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# Call for proposals

**CFP-HUSK-2301**

**NON-COMPETITIVE TARGETED CALL**

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## 1. Introduction

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The Interreg VI-A Hungary-Slovakia Programme operates within the 2021-2027 financial framework of the European Union as a part of the Cohesion Policy. The aim of the Programme is to eliminate the administrative and legal obstacles on the Hungarian-Slovak border, build up mutual trust between the citizens and to make the border area more competitive, inclusive and environmentally friendly. These objectives are described in the Programme document that was approved by the European Commission on 3 November 2022.

The Joint Secretariat (JS) of the Programme on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary as Managing Authority (MA) and the Ministry of Investment, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic as National Authority (NA) launches a non-competitive targeted call for proposals under the following actions:

- Action 3.1.1 – Eliminating border obstacles
- Action 3.2.1 – Small project fund

In case of Action 3.1.1, Member States submitted an operation of strategic importance within the Programme document. Basic principles of the operation were elaborated in close cooperation with the Central European Service for Cross-border Initiatives (CESCI) private-law association in Hungary and its partner CESCİ Carpathia private-law association in Slovakia. In order to ensure the operation's professional and timely implementation the present Call is targeted to the CESCİ and CESCİ Carpathia associations.

In case of action 3.2.1, the circle of eligible applicants is targeted to European Groupings for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC). EGTCs can be eligible if they possess relevant experience in management of Small project funds from the 2014-2020 period on the programme area. In order to ensure the professional and timely implementation of the Small project fund in the current, the present Call is targeted to the Rába-Duna-Vág EGTC and the Via Carpatia EGTC as management bodies of the Small project fund in the Interreg V-A Cooperation Programme.

**Each applicant has to fulfil all formal and eligibility criteria described in the present call and submit an application in the prescribed format until Friday, 24 February 2023.**

The Managing Authority in agreement with the National Authority may modify the terms of the present Call by an amendment at any time prior to the deadline for the submission. Amendments may not affect the eligibility and evaluation criteria. In case terms of the Call are modified, the Managing Authority may extend the deadline for the submission of applications. If Applicants submitted the application before publishing an amendment, Applicants cannot suffer disadvantage due to the modified terms of the conditions. The Managing Authority in agreement with the National Authority may decide to cancel the present call at any stage, but particularly if there have been irregularities in the procedure, in particular where these have prevented equal treatment or in exceptional circumstances or force majeure render the normal implementation of the planned actions impossible.

Information on modifications or the cancellation are published on the programme website. Any potential losses from cancellation are not entitled for compensation. For more information, please contact the Joint Secretariat.

## 2. Main data

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### 2.1. Eliminating border obstacles

#### Programme structure

<b>Priority axis:</b>	PA3 – Institutional cooperations
<b>Policy objective:</b>	ISO1 SO(b) – Enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens, civil society actors and institutions, in particular, with a view to resolving legal and other obstacles in border regions
<b>Specific objective:</b>	SO3.1 – Enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation
<b>Action:</b>	Action 3.1.1 – Eliminating border obstacles
<b>Type of operation:</b>	Operation of strategic importance

#### Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants are targeted to the Central European Service for Cross-border Initiatives (CESCI) private-law association in Hungary and the CESCI Carpathia private-law association in Slovakia.

#### Supported activities

Stronger integration of the Slovak-Hungarian borderland and the intensification of cross-border interactions (mobility) necessitate the systematic monitoring, analysis and elimination of legal and administrative barriers. The Interreg Specific Objective 1 explicitly favours interventions targeting border obstacles via which the Programme is expected to remarkably improve the implementation conditions of cross-border projects. The action supports among others cross-border initiatives that

- systematically identify the existing obstacles experienced by everyday citizens;
- analyse the legal background of the obstacles;
- create platforms of exchange of the competent authorities;
- elaborate projects addressing the identified obstacles;
- operate permanent help desk collecting and providing information for border people, project owners and authorities on obstacles, solutions and conditions for cross-border mobility.

#### Indicators to achieve

Type	ID	Indicator	Unit	Target
Output	RCO117	Solutions for legal or administrative obstacles across border identified	solutions	10
Result	RCR82	Legal or administrative obstacles across borders alleviated or resolved	obstacles	4

#### Main target group

Main target groups of the Specific objective are the inhabitants of the programme area.

## Financial allocation

ERDF contribution: 1.401.869,00 EUR

## 2.2. Small project fund

### Programme structure

<b>Priority axis:</b>	PA3 – Institutional cooperations
<b>Policy objective:</b>	ISO1 SO(c) – Build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions
<b>Specific objective:</b>	SO3.2 - Build up mutual trust
<b>Action:</b>	Action 3.2.1 - Small project fund
<b>Type of operation:</b>	Small project fund – Management body

### Eligible applicants

The small project fund constitutes an operation within the meaning of point 4 of Article 2 of Regulation (EU) 2021/ 1060 which shall be managed by a beneficiary, taking into account its tasks and remuneration. The beneficiary shall be a cross-border legal body or an EGTC or a body which shall have legal personality (Article 25; Interreg Regulation). Eligible applicants are targeted to the Rába-Duna-Vág EGTC and the Via Carpatia EGTC as management bodies of the Small project fund in the Interreg V-A Cooperation Programme.

### Supported activities

The action is expected to contribute to the strengthening of cross-border cooperation by people-to-people actions via Small Project Fund. The overall objective of the Small Project Fund (SPF) is to strengthen social cohesion across the borders by supporting local level cooperation and to establish and improve long-term collaboration between actors on both sides of the border through the support of local/regional projects. The Beneficiary shall select the small projects which are implemented by the final recipients within the meaning of point (18) of Article 2 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060. The beneficiary shall ensure that the final recipients comply with the requirements set out in Article 36 (5) of Interreg Regulation.

The SPF is expected to create new cross border partnerships and build mutual trust on the level of municipalities, public institutions and citizens as well. The action supports among others the following cross-border initiatives:

- organization of cross-border cultural and sport events for people living in the border area;
- building new partnerships between local governments, public institutions, economic operators via joint study trips, common board meetings, professional conferences etc.;
- organization of exchange programmes and joint camps for children;
- supporting of bilingualism and digitalisation;
- supporting festivals and performances promoting cross-border partnership;
- support common project development and project preparation for Interreg Call for Proposals.

## Indicators to achieve

Type	ID	Indicator	Unit	Target
Output	RCO115	Public events across borders jointly organised	events	200
Output	RCO87	Organisations cooperating across borders	organizations	288
Result	RCR84	Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	organizations	230

## Main target group

Small projects within the SPF are expected to be implemented by the following type of partners:

- local and territorial municipalities and their budgetary organizations
- non-governmental organizations
- churches
- educational institutions
- other

## Financial allocation

Since the border between Hungary and the Slovak Republic is one of the longest in the European Union, dividing the Programme area into the Western and Eastern part is reasonable as it was in the Interreg V-A programme. Western part shall consist of the following counties and regions:

- HU221 - Győr-Moson-Sopron county
- HU212 - Komárom-Esztergom county
- HU120 - Pest county
- HU110 – Budapest capital
- SK010 - Bratislava region
- SK021 - Trnava region
- SK023 - Nitra region

ERDF contribution for the Western part: 6 074 766 EUR

Eastern parts shall consist of the following counties and higher territorial units:

- HU313 - Nógrád county
- HU312 - Heves county
- HU311 - Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county
- HU323 - Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county
- SK032 - Banská Bystrica region
- SK042 - Košice region

ERDF contribution for the Eastern part: 6 074 766 EUR



## 3. Project development

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### 3.1. General requirements

#### **Cooperation criteria**

All projects have to be developed and implemented in partnership created by minimum two Partners registered in Hungary and Slovakia. Partners shall cooperate in the development and implementation of the projects. In addition, they shall cooperate in the staffing or the financing of projects, or in both. In line with the Article 23 (6) Regulation No 1059/2021 of the Council and the European Parliament, this requirement is automatically fulfilled by the organisations operated in the form of European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation type of legal bodies.

#### **Professional criteria**

Applying organizations have to be experienced and their profile shall be in line with the role and activities undertaken in the application form.

#### **Lead Partner principle/Sole partner**

Applicants shall appoint one organization among themselves who acts as Lead Partner or shall be a Sole Partner. Lead Partner/Sole Partner shall bear the responsibilities to represent the whole project towards the Managing Authority, Joint Secretariat, Certifying Authority and Audit Authority. The Lead Partner/Sole Partner shall meet the following requirements:

- assume responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the entire project;
- lay down the arrangements with the other partners in an agreement comprising provisions that, inter alia, guarantee the sound financial management of the funds allocated to the projects, including the arrangements for recovering amounts unduly paid;
- ensure that expenditure presented by all Beneficiaries has been incurred in implementing the operation and corresponds to the activities agreed between all the Beneficiaries.

The Subsidy contract setting out the conditions for the entire project is concluded between the Managing Authority and the Lead Partner/Sole Partner. As a result, the Lead Partner/Sole Partner is legally responsible for the delivery of the whole project. General tasks of the Lead Partner/Sole Partner:

- submission of the Application form;
- ensuring the delivery of the tangible outputs stipulated in the Application form;
- ensuring that all Beneficiaries carry out activities in line with the Application form;
- ensuring that all activities are carried out in line with the approved time plan;
- collecting the partners' claims verified by the relevant body,
- submission of the project reports and applications for reimbursement;
- submission of the project's financial claims;
- receiving payment of the ERDF support and distributing it amongst the partners;
- recovering amounts paid in error to other partners in the project;
- submission of Follow-up reports after the closure of the project.

**Special requirements for the SPF Beneficiaries**

According to the provisions of Article 25(3), an SPF beneficiary is responsible in the first place for:

- establishing a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure for small projects;
- applying objective criteria for the selection of small projects, avoiding conflicts of interest;
- assessing small project(s) applications;
- selecting small projects and fixing the amount of support for each small project;
- making payments to the final recipients;
- being accountable for the implementation of the operation, and keeping - at beneficiary level - all supporting documents required for the audit trail, in accordance with the relevant Annex provisions of the CPR;
- making available to the public a list of the final recipients which benefit from the SPF project;
- ensuring that the final recipients comply with the transparency and communication requirements stipulated in Article 36 of the Interreg Regulation.

In addition to the above-mentioned responsibilities, an SPF beneficiary might also be responsible for:

- attracting final recipients;
- providing guidance for final recipients during the application phase;
- supporting the management verification of final recipients' expenditures; respectively, the small projects' outputs and results;
- controls and on-site visits;
- capitalization among final recipients.

**Horizontal principles**

All partners must ensure that equality between men and women, gender mainstreaming and the integration of a gender perspective are taken into account and promoted throughout the preparation and implementation of projects.

Partners must take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the preparation and implementation of projects. In particular, accessibility for persons with disabilities shall be taken into account throughout the preparation and implementation of all projects.

Applications have to be prepared in line with the objective of promoting sustainable development, taking into account the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement and the "do no significant harm" principle. Projects shall be pursued in full respect of the Union environmental acquis.

## 3.2. Eligible activities

All projects have to demonstrate strong cross-border character having clear impact on territorial, economic and social cohesion of the border area and shall generate long-term partnerships. Project objectives must be linked clearly to the achievements of the relevant priority, specific objective and action. These objectives shall be transformed into activities which represent group of individual tasks which have common tangible outputs. Only activities implemented on the programme area having clear contribution to the projects' objectives may be eligible.

Applicants shall thoroughly plan the duration of activities and the project itself with the consideration of several factors like the possible length of the public procurement procedures, availability of the necessary human capacity or the Partners' cash-flow conditions.

**Project proposals submitted for the present Call may last until 31/12/2029 at the latest.**

### 3.3. Eligible expenditures

As a general rule, the expenditure is eligible if it has been incurred and paid in the preparation and implementation of the project. The period of eligibility starts with 1 January 2021 and ends with 31 December 2029 the latest. There is no dedicated budget heading for preparation costs. Those costs if any must be planned in the budget as per the subject of the given expenditure and, as general rule, included in the first Project Report. The latest possible date for the payment of expenditures incurred within the project is 30 calendar days after the last day of the project implementation. In duly justified cases, the JS is entitled to extend the above mentioned period upon the official request of the respective partner. However, the payment is not allowed after the final date of eligibility, which is 31 December 2029.

Expenditure is eligible for funding when it is in accordance with the regulatory framework above and fulfils the following requirements:

- it relates to costs of implementing a project as approved by the Joint Monitoring Committee and activities listed in the Annex II of the Subsidy Contact;
- it is incurred during the preparation and implementation of a project that contributes to the objectives of the Programme;
- it is compliant with Programme, national and EU rules;
- it is essential for the achievement of the project objectives/outputs and it would not be incurred if the project is not carried out;
- it is included in the approved project budget (to be annexed to the Subsidy Contract for EU Contribution);
- it is not financed by other EU funds or other financial contributions from third parties, except national contributions to the Programme co-financing; i.e. no double-financing is allowed (Article 63(9) of EU Regulation 1060/2021);
- it complies with the principle of real costs except for costs calculated as flat rates, unit costs and lump sums (hereinafter together as SCOs);
- it complies with the principle of sound financial management as set out in Regulation (EU) 1059/2021 and Regulation (EU) 1060/2021 of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- it has been incurred and paid by the Lead Partner or its Partner(s) within the eligibility period of the project, and it can be verified via Interreg+ system on the basis of original invoices or other accounting documents with equivalent probative value (except for SCOs, where specific verification rules apply);

### Cost categories

Applicants shall indicate their expenditures in EUR in line with their VAT status. Beneficiaries reclaiming VAT from the State Treasury shall indicate net prices for the concerned expenditures. Under the Priority axis 3, expenditures falling into the following categories are eligible:

#### **Staff costs**

Staff costs shall consist of gross employment costs of staff employed by the beneficiary in one of the following ways:

- (a) full time;
- (b) part-time with a fixed percentage of time worked per month;
- (c) part-time with a flexible number of hours worked per month; or
- (d) on an hourly basis.

Staff costs shall be limited to the following:

- (a) salary payments related to the activities which the entity would not carry out if the operation concerned was not undertaken, provided for in an employment document, either in the form of an employment or work contract or an appointment decision, or by law, and relating to responsibilities specified in the job description of the staff member concerned;
- (b) any other costs directly linked to salary payments incurred and paid by the employer, such as employment taxes and social security including pensions as covered by Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council (20), on condition that they are:
  - (i) provided for in an employment document or by law;
  - (ii) in accordance with the legislation referred to in the employment document and with standard practices in the country or the organisation where the individual staff member is actually working, or both; and
  - (iii) not recoverable by the employer.

Staff costs may be reimbursed either proven by the employment document and payslips or as a flat rate of up to 20 % of the direct costs (other than the direct staff costs) of that operation.

#### **Office and administrative expenditure**

Office and administrative costs shall be limited to the following elements:

- a) office rent;
- b) insurance and taxes related to the buildings where the staff is located and to the equipment of the office (such as fire or theft insurance);
- c) utilities (such as electricity, heating, water);
- d) office supplies;
- e) accounting;
- f) archives;
- g) maintenance, cleaning and repairs;
- h) security;
- i) IT systems;
- j) communication (such as telephone, fax, internet, postal services, business cards);
- k) bank charges for opening and administering the account or accounts where the implementation of an operation;
- l) requires a separate account to be opened; and
- m) charges for transnational financial transactions

#### **Costs of travel and accommodation**

Travel and accommodation costs, regardless whether such costs are incurred and paid inside or outside the programme area, shall be limited to the following cost elements:

- a) travel costs (such as tickets, travel and car insurance, fuel, car mileage, toll, and parking fees);
- b) the cost of meals;
- c) accommodation costs;
- d) visa costs; and
- e) daily allowances.

**Costs of external expertise and services**

External expertise and service costs shall be limited to the following services and expertise provided by a public or private body or a natural person, other than the beneficiary, and all partners of the operation:

- a) studies or surveys (such as evaluations, strategies, concept notes, design plans, handbooks);
- b) training;
- c) translations;
- d) development, modifications and updates to IT systems and website;
- e) promotion, communication, publicity, promotional items and activities or information linked to an operation or to a programme as such;
- f) financial management;
- g) services related to the organisation and implementation of events or meetings;
- h) participation in events (such as registration fees);
- i) legal consultancy and notarial services, technical and financial expertise, other consultancy and accountancy services;
- j) intellectual property rights;
- k) travel and accommodation for external experts, speakers, chairpersons of meetings and service providers; and
- l) other specific expertise and services needed for operations.

**Equipment expenditure**

Costs for equipment purchased, rented or leased by the beneficiary of the operation shall be limited to the following:

- a) office equipment;
- b) IT hardware and software;
- c) furniture and fittings;
- d) laboratory equipment;
- e) machines and instruments,
- f) tools or devices;
- g) vehicles; and
- h) other specific equipment needed for operations.

**Ineligible costs**

The following costs are not eligible:

- a) fines, financial penalties and expenditure on legal disputes and litigation;
- b) costs of gifts;
- c) costs related to fluctuation of foreign exchange rate;
- d) interest on debt;
- e) value added tax (VAT) except
  - o for projects the total cost of which is below EUR 5 000 000 (including VAT);
  - o for projects the total cost of which is at least EUR 5 000 000 (including VAT) where it is non-recoverable under national VAT legislation;

- f) customs and import duties, or any other charges;
- g) bank charges, unless a separate bank account is opened for the project;
- h) conversion costs, charges and exchange losses, as well as other purely financial expenses, except for charges for transnational financial transactions;
- i) costs of alcoholic beverages;
- j) fees between partners of the same project for services and work carried out or equipment purchased within the project;
- k) purchase, rent or leasing of real estate (except office rental for project purposes);
- l) leasing of vehicles and equipment
- m) the purchase of land for an amount exceeding 10 % of the total eligible expenditure for the project;
- n) tips;
- o) costs of guarantees and similar charges, unless that the guarantees are required by national or Community legislation;
- p) contributions in kind (e.g. free use of room, equipment or other facilities, unpaid voluntary work, generally any contribution without money flow);
- q) benefits apart from salary (cafeteria) which do not appear on payslips.

## Ineligible expenditures

Furthermore, the following expenditure is not eligible:

- a) any costs incurred after the implementation period of the project, as defined in the Subsidy Contract for EU Contribution;
- b) commissions and dividend, profit payment;
- c) purchase of business share and stock exchange share;
- d) expenses of private consumption;
- e) cost of subcontracted activities increasing the cost of the project without adding proportionate value to it;
- f) cost of activities subcontracted by partners to other partners of the same project;
- g) unpaid invoice amounts or undrawn reduction of the price (cash discount, discount);
- h) services provided by contractors with whom a conflict of interest in the meaning of Commission Notice Guidance 2021/C121/01;
- i) cost of subcontracts in which the payment is defined as a percentage of the total cost of the project (e.g. success fee);
- j) cost of any services, purchase of goods, construction works or movable assets, not directly related to the project;
- k) any expenditures not directly associated with the Lead Partner/Partner;
- l) any form of double financing: expenditure, which is already supported by an EU or other international or national grant.

Expenses not included in the list above are not automatically eligible.

## Simplified cost options

### Flat rate option A

In case of Partners, where cost of services and equipment represent the majority of the expenses, staff cost shall be planned and reimbursed on flat rate basis. Based on the sum of direct costs (other than the direct staff costs), Partners are eligible 10 or 20% of staff costs with following ceilings:

Sum of direct cost per Partner	Flat rate	Ceiling
<1.000.000,00 EUR	20%	max. 100.000 EUR
>=1.000.000,00 EUR	10%	max. 150.000 EUR

Office and administrative costs are calculated as 15% percent of the eligible direct staff cost. Travel and accommodation costs of an operation are calculated at a flat rate of 15% of eligible direct staff costs of the operation.

### Flat rate option B

In case of Beneficiaries, where the staff costs represent the majority of the expenses, staff costs shall be reimbursed on real cost basis. Based on the sum of eligible direct staff costs, the Partner/Beneficiary is eligible for 40% of flat rate that covers all other costs.

Please note that staff and other costs corresponding to the cost categories in Articles 39 to 43 of Interreg Regulation generated at the level of the beneficiary for the management of the small project fund or funds shall not exceed 20 % of the total eligible cost of the small project fund or funds, respectively.

Please, note that detailed rules on eligibility of expenditures may be applicable at national level.

### 3.4. Sources of financing

Expenditures related to eligible activities are provided to Partners/Beneficiaries as non-repayable grant in the form of reimbursement. Projects are financed from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), central budgets of the Member States and own resources of the Partners/Beneficiaries. The financing rates for the eligible applicants in the present Call are the following:

	Hungary	Slovakia
<b>ERDF</b>	80%	80%
<b>National co-finance</b>	15%	12%
<b>Own contribution</b>	5%	8%

Economic activities falling under State aid rules are not eligible in the frame of the present Call.



## 4. Submission procedure

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### 4.1. Applicants' package

The documentation to the present Call consists of several documents that can be downloaded from the Programme website. The Applicants' package contains the following documents:

- Call for proposals
- Methodology and criteria for selecting operations
- Application form
- Admissibility assessment grid
- Eligible assessment grid
- Template for the Declaration of the Applicant

### 4.2. Documents to submit

#### **Application form**

The application form shall be filled in by the Lead Partner in cooperation with the members of the partnership on the predefined template in English.

#### **Implementation plan**

Each application form shall be supplemented by a study prepared by the Lead Partner in cooperation with the members of the partnership in English describing the following topics:

- main mission and objectives of the operation;
- description of the initial situation;
- identification of the target groups;
- human capacity, methodology and workflow of the implementation.
- expected results.

#### **Declaration of the Applicant**

Each partner shall submit a signed declaration of honour in the predefined format stating their cooperation will and the non-existence of exclusionary criteria.

### 4.3. Submission deadline

Applications have to be submitted by the Lead Partner electronically via electronic mail containing all documents in an attached single compressed file. Lead Partners shall indicate in the following text in the subject field: "CFP-HUSK-2301"

**Deadline for sending the applications is Friday, 24 February 2023.**

**Applications shall be sent to the following e-mail address: [application@skhu.eu](mailto:application@skhu.eu)**

## 5. Selection procedure

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### 5.1. Assessment

The assessment procedure of the present call consists of the following stages:

- 1) admissibility check
- 2) eligibility check including content-related evaluation criteria

The evaluation of the different stages is described in the Chapter 2 of the Methodology for selection of operations document. Based on the result of the assessment, the Monitoring Committee shall approve the successful operation. After the Lead Partner receives the official notifying letter on project approval, each representative of the Partnership is requested to participate on the contracting consultation with the Joint Secretariat. The aim of the consultation is to clarify the activities, budget and indicators of each Partner in detail and to carry out necessary project modification in case of deficiencies before contracting.

### 5.2. Data protection and processing policy

The data controller regarding data provided in the submitted application is the Széchenyi Programme Office Nonprofit Limited Liability Company.

The Company processes personal data in accordance with principles of good faith and fair dealing and transparency and subject to law in force and provisions of the present Policy. The Company processes personal data only on the basis of the Data protection and data processing policy and for a specific purpose(s) and does not go beyond them.

If the Company intends to use personal data for purpose other than the original purpose, the Company informs the data subject of such a purpose and use and obtain the previous and express consent of the data subject (where there is no other legal basis determined by GDPR) and the Company allows the data subject opportunity to defy the use of personal data.

The Company does not control personal data provided, person who provided the personal data, shall be liable for adequacy. The Company does not transfer personal data, except that the Company is entitled and obliged to transfer or forward personal data available to and properly stored by the Company to competent authority where transfer and forward of personal data is determined by law or legally binding order of authority. Company shall not be liable for such a transfer or its consequences.

The Company ensures the security of personal data, takes all technical and organizational measures and establishes rules of procedure that guarantee protection of recorded, stored and processed personal data, and prevent accidental losses, destruction, unauthorised access, unauthorised use, unauthorised alteration and unauthorised dissemination.

For more information, please see the Data protection and data processing policy document on the Programme website.