Annex 4

to the Regulations on selection of project applications

**Methodology of application of criteria for evaluation of project applications**

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| Title of the operational programme | Growth and Employment |
| Title and number of the priority axis | 8. Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning |
| Title and number of the specific objective | 8.2.1. To reduce fragmentation of study programmes and to strengthen sharing of resources |
| Selection type of project applications | Open selection of project applications |
| Responsible institution | Ministry of Education and Science |
| Selection round of project applications | round 2 and forthcoming (if applicable) project application selection rounds  *(Study programmes in EU languages (other than Latvian) and joint doctoral programmes, excluding pedagogic study programmes)* |

The methodology of application of criteria for evaluation of project applications is an informative and explanatory material.

*General conditions of application of criteria for evaluation of project applications:*

1. In order to evaluate compliance with the respective evaluation criterion, the assessor should take into account both the information provided in sections of the respective project application form and all the other information available in the project application form (in other sections and annexes of the project application form).
2. When evaluating compliance of the project application with evaluation criteria, only the information available in the project application form (in the project application form and annexes) should be taken into account. The evaluation cannot be based on assumptions or other information, which cannot be checked or proved, or which is not applicable to the specific project application. However, if the assessor has access to any information, which can affect the evaluation of the project, specific facts and sources of information should be indicated, which support and prove the information provided by the assessor.
3. When evaluating project applications, attention should be paid that the information provided in the project application form is harmonised in all the sections of the project application form, in which it is mentioned. If the information in sections of the project application form is not harmonised, a condition should be set that an additional explanation needs to be provided with regard to the criterion, to which this mismatch is applicable.
4. The following should be used in the evaluation of project applications:
   1. Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No.27 of 9 January 2018 “Regulations Regarding Implementation of the First and Second Project Applications Selection Round of Specific Objective 8.2.1 “To Reduce Fragmentation of Study Programmes and to Strengthen Sharing of Resources” of the Operational Programme “Growth and Employment”” (hereinafter referred to as CM regulations on the implementation of the SO);
   2. Operational Programme “Growth and Employment”;
   3. Regulations for the second round of selection of project applications for Specific Objective 8.2.1 “To Reduce Fragmentation of Study Programmes and to Strengthen Sharing of Resources” of the Operational Programme “Growth and Employment” (hereinafter referred to as SO 8.2.1), including criteria for evaluation of projects applications for the second round of selection of project applications for SO 8.2.1 and the methodology for completion of the project application form for the second round of selection of project applications for SO 8.2.1.

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| **1. COMMON CRITERIA** | | **Impact of the criterion on decision-making**  **(R; A)** | **Explanation for eligibility determination** | |
| 1.1. | The project applicant meets the requirements of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulations set for project applicants for the implementation of the specific objective (hereinafter CM regulations on the implementation of the SO)[[1]](#footnote-2). | R | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the project applicant meets provisions of Paragraph 22 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO set for project applicant and has met the requirements listed in Sub-paragraph 2.10 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO.  Within the framework of the criterion, it is verified whether the project applicant complies with the defined range of beneficiaries and the requirement to submit and coordinate the development and consolidation plan of the study programmes with the commission created by the Ministry of Education and Science.  The information about the coordination of the development and consolidation plan of the study programmes of a higher education institution is provided by the representative of the Ministry of Education and Science of the project application evaluation committee for the second round of SO 8.2.1.  **The evaluation is “No”**, if the project applicant does not meet the requirements of Paragraph 22 or Sub-paragraph 2.10 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. | |
| 1.2. | The project application form completed using a computer | R | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the project application form and annexes thereto (hereinafter referred to as the project application) have been completed using a computer.  **The evaluation is “No”**, if the project application form is not completed using a computer. | |
| 1.3. | The project applicant has sufficient administrative, implementation and financial capacities to implement the project. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the project application sufficiently characterises and justifies the administration, implementation and financial (administrative) capacity necessary for the implementation of the project.  The project administration capacity is sufficient, if the project application includes information:   1. about necessary administrative staff for the project (for example, project manager, assisting project manager, procurement specialist, accountant), their number, planned load and main tasks, as well as experience and professional qualifications necessary for the fulfilment of the work; 2. that the project applicant is planning to provide the administrative employees specified in Paragraph 1 of this explanation; 3. about the project implementation system, including the mutual cooperation among the administrative staff, about the project implementation monitoring mechanism, cooperation with project implementation cooperation partners (if applicable), etc.; 4. about the material and technical equipment for workplaces which is necessary and available to the administrative staff of the project (computer equipment, software, internet, office equipment, etc.); 5. about the infrastructure necessary and available for the administration of the project (buildings, premises).   The project implementation capacity is sufficient, if the project application includes information:   1. about necessary project implementation staff, their numbers and main tasks, as well as experience and professional qualifications necessary for the fulfilment of the work; 2. that the project applicant is planning to provide the employees for the implementation of the project specified in Paragraph 1 of this explanation; 3. about the project implementation system, including the mutual cooperation among the implementation staff, about cooperation with project cooperation partners (if applicable), etc.; 4. about the infrastructure necessary and available for the implementation of the project (buildings, premises); 5. about the material and technical equipment for workplaces which is necessary and available to the implementation staff of the project (computer equipment, software, internet, office equipment, etc.).   The financial capacity of the project applicants, having a status of a derived public person or a derived public person agency, is certified, providing information that when the project will be implemented, payments will be made from the advance and interim payments received for the implementation of the project, which amounts to 100 % of the funding from the European Social Fund and state budget co-funding intended for the project.  The financial capacity of a higher education institution established by a private person or a college established by a private person is certified, providing information that when the project will be implemented, payments will be made from the advance and interim payments received for the implementation of the project, which amount to 90 % of the funding from the European Social Fund and state budget co-funding intended for the project. The financial capacity of a higher education institution established by a private person or a college established by a private person is deemed to be sufficient, if the information provided in the project application about the funds available to the higher education institution established by a private person or the college established by a private person for the implementation of the project and the planned project financing procedure.  The financial capacity of the project of project applicants having a status of a state budgetary institution is sufficient, if section 2.1 of the project application provides that project costs will be financed from department 74 “Redistributable budget in the annual state budget implementation process” in programme 80.00.00 “Undistributed funding for the implementation of projects and activities co-financed by European Union policy tool and other foreign financial support” and funds envisaged in state budgetary long-term liabilities.  If the project application does not meet any of these requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the corresponding condition to clarify the project application. | |
| 1.4. | On the date of project application, the project applicant and project cooperation partner (if applicable) have no tax debts in the Republic of Latvia, including mandatory social security contribution debts exceeding a total of EUR 150. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the project applicant and the project cooperation partner have no tax debts, the total amount of which for each separately exceeds EUR 150.  The compliance with the criterion is determined by verifying the information published in the database of the State Revenue Service (hereinafter referred to as SRS) (<http://www6.vid.gov.lv/VID_PDB/NPAR>). Taking into account that the information on tax debts administered by SRS is published in the SRS database twice a month, the tax debt during the evaluation is checked in the SRS database on the day of publication set by the SRS, which is the closest date of submission of the project application.  The project application evaluation form should specify the date of the check and the amount of the tax debt, if any has. If the project applicant or the cooperation partner has tax debts, the total amount of which exceeds EUR 150, the evaluation is **“Yes, under condition”** and a condition is set to pay the tax debt. | |
| 1.5. | The project application has been submitted to the Cohesion Policy funds management information system for 2014–2020. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the project application has been submitted to the Cohesion Policy funds management information system for 2014-2020 (https://ep.esfondi.lv).  **The evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, if the project application has not been submitted to the Cohesion Policy funds management information system for 2014-2020 (https://ep.esfondi.lv), at the time setting the respective condition to submit the project application to the Cohesion Policy funds management information system for 2014-2020 (https://ep.esfondi.lv). | |
| 1.6. | The project application form has been completed in Latvian in compliance with the requirements of Regulations No. 784 of the Cabinet of Ministers of 16 December 2014 “Procedures by which the institutions involved in the management of European Union Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund shall ensure preparation of programming documents and implementation of such funds in the 2014–2020 programming period”, the project application contains all the documents required by the project selection regulations, they have been prepared in Latvian or accompanied by a certified translation into Latvian. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the project application meets the following conditions:   1. the project application has been prepared according to the form appended to the Regulations on selection of project applications and it is fully completed according to the Regulations No. 784 of the Cabinet of Ministers of 16 December 2014 “Procedures by which the institutions involved in the management of European Union Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund shall ensure preparation of programming documents and implementation of such funds in the 2014–2020 programming period”; 2. the sections of the project application specified in the project selection regulations have been submitted in English, Latvian and English versions match and are in harmony, which is confirmed by the project applicant’s written certification; 3. the project application is accompanied by all the annexes to be submitted according to the project applications selection regulations.     If the project application in whole or in part does not meet any of the set requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the following conditions:   1. to submit a project application, which has been prepared according to the project application form attached to the regulations on selection of project applications, and the project application has been completed in full; 2. to submit any missing annex(es); 3. to append a written certification that Latvian and English versions match and are in harmony. | |
| 1.7. | The financial data in the project application are indicated in EUR. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the financial data in the project application (including in Annexes 2 and 3 to the project application) are indicated in euro (EUR).  If the project application in whole or in part does not meet these requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the condition to clarify the project application envisaging indication of financial data in euro (EUR). | |
| 1.8. | Financial calculations in the project application are arithmetically correct and comply with the requirements of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO and with the project application form in Annex 1 to Regulations No. 784 of the Cabinet of Ministers of 16 December 2014 “Procedures by which institutions involved in the management of European Union Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund shall ensure preparation of programming documents and implementation of such funds in the 2014–2020 programming period”. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if in the project application (including in Annexes 2 and 3 to the project application):   1. the financial calculation has been developed in an arithmetically correct way (i.e. there are no mathematical errors); 2. the financial calculation has been made using two decimals after the point; 3. the financial calculation has been developed according to the requirements of the project application form, including the mutual compliance of the amount of funding in annexes 2 and 3 of the application (and in other sections, if applicable) is ensured. 4. the financial calculation complies with the requirements of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO and with the project application form in Annex 1 to Regulations No. 784 of the Cabinet of Ministers of 16 December 2014 “Procedures by which the institutions involved in the management of European Union Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund shall ensure preparation of programming documents and implementation of such funds in the 2014–2020 programming period”.   If the project application in whole or in part does not meet these requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the following conditions:   1. to submit a financial calculation, which has been developed in an arithmetically correct way; 2. to submit a financial calculation, which has been made using two decimals after the point; 3. to submit a financial calculation, which has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the project application. 4. to submit a financial calculation, which complies with the requirements of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO and with the project application form in Annex 1 to Regulations No. 784 of the Cabinet of Ministers of 16 December 2014 “Procedures by which the institutions involved in the management of European Union Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund shall ensure preparation of programming documents and implementation of such funds in the 2014–2020 programming period”. | |
| 1.9. | The amount of funding in the project application to be provided by the European Social Fund (ESF) corresponds to the allowable project funding set by the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the total eligible funding indicated in the project application does not exceed maximum total eligible amount of funding available for the project as defined in Paragraph 29 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO and the amount of the ESF funding does not exceed 85 % of the total eligible project funding.  If the project application in whole or in part does not meet the said requirement, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the condition to clarify the project application*.* | |
| 1.10. | The ESF funding intensity indicated in the project application does not exceed the maximum ESF funding intensity set by the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the ESF funding intensity indicated in the project application does not exceed 85 per cent of the total eligible funding.  If the project application in whole or in part does not meet the said requirement, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the condition to clarify the project application envisaging that the ESF funding intensity does not exceed 85 per cent of the total eligible funding*.* | |
| 1.11. | The total costs included in the project application (total eligible costs, total ineligible costs and total costs of the project), planned eligible activities and cost items correspond to those set by the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO, incl. do not exceed the set cost item amounts, and: | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if:   1. the planned activities indicated in the project application (sections 1.1, 1.5, annex 1) comply with the eligible activities defined in Paragraph 27 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO; 2. the costs planned in the project application (in annex 3 and other sections, if applicable) comply with the eligible costs defined in Paragraph 28 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO; 3. the amount of costs planned in the project application (in annex 3 and other sections, if applicable) does not exceed the cost restrictions defined in Sub-paragraphs 28.1.2, 28.2 and Paragraph 36 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO, if applicable (including in percentage, limitations of activity costs); 4. each cost item has a corresponding number of units specified and the name of the appropriate unit of measure;   If the project application does not meet all of these requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the corresponding conditions. | |
| 1.11.1. are related to project implementation; |
| 1.11.2. are necessary for the implementation of the project (implementation of the project activities, meeting the needs of the target group, addressing the problem defined); |
| 1.11.3. ensure the achievement of the project objective and indicators. |
| 1.12. | The project implementation deadlines correspond to the project implementation period set by the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if according to the information provided in annex 1 and section 2.3 of the project application (and in other sections, if applicable):   1. the activities planned in the project have not been started earlier than specified in Sub-paragraph 40.2 and Paragraph 41 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO; 2. the project implementation deadline does not exceed the project implementation period set in Paragraph 31 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO, i.e. no longer than until 30 November 2023; 3. the funding planned in Annexes 2 and 3 of the project application matches provisions of Annex 1 both by breakdown of finances by years and by planning of cost items.   If the project application in whole or in part does not meet all the above mentioned requirements of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the condition to accordingly clarify the duration of implementation of the project, planning of activities by quarters or planning of funding by years or cost items, to ensure harmonised information in related sections of the project application. | |
| 1.13. | The project objective corresponds to the objective stated in the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the information specified in section 1.1, 1.2 of the project application and also information specified in other sections of the project application about the objective of the project, as well as activities planned within the project evidences that it matches provisions of Paragraph 3 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO set for the objective of SO 8.2.1 – to reduce fragmentation of study programmes and strengthen sharing of resources.  If the project application in whole or in part does not meet this requirement, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the condition to clarify the objective specified in sections 1.1 and 1.2, activities planned within the project for them to be aimed at the achievement of the objective defined in Paragraph 3 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. | |
| 1.14. | The results to be achieved and monitoring indicators are precisely defined in the project application, they are justified, measurable and foster the achievement of indicators set by the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if:   1. section 1.5 (and other sections, if applicable) of the project application, for each planned project activity states a justified (clearly derives from the corresponding project activity), precisely defined and measurable result, which will be achieved as a result of each project activity; 2. section 1.6 (and other sections, if applicable) of the project application states a justified (clearly derives from the project activity), precisely defined and measurable project monitoring indicators. They are directed towards the achievement of monitoring indicators defined in Paragraph 5 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO.   If the project application does not meet all of these requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the following conditions:   1. to clarify section 1.5 (and other sections, if applicable) of the project application specifying a justified, precisely defined or measurable result for each project activity; 2. to clarify section 1.6 (and other sections, if applicable) of the project application specifying justified, precisely defined and measurable project monitoring indicators. | |
| 1.15. | Project activities planned in the application:  1.15.1. correspond to those set by the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO and provide for a link to the relevant eligible activities;  1.15.2. are precisely defined and justified, and address the problems defined by the project.  1.15.3. are clear and realistic, with precisely defined deadlines and results. | A | **The evaluation** of the criterion included in Sub-paragraph 1.15.1 **is “Yes”**, if the activities indicated in section 1.5 of the project application comply with the eligible activities defined in Paragraph 27 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. If an accreditation of the study programme in an international professional organisation is planned within the project, then its feasibility and positive impact on the quality of the study programme is justified.  **The evaluation** of the criterion included in Sub-paragraph 1.15.2 **is “Yes”**, if:   1. project activities are accurately defined, i.e. the content of the activities can be figured out from names of the activities; 2. project activities are justified, i.e. they directly influence the achievement of project objective, results and indicators. The achievement of the project objective, results and indicators is impossible without any of the activities. Descriptions of all activities justify their need, describe actions planned within their scope; 3. project activities are aimed at the resolution of problems described in section 1.3 of the project application. The activities planned within the project envisage logical and sound preparation, implementation, evaluation, post-monitoring and result dissemination stages.   **The evaluation** of the criterion included in Sub-paragraph 1.15.3 **is “Yes”**, if the actions indicated in section 1.5 (and other sections, if applicable) are clear and realistic, with precisely defined deadlines and results and certify the logical and sound planning capability and envisages respective preparation, implementation, evaluation, post-monitoring and result dissemination stages.  If the project application in whole or in part does not meet all of these requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the following conditions:   1. in case of the criterion included in Sub-paragraph 1.15.1 – to clarify section 1.5 of the project application, indicating project activities and their descriptions in accordance with the eligible activities defined in Paragraph 27 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO; 2. in case of the criterion included in Sub-paragraph 1.15.2 – to clarify project activities or their description, thus ensuring that they directly affect the achievement of project objective, results or indicators or they are aimed at the resolution of problems described in section 1.3 of the project application; 3. in case of the criterion included in Sub-paragraph 1.15.3 – to clarify project activities or their descriptions, thus ensuring that they are clear and realistic, with precisely defined deadlines and results. | |
| 1.16. | The publicity and information measures planned in the project application comply with the conditions of the General Regulation[[2]](#footnote-3) and the CM Regulations “Procedures by which the compliance with communication and visual identity requirements shall be ensured in the implementation of the European Union structural funds and the Cohesion Fund in the 2014–2020 programming period”. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if section 5 (and other sections, if applicable) of the project application states information and publicity measures correspond to provisions of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 (Article 115 and Annex XII), and Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No.87 of 17 February 2015 “Procedure of ensuring observation of communication and visual identity requirements in 2014-2020 programming period in the implementation of European Union Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund”, i.e.:   1. the target group of the project, which participates in the implementation of the project, is informed that the activity is co-financed from the ESF; 2. it is envisaged to place at least one poster with information about the project (minimum size A3), including the financial support from the ESF, at a location visible to the public, such as the entrance area of a building; 3. it is envisaged to publish on the beneficiary’s website a description of the implementation of the project, including its objectives and results, highlighting the financial support received from the ESF. It is envisaged to update information on the beneficiary’s website about the implementation of the project at least once in three months; 4. these information and publicity measures have a description of the measure (i.e. what this measure includes, who will implement it, how frequently), the implementation period (for example, during the entire project implementation period, specified quarters of the year), as well as the number the measures.   If the project application in whole or in part does not meet the requirements set in these laws and regulations, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the condition to clarify the type, description or the period of implementation of publicity and information dissemination measures. | |
| 1.17. | The project application identifies, describes and assesses project risks, evaluates their impact and likelihood, and defines mitigation measures. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the project application contains a qualitative assessment of all the risks specified in section 2.4 (and in other sections, if applicable) of the project application, including management and implementation staff risks (including problems of availability of properly qualified human resources, lack of project management experience, communication and cooperation between project management and implementation staff, inability of the project management team to cooperate, etc.), financial risks (including inadequately planned financial flow, accounting/posting risk, possible cost increase risk), implementation risks (incl. fitting of the implementation of the project in the intended time schedule, actual implementation of the development and consolidation plan of the study programmes, inappropriate knowledge of English for academic staff, communication and cooperation between involved structural units of HEIs and cooperation partners (if applicable), etc.), legal risks (including breach of contractual obligations, inadequate conduct of procurement procedures), risks of achievement and administration of results and monitoring indicators (including the risk of non-fulfilment of indicators, a justified plan of measures for risk mitigation) and other risks (including change in regulatory enactments), the impact (high, medium, low) and probability (high, medium, low) of each risk is set out and explained, and also a substantiated plan of measures to be implemented to avoid these risks has been developed, i.e. activities for the prevention of all the above-mentioned risks prevention activities are described and the plan of measures is justified.  ***Definition:*** *The main task of risk management is to identify and assess the risks of the project implementation in the project field, to describe the risk assessment and control procedures, which in turn make it possible to draw up proposals for risk prevention activities.*  *Risk management process consists of four main stages:*   1. *Risk identification;* 2. *Risk evaluation (assessment);* 3. *Determination of risk management measures;* 4. *Risk control.*   If the project application in whole or in part does not meet all of these requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the corresponding condition. | |
| 1.18. | The project cooperation partner (if applicable) meets the requirements of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, the project cooperation partner(s) (if applicable) indicated in the application meets the requirements defined in Paragraph 23 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO.  If the project application in whole or in part does not comply with all the above mentioned requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the condition to envisage in the implementation of the project the cooperation partners, which meet the requirements set in Paragraph 23 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. | |
| 1.19. | The project application defines the project cooperation partner’s activities planned within the project and complying with the eligible activities (if applicable) under the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the project application (section 1.5 “Project activities and results to be achieved”) are correctly reflected in the activities planned by the cooperation partners of the project within the project, which corresponds to the eligible activities defined in Paragraph 27 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO (if applicable).  If the project application does not meet the above mentioned requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, setting the corresponding condition, to supplement or clarify the activities planned by the cooperation partner of the project within the project, or also their compliance with the eligible activities defined in Paragraph 27 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO. | |
| **2. SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA** | | **Impact of the criterion on decision-making**  (R; A) |  | |
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| 2.1. | The project application is accompanied by a development and consolidation plan of the study programmes *(applies to the whole project)*. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”,** if pursuant to Sub-paragraph 26.1 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO the project application is accompanied by a development and consolidation plan of the study programmes, which has been coordinated with the commission created by the Ministry of Education and Science.  The project application is accompanied by a letter of the Ministry of Education and Science on the coordination of the development and consolidation plan of the study programmes. The study programmes to be closed (if applicable) and the newly created study programmes specified in the project application should correspond to the study programmes specified in the letter of the Ministry of Education and Science on coordination of the development and consolidation plan of the study programmes within round 2 of SO 8.2.1.  If the project application does not meet the above mentioned requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, setting the corresponding condition. | |
| 2.2. | The project application is accompanied by a communication and publicity plan (*applies to the whole project).* | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”,** if pursuant to Sub-paragraph 26.2 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO the project application is accompanied by a communication and publicity plan, which has been developed in compliance with the requirements set in Sub-paragraph 2.2 of the CM regulations on the implementation of the SO.  If the project application does not meet the above mentioned requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, setting the corresponding condition. | |
| 2.3. | ***Capacity to implement the doctoral programme which development is envisaged within the project*** (if applicable):  The project application shows that the doctoral programme to be developed within the project is based on adequate research capacity of the higher education institution (HEI), which is demonstrated by:  2.3.1. Research projects implemented by the HEI over the last three years and their attracted funding;  2.3.2. Research areas defined in the HEI’s development strategy and their development plan, which are also available on its website;  2.3.3. Capacities of academic and scientific staff available at the HEI;  2.3.4. Research infrastructure available to the HEI. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the project application shows that the doctoral study programme to be developed within the project is based on an appropriate research capacity of HEI, which certifies that:   1. Research projects implemented by the HEI over the last three years and their attracted funding; 2. Research areas defined in the HEI’s development strategy and their development plan, which are also available on its website; 3. Capacities of academic and scientific staff available at the HEI (number of academic and scientific staff and number of scientific articles which are published in magazines or conference proceedings included in the Web of Science or SCOPUS (A or B) databases; 4. Research infrastructure available to the HEI.   If the project application does not meet all the above mentioned requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, setting the corresponding conditions to supplement or clarify the justification.  The criterion is applicable, if there are plans to develop a doctoral study programme within the project. | |
| 2.4. | The project application shows the appropriateness of the study and research infrastructure for the study programmes to be developed within the project *(applies to study programmes in the EU languages)*. | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the project application shows the appropriateness of the study and research infrastructure for the study programmes to be developed within the project, including students will be provided remote access to academic information resources.  The criterion is also applicable to partner institutions, which will be involved in the development and implementation of joint study programmes.  If the project application does not meet the above mentioned requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, setting the corresponding condition to supplement or clarify the justification. | |
| 2.5. | The project application shows that the academic staff to be involved in the implementation of the new study programmes have adequate knowledge of the English language and teaching skills in an international environment *(applies to study programmes in the EU languages and joint doctoral programmes).* | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the project application shows that academic staff involved in the implementation of the new study programmes have adequate knowledge of the English language (or other EU languages corresponding to the language of implementation of the study programme) (level C1) and teaching skills in an international environment. The project application shows that academic staff has experience in work with foreign students or experience in participation in mobility activities.  The criterion is also applicable to partner institutions, which will be involved in the development and implementation of joint study programmes.  *Note:* the level of knowledge of English is certified by a document issued by an international testing institution or a certificate issued by the respective language centre, which certifies level C1 of knowledge of English, or the knowledge of the appropriate EU language. An appropriate knowledge of English or other EU language is also certified by: (1) an education document issued by a foreign education institution, which certifies obtaining formal education in basic, secondary or higher education degree (if English or the relevant EU language was the language of studies); (2) a bachelor, master or doctoral diploma in English philology; (3) a diploma issued by the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga, the Riga Graduate School of Law or the Riga Technical University on mastering a study programme in the Riga Business School.  The document certifying the level of English or relevant EU knowledge should be available at the time of commencement of the implementation of a new study programme.  If the project application does not meet the above mentioned requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, setting the corresponding condition to supplement or clarify the justification. | |
| 2.6. | The project application shows that the HEI follows a good practice in attracting foreign students and has created an organisational structure which fulfils, in a transparent and efficient manner, the tasks of attracting and supporting foreign students, and is capable of operating in a strategic and coordinated way (*applies to study programmes in the EU languages*). | A | **The evaluation is “Yes”**, if the project application (section 1.3 and other sections, if applicable) justifies that the HEI has created an organisational structure, which transparently and effectively fulfils foreign students attraction and support tasks, is able to act in a strategic and coordinated way, including an internal procedure has been developed, according to which the HEI organises attraction of foreign students, the website of the HEI provides a readily available, illustrative and up-to-date information in English about the study supply and research opportunities in the HEI, as well as about the possibilities of stay in Latvia, the HEI is conveniently accessible from a distance, etc.  The criterion is also applicable to partner institutions of the HEI, except foreign, which will be involved in the development and implementation of joint study programmes.  If the project application does not meet the set requirements, **the evaluation is “Yes, under condition”**, at the same time setting the condition to supplement/clarify the project application.  The criterion is applicable, if there are plans to develop a study programmes in EU languages within the project. | |
| 1. **QUALITY CRITERIA[[3]](#footnote-4)** | | **Evaluation system** | | |
| **Maximum score to be obtained and scoring procedure** | **Minimum score required** | **Explanation for eligibility determination** |
| **3.1. Contribution of the project to the performance of monitoring indicators (0 - 5 points)** | | | | |
| **3.1.1. The share of study programmes closed, on the basis of which the new study programmes will be developed** | | **3[[4]](#footnote-5) / 1[[5]](#footnote-6)** | **2[[6]](#footnote-7)/ the criterion is not excluding[[7]](#footnote-8)** | a) **to higher education institutions implementing 12 or more study programmes** (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1):  Score P 3.1.1. is calculated:  1. using the formula P3.1.1.= 0.1\*S3.1.1. – 1, where S3.1.1. – the share of study programmes to be closed, on the basis of which new study programmes are planned to be created (% in the total number of study programmes implemented by the HEI on 1 October 2017, excluding level 1 professional higher education (college level) study programmes and study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”);  2. provided that P3.1.1. = 3 points, if S3.1.1. ≥ 40%, andP3.1.1. = 2 points, if S3.1.1. = 30%.  The minimum necessary number of points is 2 points, the maximum score that can be obtained is 3 points.  b) **to higher education institutions implementing 11 or less study programmes** (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1):  Score P 3.1.1. is calculated:  1. using the formula P3.1.1.= 0.1\* S3.1.1., where S3.1.1. – the share of study programmes to be closed, on the basis of which new study programmes are planned to be created (% in the total number of study programmes implemented by the HEI on 1 October 2017, for higher education institutions excluding level 1 professional higher education (college level) study programmes and study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”);  2. provided that P3.1.1. = 1 point, if S3.1.1. ≥ 10%. The criterion is not exclusive, the maximum score that can be obtained is 1 point. |
| *The project application pursuant to CM Regulations No. 322 of 13 June 2017 “Regulations on Classification of Latvian Education” should specify titles and codes of the closed study programmes (the study programmes, which were closed from 1 March 2018 to the end of implementation of the project, and the study programmes, which have already been closed since 1 October 2013, if the total number of study programmes in HEIs as at 1 October 2017 has reduced compared to 1 October 2013), as well as the date of actual closure of the study programmes (decision of the study programme licensing commission on the annulment of the study programme licence) or the planned time of closure of study programmes.*  *Note: The total number of study programmes implemented also includes those study programmes, licences of which are in force on 1 October 2017. The study programmes to be closed should not include the study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1.* ***The number of closed study programmes should correspond to the number of study programmes to be closed specified in the letter of the Ministry of Education and Science on coordination of the development and consolidation plan of the study programmes within round 2 of SO 8.2.1****.*  If there are plans to develop a joint study programme, then the number of closed study programmes may include study programmes closed of the Latvian partner institution (those, which are planned to be close, as well as those, which have been closed since 1 October 2013, if the total number of study programmes at HEI on 1 October 2017 has reduced compared to 1 October 2013). Each study programme can be indicated as a study programme to be closed only in one project.    ***Recommendations:*** *HEI evaluates, which of existing study programmes in all study levels can be closed, for example, if they are no longer relevant to:*  *- the strategic specialisation of the HEI,*  *- the demand of students,*  *- the needs of the labour market, long-term socioeconomic development forecasts;*  *- if the content of the study programmes to be closed in the parts to be preserved can be offered as specialisations in other study programmes or in newly created study programme;*  *- if their social value added (for example, in the regional context) has reduced or is provided by other study programmes;*  *- if the analysis of closing of the study programme shows clear financial and administrative benefits and insignificant losses.*  The share of study programmes to be closed is written down using two decimals after the point.  The score is written down using two decimals after the point.  If the evaluation in sub-criterion 3.1.1 to higher education institutions implementing 12 or more study programmes (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1), is lower than 2 points, the project application is rejected. | | | | |
| * + 1. **The share of new study programmes** | | | | |
| **3.1.2. The share of new study programmes** | | **2[[8]](#footnote-9) / 4[[9]](#footnote-10)** | **1[[10]](#footnote-11) / 1.5[[11]](#footnote-12)** | a) **to higher education institutions implementing 12 or more study programmes** (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1):  Score P 3.1.2. is calculated:  1. using the formula P3.1.2.= 0.2\*J 3.1.2., where J 3.1.2. – the share of new study programmes in EU languages and new joint doctoral study programmes (% in the total number of study programmes implemented by the HEI on 1 October 2017, excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”);  2. provided that P3.1.2. = 2 points, if J 3.1.2. ≥ 10%.  The minimum necessary number of points is 1 point, the maximum score that can be obtained is 2 points.  b) **to higher education institutions implementing 11 or less study programmes** (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1):  Score P 3.1.2. is calculated:  1. using the formula P 3.1.2.= 0.2\*J3.1.2., where J3.1.2. – the share of new study programmes in EU languages and new joint doctoral study programmes (% in the total number of study programmes implemented by the HEI on 1 October 2017, excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”).  2. provided that P 3.1.2. = 4 points, if J3.1.2. ≥ 20%.  The minimum necessary number of points is 1.5 points, the maximum score that can be obtained is 4 points. |
| The project application should specify titles and codes or levels of newly created study programmes according to Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 322 of 13 June 2017 “Regulations on Classification of Latvian Education”.  *Note: The total number of study programmes implemented also includes those study programmes, licences of which are in force on 1 October 2017. The new study programmes should not include the study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”. If study programmes in an agency – college of the higher education institution is planned to be developed within the project, then the number of new study programmes at HEI and the total number of study programme being implemented should also include the study programmes implemented in the agency – college of the higher education institution.*  ***The number of new study programmes should correspond to the number of new study programmes to be developed specified in the letter of the Ministry of Education and Science on coordination of the development and consolidation plan of the study programmes within round 2 of SO 8.2.1.***  The share of new study programmes in EU languages and new joint doctoral study programmes is written down using two decimals after the point.  The score is written down using two decimals after the point.  If the evaluation in sub-criterion 3.1.2 to higher education institutions implementing 12 or more study programmes (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1), is lower than 1 point, or to higher education institutions implementing 11 or less study programmes (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1) is below 1.5 points, the project application is rejected. | | | | |
| * 1. **Relevance of the project** | | | | |
| 3.2.1. | The project corresponds to the objectives of higher education policy of Latvia. | **0 – 5**  *(Evaluation unit – 0.5 points)* | Must score at least  **4** points | The project application justifies that the implementation of the activities included in the project application, for example, the reduction of the number of study programmes in the HEI, by developing new study programmes on the basis of several existing study programmes, sharing of HEI resources, development of interdisciplinary study programmes, development of professional study programmes, attraction of foreign students in new study programmes will foster the achievement of the goals of the higher education policy of Latvia according to provisions of the Guidelines for the Development of Education 2014–2020, the Guidelines for the Development of Science, Technology and Innovation 2014–2020 and the Latvian Smart Specialization Strategy. The compliance justification should also take into account conclusions and recommendations of the Assessment of the Quality, Cooperation and Sustainability of Study Programmes (<http://www.aip.lv/ESF_par_projektu.htm>) and the International Assessment of Scientific Institution (<http://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/zinatnisko-instituciju-starptautiskais-izvertejums>) (if applicable).  The main goal of reforms in higher education is to ensure qualitative, internationally competitive and research-based higher education, which is offered by effectively managed educational institutions or higher education institutions. The reforms are aimed at redefining of the role of higher education institutions – they should stimulate economic development of the state as knowledge centres.  The Ministry of Education and Science has set four tasks for higher education institutions:   1. to ensure a potentially diverse knowledge base in all fields of science, fostering research in those, which characterise the highest development potential, international competitiveness, as well as sufficient research capacity and the operation of which matches the goals and priorities defined in the Smart Specialisation Strategy; 2. to promote the innovative capacity of enterprises improving cooperation with industry enterprises, fostering commercialisation of knowledge and performing ordered research; 3. to create a rooted and global human capital in Latvia, to the extent possible linking the study process to the preparation of specialists necessary for the development of Latvian national economy, at the same time identifying global labour opportunities and ensuring an internationally competitive supply of education; 4. to develop as knowledge centres, attracting resources from different sources, ensuring an open access to laboratories and equipment, as well as making it possible to share infrastructure and the material and technical base for training with other education institutions, research institutions and industry enterprises.   Reforms in higher education should ensure an increase in the quality of higher education, as a result creating a new model of quality of higher education.  Four elements are in the centre of it: students, academic staff, resources and regulatory framework.   1. Higher education is considered qualitative, if students obtain theoretical knowledge and also develop practical skills, they have access to state-funded study positions and are provided with the possibility to work in research and creative projects. The quality of education is certified not only by the opportunities offered to students, but also by the opportunities realised by students themselves (specific, practical skills) and transversal competences (convertibility, application of these skills) in the selected field. International mobility of students in studies and research is also important. 2. The quality is also characterised by academic staff of the higher education institution, which is internationally competitive in research and teaching, including is able to work with international students. Provides a research-based education content. 3. Modern infrastructure and a material and technical base are the basis for the resources of higher education institutions for the implementation of the research and study process; access to modern laboratories, latest scientific literature and international academic research networks is ensured. 4. The regulatory framework should consist of sound regulatory enactments, balanced incentives and accreditation corresponding to international standards. Motivation programmes for achievements are also important quality promoters.   The project application shows that the study programmes to be developed within the project correspond the HEI’s development and consolidation plan of the study programmes, their development is feasible and fosters a qualitative supply of study programmes. The project application should be accompanied by a development and consolidation plan of the study programmes (in English).  The project application shows that the new study programmes to be developed within the project correspond to the HEI’s strategic specialisation, development needs of the economy and the demand of potential students (the analysis of needs has been performed).  The project application should specify and explain the compliance of the study programmes developed within the project with at least one growth priority set in the Smart Specialisation Strategy of Latvia (see the description of growth priorities in the annex to this methodology “RIS3 priorities and their explanations”).  The project applicant provides information about other initiatives (for example, cooperation agreements, agreements with other institutions, preliminary works, foreruns, etc.) and projects related to the activities planned in the project application (for example, Marie Skłodowska-Curie programmes within Horizon 2020, or Nordplus development and implementation projects for joint master’s programmes, etc.), which are or have been implemented, as well as planned projects (for example, content linkage (synergy) of the activities planned in SO 8.2.1 projects with those of SO 8.2.2, SO 8.2.3) under evaluation. Also those projects can be indicated, where HEI is involved as a cooperation partner in the projects implemented by other institutions. |
| 3.2.2. | The project corresponds to the development and consolidation plan of the study programmes. |
| 3.2.3. | The new study programmes to be developed within the project correspond to the HEI’s strategic specialisation, development needs of the economy and the demand of potential students. |
| 3.2.4. | The new study programmes to be developed within the project correspond to the growth priorities set by the Smart Specialisation Strategy. |
| 3.2.5. | The project complements other initiatives and projects implemented or ongoing at the higher education institution. |
| If the evaluation is below 4 points, the project application is rejected. | | | | |
| * 1. **Quality of project design and implementation** | | | | |
| 3.3.1. | The substantive solution of the project (methodology) is innovative, the planned activities are contextually appropriate for the achievement of the objective, their reciprocal logic is justified and appropriate for the achievement of the planned results. | **0 – 5**  *(Evaluation unit – 0.5 points)* | Must score at least  **3** points | The project application should describe whether project results will be innovative and whether innovative work methods will be used to achieve the results specified in the project application, for example, in the new study programmes, when planning innovative learning methods, access to information and e-solutions in the implementation of study programmes.  If the project application is based on existing innovations or results of other projects, the project application should show what innovative value added will be obtained as a result of the activities planned in the project application.  The project application provides information that the activities planned within the project and their implantation steps are sound, enforceable, qualitative and aimed at the achievement of the objective defined in the project application.  The project application identifies the amount of financial and other necessary resources corresponding to each activity, including necessary human resources, financial resources, infrastructure resources at the disposal of the higher education institution, etc.  The project applicant should demonstrate that the activities planned within the project are defined on the basis of the analysis of the situation conducted by the project applicant and the cooperation partner (if applicable), the order of their implementation is logical, transparent, mutually coordinated and corresponding to the time schedule planned within the scope of the project.  The activities planned in the project and the order of their implementation should ensure the achievement of the goals and results planned in the project application within the scope of the planned funding.  The project application provides information about the project implementation quality control measures planned by the project applicant and the cooperation partner (if applicable), which allows to measure progress, quality of the planned actions and make necessary amendments to ensure the achievement of the goals and results planned in the project application within the scope of the time schedule specified and the funding planned in the project application. |
| 3.3.2. | The activities planned within the project are sound and developed in a quality that enables achievement of the expected goals and results. |
| 3.3.3. | The project is economically feasible (profitable), with adequate resources envisaged for each project activity. |
| 3.3.4. | The overall project design ensures consistency between its objectives, substantive solutions, activities and planned budget. |
| If the evaluation is below 3 points, the project application is rejected. | | | | |
| * 1. **3.4. Quality of the project implementation team and the cooperation arrangements** | | | | |
| 3.4.1. | The project envisages close, reciprocally complementary and goal-oriented partnerships between higher education institutions participating in the project; | **0 – 5**  *(Evaluation unit – 0.5 points)* | Must score at least  **3** points | The project application provides information:   1. about cooperation partner’s (if applicable) specialisation, experience, skills, know-how and management support, which are necessary for the implementation of the specific planned activities listed in the project application, and a description of the cooperation partner’s (if applicable) planned involvement and expected effect on the achievement of the aim and results defined in the project application; 2. about the project applicant’s and cooperation partner’s (if applicable) staff involved in the implementation of the project, describing necessary professional qualification requirements, competencies, experience and fitness for the fulfilment of anticipated duties and provides a justification, why it is planned to attract the respective staff to ensure the implementation of the specific actions planned within the scope of the project; 3. about experts (for example, foreign experts, experts with experience and competence in the development of study programmes, experts from professional industry organisations; technology experts, representatives of employers), who are planned to be involved for the implementation of the activities planned within the scope of the project and provides an explanation (including a description of their specific competencies, knowledge and skills) for their attraction to ensure the implementation of specific activities planned within the scope of the project.   The project application describes the contribution of the project applicant and the cooperation partner (if applicable) and their responsibility in the implementation of the activities planned within the scope of the project according to their specialisation, experience, skills and know-how. Planned activities of the project applicant and the cooperation partner (if applicable) are complementing and their overlapping or redundancy is prevented.  The project application describes the breakdown of activities of the project management and project implementation staff involved in the implementation of the project specifying information about the breakdown of duties, tasks and responsibilities of the staff involved in management and implementation of the project of the project applicant and the cooperation partner (if applicable) according to their competencies, planned activities planned within the scope of the project and contribution to the implementation of the objectives defined in the project application.  The project application accurately describes and justifies the organisational structure of management of the project applicant and the cooperation partner (if applicable), the decision making and the conflict resolution procedure, including specifies, who takes decisions in certain matters, for example, in process management, distribution of the flow of funding, etc. to ensure the implementation of the actions and the achievement of the objectives set in the project application.  The project application justifies, why this particular organizational structure and mechanism of decision making process comply with the complexity and scope of the project. |
| 3.4.2. | The project implementation staff (incl. that of the cooperation partner) have appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and management support to successfully implement all the activities planned within the project and achieve the set objective; |
| 3.4.3. | An appropriate and varied range of experts has been attracted to project implementation to enable use of their diverse experiences, specialisation (foreign experts, technology experts, industry representatives etc.); |
| 3.4.4. | Roles and responsibilities of the staff involved in the project implementation are clear and appropriate and affirm the commitment or motivation of all actors involved to actively participate in conformity with their competences and tasks set by the project; |
| 3.4.5. | The project envisages an efficient cooperation mechanism between all actors involved to ensure effective (qualitative, operative) coordination, decision-making and communication. |
| If the evaluation is below 3 points, the project application is rejected. | | | | |
| * 1. **Project impact and dissemination of the results** | | | | |
| 3.5.1. | The project will have a significant impact on the capacities of participating organisations (in particular, higher education institutions) and their development and modernisation in order to make them available to society as a whole and to the labour market, and to support their international cooperation capacities at local, regional, national or international level. | **0 – 5**  *(Evaluation unit – 0.5 points)* | Must score at least  **3** points | The project application provides information on the changes and benefits, which the implementation of the specific project will introduce in the project applicant’s and the cooperation partner’s institution (if applicable) during the implementation of the project and after its completion (during the implementation of new study programmes), as well as provides information on the potential effect of the project in the field of higher education at local, regional, national or European level and the society in general.The project application describes the impact of the project on the development of the quality of higher education to foster research-based studies, modern study content corresponding to the labour market and public needs and development trends, the development of locally rooted and globally thinking and related human resources, as well as the availability of qualitative higher education.  A communication and publicity plan has been developed that the project applicant and the cooperation partner (if applicable) will ensure the distribution of the results created within the framework of the project in the project applicant’s and the cooperation partner’s (if applicable) institution, as well as to other stakeholders, which, inter alia, describes anticipated target audience reaching, involvement and awareness measures (during the implementation of the project and after the completion of the project), using specifically indicated communication channels, which are the most appropriate for the respective target audience (for example, informative booklets, interviews on radio/TV, conferences, seminars, social media, lectures, participation in international exhibitions, lectures and other measures).  The project application describes how the materials and documents prepared within the framework of the project will be made freely available through open licences[[12]](#footnote-13) to stakeholders (for example, to project applicant’s academic staff and students, academic staff and students of other HEIs, representatives of scientific institutions, school teachers and other interested persons).  If any restrictions for the dissemination and free access of information are envisaged, they should be stipulated in the project application. These restrictions should be proportionate and cannot have a serious effect on the dissemination of results.  The project application should describe sustainability of the activities and results performed within the scope of the project after the completion of the project.  *Types of sustainability can be:*   * *Institutional sustainability means human resources available to the project implementer in order to continue the initiated project activities after the completion of the project. The project applicant shows that the structures established within the framework of the project, attracted employees, trained specialists or other project results will be maintained after the completion of the project. A description is provided, who and in what way will inherit project results and acquired experience/ knowledge;* * *Financial sustainability means financial resources available to the project implementer in order to continue project activities after the completion of the project. If the project applicant has no such resources, then it provides an explanation based on its previous experience regarding the attraction of such resources from other financial sources.*   The project application provides information whether and how cooperation with the project cooperation partner (if applicable), with the parties involved in the strategic partnership (scientific institutions, student organisations, leading industry associations) will continue after the completion of implementation of the project. |
| 3.5.2. | The project will have an impact outside the participating organisations at a local, regional, national or international level. It envisages appropriate measures to monitor progress and evaluate the expected (short- and long-term) impact. |
| 3.5.3. | The project envisages a clear and efficient plan for dissemination of results and includes appropriate measures, tools and channels to ensure efficient dissemination of results and outputs among stakeholders, both during and after project implementation. |
| 3.5.4. | The project includes appropriate measures and resources to ensure sustainability of its results and outputs after the completion. |
| If the evaluation is below 3 points, the project application is rejected. | | | | |
| 3.6. | The HEI has **previous experience** of development and implementation of joint programmes with a foreign HEI. | **1** | The criterion gives additional point | The project should receive **1 point**, if the HEI has previous experience of development and implementation of at least 1 joint study programme with a foreign HEI. The project applicant indicates in the project application the title and the code of the joint study programme, foreign HEI involved in the development and implementation of the study programme, and the source of funding, with support of which the study programme has been developed and is implemented.  The project should receive **0 points**, if the HEI has no previous experience of development and implementation of a joint study programme with a foreign HEI. |
| 3.7. | It is planned to attract Latvian nationals having a degree from foreign higher education institutions and no previous employment relationship with the relevant HEI as academic staff (in the main job) for the implementation of the newly developed study programmes. | **1** | The criterion gives additional point | The project should receive **1 point**, if it is planned to attract at least 1 Latvian national having a degree from a foreign higher education institution and no previous employment relationship with the relevant HEI as academic staff (in the main job) for the implementation of the newly developed study programmes.  The project should receive **0 points**, if it is not planned to attract at least 1 Latvian national having a degree from a foreign higher education institution, or a Latvian national having a degree from a foreign higher education institution has a previous employment relationship with the relevant HEI as academic staff (in the main job) for the implementation of the newly developed study programmes.  *Note*: The Latvian national, who obtained a degree in a foreign higher education institution and was not in an employment relationship with the relevant HEI, should be employed at the HEI as academic staff at the time of commencement of the implementation of a new study programme. |
| 3.8. | The project applicant has concluded an agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science on good practice of attracting foreign students and delivering studies. | **2** | The criterion gives additional point | The project should receive **2 points**, if the project applicant has concluded an agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science on good practice of attracting foreign students and delivering studies.  The project should receive **0 points**, if the project applicant has **not** concluded an agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science on good practice of attracting foreign students and delivering studies. |
| 3.9. | The activities planned within the project promote compliance with the horizontal principle of “Equal opportunities” (gender equality, disability, age and ethnicity). | **0–1** | The criterion gives additional point | The project should receive **1 point**, ifthe activities planned within the project promote compliance with the horizontal principle of “Equal opportunities”.  The project should receive **0 points**, ifthe activities planned within the project do not promote compliance with the horizontal principle of “Equal opportunities”. |
| 3.9.1. | The activities planned within the project do not promote compliance with the horizontal principle of “Equal opportunities”; | **0** |
| 3.9.2. | The activities planned within the project promote compliance with the horizontal principle of “Equal opportunities”. | **1** |

Notes:

R – Criterion not to be updated, in case of discrepancy of the criterion, the cooperation authority shall decide on rejection of the project application;

A – Criterion to be updated, if the criterion is not met, the cooperation authority takes a decision on the approval of the project application provided that if the project applicant ensures complete compliance with the criterion during the time and according to the procedure defined in the decision.

For the assessment of quality criteria 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, the expert applies the following evaluation approach:

**0 points** — The application fails to address the respective criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information (unless a “manifest clerical error has occurred”);

**1 point**— Weak: the criterion is not sufficiently addressed, or there are serious deficiencies in the application;

**2 points** – Fair: the application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are some significant shortcomings;

**3 points** – Good: the application addresses the criterion well, but there is still a number of shortcomings;

**4 points** – Very good: the application addresses the criterion very well, but there is still a small number of shortcomings;

**5 points** – Excellent: the application successfully meets all the relevant aspects of the criterion; if there are shortcomings, they are minor.

Based on the expert evaluation form, the expert justifies the number of points awarded.

Annex 1. “RIS3 priorities and their explanations”

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RIS3 growth priority** | **Explanatory problem of the priority and the proposed solution** |
| ***1st priority:***  More efficient use of primary products for the manufacture of products of higher added value, development of new materials and technologies, as well as diversification of their application. More extensive use of non-technological innovations and the potential of the Latvian creative industry for the production of goods and services with a higher added value in the economic sectors. | The current Latvian economy structure is based on the traditional industries which competitiveness is based on the use of natural advantages – cheap labour and available natural resources. Although in a medium-term, the traditional sectors of the economy will give a major contribution to the overall economic growth and job creation, it must be taken into account that cheap labour and access to resources do not create incentives for change of business model and creation of other competitive advantages. Hence, in order to facilitate economy transformation, it is necessary to promote structural changes in favour of production of goods and services with higher added value. For example, one of the added value multipliers are innovations which general development and promotion of application play an important role. An important opportunity for development is the use of smart and flexible technologies and approaches in manufacturing, energetics, health care, public management, etc.  *The specialization areas “Knowledge-intensive bio-economics”, “Knowledge-intensive health (including bio-medicine, medicine technologies, bio-pharmacy and bio-technologies” and “Smart materials, technologies and engineering sciences” and “Information and communication technologies” correspond to this priority.* |
| ***2nd priority:***  Constant search for new products/services that requires establishing an efficient identification system that could find and provide support for the development of new products within the framework of the existing sectors and cross-sector areas, as well as forming new sectors with a high growth potential. | Sustainable development of the Latvian economy requires diversification of the manufacturing industry and export-capable service sectors, thus facilitating a more rapid development of the medium-high and high-technology industries, as well as knowledge-based industries. This direction includes, for example, such high added value sectors as pharmacy, biotechnology, electronics, apparatus construction, and health tourism, as well as the emerging areas of knowledge in these and other sectors.  *The specialization areas “Smart materials, technologies and engineering sciences” and “Knowledge-intensive health” and “Information and communication technologies” correspond to this priority.* |
| ***3rd priority:***  An increase in energy efficiency, including the development of new materials, optimization of production processes, introduction of technological innovations, use of alternative energy resources, and other solutions. | Low level of energy efficiency creates risks of energetic security and resource sustainability, as well as competitiveness. Raising the level of energy efficiency in the economy with the help of innovative solutions is a sustainable and cost effective way to reduce risks, at the same time creating additional jobs and promoting economic growth.  In Latvia, there is a high economy energy intensity level (energy consumption against GDP in kilograms of oil equivalent per thousand of euros). In 2011, the energy intensity level was 323.3 kg of oil equivalent per thousand Euro or 2.2 times above the EU average.  For the implementation of the strategy Latvian National Reform Programme “EU 2020” determines the national target to achieve primary energy savings of 0.670 Mtoe in 2020, but the commitments on the energy performance determined by the Directive 2012/27/EU of the minimum annual of the final energy savings of 1.5% correspond to 0.213 Mtoe in 2020.  *The specialization areas “Smart materials, technologies and engineering sciences”, “Smart energy” and “Information and communication technologies” correspond to this priority.* |
| ***4th priority:***  A modern ICT system in the private and public sector that meets today’s requirements. | The new opportunities and solutions of the ICT sector should contribute more to the development of other sectors, significantly increasing their work efficiency. For the implementation of the strategy the Latvian National Reform Programme “EU 2020” as one of the sub-measures of reform directions mentions the need to increase the development of information and communication solutions (ICT) and the introduction of the digital single market, thus contributing to the economic growth, which is linked to the need to ensure the growing demand for more efficient solutions of business process management and analysis. In addition, equal access to electronic communications across the whole territory of Latvia will raise the ICT contribution to the growth and innovation of all the economy sectors. ICT development is closely linked to the use of smart and flexible approaches in industry.  Opening the data held by the Public Administration includes an untapped economic and social potential. When making the data public, they can be used in creation of new products and services, as well as innovation in the scientific and research work. An open, secure and interoperable public data infrastructure is one of the key solutions to boost the country's economic growth.  Information Society Development Guidelines for 2014-2020 identify the priorities for ICT sector in Latvia that have been developed in the light of the priorities determined by the Digital Agenda for Europe and the objectives set by the European Commission for development of the Digital Single Market: ICT education and e-skills development, widely accessible Internet, a modern and efficient public administration, development of e-services and digital content, cross-border cooperation in the development of the digital single market, as well as the ICT research and innovation, trust and security promotion.  The ICT sector contribution should be encouraged by creating digital content resources and ensuring accessibility to creation of new products and services, respectively the digital content base needs to be developed and the collaboration of ICT and other industries (language technology development, cultural and educational content digitization, etc.) needs to be promoted.  *The specialization area “Information and communication technologies” corresponds to this priority.* |
| ***5th priority:***  A modern education system that meets the requirements of the future labour market and facilitates the transformation of the economy and the development of competencies, entrepreneurial ability and creativity needed for the implementation of the RIS3 priorities at all levels of education. | In the medium and long term, the Latvian economy will face lack of a professional and highly qualified workforce (mostly with college or higher education level), as well as with the low public absorption capacity and lack of modern competence in general. The main challenges that we will face in the future are insufficient number of qualified specialists, mainly in the fields of nature sciences and engineering (in both secondary and higher education levels), and lack of highly qualified specialists with skills necessary for future – technical expertise combined with the creative, entrepreneurial and problem solving competences. In order to build absorption capacity of Latvia, it is necessary to develop the ability of identifying and understanding the knowledge and competencies existing in the global knowledge space and using them for economic development. It is necessary to develop network structures that ensure independent connections between the global and the local. It is necessary to develop such education in institutions of higher education that:   1. Is based on the understanding of modern education and ensures development of modern competencies, including problem solving, processing and use of data, identification and use of possibilities, technical innovation and skills necessary for high-value-added professions; 2. Ensures acquisition and distribution of global knowledge necessary for smart specialization areas, in particular, by developing a sustainable acquisition and distribution system – including the creation of new companies and study specialization that meets the needs of specific companies, as well as creation of cooperation networks at the individual and organization level; 3. Ensures dealing with the social problems related to the development of specialization areas, building the analytical and absorption capacity of the society through permanent supply of proactive knowledge and skills to a variety of public groups and organizations; 4. Develops and strengthens the value of active creativity and innovation. |
| ***6th priority:***  A developed knowledge base and human capital in the areas of knowledge, where Latvia has comparative advantages and that are significant for the process of transformation of the economy: areas of knowledge related to the development needs of knowledge-intensive bio-economics, knowledge-intensive health (including pharmacy, biomedicine and translational medicine), smart energetics and ICT areas, and the key technology areas identified by the EC (nanotechnologies, micro- and nanoelectronics, photonics, advanced materials, production systems, and biotechnologies). | The capacity of science and research in different areas of knowledge in Latvia is heterogeneous. The international scientific assessment showed that there is some level of capacity in all branches of science in Latvia, as well as some excellences. At the same time, both the knowledge base and the human capital (researchers, engineers and their cooperation networks) are depleted or insufficient for achieving the established development objectives. In some branches of science, such as mathematics, the situation is critical. This is evidenced by the small number of people employed in science (aging of scientists, insufficient number of doctoral students) as well as the absence of connections with the industry and other research institutions. Therefore, it is necessary to invest in the maintenance and development of the knowledge base and the human capital. Research and absorption capacity of Latvian companies, as well as their involvement in knowledge networks relevant to the strategic specialization have to be increased significantly. |
| ***7th priority:***  Identification and specialization of the existing resources of the territories, proposing the possibilities and directions of potential economic development, including the leading and prospective business directions in municipal territories. | At the moment, what can be observed in Latvia is a monocentric development that causes peripheral and unfavourable environment for business operations in the regions, promotes territorial depopulation and inefficient use of the Latvian resources. If the monocentric development continues, competitiveness will decrease, because the labour and infrastructure costs in the monocentre will increase, but other growth opportunities in regions will not be used. The significantly different economic activity, accessibility and availability of services create diverse standards for the quality of life and development opportunities for territorial residents, as well as contribute their migration to more developed areas, which further reduces the growth opportunities for less developed areas.  For sustainable development of Latvia it is very important to advance more rapid development in the entire territory of the country, as well as to increase competitiveness. It is necessary to look for new ways of regional development, including the use of the advantages that are provided by network structure organizations and remote cooperation by using the available and developing new networking platforms. It is also essential to use the opportunities provided by the collaboration networks, which connect Latvia with other European and world countries. |

1. Compliance of the project applicant’s legal status is assessed under the criterion [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Weight of the criteria:

   3.1. Contribution of the project to the performance of monitoring indicators — **30%**;

   3.2. Relevance of the project — **20%**;

   3.3. Quality of project design and implementation — **20%**;

   3.4. Quality of the project implementation team and the cooperation arrangements — **10%**;

   3.5. Project impact and dissemination of the results — **10%;**

   3.6. The HEI has previous experience of development and implementation of joint programmes with a foreign HEI — **2.5%**

   3.7. The plans are to attract as academic staff (in the main job) for the implementation of the new study programmes Latvian nationals having a degree from foreign higher education institutions and no previous employment relationship with the relevant HEI – **2.5%;**

   3.8.The project applicant has concluded an agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science on good practice of attracting foreign students and ensuring of their studies — 2.**5%**.

   3.9. The activities envisaged within the project promote compliance with the horizontal principle of “Equal opportunities” (gender equality, disability, age and ethnicity) — 2.**5%**. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Applies to higher education institutions implementing 12 or more study programmes (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Applies to higher education institutions implementing 11 or less study programmes (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Applies to higher education institutions implementing 12 or more study programmes (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Applies to higher education institutions implementing 11 or less study programmes (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Applies to higher education institutions implementing 12 or more study programmes (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Applies to higher education institutions implementing 11 or less study programmes (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Applies to higher education institutions implementing 12 or more study programmes (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Applies to higher education institutions implementing 11 or less study programmes (excluding study programmes in the study direction “Education, Pedagogics and Sport”, which will be specified in round 1 of SO 8.2.1) [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Open data licences are the so-called free licences, which enable the use of the content without asking for an additional permit, because the permit has already been provided in the licence conditions.

    Open data are machine readable data in an open format with such a licence, which enables their repeated use. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)