



**SICAP**

**Social Inclusion &  
Community Activation  
Programme**

# SICAP 2024-2028

## 2024 LCDC Mid Year Review Guidance

Version: 3

Date: 17/06/2024



**Rialtas na hÉireann**  
Government of Ireland



Arna chomhchistiú ag  
an Aontas Eorpach

Co-funded by the  
European Union



**pobal**

government supporting communities

The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is co-funded by the Irish Government, through the Department of Rural and Community Development, and the European Union through the European Social Fund Plus under the Employment, Inclusion, Skills and Training (EIST) Programme 2021 -2027.

## Overview

This guide sets out a standardised process for completing the mid year review to ensure a nationally consistent approach in the context of the newly commenced Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme 2024-2028 .

The continued funding of SICAP is subject to positive findings from a mid-year and annual performance review by the LCDC and the KPI targets being met. Two Financial and Monitoring (**Fin & Mon**) reports are submitted annually for each Annual Plan, at mid-year and end of year.

The SICAP mid-year performance review assesses your Programme Implementer's (PIs) performance at the mid-point of the year. It is an opportunity for each Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) to take stock of the performance of their PI in delivering SICAP in accordance with the 2024 Annual Plan, SICAP Programme Requirements and the Funding Agreement, prior to the end of year review. It is designed to serve as a catalyst for greater engagement between the LCDC and the PI and to be a supportive process in the lead up to the end of year review.

As a result of carrying out the mid-year review, LCDCs will have a good understanding of how their PI is performing and will be able to direct support where needed e.g. support meetings between the LCDC and PI. The review can also highlight areas of good practice and confirm that sufficient progress is being made and the performance of the PI has been satisfactory or greater. It would be highly recommended that the monitoring process is also used as a mechanism to give feedback on areas of the work that have progressed well.

IRIS hosts a SharePoint document storage site which allows users to upload documents as part of their planning and reporting requirements. Access is granted to designated users based on user role and Contract Area Boundaries (CABs)/ Lot(s).

This document sets out the process for undertaking the Mid-Year Review under the following headings:

- Purpose
- What to upload onto IRIS?
- Timeline for completing the Mid-Year Review
- The Mid-Year Checklist
- Completing the Mid-Year Review
- IRIS Data Checks
- Outcomes from the Mid-Year Review and Approval Steps

<b>Purpose</b>
----------------

- The LCDC is responsible for undertaking the mid-year review. The review allows the LCDC to assess the progress of PIs almost halfway through the year against what was set out in the SICAP annual plan and budget.
- It provides a snapshot of progress to date in achieving the actions and targets set out in the SICAP annual plan and budget for each CAB/Lot.
- It identifies any issues well in advance of the end of year performance review. (For example, if a particular action is not working, engaging with the PI to identify the steps that can be taken to address the slow progress).
- It provides a mechanism for PIs to report on and charge VAT costs to the programme.

### Documents to be uploaded onto IRIS

The LCDC reviews progress by assessing financial and non-financial information through the Fin & Mon report. As part of submitting the Fin & Mon report, the following documents are generated and uploaded onto IRIS by the PI:

- Lot Cost Charged Report (This report must be signed by the PI)
- Monitoring report
- Individual Target Group Report
- Action Progress Report

PIs can refer to *IRIS User Guide 1.4: How to Upload a Document* available under the IRIS User Guides Set up and Functionality section on the [SICAP webpage](#)

### Timeline for completing the Mid- Year Review

1. The PI uploads their Fin & Mon report on IRIS by **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024**
2. The LCDC reviews the Fin & Mon report and provide feedback to Pobal on any issues identified by **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024**.
3. Pobal will carry out a high-level review (to ensure compliance with the Programme Requirements) and provide feedback to the LCDCs by **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2024**.

The Pobal review will look at the following:

- Financial review to ensure the spend reported against administration and goal costs are in line with the % agreed in the 2024 annual plan
  - KPI 1 and KPI 2 achievement
  - Action level performance
  - PIs and LCDCs websites to establish to what extent they meet the SICAP EU Communication & Visibility Guidelines.
4. Fin & Mon reports should be formally approved by the LCDC by **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2024**.

### The Mid-Year Checklist

A checklist has been developed by Pobal to assist LCDCs in completing the mid-year review (see separate Checklist issued with this guidance). It contains a list of items which should be assessed as part of the mid-term review in the Fin & Mon report and additional information, which should be reviewed. Pobal recommends that LCDCs follow the checklist as it compiles in one place all the aspects to be reviewed and provides a space for LCDCs to set out any adjustments deemed necessary in order to fully deliver on the agreed action plan.

### Completing the Mid- Year Review

The key tool for completing your review is the Fin & Mon mid-year report on IRIS and this incorporates a review of financial and non-financial information. The Fin & Mon report on IRIS is currently undergoing testing and will go live **7<sup>th</sup> June 2024**. Pobal plan to deliver IRIS Fin & Mon training to PIs and LCDCs in advance of the submission date. IRIS training for PIs finance staff is planned to take place on-line on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024 from 2-3pm and for LCDCs support staff on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2024 from 11am -12noon.

As part of the mid –year reporting process, the following reports will be uploaded by the PI as PDF files to the Documents folder on the Annual Plan record:

- **Financial Information:**

Lot Cost Charged report (Signed by the PI)

- **Non-Financial Information:**

Monitoring Report

Individual Target Group Report

Action Progress report

Refer to the **IRIS User Guide 4.4: How to Review and Approve a Financial & Monitoring Report** which sets out the steps to view the reports (page 5) available under the IRIS User Guides Annual Plan and Financial Management section on the [SICAP webpage](#)

Please ensure that you are reviewing the reports for the period to the 31<sup>st</sup> May, ensuring that they are the reports provided and uploaded into IRIS by the PI up to the 18<sup>th</sup> June; **if you run the reports after this date additional payments and outputs may be included.**

### **Island Communities**

SICAP 2024-2028 acknowledges the specific challenges faced by islands residents, and by PIs implementing SICAP on the islands as Island residents are a named SICAP target group. There are three specific Island CABs/Lots (Galway, Mayo and West Cork). In addition, the Donegal Gaeltacht (33-2) is majority mainland but contains an offshore island community as a minority component of the CAB/Lot. Therefore, the PI is required to ring-fence a budget for SICAP delivery on the islands and this has been noted on the Action record as part of the annual planning process. For the mid-year report, the PI should outline the level of engagement, specific work focused on the island communities and detail the supports delivered to the island community, within the “Progress Update” section of the relevant action records on IRIS.

<b>Review of Financial Information</b>
--

Spending and any rationale for underspend is to be reviewed at this point and within the mid-year return process as it is important to work to maximise spend to ensure that funding is not lost to the CAB/Lot area by year end.

### **Reporting spend of the New Arrivals Budget**

When reviewing the Mid-Year Fin & Mon reports, (and End of Year Fin & Mon reports) please note that PIs are to input costs charged items under the ‘New Arrivals’ budget type on IRIS. This will facilitate tracking of the total costs charged against the New Arrivals budget allocation.

### **VAT**

VAT payments are to be recorded against the Annual Plan for the year in which the payment is made i.e. a VAT payment made in 2024 should be entered against the 2024 Annual Plan in IRIS. Therefore the recording of VAT payments in 2024 relating to 2023 annual plan should be reported in 2024.

- **Lot Cost Charged report:**

The Lot Cost Charged Report details costs charged to SICAP and comprises details of costs charged for administration/ direct salary items and Action costs.

The checks to be undertaken are as follows:

- SICAP and New Arrivals cost charged items have been entered separately
- The total amount reported as administration costs must not be in excess of 25% of the total budget for both the SICAP budget and New Arrivals budget separately, and proportionally (for the five-month period under review), should not be in excess of 10% -12.5% of the total budget, unless a reasonable rationale has been provided by the PI.
- It is recommended that each goal has a 40% to 60% split of the total action costs. The percentage split of goal costs presented in the annual plan should be adhered to as closely as possible by the PI. Where the split of goal spend varies by more than 10% from what is contained in the Annual Plan then this deviation needs to be presented to the LCDC and approved by them.
- Check % charged against the costs for both SICAP and New Arrivals and the variance to establish the proportion of spend to date. Note any significantly low or high level of spend for the 5 month period.
- Check that total grant amount reported does not exceed 7.5% of the total Action Costs % budget
- Check to ensure that the PI has confirmed that the amount of spend reported on Sub-contractors does not exceed 30% of the total annual budget amount
- Check that grant awarded to an individual has not exceeded the maximum eligible of €800 on a cumulative basis per annum. ([SICAP Grants dashboard](#) on IRIS)
- Check that the maximum total grant awarded to a Local Community Group (LCG) or Network is €2,500. ([SICAP Grants dashboard](#) on IRIS)
- Check that the grant awarded this year to an Enterprise Start Up or Social Enterprise have not exceeded the maximum eligible of €2,500 ([SICAP Grants dashboard](#) on IRIS)
- Have SICAP and New Arrivals payments been entered separately on IRIS?
- Have the VAT payments arising from the 2023 end of year financial and monitoring report been made and recorded in IRIS ?

Review of Non-Financial Information:
--------------------------------------

The main tools in reviewing CAB/Lot level performance of the PI are as follows:

- Achievement to date of the two KPIs
- Monitoring Report
- Individual Target Group Report
- Action Progress Report

**KPI achievements:**

Check to ensure that achievements (actuals) against KPI 1 (the number of Community Organisations) and KPI 2 (the number of individuals) are reasonable for the reporting period. As no mid-year targets are set, the expected achievement of targets by the end of May is 40%. It would also be useful to check the percentage of goal spend and see if this correlates with the targets achieved so far for KPI 1 and KPI 2. If actuals achieved are low, then a rationale should be sought from the PI and the PI must demonstrate how they will achieve targets fully by year-end.

**Monitoring Report:**

The Monitoring Report displays key performance information and allows for a centralised review of IRIS data. The range of information provided includes the following:

**KPI 1:**

- KPI 1 achievement to date, breakdown of types of Community Organisations (COs), newly registered COs, average (median) number of interventions;
- Percentage of CO interventions by support type, number of grants, total grant amount;
- Number and percentage of COs by Primary and Secondary target group.

**KPI 2:**

- KPI 2 achievement to date, newly registered individuals, average (median) number of interventions, percentage of Individuals with a Personal Plan and/or engaged with My Journey DTT;
- Percentage of Individual interventions by support type, number of grants, total grant amount;
- Individual progression outputs recorded (participation in a course, progression into employment/self-employment, volunteering / work placements and referrals);
- Breakdown disadvantaged areas (top 5) with highest number of individuals on caseload;
- Details of SICAP funded life-long learning course placements;
- Details of employment/self-employment progression;
- Details of volunteering / work placements and referrals.

**Non-caseload events:**

- Number of activities and attendees and breakdown by goal;
- Percentage of activities by support type and target group/focus area.

**Children & Family activities:**

- Number of activities and attendees;
- Percentage of activities by type and target group/focus area.

**Individual Target Group Report**

This report provides a breakdown of the individual caseload by target group.

- Number of individuals on the caseload;
- Number of individuals by target group;
- Percentage of individuals by target group;
- Local Priority target groups with number and percentage achieved and the targets set.

The LCDC should review both reports within the context of local performance and achievement to date, ensuring that the type of supports and targeting reflects local priority needs.

**Action Progress Report**

Non-financial information on progress to date within agreed actions can also be found in the action level progress section within each action of the annual plan. This section allows the PIs to provide a narrative update under each action outlining the level of achievement to date or explaining why no progress has been made at this stage. The Action Progress Report also provides the opportunity for

PIs to record detail on beneficiaries, progress on engagement with target groups/local priority target groups and support received that cannot be captured on IRIS. Note for Donegal Gaeltacht (33-2), the PI should outline detail of the supports delivered to the island community for actions with a ring-fenced budget.

**Please note that currently only PI users with finance access rights can update the ‘Mid-year update’ field on the Action record. This is temporary and a workaround is in place for the 2024 Mid-Year Review process. PIs can refer to *IRIS User Guide 4.3: How to Input & Submit a Financial & Monitoring Report* for further details on inputting the ‘Mid-year update’ narrative available under the IRIS User Guides Annual Plan and Financial Management section on the [SICAP webpage](#)**

### IRIS Data Checks

The following IRIS data checks will need to be carried out by the LCDC to ensure quality reporting on IRIS. The [Data Checks dashboard](#) on IRIS identifies data gaps and details of follow-up required. Please refer to *IRIS User Guide 1.5: How to View IRIS Reports and Dashboards* available under the IRIS User Guides Set up and Functionality section on the [SICAP webpage](#).

1. Check where **Personal Action Plans** or **My Journey (DTT)** have not been completed for individuals.
2. Check where **Support Plans** have not been completed for Community Organisations (LCGs, Social Enterprise and Networks).
3. Check to ensure that the PI is reporting **LLL course outcomes** for individuals who have completed a lifelong-learning course (e.g. completed or not completed).

### Outcomes from the Mid-Year Review and Approval Steps-

Following the review, the LCDC may:

1. Conclude that sufficient progress has been made and they are satisfied with the PI performance in delivering SICAP.
2. Conclude that performance has not been satisfactory and there has not been an acceptable level of progress, or in any other way is deemed to have fallen short on the annual plan. In this case, the LCDC can request a report from the PI setting out the reasons for performance issues and putting forward actions to address these. The LCDC and PI should enter into a process of engagement and the PI commit to making changes to how it is delivering SICAP. The purpose of this engagement is to identify where the concerns are in terms of meeting targets, the rationale for slow progress and budgets by year-end and to agree a plan of work that will ensure that these will be met. The LCDC may arrange ongoing meetings with the PI and/or request additional updates.

### Approval Steps

**Step 1:** Any issues identified as part of the review process must be communicated to the PI, with a timeline to address these issues. The LCDC must confirm with Pobal how the PI addressed items raised by Pobal. Once this is completed, Pobal will move the Fin & Mon report stage to **“Pobal Reviewed”** on IRIS.

**Step 2:** Assuming the LCDC is satisfied with the outcome of the Fin & Mon report and approves the Fin & Mon report, the LCDC should move it from “**Pobal Reviewed**” to “**LCDC Formally Approved**”. The deadline to have all Fin & Mon reports approved is **Friday 26th July 2024**.

**Step 3:** If the LCDC is not satisfied by the mid-year performance, they need to engage promptly with the PI and identify issues and agree actions to ensure the full delivery of the annual plan by year-end. In these circumstances, immediate engagement with Pobal and DRCD will be required.

### **Further Information**

If you would like further information, please contact your Pobal Co-ordinator.