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Cómhainithe ag an  
Aontas Eorpach

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# EU Just Transition Fund Programme 2021-27



Tionól Reigiúnach Oirthir agus Lár-Tíre  
Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly

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## 1. Programme strategy: main challenges and policy responses

*Reference: points (a)(i) to (viii) and point (a)(x) of Article 22(3) and point (b) of Article 22(3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 (CPR)*

The EU Just Transition Fund (JTF) - one of the pillars of the Just Transition Mechanism under EU cohesion policy - aims to mitigate adverse effects of the green transition by supporting the most affected territory & workers and to promote a balanced socio-economic transition. In line with the JTF's single specific objective, actions supported will directly contribute to alleviating negative impacts of the transition on employment by supporting diversification and modernisation of the local economy in the most impacted territory.

The JTF Territory (the Territory) as defined in Ireland's Territorial Just Transition Plan (TJTP) was the powerhouse of Ireland, producing fuel & agricultural produce. Bord na Móna (BnM) and the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) were important employers within the Territory, creating communities which were economically reliant on the interdependent sectors of peat harvesting & energy generation. The peat industry provided an anchor to the Territory in terms of economic benefits, knowledge & skills transfer, creating regional attractiveness, and providing a sense of identity.

The accelerated transition away from peat-fired power generation in the Territory presents challenges for a predominantly rural geography that faces a number of socio-economic disparities. **The immediate challenge has been the impact on jobs and communities in the Territory – direct, indirect & induced – as the labour-intensive peat industry is wound down** and replaced by less labour-intensive industries such as renewable energy, recycling & the provision of low carbon goods and services. This market failure has resulted in an employment deficit which can only be addressed through public intervention in the short to medium term.

**The key task for the JTF is to provide new employment opportunities for workers and communities that were heavily dependent on peat. This can be achieved by supporting the diversification of the economy of the Territory to enable development and help impacted workers and communities adapt to a changing labour market. By providing opportunities for employment in the Territory, the JTF can help to create an inclusive, attractive, healthy & sustainable place to live, work and visit.** A focus on inter-generational sustainability, local development, regenerative-tourism & building a green and circular economy will be central to achieving this vision.

### **The Territory**

To inform the development of the TJTP and the JTF Programme, the European Commission funded an analysis via the Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP). To ensure that the TJTP and Programme targets the most negatively affected communities, the Member State (MS) commissioned a complementary analysis to identify the most negatively affected territory based on key socio-economic, demographic and environmental indicators. Based on these territorial analyses, the counties of Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath, Roscommon and Municipal Districts (MDs) of Ballinasloe (Co. Galway), Athy, Clane-Maynooth (Co. Kildare) & Carrick-on-Suir and Thurles (Co. Tipperary) were identified as the most negatively affected by the green transition. This contiguous territory – which includes one full NUTS 3 Region (Midlands) and parts of three more (Mid-East, West & Mid-West) – provided a baseline for the geographical context, to ensure an evidence-based approach was applied in the selection of Programme operations.

### **Transition challenges identified in the Territorial Just Transition Plan**

The transition challenges identified in the TJTP for Ireland are:

### ***Economic/Direct impacts on employment***

The TJTP outlines the direct impact of the cessation of peat production on BnM and ESB workers in the context of a Territory that is already economically disadvantaged compared to other regions. It sets out how employment in peat extraction and energy production has declined over time, with further job losses expected with the cessation of peat briquette manufacturing and peat burning for energy generation in 2023.

### ***Socio-Economic Impacts***

The TJTP sets out the employment effects of declining commercial extraction and power generation using peat on the regional economy. It notes impacts such as the reduction in indirect employment, business spend and expenditure. The TJTP references the negative impacts recorded during the public consultation, particularly for the retail and hospitality sectors. Participants noted that the transition has led to reduced activity across all sectors - agriculture, transport, construction, R&D and social enterprise - a key challenge to providing communities with sustainable economic growth and development for future generations. The TJTP further outlines how BnM, the EU and the MS have responded to these socio-economic challenges and sets out various interventions which have already been applied, particularly in relation to the transition to a low-carbon economy.

### **Main challenges experienced in the Territory**

#### ***Economic, Social and Territorial Disparities and Inequalities***

Historically, the Territory has provided key inputs to the national economy by producing energy, fuel, along with agricultural produce, all based on peat and peat soils. Peat harvesting has a long history in the Territory and peat-fired energy production has been a vital source of employment. As well as a key part of the natural environment, peatlands are significant from a cultural and historical perspective. The sector has long standing links to communities and other locally significant sectors, such as agriculture. It is embedded in place-based connections that define the Territory.

#### ***Economy***

The cessation of peat production has impacted directly and indirectly on key sectors for the Territory, amplifying existing economic, social and territorial disparities. Before the cessation of commercial peat extraction, the Territory faced several disadvantages. The Midlands region at the heart of the Territory has persistently low levels of GDP per capita compared to national averages and a high level of disparity compared to more affluent geographies. For example, in 2019 the Dublin region had an average disposable income per person of €25,696, representing a 5.3% increase on its 2018 value. In comparison, the Midlands region had an average disposable income per person of €17,125 representing a 0.4% decrease on its 2018 value and 22.3% below the State average of €22,032. Similarly, gross median household income is lower in the Territory than in the State. With commercial peat extraction activities ending, these indicators of disadvantage are set to persist, and potentially be exacerbated, as traditional income sources disappear.

Business demography data reveals the significance of indigenous employment and SMEs in the Territory (>90% of all firms); with Irish-owned firms with less than 10 employees accounting for most employment. Agriculture is an important employer and a driver of the local economy in rural communities across the Territory. As outlined in the SRSP funded analysis, there is concern in the region

over pockets of unemployment in certain areas following the closure of power plants, particularly where there are limited alternative local employment opportunities. The ending of seasonal opportunities for peat harvesting offered to contractors and farmers as well as students represents a significant concern with the potential for youth drain from the region. This highlights a need for diversification of opportunities in the Territory's economy.

### ***People & Place***

Relative to the State, the Territory is more rural and has a lower population density: 40.6 persons per km<sup>2</sup>, while the corresponding value for the State is 68.1. **Communities with a high level of dependence on the peat industry and associated energy generation have experienced population decline due to the associated loss of job opportunities.**

The Territory has a higher age dependency rate than the State as a whole. Without intervention, the relative rate of ageing is likely to be greater in the Territory, particularly in remote locations due to continued population decline as a direct result of the transition from the traditional peat sector. The Territory has a higher level of deprivation with 17 of the Territory's 19 MDs being more deprived than the State average.

The proportion of the Territory's labour force classified as being 'at work' (84.9%) is lower than the State (87.1%) and Eastern and Midland NUTS 2 Region as a whole (87.6%). While there has been a convergence between men and women in respect of workforce participation rates, the gender gap is greater in the Territory than in the State. Regional-level data reveal that the Midlands (NUTS 3) has a higher unemployment rate than the State; 6.1% and 5.7% respectively. Over 15,000 people in the Territory work in the primary sector (agriculture, peat harvesting, forestry & fishing). This constitutes 7.5% of the workforce – a proportion that is over 3% higher than the State as a whole. Areas dependent on agriculture are most at risk of energy poverty due to the transition, being far more likely than elsewhere to rely on peat as their primary fuel source.

### ***Environment & Connectivity***

The extensive peatlands of the Territory are some of Ireland's most important habitats and are recognised as internationally significant landscapes. Formed over millennia, healthy peatlands provide a home for unique flora and fauna and deliver a range of ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration, water filtration and flood mitigation, and cultural services like aesthetic beauty and recreation.

Historically Ireland's focus has been on the provisioning services these ecosystems provide. From the 1940s, the Territory's peat resource was harnessed to provide an indigenous fuel source for electricity generation and home heating, peat moss for the horticultural industry, and reclaimed land for agriculture. This generated significant socio-economic benefits for rural communities across the Territory. However, it led to the rapid and unsustainable exploitation of peat, transforming peatlands from carbon sinks into carbon emitters. Damage to the peatland environment caused by extensive harvesting is considerable.

Furthermore, the limited sustainable public transport options and an increased reliance on private cars to access alternative employment and key services, is leading to further environmental and air quality degradation within the Territory. Enhanced green mobility options and innovations would contribute to a low carbon future for impacted inhabitants, businesses and visitors in the Territory.

### **Investment Needs**

As outlined in the TJTP, the following 4 investment needs were identified by the SRSP funded analysis and formed the basis for the public consultation for the JTF:

1. Enhance the Business Environment and Create Employment Opportunities
2. Enhance the Skills Profile
3. Promoting Environmental Sustainability and Industrial Heritage
4. Enhancing potential of region as a place to live, work, invest and visit

Based on the views expressed during the public consultation, there was little divergence from the objectives and approach as outlined in the draft TJTP, with the following key needs identified:

- Deal with the economic impacts of the transition away from peat, focusing on employment and socio-economic impacts on peat workers and the wider communities.
- Build on the existing assets in the Territory and opportunities arising from environmental, sustainability and industrial heritage.

A cross cutting theme was the impact of the transition on connectivity within the Territory and the resulting need for new connections. There were multiple observations in relation to supporting sustainable mobility, public transport and creating transport hubs that connect impacted communities to economic opportunity.

### **Complementarity and synergies with other forms of support**

Operations funded under the JTF must adhere closely to the regulation in terms of their eligibility, and also complement other forms of support. The Territory borders and overlaps with a number of territories supported by other EU programmes, each of which has their own distinct focus, but which complement the JTF.

- **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)** – The JTF will complement the ERDF priorities of developing smarter, more competitive, greener and more energy efficient regions. The JTF will complement existing ERDF measures such as the co-funded Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme. In relation to research, ERDF supports capacity building in research organisations and JTF focuses on key sectors for the transition.
- **European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)** – The ESF+ focus on employment, skills and lifelong learning aligns with JTF objectives to address the social impacts of the transition. During JTF Programme development, the appropriate delivery bodies considered that general skills and training development schemes are already being funded under existing programmes such as ESF+. Where appropriate, JTF specific skills and training support will target those in the Territory who have been most impacted by the transition in relevant sectors.
- **European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)** – Synergies exist in terms of addressing territorial imbalances and inequalities and enhancing the local economic and community potential. JTF will complement EAFRD's emphasis on strengthening supply chains and increasing competitiveness while respecting the environment by linking research and innovation with financial and technical capacities in impacted communities to build a circular and bio-based economy.
- **LEADER**- the following themes align with the JT Programme: rural tourism, enterprise development, basic services targeted at hard-to-reach communities, protection and sustainable

use of water resources, local biodiversity, and renewable energy. Where relevant the CLLD groups in the Territory will benefit from these synergies between LEADER and the JTF.

- **Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)** – The JTF will complement the RRF in relation to green skills training and peatlands restoration. On top of the peatland rehabilitation supported by RRF, JTF will include wetland restoration. While RRF will fund recovery skills and training including green skills across Ireland, JTF activities will focus on those most affected by the transition in the Territory with targeted upskilling opportunities.
- **EU Life** – Supports activities including knowledge sharing, enterprise development and an immersive attraction. The JTF will add value to these actions through its continued and broadened support to regenerative tourism and peatland restoration.
- **Seal of Excellence Mechanism-** Seal of Excellence holders in the Territory will be encouraged to apply to the JTF were eligible to do so.
- **Horizon Europe** – Research activities supported by JTF will open synergies with Horizon Europe, particularly within agriculture and rural areas, environment and biodiversity (cluster 6). There is also strong alignment with: Mission 1, Objective 3; and with Mission 5, Objective 2 (Target 2.2) and Objective 8 (Targets 8.3, & 8.4).

All envisaged operations will be reviewed to ensure that they demonstrate complementarities with other forms of support from the EU, as well as national and regional support as set out in the TJTP.

### **Challenges identified in relevant country-specific recommendations, national or regional strategies of the MS**

#### ***Country-Specific Recommendations***

The 2020 Country Report (Annex D) sets out investment guidance on the JTF for Ireland. With the prospect of around 4,000 jobs potentially being affected by the end of 2020, it identified the need to diversify the regional economy to make it more modern and competitive and to alleviate the socio-economic costs of the transition. It recommended that actions of the JTF could target upskilling & reskilling of workers; job-search assistance; support to SMEs; investments in R&I, green energy, and the circular economy. The 2022 Country Report identified some factors inhibiting productivity in domestic sectors, such as low investment in R&D, skills shortages, & lagging digitalisation, with challenges identified in the areas of climate action, the circular economy, regional disparities, digitalisation & skills. It further notes that planned investments in sustainable mobility included in the RRP will not be sufficient to decarbonise public transport. This will be particularly pronounced in the JTF Territory which consistently lags behind on all related measures.

#### ***Relevant national or regional strategies of the MS***

As set out in the TJTP, in addressing the single objective of the JTF, operations supported by the Programme will align with national, regional and territorial strategies & plans including:

- National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030
- Climate Action Plan 2021
- Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework
- National Development Plan 2021-2030
- National Recovery and Resilience Plan
- National Smart Specialisation Strategy for Innovation 2022-2027
- Rural Development Policy: Our Rural Future 2021-2025

- People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025 – Regional Tourism Strategy for Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands 2022-2026
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies
- Local Authority Development Plans
- Regional Enterprise Plans
- Local Economic and Community Plans
- Relevant Transport Plans and Strategies
- National Peatlands Strategy 2015-2025

Sections 1.1 and 2.3 of the TJTP outline relevant challenges and opportunities identified in these strategies & plans which the JTF will address. The Climate Action Plan 2021 outlines the MS’s overall JT response, incorporating a JT policy framework supporting effective transition to a climate neutral economy and a JT Implementation Plan for the Midlands Region, responding to recommendations from the JT Commissioner. Broad challenges identified are the need for new employment opportunities, enhanced connectivity and improved quality of life in the Territory. Opportunities are identified in relation to indigenous growth, tourism, green and circular economy and decarbonisation. The Territory will benefit from complementarities between the EAFRD Programme, LEADER, and the JTF, as together they will create multiple routes for delivery of 2021-2027 cross-cutting themes.

### **Justification for selected policy objectives, corresponding priorities and forms of support**

To achieve the specific objective of the EU JTF, the Programme will address the investment needs identified above via the 3 complementary priorities listed below, which are each cross-cut by the key objectives of supporting research, upskilling and reskilling through investments which build on regional strengths to address the socio-economic challenges deriving from the transition process in the Territory and facilitate the move towards climate-neutrality:

#### ***1. Generating employment for former peat communities by investing in the diversification of the local economy by supporting productive investments in enterprise, SMEs and community actions, focusing on sectors and activities which can address the economic challenge of the transition.***

As noted in successive Country reports, the transition to a climate-neutral economy is having significant impact on the economy and employment. According to the SRSP funded analysis, such challenges can be addressed by supporting the local business environment and diversifying the economic fabric by developing sectors with growth potential. The analysis also identified the need to retain youth in the Territory by offering opportunities for work, education, and vibrant and stable community by allowing communities to make decisions on what could be provided, a concept that was strongly echoed in the public consultation process. This indicates the importance of an action that has a democratic mandate, is bottom-up in nature and provides local groups with an opportunity to access funds. Alignment with Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, Local Economic and Community Plans and Regional Enterprise Plans is a supportive pre-condition to address this. Such an action may include support for transformative projects and initiatives by local SMEs, community groups and other local stakeholders, including those working with the local authorities and other agencies to address the single specific objective of the JTF.

Strengths of the Territory as identified in the Midlands Regional Enterprise Plan include significant tourism assets, the emerging low-carbon/Green Economy and quality of life. Furthermore, the Climate

Action Plan 2021 identifies the green economy, including the circular economy, clean mobility, green and blue infrastructure (GBI) and the bioeconomy as sectors which can create high quality employment opportunities that will be a source of significant employment growth over the coming decades.

The Smart Specialisation Strategy for Innovation (S3) specifies ‘bioeconomy/renewable energy (including climate action/sustainability)’ as a sectoral strength and emerging opportunity. S3 identifies a notable opportunity for the Midlands to develop significant capacity in the Low Carbon Economy and to support the use of green technologies in enterprise. Given its unique peatland character and related capacities in bio-based economic sectors, developments in areas such as energy system decarbonisation; the bioeconomy; carbon sequestration and utilisation (including nature-based solutions); natural capital and ecosystem services can lay a solid foundation for the Territory’s economic diversification built on regional strengths.

There is a desire among stakeholders to harness the decades of experience the Territory has in electricity generation and maintain it as a productive region. Diversification towards the bioeconomy offers a means to capitalise on the experience of impacted workers and communities while also engaging with cross-cutting key sectors identified in the S3, including agriculture and waste management. Supported actions would align with the EU Bioeconomy Strategy & Action Plan under its priority to deploy local bioeconomies rapidly across Europe. The Territory is well placed to capitalise on the biorefining and bioconversion market, a growing economic sector that can support its strong agricultural base. This would facilitate a transition to the production of biobased products as part of an integrated circular economy approach to economic development.

As Ireland’s largest indigenous sector, tourism is a significant employer and contributor to the economy. As noted in the S3, the tourism sector is one of the most employment intensive sectors nationally and is a key employment generator for rural regions. Relevant national strategies aim at driving endogenous sustainable growth in this sector in order to support local and regional economies, making investment in tourism strongly aligned with the strategic objectives of the S3. The sector supported 260,000 jobs in early 2020 and generated approximately €9 billion for the economy in 2019. In many rural regions, tourism is the only employer of note outside of agriculture and is therefore important to local and regional economies and communities. As cessation of peat extraction reduces the potential of impacted communities to generate income directly from the land, tourism represents a high-potential and place-based avenue for supporting SMEs in the Territory. While tourism in the Midlands region was worth €307m in 2019 and sustained approximately 7,000 jobs, this represents only about 5% of the share of overseas and domestic visitors nationally. There is therefore potential to develop tourism to attract more visitors to the Territory which will support local SMEs. In the context of similar market failures, investment in this sector and its assets has been an enabler and multiplier for many other sectors. According to Fáilte Ireland, Ireland’s National Tourism Development Authority:

- For every € spent on tourism, 23c is generated in tax
- Every €1M of tourist expenditure helps to support 27 tourism jobs
- 1,000 additional overseas tourists support 19 jobs in the tourism industry

Furthermore, post-pandemic research indicates an increased demand for outdoor activities and maximising the recreational value of public lands which can directly enhance the visitor experience. Actions funded by the JTF can, in line with the Hidden Heartlands Regional Tourism Strategy, unlock the commercial potential of the Territory while protecting the environment and enhancing the well-being of impacted communities.

***2. Supporting the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded peatlands and regeneration and repurposing of industrial heritage assets to enable the transition towards climate-neutrality while also facilitating the diversification and modernisation of the economy of the Territory.***

Beyond economic and employment needs, the SRSP funded study highlighted ‘Environmental Sustainability and Cultural Capital Integrity’ as a relevant area for intervention. Effective management and regeneration of environmental assets by linking them with new economic opportunities is crucial to a successful transition.

As recognised by the EU Green Deal, there is an urgent need to restore & rehabilitate degraded peatlands and improve management of soils to support the achievement of international CO2 emissions targets and create biodiverse habitats. Retaining the cultural capital of the region’s peatlands is an important element of achieving a just transition in the Territory.

In recent years, many peatlands in the Territory have been designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and as recreational spaces. As detailed in the TJTP, several initiatives have been established for accelerated rehabilitation, restoration & management of peatlands. The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) has also provided support to the Peatlands Community Engagement Scheme to encourage communities to engage in peatland conservation, to promote public engagement and raise awareness of our natural heritage and environment. The JTF will complement these initiatives in a manner that aligns with its single objective by supporting the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded peatland habitats and the regeneration and repurposing of industrial heritage assets in the Territory that are not already supported by existing funding programmes, adding value by linking with economic and social activities.

The JTF will support the provision of new sustainable recreational, economic and employment opportunities including the regeneration, repurposing and development of walking and cycling trails, waterways and other GBI. This will enhance the land management skills of peat communities and promote environmental sustainability. In addition to addressing the climate and biodiversity emergency, improved peat soil management techniques can act as a resource to stimulate economic opportunities.

This Priority provides a unique opportunity to reconnect the Territory’s communities to their local natural assets while delivering new jobs and economic opportunity.

***3. Providing former peat communities with smart and sustainable mobility options to enable them to benefit directly from the green transition by supporting clean, green mobility to build regional attractiveness and support economic development.***

As a result of the transition from peat, there is a need in the Territory for safe, reliable and clean local transport solutions connecting more people to more opportunities to work, (re)train, do business, meet and visit. The SRSP funded report identified that a focus should be on retaining Youth in the region, including offering sustainable transport solutions. This report and the public consultation identified a clear need to enhance the availability and capacity of local sustainable transport options for impacted communities to support employment in the Territory and access to innovation/remote working hubs and training & education opportunities. The provision of local sustainable transport solutions is consistent with the aims of the National Planning Framework which emphasises the need to electrify mobility systems, including in rural areas such as those in the Territory to better harness their potential for focused investment. Improved and sustainable local public transport links will increase economic competitiveness and create better places to work and live for impacted workers & communities.

The transport sector accounts for the second largest share of GHG emissions after agriculture. National policy supports a move towards a zero-emission public transport fleet, improved access to education and employment opportunities, and a reduced dependence on private vehicles reliant on fossil fuels. More sparsely populated areas, such as those in the JTF Territory, rely heavily on personal private transport with a greater reliance on fossil fuels and lower electric vehicle (EV) uptake. A shift toward zero-emissions transport and having an effective and reliable charging network for EVs is therefore an essential part of enabling citizens within the Territory to switch to zero-emission options. Strategies for EV charging infrastructure will likely be based on population density and expected uptake. Due to its low population density the Territory, without the JTF, would be passed over for the first wave EV charging point installation. This risk can be significantly mitigated through the accelerated installation of public charge point infrastructure in key locations in the Territory. There will be a direct and measurable impact on EV uptake by communities in these areas, which will in turn drive further demand for EV infrastructure and sustained investment and job growth in the Territory.

### **Lessons Learnt**

This is the first phase of EU JTF programming thus direct lessons learnt from past experiences are not applicable. In the development of this Programme, **complementary lessons have been drawn from a wide range of sources**. E.g. Ireland has a National JTF, made available in 2020 to support communities transitioning to a low carbon economy. The projects funded under the National JTF have been diverse and highlight areas for potential further support. The Managing Authority (MA) builds on the body of knowledge and expertise associated with its participation in the development and future implementation of the 2021-2027 ERDF programme, which has been applied to the development of the Programme's operational aspects. E.g. the positive impact of EU funding on supporting the shift to a low-carbon economy has already been demonstrated through Ireland's regional operational programmes (BMW and S&E). Similarly, support for economic diversification and SME development have been a valuable means to boost growth in the low-carbon and green economy.

The MA has worked with implementing partners to develop the Programme and will work with them to design and implement an effective management and control system. Technical Assistance will be used to provide training to implementing bodies and beneficiaries to build their capacity and ensure they are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities.

### **Public Procurement**

The MA will promote the strategic use of public procurement to support Policy Objectives. Beneficiaries will be encouraged to use more quality-related and lifecycle cost criteria. When feasible, environmental and social considerations as well as innovation incentives will be incorporated into public procurement procedures.

### **Environmental Reports and Do No Significant Harm (DNSH)**

The Programme includes environmental assessment documents on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment (AA), Strategic Flood Risk Appraisal Screening (SFRA) and DNSH under Regulation (EU) 2021/241 requiring that no measure should lead to significant harm to any of the environmental objectives within the meaning of Art. 17 of the Taxonomy Regulation (EU) 2020/852.

The Programme will contribute to mainstreaming climate actions and supporting activities that would respect the climate and environmental standards and priorities of the EU. To ensure compliance with the requirements for DNSH, the Programme will support activities that protect biodiversity, water, air & land quality, and marine resources; encourage circular economy initiatives; reduce waste and increases recycling, and; reduce GHG emissions.

At project level, all applications for development consents for activities that may give rise to likely significant effects on the environment must be accompanied by the following, as relevant:

- SEA Environmental Report
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report
- Appropriate Assessment

Any reference to support for all activities in the Programme should be considered to refer to 'environmentally sustainable development' with no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites and no net loss of biodiversity, that shall be subject to appropriate feasibility studies, best practice site/route selection (to consider environmental constraints such as landscape, cultural heritage, protection of water quality, flood risks & biodiversity), environmental assessment including Ecological Impact Assessment Report to support development management and the completion of statutory SEA, EIA & AA processes as required.

The Programme seeks to protect, manage, and through enhanced ecological connectivity, improve the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network in the Territory.

Support for other plans/programmes (and initiatives arising) is based on compliance with EU & national policy, directives & legislation ensuring appropriate SEA, SFRA, EIA & AA processes are undertaken. The Programme will not support any plans/programmes where adverse effects on the Natura 2000 Network cannot be avoided or mitigated.

The Programme supports relevant development proposals compliant with the Water Framework Directive, that aim to protect inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters & groundwater, preventing pollution, further deterioration of water quality, promote sustainable water use & enhance improvement of the aquatic environment.

Any planning consent process emanating from support through the Programme will ensure compliance with the EU Waste Framework Directive & Action Plan for the Circular Economy. As such projects will:

- be subject to the objectives of County Development Plans and Local Area Plans supporting the circular economy and prioritising waste prevention followed by re-use, recycling and recovery before landfill
- adhere to Best Practice Guidelines on the Preparation of Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects (DHLGH) and any updated guidelines
- adhere to the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy

Thereby, minimising the use of natural resource inputs, reducing waste, pollution & carbon emissions and improving the productivity of resources used in development through extending the life span of materials and facilitating the repurposing, recycling & re-use of resources at end of life.

## 1. Programme strategy: main challenges and policy responses

**Table 1**

Policy objective or JTF specific objective	Specific objective or dedicated priority *	Justification (Summary)
<p>8. Enabling regions and people to address the social, employment, economic and environmental impacts of the transition towards the Union’s 2030 targets for energy and climate and a climate-neutral economy of the Union by 2050, based on the Paris Agreement</p>	<p>JSO8.1. Enabling regions and people to address the social, employment, economic and environmental impacts of the transition towards the Union’s 2030 targets for energy and climate and a climate-neutral economy of the Union by 2050, based on the Paris Agreement</p>	<p>Achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 requires transformational levels of change across the economy and society. In Ireland, the transition will be felt most acutely in the Territory where – due to the cessation of large-scale peat harvesting and processing for energy production – a key economic sector will disappear forever. This is resulting in direct and indirect job losses in a Territory that is already economically disadvantaged compared to neighbouring regions. In line with the JTF’s single specific objective, actions supported by the fund in Ireland will directly contribute to alleviating the negative impact of the transition in the most impacted territory by mitigating the negative repercussions on employment and by supporting the diversification and modernisation of the local economy. The JTF will enable the Territory and its people to address the social, employment, economic and environmental impacts of the transition by i) generating employment for former peat communities by investing in the diversification of the local economy; ii) Supporting the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded peatlands and regeneration and repurposing of industrial heritage assets; and iii) providing former peat communities with smart and sustainable mobility options. By supporting these priorities, and complementing national and regional policies, strategies and schemes to address the negative economic impacts of the transition, the JTF will</p>

Policy objective or JTF specific objective	Specific objective or dedicated priority *	Justification (Summary)
		<p>help the communities directly affected and, also, contribute to the economic development of the Territory. By capitalising on and creating new opportunities in key sectors, the EU JTF will ensure communities benefit directly from the green transition in the short to medium term and support the Territory's attractiveness in the longer-term. This will be achieved through the allocation of grants as the most efficient way to attain the objectives of the Programme as the set-up of Financial Instruments for the Programme Territory only would be too costly and time-consuming and limit the ability of the Programme to deliver results quickly.</p>

\* Dedicated priorities according to ESF+ Regulation

## 2. Priorities

*Reference: Article 22(2) and point (c) of Article 22(3) CPR*

2.1. Priorities other than technical assistance

### 2.1.1. Priority: JTF1. Generating employment for former peat communities by investing in the diversification of the local economy

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: JSO8.1. Enabling regions and people to address the social, employment, economic and environmental impacts of the transition towards the Union's 2030 targets for energy and climate and a climate-neutral economy of the Union by 2050, based on the Paris Agreement (JTF)

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

*Reference: points (d)(i), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (vii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

**The related types of actions** – point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation:

By supporting modernisation and diversification in key economic sectors in the Territory, this Priority will complement EU programmes and national & regional policies to assist the Territory in addressing the negative economic impacts of the transition by capitalising on and creating new opportunities in key sectors to develop a thriving economy built on regional attractiveness for living, working, visiting and doing business.

#### Key actions under this priority

With this priority, the EU JTF Programme will aim at addressing the economic challenge of the transition by fostering the diversification of the local economic fabric, jobs creation and local development in the Territory. In order to achieve this, the Fund will support the following types of action:

**1.1 Foster the economic diversification of the territory by supporting productive investments in micro-enterprises, SMEs and economic stakeholders in key sectors**, such as sustainable tourism and the bioeconomy, and by providing support to businesses to:

- Develop new/expand existing services and products, such as those which contribute to a transition to a sustainable, climate-neutral and circular economy.
- Develop the digital capabilities of SMEs/businesses to make the most of opportunities offered by digitalisation.
- Foster entrepreneurship, productivity, competitiveness, internationalisation, clustering and network development.
- Enable SMEs and businesses to set-up, modernise, diversify and expand in the EU JTF Territory.

**1.2 Support the implementation of bottom-up local and regional economic strategies**

The EU JTF will support local authorities and local stakeholders in implementing economic and community objectives and actions of economic strategies which are developed through collaboration involving local and regional stakeholders, and are adopted through democratic processes. The targeted strategies are Local Economic and Community Plans and Regional Enterprise Plans.

This action may:

- Build on achievements of the National Just Transition Fund and on regional strengths as identified in the Smart Specialisation Strategy for Ireland.
- Encourage the development of transformative projects in association with the local authorities and local stakeholders.
- Support the transition towards a climate-neutral economy by supporting the diversification of the economy of the Territory in line with bottom-up local and regional and economic strategies.

In supporting implementation of bottom-up local and regional economic strategies, this action will support:

- activities which are aligned with the single specific objective of the EU Just Transition Fund and which contribute to the implementation of the Territorial Just Transition Plan for Ireland, and;
- activities which are limited to the types of activities listed in Article 8.2 of the EU JTF Regulation such as but not limited to:
  - Supporting new and existing businesses/SMEs to create jobs, improve and diversify employment in the Territory
  - Supporting job creation and providing enterprise supports in green and low carbon sectors.
  - Supporting digitalisation and connectivity to open up new employment options

### **1.3 Support research, development and innovation activities to contribute to the development of the green and circular economy**

The EU JTF will support investments in research, development, innovation, cooperation and demonstration activities that contribute to the development through structuring (aligning relevant partners) and mobilisation (development of multi-actor engagement to enable knowledge exchange and innovation) of the circular economy of the Territory, including the bioeconomy. This would include:

- Support for research, development and innovation (RD&I) activities and fostering the transfer of advanced technologies, including through living labs.
- Support to multi-actor cooperation for mobilising, supporting and enhancing the circular economy, including through waste prevention, reduction, resource efficiency, reuse, repair and recycling, including RD&I for sustainable higher value products for new circular, resource-efficient biobased industries.
- Support the building of multi-sectoral engagement based on the principles of a circular economy and bioeconomy to consider the material flow (the territorial metabolism) as a resource which supports goals for ensuring food and nutrition security, managing natural resources sustainably, reducing dependence on non-renewable, unsustainable resources, limiting, and adapting to climate change and strengthening European competitiveness and creating jobs, welfare, and prosperity.

- Support enabling communication, coordination and alignment with education, training, and skills activities to support activities and productive investments in relevant actors in the circular and bioeconomy including cooperative organisations, SMEs and industry for the development of new business models, value chains, technologies, products and services.

If relevant, actions in the field of clean energy could also be supported as they could be linked to actions in the field of bioeconomy.

### **Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) Analysis**

A DNSH analysis has been carried out at the level of the types of actions defined above and it has been determined that these actions would do no significant harm to environmental objectives within the meaning of Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

### **The main target groups - point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR:**

The expected target groups are:

For action 1.1:

- SMEs, micro-enterprises, businesses and community-based enterprises, those with responsibility in the area of SME and entrepreneurship programmes, including the hospitality & tourism sector.

For action 1.2:

- SMEs, local economic and community groups including but not limited to Local Authorities, Local Development Companies, Local Community Development Companies, County Childcare Committees, Children and Young People Committees and Family Resource Centres, community and voluntary organisations.

For action 1.3:

- Rural and regional stakeholders including but not limited to research performing organisations, higher education institutions, innovation intermediaries, cooperation and cooperative activities, SMEs, micro-enterprises, local economic and community groups and community-based enterprises, those with responsibility in the area of SME and entrepreneurship programmes and education, training & skills provision.

The main target groups of all actions is the overall population of the territory that will benefit from a revitalised local economy and new employment opportunities.

**Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination** – *point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation*

In line with horizontal principles, the Programme considers the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, gender equality, non-discrimination, including accessibility, as well as other Horizontal Enabling conditions of relevance throughout the programming cycle. The Programme will have access to and make use of the Equality and Human Rights in CPR Programming Guidance Tool, published in 2022, which provides a practical and bespoke support for MAs, Intermediate Bodies and Beneficiary Bodies under CPR programmes in Ireland, outlining compliance requirements under Irish national law and CPR adherence.

The Programme will adhere to the best practice recommendations throughout the preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of programmes by ensuring that equality between men and women, gender mainstreaming and the integration of a gender perspective are taken into account and promoted. Simultaneously, the Programme will take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Programme implementation will also respect Ireland’s “Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty” which provides a framework to ensure initiatives include actions and processes necessary to respect the horizontal principles.

Operations funded under this Priority will build stronger and more resilient communities by driving regeneration through creation of employment in key sectors. To achieve this objective, operations may: employ multi-actor and sectoral cooperation approaches and ‘living labs’ to engage with impacted communities and local enterprises to integrate and mainstream traditional knowledge, culture and practices and to inspire youth and generational renewal and innovating by combining traditional knowledge with new science and technology within local contexts; generate meaningful employment for socially marginalised people with enhanced social engagement, and; supported by enabling communication, coordinate and align with education, training, and skills activities.

**Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools** – *point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR*

The actions will target the EU JTF Territory as identified in the Territorial Just Transition Plan. No territorial tool in the meaning of Article 28 of the CPR will be used.

### The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR

All Programme actions will take place in or directly target the EU JTF Territory as outlined in the TJTP for Ireland. During the lifetime of the Programme, sector specific best practice approaches to enhancing and diversifying the local economic and community potential of the Territory from other JT Regions across Europe will be monitored to ensure that the most innovative and cutting-edge approaches are being deployed in the EU JTF Territory. The fund will support interregional, cross-border and transnational actions in relation to research and good practice transfer on the the green and circular economy, including the bioeconomy. Learnings and best practices from existing projects, such as the Interreg Europe Next2Met project focusing on regional attractiveness and digitalisation in the Midlands, can also inform the related actions.

### The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

The selected form of support for all actions under Priority 1 is grants. While some activities envisaged under this Priority could generate a return, the use of financial instruments (FI) has been ruled out as setting up a new FI in the Irish context for a limited pool of beneficiaries (confined to the EU JTF territory) would be too costly and difficult to achieve to ensure swift allocation of funds.

#### 2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation

**Table 2: Output indicators**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		RCO01	Enterprises supported (of which: micro, small, medium, large)	enterprises	58.00	453.00
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		RCO02	Enterprises supported by grants	enterprises	58.00	453.00
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		RCO10	Enterprises cooperating with research organisations	enterprises	8.00	16.00
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		PSO1	Local and regional economic strategies supported	Number of local and regional economic strategies supported	1.00	5.00

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

**Table 3: Result indicators**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference Year	Target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		RCR01	Jobs created in supported entities	annual FTEs	0.00	2022	109.25	Supported projects	
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		RCR03	Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) introducing product or process innovation	enterprises	0.00	2022	266.00	Supported projects	
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		RCR04	SMEs introducing marketing or organisational innovation	enterprises	0.00	2022	16.00	Supported projects	
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		PSR1	Population covered by local or regional economic strategies supported	Number of inhabitants	0.00	2022	292,301.00	Supported projects	

### 2.1.1.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention

Reference: point (d)(viii) of Article 22(3) CPR

**Table 4: Dimension 1 - intervention field**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		013. Digitising SMEs (including e-Commerce, e-Business and networked business processes, digital innovation hubs, living labs, web entrepreneurs and ICT start-ups, B2B)	5,000,000.00
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		021. SME business development and internationalisation, including productive investments	19,905,477.00
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		030. Research and innovation processes, technology transfer and cooperation between enterprises, focusing on circular economy	10,000,000.00
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		169. Territorial development initiatives, including preparation of territorial strategies	8,700,000.00
JTF1	JSO8.1	Total			43,605,477.00

**Table 5: Dimension 2 - form of financing**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		01. Grant	43,605,477.00
JTF1	JSO8.1	Total			43,605,477.00

**Table 6: Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		33. Other approaches - No territorial targeting	43,605,477.00
JTF1	JSO8.1	Total			43,605,477.00

**Table 7: Dimension 6 – ESF+ secondary themes**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
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**Table 8: Dimension 7 – ESF+\*, ERDF, Cohesion Fund and JTF gender equality dimension**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
JTF1	JSO8.1	JTF		03. Gender neutral	43,605,477.00
JTF1	JSO8.1	Total			43,605,477.00

\* In principle, 40 % for the ESF+ contributes to gender tracking. 100 % is applicable when Member State chooses to use Article 6 ESF+

## 2.1.1. Priority: JTF2. Supporting the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded peatlands and regeneration and repurposing of industrial heritage assets

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: JSO8.1. Enabling regions and people to address the social, employment, economic and environmental impacts of the transition towards the Union's 2030 targets for energy and climate and a climate-neutral economy of the Union by 2050, based on the Paris Agreement (JTF)

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

*Reference: points (d)(i), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (vii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

**The related types of actions** – *point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation:*

The EU JTF will contribute to this Priority by supporting actions aimed at the restoration & rehabilitation of degraded peatlands; research and knowledge transfer for improved environmental management of drained organic soils, and; the regeneration and repurposing of industrial heritage assets such as access roads, tracks, trails, canals and peatland railways. Such actions will support the transition towards climate-neutrality, address the biodiversity crisis while also facilitating the diversification and modernisation of the economy of the Territory for the benefit of impacted workers and communities.

By offering a global approach to the rehabilitation, restoration, regeneration, repurposing and improved management of degraded peatland environments and drained organic soils, actions supported under this priority will complement existing peatland restoration & rehabilitation programmes. This funding will support additional restoration and rehabilitation of degraded peatlands, research and knowledge transfer for sustainable land management of farmed grassland on drained organic soils and by providing opportunities for regenerating industrial heritage assets by linking them with new economic opportunities and drivers of socio-economic change.

Outcomes of actions supported under this scheme may include:

- Restoration and rehabilitation of degraded peatland sites across and adjacent to the EU JTF Territory including fens, raised and blanket bogs and other wetlands types (See definitions under 'Standards of Rehabilitation' below)
- Research, skills development and knowledge transfer for improved environmental management of farmed grassland on drained organic soils
- Repurposing and redevelopment of existing routeways, waterways and existing infrastructures to create ecological corridors, trails and green & blue infrastructure networks (GBI) for walking, cycling, water and/or other recreational activities

Key actions supported under this priority

**2.1 Restoration and rehabilitation of degraded peatlands including:**

- Preparation measures such as feasibility and design studies including restoration/rehabilitation plans
- Stakeholder engagement activities which could include landowner negotiations (including incentive payments and/or land purchase)
- Implementation of measures to enable and monitor restoration and rehabilitation (where required) of degraded peatlands across multiple project sites. Project sites may be located within Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and will not include peatlands that are subject to obligated rehabilitation or are currently subject to restoration under any other funded programme. Restoration measures will include blocking of drains (with peat or plastic dams); construction of bunds; imposition (or amendment) of grazing regimes; erection of fencing for stock control; control of scrub/invasive species; management of nutrient loadings from adjacent land, and; tree felling where appropriate. Drain-blocking and bunding measures on deeper peats will follow the best practice guidelines outlined in Irish Wildlife Manual No. 99 ‘Best practice in raised bog restoration in Ireland’ published by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) in 2017
- Education, awareness-raising and community engagement activities presenting the benefits of the restoration measures to the wider public

**2.2 Research, knowledge transfer and monitoring activities on rewetting measures and overall land management improvements for farmed peat soils** including:

- Preparation measures such as feasibility and design studies including action plans
- Stakeholder engagement activities which could include landowner negotiations (including incentive payments)
- Rewetting of drained organic soils under grass. Rewetting is the deliberate action of raising the water table on drained soils to re-establish water saturated conditions (i.e., by blocking drainage ditches, disabling pumping facilities or breaching obstructions)
- Research on rewetted soils to identify suitable land management practices to maintain low GHG emissions and support biodiversity while farming under wet conditions. Actions on the rewetted area may include, but are not limited to, reducing the grazing period with existing livestock and use of alternative crops & grazing animals
- Education, awareness-raising and community engagement activities presenting the benefits of the rewetting measures to the wider public

**2.3 Regeneration and repurposing of industrial heritage assets** including:

- Preparation measures such as feasibility and design studies including action plans
- Stakeholder engagement activities which could include landowner negotiations (including compensation payments or land purchase)

- Implementation of regeneration and repurposing measures to include investments in the upgrade of existing industrial heritage assets for amenity and investments in new amenity assets such as, but not limited to, walking trails, cycle paths, signage/notice boards, seating, boardwalks and bog bridges. Any necessary 'environmental stabilisation' will, where relevant, have already taken place in accordance with the Polluter Pays Principle and/or requirements for obligated rehabilitation (See definition under 'Standards of Rehabilitation' below)

These actions will complement the activities under Priority 1 by providing employment for impacted workers and communities and by making the Territory a more attractive place to live, work and visit. Attracting visitors to the Territory by providing first-rate amenities and restored landscapes will support new and existing SMEs by creating a market for additional goods and services. The rewetting and restoration works will require and involve the expertise of workers and contractors formerly involved in peat extraction. The research, education, community engagement activities and knowledge transfers possible under this priority will also increase the skills base of impacted communities, supporting the potential for further productive activities.

### **Standards of Rehabilitation**

Almost all peatlands in Ireland have been modified to some degree and require some level of management, either to prevent further degradation or to improve and enhance their condition.

**Restoration** is the process of assisting, through human interventions, the recovery of a moderately degraded peatland ecosystem through management measures that aim to restore the original form and function of peatland habitats to favourable conservation status.

**Rehabilitation** involves similar techniques to those of restoration but may involve greater intervention since subject peatlands have often changed too drastically to allow restoration to 'fully functioning' peatlands. Rehabilitation measures include wetland engineering, water quality improvements, profiling works associated with the creation of wetlands and fens, the active seeding of targeted vegetation, and the proactive inoculation of appropriate bog areas with Sphagnum. These measures are not aimed at restoring a habitat to its original structure and function in the medium term, but intend to improve and enrich biodiversity value.

**Obligated rehabilitation** is a requirement of the Integrated Pollution Control Licences, to ensure '*environmental stabilisation*'. In practice '*environmental stabilisation*' shall be achieved by removing harmful materials and equipment, blocking field drains, slowing the movement of surface water, creating mini-silt traps, re-wetting the peatlands and improving conditions for vegetation establishment through natural colonisation.

Where relevant, the standard of restoration/rehabilitation shall be agreed with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), the designated State body for the implementation of National and EU legislation and policies for nature conservation and biodiversity.

**Polluter Pays Principle**

Where relevant, the Polluter Pays Principle will be taken into account.

**The protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems**

In those project areas which are designated by the national competent authority for conservation or in habitats that are protected, all activities will be carried out in accordance with the conservation objectives that are set or exist for those areas and the EU Taxonomy Regulation regarding new construction on adjoining land. There will not be any conversion of habitats specifically sensitive to biodiversity loss or with high conservation value, or of areas set aside for the restoration of such habitats in accordance with national conservation objectives. Provisions will be made for maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in accordance with national and local provisions.

**Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) Analysis**

A DNSH analysis has been carried out at the level of the types of actions defined above and it has been determined that these actions would do no significant harm to environmental objectives within the meaning of Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

**The main target groups - point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR:**

The expected target groups of these actions are local authorities, former peat workers, owners of farmed drained organic soils targeted for rewetting and local communities impacted directly by the transition. These groups will benefit from the economic development and other opportunities created by the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded peatlands; research and knowledge sharing on sustainable land management practices for rewetted organic soils, and; regeneration and repurposing of industrial heritage assets of the peatlands.

Other target groups of this action will be the SMEs/businesses in the Territory who will benefit from new, sustainable amenities which will support their commercial activities, and the general public which will benefit from this amenity value.

**Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination – point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation**

In line with horizontal principles, the Programme considers the EU Charter of fundamental rights gender equality, non-discrimination, including accessibility, as well as other Horizontal Enabling conditions of relevance throughout the programming cycle, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The Programme will adhere to the best practice recommendations throughout the preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of programmes by ensuring that equality between men and women, gender mainstreaming and the integration of a gender perspective are taken into account and promoted. Simultaneously, the Programme will take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Programme implementation will respect Ireland’s “Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty” which provides a framework for Intermediate Bodies and Beneficiaries to ensure initiatives include actions and processes necessary to respect the horizontal principles.

The Programme will have access to and make use of the Equality and Human Rights in CPR Programming Guidance Tool, published in 2022, which provides a practical and bespoke support for MAs, Intermediate Bodies and Beneficiary Bodies under CPR programmes in Ireland, outlining compliance requirements under Irish national law and CPR adherence.

Under this Priority, particular attention will be paid to the principles of universal design across all projects to ensure that all persons, regardless of their physical or cognitive needs, are able to use and enjoy all available amenities in an equitable and sustainable manner. The actions under this priority will be guided by concepts such as those outlined in the “Great Outdoors - A guide for accessibility” developed by the Irish Wheelchair Association’s Sports Department in conjunction with Sport Ireland for accessible design of outdoor spaces for people with a disability.

#### **Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools – point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR**

The actions will target the EU JTF Territory as identified in the Territorial Just Transition Plan. No territorial tool in the meaning of Article 28 of the CPR will be used.

#### **The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions – point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR**

During the lifetime of the Programme, best practice approaches for restoration and rehabilitation of degraded peatlands and repurposing and regeneration of industrial heritage assets in other regions across Europe (such as Limburg, Northern Germany, Finland and in the Baltic states) will be monitored to ensure

that the most innovative and cutting-edge approaches are being deployed in the EU JTF Territory. Similarly, the fund will support interregional, cross-border and transnational actions in relation to research on rewetted soils to identify suitable land management practices to maintain low GHG emissions and support biodiversity while farming under wet conditions. Learnings and best practices from existing projects, such as the Interreg Europe PROGRESS project focusing on improved governance for ecosystem services can also inform the related actions.

### The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

The selected form of support for all actions under Priority 2 is grants. The supported actions in Priority 2 are not expected to generate a return during their lifetime. The use of financial instruments would therefore not be feasible as a form of support and would not be attractive to potential beneficiaries.

#### 2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation

**Table 2: Output indicators**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
JTF2	JSO8.1	JTF		RCO38	Surface area of rehabilitated land supported	hectares	1,506.00	12,530.00

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

**Table 3: Result indicators**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference Year	Target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
JTF2	JSO8.1	JTF		RCR52	Rehabilitated land used for green areas, social housing, economic or other uses	hectares	0.00	2022	130.00	Projects supported	
JTF2	JSO8.1	JTF		PSR2	Rehabilitated land used to support the protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and/or improve hydrological status	Hectares	0.00	2022	12,400.00	Supported projects	

### 2.1.1.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention

Reference: point (d)(viii) of Article 22(3) CPR

**Table 4: Dimension 1 - intervention field**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
JTF2	JSO8.1	JTF		012. Research and innovation activities in public research centres, higher education and centres of competence including networking (industrial research, experimental development, feasibility studies)	250,000.00
JTF2	JSO8.1	JTF		073. Rehabilitation of industrial sites and contaminated land	15,000,000.00
JTF2	JSO8.1	JTF		079. Nature and biodiversity protection, natural heritage and resources, green and blue infrastructure	5,750,000.00
JTF2	JSO8.1	JTF		080. Other measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the area of preservation and restoration of natural areas with high potential for carbon absorption and storage, e.g. by rewetting of moorlands, the capture of landfill gas	7,475,000.00
JTF2	JSO8.1	Total			28,475,000.00

**Table 5: Dimension 2 - form of financing**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
JTF2	JSO8.1	JTF		01. Grant	28,475,000.00
JTF2	JSO8.1	Total			28,475,000.00

**Table 6: Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
JTF2	JSO8.1	JTF		33. Other approaches - No territorial targeting	28,475,000.00
JTF2	JSO8.1	Total			28,475,000.00

**Table 7: Dimension 6 – ESF+ secondary themes**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
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**Table 8: Dimension 7 – ESF+\*, ERDF, Cohesion Fund and JTF gender equality dimension**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
JTF2	JSO8.1	JTF		03. Gender neutral	28,475,000.00
JTF2	JSO8.1	Total			28,475,000.00

\* In principle, 40 % for the ESF+ contributes to gender tracking. 100 % is applicable when Member State chooses to use Article 6 ESF+

### **2.1.1. Priority: JTF3. Providing former peat communities with smart and sustainable mobility options to enable them to benefit directly from the green transition**

2.1.1.1. Specific objective: JSO8.1. Enabling regions and people to address the social, employment, economic and environmental impacts of the transition towards the Union's 2030 targets for energy and climate and a climate-neutral economy of the Union by 2050, based on the Paris Agreement (JTF)

2.1.1.1.1. Interventions of the Funds

*Reference: points (d)(i), (iii), (iv), (v), (vi) and (vii) of Article 22(3) CPR*

**The related types of actions** – *point (d)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation:*

The EU JTF will provide the communities affected by the transitioning away from peat with smart and sustainable connections by supporting actions aimed at enhancing sustainable and clean mobility in the Territory focusing on the decarbonisation of transport to provide clean transport solutions to the people working, studying and visiting the EU JTF Territory.

Improving access to green mobility in the Territory will have positive social and economic benefits, particularly for older and younger people allowing for increased sustainable access to local employment, education, and social opportunities in the Territory, making it possible for the most affected communities to better manage the transition in the short and medium term, while reinforcing the attractiveness of the Territory in the long-term. This will also help to address the challenge outlined in the 2022 Country Report, that the planned investments in sustainable mobility included in the RRP will not be sufficient to decarbonise public transport and achieve the ambitious targets to decarbonise transport outlined in the Climate Action Plan.

Switching to sustainable and clean forms of energy will place the Territory on a more sustainable path by reducing the reliance on peat as a form of energy and supporting the Territory in achieving its greenhouse gas emissions targets. There are human health benefits which result from such actions such as improved air quality in the Territory and helping to mitigate the impacts of global climate change.

#### Key activities under this priority

As part of this priority, the EU JTF Programme will enhance sustainable and clean mobility in the Territory by supporting actions focusing on the decarbonisation of transport to provide clean transport solutions to the people working in, studying in and visiting the EU JTF Territory. Factors such as range anxiety, stretched resources and uncertain travel patterns following the pandemic, and rapidly changing technology, mean that the barriers to transport operators in the Territory taking advantage of zero carbon fleets are very high. By introducing relatively simple measures, the move to cleaner public transport for all can be accelerated in the EU JTF Territory. This will include the following type of activities:

- Decarbonisation of public local rural bus route(s) including scoping, installation of electric charging points, and purchase of electric buses.

- Support to private bus operators in the territory to move to electric vehicles including consultancy support and support for specific aspect of the electrification upgrade
- Installation of publicly available fast and high-powered charge point infrastructure at community centre sites, including consultancy support, support to infrastructure work (civil and electrical work) and purchase of necessary equipment and related installation measures

This Priority is key to ensuring the success of Priority 1. Sustainable and clean mobility in the region is essential to ensuring the Territory's population are able to access jobs and training in order to participate in the economic and community diversification activities of Priority 1. It is intended that actions supported under this Priority will build more resilient communities by allowing earlier adoption of zero-emissions mobility options, providing workers with better access to local jobs, training and education opportunities. The creation of local sustainable transport solutions will better connect towns, remote working hubs and educational institutions in the Territory, better serving employees. Enhanced local sustainable transport enables communities to embrace clean and sustainable opportunities resulting from the green transition. It is envisaged that local suppliers of works, equipment and services will benefit from the investment of JTF funding of these actions, as well as local businesses which may be considering the use of zero-emissions vehicles for commercial purposes, particularly last-mile freight services and services associated with community programmes, such as meals on wheels or youth clubs.

Priority 3 aligns with measure 49420 of the National Air Pollution Control Programme. Air quality impact will be calculated based on directly measurable factors such as the increase in kilometres travelled by electric vehicles, or the kWh of renewable electricity used to charge vehicles.

### **Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) Analysis**

A DNSH analysis has been carried out at the level of the types of actions defined above and it has been determined that these actions would do no significant harm to environmental objectives within the meaning of Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

### **The main target groups - point (d)(iii) of Article 22(3) CPR:**

The main target groups of the actions included in this Priority will be local transport providers operating in the Territory, local communities that have limited clean mobility options, owners of locations, such as owners and operators of community buildings where EV charging points will be installed and the general public who will be able to avail of clean transport in the Territory to go to work, study or to visit the Territory, as well those commuting to and utilising remote working hubs located at or near the EV charging points.

**Actions safeguarding equality, inclusion and non-discrimination** – *point (d)(iv) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 6 ESF+ Regulation*

In line with horizontal principles, the Programme considers the EU Charter of fundamental rights gender equality, non-discrimination, including accessibility, as well as other Horizontal Enabling conditions of relevance throughout the programming cycle, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Programme will have access to and make use of the Equality and Human Rights in CPR Programming Guidance Tool, published in 2022, which provides a practical and bespoke support for MAs, Intermediate Bodies and Beneficiary Bodies under CPR programmes in Ireland, outlining compliance requirements under Irish national law and CPR adherence.

The Programme will adhere to the best practice recommendations throughout the preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of programmes by ensuring that equality between men and women, gender mainstreaming and the integration of a gender perspective are taken into account and promoted. Simultaneously, the Programme will take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

This priority will support the earlier adoption of zero-emissions mobility options. Increased access to mobility for all citizens in the Territory has positive benefits in terms of making it possible for the most affected communities to better manage the transition, ensuring respect for fundamental rights and compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Increased access to local employment, education, and social opportunities in the Territory through more sustainable mobility options will provide opportunities for women and youth to participate in economic and community diversification activities, thereby assisting in the integration of gender perspectives.

**Indication of the specific territories targeted, including the planned use of territorial tools** – *point (d)(v) of Article 22(3) CPR*

The actions will target the EU JTF Territory as identified in the Territorial Just Transition Plan. No territorial tool in the meaning of Article 28 of the CPR will be used.

**The interregional, cross-border and transnational actions** – *point (d)(vi) of Article 22(3) CPR*

All Programme actions will take place in or directly target the EU JTF Territory as outlined in the TJTP for Ireland. During the lifetime of the Programme, best practice approaches to the deployment of sustainable and clean mobility options in other JT Regions across Europe will be monitored to ensure that the

most innovative and cutting-edge approaches are being deployed in the EU JTF Territory. The EU JTF Programme will benefit from learnings and potential cooperation through other regional programmes such as: PEACE PLUS; NWE, NPA, and AA Interreg; Interreg Europe; and URBACT.

### The planned use of financial instruments – point (d)(vii) of Article 22(3) CPR

The selected form of support for all actions under Priority 3 is grants. The proposed actions are not expected to generate a return and the use of Financial instruments is prohibited for some of the beneficiaries. The use of financial instruments would therefore not be feasible as a form of support and would not be attractive to potential beneficiaries.

#### 2.1.1.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 8 ERDF and CF Regulation

**Table 2: Output indicators**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		RCO01	Enterprises supported (of which: micro, small, medium, large)	enterprises	12.00	12.00
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		RCO02	Enterprises supported by grants	enterprises	8.00	8.00
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		RCO04	Enterprises with non-financial support	enterprises	12.00	12.00
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		RCO57	Capacity of environmentally friendly rolling stock for collective public transport	passengers	0.00	95.00
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		PSO2	Alternative fuels infrastructure (refuelling/ recharging points)	refuelling/recharging points	16.00	62.00

Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 22(3) CPR

**Table 3: Result indicators**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline or reference value	Reference Year	Target (2029)	Source of data	Comments
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		RCR03	Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) introducing product or process innovation	enterprises	0.00	2022	4.00	Supported projects	
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		RCR29	Estimated greenhouse emissions	tonnes CO2 eq./year	91.10	2022	63.60	Vehicle kilometre data	
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		PSR3	Annual active usage time of newly installed EV charging points	hours/year	0.00	2022	438.00	Supported projects	Target value based on 5% of active time per annum

### 2.1.1.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programmed resources (EU) by type of intervention

Reference: point (d)(viii) of Article 22(3) CPR

**Table 4: Dimension 1 - intervention field**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		021. SME business development and internationalisation, including productive investments	512,500.00
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		082. Clean urban transport rolling stock	1,125,000.00
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		086. Alternative fuels infrastructure	7,500,000.00
JTF3	JSO8.1	Total			9,137,500.00

**Table 5: Dimension 2 - form of financing**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		01. Grant	9,137,500.00
JTF3	JSO8.1	Total			9,137,500.00

**Table 6: Dimension 3 – territorial delivery mechanism and territorial focus**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		33. Other approaches - No territorial targeting	9,137,500.00
JTF3	JSO8.1	Total			9,137,500.00

**Table 7: Dimension 6 – ESF+ secondary themes**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
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**Table 8: Dimension 7 – ESF+\*, ERDF, Cohesion Fund and JTF gender equality dimension**

Priority	Specific objective	Fund	Category of region	Code	Amount (EUR)
JTF3	JSO8.1	JTF		03. Gender neutral	9,137,500.00
JTF3	JSO8.1	Total			9,137,500.00

\* In principle, 40 % for the ESF+ contributes to gender tracking. 100 % is applicable when Member State chooses to use Article 6 ESF+

## 2.2. Technical assistance priorities

### 3. Financing plan

Reference: points (g)(i), (ii) and (iii) of Article 22(3), Article 112(1), (2) and (3), and Articles 14 and 26 CPR

#### 3.1. Transfers and contributions (1)

Reference: Articles 14, 26 and 27 CPR

Programme amendment related to	<input type="checkbox"/> contribution to InvestEU
	<input type="checkbox"/> transfer to instruments under direct or indirect management
	<input type="checkbox"/> transfer between ERDF, ESF+, Cohesion Fund or to another Fund or Funds

(1) Applicable only to programme amendments in accordance with Articles 14 and 26 except complementary transfers to the JTF in accordance with Article 27 CPR. Transfers shall not affect the annual breakdown of financial appropriations at the MFF level for a Member State.

Table 15A: Contributions to InvestEU\* (breakdown by year)

Contribution from		Contribution to	Breakdown by year							
Fund	Category of region	InvestEU window	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total

\* For each new request for contribution, a programme amendment shall set out the total amounts for each year by Fund and by category of region.

Table 15B: Contributions to InvestEU\* (summary)

Fund	Category of region	Sustainable Infrastructure (a)	Innovation and Digitisation (b)	SME (c)	Social Investment and Skills (d)	Total (e)=(a)+(b)+(c)+(d)
Total						

\* Cumulative amounts for all contributions done through programme amendments during the programming period. With each new request for contribution, a programme amendment shall set out the total amounts for each year by Fund and by category of region.

Justification, taking into account how those amounts contribute to the achievement of policy objectives selected in the programme in accordance with Article 10(1) of the InvestEU Regulation

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Table 16A: Transfers to instruments under direct or indirect management (breakdown by year)

Transfers from		Transfers to	Breakdown by year							
Fund	Category of region	Instrument	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total

Table 16B: Transfers to instruments under direct or indirect management\* (summary)

Fund	Category of region	Total
Total		

\* Cumulative amounts for all transfers done through programme amendments during programming period. With each new request for transfer, a programme amendment shall set out the total amounts transferred for each year by Fund and by category of region.

Transfers to instruments under direct or indirect management - Justification

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Table 17A: Transfers between ERDF, ESF+ and Cohesion Fund or to another Fund or Funds\* (breakdown by year)

Transfers from		Transfers to		Breakdown by year							
Fund	Category of region	Fund	Category of region	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total

\* Transfer to other programmes. Transfers between ERDF and ESF+ can only be done within the same category of region.

Table 17B: Transfers between ERDF, ESF+ and Cohesion Fund or to another Fund or Funds (summary)

	ERDF			ESF+			CF	EMFAF	AMIF	ISF	BMVI	Total
	More developed	Transition	Less developed	More developed	Transition	Less developed						
Total												

\* Cumulative amounts for all transfers done through programme amendments during the programming period. With each new request for transfer, a programme amendment shall set out the total amounts transferred for each year by Fund and category of region.

Transfers between shared management funds, including between cohesion policy funds - Justification

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### 3.2. JTF: allocation in the programme and transfers (1)

#### 3.2.1. JTF allocation to the programme prior to transfers by priority (where relevant) (2)

Reference: Article 27 CPR

**Table 18: JTF allocation to the programme in accordance with Article 3 JTF Regulation, prior to transfers**

JTF Priority	JTF Allocation
Generating employment for former peat communities by investing in the diversification of the local economy	21,609,219.00
Supporting the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded peatlands and regeneration and repurposing of industrial heritage assets	5,873,525.00
Providing former peat communities with smart and sustainable mobility options to enable them to benefit directly from the green transition	9,503,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>36,985,744.00</b>

(1) Transfers shall not affect the annual breakdown of financial appropriations at the MFF level for a Member State

(2) Applicable to the first adoption of programmes with JTF allocation.

#### 3.2.2. Transfers to the JTF as complementary support (1) (where relevant)

Transfer to JTF	<input type="checkbox"/> concerns internal transfers within the programme with JTF allocation
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	<input type="checkbox"/> concerns transfers from other programmes to the programme with JTF allocation
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(1) Section to be filled in by receiving programme. Where a programme supported by the JTF receives complementary support (cf Article 27 CPR) within the programme and from other programmes all tables in this section need to be filled in. At the first adoption with JTF allocation, this section is to confirm or correct the preliminary transfers proposed in the Partnership Agreement

Table 18A: Transfers to the JTF within the programme (breakdown by year)

Transfers from		Transfers to	Breakdown by year							
Fund	Category of region	JTF Priority*	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total

\* JTF resources should be complemented with ERDF or ESF+ resources of the category of region where the territory concerned is located.

Table 18B: Transfer of ERDF and ESF+ resources to the JTF within the programme

Transfer within the programme* (complementary support) per category of region	JTF allocation in the programme* broken down by category of region, which territory located** in (by JTF priority)	
	JTF Priority	Amount

\* Programme with the JTF allocation.

\*\* JTF resources should be complemented with ERDF or ESF+ resources of the category of region where the territory concerned is located.

Table 18C: Transfers to the JTF from the other programme(s) (breakdown by year)

Transfers from		Transfers to	Breakdown by year							
From fund	Category of region	JTF Priority*	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total

\* JTF resources should be complemented with ERDF or ESF+ resources of the category of region where the territory concerned is located.

Table 18D: Transfer of ERDF and ESF+ resources from other programmes to the JTF in this programme

Transfer(s) from other programme(s)** per category of region	Complementary support to the JTF in this programme* to the territory located*** in a given category of region (by priority)	
	JTF Priority	Amount

\* Programme with JTF allocation, which receives complementary support from the ERDF and ESF+.

\*\* Programme providing the complementary support from the ERDF and ESF+ (source).

\*\*\* JTF resources should be complemented with ERDF or ESF+ resources of the category of region where the territory concerned is located.

### 3.2.2. Transfers to the JTF as complementary support (1) (where relevant)

Justification for the complementary transfer from ERDF and ESF+ based on the planned types of interventions

Reference: point (d)(ix) of Article 22(3) CPR

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### 3.3. Transfers between categories of region resulting from the mid-term review

Table 19A: Transfers between categories of region resulting from the mid-term review within the programme (breakdown by year)

Transfers from	Transfers to	Breakdown by year			
Category of region*	Category of region*	2025	2026	2027	Total

\* Applicable to ERDF and ESF+ only

Table 19B: Transfers between categories of region resulting from the mid-term review, to other programmes (breakdown by year)

Transfers from	Transfers to	Breakdown by year			
Category of region*	Category of region*	2025	2026	2027	Total

\* Applicable to ERDF and ESF+ only

### 3.4. Transfers back (1)

Table 20A: Transfers back (breakdown by year)

Transfers from	Transfers to		Breakdown by year							
InvestEU or other Union instrument	Fund	Category of region	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total

(1) Applicable only to programme amendments for resources transferred back from other Union instruments, including elements of AMIF, ISF and BMVI, under direct or indirect management, or from InvestEU.

Table 20B: Transfers back\* (summary)

From	To						
InvestEU / Instrument	ERDF			ESF+			Cohesion Fund
	More developed	Transition	Developed	More developed	Transition	Developed	

\* Cumulative amounts for all transfers done through programme amendments during programming period. With each new request for transfer, a programme amendment shall set out the total amounts transferred for each year by Fund and by category of region.

### 3.5. Financial appropriations by year

Reference: point (g)(i) of Article 22(3) CPR and Article 3, 4 and 7 JTF Regulation

**Table 10: Financial appropriations by year**

Fund	Category of region	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026		2027		Total
							Financial appropriation without flexibility amount	Flexibility amount	Financial appropriation without flexibility amount	Flexibility amount	
JTF* - Article 3 JTF resources			6,318,281.00	6,419,772.00	6,523,292.00	6,628,884.00	2,746,415.00	2,746,414.00	2,801,343.00	2,801,343.00	36,985,744.00
JTF - Article 4 JTF resources			23,551,323.00	23,929,627.00							47,480,950.00
JTF - Article 7 JTF resources related to Article 3 JTF resources											
JTF - Article 7 JTF resources related to Article 4 JTF resources											
Total JTF			29,869,604.00	30,349,399.00	6,523,292.00	6,628,884.00	2,746,415.00	2,746,414.00	2,801,343.00	2,801,343.00	84,466,694.00
Total			29,869,604.00	30,349,399.00	6,523,292.00	6,628,884.00	2,746,415.00	2,746,414.00	2,801,343.00	2,801,343.00	84,466,694.00

\* Amounts after the complementary transfer to the JTF.

### 3.6. Total financial appropriations by fund and national co-financing

Reference: point (g)(ii) of Article 22(3), Article 22(6) and Article 36 CPR

For the Investment for jobs and growth goal: programmes using technical assistance according to Article 36(5) CPR in accordance with the choice made in the Partnership Agreement

**Table 11: Total financial allocations by fund and national contribution**

Policy / JTF specific objective number or technical assistance	Priority	Basis for calculation Union support	Fund	Category of region*	Union contribution (a)=(b)+(c)+(i)+(j)	Breakdown of Union contribution				National contribution (d)=(e)+(f)	Indicative breakdown of national contribution		Total (g)=(a)+(d)	Co-financing rate (h)=(a)/(g)
						Union contribution		Flexibility amount			Public (e)	Private (f)		
						without technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(5) (b)	for technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(5) (c)	without technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(5) (i)	for technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(5) (j)					
8	JTF1	Total	JTF** - Article 3 JTF resources		21,609,220.00	17,661,441.00	706,457.00	3,116,656.00	124,666.00	21,609,220.00	21,609,220.00	0.00	43,218,440.00	50.0000000000%
8	JTF1	Total	JTF** - Article 4 JTF resources		23,740,475.00	22,827,380.00	913,095.00			23,740,475.00	23,740,475.00	0.00	47,480,950.00	50.0000000000%
8	JTF1	Total	JTF**		45,349,695.00	40,488,821.00	1,619,552.00	3,116,656.00	124,666.00	45,349,695.00	45,349,695.00	0.00	90,699,390.00	50.0000000000%
8	JTF2	Total	JTF** - Article 3 JTF resources		5,873,524.00	4,800,493.00	192,019.00	847,127.00	33,885.00	5,873,524.00	5,873,524.00	0.00	11,747,048.00	50.0000000000%
8	JTF2	Total	JTF** - Article 4 JTF resources		23,740,475.00	22,827,380.00	913,095.00			23,740,475.00	23,740,475.00	0.00	47,480,950.00	50.0000000000%
8	JTF2	Total	JTF**		29,613,999.00	27,627,873.00	1,105,114.00	847,127.00	33,885.00	29,613,999.00	29,613,999.00	0.00	59,227,998.00	50.0000000000%
8	JTF3	Total	JTF** - Article 3 JTF resources		9,503,000.00	7,766,901.00	310,676.00	1,370,599.00	54,824.00	9,503,000.00	9,503,000.00	0.00	19,006,000.00	50.0000000000%
8	JTF3	Total	JTF** - Article 4 JTF resources		0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
8	JTF3	Total	JTF**		9,503,000.00	7,766,901.00	310,676.00	1,370,599.00	54,824.00	9,503,000.00	9,503,000.00	0.00	19,006,000.00	50.0000000000%
Total			JTF** - Article 3 JTF resources		36,985,744.00	30,228,835.00	1,209,152.00	5,334,382.00	213,375.00	36,985,744.00	36,985,744.00	0.00	73,971,488.00	50.0000000000%
Total			JTF** - Article 4 JTF resources		47,480,950.00	45,654,760.00	1,826,190.00			47,480,950.00	47,480,950.00	0.00	94,961,900.00	50.0000000000%
Grand total					84,466,694.00	75,883,595.00	3,035,342.00	5,334,382.00	213,375.00	84,466,694.00	84,466,694.00	0.00	168,933,388.00	50.0000000000%

\* For ERDF and ESF+: less developed, transition, more developed, and, where applicable special allocation for outermost and northern sparsely populated regions. For Cohesion Fund: not applicable. For technical assistance, application of categories of region depends on the selection of the fund.

\*\* Indicate the total JTF resources, including the complementary support transferred from the ERDF and the ESF+. The table shall not include the amounts in accordance to Article 7 JTF Regulation. In case of technical assistance financed from the JTF, the JTF resources should be split into resources related to Articles 3 and 4 JTF Regulation. For Article 4 JTF Regulation, there is no flexibility amount.

#### 4. Enabling conditions

Reference: point (i) of Article 22(3) CPR

**Table 12: Enabling conditions**

Enabling condition	Fund	Specific objective	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
1. Effective monitoring mechanisms of the public procurement market			Yes	<p>Monitoring mechanisms are in place that cover all public contracts and their procurement under the Funds in line with Union procurement legislation. That requirement includes:</p> <p>1. Arrangements to ensure compilation of effective and reliable data on public procurement procedures above the Union thresholds in accordance with reporting obligations under Articles 83 and 84 of Directive 2014/24/EU and Articles 99 and 100 of Directive 2014/25/EU.</p>	Yes	<p>National Public Procurement Policy Framework</p> <p><a href="https://ogp.gov.ie/national-public-procurement-policy-framework/">https://ogp.gov.ie/national-public-procurement-policy-framework/</a></p> <p>National Public Procurement Guidelines on Goods and Services</p> <p><a href="https://ogp.gov.ie/public-procurement-guidelines-for-goods-and-services/">https://ogp.gov.ie/public-procurement-guidelines-for-goods-and-services/</a> <a href="http://www.eTenders.gov.ie">www.eTenders.gov.ie</a></p> <p>Capital Works Management Framework</p> <p><a href="https://constructionprocurement.gov.ie/">https://constructionprocurement.gov.ie/</a></p> <p>DPER circular 13/2015 <a href="https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/2b0103e70fec4127983d2c1e60e0546d/">https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/2b0103e70fec4127983d2c1e60e0546d/</a></p> <p>This will be updated for 21-27 period.</p> <p><a href="https://ogp.gov.ie/public-procurement-guidelines-for-goods-and-serv">https://ogp.gov.ie/public-procurement-guidelines-for-goods-and-serv</a></p>	<p>The Office of Government Procurement (OGP) has responsibility for developing and setting out the overarching policy framework for public procurement in Ireland.</p> <p>The National Public Procurement Guidelines outline the responsibilities of contracting authorities to comply with monitoring and reporting arrangements in line with EU procurement legislation.</p> <p>eTenders provides a central facility for advertisement of procurement opportunities and award notices across the public sector which is reported on by OGP.</p> <p>The CWMF is an integrated set of contractual provisions, guidance material and technical procedures which covers all aspects of the delivery process of a public works project from inception to final project delivery and review.</p> <p>As is noted in DPER circular 13/2015 on management and control procedures for ESIF.</p> <p>Managing Authorities, Intermediate Bodies and Beneficiaries are responsible for ensuring that projects and operations are in compliance with Procurement Guidelines and EU legislation.</p>

Enabling condition	Fund	Specific objective	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
							The National Public Procurement Guidelines for Goods and Services set out these arrangements on page 72-73. Reports in relation to this directive are submitted
				2. Arrangements to ensure the data cover at least the following elements:  a. Quality and intensity of competition: names of winning bidder, number of initial bidders and contractual value;  b. Information on final price after completion and on participation of SMEs as direct bidders, where national systems provide such information.	Yes	<a href="https://ogp.gov.ie/public-procurement-guidelines-for-goods-and-services/">https://ogp.gov.ie/public-procurement-guidelines-for-goods-and-services/</a> <a href="https://www.etenders.gov.ie/Media/Default/SiteContent/LegislationGuides/Circular_10_-_14_0.pdf">https://www.etenders.gov.ie/Media/Default/SiteContent/LegislationGuides/Circular_10_-_14_0.pdf</a>	The National Public Procurement Guidelines set out these arrangements on page 72-73.  Information on price at award is provided in the Contract Award Notice required for every contract above the value of €25,000.  eTenders, the national procurement platform, records the details of all interested bidders. eTenders is a live platform. In addition, page 22-23 of the National Procurement Guidelines on Goods and Services set out the policy on SME participation in public procurement.
				3. Arrangements to ensure monitoring and analysis of the data by the competent national authorities in accordance with article 83 (2) of directive 2014/24/EU and article 99 (2) of directive 2014/25/EU.	Yes	<a href="http://www.eTenders.gov.ie">www.eTenders.gov.ie</a>  Report of the Interim Procurement Reform Board	OGP analyses the data captured on eTenders and prepares Article 83 and Article 99 reports to the European Commission as required.  This document that is regularly published and contains additional information.
				4. Arrangements to make the results of the analysis available	Yes	Public Service Spend and Tendering Analysis	Reports are published on the OGP website once finalised. The OGP also

Enabling condition	Fund	Specific objective	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
				to the public in accordance with article 83 (3) of directive 2014/24/EU and article 99 (3) directive 2014/25/EU.		<a href="https://ogp.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/OGP-2017-Public-Service-Spend-and-Tendering-Analysis.pdf">https://ogp.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/OGP-2017-Public-Service-Spend-and-Tendering-Analysis.pdf</a>  Report of the Interim Procurement Reform Board	<p>publishes an annual Spend and Tendering Analysis report.</p> <p>This document that is regularly published contains additional information.</p>
				5. Arrangements to ensure that all information pointing to suspected bid-rigging situations is communicated to the competent national bodies in accordance with Article 83(2) of Directive 2014/24/EU and Article 99(2) of Directive 2014/25/EU.	Yes	<a href="https://ogp.gov.ie/public-procurement-guidelines-for-goods-and-services/">https://ogp.gov.ie/public-procurement-guidelines-for-goods-and-services/</a>  <a href="https://www.ccpc.ie/business/help-for-business/guidelines-for-business/bid-rigging-what-you-need-to-know/">https://www.ccpc.ie/business/help-for-business/guidelines-for-business/bid-rigging-what-you-need-to-know/</a>	<p>Contracting Authorities must report suspected bid-rigging to the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (see p. 19 of guidelines)</p> <p>The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) is an independent statutory body with a dual mandate to enforce competition and consumer protection law in Ireland. It regularly publishes information for consumers and businesses. For example, it recently published a “Business Guide on Bid Rigging”.</p> <p>Ireland’s Anti-Fraud Coordination Service (AFCOS) based in the EU and International Division of Dept of Finance are responsible for anti-fraud coordination for EU funds in Ireland.</p>
2. Tools and capacity for effective			Yes	Managing authorities have the tools and capacity to verify compliance with State aid rules:	Yes	<a href="https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/EU-Internal-Market/EU-State-Aid-Rules/">https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/EU-Internal-Market/EU-State-Aid-Rules/</a>	Granting authorities will require that applicants for support from the funds confirm within the application process

Enabling condition	Fund	Specific objective	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
application of State aid rules				1. For undertakings in difficulty and undertakings under a recovery requirement.		<p>A list of undertakings under a recovery requirement is available on the Commission's website.</p> <p>Published data will be consulted. For example, the universities are registered charities and their financial data is published on the website of the Charities Regulator</p> <p>Company financial data is available on the website of the Companies Registration Office (CRO). The CRO is the central repository of public statutory information on Irish companies and business names.</p>	<p>that they are not an undertaking in difficulty and that they are not subject to a recovery order. Granting authorities may rely on accountants certificates, published financial statements and databases (including Arachne) to verify as appropriate.</p> <p>Checks will be carried out and documented by the awarding bodies at the project selection stage and again as part of the management verification process as appropriate. Applicants will be required to complete self-declarations and to provide supporting documents as appropriate. Awarding bodies will be able to validate information against national databases (see above), accountant's certificates and/or audit reports.</p> <p>The Managing Authorities will review the checks carried out and documented at the level of the operation by the awarding bodies as part of the MA management verification process and using an approved sampling methodology.</p>
				2. Through access to expert advice and guidance on State aid matters, provided by State aid experts of local or national bodies.	Yes	<p><a href="https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/EU-Internal-Market/EU-State-Aid-Rules/">https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/EU-Internal-Market/EU-State-Aid-Rules/</a></p> <p>GBER schemes are published on the website of the Granting Authority (and</p>	The State Aid Unit in the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment (DETE) provides guidance on interpretation of state aid rules and state aid training. EMFAF's parent department and several ERDF

Enabling condition	Fund	Specific objective	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
						<p>the relevant information is made available to the Commission as part the information note required within 20 days of the granting of aid under the scheme).</p> <p>DETE is currently considering creating a centralised website for all GBER schemes.</p>	<p>intermediary bodies have in-house expertise in relation to State Aid.</p> <p>DETE will provide advice, where relevant, on schemes at design stage and during the implementation phases of programmes. Advice is available to all public service bodies and the unit operate a case management system to ensure service delivery. If the issue is particularly complex or Managing Authority decide to seek another opinion they can deploy technical assistance to procure state aid advice including legal advice or specialist training. The State Aid Unit will provide tailored training to Managing Authorities and public bodies delivering schemes upon request subject to capacity. The Interdepartmental Committee on State Aid is a state aid network, which includes Managing Authorities, shares information and knowledge.</p>
3. Effective application and implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights			Yes	<p>Effective mechanisms are in place to ensure compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ('the Charter') which include:</p> <p>1. Arrangements to ensure compliance of the programmes supported by the Funds and their implementation with the relevant provisions of the Charter.</p>	Yes	<p>Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014</p> <p>IHREC Strategy Statement</p> <p>Implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty</p> <p>Guidance Tool on Equality and Human Rights in EU Funds</p>	<p>The MAs will ensure compliance with the Charter in all Funds.</p> <p>IHREC will support the MAs with monitoring, assisting to ensure compliance with the Charter.</p> <p>The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty (the Duty) requires public bodies to have regard to non-discrimination, equality, and human rights in carrying out their functions. Adherence to the Duty by all</p>

Enabling condition	Fund	Specific objective	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
							<p>implementing bodies will help to ensure compliance with the Charter.</p> <p>Building on the Duty, a guidance tool has been developed with IHREC to assist Intermediate Bodies (IBs) and Beneficiaries in advancing equality and human rights.</p> <p>IHREC will be invited to sit on the PMCs and will be consulted throughout the development of the PA and OPs and in implementation, monitoring and evaluation of OPs.</p> <p>Compliance will be ensured through application of the Duty and with the help of the Commission's 'Fundamental Rights Checklist' and IHREC guidance. Each IB or scheme delivery partner will report annually on progress in relation to human rights and equality and on continued compliance with the Charter.</p> <p>Training on human rights and equality will be procured</p>
				2. Reporting arrangements to the monitoring committee regarding cases of non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds with the Charter and complaints regarding the Charter submitted in accordance with the arrangements made pursuant to Article 69(7).	Yes	<a href="https://www.ihrec.ie/">https://www.ihrec.ie/</a>	Where a complaint regarding the Charter or potential case of non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds with the Charter is brought to the attention of the MA, the MA will establish the facts of the case. If the case is established by the MA to be a potential breach of the Charter, the MA will request that IHREC provide an assessment. The MA will state clearly the reasons for its belief that a potential breach of the Charter has occurred.

Enabling condition	Fund	Specific objective	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
							<p>Upon formal receipt of such a request, IHREC will complete their assessment with reference to Ireland’s obligations under the Charter.</p> <p>Where IHREC deem that the Charter has not been complied with they will inform the Monitoring Committee. IHREC will set out its findings in a report and propose recommendations, if any, drawing on the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty and the guidance tool developed by IHREC and the MAs to support integration of equality and human rights standards under the Funds. The MA will respond and inform the Committee of any remedial actions taken and of the scope to draw lessons for the implementation of programmes. Reporting on any cases of non-compliance and complaints will take place at least annually.</p>
<p>4. Implementation and application of the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD) in accordance with Council Decision 2010/48/EC</p>			<p>Yes</p>	<p>A national framework to ensure implementation of the UNCRPD is in place that includes:</p> <p>1. Objectives with measurable goals, data collection and monitoring mechanisms.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The National Disability Inclusion Strategy</p> <p>Mid-Term Review of National Disability Inclusion Strategy</p> <p>Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-24</p> <p>IHREC - UNCRPD</p>	<p>The current mechanism to implement the UNCRPD commitments is the National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) and its Steering Group.</p> <p>The NDIS has been extended until the end of 2022 with implementation of actions and monitoring by the NDIS Steering Group continuing. Progress is tracked against a set of 62 indicators identified by the National Disability Authority (NDA).</p>

Enabling condition	Fund	Specific objective	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
						<p>NDA – Monitoring of NDIS</p> <p>Launch of Disability Consultation Network</p>	<p>There will be ongoing assessment of the implementation of actions identified in the NDIS until the strategy concludes. The Mid-Term review of the NDIS commits to the development of a specific UNCRPD implementation plan, expected in 2022.</p> <p>The Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities (CESPD) is also of particular relevance in relation to Article 27 of the UNCRPD.</p> <p>IHREC is the independent monitoring mechanism for UNCRPD in Ireland, and will work with the NDA to carry out this task.</p> <p>A Disability Participation and Consultation Network has been established to ensure that persons with disabilities have input into the formation of policy and legislation in Ireland.</p>
				<p>2. Arrangements to ensure that accessibility policy, legislation and standards are properly reflected in the preparation and implementation of the programmes.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The National Disability Inclusion Strategy</p> <p>Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-24</p> <p>Disability Act 2005</p> <p>Employment Equality Act 1998-2015</p>	<p>The MAs will ensure that accessibility policy, legislation and standards are properly reflected in the preparation and implementation of programmes. Where relevant, interventions will be aligned with and enable progress on the implementation of the NDIS &amp; CESPD.</p> <p>The NDA and IHREC are members of the Partnership Process Steering Group</p>

Enabling condition	Fund	Specific objective	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
						<p>Equal Status Act 2000-2018</p> <p>NDA Code of Practice on Accessibility of Public Services and Information provided by Public Bodies</p> <p>NDA Centre for Excellence in Universal Design</p> <p>Implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty</p>	<p>which advises on preparation for 2021-27 and will be consulted throughout the development of the PA and OPs. They will be invited to sit on the Monitoring Committees.</p> <p>The MAs will ensure that accessibility policy, legislation and standards will be reflected in all stages through consultation on key documents and active monitoring. Relevant policy, legislation and standards include the NDIS, CESP, the Disability Act and the Equality Acts. The NDA and IHREC have developed detailed guidance for use by public bodies involved in preparation and implementation of programmes. Each IB or scheme delivery partner will report annually on disability issues.</p> <p>Training in relation to disability issues will be procured and provided to staff in the MAs, IBs and Beneficiaries as required</p>
				3. Reporting arrangements to the monitoring committee regarding cases of non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds with the UNCRPD and complaints regarding the UNCRPD submitted in accordance with the arrangements made pursuant to Article 69(7).	Yes	<a href="https://www.ihrec.ie/">https://www.ihrec.ie/</a>	Where a complaint regarding UNCRPD or potential case of non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds with UNCRPD is brought to the attention of the MA, the MA will establish the facts of the case. If the case is established by the MA to be a potential breach of UNCRPD, the MA will request that IHREC provide their assessment. The MA will state clearly the reasons for its

Enabling condition	Fund	Specific objective	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
							<p>belief that a potential breach of UNCRPD has occurred.</p> <p>Upon formal receipt of this request, IHREC will complete their assessment with reference to Ireland's obligations under UNCRPD, the Employment Equality Acts and the Equal Status Acts. Where IHREC deem that UNCRPD has not been complied with, they will inform the Monitoring Committee. IHREC will set out its findings in a report and propose recommendations, if any, drawing on the Public Sector Duty and the guidance tool developed by IHREC and the MAs to support integration of equality and human rights under the Funds. The MA will respond and inform the Committee of any remedial actions taken and of the scope to draw lessons for the implementation of programmes. Reporting on any cases of non-compliance and complaints will take place at least annually.</p>

## 5. Programme authorities

Reference: point (k) of Article 22(3) and Articles 71 and 84 CPR

**Table 13: Programme authorities**

Programme authorities	Name of the institution	Contact name	Position	Email
Managing authority	Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly	Jim Conway	Director	jconway@emra.ie
Audit authority	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	Paul Herron	Audit Manager (Internal & EU Audit Unit)	paul.herron@per.gov.ie
Body which receives payments from the Commission	Department of Finance	Paddy Delaney		paddydelaney@finance.gov.ie
Body (other than managing authority) carrying out the accounting function	Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications	Frank Maughan	Principal officer	frank.maughan@decc.gov.ie

The repartition of the reimbursed amounts for technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR if more bodies are identified to receive payments from the Commission

Reference: Article 22(3) CPR

Table 13A: The portion of the percentages set out in point (b) of Article 36(5) CPR that would be reimbursed to the bodies which receive payments from the Commission in case of technical assistance pursuant to Article 36(5) CPR (in percentage points)

## 6. Partnership

Reference: point (h) of Article 22(3) CPR

The Partnership Principle is a key feature of EU Funds under shared management, including the JTF in Ireland. The EU JTF Programme was prepared with input from a broad range of partners and stakeholders from across the relevant territory, in compliance with Article 22(3)(h) of the CPR and Article 8(1) of the EU JTF regulation. Broad engagement throughout programming is essential to ensure actions are adapted to the local and regional needs and priorities, that funding is spent efficiently, and to bring added value by including a wide range of stakeholders in funding management. Partnership also helps to avoid policy fragmentation.

### **Preparation of Programme**

The preparation of the Programme has operated in accordance with the European Code of Conduct on Partnership and Article 8 of the CPR in relation to partnership and multilevel governance. The Managing Authority (MA) engaged with relevant partners during the programme preparation stage in a transparent and effective way. Consultation of partners followed several steps and processes, involving review of public policy, public consultations and updates on progress. Documentation was circulated to members of the PPSG and the PAWG, notices of public consultation and consultation reports were published on the website [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) with links from the [www.eufunds.ie](http://www.eufunds.ie) and MA's website. The output of these actions informed the shape of the programme. Partners have also been integral in their feedback during the preparation of the programme and amendments, as appropriate.

### **National Partnership Structures**

Coordination between Funds ensure synergies between co-financed activities. At national level, two groups were set up to assist in the development of EU-funded programmes, including the JTF, and encourage coordination between EU Funds and national instruments. These structures remain in place for implementation.

- The **Partnership Process Steering Group of the Funds (PPSG)** was established to assist programme authorities in developing the Partnership Agreement, including identifying and putting in place mechanisms to address synergies, complementarities and enhance cooperation across programmes. The PPSG is made up of representatives from the Member State, the funds covered by the CPR and relevant government Departments, economic & social partners, bodies promoting social inclusion, fundamental rights, rights of persons with disabilities, gender equality & non-discrimination, and relevant bodies representing civil society, the Common Agricultural Policy, the Recovery & Resilience Plan, and the Brexit Adjustment Reserve.
- The **Partnership Agreement Working Group (PAWG)** brought together the funds covered by the PA to help draft the document and explore potential complementarities between the funds and other EU instruments. It also played a key role in the development of a common approach to the horizontal principles. This group met regularly during the preparation phase, and it is proposed that it could continue to examine challenges of managing bodies in developing complementarities between actions and facilitate peer to peer learning between funds. The PAWG reports to the PPSG.

EU JTF continues to participate in the National Communications Committee to coordinate EU-funds communications activities.

### **Structural Reform Support Programme**

To support MSs in the preparation of their JT plans, the European Commission contracted technical expertise through its Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP) to consider the development needs of the proposed EU JTF Territory in Ireland. Under SRSP, the Commission made support available to help national and regional authorities to assess social, economic and environmental impacts of the transition, to build a dialogue among stakeholders to reach a common vision on how to go about the transition and to identify actions to achieve a successful transition. AARC Ltd. and EnvEcon were selected to carry out an assessment of the transition process. The reports to assist in the programme development process are publicly available. Extensive engagement with relevant stakeholders at local, regional and national levels, including the Midlands Regional Task Force and Just Transition Commissioner, was a key feature in the preparation and finalization of these reports.

### **Engagement with Government Departments & Agencies**

Following the publication of the SRSP funded reports, the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications engaged with the relevant Government Departments and Agencies to explore their involvement in the potential actions put forward at the end of the SRSP process. This engagement facilitated further exploration of potential programme alignment and complementarity with national policies and priorities.

### **Public Consultation, Dec 2021 – Mar 2022**

To assist in the development of the Territorial Just Transition Plan and Programme, a public consultation was carried out from December 2021 to March 2022. Gathering views of a broad range of stakeholders, including individuals, communities, businesses, social enterprises, civil society and representative bodies in the JT Territory, overall, 240 individuals and organisations engaged with the consultation process. It consisted of written submissions (40), online survey responses from individuals and organisations (82), a series of workshops with the public and with local authority staff and elected members, as well as a workshop dedicated to gathering input from youth (16 to 24-year-olds) in the region, totaling 57 participants. Written submissions to the consultation were possible in English and Irish. A report, prepared by a contracted organisation, gives an overview of the responses received during the public consultation process and is publicly available.

### **Engagement with Local Elected Officials**

Development of the EU JTF Programme has been a recurring agenda item of the EU Subcommittee of the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA). Through this group, local elected representatives are kept informed of the developments and able to share their views. These meetings were then reported to the whole Assembly membership as part of the monthly Assembly meetings' agenda. Online briefings on the EU JTF were also held with Oireachtas Members, local elected officials and staff.

### **Complementarities Workshop**

In April, November and December 2021, a series of complementarities workshops took place where the CPR funds and other EU programmes discussed their main themes to identify possible complementarities. The different funds explored how they could work together to achieve common goals and avoid double funding. A report was drafted with an outline of issues raised and of next steps for continued cooperation.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) with Public Consultation**

In 2022, the MA commissioned an SEA of the Programme to assess the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the EU JTF Programme. The aim is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to ensure environmental considerations are integrated and addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision making. This process is conducted in line with national and EU guidelines

and legislation and includes an assessment of the respect of the “do no significant harm” principle. The process will include two stages of consultation with the public and relevant statutory bodies.

### **Horizontal Enabling Conditions Engagement**

The Fund worked closely with IHREC on the development of a new guidance tool to strengthen the institutional capacity of Intermediate Bodies (IBs) and Beneficiaries in advancing equality and human rights during programme implementation.

### **During Implementation**

#### **Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC)**

The partnership principle and the European Code of Conduct on Partnership will be reflected in both PMC membership and adopted rules of procedure. Gender balance will be promoted and membership will be published on the Programme website and will include representatives from:

- Member State (DPER & DECC)
- Regional, local, national, & other relevant public authorities, incl. those responsible for implementation & Government Departments representing the horizontal principles
- Audit authority
- IBs, relevant Departments & Agencies
- Elected representatives at local & regional level of the Territory
- Economic & social partners
- Civil society bodies – environmental partners, youth representation, NGOs & bodies responsible for promoting social inclusion, fundamental rights, rights of persons with disabilities, gender equality & non-discrimination
- Representatives from other EU shared management funds in Ireland
- European Commission in an advisory capacity

The PMC will meet at least once a year to review progress in programme implementation. It will make recommendations to accommodate new challenges impacting programme implementation, monitor progress in achieving milestones and targets and measures taken to address issues. Progress on communications and visibility actions as well as operations of strategic importance will be examined at these reviews. It will also monitor relevant programme contributions to Ireland’s country-specific recommendations, evaluations and follow up to associated findings, actions to enable fulfilment of enabling conditions, progress to administrative capacity-building for public bodies, partners and beneficiaries, as relevant.

This Committee will be set up within 3 months of the date of notification to the Member State of the Programme’s approval. The MA will submit a programme evaluation plan to the PMC within a year of approval as well as a mechanism for reporting to the PMC cases of non-compliance of supported operations with the Chamber of Fundamental Rights of the EU to ensure enabling conditions remain respected during implementation.

In the interim and as early as is practical, the MS and MA envisage establishing a shadow PMC which will reflect the above membership and ensure early involvement of the relevant stakeholders in the finalisation and launch of the Programme.

### **Role of Partners in Implementation, Monitoring, Reporting & Evaluation**

Partnership will be essential for programme implementation, including monitoring, reporting on progress, evaluation activities and communication. Many of the partners and stakeholders involved in programme preparation will be directly involved in Programme implementation. Certain public bodies and state agencies will be intervention beneficiaries as appropriate. A performance framework will be established, as per Article 17 of the CPR, for transparent monitoring, reporting and evaluation of programme performance. Relevant partners and stakeholders will be consulted as appropriate, for the delivery of this performance framework. Technical assistance will be used to support the strengthening of the institutional capacity of partners, including, for example, training and development activities.

### **No Double Funding**

Complying with Article 188 Regulation 2018/1046, during project selection there will be checks for double financing e.g. validation of the project selection criteria by the PMC, and the beneficiary will be required to indicate the sources and amounts of any other funding received or applied for in the same financial year for the same action.

During implementation, on-the-spot checks, audits, etc. will be incorporated into the Article 74 checks.

### **Communications**

Timely, transparent and effective communication will be key to successful partnership engagement. This will ensure that stakeholders and relevant parties are kept informed of programme progress and that visibility to the broader public is maintained.

## 7. Communication and visibility

Reference: point (j) of Article 22(3) CPR

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU guarantees the right of all citizens to be informed about European issues, and as such sets out a legal basis for effective communication. The MA will respect this right by using appropriate means to communicate to key stakeholders and to the general public, the opportunities, achievements and impact of the EU JTF Programme in Ireland in a visible, open and transparent way. The MA will involve delivery partners to maximise visibility of programme work and results.

### Key objectives

- Highlight the positive contribution of the EU JTF to the lives of people living in the Territory, including awareness of the results and impact of funded activity
- Raise awareness amongst stakeholders and potential beneficiaries of funding opportunities
- Maximise an understanding of the objectives and achievements of operations supported by the EU JTF, with particular attention to Operations of Strategic Importance (OSI)
- Inform and support beneficiaries in communicating their projects and in complying with EU, national and Programme legislation and guidelines

### Target Audience

The means of communicating and nature of the message will be tailored to the target audience, with particular emphasis on reaching populations in and around the target Territory. The target audience for communication activities will comprise one or more of the following groups:

- General public
- Potential beneficiaries & beneficiaries
- Elected representatives
- Programme Monitoring Committees & Intermediate Bodies
- European Commission, European Commission Representation & European Parliament in Ireland
- Europe Direct Information Centres in region
- National & local media
- Government Departments, Regional Assemblies, Local Authorities, other public bodies
- Academia, research institutions, education & training bodies
- Visiting delegations
- Economic & social partners, incl. SMEs
- Civil society representatives
- Organisations representing young people in the Territory

### Communications Channels

The MA will prepare and implement an annual communication plan and establish monitoring & evaluation mechanisms to measure effectiveness. This will inform the MA on prioritising resources and the most effective communication tools to meet its strategic objectives.

The MA will proactively seek opportunities to highlight results and achievements of the Programme.

Key channels:

- **National website portal** for information on EU Funds, incl. information on EU JTF programme
- **Website:** provide regular updates on programme objectives, opportunities and activities, hosted on MA website
- **Social media channels**, incl. Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and others as appropriate to target different audiences
- **Events** (in-person, hybrid, online) to inform & engage audiences, incl. public events
- **Media engagement** through press releases, advertising, interviews
- **Publications** (online/print/audio-visual productions) highlighting positive contribution of the EU
- **Use of data** to publicise results of EU JTF
- **Collaboration with national communications committee** to deliver joint activities
- **Office email address** dedicated to queries from the public

The MA will consider accessibility of its communications tools and platforms for persons with disabilities and will comply with S.I. No. 358/2020 - European Union (Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications of Public Sector Bodies) Regulations 2020.

There will be additional support to OSI along these channels to ensure programme achievements are visible.

The MA will nominate a communication officer to deliver all communications and visibility measures and to collaborate with the National Communication Co-ordinator. The MA will actively engage in the other EU funds operating in Ireland, including contributions to the national web portal, and with the European Network of Communication Coordinators to explore new and innovative approaches to communicating European funding. The MA will report progress on communications activities to the PMC and the European Commission at least once a year.

## **Budget**

At least 0.3% of the Programme budget will be dedicated to communication measures. The budget will have a degree of flexibility in order to react to changing circumstances during the programming period.

## **Monitoring & Evaluation**

Different analytical tools will be used to record, track and evaluate the success of media activities on each platform on a regular basis. This analysis will be focused on engagement levels, reach, impressions, new followers. Analytical data from internal statistics, listener and reader reach, website/platform analytics, etc., will be collected and continuously assessed to enhance performance.

The following actions will be monitored and evaluated annually, and reported to the PMC, using metrics and tools as appropriate on the specific platforms:

- **Website & social media:** metrics measured against 2022 analytics as baseline
- **Events:** participation at 5 events per year delivered by MA and third-party organisations on EU JTF Programme
- **Case studies:** 4 collected and published online per year

- **Publications:** 4 produced and published online (with programme statistics) per year, including newsletters
- **Advertisements:** 5 produced and published online and print over the programming period

## 8. Use of unit costs, lump sums, flat rates and financing not linked to costs

Reference: Articles 94 and 95 CPR

**Table 14: Use of unit costs, lump sums, flat rates and financing not linked to costs**

Intended use of Articles 94 and 95 CPR	Yes	No
From the adoption, the programme will make use of reimbursement of the Union contribution based on unit costs, lump sums and flat rates under the priority according to Article 94 CPR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
From the adoption, the programme will make use of reimbursement of the Union contribution based on financing not linked to costs according to Article 95 CPR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix 1: Union contribution based on unit costs, lump sums and flat rates

### A. Summary of the main elements

Priority	Fund	Specific objective	Category of region	Estimated proportion of the total financial allocation within the priority to which the SCO will be applied in %	Type(s) of operation covered		Indicator triggering reimbursement		Unit of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement	Type of SCO (standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates)	Amount (in EUR) or percentage (in case of flat rates) of the SCO
					Code(1)	Description	Code(2)	Description			

(1) This refers to the code for the intervention field dimension in Table 1 of Annex I to the CPR and the Annex IV to the EMFAF regulation

(2) This refers to the code of a common indicator, if applicable

Appendix 1: Union contribution based on unit costs, lump sums and flat rates

B. Details by type of operation

C. Calculation of the standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates

1. Source of data used to calculate the standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates (who produced, collected and recorded the data, where the data is stored, cut-off dates, validation, etc.)

2. Please specify why the proposed method and calculation based on Article 94(2) CPR is relevant to the type of operation.

3. Please specify how the calculations were made, in particular including any assumptions made in terms of quality or quantities. Where relevant, statistical evidence and benchmarks should be used and, if requested, provided in a format that is usable by the Commission.

4. Please explain how you have ensured that only eligible expenditure was included in the calculation of the standard scale of unit cost, lump sum or flat rate.

5. Assessment of the audit authority(ies) of the calculation methodology and amounts and the arrangements to ensure the verification, quality, collection and storage of data.

## Appendix 2: Union contribution based on financing not linked to costs

### A. Summary of the main elements

Priority	Fund	Specific objective	Category of region	The amount covered by the financing not linked to cost	Type(s) of operation covered		Conditions to be fulfilled/results to be achieved triggering reimbursement by the Commission	Indicator		Unit of measurement for the conditions to be fulfilled/results to be achieved triggering reimbursement by the Commission	Envisaged type of reimbursement method used to reimburse the beneficiary(ies)
					Code (1)	Description		Code (2)	Description		

(1) This refers to the code for the intervention field dimension in Table 1 of Annex I to the CPR and the Annex IV to the EMFAF regulation

(2) This refers to the code of a common indicator, if applicable

### B. Details by type of operation

### Appendix 3: List of planned operations of strategic importance with a timetable

#### Article 22(3) CPR

One operation will highlight an action from 1.2 under Priority 1: Generating employment for former peat communities by investing in the diversification of the local economy. The programme will support the delivery of economic and community actions by supporting local economic activity, SMEs, as well as local and regional economic strategies such as those associated with the LECPs and Regional Enterprise Plans. Initiatives in this operation of strategic importance will exemplify the innovative and bottom-up approach these plans represent. They will showcase the Territory's innovative character while supporting endeavors that promote communities and local economies that are socially inclusive, sustainable, and resilient. The operation will be selected as the programme begins to roll out, through a competitive call and will ensure alignment with the objectives of the EU JTF and Ireland's Territorial Just Transition Plan. An indicative timetable is given below.

Q1 2023 Initiation of activities under JTF Programme, commencement of specific programme activities

Q4 2023 Potential call launch or identification of operations delivered through intermediary body, as applicable

Q1 2024 Selection of operation – informing Commission within 1 month of selection

Q2 2024 Commencement of operations

The second operation of strategic importance will come from Priority 2: Innovative approaches to regeneration and repurposing of land. One operation will be selected under this priority that highlights an exemplary activity for regenerating and transitioning of peat lands for new uses, improving management of lands to enhance the overall attractiveness of this specific geography. This will link to diversification of economic opportunity and community engagement activities, and development of sustainable visitor experiences. The selected operation is of strategic importance as it will present the special character of the Territory, support action on climate change and the transformative capacity of the region. The operation will be selected as the programme begins implementation of specific schemes, with the indicative timetable below:

Q1 2023 Initiation of activities under JTF Programme, commencement of specific programme activities and schemes

Q2/Q3 2023 Selection of operation

Q4 2024 Commencement of operations

## DOCUMENTS

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent by
Performance Framework Methodology document EU Just Transition Fund 2021-2027	Supplementary Information	8 Dec 2022		Ares(2022)8536673	Performance Framework Methodology document EU Just Transition Fund 2021-2027	8 Dec 2022	Antoniotti, Laure
Report for Do No Significant Harm Assessment of the EU Just Transition Fund Programme 2021-2027	Supplementary Information	8 Dec 2022		Ares(2022)8536673	Report for Do No Significant Harm Assessment of the EU Just Transition Fund Programme for Ireland 2021-2027	8 Dec 2022	Antoniotti, Laure
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report for the EU Just Transition Fund Programme for Ireland 2021-2027	Supplementary Information	8 Dec 2022		Ares(2022)8536673	Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report for the EU Just Transition Fund Programme for Ireland 2021-2027	8 Dec 2022	Antoniotti, Laure
Non-Technical Summary of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report for the EU Just Transition Fund Programme for Ireland 2021-2027	Supplementary Information	8 Dec 2022		Ares(2022)8536673	Non-Technical Summary of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report for the EU Just Transition Fund Programme for Ireland 2021-2027	8 Dec 2022	Antoniotti, Laure
DRAFT Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement for the EU Just Transition Fund Programme for Ireland 2021-2027	Supplementary Information	8 Dec 2022		Ares(2022)8536673	DRAFT Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement for the EU Just Transition Fund Programme for Ireland 2021-2027	8 Dec 2022	Antoniotti, Laure
Programme snapshot 2021IE16JTTPR001 1.1	Snapshot of data before send	8 Dec 2022		Ares(2022)8536673	Programme_snapshot_2021IE16JTTPR001_1.1_en.pdf	8 Dec 2022	Antoniotti, Laure



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