Fact Sheet 25: Project Changes

Version	Valid from	Valid to	Main changes
Version 1	12.04.23	02.07.2023	
Version 2	03.07.23		Clarification about approval of lifetime extension of 6 months

CORE MESSAGE
This fact sheet outlines the procedures for identifying and implementing (i) changes to basic information, (ii) minor changes and (iii) major changes. The overview also includes tables on minor changes and major changes, what is allowed in each, and the timeframe for submitting changes. This overview is for both small-scale and regular projects. Please note, however, that there are some differences in what changes each type of project is allowed to make.

Background

Project partnerships must always deliver their project in accordance with the work plan and budget laid out in the approved application (small-scale and regular projects). In general, projects should avoid changes and stick to the original project plan. However, it is recognised that the budget and work plan in the approved application are only a best estimate of the work to be carried out and the costs associated with that and that some changes are inevitable over the project's lifetime.

Three procedures have therefore been put in place for different kinds of changes. This fact sheet allows projects to identify the types of change, when a change can be submitted and what it takes to have a change approved. It is important to underline that it is never possible to use a project change to increase the total budget approved for the project.

The lead partner is responsible for managing and applying project changes for the entire partnership. Projects should not start to implement changes until they have the necessary approval by the Joint Secretariat or by the Monitoring Committee. The only exception to this is changes related to basic information. Any projects implementing activities prior to approval of associated changes, do so at their own risk.

Once a project is approved, the Monitoring Committee might have technical remarks that need to be addressed prior to or after signing the contract. These remarks are listed in the approval letter sent to the

lead partner of the approved project. In case these remarks require a change in the application form, they will be handled in the form of a technical change in the Online Monitoring System (OMS). These technical changes will be started and filled out by the project advisor and then submitted by the project. Once the change is approved by the Joint Secretariat, the application form is updated accordingly. It is important to underline that these changes are of technical nature and will not be counted towards the limit of two major changes that the project is allowed during implementation (see below).

Changes in practice

There are three types of changes:

      (i) changes to basic information
      (ii) minor changes
      (iii) major changes

Basic information changes

Changes to project staff contact details are inevitable. The contact information of project staff is handled via the partner manager overview, and project partner managers can be added and removed here without having to edit the application.

Further changes to basic information of the partner organization, e.g. address, website URL, etc., can be handled in a format of a basic information change. These changes can be submitted and approved by the lead partner in the Online Monitoring System via the changes module at any time during project implementation.

Minor changes

Minor changes that have no impact on the outputs, results or overall financing of the project can be implemented after an agreement between the Joint Secretariat and the lead partner. Minor changes include:

- Project lifetime extensions of 6 months provided there is still time in the programme period to complete all closure procedures. Projects are only allowed one lifetime extension. Please note that only regular projects can be granted an extension; this is not possible for small-scale projects.
- Changes between cost categories of the same partner, but no changes to the total partner budget.
- Change of deliverables (description and/or target value), provided there is no impact on project outputs and results.
- Inactivating partners, who for one reason or another can no longer participate in the project.

These changes can be submitted in the Online Monitoring System via the changes module. Approval of minor changes is granted by the Joint Secretariat. A detailed overview table of what is allowed as a minor change is presented below. Please note that the only types of minor changes that small-scale projects may make are changes to partner information, inactivating partners and changes to the work plan.

Type of projects	Section in the application form	Type of change	What can be done	When to submit/approve
Regular projects	Timeline	Timeline	Lifetime extension of 6 months	Only allowed once during the project lifetime. Can be submitted while a report is open, but approval is granted only after the report has been approved by the JS.
Regular and Small-scale projects	Partners	Inactivating partners	Setting partners as inactive	Can be submitted and approved while a report is open.
Regular and Small-scale projects	Partners	Changes to partner's legal status and/or State aid status	Change of partner's legal status and/or State aid status. (If a change of legal status accompanies a change of the organisation's name, this name change can also be included in the minor change.) This requires a new letter of intent and a new State aid declaration, if applicable.	Can be submitted while a report is open, but approval is granted only after the report has been approved by the JS.
Regular and Small-scale projects	Work plan	Activities, deliverables and target values	Updates of activity descriptions, adjusting deliverable indicators and their targets	Can be submitted while a report is open, but approval is granted only after the report has been approved by the JS.
Regular and Small-scale projects	Work plan	Investments – adjusted item	Adjustments to description of an investment. Partner budget remains the same. Changes to investment costs require a major change	Can be submitted while a report is open, but approval is granted only after the report has been approved by the JS.

Regular projects	Project budget – cost categories	Adjustments to partners' costs in different cost categories	Update project partners' costs (re-allocate between cost categories), without changing the partner's total budget	Can be submitted while a report is open, but approval is granted only after the report has been approved by the JS.
Regular and Small-scale projects	Funding	Adjustment to a partner's co-financing sources	Adjusting the composition of a partner's own contribution to the co-financing, divided between private and public.	Can be submitted while a report is open, but approval is granted only after the report has been approved by the JS.
Regular and Small-scale projects	Spending plan	Adjustments to a partner's spending plan	As long as the partner's total budget remains the same; otherwise, this is a major change.	Can be submitted while a report is open, but approval is granted only after the report has been approved by the JS.

Major changes

In exceptional and well-justified cases, more significant changes to the original budget, partnership, and certain content related parts may be necessary. However, because these changes alter the conditions under which the original grant was made, they need to be approved by the programme's Monitoring Committee. Once approved, major changes also require that a new contract is issued and signed. Please note that additional partners must be reflected in an amended Partnership Agreement or addendum to the Partnership Agreement. No other project changes require an amendment to the Partnership Agreement. This is the case for both regular and small-scale projects.

Regular projects may submit a maximum of two major changes during their lifetime. Small-scale projects are allowed one major change. One major change request, however, can consist of any number of the changes listed below. Please note that major change options for small-scale projects only include adding a new partner (keeping in mind that the maximum number of partners is 7), changing the status of sub-partners to partners and changes of staff costs between partners. For small-scale projects it is not possible to extend the lifetime of the project.

For regular projects, major changes include:

- Project lifetime extensions of more than 6 months.
- Transfers of budget between partners
- Adding a partner/s. It is possible to add a partner, provided that they can be funded by redistributing the project budget across the partnership, i.e. overall project budget increases are not allowed as part of a major change
- Adjusting work package objectives

▪ Adding new investments or changing the description of the originally planned investments

Major changes can be submitted in the Online Monitoring System via the changes module between reporting rounds and must be approved before a report is open. They should be carried out in close consultation with the Joint Secretariat to avoid unnecessary delays or problems. The Joint Secretariat can advise on the best timing for submitting a major change. Approval of major changes is granted by the Monitoring Committee. Projects should be aware that any major change request must be well justified. If a change request is rejected, the project needs to continue the implementation based on the latest version of the approved application. In extreme cases, i.e. where a change seriously undermines the value of the original project, the Monitoring Committee may decide to end support to the project.

Type of projects	Section in the application form	Type of change	What can be done
Regular and Small-scale projects	Lead partner	New lead partner	Adjustments should also be made in section B.1. Partners.
Regular projects	Timeline	Timeline	Lifetime extension of more than 6 months
Regular and Small-scale projects	Partners	New partner	Addition of a project partner. This requires a letter of intent and a State aid declaration, if applicable. Adjustments should also be made in section B.1. Partners.
Regular and Small-scale projects	Partners	Adjustments to sub-partners	Changing the status of a partner from sub-partner to coordinating partner
Regular projects	Work plan	Work package objective	Adjustments to work package objective. This must, as a result, include adjustments of activity and deliverable indicator descriptions and targets.
Regular projects	Work plan	Investments – new item; adjusted item	Additional investments and adjustments to descriptions of existing investments.
Regular projects	Project budget – overview per partner and per budget category	Adjustments to partner's budget	Total budget of a partner may change but the total project budget must remain the same. If a partner's budget increases, a new letter of intent needs to be uploaded.

Small-scale projects	Project budget – staff costs	Adjustment to partner's budget	Only the 'staff costs' cost category can be changed, which triggers automatically a major change request. Total budget of a partner may change but the total project budget must remain the same. If a partner's budget increases, a new letter of intent needs to be uploaded.
Regular projects	Spending plan	Adjustments to a partner's spending plan	If the partners' budget have changed, the update of the spending plan is necessary.

The Online Monitoring System

It is not possible to start a report when you still have a change request waiting to be processed. This is to ensure that the report is based on the latest approved data. Please keep in mind that changes to projects are not valid until applied by the Joint Secretariat. It is also important to remember that minor changes are eligible from the date on which they are submitted in the Online Monitoring System, while major changes are eligible from the date on which the change (or one part of the change) is first mentioned by the project manager in a message to the project advisor through the OMS.

The lead partner will make use of the system when applying for and submitting changes. The system is designed to facilitate the effective processing of all type of changes and will guide the lead partner through the entire change process. All decisions on changes by the Joint Secretariat and Monitoring Committee will be made and applied in the system.