

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ISSUES (cost categories, budget shifts, budget lines, payments etc.)

Q: We have 9 ERDF-funded partner and 1 IPA-funded partner. If IPA fund should stay the same, it means that we cannot reallocate from/to the IPA partner to others? What will be the IPA reimbursement process?

A: It is not possible to allocate part of IPA budget from an IPA partner to an ERDF partner, or vice versa. If this is really needed for the success of project, it could be done through an amendment to the subsidy contract (to fix the new amounts for ERDF and IPA allocation at the network level).

Q: Who reimburses the IPA partner, the MA directly or the LP?

A: The LP will also ensure the reimbursement for IPA partner. This is the rule today.

Q: Do the flexibility rules also apply within different work packages? or can we for example freely move (with no limit) staff costs between the different work packages?

A: The distribution of activities in WPs does not impact the budget lines. Therefore, as long as a sum of money is planned for staff costs and used for staff costs, it does not matter to which WP corresponds the respective project activity paid for.

Q: What are the flexibility rules between years?

A: You have full flexibility between years.

Q: Regarding the coordinator's salary, it is considered full time?

A: There is not an obligation to consider the coordination workload as a full-time employment for the total length of the project. This may be the case for the coordinator of the Lead Partner, but not an obligation. It really depends on the necessary workload and local arrangements. It may be the case that several persons are contributing to the project and their individual contributions put together are representing the equivalent of a full time.

Q: Regarding the staff costs, the payment of the contribution to the project can be considered as a premium/bonus on the top of the salary? Would this be eligible if included as a work contract provision?

A: Taxable benefits are only eligible if foreseen in the signed working contract, and/or in national and internal regulations, and if they are in line with the employment policy of the beneficiary organization. They must be directly linked to the salary payments and figure on the payslip. Unjustified ad-hoc salary increases or bonuses just for project purposes are not eligible.

Q: Are we to include a new/revised budget as part of the Baseline Study and Roadmap to be delivered in December?

A: No. If there is any adjustment needed, you just have to monitor it and make it official next year.

Q: Do we still need to report any kind of reallocation/deviances within first report (3/2024) in Synergie? I mean if they are kept within this 20% rule.

A: Yes. A special table is to be filled in the Progress Report with the deviation that took place in the budget during the reporting period.

Q: The LE travel costs are included in the Travel and Accommodation?

A: No, they are not included in the Travel and accommodation budget line, but in External expertise/expert and other non-staff travel. If mistakenly included in the Travel and accommodation budget line in the Application, the budget allocated for covering the LE expert can be moved to the correct budget line.

Q: According to the Call for proposals, section 6, 6.3.1 - Expertise budget, "Travel and accommodation costs for Lead and Ad-Hoc Experts MUST be covered by the network budget." We're treating the expense like an obligation and not like a local rule. On what kind of documents we can refer in terms of LE per diems? LE has to make an invoice for a certain amount of money, based on his/her countries national legislation?

The URBACT Secretariat is covering just the fee of the LE, all the cost related to travels, including daily allowances, are at the charge of the LP. The LP is not obliged to apply the programme rules for reimbursement of LE travel expenses, what counts are the local rules of LP for such travel costs. Daily allowances to cover accommodation and meals as well as local transport for experts are eligible, according to your internal rules applied for such travel costs. In case that according to your local laws, your organization cannot cover that kind of expenses for non-staff persons, you are not obliged to cover them. You are only obliged to cover TRAVEL (transportation to and from meeting location) AND ACCOMMODATION (hotel for meeting days) expense, and everything besides that is covered or not covered according to your local rules.

Q: Claiming costs is different from getting the refund right? Will the refund occur at the very end of the program in 2025/2026 or is it gradual (several refunds corresponding to the different reports)? There will be quarterly reports as well?

A: There are three reporting periods in total, each one followed by a refund.

Q Is it true that staff can be paid until March 2026 for preparing the final report?

A: Yes, this is true.

Q: In the beginning you mentioned the time between 1 Jan and 31 March 2026, at the end of the project as "closure period". Can we receive more details on what expenses are eligible lasting this period? Also, is there an official name for these 3 months?

A: The 3 months following the official ending date of the project, are currently called the closure period. Lasting this period, travel costs for attending different relevant events like the APN City Festival can be eligible for reimbursement if this cost does not exceed the total project budget allocated to the respective partner.

Q: We bring all FLC certificates together in one Payment Claim. The Payment Claim needs to be signed by the Lead Partner, but does it also need to be signed or validated by the LP FLC?

A: No, the Payment Claim is only signed by the LP.

Q: When participants wish to stay longer where the transnational meeting takes place, are travels to go back later - even if they do not occur straight after the end of the meeting - eligible or should participants take them at their own charge? Just to avoid any confusion as we have the case for several participants for our 1st transnational meeting. Does it depend on internal rules for each partner ?

A: This depends on internal rules of each Partner. In any case, the costs that partners will report is what the municipality/organisation will have paid for the trip. So, this is why local rules should be checked by each Partner on this matter. Each FLC can help on this as well.

Generally, you should prove to your FLC that the airplane ticket bought for dates other than original ones is less or equally expensive as the one for the original travel dates, and in that case there should not be any problems. However, all the extra accommodation expenses (like hotel) for extra days need to be covered personally. **Private stay after transnational meetings is not eligible.**

Q: Do you already know when the costs will be reimbursed after the reporting phase?

A: Payment is made in 80 days after the submission of the reimbursement claim.

Q: For the URBACT Reimbursement Grid I have a document on refund conditions applying from 8th of September 2022, do you have an updated version or we use this one?

A: The version from Sept 2022 is the last version available. However, these Travel Reimbursement Rules are used by the Secretariat to reimburse the travels costs for externals and as such these rules are not mandatory to be followed by the LPs.

SYNERGIE

Q: When will we have project implementation access in Synergie?

A: Synergie will open in the coming days

Q: Only LP reports in Synergie, or every PP has to report own expenses?

A: Every PP has to report own expenses in Synergie.

Q: Will PP get notification when FLC is approved by Approbation Body or should they monitor Synergie?

A: Yes we confirm they should receive a notification email from Synergie when the checklist is approved or rejected.

Q: You share access to Synergie to admin team of all LP? Is it possible to share with the coordinator as well?

A: All the people from the contact list (from LP team but also PP team) you provided are included in Synergie and will get an access to the platform.

FLC & AUDITS

Q: Only the LP can be audited? or also the PP?

A: Lasting the 5 years after the closure of the project, all partners can be audited, no matter if they are LP or PP. In some countries this delay can be even longer.

Q: Is it already clear what the FLC system in North Macedonia is/will be?

A: We do not have final information on the set up of FLC in North Macedonia, we are in touch with the national authority on this issue. Same for Albania

Q: Is it already clear what the FLC system in Bosnia-Herzegovina is/will be?

A: The FLC system in Bosnia-Herzegovina is centralised.

Q: How do we know if we are in the centralised or decentralised FLC system?

A: In Basecamp there is a list informing about the FLC system that applies in each country.

Q: Do we need FLC for network reporting to URBACT, or is this Synergie reporting sufficient?

A: The FLC checks and validates the financial costs in Synergie. Your reimbursement claim cannot be sent without the FLC validation.

Q: Can we download the FLC Approbation questions somewhere?

A: These are available to be downloaded from Synergie.

Q: Who is the French body that needs to approve the FLC for French partners?

A: for FR the national body responsible with FLC is DGCL - Ministere de l'Interieur. We'll share a list with the contact details. Once you submit the FLC approval request in Synergie, approval will be done automatically through the system.

AVAILABLE GUIDANCE & TEMPLATES

Q1: Where can we find the checklist for the audit trail?

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A: This check list can be downloaded from [Basecamp](#).

Q: Could you provide the link to the newest programme manual?

A: The programme manual can be accessed at <https://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/2023-10/URBACT%20IV%20Programme%20Manual%20November%202023.pdf> and it will be also uploaded on Basecamp.

Q: Do you have staff costs spreadsheet templates to share?

A: These are to be prepared by each partner according to their rules, we do not have an imposed template from URBACT.

Q: Is there a template for the progress report? (is it operational report?)

A: You will be able to access the progress report directly in Synergie when you get your account.

Q: Would it be possible for you to identify in the first the changes or the new entries every time you update the programme manual?

A: Yes, will do so.

Q: Will the recording of this meeting be available? Sometimes it's difficult to break down notes and follow what Manon shows in Synergie :-)

A: The recording of the meeting has been shared after the meeting. Furthermore, there will be guidance notes for each of the tasks to be done through Synergie. They will be shared with you as soon as the platform will be open.