. if for port A the draught is brought to 13m and for port B the draught is brought to 12m, the Value for the field Port terminals (m draught) should indicate 12,13.

Do the items to be financed by structural funds have to be classified as the “Global Project” and accounted for under A 3 2 under the heading “Global Project”?

Should the total capacity improvement on the sea link be presented as part of the Motorways of the Sea Action?

When deciding on what elements to include in the global project and what elements to include in the action, one should consider that the Proposed Action should only include the items for which TEN-T funding is requested in the framework of the proposal submitted. All the other actions are part of the Global Project. It should be noted that the project should describe all actions that directly or indirectly affect the project, not only in terms of capacity (e.g. of ports, vessels) but also of quality of service (e.g. solving bottlenecks in the hinterland that makes the door-to-door transportation more fluid).

Does an environmental impact assessment or a Natura 2000 certificate etcetera need to be provided for an item which is not subject to a request for TEN T financing, but where financing from regional funds is foreseen?

The information concerning compliance with community policy and law concerns only the Proposed Action and not the Global Project.

Shall the technical information to be described in form A 3 4 concern the entire project/ port or only projects to be financed with TEN T funding?

The information in form A.3.4 should focus on the Proposed Action and not on the Global Project or on the whole port.

What is the significance of a number of the one letter abbreviations in the ports section of A 3 4, in particular for (t) after “master plans”, and after ‘rail connections” (n) following “port terminals”?

(t) stands for tonnes - i.e. for master plans the capacity of the port projected by the implementation of the master plan; the "n" of "rail connections" stands for "number of tracks".