

## Complaint procedure for the application/selection phase

The complaint procedure aims at ensuring that when a complaint is submitted to the Programme, a fair, reliable and formal procedure is in place regarding the selection of operations. Applicants have the opportunity to informally or formally complain about the Programme Monitoring Committee's decision when a project is not selected for funding. Only the project's lead applicant can make or forward a complaint from a partner.

In most cases, complaints concern some kind of doubts, misunderstandings that can easily be solved through informal clear explanation of the decision or procedure carried out. The formal complaint procedure should be the last option after full information and explanations have been provided to the applicant by the JS or the MA.

Following the decision of PMC not to approve a project, the applicant (Lead Partner) will be informed by means of a notification e-mail/letter sent by the Joint Secretariat (JS), stating the main reasons for this decision. The opportunity for the applicant to receive further clarification on the decision shall be mentioned in this notification.

The complaint procedure applies to calls operating a one or two stage application process, to projects not approved in each phase, having an independent procedure.

### Implementing procedure

#### Informal stage

The JS is contacted in writing, by phone or in an informal meeting where the complainant explains the situation he/she wishes to bring forward, for the respective programme body to provide information and clarifications on the decision/ procedure.

- An informal complaint procedure may be initiated within 15 days<sup>1</sup> after the project notification concerned. Reply shall be done within 15 days after receiving the informal complaint.

#### Formal stage 1 - Complaint to the Joint Secretariat

If the result of the informal stage is not satisfactory, the complainant may present a formal complaint through the email [atlantico.complaints@ccdr-n.pt](mailto:atlantico.complaints@ccdr-n.pt). This will lead to a formal written answer by the JS, clarifying the basis of the decision taken by the PMC regarding the project selection decision.

- A formal complaint to the JS may be done within 30 days after the project notification of the decision. Reply shall be done within 15 days after receiving the formal complaint.

#### Formal stage 2 - Appeal to the Monitoring Committee

If the complainant is not satisfied with the conclusions of the JS, he/she may appeal to the PMC. The formal complaint must be submitted to the PMC Presidency *via* the JS (via complaints email), clearly explaining the grounds upon which an examination is being requested.

- A formal appeal to the PMC must be presented within 45 days after the project notification of the decision; the conclusions of the appeal will be communicated to the complainant in writing by the JS (on behalf of the PMC) within 30 days following the submission of the appeal complaint.

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<sup>1</sup> Calendar day

