

Marco Polo II Programme - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Version as of October 2011. Applicable as of Call for proposals 2011

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1. About the programme

a) What is the Marco Polo programme?

Marco Polo is the European Union's funding programme for projects which shift freight transport from the road to sea, rail and inland waterways. This means fewer trucks on the road and thus less congestion, less pollution, and more reliable and efficient transport of goods. The current, second Marco Polo programme runs from 2007-13 and is a continuation of the first Marco Polo programme, which ran from 2003-2006.

b) What type of projects can be supported by Marco Polo II?

Only projects concerning freight transport services may be supported by the Marco Polo programme. Infrastructure projects, research or study projects are not eligible for support. However, also mixed passenger-freight services and RoRo Ferries services may be proposed, but the support would then only be given to the freight part.

c) What is the history of the Marco Polo I and II programmes?

4 February 2002:	Commission's Proposal for the Marco Polo I programme
22 July 2003:	Adoption of the Marco Polo I programme
2 August 2003:	Publication of the Marco Polo I programme in the Official Journal of the EC (O.J. (2003) L 196/1)
3 August 2003:	Marco Polo I Programme enters into force
14 July 2004:	Commission's Proposal for the Marco Polo II programme
24 October 2006:	Adoption of the Marco Polo II programme
24 November 2006:	Publication of the Marco Polo II programme in the Official Journal of the EC (O.J. (2006) L 328/1)
31 December 2006:	Marco Polo I programme comes to an end
1 January 2007:	Start of the Marco Polo II programme
9 October 2009:	Publication of the revision of the Marco Polo II Regulation (O.J. (2009) L266/1)



d) In what aspects does the Marco Polo II programme differ from its predecessor Marco Polo I?

- 1) **Wider geographical scope:** Marco Polo II introduces the possibility for all "*close third countries*" to participate fully to the Marco Polo II programme on the basis of supplementary agreements. This means that all commercial undertakings established in third countries having "*a common border with the European Union or with a coastline on a closed or semi-closed sea neighbouring the European Union*" could potentially participate in a project to be granted by Marco Polo II, but it is to be noticed that the costs incurred are not eligible for funding. No funding can be given to third countries not fully participating to the Marco Polo II programme and costs incurred on the territory of such third countries are not eligible for funding. Agreements have been concluded between EFTA/EEA countries (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) and they are fully participating in the Marco Polo II programme. Croatia is fully participating in Marco Polo II as of the Call for proposals in 2009.
- 2) **New Action Types (Motorways of the sea and Traffic avoidance actions):** In addition to the Modal shift, Catalyst and the Common learning actions, Marco Polo II introduces two new action types: Motorways of the sea action and the Traffic avoidance action.
- 3) **Modifications in the funding rules of the Modal shift- and the Catalyst action:** For Modal shift actions, the funding intensity increased from 30% to 35%. For Catalyst actions, the maximum duration of a grant agreement increased from four to five years.
- 4) **Increased budget:** While Marco Polo I had a budget of € 102 million, Marco Polo II has a budget of € 450 million (taking into account the price inflation).
- 5) **Extended duration:** Marco Polo I lasted from 1 January 2003 to 31 December 2006. Marco Polo II has a timeframe of 7 years, from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2013.
- 6) **Special attention to sensitive and metropolitan areas:** The Marco Polo II Regulation stipulates that "*special attention should also be paid to sensitive and metropolitan areas within the geographic scope of the Programme when allocating funding*". As a consequence, extra points for the qualitative environmental & social benefits may be given in the evaluations for proposals addressing this point.
- 7) **Co-ordinated projects for Modal shift, Catalyst and Common learning actions are allowed:** Marco Polo II introduces the possibility to coordinate several small projects for certain action types in order to meet the thresholds (for example, the threshold of 60 million tkm (tonne-kilometre) on average per year in modal shift actions). This only applies to Catalyst actions, Modal shift actions and Common learning actions.
- 8) **Eligible applicants: submission by a single undertaking of a EU Member State:** Marco Polo II gives the possibility for a project to have only one single partner. However, this partner will have to be established in an EU Member State.



9) **Vehicle-km in Traffic avoidance actions:** Marco Polo I only considered the concept of tonnes and tkm. The adoption of these measurement units did not allow taking into account empty containers when calculating the modal shift. For Traffic avoidance actions, Marco Polo II introduces the possibility to use vkm (vehicle-kilometre) for the calculation of the minimum average threshold of traffic avoidance for this type of action. The definition of vkm is the following: "Movement of a truck, loaded or empty, over a distance of 1 km".

e) **What are the consequences of the revision of the Marco Polo II Regulation?**
On 9 October 2009 Regulation 923/2009 amending the Marco Polo II Regulation (Regulation 1692/2006) was published in the Official Journal. The main aim of this revision is to increase the effectiveness of the Marco Polo II programme. Four kinds of amendments are introduced:

- measures to facilitate participation by small enterprises;
- measures lowering the tonne-kilometre thresholds for eligibility;
- raising funding intensity;
- simplification of the Programmes procedures.

The Regulation can be found on our website (<http://ec.europa.eu/marcopolo>).

f) **Who manages the Marco Polo II programme?**

Originally the Marco Polo I (2003-2006) and II (2007-2013) programmes were managed by DG Energy and Transport of the European Commission. Since 1 March 2008, the Marco Polo programme management task has been transferred officially from DG Energy & Transport to the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI). EACI was established by a Commission decision, inter alia, in order to manage the Marco Polo I and II programmes. The Commission decision setting up the EACI is based on the Council Regulation defining the status of Executive Agencies. This legal framework confers to Executive Agencies their own particular legal statute. Executive Agencies are Community bodies governed by Community law which have the legal personality and enjoy consequently full legal capacity to engage in legal transactions and to manage a Community programme such as Marco Polo, including the implementation of appropriation entered in the Community budget.

g) **How can I request specific information about the Marco Polo II Programme**

In order to keep response times short, please always look first at our website [<http://ec.europa.eu/marcopolo>] before sending a specific request:

Via the Marco Polo Mailbox eaci-marco-polo-helpdesk@ec.europa.eu

Via the Helpdesk Line +32 2 29 50924

Via Fax +32 2 29 79506



2. Who can participate?

a) May projects carried out by a single commercial undertaking receive support?

Yes, both single undertakings as well as consortia may receive support. However, in all cases, there is a minimum requirement of having at least one EU partner involved. For applications made by a single undertaking, the undertaking needs to be established in an EU member State and for consortia, at least one undertaking needs to be established in an EU Member State. Undertakings from "Close third countries" (see below in "b") can never be lead partners, only associated partners.

The project partners must be established commercial legal entities. They can be privately or publicly owned commercial undertakings. The commercial undertakings involved in a consortium can be linked or subsidiaries, so that undertaking A controls more than 50% of undertaking B.

b) Which countries may participate in the Marco Polo II programme?

Firstly, there is a differentiation between "participation" and "being eligible for funding" (the latter also often referred to as "full participation"):

From day one of the programme undertakings from EU Member States and "*close third countries*", such as all Candidate States, EFTA Countries as well as others due to their geographical proximity are eligible to participate in Marco Polo projects (definition of "*close third countries*" see call text, appendix 1).

However, only costs and modal shift/traffic avoidance arising on the territories of EU Member States or fully participating countries (i.e. countries which have concluded Special Agreements (e.g. Memorandum of Understanding) with the EU) are eligible for Marco Polo funding (see also question on "*Candidate States*" and "*close third countries*").

The practical consequence for calculating the lengths of the transport routes is that only route sections going through fully participating countries which are eligible for funding are to be used. This is important when calculating the tonne-kms figure (modal shift volume), but also to estimate the environmental benefit of the modal shift realised by the freight transport service proposed in the project.

Currently the following countries are fully participating in the Marco Polo programme: **Liechtenstein**, **Iceland** and **Norway** (i.e. all EFTA/EEA countries excluding Switzerland). **Croatia** signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the European Commission which enables Croatian undertakings to take part in the programme as of the Call for proposals 2009. Please check the MARCO POLO website for the latest information [<http://ec.europa.eu/marcopolo>].



c) Can undertakings from Candidate Countries participate in the Marco Polo II programme?

Commercial undertakings from Candidate States, which are scheduled to be joining the EU in the years to come, are welcome to participate in the Marco Polo programme. However, according to financial arrangements required for a full participation of undertakings from these countries, the conclusion of a Special Agreement between the EC and the respective country is needed. Croatia recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the European Commission which enables Croatian undertakings to take part in the programme as of the Call 2009. Please check the MARCO POLO website for the latest information. [<http://ec.europa.eu/marcopolo>].

Nevertheless, the participation of undertakings from other Candidate States is possible without such a special agreement. However, project costs arising on the territory of these Candidate States are neither eligible for funding under Marco Polo, nor can the environmental benefits or modal shift/traffic avoidance generated on their territory contribute to the project key figures. Undertakings from third countries not fully participating in the Marco Polo II programme cannot be lead partners of a project; they therefore need to be part of a wider consortium, headed by an undertaking from an EU Member State or a fully participating country.

d) Which close third countries have concluded special agreements with the EU for full participation in the Marco Polo II programme?

Croatia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway. Costs and modal shift/traffic avoidance arising on the territories of these fully participating countries are eligible for EC financial support under Marco Polo.

e) Can administrations participate in Marco Polo II projects?

No, only commercial undertakings are eligible to participate. However, administrations may be up to 100% owners of a participating commercial undertaking.

f) Can associations participate in Marco Polo II projects?

Yes, they can as long as they are a separate legal entity and they have a VAT number or a commercial registration number.

g) Can airports participate as partners?

Yes, they can if the objective of the project is in line with the programme objectives, e.g. moving freight off the road. An airport can for example be an origin or destination in a transport chain being realised within the programme (with the exception of airborne parts).



h) Which ports are eligible for funding under the Marco Polo action Motorways of the sea?

The eligibility criteria for Motorways of the sea actions foresee that only "category A" ports (i.e. ports with a total annual traffic volume of not less than 1.5 million tonnes of freight or 200,000 passengers) may apply for funding. This is in conformity with the revised Marco Polo II Regulation (Article 5): "within the European Union such actions shall be consistent with the features of the Motorways of the Sea priority project defined in the framework of Decision No 1692/96 EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 1996 on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network." Category A ports" are defined in Article 12(2) of the said Decision.

3. Funding and eligible costs

a) Are national routes eligible?

No, based on the subsidiarity principle, the Marco Polo II Regulation can only support projects with international routes. However, it is sufficient that the modal shift/traffic avoidance takes place on the territory of one country only, as long as it is the territory of an EU Member State or a fully participating country. (On the condition that the complete transport chain of the freight concerned involves the territory of more than one country, one of them being EU or fully participating). Additionally, it is important to note that no circumvention of the eligibility criteria, by artificially designing the route, is allowed. For example, by suggesting that the freight transport route is international while the route as proposed is not realistic (i.e. a national old route is in reality more efficient).

b) Is air transport included?

No, air transport is not covered by Marco Polo because this mode of transport is not deemed to provide for less external costs than road transport. One of the main aims of Marco Polo is to reduce the amount of road traffic by using transport systems that are normally less damaging to the environment. Likewise, modal shift from air freight to rail or waterborne transport is not eligible in Marco Polo, only road freight shifted or avoided is covered.

c) Can the EC-subsidy be given in addition to other public funding?

The EC-subsidy may be given in addition to other public funding, as long as this does not constitute illegal state aid, and as long as the combined public subsidy does not surpass the maximum subsidy rate of eligible costs. This rate is action type dependent: 35% for Modal shift actions, Catalyst actions, Motorways of the sea actions and Traffic avoidance actions; and 50% for Common Learning actions. However, requesting a Marco Polo grant for eligible costs of an action already funded by another EC scheme is not permitted. Neither can a second EC-subsidy from another EC-scheme concerning eligible costs of an action funded under the Marco Polo Programme be granted (no double financing).



d) What about infrastructure?

Pure infrastructure projects are not eligible for funding under the Marco Polo programme. However, for all actions with the exception of Common Learning Actions, there is a possibility to include ancillary infrastructure costs as eligible costs, up to a maximum of 20% of the total eligible costs. Ancillary infrastructure is defined as *"the necessary infrastructure to achieve the goals of the actions, including freight-passenger installations"*.

e) Can profit-making activities be funded under Marco Polo?

No. Marco Polo can only support costs that the beneficiaries incurred while setting up and carrying out a loss-making service or its upgrade as described in their project proposals. Any cumulative profit resulting from the service has the consequence of reducing or cancelling the subvention accordingly.

f) Should a Marco Polo project demonstrate its viability in order to receive funding?

Yes, all actions except Common learning actions need to be viable. Generally, after the Marco Polo project period, the project must be in such a situation as to be economically viable and continue without the Marco Polo subvention.

g) Are the non eligible costs to be taken into account in the overall budget estimations?

Yes, they are. The overall profit/loss balance is to be assessed on the basis of all the costs - eligible and non eligible - in order to conclude on the possible profit or loss of the project. However, all costs (eligible and non-eligible) related to the action are to be taken into account.

h) How are the eligible costs taken into account in the case of maritime project route ending up in the territory of a non eligible country?

The operating costs of the vessel (crew, charter, fuel etc.) are taken into account up until the first port of the non-eligible third country. Costs occurring in the port of the non-eligible country (stevedoring, mooring, lashing etc.) are not eligible.



i) How are the eligible costs calculated in the case of a mixed freight-passenger service?

In case of a service that is transporting both freight and passengers, all costs related to the passenger service will have to be excluded from the budget. They will not even be considered as non-eligible costs because they are not related to the action (which is the transportation of freight). This applies to:

- **costs which are directly attributable to non-freight transport service** (for example, costs related to commissions paid on passenger bookings);
- **shared costs, which are not directly attributable to one type of transport (freight or non-freight/passengers)**. In this case, only the proportion of operational costs linked to the transportation of freight would be considered as cost of the action. The proportion of operational costs linked to the passenger service will have to be disclosed but then eliminated from the budget. To consider only the freight part of these shared costs, please follow this methodology:
 1. Take the freight revenue
 2. Divide by the total revenue (freight + non freight) to find a ratio
 3. Multiply the ratio by all shared costs to find the freight part of the eligible shared costs. This is the only part of the shared costs that you can consider in your budget.

The costs actually incurred during the action lifetime will have to be certified through a final financial audit, carried out at the end of the action. This audit will also establish the actual ratio of the freight revenues in comparison to total revenues (freight and non freight/passengers).

4. Type of projects and Modal Shift

a) What are the key guidelines for the different actions?

Modal Shift Actions:

- Aid to start-up services
- Robust, but not innovative: - just shift freight off road
- Subsidy of €2 per 500 tkm shifted
- at least 60 million tkm shifted on average per year per contract (13 million tkm per year on average for pure inland waterway projects and 30 million tkm per year on average for pure single wagon load projects)
- Subsidy rate up to 35% of eligible costs
- Ancillary infrastructure costs eligible up to 20% of total eligible costs
- Subsidy up to maximum 36 months and minimum 24 months funding period
- No unacceptable distortions of competition
- Viable after subsidy ends



Catalyst Actions:

- Overcome structural market barriers
- Highly innovative: *causing a real break through*
- at least 30 million tkm shifted on average per year per contract
- Subsidy rate up to 35% of eligible costs
- Ancillary infrastructure costs eligible up to 20% of total eligible costs
- Subsidy up to maximum 60 months funding period and minimum 36 months
- Dissemination of results
- No unacceptable distortions of competition
- Viable after subsidy ends

Common Learning Actions:

- Improve co-operation and sharing of know-how
- Mutual training: *coping with an increasingly complex transport and logistics market*
- Minimum subsidy threshold €250,000
- Subsidy rate up to 50% of eligible costs
- Subsidy up to 24 months funding period
- No unacceptable distortions of competition
- Dissemination of results

Motorways of the Sea Actions:

- Modal shift by introducing a door-to-door service of short sea shipping and other modes of transport
- Subsidy of €2 per 500 tkm shifted
- Subsidy rate up to 35% of eligible costs
- at least 200 million tkm shifted on average per year per contract
- Ancillary infrastructure costs eligible up to 20% of total eligible costs
- Subsidy up to maximum 60 months funding period and minimum 36 months
- Only projects relating to category A ports within the Trans-European Transport Network
- No unacceptable distortions of competition
- Viable after subsidy ends
- Dissemination of results



Traffic Avoidance Actions:

- Integrating transport into production logistics to avoid a large percentage of freight transport by road without adversely affecting production output or workforce
- Subsidy of €2 per 500 tkm shifted or € 2 per 25 vehicle-kilometres of road freight
- Subsidy rate up to 35% of eligible costs
- at least 80 million tkm or 4 million vkm avoided on average per year per contract
- Ancillary infrastructure costs eligible up to 20% of total eligible costs
- Subsidy up to maximum 60 months funding period and minimum 36 months
- No unacceptable distortions of competition
- Not adversely affecting production output or workforce
- Dissemination of results

b) Does the minimum threshold of 60 million tonne-kms for modal shift actions apply to the total duration of the contract?

No, the minimum threshold for modal shift actions refers **to an average** per year. The total modal shift threshold will be calculated over the duration of the contract, e.g. a two-year project will need to shift at least 120 million tkm and a three-year project will need to shift at least 180 million tkm. Please note that it is possible (for Modal shift, Catalyst and Common learning actions only) to coordinate several small projects to meet the threshold and that there is no yearly rate of implementation (meaning that the modal shift to be achieved can be spread unevenly over the contract period).

c) Why are there special conditions for inland waterway projects and for single wagon loads (SWL)?

Projects that shift goods from the roads to inland waterways have a specific threshold for modal shift projects. The reason for this is that experience with the Marco Polo programme has shown that the inland waterway transport sector had a difficult entry barrier with the high eligibility thresholds. Because of the fragmentation of this sector it is very difficult to put together a proposal which reaches the threshold for modal shift projects over the life of the projects. Therefore the thresholds for these projects were lowered in the revision of the Marco Polo II Regulation, to 13 million tkm per year for modal shift projects. However, this lower threshold only applies to modal shift projects that shift freight exclusively to inland waterways, not to modal shift projects that combine inland waterways with other modes of transport.

The Marco Polo work programme introduces a specific political priority and facilitation measures for SWL rail projects. In view of the emerging problem of decreasing support for SWL traffic in the market, for projects using SWL traffic only, the minimum modal shift threshold for Modal shift actions is lowered to an average of 30 million tkm per year.



Single Wagon Load Traffic is defined as "less-than-trainload rail traffic not using intermodal loading units" and furthermore it is characterised as follows:

Shipments in single wagons or groups of wagons, transported in at least 2 different trains or in a single train if the train picks up and sets out wagons during intermediate stops (changes composition).

d) Can tonnes-km be replaced by another unit in the case of light goods?

As an **alternative for light goods** the volume equivalent "freight tonnes" measured in m³ may be used by the applicant. This means, that **4 cubic metre-kilometre (m³km) shall be equivalent to 1 tonne-kilometre (tkm)**, and all calculations and key-figures throughout the proposal are to be presented in analogy to the tonne-kilometre case. The choice of basic unit m³km or tkm must be clearly specified by the applicant. However, please note that we cannot accept the use of the volumetric equivalent for empty containers. In this case, it is compulsory to use the tonne-kilometre (tkm) option. The reason being that the volumetric option is only to be used for light **goods** and cannot be used to artificially increase the modal shift for the transportation of empty containers (without any freight).

e) Can the weight of the transport unit be included when calculating the modal shift?

Yes, since the revision of the Marco Polo II Regulation on 09/10/2009, the weight of the transport unit could potentially be taken into account when calculating the modal shift. The definition of freight is now as follows: *"freight" means, for the purpose of the calculation of "tonne-kilometre" shifted off the road, the goods transported plus the intermodal transport unit plus the road vehicle, including empty intermodal transport units and empty road vehicles, if these are shifted off the road.*

Please note that the weight of the intermodal loading unit or the weight of the road vehicle can only be taken into account in case the intermodal loading unit or the road vehicle is also effectively loaded at the beginning and end of the new modally shifted route. Reference is made to the guidance document "Call 2010 and onwards - new definition of freight" (see "call documents 2011" on the Marco Polo website).

f) How are the modal shift and environmental/social benefits calculated for waterborne routes between a fully participating and a close third country?

If part of the new modally shifted route is a waterborne route between a fully participating country and a close third country, sea routes to non eligible third countries may be calculated until the first foreign port (for ex. Italy to Tunisia). This procedure applies for all sea routes to close third countries (e.g. Russia, Morocco or Turkey) but also for inland waterways where the river constitutes the border between a fully participating and a third country, e.g. the Danube between Romania and Serbia. Only the modal shift in the EU part/territory of a fully participating third country can be taken into account for the modal shift calculations and for the calculation of eligible costs.



g) Can empty vehicles (or loading units) be counted as freight to be shifted, e.g. on Ro-Ro vessels?

Yes. Since the revision of the Marco Polo II Regulation, the definition of freight has been revised and it now includes empty intermodal transport units and empty road vehicles, in case these are effectively shifted off the road and loaded and unloaded at the beginning and end of the new modally shifted route.

h) Is there any restriction on eligible modal shifts?

Yes, only modal shifts off the road towards short sea shipping, inland waterway and rail are eligible for Marco Polo support. This means that, for instance shifts between the above non-road modes are not eligible, e.g. modal shift from rail to inland waterway is not eligible for support.

i) How is the monitoring of the modal shift done? What proof of modal shift figures is to be delivered?

As of the Call 2009, project beneficiaries are requested to have or develop a tool where all the relevant data required for the modal shift calculation is registered. This tool, normally software-based, must be externally audited and certified by a recognised independent auditing and certifying entity. Modal shift of freight quantities registered by a system which is not audited and certified by an independent external auditor shall not be considered for the calculation of modal shift and respective subsidy.

j) Can the internal industrial re-organisation of a company changing the mode of transporting goods from road to another environmentally friendly mode of transport be considered as modal shift?

Yes, but only in certain cases. Let's take the example of an industrial manufacturer who submits a project consisting of a purely internal reorganisation, e.g. shifting internal distribution routes from road to rail. As such, the project would not generate any revenue and would therefore not be able to demonstrate the loss-making nature of the new service introduced. In order to be considered for funding, the proposal should instead include a cost analysis comparing the previous road service to the modally shifted one. Moreover, the proposal should show that during the project lifetime road transport would generate lower costs than the modally shifted line, but that by the end of the contract the latter service would be economically more advantageous and viable.

k) Can an upgrade of an existing service be eligible for Marco Polo support?

Yes, it is possible to propose a project involving an upgrade of an existing service. In this case, the proposal must make clear what the added value of the upgrade compared to the existing service is (e.g. a higher frequency, other origins/destinations, etc.). Also, only the additional modal shift generated by the upgrade and the additional costs of the upgrade can be taken into account, not the modal shift generated by the existing service or the costs of the existing service. The upgrade must have its start-up date in the timeframe mentioned in the Call text.



5. Call for proposals

a) When can I submit a proposal?

Project proposals may only be submitted when a call has been published and while it is open. The call will appear in the EC's Official Journal and on the Marco Polo homepage and will specify all details. Calls are published annually. Note that the content of calls is quite similar each year, but some details may change from year to year. For more up-to-date information, please visit our website [<http://ec.europa.eu/marcopolo>].

b) How many calls are foreseen under the Marco Polo II programme?

It is planned to launch a call for proposals annually at the beginning of each year. Marco Polo II runs until 31 December 2013, therefore the last call is foreseen for the 1st quarter of 2013.

c) What is the overall timeline of the 2011 Call for proposals? 2011 CALL indicative planning (subject to change)

- *(indicative budget about €56,9 million)*
- Beginning October 2011: Publication of 2011 call for proposals
- 16th January 2012: Closing date for submission of application
- Beginning of February 2012: Opening of applications
- Spring 2012: Estimated date for Report on Evaluation by Evaluation Committee
- Summer 2012: Estimated date of notification of applicants and start of contract negotiations
- End 2012: Estimated date for signature of EC subsidy contracts

d) Can I apply for more than one project in a single call?

Yes, but the different projects are to be submitted in separate proposals (in separate envelopes) to avoid confusion.

e) Will the call texts be available in all languages?

The publication of the announcement of a Call in the Official Journal of the EC will be published in all the official languages of the EU. The full Call text is only available in English. Since the recent EU enlargements, the availability of translation services is very restricted. Extensive translations would thus cause unacceptable delays for launching a Call.

f) Can applicants submit additional material to their proposal after the deadline of submission?

No! Since it is a competitive evaluation of proposals, such an addition would be unfair to the other applicants. Please therefore do not send us any additional documents after the deadline.



g) Is it possible to combine several projects in one application?

It is not allowed to mix several action types in one application; only submissions of one action type are allowed. However, for Modal shift - Catalyst- and Common learning actions, it is permitted to submit several coordinated projects if they all refer to the same action type. For example, several Modal Shift projects may be included in one Modal Shift action proposal in order to meet the minimum threshold of 60 million tkm of average modal shift per year in the project period.

h) What are the political priorities of Call 2011?

There are 3 political priorities of the Call 2011.

For these two types of projects, they would need to pass the eligibility, funding, and exclusion and selection criteria and meet the minimum thresholds of the different award criteria as applicable and announced in the 2011 Call. However, having met these conditions and criteria, they will be ranked higher than other projects not having a political priority even if their total score is lower.

These are:

1) SSS projects reducing polluting emissions of maritime transport (low sulphur fuels, LNG powered vessels etc.) only: maximum 10% of the Call budget.

For projects of low sulphur fuels, it is mandatory that sulphur limits of 0,1 % for SECAs and 0,5 % for other areas are respected at the time of submission of the proposal and during the entire lifetime of the Marco Polo contract period if the project is selected for funding. Not respecting this condition, would risk a termination of the Grant Agreement.

The SECA areas are defined by the I.M.O: Baltic Sea, North Sea and the English Channel.

2) Inland Waterway Transport only, maximum 10 % of the Call budget.

3) Single Wagon Load Traffic only - lower minimum modal shift threshold for Modal shift actions of 30 million tonne-kilometres per year.

i) What kind of evaluation procedure will apply to maritime proposals introduced in the Call 2011?

The unacceptable distortion of competition is of a major concern in particular in the maritime sector. Therefore all SSS-based Modal shift, Motorways of the Sea and Catalyst proposals will go through a reinforced evaluation procedure. A special expert group will be appointed to assess the eligibility criterion of "unacceptable distortions of competition" which will be in addition to the normal evaluation procedure. For maritime proposals, it means that the possible unacceptable distortion of competition will be assessed three times (twice in the external evaluation and then by the internal Evaluation Committee). It is therefore of outmost importance that the competition analysis is done exhaustively and truthfully.



- j) For the selection criterion **Financial Capacity of applicants**, it is mentioned that **"unconsolidated"** financial statements will have to be submitted. What does the **"unconsolidated"** mean?

The "unconsolidated" means a financial statement submitted by the individual undertaking (legal entity) applying for MP support and not the group to which it may belong (such as a holding company, or some other parent company). Only the individual financial statement of the legal entity applying as a project partner will be accepted. This means that if a daughter company applies for Marco Polo funding (without the mother company) and the daughter company has a separate legal entity from the mother company, the daughter company will have to submit its own financial statement and not the one of the mother company.

6. Additional Information

- a) Is it possible to have some feedback on a project idea in advance of a formal call for proposals?

Yes, the Marco Polo Helpdesk is open all year round to assist potential applicants. It can be reached:

Via the Marco Polo Mailbox eaci-marco-polo-helpdesk@ec.europa.eu

Via the Helpdesk Line +32 2 29 50924

Via Fax +32 2 29 79506

However, in order to efficiently discuss your project idea and to cope with demand, please use the information given at the Marco Polo website before contacting the Helpdesk for detailed discussions or asking for an appointment at our offices. Furthermore, there are a number of events (Marco Polo Info Days and Conferences) which offer you the opportunity to raise your questions and/or set up individual meetings with the Marco Polo team of the EACI to discuss all aspects related to your project. We can unfortunately not receive potential applicants in our premises during the timeframe of an open call for proposals.

