

Interreg
*M*editerranean



EUROPEAN UNION



European Territorial Cooperation

INTERREG V – B MEDITERRANEAN (MED) COOPERATION PROGRAMME 2014 – 2020

N° 2014TC16M4TN001

Programme cofinancé par le Fonds Européen
de Développement Régional (FEDER)

Programme Cofinanced by the European Regional
Development Fund (ERDF)

CCI	2014TC16M4TN001
TITLE	INTERREG V – B MEDITERRANEAN (MED) COOPERATION PROGRAMME 2014-2020
VERSION	1.2
FIRST YEAR	2014
LAST YEAR	2020
ELIGIBLE FROM	JANUARY 1 ST , 2014
ELIGIBLE UNTIL	DECEMBER 31 ST , 2023
EC DECISION NUMBER	C(2015) 3576
EC DECISION DATE	JUNE 2 ND 2015
MS AMENDING DECISION NUMBER	
MS AMENDING DECISION DATE	
MS AMENDING DECISION ENTRY INTO FORCER DATE	

**NUTS REGIONS COVERED BY THE
COOPERATION PROGRAMME**

AL – ALBANIA
BA – BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
CY00 – Κύπρος (Kýpros)
EL11 – Ανατολική Μακεδονία, Θράκη (Anatoliki Makedonia, Thraki)
EL12 – Κεντρική Μακεδονία (Kentriki Makedonia)
EL13 – Δυτική Μακεδονία (Dytiki Makedonia)
EL14 – Θεσσαλία (Thessalia)
EL21 – Ήπειρος (Ipeiros)
EL22 – Ιόνια Νησιά (Ionia Nisia)
EL23 – Δυτική Ελλάδα (Dytiki Ellada)
EL24 – Στερεά Ελλάδα (Stereá Ellada)
EL25 – Πελοπόννησος (Peloponnisos)
EL30 – Αττική (Attiki)
EL41 – Βόρειο Αιγαίο (Voreio Aigaio)
EL42 – Νότιο Αιγαίο (Notio Aigaio)
EL43 – Κρήτη (Kriti)
ES24 – Aragón
ES51 – Cataluña
ES52 – Comunidad Valenciana
ES53 – Illes Balears
ES61 – Andalucía
ES62 – Región de Murcia
ES63 – Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta
ES64 – Ciudad Autónoma de Melilla
FR62 – Midi-Pyrénées
FR71 – Rhône-Alpes
FR81 – Languedoc-Roussillon
FR82 – Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur
FR83 – Corse
HR03 – Jadranska Hrvatska
HR04 – Kontinentalna Hrvatska
ITC1 – Piemonte
ITC2 – Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste
ITC3 – Liguria
ITC4 – Lombardia
ITF1 – Abruzzo
ITF2 – Molise
ITF3 – Campania
ITF4 – Puglia
ITF5 – Basilicata
ITF6 – Calabria
ITG1 – Sicilia
ITG2 – Sardegna
ITH3 – Veneto
ITH4 – Friuli-Venezia Giulia
ITH5 – Emilia-Romagna
ITI1 – Toscana
ITI2 – Umbria
ITI3 – Marche
ITI4 – Lazio
ME – MONTENEGRO
MT00 – Malta
PT15 – Algarve
PT17 – Lisboa
PT18 – Alentejo
SI01 – Vzhodna Slovenija
SI02 – Zahodna Slovenija
UKZZ – Extra-Regio NUTS 2

Acronyms

AA	Audit Authority
CA	Certifying Authority
CP	Cooperation Programme
CSG	Community Strategic Guidelines
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
GAV	Growth Added Value
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
JS	Joint Secretariat
MA	Managing Authority
NCP	National Contact Point
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SME	Small and Medium size Enterprises
SWOT (analysis)	Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

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Introduction

The MED transnational programme supports the sharing of experiences, knowledge, and the improvement of public policies between national, regional and local authorities and other territorial actors of the MED area eligible regions. The programme is bilingual (English and French).

It includes 57 regions from 10 different EU countries and 3 candidate countries.

The programme is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and its total budget is of € **224,322,525 million ERDF** for the 2014-2020 period.

Its main purpose is to contribute to the long term development of the Mediterranean area and to strengthen transnational cooperation between regions and participating countries.

This programme takes into consideration the experience of the 2007-2013 period, the results of the *in itinere* evaluation and the capitalisation of the overall programme achievements.

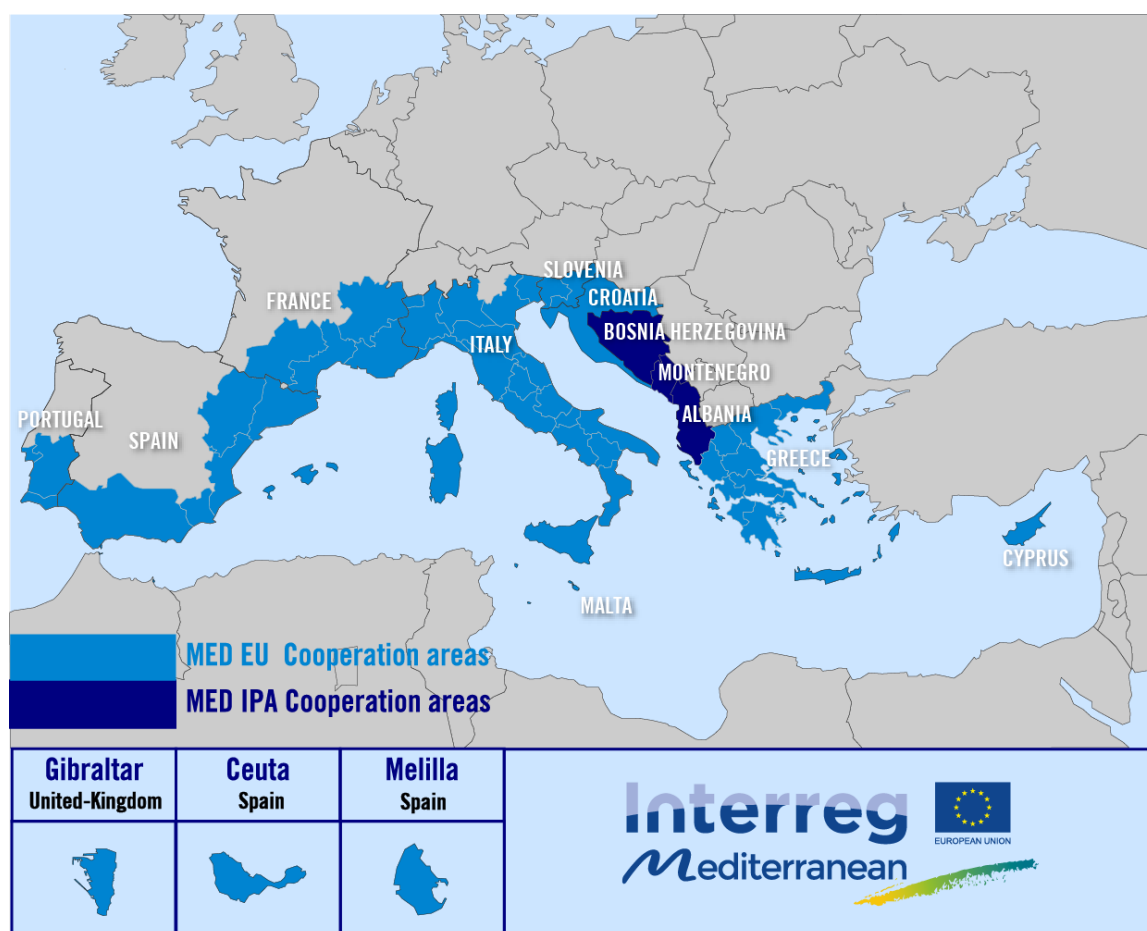
This first section of the cooperation programme provides an overview of the context of the programme in regards to the regulations, territorial and policy needs as well as challenges and lessons from the previous programming period. It presents the overall strategy and objectives of the programme.

Geographic coverage

Following the Commission's decision to draw up the list of eligible regions and areas for the transnational strands of the European territorial cooperation objective, the Med Programme covers the following areas:

a) The Member States:

- Cyprus: Entire country
- France: 5 regions : Corse, Languedoc-Roussillon, Midi-Pyrénées, Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur, Rhône-Alpes
- Greece : Entire country
- Italy : 19 regions : Abruzzo, Apulia, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Emilia-Romagna, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Lazio, Liguria, Lombardy, Marche, Molise, Piedmonte, Sardinia, Sicily, Tuscany, Umbria, Valle D'Aosta, Veneto.
- Malta: Entire country
- Portugal : 3 regions – Algarve, Alentejo, Area Metropolitana de Lisboa
- Slovenia: Entire country (Western and Eastern Slovenia)
- Spain: 6 autonomous regions – Andalusia, Aragon, Catalonia, Balearic islands, Murcia, Valencia – and 2 autonomous cities – Ceuta and Melilla
- United-Kingdom : 1 region of economic programming – Gibraltar
- Croatia : Entire country



b) The Partner States:

The programme has also invited Mediterranean candidates or potential candidate countries to the European Union to join the programme. These countries participate with the IPA European funds (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance). The eligible area thus includes the following IPA countries with their entire territory:

- Albania
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Montenegro

Moreover, according to Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, in the context of cooperation programmes and in duly justified cases, the Managing Authority may accept that whole or part of an operation is implemented outside the Union part of the programme area, provided that the conditions of Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 are satisfied.

The total amount allocated under the cooperation programme to operations located outside the Union part of the programme area shall not exceed 20 % of the support from the ERDF at programme level. The 20% threshold of ERDF will be applied at project level in order that each project can benefit of this measure.

SECTION 1

Strategy for the cooperation programme's contribution to the union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and the achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion

Reference: Article 27 (1) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹ and point (a) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council (2)

1.1 Strategy for the cooperation programme's contribution to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and to the achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion

1.1.1. Description of the cooperation programme's strategy for contributing to the delivery of the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and for achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion.

1.1.1.1. CONTEXT OF THE PROGRAMME

The MED programme is one of the instruments for the implementation of the EU cohesion policy. With this policy the EU pursues harmonious development across the Union by strengthening its economic, social and territorial cohesion in order to stimulate growth in the EU regions and participating countries.

The policy aims to reduce the existing disparities between the EU regions in terms of their economic and social development and environmental sustainability, taking into account their specific territorial features and opportunities. In terms of socioeconomic development, programmes must take into account the consequences of the economic crisis that changed the situation for many economic operators, for the population, for local and regional public bodies confronted to the tighter budget constraints.

From a strategic point of view, the general orientations for the coming years have been set up in the Europe 2020 strategy aiming to turn the EU into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. The Europe 2020 strategy is an agenda for the whole Union, taking into account Member States' different

¹ 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 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 320).

² Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 259).

starting points, needs and specificities to promote growth for the whole European Union. The Europe 2020 strategy has three mutually reinforcing priorities:

- Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation.
- Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource-efficient, competitive and greener economy.
- Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

The Europe 2020 strategy, together with the Territorial Agenda 2020, which connects smart, sustainable and inclusive growth to territorial cohesion, provides the overall strategic framework for the EU cohesion policy 2014-2020 and as such for the MED programme.

The regulatory framework for the MED programme is provided by the regulations for cohesion policy 2014-2020. They are accompanied by a Common Strategic Framework (CSF) setting out the key actions in order to address the EU priorities and giving guidance to ensure coordination between funds.

The thematic scope of the MED programme is provided by the 11 thematic objectives described in the Common Provisions Regulation³. The European Territorial Cooperation regulation⁴ and the Common Strategic Framework⁵ outline that transnational programmes should aim to strengthen cooperation and achieve a higher degree of territorial integration contributing to territorial cooperation across the Union.

1.1.1.2. FRAMEWORK AND GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2014-2020 MED PROGRAMME

For the 2014-2020 period, the Commission proposed some important changes to the way the cohesion policy should be designed and implemented. Among the major hallmarks of the proposal, the following points can be found:

- Concentrating funding on a smaller number of priorities that are better linked to the Europe 2020 Strategy (smart, sustainable and inclusive growth);
- Focusing on results (result oriented, fewer and higher quality projects). This requires putting more emphasis on the demand in order to clearly identify the real needs of beneficiaries and end-users. This requires also to ensure that the capitalisation process and the external communication reach effectively the final target groups and end users and that these end users use effectively projects outputs;
- Taking into account the territorial dimension of development (urban development, coastal areas, islands, remote and low density areas);
- Monitoring progress towards agreed objectives (definition of targeted and measurable objectives);
- Increasing the use of conditionalities for regional and national programmes;
- Simplifying the procedures (application process, selection, implementation, monitoring, etc.).

³Regulation (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 (article 9).

⁴ Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal (article 7)

⁵ Common Strategic Framework, Annex II, Priorities for Cooperation

One must also mention the need to better coordinate cooperation programmes with mainstream programmes and especially the possibility to use the results of ETC projects in favour of national and regional programmes and projects. **Regional authorities involved in MED projects will be encouraged to integrate MED project results in their own or in the mainstream policies.**

For the beneficiaries, one of the most visible aspects of 2014-2020 programmes is the concentration of financing on a selection of Thematic Objectives and Investment priorities. The will to promote more result oriented activities and improve the monitoring process led to some innovations regarding the conception and implementation of MED projects.

1.1.1.3. LESSONS FROM THE PAST

Intervention fields

During the previous programming period from 2007 to 2013, a difficulty to generate projects in specific intervention fields like transports, maritime safety and natural risks, was observed. This was mainly due to the insufficient availability of key players like state authorities, international or private bodies that intervene and cooperate mainly through other types of programmes. Although these themes continue to be important to the programme area, the Partner States of the programme took into account these constraints in setting of the 2014-2020 programme strategy (more targeted objectives with a coherent budget allocation).

Activities related to innovation but also to some environmental issues have been quite successful and play an important role in Axis 1 and 3 of the 2014-2020 programme.

Types of calls

The MED programme 2007-2013 started with 2 open calls on the 4 priority axes. More than 1000 applications were received and only 10% of them were finally selected.

This showed the necessity to adapt the application and selection process to the objective in order to reduce the number of applications by better focusing on the content of the call, reduce the administrative burden for project promoters and evaluators and improve the quality of projects. The method of specific Terms of Reference has been progressively put in place with the launch of strategic and targeted calls that significantly reduced the number of applications and improved the monitoring of the project contents. For the 2014-2020 period, the MED programme will be implemented only through more focused calls for projects on one or several priorities.

Information for beneficiaries

During the 2007-2013 programme, the access to information, especially regarding results and deliverables of the already implemented projects, has been improved with the setting up of the online "MED Library". This tool is still being completed and is available for the 2014-2020 period.

Integrated management of ERDF/ IPA funds

The MED programme decided in 2010 to use the possibility offered by the EU Commission to manage directly IPA funds allocated to the programme. This has been successfully implemented with a budget of 5,4M€ of IPA funds from 2010 to 2013. A system of advances for IPA partners has been adopted by the Monitoring Committee in 2011 that increased the interest of IPA partners towards the programme.

1.1.1.4. ASSESSMENT OF CHALLENGES AND NEEDS FOR THE PROGRAMME

The objective of this section is to highlight the overall needs of the cooperation area. More precisely, the aim of it is to identify the kind of needs that the programme can especially take into account in line with its role, its budget and its intervention capacities.

It should be kept in mind that transnational programmes are not aimed to support heavy investments or infrastructures that are better taken in charge by European, national, regional or cross-border programmes. ETC programmes are more dedicated to institutional cooperation, strategy building, improvement of governance and share of experience and practices with the objective to improve the integration and the implementation of strategies and policies.

A. NATURAL, PHYSICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The MED programme covers a vast territory stretching from the Portuguese regions of the Area Metropolitana de Lisboa, Algarve and Alentejo on the Atlantic coast, to Cyprus at the eastern edge of the Mediterranean. It includes 13 countries (10 MSs and 3 PSS). The eligible geographic area extends over some 860 000 km² or around 20% of the European Union area.

The territory has **extremely diverse natural, physical and geographic characteristics**. It enjoys more than 15 000 kilometres of a maritime coastline and fertile arable plains that were the cradle of Mediterranean agriculture, with its vine growing and olive and citrus fruit plantations. It also has high mountain ranges such as the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the Pindos. Another characteristic of the MED space is that it is composed of participating countries' large areas, but equally a high number of small islands, including the small Member States such as Malta and Cyprus, and also island regions like the Balearic Islands, Corsica, or Crete.

In spite of the Mediterranean having historically been a place of transit between Europe, Asia and Africa, its geographic diversity provides a partial explanation for the accessibility and communication difficulties experienced travelling within, to, or between its different regions.

The juxtaposition of such diverse regions creates both opportunities and challenges for developing the programme area. Its climate, coast, and mountains are true assets (both for living and for tourism) and the programme area is rich in biodiversity and agricultural potential.

Mediterranean countries possess a wide diversity of natural resources including woodlands, arable lands, mountainous areas, rivers, lagoons, deltas, and wetlands.

These resources are important assets (especially for agriculture and tourism) but also represent sources of fragility.

Even if there are significant differences between MED countries with regard to the state of the environment and the gravity of the environmental problems encountered, there are still challenges that are common for all the countries, namely the management of coastal areas, water resources, soil, and protected areas.

Common challenges for Mediterranean coastal areas are listed in the Bologna Charter that highlights especially the risks related to climate change effects, urban pressure and the necessity to better promote cooperation between regional partners.

Within MED countries, the impact of human activity on the environment is relatively high.

The concept of an ecological footprint is used to estimate the human activity driven consumption level of the available resources⁶. All the MED space countries recorded an ecological deficit in 2009⁷, i.e. the environmental capital of the area was used more quickly than it was re-newed. For example, between 1995 and 2009, the Ecological footprint per capita decreased in Malta, in Italy, Greece and Slovenia.

Yet, the region is also more vulnerable to climate change, thus environmental protection needs to be given a high priority.

Generally speaking, the Mediterranean countries are confronted with major problems including water stress, desertification, loss of biodiversity and extreme climatic conditions such as floods and drought. Climate change will most probably aggravate these problems.

One of the main climate change impacts is on water resources, particularly, in the rapid way climate change is modifying the water cycle, bringing about a rise in evaporation and a reduction in rainfall levels⁸.

Bearing the above in mind, the MED space can be characterised on the basis of **three broad indicators specific to the Mediterranean**:

- its unique climate and flora;
- the value of its biodiversity and landscapes;
- the fragility of its different territories, particularly islands, which are subject to inherent environmental risks (drought, water erosion, flooding, soil salinity, steep terrains).

The MED area contains a high number (over 6000) of Natura 2000 sites, both land- and sea based, and there is a clear need to contribute to the effective management of these sites by transnational networking and cooperation.

B. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Today, the MED territory is home for more than 122 million people, or in other terms, **almost a quarter of the European population** (24.3% of the EU27 population)⁹.

This means that its population density is significantly higher than the European average (142 people per km² in the MED space compared with 116.3 in Europe as a whole¹⁰). This average however masks **significant disparities** across the MED space, where population densities vary considerably; from 1 318 people/km² in Malta¹¹, to 23.9 people/km² in Portugal's Alentejo region¹².

⁶ This indicator allows us to calculate a region's ecological deficit or reserve. The indicator measures the amount of biologically productive space needed by a population or an activity so as to produce all the resources consumed and to absorb the waste produced, taking into consideration the technologies available and management practices employed.

⁷ Plan Bleu, Mediterranean Strategy for sustainable development follow-up: main indicators – 2013 update (May 2013)

⁸ Plan Bleu, *ibidem*.

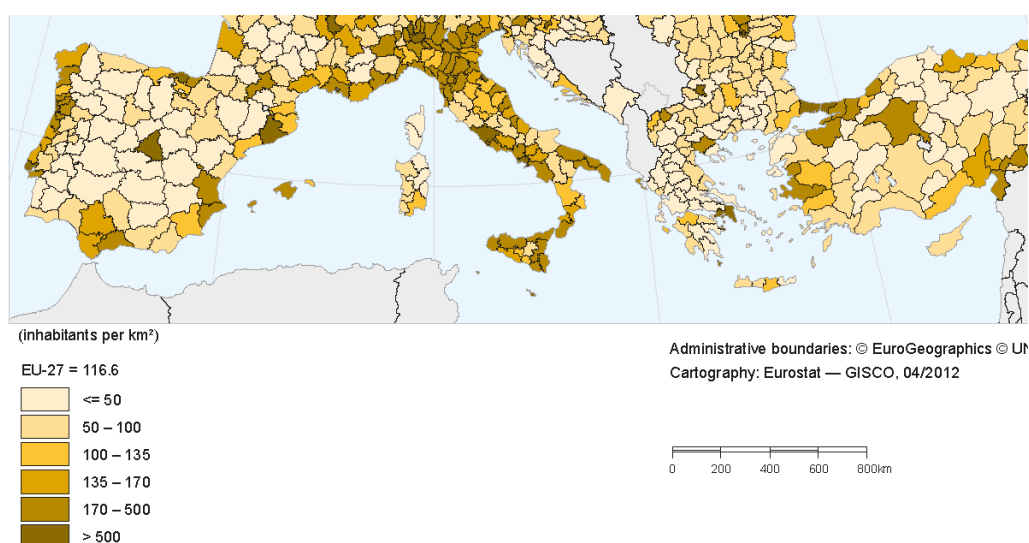
⁹ Eurostat, population au 1^{er} janvier 2012.

¹⁰ Eurostat, population on 1st January 2012.

¹¹ Eurostat, population density on 1st January 2011.

¹² Eurostat, population density on 1st January 2011.

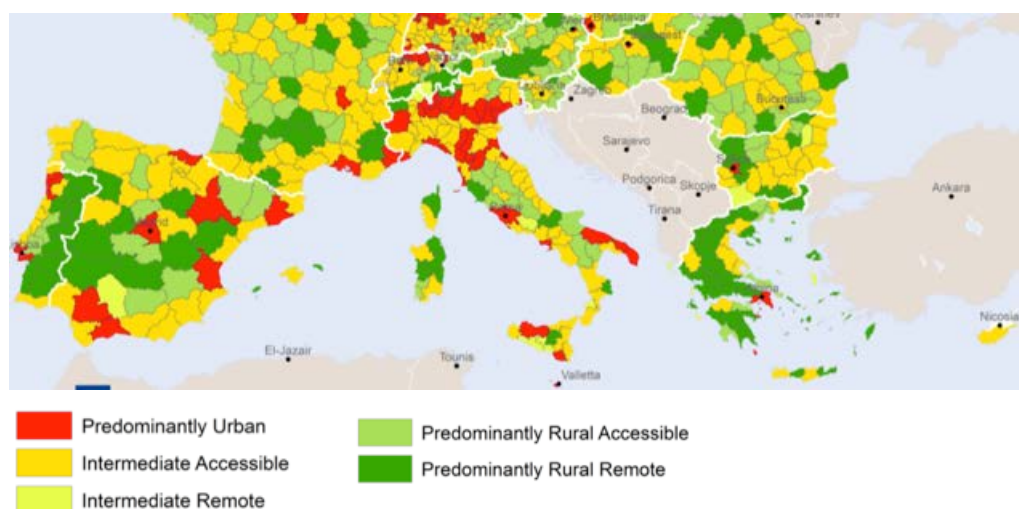
Map 1 Population density in the MED space (Eurostat/GISCO, 2010)



Nb: The population density in Malta is > 500 in 2010.

A number of major cities (notably Barcelona, Lisbon, Marseille, Toulouse, Milan, Rome, Naples and Athens, etc.) are located in the MED space. Another important feature is the number of smaller urban centres located along the Mediterranean coast (town such as Valencia, Montpellier or Genoa, for example). The area also includes a number of **rural and/or isolated territories**, particularly in Greece.

Map 2 Typology of urban and rural areas in the MED region (Espon TerrEvi 2012)



Nb: Malta is predominantly an urban territory

Demographic figures reveal that the MED space has strong appeal. At the start of the 2007-2013 MED programme, its population stood at 110 million. Today, it stands at 122 million (*without the 3 new regions eligible for the 2014-2020 programme*). This 6.3% increase (which does not include Croatia) is significant when compared to the European average increase of a 1.6% over the same period.

This growth results in part from the attractiveness of the living conditions (in terms of climate, geography, and culture, etc.) and regions such as the east coast of Spain, the north-west coast of Italy and the south coast of France all attract a substantial number of young professionals or retired people.

This demographic trend has direct effects on urbanisation, resource consumption (land, water, energy) and on waste production.

Wastes represent one of the strongest pressures on the environment in Mediterranean regions with threats on groundwater, surface water, soil contamination, degradation of ecosystems, emissions of GHG, etc.¹³.

Another dimension of the waste problem and its transnational effects is the macro-waste found in the sea and on the coastline. Human activities and growing economic development in Mediterranean countries have had a strong environmental impact which is particularly visible in the high level of degradation of coastal and marine areas. All around the Mediterranean basin, there is a broad spectrum of industrial activities, ranging from mining to the production of manufactured goods, giving rise to a certain number of “pollution hotspots”, where the dumping and release of contaminants by industrial areas and large commercial ports are important environmental threats¹⁴.

In order to reduce these effects, policies introduced at a regional level have included the setting up of marine protected areas (in 1982), and the introduction of a Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (in 1995)¹⁵.

Through the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol), the Barcelona Convention established the List of Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMIs List) in order to promote cooperation in the management and conservation of natural areas as well as in the protection of threatened species and their habitats.

Finally, in some MED regions, such as Greece and in the south of Portugal, the population is falling and may well fall further as a result of the economic crisis and its consequences for employment.

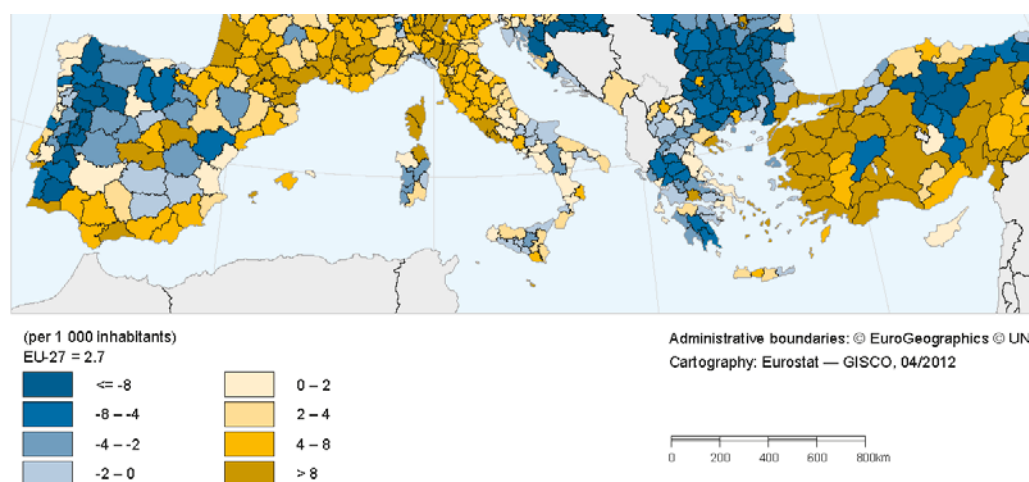
The attractiveness of the MED space has also a consequence for immigration, both within and from outside the European Union. In the MED space, in their broad trends, migration flows tend to correlate with overall population growth (seeMap 3).

¹³ Plan Bleu, Mediterranean Strategy for sustainable development follow-up: main indicators - 2013 update.

¹⁴ Plan Bleu, *ibidem*

¹⁵ Plan Bleu, *ibidem*

Map 3 Population growth in the MED space (Eurostat/GISCO, 2010)



Nb: Malta has a population growth between 4 and 8 in 2010

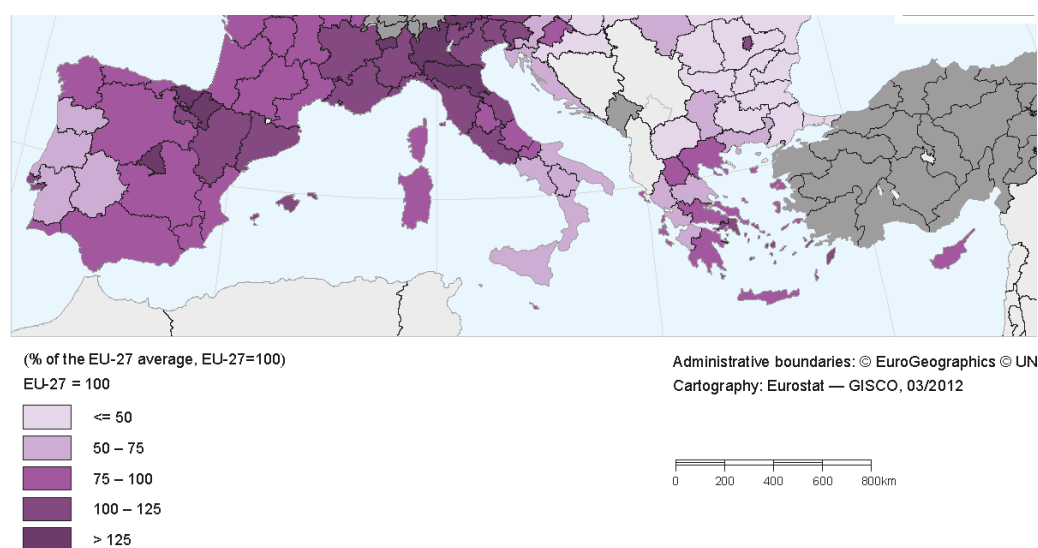
Another characteristic of the MED space is that it has (a) a lower proportion of young people in its population than the EU average (15% against 15,6%). and (b) a higher proportion of elderly people than the European average (19.2% against 17,8%).

C. MAIN ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MED SPACE

In 2010, the average GDP per capita of the MED space was 12% lower than the average GDP per capita of the EU as a whole (standing at 21 776€ compared with 24 500€ in Europe as a whole)¹⁶.

However, this figure masks **wide regional disparities**. Some 34 NUTS2 regions in the MED space have a lower average GDP per capita than the European average and 18 NUTS2 regions have a GDP per capita above the European average¹⁷.

Map 4 GDP per capita (in Purchasing Power Standard) in 2009 (source: Eurostat/ GISCO)



¹⁶ Eurostat data, 2010, processing Technopolis, 2013

¹⁷ The most successful wealth creating regions are, from northern Italy (Trentino, Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy, Vallée d'Aosta and Haut-Adige), Rhône-Alpes and Catalonia (recession of Attica following the economic crisis).

Nb: Malta has a GDP per capita of 84% of the EU average in 2009 (86% in 2012)

The map No 4 does not however show the **consequences of the 2007 economic crisis and of the subsequent debt crises that have been affecting EU Member States since 2010** (particularly Greece, Portugal, Cyprus, and to a lesser extent Spain, Italy and France). While for many years the growth rate of Mediterranean countries was above the European average¹⁸, recent years have been marked by severe recession¹⁹:

- In Italy, the GDP fell by 2,4% in 2012 and 0,9% in 2013
- In Portugal, GDP fell by a 3.2% in 2012 and 1,4% in 2013, representing the most severe recession since 1975
- In Greece, GDP dropped sharply by 7% in 2012 and 3,9% in 2013, marking the country's sixth successive year of economic recession.
- In Spain, after an improvement in 2011 (+0,1 of growth), the GDP fell again in 2012 and 2013 (-1,6% and -1,2%).

In the Eighth progress report on economic, social and territorial cohesion, the European Commission examined **the regional and urban dimension of the crisis**²⁰ and noted in the introduction that “in 2014, the Cohesion Policy programming period will start in the aftermath of the worst recession of the last fifty years. The crisis has reversed the process of convergence of regional GDP per head and unemployment within the EU”.

At European scale, the recession began in the second quarter of 2008 and lasted for five consecutive quarters. Between 2007 and 2011, the most serious impact on GDP and employment was felt in three Baltic countries, as well as in Ireland, Greece and Spain. While in 2010 and 2011, the Baltic countries' and Irish economies showed a return to growth, “Spain and Greece, however, have not returned to a consistent growth path. Spain started growing in 2011, but its GDP contracted in 2012 and 2013. GDP growth rates for Greece show a continuation (but reduction) of the recession in 2012 and 2013. In addition, Cyprus was confronted with a financial crisis in 2012, which led to a harsh reduction of GDP and employment which is expected to continue until 2014”. In Greece, the GDP decreased by around 25% between 2009 and 2013.

The impact of the crisis on unemployment has been significant: “At EU level, unemployment rates increased from 7 % to 10 % between 2008 and 2012”. Unemployment rates in the most affected Member States, however, doubled or even tripled to reach 26% in Spain and 27% in Greece in 2013 (source Eurostat).

The risks of poverty and exclusion have also risen strongly: they “were the highest in the six most affected Member States, but the impact in Italy and Bulgaria was also significant. In Spain, the effects of the crisis only started to be felt in 2009. Since then, both countries have lost around 8 % of their disposable income, returning them to 2005 levels. In Greece, the decline in disposable income started slowly in 2007. In 2009 and 2010 it took a very sharp downturn. As a result, Greek disposable income in 2011 was well below its 2005 level”

Finally, the economic ‘model’ of the regions in the MED space can be characterized by three specific traits that distinguish it from other cooperation areas. These are:

¹⁸ See MED OP 2007-2013, p.10

¹⁹ Sources: EUROSTAT 2014

²⁰ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, Eighth progress report on economic, social and territorial cohesion – The regional and urban dimension of the crisis, 26/06/2013 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0463:FIN:EN:PDF>

- **The importance of agriculture and agribusiness for the economy and the specific features of Mediterranean agriculture** (relying on a limited range of produce, essentially olives, wine, citrus fruits, cork, etc. produced by small farms)
- **The predominant role of small (and medium) enterprises** in all sectors of the economy and the dependence of the wider economy on them. (See Business competitiveness, especially of SMEs).
- **The importance of tourism**, a potential for growth that is still strong and a need to promote a more sustainable tourism industry (taking account the issues related to "Blue Growth");
- **The importance of the maritime sector and of the "blue growth"** ²¹ including maritime, coastal and cruise tourism, creative industries, coastal and marine resources, protection of biodiversity, blue energy, blue biotechnology, port activities, marine and environmental industries, etc.

The "blue growth" GVA (Gross Value Added) generated by Mediterranean countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Malta, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey) exceeds 63 billion EUR, i.e. more than three times the total GVA generated by all maritime economic activities in the Baltic Sea.

The first three countries, Italy, Greece and Spain, represent 81% of this activity.

In terms of sub-regions, the Western Mediterranean (Spain, France and Tyrrhenian coast of Italy) reaches 27,1 billion € (in terms of GVA), followed by the Central Mediterranean (Adriatic/Ionian) for a total of 19,3 billion €. The Eastern Mediterranean (Aegean coast of Greece, Turkey, Cyprus) totals 16,9 billion €.

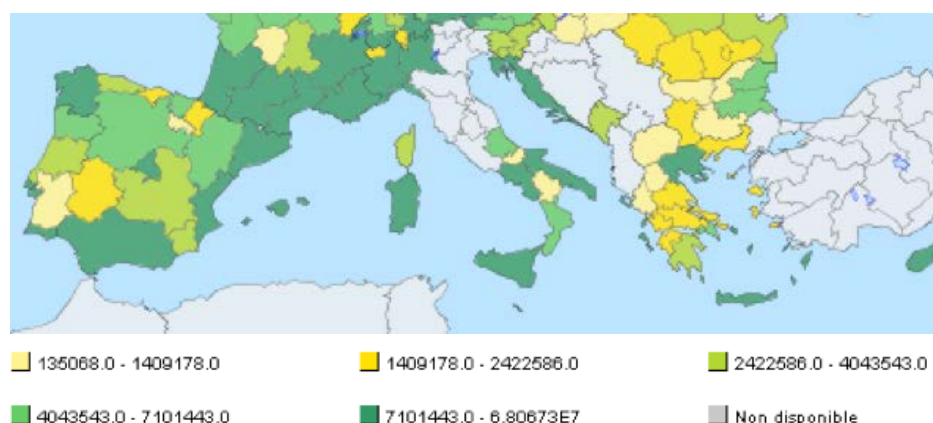
Regarding tourism, the MED space combines many attractive features (climate, coastlines, landscapes, cultural heritage, etc.) making **it the most popular tourist region in Europe and one of the largest tourist areas in the world**. According to the World Tourism Organization²², countries in the southern hemisphere and the Mediterranean attract 18.5% of the world's tourists. Between 2005 and 2012, this figure rose constantly (+2.9%), and was higher than the rate of growth in Europe (+2.5%). This represents 15.9% of world tourism revenues. In addition, France, Spain and Italy (whole of the country) are among the world's top 6 tourist destinations (in terms of number of tourists and tourism generated revenues).

In 2012, the MED area countries (+2%) consolidated their performance of previous years (+8% in 2011). Croatia, Portugal and Spain recorded a growth of 4% (above the average for the sub-region).

²¹ The 'Blue Growth' initiative aims to elaborate the maritime dimension of the Europe 2020 strategy. Blue Growth is hence defined as "smart, sustainable and inclusive economic and employment growth from the oceans, seas and coasts". The maritime economy consists of all the sectoral and cross-sectoral economic activities related to the oceans, seas and coasts. (*Blue Growth, Scenarios and drivers for sustainable Growth from the Oceans, Seas and Coasts, Third Interim Report, EU Commission, DG MARE, march 2012*)

²² UNWTO Tourism highlights 2013 : <http://www.e-unwto.org/content/hq4538/fulltext.pdf>

Map 5. Number of overnight stays in hotels in 2009 (residents and non-residents)



Source: Eurostat / Nb: The number of overnight stays in hotels in 2009 in Malta was 352 312.

The World Tourism Organization's long-term forecast (in 2030) is for a constant increase of 3.3% per year in world tourist arrivals. While growth is set to be strongest in Asian and emerging economy destinations, **Europe, and especially Mediterranean Europe, will continue to be a major destination, with numbers growing from 169 million in 2010 to 264 million in 2030).**

The tourism sector, therefore, offers substantial opportunities in terms of economic growth and employment (jobs in this sector are rarely threatened by globalisation). Exploiting this potential will require development strategies for infrastructures, sites and attractions, accommodation, marketing and for services innovation. It will also be necessary to embed sustainability in the sector (with respect to planning, the sustainable management of coasts, biodiversity and water resources, to name but a few).

Culture, in its broad sense, is also important for the MED space. While culture clearly matters for tourism – especially its popular historical sites and heritage, its wealth of cultural and creative activities, such as festivals and its rich offer of exhibitions – Culture is first and foremost aimed at the inhabitants of the MED space.

D. SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE MED AREA

Smart growth

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Research, technological development and innovation	- Some regions leaders in R&D (Rhône Alpes, Trentino, Catalonia, Lombardy, Slovenia...) - Some high skill industrial sectors (agriculture, agribusiness, chemicals, materials...)	- GDP per capita 12% lower than EU average - Low investment in R&D - Low proportion of research staff in the population - Low number of patent applications - Innovation models more based on diversification than breakthrough innovation	- Rising investments in R&D - Slight increase of patent applications over the last years - R&D specialisations in agribusiness, construction and eco-construction, maritime and tourism... - A diverse and networked innovation community (clusters...)	- Economy seriously affected by the economic and debt crisis - Increasing competition from southern and eastern countries
Information and communication technologies	- Wide coverage of high-speed broadband - Increasing use of ICT by individuals and businesses	- Limited access to broadband across the whole MED regions - Lower ICT skills of individuals than in other EU regions - Limited use of online public services	- Development of high-speed broadband - R&D sectors specialised in ICT	- Significant inequalities between regions and territories in term of ICT use
Competitiveness of SMEs	- Attractiveness of the MED area which is essential for the tourism - Highly competitive regions (Catalonia, PACA, Piedmont, Lombardy, Lazio, western Slovenia...) - Positive results of policy support for businesses (business innovation and competitiveness)	- Strong influence of traditional business (low and medium technology sectors) - Incremental innovation producing limited added value in SMEs - Low business productivity - A majority of SMEs isolated and poorly integrated in networks - Wide regional disparities and regions with low competitiveness - Limited understanding of the importance of intellectual property	- High business rate creation in some MED regions (Portugal, Slovenia, France...) - Increasing clustering of SMEs	- Serious recession in the majority of MED regions - Difficulties of businesses to access to finance

Sustainable growth

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Low carbon economy and energy sector	- Favourable conditions for the production of renewable energy (climate, natural resources) - Heightened awareness about the need for a shift towards a low carbon economy	- Concentration of ozone higher than the EU average - Green-house gas index much higher than the EU average - Insufficient development of renewable energy - Relatively high degree of energy dependence - Low energy efficiency compared to the EU average	- Development potential for renewable energy not fully exploited - MED countries committed to reduce GHG emissions	- Significant increase in the cost of low carbon energy
Climate change and risks	- Existence of a European framework and national policies for the reduction of carbon emissions	- MED countries more susceptible to climate change than EU average - MED countries among the main producers of greenhouse gas in Europe - MED area strongly confronted to natural risks with low adaptation capacity (drought, fire, floods...)	- Increasing commitment to sustainable development	- Increased risk of natural disasters due to climate change - High costs involved in repairing the damage caused by natural disasters
Protection of the environment	- Extremely rich environmental heritage (sea, mountains, arable lands, forests, rivers, wetlands...) - Many protected areas (NATURA 2000, areas of Mediterranean importance)	- Degradation of fragile areas, notably coastal areas and pollution of maritime areas - Air and water pollution due to urban concentration - Growing households waste production - Waste recycling remains lower than the EU average	- Development of environmental protection measures (protected areas...) - A potential for the use of renewable energies - Shift from traditional waste processing towards cleaner methods	- Risk of increasing environmental pollution due to increase in tourism and agriculture activities - Increasingly poorer air quality - Increasing scarcity of water resources - Increasing urban sprawl - Increasing cost of recycling and waste re-use methods
Transports	- General good quality of transport networks - Overall satisfactory accessibility, notably for large urban areas - Good level of road infrastructures - Large network of port cities well equipped to deal with the flow of passengers and goods - Strategic geographical location between East and West Europe and Africa - Satisfactory level of airport facilities	- Geographical fragmentation and isolation of numerous territories (Islands, remote areas) - Badly managed urban development, notably in coastal areas - Dependence of MED territories from the road transports - Predominance of individual transports in urban and surrounding areas - Lower density of the railway network than the EU average - Low multimodal accessibility - Insufficient development of coastal maritime traffic	- Good position of islands and MED regions as hubs for tourists and trade - Development of multimodal transport systems - Reinforcement of existing railway network	- Transport is a major source of pollution - Lack of European coordination in the communication system - Competition with north and central European urban centres

Inclusive growth

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Employment and labour mobility	- Attractiveness of the MED area universities - High level of students mobility	- Low employment level, especially for youth and women - High territorial disparities of unemployment levels - High long term unemployment rate	- Labour mobility within and between MED States	- Consequences of the financial crisis - Strong increase of the unemployment rate with the economic crisis - Drain of human resources, notably young people towards other EU countries
Social inclusion and fight against poverty	- Descending intergenerational solidarity	- A large percentage of the population at risk of poverty and social exclusion	- Important role played by the social and solidarity economy	- Alarming human and social effects of the crisis
Skills and education	- Full range of high quality and free training - Good choice of professional training	- High level of early school leavers compared to the EU average	- Progressive decrease in the rate of early school leavers	

E. SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CHALLENGES AND NEEDS OF THE MED AREA

	Main challenges	Main needs
Smart growth	- Increasing competition from other countries and areas in the world - Challenge to reach the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy with lower innovation level in Mediterranean regions than the EU average - Good development potential in the sector of blue and green growth that would deserve to be better promoted	- Need for stronger investments in R&D - Need to improve competitiveness of businesses - Need to strengthen the connection and cooperation between research, innovation and businesses - Need to improve connections between regional networks and clusters to generate critical mass in terms of research and innovation - Need to improve the capacity of SMEs to use the results research and innovation produced by large research and innovation poles - Need to better focus interventions on common innovation sectors throughout the MED area (blue growth, and green growth sectors)
Sustainable growth	- Increasing climate change consequences on MED regions - Increasing scarcity of water resources - Potential to improve the production of renewable energy but very diverse situations between MED regions and MED countries - Increasing urban pressure requiring long term sustainable and integrated urban development (energy, water, planning, transports, waste management, health) - Increasing pressure of economic activities on natural and cultural resources and on coastal areas - Important impact of the agriculture on landscapes and natural resources - Important pollution of the Mediterranean Sea	- Need to improve observation capacities, norms, technics and cooperation between stakeholders to reduce the vulnerability of MED regions to natural risks - Need for a more sustainable management of Mediterranean cities (energy, water, spatial planning, transports, waste management, health management) - To bring specific answers to the needs of islands regarding energy and water management (small scale solutions, independence) - Need to improve the resilience of coastal areas, biodiversity, natural and cultural heritage in front of human pressure and climate change consequences (awareness raising, change of habits, protection measures...) - Need to reduce marine pollution and marine litter
Inclusive growth	- Important consequences of demographic change on economy, employment and quality of life (aging population) - Increasing difficulties for the socioeconomic inclusion of young people, in particular in time of crisis	- Need to better promote social innovation in connection with key socioeconomic sectors (tourism, energy, transports...) - Need to better take into account socioeconomic issues and needs of end users in the conception and implementation of sustainable development policies (environment, energy, transports)

F. RANKING OF THE IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES AND POTENTIALS

Among the potential and the different challenges, the most important one for EU Mediterranean regions is related to its economic development perspectives and to economic recovery after years of economic and financial crisis. Countries of southern Europe especially suffered from the crisis and MED regions, in a general way, suffered from the lack of innovation capacities. In the MED area, development perspectives are especially important in the fields of blue and green growth with the strong potential development of coastal areas, the use of marine resources, the perspectives offered by biotechnologies, the evolution of transport systems and tourism activities, etc.

Taking into account their huge natural and cultural heritage, MED regions must also promote a development model respectful of resources that play a strong role in its economic and social development. For this reason, sustainable development is considered as the second most important challenge to be taken into account. It requires that economic activities make a reasonable use of natural resources and ensure long term balanced development. For the MED area, a specific challenge is represented by tourism activities that generate strong pressure on the most attractive and most fragile areas (land, soil pollution, water resources...). In coastal and densely populated areas, there is also an important challenge concerning air pollution, in particular NO₂, PM and SO₂ emissions, and GHG emission due to economic activities, housing and transport.

Despite the fact that many protected areas have been set up in MED regions, protection measures and management must be adapted in order to ensure higher resilience at transnational level. Water management is especially concerned due to environmental changes, pollution and global warming.

In a more political way, one must also highlight the difficulty to generate integrated transnational policies in the MED area that is characterised by significant geographical, socioeconomic and political differences. The long term development of the MED area could be ensured only with stronger integration and better adapted governance processes.

G. IDENTIFICATION OF CHALLENGES AND POTENTIALS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME

In the framework of the cooperation programme, the challenges and potentials identified in the previous sections could be taken into account with the following adaptations.

The economic development, promotion of research and innovation represent a key challenge for the area and one of the main preoccupations of the Europe 2020 strategy. Strong efforts and operational tools are deployed through regional cooperation programmes and with EU thematic programmes like Horizon 2020 and COSME. As the MED programme is not adapted to finance research infrastructures or to boost large scale innovation in such a large cooperation area, it will promote transnational cooperation in well targeted development and innovation fields, such as blue and green growth sectors. Taking also into account the difficulties to commit economic operators and respect competition rules in transnational cooperation projects, the promotion of innovation capacities shall use only a reasonable part of the programme resources (around 32% of the budget).

The field of intervention considered as the other main challenge, "sustainable development", shows good development potential in the MED programme for the following reasons. The protection of the environment and the management of resources are vital for the long term development of the area. It is also especially relevant for transnational cooperation with challenges requiring solutions beyond regional and national boundaries.

This field of intervention is also less considered by regional and national programmes that are mainly concentrating on innovation, ICT, SMEs and low carbon economy. Transnational cooperation perspectives are significant in an area requiring large scale observation, exchange of data and knowledge, coordination of planning tools and public policies. Improvement perspectives are significant in the MED area and the programme will have the possibility to involve stakeholders and key players familiar with transnational cooperation (local and regional public authorities, environment agencies, universities, natural parks, etc.). For these reasons, sustainable development priorities shall represent the most important field of the programme's intervention (around 34% of the budget).

They are completed with measures dedicated to the fight against greenhouse gas emissions (energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable transports). The MED programme will intervene on this latter issue in a complementary way – by taking into account regional and national programmes – with a more limited budget (around 20% of the budget).

Taking into account the difficulties of transnational cooperation observed in the MED area, the Programme shall also consider improving cooperation processes. This can be done taking into account the macro regional approach. The improvement of cooperation processes could be done by testing some specific intervention measures which would not require a too important budget (around 8% of the budget of the programme).

1.1.1.5. STRATEGY OF THE TRANSNATIONAL MED PROGRAMME

A. OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE PROGRAMME

The overall objective of the MED programme is to promote sustainable growth in the Mediterranean area by fostering innovative concepts and practices (technologies, governance, innovative services...), reasonable use of resources (energy, water, maritime resources...) and supporting social integration through integrated and territorially based cooperation approach.

In coherence with the available budget and the large geographical coverage, the programme aims mainly to strengthen transnational and regional intervention strategies in fields of Mediterranean importance where transnational cooperation can contribute to improve regional and territorial practices. Hence the MED programme will grant a specific attention to the coherence, complementarity and transfer of experiences and practices with **ERDF regional and national programmes** that can feed transnational actions and benefit of their results. For the 2014-2020 period, the **transfer of experience** between actors, territories and programme is considered as a major goal for the MED programme.

This will be done taking into account the potential and challenges of specific sectors related to the blue and green growth such as tourism, agriculture and agribusiness, marine and environmental industries, energy, transports but also creative industries and social economy that are especially important for the Med area. In these different sectors, the objective is to better identify development potential and challenges at the transnational level, to support stakeholders promoting innovation and help them to get organized and share experiences and knowledge with structures from other regions and countries.

The programme will grant a specific attention to the setting up of favourable conditions for transnational discussions and transnational decision making processes. This shall be supported in particular in the perspective of the development of macro-regional or sea-basin strategies in the Mediterranean. The programme shares large parts of its cooperation area (4 EU Member States – Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Greece and 3 non EU Member States – Bosnia

and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Albania) with the EU strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) built upon the following four pillars: 1. Blue Growth; 2. Connecting the Region; 3. Environmental quality; 4. Sustainable tourism. The EUSAIR Action Plan was adopted by the European Commission on the 17 June 2014 and endorsed in the Council conclusions adopted by General Affairs Council meeting on 23-24 October 2014²³.

Together with the Adriatic-Ionian Programme, the MED programme 2014-2020 may contribute to the implementation of the Action Plan of the EUSAIR Strategy; synergies and coordination activities between Programmes are envisaged on the different priorities axes and investment priorities.

In this framework, the programme (through the Joint Secretariat) will ensure coherence and complementarity with EU thematic programmes like Horizon 2020, LIFE Programme, COSME or the Programme for Social Change and Social Innovation and other cooperation programmes such as ENI Med and the Balkan Mediterranean programmes. This will be done by getting informed of their activities and, when relevant, adapting calls launched by the MED programme in order to generate synergies.

In a cross-cutting way, a specific attention will be paid to the development and dissemination of **eco-innovative achievements** aiming to ensure a more sustainable use of resources and a reduction of pollution (air pollution, water pollution, marine pollution and marine litter...).

"Innovation" refers to technical, scientific, social, environmental, managerial, organisational, commercial or administrative solutions leading to value creation (improvement of technologies, processes, management and governance systems, public procurement of innovation...).

An ecosystemic approach...

The approach is '**integrated**' or '**ecosystemic**' when the result is not a series of isolated proposals working on limited aspects of tourism, transports, creative industry, but a global co-ordination effort making these domains contribute to the sustainable development of territories (taking into account available means, existing public policies, conflict of use, jobs creation, involvement of public and private operators, etc.). Partners will have to make work together relevant actors from environment protection, transport, tourism etc. sectors. With this approach, transnational cooperation will contribute to develop strategic planning aspects.

Projects must also be elaborated taking into account the analyses and exploration of ideas, strategy building, implementation of activities (including pilot actions when relevant) and wider dissemination of experiences and result in territories towards all end-users. In the MED programme, this approach is materialised by different "**modules**" or steps, that the beneficiaries must refer to in the elaboration of their project (*see part 2.A.6.2. "Guiding principles for the selection of operations"*).

... for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

For **smart growth**, the programme will attach special attention to the development of **regional innovation strategies and smart specialisation strategies** (RIS3) affecting key sectors mentioned previously. It will support exchange processes in order to develop these strategies, strengthen clusters, networks, economic sectors, value chains, and to improve their implementation and increase their interaction between Mediterranean regions. This will specifically be achieved thanks to the promotion of cooperation opportunities between research institutions

²³ Communication (COM (2014) 357 final) from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions concerning the European Union Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region and its accompanying Action Plan (SWD(2014) 190 final).

and innovative SMEs, between SMEs of different regions themselves (through their clusters), and the coordination and monitoring of smart specialisation operations at regional and interregional level.

Concerning sustainable growth, taking into account the pressure observed in urban and coastal Mediterranean areas, the MED programme will seek to promote the use of low carbon emission energy sources, reduce the impact of human activities on natural resources, and improve the living environment and health. It will particularly focus on the promotion of **energy mix strategies**, the improvement of **water management** and the **management of natural resources in coastal and marine areas**.

In these fields, a specific attention will be paid to the coordination with EU national and regional programmes in order to use existing inputs and disseminate the results of MED projects. In this respect, partners of transnational projects will have to be aware of regional needs and propose ways to **disseminate their results towards regional mainstream programmes**.

From a territorial and geographical point of view, in addition to **urban and coastal areas**, the programme will grant a special attention to **Islands** and **remote areas** in order to promote policy transfer at transnational level which is currently lacking.

At transnational level, one can still observe major fields of intervention where cooperation between states and between regions is insufficient. This is the case, for example, for Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP), Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), maritime safety, transport, energy or pollution of the Mediterranean Sea (marine pollution and marine litter). In these fields, higher institutional and political commitment would be necessary and could be promoted through a **macro-regional approach supported by the MED programme**. This shall be done in close coordination with the implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive and in cooperation with the Barcelona Convention.

For the implementation of a macro-regional approach or regarding the development of key Mediterranean economic sectors or sustainable management of resources, the **involvement of authorities or experts from the southern shore of the Mediterranean** is an asset for the future (water management, Mediterranean agriculture, etc.) and their contribution will be highly encouraged.

B. TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION EXPECTED FROM THE MED PROGRAMME

Paying attention to the various dimensions of a project (analysis, definition of strategies, implementation of activities and pilot projects, dissemination/transfer of experiences), the programme will give the possibility to improve expertise, knowledge, networking and support capacity building for public and private bodies. When relevant, it will support pilot actions to test tools, processes, governance systems contributing to improve public interventions and support long term sustainable development in key sectors of green and blue growth (energy, agriculture and agribusiness, biotechnologies, eco-construction, etc.).

As a transnational programme, its main contribution will be to exchange and transfer experiences between regions, support transnational strategies and capacity building and ensure that results are disseminated and used beyond project partners reaching large number of end-users.

The programme will especially support the constitution of multilevel and intersectoral working teams and partnership in order to overcome administrative and sectoral bottlenecks, with the involvement of citizens, local, regional, national and international bodies. At territorial level, a key issue will be to reduce conflicts of use that constitute the main aspect of sustainable development strategies (promotion of renewable energy, protection of natural and cultural heritage, reduction of carbon emissions, etc.).

Among the framework conditions for the implementation of actions, stakeholders must bear in mind that projects are not aimed to meet the needs of a limited number of partners but to contribute to better living conditions in MED territories (economic activities, quality of the environment, safety, etc.).

Taking into account the difficulties to set up wide political agreements at Mediterranean level, the programme seeks also to promote decision making processes between regions and participating countries. The setting-up of macro regions and sea basin strategies constitute a step forward in this direction. In the 2014-2020 period, with the setting up of an EU strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region (EUSAIR), the MED programme can provide support on issues relevant to its own priorities. The MED programme will also seek to improve integration of policies and strategies in its own intervention fields paving the way to stronger and more efficient transnational cooperation in the coming years.

From the action and output point of view, taking into account the programme's strategy, the MED programme is mainly delivering:

- Policies and strategies
- Methodologies and tools
- Pilot actions
- Action plans
- Joint management systems and cooperation agreements

As a transnational cooperation programme, the MED programme will neither support heavy investments, development of large infrastructures nor scientific and technology research as such. Investments in small scale facilities or infrastructures might be supported in the case of pilot projects and territorial experiences. The MED programme supports in particular intangible or “soft” actions which could potentially have a long term effect and which provide visibility to the programme (studies and research, networking, dissemination of knowledge and data, etc.).

Regarding the action implementation, there is a clear distinction between “beneficiaries” and “target groups” or “end-users”. In the context of the Programme, beneficiaries are bodies and organisations that will be directly involved in the projects funded by the programme and will be the ones to conceive, discuss and develop the deliverables described above. “Target groups” or “end-users” are bodies, groups and individuals who will use the outputs of the projects or will experience a change in their activities and lives because of the programme outputs.

C. SELECTED THEMATIC OBJECTIVES, INVESTMENT PRIORITIES AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

For each thematic objective, a set of specific investment priorities (IP) is pre-defined reflecting the challenges that the Mediterranean regions are facing.

The cornerstones for the selection of the Thematic Objectives and Investment Priorities are:

- The diagnosis and needs identified for the MED regions
- The lessons learnt from the period 2007-2013
- The application of thematic concentration on a smaller amount of priorities related to the Europe 2020 strategy and to the results evaluation
- The complementarity with other EU regional and thematic programmes
- The specificities of transnational cooperation programme

For the MED programme the following 4 thematic Objectives and 6 Investment priorities have been selected:

Priority Axis 1: Promoting Mediterranean innovation capacities to develop smart and sustainable growth

Thematic Objective 1: Strengthening research, technological development and innovation by:

IP 1b: Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector, in particular promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation, and supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first production, in particular, in key enabling technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies;

SO 1.1: To increase transnational activity of innovative clusters and networks of key sectors of the MED area

Priority Axis 2: Fostering low-carbon strategies and energy efficiency in specific MED territories: cities, islands and rural areas

Thematic Objective 4: Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors by:

IP 4c: Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructures, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector

SO 2.1: To raise capacity for better management of energy in public buildings at transnational level

IP 4e: Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multi-modal urban mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures

SO 2.2: To increase the share of renewable local energy sources in energy mix strategies and plans in specific MED territories

SO 2.3: To increase capacity to use existing low carbon transport systems and multimodal connections among them

Priority Axis 3: Protecting and promoting Mediterranean natural and cultural resources

Thematic Objective 6: Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resources efficiency by:

IP 6c: Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage

SO 3.1: To enhance the development of a sustainable and responsible coastal and maritime tourism in the MED Area

IP 6d: Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure;

SO 3.2: To maintain biodiversity and natural ecosystems through strengthening the management and networking of protected areas

Priority Axis 4: Enhancing Mediterranean Governance

Thematic objective 11: Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration through actions to strengthen the institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administrations and public services related to the implementation of the ERDF

IP 11: Enhancing governance in the Mediterranean

SO 4.1: To support the process of strengthening and developing multilateral coordination frameworks in the Mediterranean for joint responses to common challenges

Detailed information on the specific objectives is provided in Section 2.

D. HORIZONTAL DIMENSIONS

Apart from thematic orientation, the MED programme addresses horizontal thematic aspects highlighted in the EU regulations: sustainable development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, equality between men and women. These horizontal principles are further developed in section 8 of the Cooperation Programme.

Besides the thematic concentration and the choice of thematic objective, specific issues will be addressed in a cross-cutting way in the different investment priorities of the programme contributing to the overall objectives of the programme:

Information and Communication Technologies

The development of ICT products, services and applications constitute a relevant support for socioeconomic development, governance, networking, etc. As a tool, ICT can be used in a transversal way in order to reach the objectives of several investment priorities.

Social cohesion and social innovation

In different fields of intervention, a positive attention will be paid to projects involving partners or taking measures that have positive effects on social cohesion. This is especially the case when involving social enterprises or implementing actions that improve the conditions of target groups confronted with economic and social integration difficulties.

Data and knowledge management

Each project and each project partner must make available for public the data used for the projects or generated by the projects in order to enhance the dissemination of experiences and results. Projects are encouraged to deliver datasets in line with the “open data by default” principle in order to improve the diffusion and reuse of data between public institutions, partners and a wider public.

Territorial and eco-systemic approach

In each targeted territory (islands, urban, coastal and remote areas), projects will have to involve relevant sectors and institutions stakeholders from the project intervention field. Approaches must be ‘**integrated**’ or ‘**ecosystemic**’, so that the result would not be isolated proposals working on limited aspects of tourism, energy or transport, for example, but a coordination effort insisting on the contribution of these domains to the sustainable development of territories (taking into account available means, economic perspectives, on-going public policies, conflict of use, environmental constraints, etc.).

Partners will have to explore how to make relevant actors from environment protection, tourism, transport sectors, etc. work together. With this approach, transnational cooperation will contribute to develop strategic planning aspects.

E. JUSTIFICATION OF THE CHANGES IN THE PROGRAMME GEOGRAPHY

Compared to the 2007-2013 period, three additional regions have been accepted to participate to the MED programme: Area Metropolitana de Lisboa (Portugal); Midi-Pyrénées (France); Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste (Italy).

These regions have provided a questionnaire sent by the programme authorities specifying their profile, their connection with the Mediterranean area and their contribution to Mediterranean main challenges (economic development, environment, territorial cohesion...).

The "Mediterranean dimension" of applicants was a key argument for their selection, as well as the contribution they could bring to the setting-up of future macro regional and sea basin strategies in the Mediterranean.

The macro regional approach is especially relevant for the region of Area Metropolitana de Lisboa as a capital region. Furthermore, the involvement of the region of Area Metropolitana de Lisboa as an economic and administrative hub increases also the synergy with the regions of Algarve and Alentejo in the programme.

The region of Midi-Pyrénées is already involved in other southern European programmes (SUDOE and POCTEFA) with priorities that are quite similar to the MED programme area (research/innovation, environment, accessibility, sustainable urban development...). This region has a significant experience in scientific fields related to satellite observation, oceanography, meteorology and irrigation that is an added value for the MED programme.

The region of Valle D'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste is participating to the Euroregion Alps-Mediterranean but has not been involved in the 2007-2013 MED programme. This region has preoccupations in issues like natural risks, climate change and accessibility that are coherent with the MED programme priorities. It has an important experience in territorial cooperation projects with active involvement in two cross border programmes (ALCOTRA and Italy/Switzerland) and two transnational ones (Alpine Space and Central Europe).

1.1.2 Justification for the choice of thematic objectives and corresponding investment priorities

Table 1: A synthetic overview of the justification for the selection of thematic objectives and investment priorities

Selected thematic objective	Selected investment priority	Justification for selection 1000 characters each
Thematic Objective 1 Strengthening research, technological development and innovation (...)	Investment priority 1b Promoting business investment in innovation and research and developing links and synergies between enterprises, R&D centres and higher education (...)	- Need to improve innovation capacities, competitiveness and internationalisation of SMEs confronted to international competition (tourism, agribusiness, creative industries...) - Need to improve cooperation between actors of the quadruple helix, especially between research and businesses - Need to strengthen growth sectors representing important jobs potential (blue and green growth sectors) - Need to support social innovations in a context of strong economic crisis and tight public budgets
Thematic Objective 4 Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors	Investment priority 4c Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructures, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector	- Need to reduce GHG emission in Mediterranean regions - Weak energy efficiency in the existing residential sectors and other buildings in MED regions - Insufficient energy autonomy requiring higher energy saving and energy efficiency - Insufficient knowledge of owners, managers and public authorities about the increase of energy efficiency in public buildings - Specific economic, geographic and climatic conditions of MED regions (cities, coastal areas, islands, remote areas) requiring ad-hoc measures in favour of energy efficiency
	Investment priority 4e Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multi-modal urban mobility and mitigation relevant adaptation measures	- Too important emission of GHG in the transport sector and in Mediterranean cities - Need to improve the living environment in high density areas, reduce the effect of human activities on sea, land, air and human health - Need to maintain and improve the mobility and quality of life of populations in a context of economic crisis - Use of renewable energies lower than the EU average - Excessive share of goods transported by road and huge impact of transport on the MED area - High pressure on coastal roads unable to absorb increasing traffic - Limited transnational maritime/rail public transport services for passengers and freight (including shipping which can also be a major source of emissions especially in ports: PM, SO₂, NO₂...affecting people's health and ecosystems) - Need for transport and logistics as leverages to boost the competitiveness of the MED area

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Selected thematic objective	Selected investment priority	Justification for selection 1000 characters each
Thematic Objective 6 Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	Investment priority 6c Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage	- High cultural and environmental resources in MED regions threatened by human activities - High pressure of tourism activities and urbanisation, especially in the coastal areas of the MED regions - Increased pressure on natural resources due to the combination of human activities and environmental changes (especially climate change) - Increased pressure on water resources from a quantitative and qualitative point of view
	Investment priority 6d Protecting and restoring biodiversity, soil protection and restoration, promoting ecosystem services including NATURA 2000 and green infrastructures	- High environmental resources in the MED regions threatened by human activities - Pressure on the biodiversity and development of invasive species - Pressure on water quality with direct consequences on the biodiversity - Crucial role of the environment in the attractiveness and economic development of MED regions
Thematic Objective 11 Enhancing institutional capacity and an efficient public administration	Investment priority 11c Developing and coordinating macro-regional and sea-basin strategies (ETC-TN)	- Need to better coordinate existing and future macro regional and sea basin strategies - Absence of transnational agreements in key cooperation fields like transports, energy or depollution of the Mediterranean

1.2. Justification of the financial allocation

The financial allocation to each thematic objective has been defined according to the:

- Type of actions defined in the Cooperation Programme (giving indication on the likely size of partnerships, probability of investment/pilot projects, amount of relevant stakeholders)
- Type of foreseen stakeholders
- Attractiveness of the programme to relevant stakeholders (mobilization capacity based on current experience (when relevant))

Priority axis 1: Promoting Mediterranean innovation capacities to develop smart and sustainable growth_(*Thematic Objective 1*)

Innovation and competitiveness are highlighted in the Europe 2020 strategy. It is a major challenge in MED regions facing international competition, and contributes to overcome the economic crisis.

Types of actions consist mainly in the development of clusters and networks, development of models and tools, and transfer of knowledge, awareness-raising, capitalization activities. Pilot projects with investment are not likely, at least not frequent.

Key target groups are SME's and structures accompanying them, public authorities, and research structures (*see the definition of SMEs in the annexe of the Cooperation Programme (glossary)*).

The Innovation priority of the 2007-2013 period attracted a high number of proposals, allowing the programming of almost the whole foreseen budget in the two open standard calls. The attractiveness of the programme for relevant stakeholders was evident, and the results of the public consultation for the MED 2014-2020 priorities supported this, as the domain was rated by stakeholders as the most important for the new CP (Cooperation Programme).

Taking into account the necessity to raise innovation capacities in the MED programme area, the effort that will be made to attract economic operators and the mobilisation capacity of other stakeholders of the quadruple helix, a budget of 84.450.833 € is foreseen for Priority Axis 1. It represents around 32% of the overall budget of the programme.

Priority Axis 2: Fostering low-carbon strategies and energy efficiency in specific MED territories: cities, islands and rural areas (*Thematic Objective 4*)

Low carbon economy is a key issue for territorial sustainable development and for EU objectives (reduction of GHG, increase energy efficiency and use of renewable energy). It is especially important for the mitigation of climate change that has strong consequences in MED regions. However, the contribution of the MED programme must be in coherence with the fact that regional and national programmes provide already an important support.

The foreseen activities consist in capacity building, awareness-raising, strategy building, training and changing practices, (not only those of end-users but also of public authorities, and eventually of enterprises). Feasibility studies and analyses, elaborating policy plans, services and tools will also form a part of activities. In this priority the likelihood of small-scale investment is high, and pilot projects including investment could be relatively frequent (ICT services and solutions, energy efficiency tools, pilot services...).

The Axis includes three distinctive domains of activity: energy efficiency, renewable energy production and use, and low carbon mobility. Target stakeholder groups are public authorities,

research structures, enterprises, and NGO's/civil society structures, and the latter ones might play an important role in regard to end users.

Low carbon economy as such has not been considered as a key domain for the new programme further, in the stakeholder consultation. However, energy efficiency and promoting renewable energies were considered a priority issue.

The part of the budget allocated has been estimated according to the mobilization capacity of stakeholders, and also according to the probability of small-scale pilot investments (eventually a small number of pilot projects, but with a budget per project above the average). The budget for this Priority Axis is of 52.781.771 € representing around 20% of the overall budget of the programme.

Priority Axis 3: Protecting and promoting Mediterranean natural and cultural resources *(Thematic Objective 6)*

In MED regions, protection of the environment is a major challenge with strong attractiveness of coastal areas, environmental strain of urban development, geographical constraints and environmental consequences of climate change. The domain represents also a potential of new employment creation for the future.

Main types of activity: focus on analysis, studies, policy-planning and strategy development, but also transfer of practices and policy implementing measures. Pilot projects with investments are not likely to be frequent, although some pilot projects to test tools or services are probable.

The domains chosen for the CP: development of sustainable tourism, protection of natural and cultural heritage, development of human activities in coherence with environmental change and climate change as well as biodiversity present enormous challenges to the MED area. They clearly need transnational coordination and are also less covered by regional ERDF financing.

The stakeholder groups are several, as the Priority Axis also combines several domains of activity: more particularly, public authorities, but also associations and NGO's, research bodies, and to some extent enterprises.

Globally, the domain has a high number of potential stakeholders and will also be the key thematic Axis to support eventual priority projects linked to existing or foreseen macro-regional or sea-basin strategies. The budget level has been adjusted consequently. The budget for this axis is 89.729.012 € representing 34% of the programme's overall budget.

Priority Axis 4: Enhancing Mediterranean Governance *(Thematic Objectives 11)*

This is an experimental and challenging type of priority, but the necessity of better coordination between the authorities of the programme area is incontestable. Moreover, part of the programme space is already concerned by a macro-regional strategy.

Taking into account the experimental nature of this Priority, and also the possibility to finance earmarked 'macro-regional' pilot projects of the EUSAIR via thematic Priorities (especially within Priority 3), the budget level should be adjusted to the estimated possibilities to mobilize key stakeholders represented by, more particularly, state, regional and local authorities. One must recognize that also political support is necessary for the relevant use of the budget of this Priority, and as a programme there is no certitude of these dynamics. However, it is vital to offer a support mechanism to encourage positive development in Mediterranean multi-lateral governance.

The budget of this Priority Axis is 21.112.708 € Representing around 8% of the overall budget of the programme.

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Table 2: Overview of the investment strategy of the cooperation programme

Priority axis	ERDF support (EUR)	Proportion of the total Union support to the cooperation programme (by Fund) ²⁴			Thematic objective ²⁵	Investment priorities ²⁶	Specific objectives	Result indicators corresponding to the specific objective
		ERDF	ENI (where applicable)	IPA (where applicable)				
1.	71.783.208	30.72%	0%	1.28%	1. Strengthening research, technological development and innovation	Investment priority 1.b Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education (...)	1.1 To increase transnational activity of innovative clusters and networks of key sectors of the MED area	Share of innovative clusters (i.e. including RDI activities) offering to their members a consolidated mix of transnational activities in key sectors of the MED area
2.	44.864.505	19.20%	0%	0.80%	4. Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors	Investment priority 4.e Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multi-modal urban mobility and mitigation relevant adaptation measures	2.3 To increase capacity to use existing low carbon transport systems and multimodal connections among them	Share of urban plans which include low carbon transport and multimodal connection soft actions
						Investment priority 4.c Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructures, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector	2.1 To raise capacity for better management of energy in public buildings at transnational level	Share of regional, sub-regional, and local energy efficiency plans including adapted measures for public building stock
						Investment priority 4.e Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multi-modal urban mobility and mitigation relevant adaptation measures	2.2 To increase the share of renewable local energy sources in energy mix strategies and plans in specific MED territories	Share of renewable energy from local sources, in energy mix of MED islands and rural areas

²⁴ Presentation of the shares corresponding to ENI and IPA amounts depends on management option chosen.

²⁵ Title of the thematic objective, not applicable to technical assistance

²⁶ Title of the investment priority, not applicable to technical assistance

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Priority axis	ERDF support (EUR)	Proportion of the total Union support to the cooperation programme (by Fund) ²⁷			Thematic objective ²⁸	Investment priorities ²⁹	Specific objectives	Result indicators corresponding to the specific objective
		ERDF	ENI (where applicable)	IPA (where applicable)				
3.	76.269.660	32.64%	0%	1.36%	6. Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	Investment priority 6.c Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage	3.1 To enhance the development of a sustainable and responsible coastal and maritime tourism in the MED area	Level of sustainability of tourism in MED coastal regions
					6. Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	Investment priority 6.d Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services through Natura 2000, and green infrastructures	3.2 To maintain biodiversity and natural ecosystems through strengthening the management and networking of protected areas	Share of protected areas meeting their conservation goals and objectives (thanks to their improved management)
4.	17.945.801	7.68%	0%	0.32%	11. Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders (...)	Enhancing governance in the Mediterranean	4.1 To support the process of strengthening and developing multilateral coordination frameworks in the Mediterranean for joint responses to common challenges	Number of joint thematic action plans allowing to implement coordinated strategic operations ³⁰

²⁷ Presentation of the shares corresponding to ENI and IPA amounts depends on management option chosen.

²⁸ Title of the thematic objective, not applicable to technical assistance

²⁹ Title of the investment priority, not applicable to technical assistance

³⁰ Such as depollution of coasts, fight against sea litter, wastewater management, integrated coastal zone management plans, maritime spatial planning.

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Priority axis	ERDF support (EUR)	Proportion of the total Union support to the cooperation programme (by Fund) ³¹			Thematic objective ³²	Investment priorities ³³	Specific objectives	Result indicators corresponding to the specific objective
		ERDF	ENI (where applicable)	IPA (where applicable)				
Technical Assistance	13.459.351	5.76%	0%	0.24%	NA	NA	5.1 To implement efficiently the cooperation programme 5.2 To improve the support to applicants and beneficiaries and to strengthen the involvement of relevant partners in the programme implementation	NA

³¹ Presentation of the shares corresponding to ENI and IPA amounts depends on management option chosen.

³² Title of the thematic objective, not applicable to technical assistance

³³ Title of the investment priority, not applicable to technical assistance

SECTION 2 Priority Axes

(Reference: points (b) and (c) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

2. 1. Description of the priority axes other than technical assistance

2. 1.1. Priority Axis 1

ID	PRIORITY AXIS 1
Title	"Promoting Mediterranean innovation capacities to develop smart and sustainable growth" The Priority Axis 1 aims to strengthen innovation capacities of public and private actors of Mediterranean regions and support smart and sustainable growth. It grants a specific attention to blue and green growth, creative industries and social innovation that represent strong development and jobs potential in Mediterranean regions. It underlines the need to strengthen innovation clusters, economic sectors, value chains and networks throughout MED regions.

2.1.2. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective

Not applicable

2.1.3. Fund and calculation basis for the Union support

Fund	ERDF
Calculation Basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	71.783.208 €

2.1.4. Investment priority 1.b

(Reference: points (b) (i) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

INVESTMENT PRIORITY 1.b
“Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector, in particular promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation, and supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first production, in particular in key enabling technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies”

2.1.5. Specific objective 1.1

(Reference: points (b) (i) and (ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

ID	1.1
Specific Objective	To increase transnational activity of innovative clusters and networks of key sectors of the MED area
	The specific objective targets to improve innovation capacities of public and private actors involved in green and blue growth sectors, creative industries and social economy through stronger transnational cooperation and better connections between actors of the quadruple helix (research bodies, businesses, public authorities, civil society).
	The objective is especially to improve empowerment of these actors with, within and between existing clusters, economic sectors and networks.

Expected results	Reinforced, empowered and increasingly transnational innovation clusters and networks in key sectors of the MED area MED regions are characterised by insufficient innovation capacities with a lack of cooperation between actors of the quadruple helix. In these regions, challenges are crucial in the fields of the green and blue growth, of creative industries and of social economy that require better cooperation between diverse (and sometimes conflicting) stakeholders. Green growth includes new materials, biotechnologies and biochemistry, eco-construction, energy, agriculture, agribusiness, agro-tourism, bio-agriculture and bio food, products' transformation, valorisation and commercialisation, etc. Blue growth concerns all the activities having strong links with the Mediterranean Sea, including maritime, coastal and cruise tourism, coastal and marine resources, protection of coastal and maritime areas and
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	biodiversity, blue energy (algae, thermic energy, waves), blue biotechnology (food, health, cosmetics), sustainable management of ports, marine and environmental industries, fisheries and aquaculture, etc. Creative industries can be promoted when actions are connected to green and blue growth sectors which can be a case for design activities, multimedia, or cultural activities in relation with tourism. Social innovations can be promoted especially in regard to marginal areas concentrating geographical, economic, social or demographic difficulties that hamper development possibilities of green and blue growth sectors (support to strategies and models for innovative social services for example). Main change sought: For this specific objective, the main change sought is to improve the innovation framework conditions, strengthen and empower innovation clusters and networks, more particularly, in their transnational dimension, in the field of green and blue growth, creative industries and social innovations (connection between clusters, between research and SMEs, between research and public administration, between SMEs and clusters; support to living labs; involvement of end users (businesses or consumers)...). Activities include the evolution of existing clusters and networks, with increasing partnerships or increasing share / transfer of innovation between actors of the quadruple helix. In a general way, a specific attention will be paid to the promotion of eco-innovations aiming to promote sustainable development principles (e.g. smart use of resources, reduction of environmental impact of activities, eco-innovation related to air quality and emission control, etc). Projects shall ensure coherence and complementarity with ERDF regional and national programmes and/or other relevant regional/local plans, taking into account on-going actions and, if relevant, supporting the transfer of results from the MED programmes to these programmes.
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Table 3: Programme specific result indicators *(by specific objective)*

(Reference: point (b) (ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

One (if possible) and no more than two result indicators should be used for each specific objective.

ID	Result Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value ³⁴ (2023) 100 char. max	Source of Data 200 char. max	Frequency of reporting 100 char. max
IP 1.b SO 1.1 1.1.1	Share of innovative clusters (i.e. including RDI activities) offering to their members a consolidated mix of transnational activities in key sectors of the MED area	Innovative clusters (%)	50 % (Current % of innovative clusters that offered to their members a consolidated mix of activities, transnational services and tools)	2014	66%	- Statistics from clusters list - Survey realised on identified clusters in order to assess the existence of transnational activities, services and tools	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)

³⁴ Target values can be qualitative or quantitative

2.1.6.Actions to be supported under the investment priority

2.1.6.1 A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS TO BE SUPPORTED

Reference: point (b) (iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment priority 1.b	“Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector (...)”
1. Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives The following list of possible actions is only an indicative list and can be completed with other relevant actions contributing to the specific objective's goals <i>Specific objective 1.1: To increase transnational activity of innovative clusters and networks of key sectors in the MED area</i> In order to reach this objective, the types of actions must include a stronger operational cooperation between the quadruple helix actors and the possibility to implement pilot demonstration activities. It is also essential to support long term structuring of networks and clusters supported. This can only be achieved with the involvement of different types of actors of the quadruple helix (economic operators, research bodies, training structures and public authorities). The efficiency of the projects will also rely on the concentration of activities in the key intervention fields (blue and green growth, creative industries and social innovation). Designing common approaches and strategies at the transnational level • Conducting studies and analyses on new trending topics on innovation stimulation at EU and MED levels • Identifying, benchmarking, designing and adapting: - o Decision support tools for innovation - o Public policies for innovation - o Innovation systems and processes using novel economic models (e.g.: innovation vouchers schemes), demand-driven innovation (e.g.: innovative Public Procurement) and Public Private Partnerships - o Supporting services for private sector in order to stimulate their innovation capacities (Technology and market intelligence, capacity building, partnering and networking, financial assessment) - o Mechanisms favouring cooperation between research, SMEs and public sector (quadruple helix) in order to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship • Elaborating a common methodology for monitoring innovation policies (e.g.: follow up of RIS3 implementation/evolution)	

Pilot demonstration activities

In key sectors or territories, testing, evaluating and demonstrating their added value and transfer potential of:

- Decision support tools for innovation
- Public policies for innovation
- Innovation systems and processes using novel economic models (e.g.: innovation vouchers schemes), demand-driven innovation (e.g.: innovative Public Procurement) and Public Private Partnerships
- Supporting services for private sector in order to stimulate their innovation capacities (Technology and market intelligence, capacity building, partnering and networking, financial assessment)
- Mechanisms tackling the increased cooperation between research, SMEs and public sector (quadruple helix) in order to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship

Creating or strengthening transnational networks of networks, clusters to achieve a sustainable model of transnational cooperation of innovation actors

Transfer, dissemination and capitalisation activities

- Transforming pilot initiatives in higher scale projects
- Reformulating, complementing and improving results, activities and outputs already obtained in precedent cooperation projects approved by the Med Programme and/or other related programmes (e.g.: European Commission Thematic programmes, European Territorial Cooperation...)
- Implementing public policies for innovation or adopting action plans by public authorities
- Transferring improved transnational systems or processes to other territories or relevant sectors
- Involving regions (beyond direct partnership) in strengthening connections and cooperation of existing smart specialization strategies (RIS3) at transnational level (cooperation platforms and tools complementing existing dynamics...)
- Creating or strengthening sustainable active networks of the quadruple helix system cooperating actors in the relevant sectors with a link to existing or foreseen European networks and platforms (e.g.: Seville S3 platform, INTERREG EUROPE thematic platforms...)
- Strengthening existing clusters and networks and increasing their connectivity and synergies at MED level
- Building capacity and empowering
 - o Public Authorities in demand-driven innovation (public tenders, procedures...), and novel economic models (e.g.: ICT, Innovation Voucher Schemes) stimulating interdisciplinary and transnational cooperation

- o Cluster Managers and members in demand-driven innovation and novel economic models (*e.g.*: ICT, Innovation Voucher Schemes) stimulating interdisciplinary and transnational cooperation
- o Social actors in demand-driven innovation approaches

2. Identification of the main target groups (non-exhaustive list)

- Local, regional and national authorities
- SMEs and economic operators
- Universities and research centres
- Civil society

3. Specific territories targeted

- To be determined according to the needs of the key intervention fields: all MED territories are concerned by this investment priority

4. Types of beneficiaries (non-exhaustive list)

- Local, regional and national authorities
- Intermediary bodies in charge of innovation and economic development
- Regional development agencies
- Universities and other education and training institutes
- Research institutes, innovation centres and clusters
- Business support centres and agencies, technology intermediary and technology/knowledge transfer institutions
- Public and public equivalent bodies dealing with innovation, industrial policy, SMEs and training
- Chambers of Commerce, business associations, platforms, economic operators

2.1.6.2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE SELECTION OF OPERATIONS

(Reference: point (b) (iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment priority 1.b	"Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector (...)"
Each operation will be submitted to an eligibility check ensuring that it fulfils essential requirements regarding the objectives of the projects, their partnership, transnational dimension and budget. At this stage, applications must fully comply with the investment priority and specific objective they refer to. Eligible applications go through a quality check going more into the detail regarding their objectives, the strategy used and the means available.	

The quality criteria will especially include:

- The coherence of the project with the strategy of the programme, the investment priorities and specific objectives
- The coherence of the project with national and regional policies and measures implemented to create synergies and avoid overlapping
- The complementarity with other EU policies, thematic programmes and initiatives in the sector tackled.
- The complementarity with other Mediterranean initiatives in the sector tackled.
- The transnational dimension of the project with partners sharing common needs and common objectives
- The innovative dimension of projects, their concrete effect on socioeconomic development and their consequences in the mid/long term
- The attention paid to mid and long-term direct and indirect environmental effects of the project
- The coherence of the partnership, the relevance and competencies of partners according to the objectives of the project
- The relevance of the financing plan and the coherence of the budget with the objectives set

A specific attention will be paid to the coherence of these elements with the requirements of each call for project. When relevant, additional requirements will be included in the terms of reference of the calls for projects, including for environmental issues.

To elaborate their project, applicants will have to refer to three types of “**modules**”. The objective of these modules is to focus projects on well identified types of activities bringing a concrete contribution to the delivery of the specific objective.

One operation might contain one or several modules depending on its strategy and main objectives.

Outline of the different modules

Module 1: a module dedicated to the design of common approaches and the elaboration of common strategies, models, rules and norms at transnational level, analyses, state of the art, share of information and establishment of networks. Projects focused on this module will analyse an intervention field, complement data, networks, and references and elaborate shared methodology, models, and strategies.

These activities can be the main objective of the project or constitute the first phase of a broader project that will use these networks, models and strategies to launch pilot activities or launch a wider process of capitalisation, dissemination and transfer of experiences and results.

Module 2: a module dedicated to pilot activities where project partners will have the possibility to test processes, technics, models, in the perspective to setup solutions applicable to a wider set of users and territories. Pilot activities can be setup when the context, data and actors are already well identified and when technical and institutional conditions are favourable. In case of short feedback loops, the pilot activity can include both the preliminary work of analysis and the implementation of the pilot activity.

Module 3: When methodologies, practices, intervention tools have been tested and implemented by stakeholders at local or regional level and that they represent a strong interest for wider dissemination in the MED eligible area, projects can propose capitalisation and dissemination activities. A specific attention will be paid to the transfer of results towards regional ERDF programmes and to the involvement of end users in the dissemination processes. At this stage, applicants are encouraged to use results of former projects (from ETC or other EU programmes) and work on outputs of other modules.

To ensure high quality of results, the final objective will not only consist in “disseminating information”. It will be also necessary to ensure that tools, practices and methodologies are effectively taken on board by all actors concerned, and applied at local, regional, national or transnational level as broadly as possible and free of charge.

2.1.6.3. PLANNED USE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

(Reference: point (b) (iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment priority 1.b	“Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector (...)”
Planned use of financial instruments	
The opportunity of the elaboration and implementation of financial instruments will be debated during the implementation of the programme	

2.1.6.4. PLANNED USE OF MAJOR PROJECTS

Not applicable

2.1.6.5. OUTPUT INDICATORS

(Reference: point (b) (iv) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 4: Common and programme specific output indicators *(by investment priority)*

ID	Output Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data 200 char. Max.	Frequency of reporting 100 char. Max.
1.1.a	Number of operational instruments to favour innovation of SMEs	Instruments	44	Programme monitoring tools	annually
1.1.b	Number of enterprises receiving grants	Enterprises	35	Programme monitoring tools	annually
1.1.c	Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	Enterprises	4.000	Programme monitoring tools	annually
1.1.d	Number of transnational innovation clusters supported	Clusters	10	Programme monitoring tools	annually

2.1.7. Priority Axis 2

ID	PRIORITY AXIS 2
Title	Fostering low-carbon strategies and energy efficiency in specific MED territories: cities, islands and rural areas The Priority Axis 2 aims to better manage energy consumption in buildings, to promote renewable energy in territorial development strategies and to increase the use of low carbon transport in urban areas. It is mainly focused on the adaptation and improvement of public policies and end-users practices.

2.1.8. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective

Not applicable

2.1.9. Fund and calculation basis for the Union support

Fund	ERDF
Calculation Basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	44.864.505 €

2.1.10. Investment priority 4c

INVESTMENT PRIORITY 4.c
“Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructure, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector”

2.1.11. Specific objective 2.1

ID	2.1
Specific objective	To raise capacity for better management of energy in public buildings at transnational level
	The specific objective is to reinforce the capacities of public administrations to optimize energy planning measures leading to a reduction of energy consumption and a better management of energy in public buildings.
Expected results	Increased capacity of building owners and managers to develop and implement energy efficiency practices in public buildings in the MED area In Mediterranean regions, buildings represent one of the main sources of GHG emission. Such public building stock requires heavy upgrading of isolation and cooling systems which is currently partly financed by national, regional and EU thematic programmes. The Energy Efficiency Directive introduced binding targets for annual renovation rates of buildings owned and occupied by central governments; recognising their exemplary role in triggering a higher renovation rate while bringing the public building stock up to higher performance. Besides financing support and the development of innovative technics, materials or isolation systems, progress can be made regarding the capacity of owners and managers in order to promote energy efficiency (addressing to the lack of awareness, increasing knowledge, improving the commitment on energy efficiency measures, introducing new financial instruments for sustainable energy...). On these issues, stakeholders can refer to the MED 2007-2013 projects results, namely from the Strategic and target calls and to the Ljubljana declaration that insists on the need for stronger involvement of EU, regional and local actors in favour of energy efficiency and renewable energy in buildings³⁵. As many programmes already support the upgrade of infrastructures, the MED programme will intervene on the qualitative aspect by

³⁵ Ljubljana declaration, Responding to Challenges Regarding Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy in Mediterranean Buildings, Ljubljana, 2013.

	supporting exchange of experience, practices and innovative projects for public building owners and managers. The MED programme will ensure with its measures a leverage effect, maximizing grant funding results. This shall be done with the involvement of public building end users as well in order to ensure coherence of capacity building measures. Main change sought: The main change sought for this specific objective is an increase of the capacity of owners and managers of public buildings to elaborate and implement energy efficiency practices. The MED programme will be especially focused on the way energy efficiency innovative solutions are promoted, disseminated and adopted by public building owners, managers and end users. It includes the mobilisation of bodies in charge of public or public owned buildings and construction, of end-users, the dissemination of innovative systems, capacity building, awareness raising and information activities, the use of carbon footprint tools and collective actions with quantitative objectives regarding the management of energy consumption, etc. Projects shall ensure coherence and complementarity with ERDF regional and national programmes and/or other relevant regional/local plans, as well other EU and international thematic programmes and policies, taking into account on-going actions and, if relevant, supporting the transfer of results from the MED programmes to these programmes.
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Table 3: Programme specific result indicators *(by specific objective)*

One (if possible) and no more than two result indicators should be used for each specific objective.

ID	Result Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value ³⁶ (2023)	Source of Data 200 char. max	Frequency of reporting 100 char. max
IP 4.c SO 2.1 2.1.1.	Share of regional, sub-regional and local energy efficiency plans including adapted measures for public building stock	Regional plans (%)	16%	2014	34%	- Literature review - Desk research on available regional sustainable energy plans	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)
2.1.2.	Share of regional, sub-regional and local energy efficiency plans including adapted measures for public building stock	Local plans (%)	29%	2014	39%	- Literature review - Desk research on a sample of local sustainable energy plans	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)

³⁶ Target values can be qualitative or quantitative.

2.1.12. Actions to be supported under the investment priority

2.1.12.1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS TO BE SUPPORTED

Investment priority 4.c	"Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructure, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector"
1. Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives The following list of possible actions is only an indicative list and can be completed with other relevant actions contributing to the specific objective's goals <i>Specific objective 2.1: To raise capacity for better management of energy in public buildings at transnational level</i> In order to improve energy efficiency in public buildings, it is essential to promote interventions at strategic, political and operational level. The foreseen activities will encourage public bodies to strengthen their intervention capacities and will contribute to better activate key stakeholders in an operational way. This includes new financial instruments, improvement of knowledge and competences, adaptation of habits and behaviours which represent a key dimension of the success of energy efficiency measures. Designing common approaches and strategies at transnational level • Identifying, benchmarking and adapting new approaches, models, tools, services and/or partnerships to improve energy efficiency management in public buildings • Identifying, benchmarking and adapting strategies and policies to improve energy efficiency management (e.g. smart metering, distribution of smart consumer applications, etc.) • Developing common methodologies for feasibility studies and business models in order to develop financial engineering capabilities to leverage ERDF and other public funds on private financial resources. • Harmonizing standards, procedures and data at EU and MED levels Pilot demonstration activities Testing, evaluating and demonstrating the added value and transfer potential of: • Feasibility studies and business models in order to develop financial engineering capabilities to leverage ERDF and other public funds on private financial resources • Strategies and policies to improve energy efficiency management in public buildings (e.g. smart metering, and distribution of smart consumer applications, etc.) • New approaches, models, tools, services and/or partnerships, to improve energy efficiency management in public buildings at EU and MED levels • Harmonized standards, procedures at EU and MED levels	

- Services and tools to raise capacities of public authorities, owners and managers for better energy efficiency in public buildings
- New public policies for the management of energy consumption
- New management approaches, (e.g. green public procurement, public private partnerships, avoiding administrative barriers, simplifying models.)

Transfer, dissemination and capitalisation activities

- Transforming pilot initiatives in higher scale projects: leverage effect.
- Building capacity and awareness raising addressed to:
 - Public Authorities building owners, managers, relevant businesses to improve their technical and administrative skills for a better energy efficiency policy
 - End users, Consumers and citizens about the change of habits in terms of energy consumption;
- Implementing public policies for a better management of energy consumption
- Reformulating, complementing and improving results, activities and outputs already obtained in precedent cooperation projects approved by the Med Programme and/or other related, programmes (e.g.: European Commission Thematic programmes, European Territorial Cooperation...)
- Transferring improved transnational systems or processes to other territories or relevant sectors

2. Identification of the main target groups (*non-exhaustive list*)

- Local and regional and national authorities having direct or indirect relation with energy matters
- Energy department and energy agencies
- Association of SMEs and economic operators (energy market, building, housing, ESCOs, ...)
- End users and civil society (*e.g.* associations of consumers, ...) for the promotion of energy efficient solutions
- NGO's and interest groups in the field of Energy efficiency.

3. Specific territories targeted

- All types of territories, with a special attention to urban areas as large energy consumers with high potential of energy savings

4. Types of beneficiaries (*non-exhaustive list*)

- Local, regional and national authorities
- National, regional and local authorities and agencies dealing with energy issues

- Energy agencies
- Research institutes, universities and energy clusters for energy and low carbon technologies
- Public and private energy suppliers
- Association of SMEs and economic operators (energy market, building, housing, ESCOs, ...)
- Users' and business Associations

2.1.12.2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE SELECTION OF OPERATIONS

(Reference: point (b) (iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Investment priority 4.c	“Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructure, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector”
Each operation will be submitted to an eligibility check ensuring that it fulfils essential requirements regarding the objectives of the projects, their partnership, transnational dimension and budget. At this stage, applications must fully comply with the investment priority and specific objective they refer to. Eligible applications go through a quality check going more into the detail regarding their objectives, the strategy used and the means available. The quality criteria will especially include: • The coherence of the project with the strategy of the programme, the content of the investment priorities and specific objectives • The coherence of the project with national and regional policies and measures implemented to create synergies and avoid overlapping • The complementarity with other EU policies, thematic programmes and initiatives in the sector tackled. • The complementarity with other Mediterranean initiatives in the sector tackled. • The transnational dimension of the project with the demonstration that partners share common needs and common objectives • The innovative dimension of projects, their concrete impact on socioeconomic development and their effects in the mid-term • The attention paid to mid and long-term direct and indirect environmental effects of the project • The coherence of the partnership, the relevance and competencies of partners according to the objectives of the project • The relevance of the financing plan, and the coherence of the budget with the objectives set	

A specific attention will be paid to the coherence of these elements with the requirements of each call for project. When relevant, additional requirements will be included in the terms of reference of the calls for projects, including for environmental issues.

To elaborate their project, applicants will have to refer to three types of “**modules**”. The objective of these modules is to focus projects on well identified types of activities bringing a concrete contribution to the delivery of the specific objective.

One operation might contain one or several modules depending on its strategy and main objectives.

Outline of the different modules

Module 1: a module dedicated to the design of common approaches and the elaboration of common strategies, models, rules and norms at transnational level, analyses, state of the art, share of information and establishment of networks. Projects focused on this module will analyse an intervention field, complement data, networks, references and elaborate shared methodology, models, and strategies.

These activities can be the main objective of the project or constitute the first phase of a broader project that will use these networks, models and strategies to launch pilot activities or launch a wider process of capitalisation, dissemination and transfer of experiences and results.

Module 2: a module dedicated to pilot activities where project partners will have the possibility to test processes, techniques, models, in the perspective to setup solutions applicable to a wider set of users and territories. Pilot activities can be setup when the context, data and actors are already well identified and when technical and institutional conditions are favourable. In case of short feedback loops, the pilot activity can include both the preliminary work of analysis and the implementation of the pilot activity.

Module 3: When methodologies, practices, intervention tools have been tested and implemented by stakeholders at local or regional level and that they represent a strong interest for wider dissemination in the MED eligible area, projects can propose capitalisation and dissemination activities. A specific attention will be paid to the transfer of results towards regional ERDF programmes and to the involvement of end users in the dissemination processes. At this stage, applicants are encouraged to use results of former projects (from ETC or other EU programmes) and work on outputs of other modules.

To ensure high quality of results, the final objective will not only consist in “disseminating information”. It will be also necessary to ensure that tools, practices and methodologies are effectively taken on board by all actors concerned, and applied at local, regional, national or transnational level as broadly as possible and free of charge.

2.1.12.3. PLANNED USE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Investment priority 4.c	"Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructure, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector"
The opportunity of the elaboration and implementation of financial instruments will be debated during the implementation of the programme	

2.1.12.4. PLANNED USE OF MAJOR PROJECTS

Not applicable

2.1.12.5. OUTPUT INDICATORS

Table 4: Common and programme specific output indicators (by investment priority/

ID	Output Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data 200 char.	Frequency of reporting 100 char.
2.1.a	Number of available planning tools to monitor and manage energy consumption in public buildings	Tools	5	Programme monitoring tools	annually
2.1.b	Number of strategies supporting plans on energy consumption management for public buildings	Models	5	Programme monitoring tools	annually
2.1.c	Number of target groups participating in capacity raising activities on energy efficiency for public buildings	Participants	570	Programme monitoring tools	annually
2.1.d	Number of regions and sub-regions engaged (through charters, protocols, MoU) in developing energy efficiency plans/strategies	Territories	176	Programme monitoring tools	annually

2.1.13. Investment priority 4e

INVESTMENT PRIORITY 4.e
“Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multi-modal mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures”

2.1.14. Specific objectives 2.2. and 2.3.

ID	2.2
Specific Objective	To increase the share of renewable local energy sources in energy mix strategies and plans in specific MED territories
	The specific objective is to instigate action among policy makers in order to increase the inclusion of local renewable energy sources in strategies and plans taking into account the specificities and diversity of MED territories
Expected results	Increased inclusion of local renewable energy sources in MED territories As to the renewable energy, the characteristics of MED are, on the one hand, large investments for wind or solar energy in some countries, and, on the other, an overall low energy independency of MED regions. The regions already get important support from ERDF regional, national programme and other thematic programmes in order to develop infrastructures. However, mass energy production must be complemented by local based solutions in order to better meet the specific needs and constraints and ensure sufficient and permanent energy supply in all territories. For these reasons, the MED programme will support projects focused on the diversification of renewable energy production taking into account the specificities of MED territories (islands, coastal and rural areas). Knowing that regional and national programmes will concentrate in this domain on investments and application of national regulations (although deriving from European Directives), the MED Programme will act in this field with a targeted approach focused on capacity building and awareness raising, promoting the exchange of transnational experience and the networking of specific territories (islands and rural areas) that share the same challenges, specificities and opportunities, especially in the field of RES. Main change sought

	For this specific objective, the main change sought is an increased development of local renewable energy sources in energy mix strategies and plans of MED territories as well as strengthening of such strategies, taking into account territorial specificities. Smart cities approach will be supported especially in regard to energy management systems and adaptation between energy production and consumption. Blue energy sources represent important development perspectives at territorial level and will be supported in energy mix strategies (especially biomass and micro-algae). Forest and agriculture biomass (including agriculture waste) constitute also significant green energy sources to be developed in MED regions. Projects shall ensure coherence and complementarity with ERDF regional and national programmes and/or other relevant regional/local plans, taking into account on-going actions and, if relevant, supporting the transfer of results from the MED programmes to these programmes.
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ID	2.3
Specific Objective	To increase capacity to use existing low carbon transport systems and multimodal connections among them The specific objective is to increase the use of sustainable transport systems by developing connectivity and low-carbon mobility plans, implementing rail and sea services as well as applications for passengers and freight in MED territories. Actions will have to pay a specific attention to the different categories of end users (taking into account the specific needs, economic, social and geographical situations).
Expected results	Enlarged capacity to use low carbon transport systems in MED regions The different historical and economic dynamics during last century and dissimilar geographical orography can be considered as some of the reasons that contributed to an unbalanced development of the infrastructure system and the transport modality among the Mediterranean shores. The shift towards low carbon transport systems is promoted with the adaptation of transport policies, the promotion of multimodality and large investments in infrastructures financed by EU, national, regional and local authorities. As the development of infrastructures and transport systems is largely financed by other EC programmes, the MED programme will avoid duplicity and will especially intervene on the question of use and access to low carbon transport systems for the different categories of population and in the development of transnational actions directed to support public transport services for multimodal passengers (urban

	transport, rail/maritime/cruise passengers), <i>e.g.</i> cutting running times, developing accessibility on peripheral and touristic cities/sites or clusters, optimizing costs. Moreover it will focus on soft measures related to transport policy building, as well as transport procedural, technology and organizational innovations. Transports have also a strong influence on the living environment, on human health (pollution, noise) which should be taken into account in the development of innovative sustainable solutions. In this sense, following Directive 2008/50/EC on Air Quality, Sustainable Urban and regional Mobility Plans will be welcomed. An improved freight and passengers transport system will boost the competitiveness of the MED territorial and economic systems, as well as of the MED cities. Main change sought For this specific objective, the main change sought is an increase of end-users having a better access to and using sustainable transports systems. Projects could focus on: • analysis and promotion of models on sustainable transport services; • launch of pilot transport services; • adaptation of measures, through planning, implementing and promotion of connectivity and low-carbon mobility plans and IT-based transport systems and services; • capacity building and awareness raising activities. Projects shall ensure coherence and complementarity with ERDF regional and national programmes and/or other relevant regional/local plans, taking into account on-going actions and, if relevant, supporting the transfer of results from the MED programmes to these programmes.
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Interreg MED Programme 2014-2020

Table 3: Programme specific result indicators *(by specific objective)*

One (if possible) and no more than two result indicators should be used for each specific objective. The need for more indicators should be exceptional.

ID	Result Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value ³⁷ (2023)	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
IP 4.e SO 2.2 2.2.1	Share of renewable energy from local sources in energy mix of MED islands and rural areas	% of local RES in the energy mix of islands	7,24%	2014	19,77%	Survey on a sample of sustainable energy action plans of MED islands	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)
IP 4.e SO 2.2 2.2.2	Share of renewable energy from local sources, in energy mix of MED islands and rural areas	% of local RES in the energy mix of rural areas	7,28%	2014	12,89%	Survey on a sample of sustainable energy action plans of MED rural areas	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)
IP 4.e SO 2.3 2.3.1	Share of urban plans which include low carbon transport and multimodal connection soft actions	Plans providing soft actions oriented towards sustainable transport (%)	23%	2014	47%	- Desk research on LC transport - Survey on a sample of Sustainable Energy Action Plans of MED cities	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)

³⁷ Target values can be qualitative or quantitative.

2.1.15. Actions to be supported under the Investment Priority

2.1.15.1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS TO BE SUPPORTED

Investment priority 4.e	“Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multi-modal mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures”
1. Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives The following list of possible actions is only an indicative list and can be completed with other relevant actions contributing to the specific objective's goals <i>Specific Objective 2.2: To increase the share of renewable local energy sources in energy mix strategies and plans in specific MED territories</i> In order to reach this objective, applicants are asked to develop territorial approaches taking into account ongoing public policies, energy mix models and strategies, as well as specificities of geographical areas and potential impacts of future initiatives on the environment. It can be achieved by strengthening measures already focused on energy mix strategies or by fostering the implementation of such approaches in MED territories. Since MED projects cannot finance heavy investments, actions are especially relevant when supporting decision making processes, exploring energy mix systems adapted to territorial specificities and ensuring a large dissemination of knowledge and experiences. Nonetheless, projects would integrate activities and outcomes leading to trigger higher investments within the framework of other initiatives and funding channels different to the MED Programme (e.g. European Investment Bank, Horizon2020, Regional and National Programmes). Designing common approaches and strategies at transnational level • Elaborating energy mix models, plans and strategies adapted to MED territories including local renewable energy sources (and including an environmental impact assessment of the energy mix) • Elaborating feasibility studies, including legal and financial factors, for the use of renewable local energy sources for specific types of territories (and including an environmental impact assessment of the energy mix) • Conducting studies for increase of share of renewable local energy for islands • Supporting private sector (private financial operators, private and public owned financial partnerships, enterprises) in order to develop and implement innovative financing instruments and tools for renewable energy sources • Elaborating plans for constant availability of renewable local energy sources • Identifying good practices related to the optimization of local energy mixes in the Mediterranean area • Drafting public policies	

Pilot demonstration activities

- Testing the feasibility of energy mix strategies including renewable local energy sources in specific areas (coastal areas, islands, rural areas)
- Testing public policies
- Designing and testing concepts and tools for the exploitation of endogenous renewable energy sources
- Developing and testing solutions for improved interconnections and coordination of energy networks at territorial level integrating renewable energy sources
- Implementing good practices related to the optimization of local energy mixes in the Mediterranean area.

Transfer, dissemination and capitalisation activities

- Organizing tailored events to raise awareness and improve capacities of citizens, public authorities and relevant businesses about availability of renewable local energy sources and their use in energy mix plans (training, seminars, targeted dissemination, events)
- Adjusting a transnational model to local conditions in order to adopt a new energy mix plan in the MED Region
- Strengthening the capacity of the public sector to develop and implement innovative local energy services, incentives and financing schemes
- Implementing and/or reinforcing public policies oriented to increase the contribution of renewable energy sources at local level
- Reformulating, complementing and improving results, activities and outputs already obtained in precedent cooperation projects approved by the Med Programme and/or other related, programmes (e.g. Intelligent Energy, Enpi CBC Med).
- Establishing bridging aspects of sustainability after the end of the projects by considering crucial aspects such as: continuity and increasing of investments, integration within strategic actions at local, regional, national and transnational level.
- Transforming pilot initiatives in higher scale projects.
- Enhancing the replicability in territories with similar characteristics of initiatives developed through other projects

Specific Objective 2.3: To increase capacity to use existing low carbon transport systems and multimodal connections among them

In order to reach this objective, activities are focused on the improvement of decision making tools (analysis, models, planning systems...), the capacity to better involve end users and the promotion of operational solutions for public authorities and stakeholders. Since the MED programme cannot finance heavy investments, activities support the adaptation of transport policies and tools with a specific attention paid to the way to better answer the needs of end users.

Designing common approaches and strategies at transnational level

Identifying, benchmarking and adapting:

- ICT systems for smart low-carbon transport models, using, for example, living labs approaches
- Solutions to facilitate the use of sustainable transports by users
- Strategies and policies to adopt or improve connectivity and mobility plans with low-carbon transport systems
- Transport plans/strategies/policies/models for passengers and freight transport services with a transnational vision, aiming at developing concrete multimodal mobility and paving the way for further larger investments
 - Services and tools to raise capacities of public authorities in low carbon transport policies
 - Public pilot services for the transport of passengers and/or goods by train and/or ship in a multimodal perspective

Conducting studies/analysis:

- to foster connectivity plans using low carbon transports within and between islands and between mainland and islands
- Regarding the existing and the potential freight/ passengers services in the MED area
- Developing common methodologies for fees
- Ability studies and business models in order to develop financial engineering capabilities to leverage ERDF and other public funds on private financial resources.

Pilot demonstration activities

Testing , evaluating and demonstrating their added value and transfer potential of:

- Feasibility studies and business plans to develop financial engineering capabilities to leverage ERDF and other public funds on private financial resources
- Strategies and policies to adopt or improve local and regional mobility plans
 - o Services and tools to raise capacities of public authorities in low carbon transport policies.
- ITC systems for low-carbon transport models using, for example, living labs approaches
- Solutions to facilitate use of sustainable transports by end users
- Models for improvement of multimodal connections between transport systems and among MED territories
- Public pilot services for the transport of passengers and/or goods by train and/or ship in a multimodal perspective
- Connectivity plans using low carbon transports within and between islands and between mainland and islands

Transfer, dissemination and capitalisation activities

- Transforming pilot initiatives in higher scale projects: leverage effect.
- Reformulating, complementing and improving results, activities and outputs already obtained in precedent cooperation projects approved by the Med Programme and/or other related, programmes (e.g.: European Commission Thematic programmes, European Territorial Cooperation...)
- Transferring improved models and systems to other territories or relevant sectors to:
 - optimise the urban and sub-urban multimodal links
 - promote public optimised passengers and freight services in the MED area
- Building capacity and awareness raising addressed to
 - Educating and informing citizens to use sustainable means of transport.
 - MED economic actors on the strategic role of sustainable transport systems for their competitiveness
- Implementing public policies for a lower carbon transport or adopting action plans by public authorities

2. Identification of the main target groups (*non-exhaustive list*)

- Local, regional and national public authorities
- Energy department and energy agencies
- Transport department and transport agencies
- End users and civil society for the use of sustainable transport solutions

3. Specific territories targeted

- Coastal areas for the development potential of renewable energy solutions and necessity to protect land, sea, natural and cultural resources
- Islands and rural areas for the development potential of local energy mix solutions
- Urban areas
- Urban areas including, city centres, suburbs and commuter zones for the use of sustainable transport systems
- Territories confronted to difficulty of mobility and / or access and requiring the development of multimodality and sustainable transports
- Areas that can profit from multimodality such as in sea-coast-hinterland relations

4. Types of beneficiaries (*non-exhaustive list*)

- Local, regional and national public authorities
- Local, regional and national authorities and agencies competent in energy resources
- Energy agencies

- Local, regional and national authorities and agencies competent in transport, mobility management and spatial development
- Research institutes for energy, low carbon technologies, transport and mobility issues
- Developers and providers of transport information systems
- Public and private operators
- Public and private transport organisation and companies
- NGOs

2.1.15.2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE SELECTION OF OPERATIONS

Investment priority 4.e	“Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multi-modal mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures”
Each operation will be submitted to an eligibility check ensuring that it fulfils essential requirements regarding the objectives of the projects, their partnership, transnational dimension and budget. At this stage, applications must fully comply with the investment priority and specific objective they refer to. Eligible applications go through a quality check going more into the detail regarding their objectives, the strategy used and the means available. The quality criteria will especially include: • The coherence of the project with the strategy of the programme, the content of the investment priorities and specific objectives • The coherence of the project with national and regional policies and measures implemented to create synergies and avoid overlapping • The complementarity with other EU policies, thematic programmes and initiatives in the sector tackled. • The complementarity with other Mediterranean initiatives in the sector tackled. • The transnational dimension of the project with the demonstration that partners share common needs and common objectives • The innovative dimension of projects, their concrete impact on socioeconomic development and their effects in the mid-term • The attention paid to mid and long-term direct and indirect environmental effects of the project • The coherence of the partnership, the relevance and competencies of partners according to the objectives of the project • Coherence of the activities with the objectives and results • The relevance of the financing plan, and the coherence of the budget with the objectives set	

A specific attention will be paid to the coherence of these elements with the requirements of each call for project. When relevant, additional requirements will be included in the terms of reference of the calls for projects, including for environmental issues.

To elaborate their project, applicants will have to refer to three types of “**modules**”. The objective of these modules is to focus projects on well identified types of activities bringing a concrete contribution to the delivery of the specific objective.

One operation might contain one or several modules depending on its strategy and main objectives.

Outline of the different modules

Module 1: a module dedicated to the design of common approaches and the elaboration of common strategies, models, rules and norms at transnational level, analyses, state of the art, share of information and establishment of networks. Projects focused on this module will analyse an intervention field, complement data, networks, references and elaborate shared methodology, models, and strategies.

These activities can be the main objective of the project or constitute the first phase of a broader project that will use these networks, models and strategies to launch pilot activities or launch a wider process of capitalisation, dissemination and transfer of experiences and results.

Module 2: a module dedicated to pilot activities where project partners will have the possibility to test processes, techniques, models, in the perspective to setup solutions applicable to a wider set of users and territories. Pilot activities can be setup when the context, data and actors are already well identified and when technical and institutional conditions are favourable. In case of short feedback loops, the pilot activity can include both the preliminary work of analysis and the implementation of the pilot activity.

Module 3: When methodologies, practices, intervention tools have been tested and implemented by stakeholders at local or regional level and that they represent a strong interest for wider dissemination in the MED eligible area, projects can propose capitalisation and dissemination activities. A specific attention will be paid to the transfer of results towards regional and national ERDF programmes and to the involvement of end users in the dissemination processes. At this stage, applicants are encouraged to use results of former projects (from ETC or other EU programmes) and work on outputs of other modules.

To ensure high quality of results, the final objective will not only consist in “disseminating information”. It will be also necessary to ensure that tools, practices and methodologies are effectively taken on board by all actors concerned, and applied at local, regional, national or transnational level as broadly as possible and free of charge.

2.1.15.3. PLANNED USE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Investment priority 4.e	“Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territories, in particular for urban areas, including the promotion of sustainable multi-modal mobility and mitigation-relevant adaptation measures”
The opportunity of the elaboration and implementation of financial instruments will be debated during the implementation of the programme	

2.1.15.5. PLANNED USE OF MAJOR PROJECTS

Not applicable

2.1.15.6 OUTPUT INDICATORS

Table 4: Common and programme specific output indicators *(by investment priority)*

ID	Output Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
2.2.a	Number of planning tools to develop energy plans including local RES	tools	5	Programme monitoring tools	annually
2.2.b	Population of islands covered by plans	population	1.600.000 (15% of population)	Programme monitoring tools	annually
2.2.c	Population of rural areas covered by plans	population	1.200.000 (5% of population)	Programme monitoring tools	annually
2.2.d	Number of models to develop action plans including local RES in energy mix	models	5	Programme monitoring tools	annually
2.2.e	Number of regions and sub-regions engaged (through charters, protocols, MoU) in increasing share of local RES in energy mix	territories	192	Programme monitoring tools	annually
2.3.a	Number of instruments available to foster the use of LC transport solutions, including multimodal ones	instruments	5	Programme monitoring tools	annually

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ID	Output Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
2.3.b	Number of models to develop urban plans including low carbon transport and multimodal connections soft actions	models	10	Programme monitoring tools	annually
2.3.c	Population involved in awareness raising activities	population	300.000	Programme monitoring tools	annually
2.3.d	Number of urban areas engaged (through charters, protocols, MoU) in developing urban plans/strategies including low carbon transport and multimodal connection soft actions	territories	80	Programme monitoring tools	annually

2.1.16. Priority Axis 3

ID	PRIORITY AXIS 3
Title	“Protecting and promoting Mediterranean natural and cultural resources” The Priority Axis 3 aims to reduce the potential impact of human activities on environmental and cultural heritage and ensure a better protection of natural resources. It grants a specific attention to maritime and coastal areas and water management that represent key challenges in Mediterranean regions.

2.1.17. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective

Not applicable

2.1.18. Fund and calculation basis for the Union support

Fund	ERDF
Calculation Basis for the Union support (public or total)	76.269.660 €

2.1.19. Investment Priority 6.c

INVESTMENT PRIORITY 6.c
“Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage”

2.1.20. Specific objective 3.1.

ID	3.1
Specific Objective	To enhance the development of a sustainable and responsible coastal and maritime tourism in the MED area
	The specific objective is to enhance the development of policies and increase the coordination of strategies between territories at interregional and transnational level regarding the development of a sustainable and responsible coastal and maritime tourism, in line with the integrated coastal zone management and maritime spatial planning principles, through cooperation and joint planning
Expected results	Improved cooperation and joint planning for the development of a sustainable and responsible coastal and maritime tourism In MED regions, natural and cultural heritage are confronted to strong demographic, economic and urban pressures from a range of socio-economic activities, including intensive coastal urbanization and mass tourism. However, recent trends show that tourism can be considered as a pioneer sector in the implementation of the principles of sustainable development. In this sense, sustainable development applied to tourism not only means to make optimal use of environmental resources and maintain ecological processes and biodiversity, but also to respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, and to provide socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders in the destination. One main challenge is to improve cooperation, joint and integrated planning and to better manage conflicting interests (economic development, tourism, use of scarce resources, environmental changes...) to enhance the development of tourism as an asset for the sustainability of MED regions, in all three aspects of sustainability (environment, social, economic). The MED programme will grant a specific attention to the way tourism activities are being developed, how strategies and development plans can be adapted and improved to reduce or better manage the impact of tourism activities on the environment (adaptation of activities, seasonality, land use, water management, energy management, etc.). The development of activities respectful of natural and cultural resources shall also take into account environmental changes like the reduction of water resources, the risks of droughts or floods,

	hydrological stress, soil and coastal erosion, extreme weather events that have direct interconnections with economic development and urbanisation and direct impact on natural and cultural heritage (improvement of observation, information and alert systems, adaptation of planning tools, reduction of conflict of use, land management tools, coastal and maritime management...). The objective to ensure that development of coastal and maritime tourism will be pursued with stronger attention paid to environmental changes and to the impact of these activities on natural and cultural heritage, taking into account integrated coastal zone management and maritime spatial planning principles. Main change sought For this specific objective, the main change sought is an improvement of cooperation strategies and policies and joint planning for the development of a more sustainable and responsible coastal and maritime tourism It includes improvement of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP), adaptation of public policies, economic activities and planning tools, better cooperation between stakeholders, coordinated actions between public authorities of different MED territories, an increase of transnational and interregional cooperation and action plans, increase of number of regions involved in such strategies.
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Table 3: Programme specific result indicators *(by specific objective)*

One (if possible) and no more than two result indicators should be used for each specific objective. The need for more indicators should be exceptional

ID	Result Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value ³⁸ (2023)	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
IP 6.c SO 3.1 3.1.1	Level of sustainability of tourism in MED coastal regions	(%)	26,7 %	2014	35,8%	Statistical and comparative analysis based on environmental, social and economic data related to tourism	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)

³⁸ Target values can be qualitative or quantitative.

2.1.21. Actions to be supported under the investment priority

2.1.21.1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS TO BE SUPPORTED

Investment priority 6.c	“Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage”
1. Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives The following list of possible actions is only an indicative list and can be completed with other relevant actions contributing to the specific objective's goals <i>Specific Objective 3.1: To enhance the development of a sustainable and responsible coastal and maritime tourism in the MED area</i> To reach this objective, a specific attention is paid to the involvement and to the cooperation capacities of public authorities, concerned by sustainable tourism and integrated management. Actions will contribute to improve knowledge and decision making capacities, including a better use of observation, monitoring and planning tools. A strong cooperation between actors is essential to generate cumulative effects at transnational level. Designing common approaches and strategies at transnational level • Conducting studies and analysis for: - o The assessment of the state of the Mediterranean coasts - o The development of a highly diversified and sustainable coastal and maritime tourism integrating the principles of Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Maritime Spatial Planning • Identifying, benchmarking, designing and adapting: - o Tools, services, policies, plans, models addressing the issues of competitiveness, seasonality, product diversification, connectivity, improved infrastructure, improved skills - o Models and plans for the management of coastal tourist destinations integrating the principles of Integrated Maritime Spatial Planning and Maritime Spatial Planning - o Innovative and integrated strategies for development of sustainable tourism - o Mechanisms favouring cooperation and networking between tourist destinations • Gathering data and monitoring indicators related to sustainable and responsible tourism in the MED area, in line with existing tools • Improving the implementation of strategies and tools to better take into account negative impacts on natural resources and cultural heritage in tourism development strategies • Developing common plans for enhancing the management of coastal and maritime tourist destinations in order to prevent negative impacts on natural resources and cultural heritage	

Pilot demonstration activities

Testing, evaluating and demonstrating their added value and transfer potential of:

- o Tools, services, policies, plans, models addressing the issues of competitiveness, seasonality, product diversification, connectivity, improved infrastructure, improved skills
- o Models and plans for the management of coastal tourist destinations integrating the principles of Integrated Maritime Spatial Planning and Maritime Spatial Planning
- o Innovative and integrated strategies for development of sustainable tourism
- o Mechanisms favouring cooperation and networking between tourist destinations
- o Evaluation tools, common standards and systems regarding the sustainability of tourist destinations

Transfer, dissemination, capitalisation activities

- Transforming pilot initiatives in higher scale projects
- Reformulating, complementing and improving results, activities and outputs already obtained in precedent cooperation projects approved by the Med Programme and/or other related, programmes (e.g.: European Commission Thematic programmes, European Territorial Cooperation...)
- Implementing public policies for sustainable and responsible tourism or adopting action plans by public authorities
- Transferring improved transnational systems or processes to other territories or relevant sectors
- Engaging Regions (beyond direct partnership) to strengthen connections and cooperation regarding sustainable and responsible tourism, ICZM and MSP
- Creating synergies with other organisations, networks and programmes for complementarity and coordinated actions towards effective implementation of ICZM protocol and MSP Directive
- Enhancing governance mechanisms towards ICZM and MSP for a better development of sustainable tourism in coastal and maritime tourism
- Facilitating the integration of ICZM principles, objectives and actions related to tourism into national or regional policy frameworks and instruments
- Building capacity and empowering:
 - o Public Authorities
 - o Tourist destinations stakeholders
 - o Economic operators

2. Identification of the main target groups (*non-exhaustive list*)

- Local, regional and national public authorities
- Environment, economic development, planning, sustainable development, tourism departments of local, regional and national authorities
- Environment agencies
- Tourism agencies and tourism organisations
- Universities and research centres
- Economic operators
- Non-governmental organisations / Citizen / tourists / end users

3. Specific territories targeted

- Coastal areas for their fragility facing human activities; the importance of their cultural and natural heritage and attractiveness for seasonal activities

4. Types of beneficiaries (*non-exhaustive list*)

- Local, regional and national public authorities
- Environment, economic development, planning, sustainable development and tourism departments of local, regional and national authorities
- Regional development agencies
- Environment agencies
- Intermediary bodies involved in territorial development processes
- Tourism agencies and tourism organisations
- Universities and Research centres
- Economic operators

2.1.21.2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE SELECTION OF OPERATIONS

Investment priority 6.c	"Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage"
Each operation will be submitted to an eligibility check ensuring that it fulfils essential requirements regarding the objectives of the projects, their partnership, transnational dimension and budget. At this stage, applications must fully comply with the investment priority and specific objective they refer to. Eligible applications go through a quality check going more into the detail regarding their objectives, the strategy used and the means available. The quality criteria will especially include: • The coherence of the project with the strategy of the programme, the content of the investment priorities and specific objectives • The coherence of the project with national and regional policies and measures implemented to create synergies and avoid overlapping	

- The complementarity with other EU policies, thematic programmes and initiatives in the sector tackled.
- The complementarity with other Mediterranean initiatives in the sector tackled.
- The transnational dimension of the project with the demonstration that partners share common needs and common objectives
- The innovative dimension of projects, their concrete impact on socioeconomic development and their effects in the mid-term
- The attention paid to mid and long-term direct and indirect environmental effects of the project
- The coherence of the partnership, the relevance and competencies of partners according to the objectives of the project
- The coherence of the activities with the objectives and results
- The relevance of the financing plan, and the coherence of the budget with the objectives set

A specific attention will be paid to the coherence of these elements with the requirements of each call for project. When relevant, additional requirements will be included in the terms of reference of the calls for projects, including for environmental issues.

To elaborate their project, applicants will have to refer to three types of **"modules"**. The objective of these modules is to focus projects on well identified types of activities bringing a concrete contribution to the delivery of the specific objective.

One operation might contain one or several modules depending on its strategy and main objectives.

Outline of the different modules

Module 1: a module dedicated to the design of common approaches and the elaboration of common strategies, models, rules and norms at transnational level, analyses, state of the art, share of information and establishment of networks. Projects focused on this module will analyse an intervention field, complement data, networks, references and elaborate shared methodology, models, and strategies.

These activities can be the main objective of the project or constitute the first phase of a broader project that will use these networks, models and strategies to launch pilot activities or launch a wider process of capitalisation, dissemination and transfer of experiences and results.

Module 2: a module dedicated to pilot activities where project partners will have the possibility to test processes, techniques, models, in the perspective to setup solutions applicable to a wider set of users and territories. Pilot activities can be setup when the context, data and actors are already well identified and when technical and institutional conditions are favourable. In case of short feedback loops, the pilot activity can include both the preliminary work of analysis and the implementation of the pilot activity.

Module 3: When methodologies, practices, intervention tools have been tested and implemented by stakeholders at local or regional level and that they represent a strong interest for wider dissemination in the MED eligible area, projects can propose capitalisation and dissemination activities. A specific attention will be paid to the transfer of results towards regional and national ERDF programmes and to the involvement of end users in the

dissemination processes. At this stage, applicants are encouraged to use results of former projects (from ETC or other EU programmes) and work on outputs of other modules.

To ensure high quality of results, the final objective will not only consist in “disseminating information”. It will be also necessary to ensure that tools, practices and methodologies are effectively taken on board by all actors concerned, and applied at local, regional, national or transnational level as broadly as possible and free of charge.

2.1.21.3. PLANNED USE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Investment priority 6.c	“Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage”
The opportunity of the elaboration and implementation of financial instruments will be debated during the implementation of the programme	

2.1.21.4. PLANNED USE OF MAJOR PROJECTS

Not applicable

2.1.21.5. OUTPUT INDICATORS

Table 4: Common and programme specific output indicators (by investment priority/

ID	Output Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data 200 char.	Frequency of reporting 100 char.
3.1.a.	Number of instruments available to enhance the development of sustainable and responsible tourism	Instruments	17	Programme monitoring tools	annually
3.1.b	Number of tourist destinations covered by a sustainable tourism evaluation tool	tourist destinations	108	Programme monitoring tools	annually
3.1.c	Number of strategies applying sustainable tourism management criteria	Strategies	11	Programme monitoring tools	annually

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ID	Output Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data 200 char.	Frequency of reporting 100 char.
3.1.d	Number of regions and sub-regions engaged (through charters, protocols, MoU) in implementing sustainable tourism plans	Territories	144	Programme monitoring tools	annually

2.1.22. Investment priority 6d

INVESTMENT PRIORITY 6.d
“Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure”

2.1.23. Specific objective 3.2.

ID	3.2
Specific Objective	To maintain biodiversity and natural ecosystems through strengthening the management and networking of protected areas
	The specific objective is strengthening capacity to adapt and improve protection measures in order to maintain the biodiversity of natural coastal and marine ecosystems. It includes a better integration of protected areas in regional development strategies and more intensive cooperation between MED regions (exchange of information, strategies, regulations...). This shall be done in close coordination with the implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework directive and in line with the Barcelona Convention.
Expected results	Maintained biodiversity of ecosystems via better integration of protected areas in territorial development strategies In MED regions, ecosystems and biodiversity represent a key dimension of the quality of life, territorial attractiveness, of the water and food supply and the fight against pollution. Natural resources in these regions are highly valuable and constitute an important driver for economic development. They are however confronted to a strong pressure and conflicts of use due to the urbanisation process, agricultural and industrial activities, transport, etc.

Protection measures must be interconnected and inclined to take into account these changes. If protected areas have been set up in most of the MED regions, ecosystems and biodiversity evolve and protection measures do not answer to all needs observed at territorial level. In the Mediterranean area, one can especially observe a strong pressure on water quality (rivers, sea, marine litters), with direct effects on the biodiversity. Invasive species represent also a specific risk as a consequence of climate change.

Integrated environmental management requires a comprehensive approach to natural resources, planning and management involving the different level of authorities (local, regional and national).

The MED programme will support the setting up of common tools and methodologies, the share of knowledge and data, the strengthening of networks between protected areas and also the definition of common answers regarding strategies, management structures and governance mechanisms. It will ensure that MED ecosystems are better taken into account in existing public policies.

Main change sought

For this specific objective, the main change sought is a strengthening of the management and of the cooperation between protected areas in order to increase their capacities to improve for instance water management, fight against invasive species and monitoring of fishing and tourism activities.

The resolution of the Bologna Charter and especially the need to improve the cooperation between regional partners in Mediterranean coastal areas will be considered (*European regions Charter for the promotion of a common framework for strategic actions aimed at the protection and sustainable development of the Mediterranean coastal areas – Brussels 2012*).

The programme will in particular support more intensive cooperation between Mediterranean regions, with adaptation and extension of protected areas where necessary. This includes the protection of ecosystem services, the reduction of conflicts of use, with a specific focus on coastal, marine and wetland areas.

Cooperation should be improved especially at transnational level with more efficient share of knowledge and better coordination of policies and interdisciplinary approaches aiming to improve awareness and protection of fragile areas, natural habitats and species.

Table 3: Programme specific result indicators *(by specific objective)*

One (if possible) and no more than two result indicators should be used for each specific objective. The need for more indicators should be exceptional

ID	Result Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value ³⁹ (2023)	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
IP 6.d SO 3.2 3.2.1	Share of protected areas meeting their conservation goals and objectives (thanks to their improved management)	Land based Natura 2000 sites (%)	73,5%	2014	85%	- Compilation of data from a selection of EEA database indicators - Selection and scoring of a sample of PA	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)
IP 6.d SO 3.2 3.2.2	Share of protected areas meeting their conservation goals and objectives (thanks to their improved management)	Marine Protected Areas (%)	65%	2012	80%	- Compilation of data from a selection of MEDPAN indicators - Selection and scoring of a sample of PA	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)

³⁹ Target values can be qualitative or quantitative.

2.1.24. Actions to be supported under the investment priority

2.1.24.1. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS TO BE SUPPORTED

Investment priority 6.d	“Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure”
1. Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives The following list of possible actions is only an indicative list and can be completed with other relevant actions contributing to the specific objective's goals <i>Specific Objective 3.2: To maintain biodiversity and natural ecosystems through strengthening the management and networking of protected areas</i> In order to reach this objective, actions are especially focused on the governance and management systems of protected areas, including the improvement of knowledge, competences, observation and monitoring capacities. Actions will contribute to improve the cooperation between these areas while involving local stakeholders. A specific focus is given to the numerous Natura 2000 sites of the MED programme area, both land and sea based. Designing common approaches and strategies at transnational level • Studying and mapping certain categories of ecosystems and their principal threats in order to improve their understanding, management and protection • Developing information services • Developing protection plans • Creating or developing networks of experts to support public authorities in decision making processes • Developing integrated strategies and tools for the sustainable management of protected and highly valuable areas (biodiversity, landscapes, eco-systems, etc.) • Drafting public policies • Monitoring resolution of conflicts among the increasing multiple economic and social uses of coastal protected areas • Promoting joint charters, protocols, and MoU in implementing management strategies for sustainable management of protected areas • Addressing pollution or deterioration of protected natural habitats (including water and waste management) • Developing integrated trans-boundary strategies and actions to maintain the natural ecosystems.	

Pilot demonstration activities

- Testing new tools and services
- Testing public policies
- Testing of innovative technologies and tools facilitating effective integrated environmental management (*e.g.* remediation technologies, monitoring tools...)
- Testing financing mechanisms and tools for protected areas
- Testing regional and trans-boundary resource management plans

Transfer, dissemination and capitalisation activities

- Raising awareness of the population about protected areas and mediating risks of conflict of users
- Raising awareness and involvement of public decision-makers about reducing pressure on protected areas
- Training local stakeholders and organising knowledge transfer to communicate about areas to protect
- Enlarging protection plans to new areas
- Animating networks for the development of strategies
- Implementing public policies
- Implementing capacity building projects
- Transferring scientific knowledge to decision-makers
- Transferring and exchanging good practices

2. Identification of the main target groups (*non-exhaustive list*)

- Decision makers, environment department, economic development departments of local, regional and national authorities
- Environment agencies
- Protected areas management organisations
- Land owners and land users
- Economic operators
- Citizen / consumers / local communities associations

3. Specific territories targeted

- Terrestrial, coastal, marine areas and islands for the importance of their biodiversity and ecosystems and their fragility in front of human pressure

4. Types of beneficiaries (*non-exhaustive list*)

- Environment departments of local, regional and national authorities

- Environment agencies
- Regional development agencies
- Protected areas management organisations
- Intermediary bodies involved in territorial development processes
- Research centres
- Economic operators
- Local communities associations

2.1.24.2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE SELECTION OF OPERATIONS

Investment priority 6.d	“Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure”
Each operation will be submitted to an eligibility check ensuring that it fulfils essential requirements regarding the objectives of the projects, their partnership, transnational dimension and budget. At this stage, applications must fully comply with the investment priority and specific objective they refer to. Eligible applications go through a quality check going more into the detail regarding their objectives, the strategy used and the means available. The quality criteria will especially include: • The coherence of the project with the strategy of the programme, the content of the investment priorities and specific objectives • The coherence of the project with national and regional policies and measures implemented to create synergies and avoid overlapping • The complementarity with other EU policies, thematic programmes and initiatives in the sector tackled. • The complementarity with other Mediterranean initiatives in the sector tackled. • The transnational dimension of the project with the demonstration that partners share common needs and common objectives • The innovative dimension of projects, their concrete impact on socioeconomic development and their effects in the mid-term • The attention paid to mid and long-term direct and indirect environmental effects of the project • The coherence of the partnership, the relevance and competencies of partners according to the objectives of the project • The coherence of activities with the objectives and results • The relevance of the financing plan, and the coherence of the budget with the objectives set	

A specific attention will be paid to the coherence of these elements with the requirements of each call for project. When relevant, additional requirements will be included in the terms of reference of the calls for projects, including for environmental issues.

To elaborate their project, applicants will have to refer to three types of “**modules**”. The objective of these modules is to focus projects on well identified types of activities bringing a concrete contribution to the delivery of the specific objective.

One operation might contain one or several modules depending on its strategy and main objectives.

Outline of the different modules

Module 1: a module dedicated to the design of common approaches and the elaboration of common strategies, models, rules and norms at transnational level, analyses, state of the art, share of information and establishment of networks. Projects focused on this module will analyse an intervention field, complement data, networks, references and elaborate shared methodology, models, and strategies.

These activities can be the main objective of the project or constitute the first phase of a broader project that will use these networks, models and strategies to launch pilot activities or launch a wider process of capitalisation, dissemination and transfer of experiences and results.

Module 2: a module dedicated to pilot activities where project partners will have the possibility to test processes, techniques, models, in the perspective to setup solutions applicable to a wider set of users and territories. Pilot activities can be setup when the context, data and actors are already well identified and when technical and institutional conditions are favourable. In case of short feedback loops, the pilot activity can include both the preliminary work of analysis and the implementation of the pilot activity.

Module 3: When methodologies, practices, intervention tools have been tested and implemented by stakeholders at local or regional level and that they represent a strong interest for wider dissemination in the MED eligible area, projects can propose capitalisation and dissemination activities. A specific attention will be paid to the transfer of results towards regional and national ERDF programmes and to the involvement of end users in the dissemination processes. At this stage, applicants are encouraged to use results of former projects (from ETC or other EU programmes) and work on outputs of other modules.

To ensure high quality of results, the final objective will not only consist in “disseminating information”. It will be also necessary to ensure that tools, practices and methodologies are effectively taken on board by all actors concerned, and applied at local, regional, national or transnational level as broadly as possible and free of charge.

2.1.24.3. PLANNED USE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Investment priority 6.d	“Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure”
The opportunity of the elaboration and implementation of financial instruments will be debated during the implementation of the programme	

2.1.24.4. PLANNED USE OF MAJOR PROJECTS

Not applicable

2.1.24.5. OUTPUT INDICATORS

Table 4: Common and programme specific output indicators *(by investment priority)*

ID	Output Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data	Frequency of reporting
3.2.a	Number of joint governance plans	Plans	36	Programme monitoring tools	annually
3.2.b	Surface of habitats supported to attain a better conservation status	Hectares	1.250.000	Programme monitoring tools	annually
3.2.c	Number of protected areas engaged (through charters, protocols, MoU) in implementing management strategies	Protected Areas	50	Programme monitoring tools	annually

2.1.25 Priority Axis 4

ID	PRIORITY AXIS 4
Title	Enhancing Mediterranean Governance
	The Priority Axis 4 aims to contribute to a dialogue on macro regional and sea basin strategies in the Mediterranean and to generate cooperation and consensus raising among Mediterranean regions and participating countries on issues currently lacking common agreements and operational plans.

2.1.26. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective

Not applicable

2.1.27. Fund and calculation basis for the Union support

Fund	ERDF
Calculation Basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	17.945.801 €

2.1.28. Investment priority 11

INVESTMENT PRIORITY 11
"Enhancing governance in the Mediterranean"

2.1.29. Specific objective 4.1.

ID	4.1
Specific Objective	To support the process of strengthening and developing multilateral coordination frameworks in the Mediterranean for joint responses to common challenges
	As the MED programme aims to benefit from and contribute to the framework of already existing macro-regions and other possible strategic frameworks emerging in the future, it is opting for specific projects which can facilitate appropriate tools and mechanisms to ease the implementation of better governance and thematic integration in the Mediterranean. This objective will be reached by a “<i>Platform of national authorities project</i>” programmed under the Axis 4, and with the financing of specific projects emanating from the work of intergovernmental and interregional Working groups under the Platform initiative.
Expected results	Enhanced capacities for multilateral coordination in the Mediterranean The Mediterranean area is one of the most heterogeneous EU cooperation areas. Geographical, economic and political contexts can vary significantly from one region to another and the implementation of shared operational plans on the overall area in key sectors like maritime safety, transports, energy or pollution is challenging. Main change sought For this specific objective, the main change sought is the setting up of a governance process between all participating countries. This shall take into account cooperation initiatives already launched or tested in the different intervention fields of the MED programme. A specific attention should be paid to economic and environmental issues, with the promotion of sustainable Mediterranean development (Axis 2 and 3 of the CP). The main result will be the setting up of planned cooperation measures between participating countries. It will include discussion and exchange processes, multilateral cooperation platforms, and definition of objectives, of a strategy and of an action plan for the implementation of shared measures. Possibilities to connect with mainstream programmes implemented in MED regions are vitally important. The MED programme could contribute, to develop a Mediterranean strategy for achieving an improved environmental status of the sea and a multilateral Action plan for the whole region and/or for each of its three sub-regions (Adriatic/Ionian, Western and Eastern Mediterranean) in close coordination with the implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework directive and in cooperation with the Barcelona Convention,

	with H2020 and the depollution initiative for MED. The programme will not directly support the governance of the macro-regional Adriatic-Ionian strategy but can contribute to the implementation of related projects in coordination with the Adriatic-Ionian transnational programme. The MED programme may support projects implementing the EUSAIR action plan when sharing common objectives with the four pillars of this strategy: 1. Blue Growth; 2. Connecting the Region; 3. Environmental quality; 4. Sustainable tourism.
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Table 3: Programme specific result indicators *(by specific objective)*

One (if possible) and no more than two result indicators should be used for each specific objective. The need for more indicators should be exceptional

ID	Result Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value ⁴⁰ (2023) 100 char. max	Source of Data 200 char. max	Frequency of reporting 100 char. max
IP 11 SO 4.1 4.1.1	Number of joint thematic action plans allowing to implement coordinated strategic operations ⁴¹	Joint action plans (number)	7	2014	10	Desk research: listing and classification of existing integrated strategies and joint action plans	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)

⁴⁰ Target values can be qualitative or quantitative.

⁴¹ Such as depollution of coasts, fight against sea litter, wastewater management, integrated coastal zone management plans, maritime spatial planning.

2.1.30. Actions to be supported under the investment priority

2.1.30.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE TYPE AND EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS TO BE SUPPORTED

Investment priority 11	"Enhancing Mediterranean Governance"
Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives The following list of possible actions is only an indicative list and can be completed with other relevant actions contributing to the specific objective's goals <i>Specific objective 4.1: "To support the process of strengthening and developing multilateral coordination frameworks in the Mediterranean for joint responses to common challenges"</i>	
Knowledge management • Studies, diagnosis, context analyses • Consultation processes	
Networking and strategy building • Meetings, workshops, seminars between actors (Working groups) • Coordination at regional and sub-regional level of EU MS monitoring programmes and programmes of observation and measure for the marine environment • Support to macro-regional and sea basin strategic cooperation • Drafting integrated approaches to common problems • Sharing tools facilitating the coordination between authorities • Contributing to better coordination with existing or emerging strategies	
Identification of the main target groups (<i>non-exhaustive list</i>) • Decision makers/politicians • Regional and national authorities • Socioeconomic players concerned by key intervention fields (maritime safety, transport, energy, pollution...) • Economic operators	
Specific territories targeted • To be determined according to the needs of the key intervention fields. All MED territories are concerned by this investment priority	

Types of beneficiaries (*non-exhaustive list*)

- European, national, regional (and local) authorities
- Research centres
- Decision makers / politicians

2.1.30.2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE SELECTION OF OPERATIONS

Investment priority 11	“Enhancing Mediterranean Governance”
Each operation will be submitted to an eligibility check ensuring that it fulfils essential requirements regarding the objectives of the projects, their partnership, transnational dimension and budget. At this stage, applications must fully comply with the investment priority and specific objective they refer to. Eligible applications go through a quality check going more into the detail regarding their objectives, the strategy used and the means available. The quality criteria will especially include: • The coherence of the project with the strategy of the programme, the content of the investment priorities and specific objectives • The coherence of the project with national and regional policies and measures implemented to create synergies and avoid overlapping • The complementarity with other EU policies, thematic programmes and initiatives in the sector tackled. • The complementarity with other Mediterranean initiatives in the sector tackled. • The transnational dimension of the project with the demonstration that partners share common needs and common objectives • The innovative dimension of projects, their concrete impact on socioeconomic development and their effects in the mid-term • The attention paid to mid and long-term direct and indirect environmental effects of the project • The coherence of the partnership, the relevance and competencies of partners according to the objectives of the project • The coherence of the activities with the objectives and results • The relevance of the financing plan, and the coherence of the budget with the objectives set A specific attention will be paid to the coherence of these elements with the requirements of each call for project. When relevant, additional requirements will be included in the terms of reference of the calls for projects, including for environmental issues. To elaborate their project, applicants will have to refer to the two types of modules identified for the Priority Axis 4. The objective of these modules is to focus projects on well identified types of activities bringing a concrete contribution to the delivery of the specific objective.	

One operation might contain one or two modules depending on its strategy and main objectives.

Outline of the different modules

Module 1: a module dedicated to knowledge management with the drafting of studies, context analyses and the launch of consultation processes. These activities aim to improve knowledge about major inter-vention fields and improve common understanding of Mediterranean context, challenges and perspectives.

These activities can be the main objective of the project or constitute the first phase of a broader project that will use these outputs to feed networking and strategy building between Mediterranean key players.

Module 2: When information about an intervention field is well developed and shared at transnational level, projects can build strategies between key players via participative multi-level procedures in order to reach common agreements and set up strategies for coordinated interventions at Mediterranean level.

The overall selection process of MED projects is presented in section 5.1.3.b of the CP "Organisation of the assessment and selection of operations".

2.1.30.3. PLANNED USE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Where applicable

Investment priority 11	"Enhancing Mediterranean Governance"
The opportunity of the elaboration and implementation of financial instruments will be debated during the implementation of the programme	

2.1.30.4. PLANNED USE OF MAJOR PROJECTS

Not applicable

2.1.30.5. OUTPUT INDICATORS

Table 4: Common and programme specific output indicators (by investment *priority*)

ID	Output Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data 200 char. max.	Frequency of reporting 100 char. max.
4.1.a	Number of stakeholders (structures) involved in supported initiatives (per category representing public and private stakeholders)	Organisations	1.200	Programme monitoring tools	annually

2.1.31. Performance framework

Table 5: The performance framework of the priority axis

Priority Axis	Indicator or Type	ID	Indicator or key implementation steps <i>255 char. max.</i>	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate
1	Number of operational instruments to favour innovation of SMEs	1.1.a	Operational instruments: tools and services effectively created or adapted from existing ones, implemented and assessed in supported clusters and networks, with measurable benefit for SMEs targeted in supported actions	Instruments	8	44	Programme monitoring tools	The instruments are aimed at providing clusters and networks' actors with support means for increasing their knowledge, skills and capacities to develop activities at transnational level. Therefore clusters and networks should be empowered at transnational level thanks to these instruments.
1	Expenses declared to the EC	1	Expenditures declared to the EC for Axis 1	Euros	12.667.625	84.450.833	Programme monitoring tools	Expenses declared to the EC are calculated based on the number of projects under implementation at the end of 2018 and 2023

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Priority Axis	Indicator or Type	ID	Indicator or key implementation steps <i>255 char. max.</i>	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate
2	Number of available planning tools to monitor and manage energy consumption in public buildings	2.1.a	Available planning tools: planning tools include specific and targeted actions plans, IT solutions allowing data collection for auditing and assessment, assessment grids, monitoring and management tools for public authorities, building managers and users, guides and other information supports	Tools	3	5	Programme monitoring tools	Increasing capacity of building owners and managers requires providing them with the necessary means to develop and implement energy efficiency practices for their building stocks. Therefore, planning tools are essential to reach the expected result of this objective.
2	Number of planning tools to develop energy plans including local RES	2.2.a	Planning tool: Planning tools are a part of action plans and can address assessment, auditing, training, management documents or IT tools.	Tools	3	5	Programme monitoring tools	Increasing the inclusion of local renewable energy sources in energy mix strategies requires suitable planning tools to support the successful elaboration of models/plans/strategies adapted to specific territories. Due to its transnational features (no infrastructures), MED cannot directly ensure the increase use of local RES, but can support the elaboration of strategies targeted to this aim.

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Priority Axis	Indicator or Type	ID	Indicator or key implementation steps <i>255 char. max.</i>	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate
2	Number of instruments available to foster the use of LC transport solutions, including multimodal ones	2.3.a	Instruments: tools and services created or adapted from existing ones for transport users and managers (traffic information, integrated information systems on public transports, car sharing management tools...)	Instruments	3	5	Programme monitoring tools	Enlarging the capacity to use low carbon transport systems requires adapted instruments to provide users with information and solutions that would encourage and facilitate the use of LC solutions. Therefore, developing or making available instruments (tools and services) are essential to reach the expected result of this objective
2	Expenses declared to the EC	2	Expenditures declared to the EC for Axis 2	Euros	7.917.266	52.781.771	Programme monitoring tools	Expenses declared to the EC are calculated based on the number of projects under implementation at the end of 2018 and 2023
3	Number of instruments available to enhance the development of sustainable and responsible tourism	3.1.a	Instruments: tools and services created or adapted from existing ones for facilitating the development of sustainable and responsible tourism	Instruments	10	17	Programme monitoring tools	Enhancing the development of sustainable and responsible tourism requires adapted instruments to provide public authorities and tourist destinations stakeholders with information and solutions that would encourage and facilitate the development of solutions for an increasing sustainable and responsible tourism integrated in a wider management strategy. Therefore, developing or making available instruments (tools and services) are essential to reach the expected result of this objective.

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Priority Axis	Indicator or Type	ID	Indicator or key implementation steps <i>255 char. max.</i>	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate
3	Number of joint governance plans	3.2.a	Governance plan: set of roles, responsibilities and processes to involve relevant stakeholders in the conservation goals (objectives and legal framework, stakeholders conditions for participation in management bodies, conflict management procedures, governance activities and reporting,...)	Plans	18	36	Programme monitoring tools	Maintaining the biodiversity of ecosystems via better integration of protected areas in territorial development strategies requires the development of relevant governance plans in which stakeholders already in charge can take part and improve their managing processes for better results. Therefore, developing governance plans is crucial to reach the expected result of this objective.
3	Expenses declared to the EC	3	Expenditures declared to the EC for Axis 3	Euros	13.459.352	89.729.012	Programme monitoring tools	Expenses declared to the EC are calculated based on the number of projects under implementation at the end of 2018 and 2023
4	Number of stakeholders (structures) involved in supported initiatives (per category representing public and private stakeholders)	4.1.a	Stakeholder: structure involved in supported initiatives, ranged by public or private status	Organisations	200	1.200	Programme monitoring tools	Enhancing capacities for multilateral coordination requires enabling relevant stakeholders to take part in the process in an adapted way. Therefore, involving relevant public and private structures in the initiatives is crucial to reach the objective of the priority.

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Priority Axis	Indicator or Type	ID	Indicator or key implementation steps <i>255 char. max.</i>	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate
4	Expenses declared to the EC	4	Expenditures declared to the EC for Axis 4	Euros	3.166.906	21.112.708	Programme monitoring tools	Expenses declared to the EC are calculated based on the number of projects under implementation at the end of 2018 and 2023

Additional qualitative information on the establishment of the performance framework *(optional)*

2.1.32. Categories of intervention

(Reference: point (b)(vii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Tables 6-9: Categories of intervention

Table 6: Dimension 1: Intervention field

Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
1	060 Research and innovation activities in public research centres and centres of competence including networking	7 477 706 €
	061 Research and innovation activities in private research centres including networking	6 879 489 €
	062 Technology transfer and university-enterprise cooperation primarily benefiting SMEs	7 776 814 €
	063 Cluster support and business networks primarily benefiting SMEs	7 776 814 €
	064 Research and innovation processes in SMEs (including voucher schemes, processes, design, service and social innovation)	7 477 706 €
	065 Research and innovation infrastructure, processes, technology transfer and cooperation in enterprises focusing on the low carbon economy and on resilience to climate change	7 477 706 €
	067 SME business development, support to entrepreneurship and incubation (including support to spin offs and spin outs)	7 477 706 €
	073 Support to social enterprises (SMEs)	7 477 706 €
	078 e-Government services and applications (including e-Procurement, ICT measures supporting the reform of public administration, cyber-security, trust and privacy measures, e-Justice and e-Democracy)	7 477 706 €
	079 Access to public sector information (including open data e-Culture, digital libraries, e-Content and e-Tourism)	7 477 706 €
2	009 Renewable energy: wind	4 673 567 €
	010 Renewable energy: solar	4 673 567 €
	011 Renewable energy: biomass	5 140 923 €
	012 Other renewable energy (including hydroelectric, geothermal and marine energy) and renewable energy integration (including storage, power to gas and renewable hydrogen infrastructure)	4 206 207 €
	013 Energy efficiency renovation of public infrastructure, demonstration projects and supporting measures	12 151 273 €
	043 Clean urban transport infrastructure and promotion (including equipment and rolling stock)	7 945 063 €

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Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
2	044 Intelligent transport systems (including the introduction of demand management, tolling systems, IT monitoring, control and information systems)	7 945 063 €
	023 Environmental measures aimed at reducing and/or avoiding greenhouse gas emissions (including treatment and storage of methane gas and composting)	5 378 805 €
	085 Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, nature protection and green infrastructure	18 027 347 €
	086 Protection, restoration and sustainable use of Natura 2000 sites	18 019 404 €
	091 Development and promotion of the tourism potential of natural areas	12 608 814 €
	092 Protection, development and promotion of public tourism assets	12 608 814 €
	094 Protection, development and promotion of public cultural and heritage assets	12 807 442 €
4	096 Institutional capacity of public administrations and public services related to implementation of the ERDF or actions supporting ESF institutional capacity initiatives	9 347 132 €
	119 Investment in institutional capacity and in the efficiency of public administrations and public services at the national, regional and local levels with a view to reforms, better regulation and good governance	9 347 131 €
5	121 Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection	12 862 319 €
	122 Evaluation and studies	408 349 €
	123 Information and communication	750 029 €

Table 7: Dimension 2: Form of finance

Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
1	01 Non-repayable grant	74 777 059 €
2	01 Non-repayable grant	46 735 663 €
3	01 Non-repayable grant	79 450 626 €
4	01 Non-repayable grant	18 694 263 €
5	01 Non-repayable grant	14 020 697 €

Table 8: Dimension 3: Territory type

Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
1	01 Large Urban areas (densely populated > 50 000 population)	33 649 677 €
	02 Small Urban areas (intermediate density > 5 000 population)	33 649 677 €
	03 Rural areas (thinly populated)	7 477 705 €
2	01 Large Urban areas (densely populated > 50 000 population)	16 357 482 €
	02 Small Urban areas (intermediate density > 5 000 population)	16 357 482 €
	03 Rural areas (thinly populated)	14 020 699 €
3	01 Large Urban areas (densely populated > 50 000 population)	19 862 657 €
	02 Small Urban areas (intermediate density > 5 000 population)	19 862 657 €
	03 Rural areas (thinly populated)	39 725 312 €
4	04 Macro regional cooperation area	18 694 263 €
5	07 Not applicable	14 020 697 €

Table 9: Dimension 6: Territorial delivery mechanisms

Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
1	07 Not applicable	74 777 059 €
2	02 Other integrated approaches to sustainable urban development	32 714 964 €
	05 Other integrated approaches to sustainable urban/rural development	14 020 699 €
3	04 Other integrated approaches to sustainable rural development	39 725 313 €
	05 Other integrated approaches to sustainable urban/rural development	39 725 313 €
4	07 Not applicable	18 694 263 €
5	07 Not applicable	14 020 697 €

2.1.33. A summary of the planned use of technical assistance

(Reference: point (b) (vi) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

PRIORITY AXIS	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
There is no action limited to improving the implementation capacity of one specific Priority Axis. Actions of technical assistance concern all Priority Axes and are developed in section 2.B.	

2.2. Description of the priority axis for technical assistance

2.2.1. Priority Axis 5

ID	PRIORITY AXIS 5
Title	Technical Assistance

2.2.2. Fund and calculation basis for union support

Fund	ERDF
Calculation Basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	13 459 351 €

2.2.3. Specific objectives and expected results

(Reference: points (c) (i) and (ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Specific Objective (repeated for each specific objective)

ID	5.1
Specific objective	To implement efficiently the cooperation programme
Expected results ⁴²	A sound management of the cooperation programme is the pre-condition for its effective implementation. The result expected within this specific objective is thus directly linked to the need of ensuring the adequate management and control environment of the programme, as described in Section 5.3, ensuring that all programme implementation steps (including the launch of calls, contracting, monitoring of operations and programme achievements, reimbursement of expenditure, etc.) are timely executed. Main change sought The evaluation of the MED programme 2007-2013 shows that the implementation of the programme could be improved and the administrative burden reduced. Accordingly, the change driven by the programme mainly refers to further improving and streamlining administrative procedures for a faster and more efficient implementation, of the programme and an improvement of the support to beneficiaries so that they can apply in better conditions and submit more targeted and better quality projects.

ID	5.2
Specific objective	To improve the support to applicants and beneficiaries and to strengthen the involvement of relevant partners in the programme implementation
Expected results ⁴³	Besides a sound programme management, the capacity of applicants and beneficiaries to participate in the programme is a key aspect of its successful implementation. The analysis of the 2007-2013 MED programme shows a very high number of projects applications, the limited number of projects selected, the need of information and monitoring of applicants in front of increased requirements from regulations and from programmes. For 2014-2020, the objectives of sound management, efficiency and the attention paid to projects results impose to strengthen the support to the preparation of application and to the implementation of projects.

⁴² Required only where the Union support to technical assistance in the cooperation programme exceeds EUR 15 million

⁴³ Required only where the Union support to technical assistance in the cooperation programme exceeds EUR 15 million

	Main change sought The main change sought is an improvement of the quality of projects, which implies less numerous applications better corresponding to the requirements of the programme. This change will require an adaptation of calls for projects (targeted calls, strategic calls...), simplified procedures and more targeted support to the applicants and to the beneficiaries (mobilisation of the Joint Secretariat, information, animation, mobilisation of National Contact Points ...).
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2.2.4. Result indicators

Not relevant as the Union support to technical assistance in the MED cooperation programme does not exceed 15 million euros

2.2.5. Actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the specific objective

2.2.5.1. A DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS TO BE SUPPORTED AND THEIR EXPECTED CONTRIBUTION TO THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

(Reference: point (c)(iii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

Priority Axis 5	Technical Assistance
1. Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives The following list of possible actions is only an indicative list and can be completed with other relevant actions contributing to the specific objective's goals <i>Specific Objective 5.1: Actions to effectively implement the cooperation programme</i> Actions within specific objective 5.1 target the preparation, management, monitoring, evaluation, information, communication, control and audit tasks of the programme. Actions referring to this specific objective also address the reduction of the administrative burden for beneficiaries. Indicative actions supported under specific objective 5.1 are listed below and refer to principles and tasks described in Sections 5.3 and 7: • Setting up and managing of a Joint Secretariat supporting the Managing Authority and assisting the Monitoring Committee in the implementation and day-to-day management of the programme; • Preparing and implementing calls for proposals, including the development of guidance documents setting out the conditions for the support of operations; • Setting-up and implementing procedures for the quality assessment, monitoring and control of operations implemented under the cooperation programme, also making use of external experts where necessary, and contributing to the reduction of administrative burden for beneficiaries;	

- Collecting data concerning the progress of the programme in achieving its objectives, as well as financial data and data relating to indicators and milestones, and reporting to the Monitoring Committee and the European Commission;
- Drafting and implementing the programme communication strategy, including the setting up and implementation of information and communication measures and tools;
- Drafting and implementing the programme evaluation plan;
- Setting-up, running and maintenance of a computerised system to record and store data on each operation necessary for monitoring, evaluation, financial management, verification and audit in compliance with the applicable electronic data exchange requirements and contributing to the reduction of administrative burden for beneficiaries;
- Setting-up a network of national financial controllers, coordinated by the Joint Secretariat, with the purpose of exchanging information and best practices at transnational level;
- Setting up and execution of audits on the programme management and control system and on operations.

Specific Objective 5.2: Actions to support applicants and beneficiaries and to strengthen the involvement of relevant partners in the programme implementation

Actions within the specific objective 5.2 target the reinforcement of the capacity of applicants and beneficiaries to apply for and use funds, to get involved in the programme and to exchange good practices among partners.

Indicative actions supported within specific objective 5.2 are listed below and they refer to principles and tasks described in Sections 5.3 and 7:

- Drafting of information documents for applicants and beneficiaries to guide them in the preparation of applications and the implementation, evaluation, control and communication of approved operations;
- Organising consultation, information, training and exchange events to strengthen the capacity of applicants to develop applications directly contributing to the programme specific objectives and expected results;
- Organising trainings on specific implementation issues such as project and financial management, reporting, control, audit, communication and networking to strengthen the capacity of beneficiaries to implement approved operations;
- Developing information and exchange tools (e.g. analytical documents, bilateral meetings, targeted events, etc.) and organisation of transnational and national events to strengthen the involvement of relevant partners in the implementation of the programme (also including authorities involved in the development or implementation of macro-regional strategies, joint legal bodies operating in the area (EGTCs...) and umbrella organisations at EU/transnational level);
- Setting-up and management of a network of national Contact Points, supporting the Joint Secretariat in implementing at national level tasks related to the implementation of the programme.
- Executing studies, reports and surveys on strategic matters concerning the programme that can contribute to the sustainability and take up of results and achievements into policies, strategies, investments or that are of public interest, making use of experts when necessary.

Technical Assistance actions shall be implemented by all authorities involved in the management of the Programme, listed in Section 5.3.

2.2.5.2. OUTPUT INDICATORS

(Reference: point (c)(iv) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 11: Output indicators *(by priority axis)*

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023) (optional)	Source of data
5.a	Established Joint Secretariat	No.	1	Observation
5.b	Calls for proposals successfully launched and closed	No.	--	Observation
5.c	Operations approved following calls for proposals	No.	140	Programme e-Monitoring System
5.d	Periodic progress reports of operations monitored and paid	No.	600	Programme e-Monitoring System
5.e	Information and communication measures and tools developed	No.	--	Observation
5.f	Independent programme evaluations implemented (ex-ante and during programme implementation)	No.	2	Observation
5.g	Programme e-Monitoring System developed and implemented	No.	1	Observation
5.h	Network of national controllers established	No.	1	Observation
5.i	Audits on programme management and control system and on operations	No.	--	Programme e-Monitoring System

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ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023) (optional)	Source of data
5.j	Information documents addressed to applicants and beneficiaries	No.	--	Observation
5.k	Consultation, information, training and exchange workshops for applicants and beneficiaries organised	No.	--	Observation
5.l	Established national Contact Points	No.	10	Observation
5.m	Studies, reports and surveys on strategic matters concerning the programme	No.	--	Observation

2.2.6. Categories of intervention

Corresponding categories of intervention based on a nomenclature adopted by the Commission, and an indicative breakdown of the Union support

Table 12-14: Categories of intervention

Table 12: Dimension 1: Intervention field

Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
5	121: Preparation, implementation monitoring and inspection	12 862 319 €
5	122: Evaluation and studies	408 349 €
5	123: Information and communication	750 029 €

Table 13: Dimension 2: Form of finance

Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
5	01: Non-repayable grant	14 020 697 €

Table 14: Dimension 2: Territory type

Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
5	07: Not applicable	14 020 697 €

SECTION 3

The financing plan

(Reference: point (d) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

3.1. Financial appropriation from ERDF

(Reference: point (d) (i) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 15

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
ERDF	0	27.372.869	23.200.743	42.155.613	42.998.724	43.858.699	44.735.877	224.322.525
IPA amounts (where applicable)	0	1.141.636	967.630	1.758.177	1.793.341	1.829.208	1.865.791	9.355.783
ENI amounts (where applicable)			0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	28.514.505	24.168.373	43.913.790	44.792.065	45.687.907	46.601.668	233.678.308

3.1.1. Total financial appropriation from the ERDF and national co-funding

(Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 16: Financing plan

Priority axis	Fund	Basis for the calculation of the Union support	Union support (a)	National counterpart (b) = (c) + (d)	Indicative breakdown of the national counterpart		Total funding (e) = (a) + (b) (2)	Co-financing rate (f) = (a)/(e)	For information	
					National Public funding (c)	National private funding (1) (d)			Contributions from third countries	EIB contributions
Priority axis 1	ERDF (possibly incl. amounts transferred from IPA and ENI)		71.783.208	12.667.625	10.134.100	2.533.525	84.450.833	85%		
	IPA		2.993.851	528.327	528.327	0	3.522.178	85%		
Priority axis 2	ERDF (possibly incl. amounts transferred from IPA and ENI) ⁴⁴		44.864.505	7.917.266	7.125.539	791.727	52.781.771	85%		
	IPA		1.871.158	330.205	330.205	0	2.201.363	85%		

⁴⁴ Presentation of amounts transferred from ENI and IPA depends on management option chosen, cfr. fiche no. 28 on Elements related to proposed integration of allocations under external financing instruments into ETC programmes

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Priority axis	Fund	Basis for the calculation of the Union support	Union support (a)	National counterpart (b) = (c) + (d))	Indicative breakdown of the national counterpart		Total funding (e) = (a) + (b) (2)	Co-financing rate (f) = (a)/(e)	For information	
					National Public funding (c)	National private funding (1) (d)			Contributions from third countries	EIB contributions
Priority axis 3	ERDF (possibly incl. amounts transferred from IPA and ENI) ⁴⁵		76.269.660	13.459.352	12.651.791	807.561	89.729.012	85%		
	IPA		3.180.966	561.347	561.347	0	3.742.313	85%		
Priority axis 4	ERDF (possibly incl. amounts transferred from IPA and ENI) ⁴⁶		17.945.801	3.166.907	3.166.907	0	21.112.708	85%		
	IPA		748.462	132.082	132.082	0	880.544	85%		

⁴⁵ Presentation of amounts transferred from ENI and IPA depends on management option chosen, cfr. fiche no. 28 on Elements related to proposed integration of allocations under external financing instruments into ETC programmes

⁴⁶ Presentation of amounts transferred from ENI and IPA depends on management option chosen, cfr. fiche no. 28 on Elements related to proposed integration of allocations under external financing instruments into ETC programmes

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Priority axis	Fund	Basis for the calculation of the Union support	Union support (a)	National counterpart (b) = (c) + (d))	Indicative breakdown of the national counterpart		Total funding (e) = (a) + (b) <u>(2)</u>	Co-financing rate (f) = (a)/(e)	For information	
					National Public funding (c)	National private funding <u>(1)</u> (d)			Contributions from third countries	EIB contributions
Priority axis 5	ERDF (possibly incl. amounts transferred from IPA and ENI)		13.459.351	3.364.839	3.364.839	0	16.824.190	80%		
	IPA		561.346	99.062	99.062	0	660.408	85%		
Total	ERDF		224.322.525	40.575.989	36.443.176	4.132.813	264.898.514	84,68%		
	IPA		9.355.783	1.651.023	1.651.023	0	11.006.806	85%		
TOTAL	Total all Funds		233.678.308	42.227.012	38.094.199	4.132.813	275.905.320	84,70%		

(1) To be completed only when priority axes are expressed in total costs.

(2) This rate may be rounded to the nearest whole number in the table. The precise rate used to reimburse payments is the ratio (f).

3.1.2. Breakdown by priority axis and thematic objective

(Reference: point (d)(ii) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 17

Priority axis	Thematic objective	Union support	National counterpart	Total funding
Priority axis 1	Thematic objective 1	71.783.208	12.667.625	84.450.833
Priority axis 2	Thematic objective 4	44.864.505	7.917.266	52.781.771
Priority axis 3	Thematic objective 6	76.269.660	13.459.352	89.729.012
Priority axis 4	Thematic objective 11	17.945.801	3.166.907	21.112.708
Priority axis 5	Technical assistance	13.459.351	3.364.839	16.824.190
TOTAL		224.322.525	40.575.989	264.898.514

Table 18: The indicative amount of support to be used for climate change objectives

(Reference: Article 27(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)⁴⁷

Priority axis	Indicative amount of support to be used for climate change objectives (EUR)	Proportion of the total allocation to the programme (%)
Priority axis 1	7 178 321,00 €	3.07%
Priority axis 2	35 712 145,80 €	15.28%
Priority axis 3	19 004 872,40 €	8,13%
Priority axis 4	00,00 €	0.00%
TOTAL	61 855 339,20 €	26,49%

⁴⁷ This table is generated automatically based on tables on categories of intervention included under each of the priority axes.

SECTION 4

Integrated approach to territorial development

(Reference: Article 8(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

The MED programme is built upon an integrated maritime approach and seeks to find adequate responses to shared transnational challenges. As identified in Section 2, while the MED area has to fight against the rising pressure of human activities and climate change, it needs to improve its competitiveness and the sustainable management of its cities, coastal and marine areas to develop its high economic, social and environmental potential. Cooperation and territorial approach are the right tools to contribute to the specific objectives set by the Programme as a transnational response to those challenges that require an adaptation of public policies and behaviours of all actors to ensure long term sustainable development.

Therefore, the actions funded under the different thematic objectives are developed within an integrated maritime approach, considering integrated coastal zone management and maritime spatial planning as cross-cutting issues to promote sustainable development, foster a more efficient use of resources and manage conflicts between stakeholders.

More specifically, from a territorial and geographical point of view, the programme grants a specific attention to four types of areas that represent important challenges due to their resources, their development potential or the economic difficulties they are confronted to.

Coastal areas

Coastal areas represent a major dimension of the MED area with a high level of attractiveness, a very important concentration of human activities and fragility of natural and cultural resources. For the MED programme, a key issue consists to better understand and manage the balance between development and sustainable management of resources, including the relation between coastal areas and their hinterland. Priorities dedicated to economic development, management of anthropic pressure and climate change consequences will tackle the challenge.

Urban areas

In the Mediterranean regions, coastal areas concentrate major urban centres that represent very important challenges in term of economic development, quality of life and use of resources. For 2014-2020, the MED programme will put an emphasis on urban areas, especially concerning low carbon development perspectives (energy efficiency and renewable energy), and sustainable transport systems including the interrelation between urban and rural areas. Urban areas will also benefit from priority axis 1 as there is a high concentration of innovation actors and institutions in cities.

Islands

Islands cover around 4% of the Mediterranean Sea. They represent a major economic, environmental and cultural dimension of the Mediterranean area. They are both at the cross-road of the main communication axes and in a situation of geographical isolation. Mediterranean islands also lack common development agendas and discussion/exchanges forums. For the MED programme, their specificities will be taken into account regarding economic development perspectives, promotion of renewable energy solutions and the sustainable manage-

ment of natural and cultural resources (ecosystems, water management...) and across all other areas of concern covered by the programme.

Remote and low density areas

In Mediterranean regions, many inland areas, sometimes close to the coast, can be quite isolated and characterised by rural activities and a low density of population. For these areas, tourism and agriculture represent essential economic activities that are sometimes threatened by demographic change and climate change effects. For the MED programme, these areas will be taken into account, especially concerning the need to develop or maintain activities (agri-business and tourism) and better manage natural resources (water management, renewable energy solutions).

4.1. Community-led local development

Not relevant

4.2. Integrated actions for sustainable urban development

(Reference: point (b) of Article 8(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

No specific urban areas have been identified to implement sustainable urban development. Partners of all urban areas located in regions eligible to the MED programme can participate to MED projects following the recommendations provided in the different priority axes and in the calls for projects.

4.3. Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI)

(Reference: point (c) of Article 8(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Though the focus on urban areas or other specific areas is considered as important by the programme participating countries, the system of Integrated Territorial Investment is not fully appropriate for transnational cooperation for the following reasons:

- The MED programme is not investment oriented even if it could support the preparation of large investments
- It would necessitate the identification of specific intervention areas in the overall MED area which is too complex and time consuming for the preparation of a transnational CP
- Selected areas would cover only part of eligible regions or eligible countries
- ITI must be implemented by bodies supported by at least two different countries. The setting up of such bodies would be quite challenging at transnational level, especially because the average transnational partnership is composed of 10-12 partners coming from several different countries
- For this reason, and taking into account the fact that integrated territorial development is considered in a cross-cutting way in each priority axis, the programme will not use Integrated Territorial Investments for 2014-2020.

4.4. Contribution of planned interventions towards macro-regional and sea basin strategies

(Reference: point (d) of Article 8(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

The Mediterranean area is composed of quite diverse geographical areas with different development priorities, political and socioeconomic contexts. This is the case between the northern and the southern shore of the Mediterranean but also from the eastern to the western part of the Sea where the fragmented geographical context pushes to the implementation of sub-regional cooperation strategies and agreements. Indeed, the MED area includes countries and regions that are part of different macro-regional and sea-basin strategies (the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, and the Atlantic Strategy).

International initiatives show the difficulty to develop common strategies and reach consensus in fields presenting major international interest like transports, maritime safety, pollution of the sea, coastal management, etc.

If the setting up of a large and integrated Mediterranean development strategy or “macro-regional strategy” is confronted to important difficulties, progress is nevertheless made through thematic approaches as shown with the EU integrated maritime policy.

In the Mediterranean, consensus needs to be reached on how best to manage maritime activities, protect the marine environment and maritime heritage or prevent and fight marine pollution (among others).

The MED programme constitutes an adequate framework to promote cooperation possibilities in areas of interest for local, regional and national authorities.

For 2014-2020, the programme proposes to seize the opportunity given by the Commission to launch activities through the Thematic Objective 11 (enhancing institutional capacity and efficient public administration) with the specific objective of supporting the process of developing multilateral coordination frameworks in the Mediterranean, including the possibility to contribute towards the implementation of the relevant macro-regional and sea-basin strategies.

At the start of 2014-2020, we can however observe that the situation is not fully “mature” to implement ambitious cooperation projects at Mediterranean level.

At sub-regional level, the Adriatic/Ionian macro region is at its very beginning and cooperation will have to be explored during the programme lifetime. With the MED programme, the connection will especially be developed regarding blue growth, protection and quality of the environment and regional attractiveness that constitute key challenges also for the MED programme. The MED programme may establish synergies and finance EUSAIR projects if they are coherent with MED CPs priorities.

The opportunity will arise during the MED programme lifetime to explore cooperation possibilities and support activities on common intervention fields for the countries involved in the programme.

For the MED programme, the promotion of the development of strategic cooperation in the Mediterranean requires strengthening transnational cooperation, strategies and political agreements on issues that constitute key intervention fields for 2014-2020 (innovation, energy and reduction of GHG emission, reduction of pollution, protection of natural and cultural heritage). The objective is to provide support for the conditions for the establishment of a wider strategy, eventually covering the whole programme space with sub-areas such as Adriatic/Ionian macro region, Western and Eastern Mediterranean areas.

SECTION 5

Implementing provisions for the cooperation programme

(Reference: Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

5.1. Relevant authorities and bodies

(Reference: Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Table 21: Programme authorities

(Reference: point (a)(i) of Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Authority/body	Name of the authority/body and department or unit	Head of the authority/body <i>(position or post)</i>
Managing Authority	Région Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur 27, Place Jules Guesde 13481 Marseille Cedex 20 France	Deputy Director General in charge of International Relations and European Affairs
Certifying Authority	Deputy Directorate General of Certifying and Payments Directorate General of European Funds Ministry of Finance and Public Administration Paseo de la Castellana 162 28071 Madrid SPAIN	Deputy Director General of Certifying and Payments
Audit Authority	Commission Interministérielle de Coordination des Contrôles et Actions cofinancées par les Fonds Européens (CICC) 5 Place des Vins de France 75012 Paris France	President of the CICC

The body to which payments will be made by the Commission is:

- the Certifying Authority

Table 22: Body or bodies carrying out control and audit tasks

(Reference: points (a)(ii) and (iii) of Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Authority/body	Name of the authority/body and department or unit	Head of the authority/body (position or post)
Body or bodies designated to carry out control tasks	Each Member and Partner State shall designate the body or person responsible for carrying out the verifications defined in Article 125(4)(a) of Regulation EU No 1303/2013 (CPR) and Article 23(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 (ETC) in relation to beneficiaries on its territory. These bodies are situated in each Member and Partner State.	The nationally appointed responsible bodies for centralised and decentralised control systems are not known yet since they are in course of appointment. Detailed information will be provided during the designation procedure.
Body or bodies designated to be responsible for carrying out audit tasks	The Audit Authority will be assisted by a Group of Auditors. Each Member State and Partner State will designate the body or person responsible for carrying out the audit tasks provided for in Article 127 of the EU No 1303/2013 (CPR). These bodies are situated in each Member and Partner State.	The nationally appointed responsible bodies participating in the group of auditors are not known yet since they are in course of appointment. Detailed information will be provided during the designation procedure.

5.2. Procedure for setting up the Joint Secretariat

(Reference: point (a)(iv) of Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

For 2014-2020, the Joint Secretariat is established in continuity with the previous period as the Managing Authority remains the same.

It is hosted by the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region.

The Joint Secretariat is composed of different units in charge of financial monitoring, project monitoring, and communication/capitalisation activities. Each unit has a referent person, and the whole team is led by a coordinator.

Member and Partner States are consulted for the setting up of the Joint Secretariat and for the recruitment of each additional staff.

5.3. Summary description of the management and control arrangements

(Reference: point (a) (v) of Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

5.3.1. Joint implementation structure and division of tasks between the different bodies

General principles for management and control arrangements are specified in the article 72 of the Common regulation

According to article 125 of the Common Provisions Regulation, the **Managing Authority** is responsible for managing the cooperation programme in accordance with the principle of sound financial management. This includes the support of the work of the **Monitoring Committee** and the transmission of the information it requires to carry out its tasks, in particular data relating to the progress of the cooperation programme in achieving its objectives, financial data and data relating to indicators and milestones.

According to Article 47 of Common regulation, Member States shall set up a committee to monitor the implementation of the programme, in agreement with the Managing Authority. The Monitoring Committee shall draw up and adopt its rules of procedure.

The Monitoring Committee is chaired by a representative of a Member State of the programme or by the Managing Authority. Once established, the Monitoring Committee designates its chair on a yearly basis. This chairmanship is supported by a vice chair from a different Member State that becomes Chair the following year.

The Monitoring Committee meets at least once a year and reviews implementation of the programme and progress towards achieving its objectives. It examines in detail all issues that affect the performance of the programme and makes a decision on any amendment of the programme proposed by the Managing Authority. The Monitoring Committee can set up specific working groups.

Without prejudice to the eligibility rules laid down or based on articles 64 and 65 of the Common regulations n° 1303/2013, the Monitoring Committee establishes the eligibility rules for the cooperation programme as a whole.

The meetings of the Monitoring Committee and its decisions are prepared in connection with the Managing Authority, the national bodies in charge of the programme in participating States and the Chair of the programme. **Decisions are taken on a consensus basis expressed by each national delegation with one vote allocated per participating country.** If necessary, decisions can be made following a written procedure (also on a consensus basis) within the participating States according to the conditions defined by the rules of procedure.

The Monitoring Committee may set up a steering committee that acts under its responsibility for the selection of operations (art. 12 of ECT regulation).

According to article 23 of ETC Regulation, the **Joint Secretariat** assists the Managing Authority in carrying out its functions. The Joint Secretariat provides information to potential beneficiaries about funding opportunities under the MED programme and assists beneficiaries in the implementation of operations. It sets up and maintains contacts with Lead Partners and their partnerships.

More specifically, the Joint Secretariat ensures at transnational level coordination, follow-up and promotion activities and provides technical support for the preparation of meetings and events at the programme and projects level (Monitoring Committees, Transnational Conferences and transnational working groups, lead partners seminar, other specific thematic meetings).

The Joint Secretariat facilitates, assesses and ensures that project selection is equitable and transparent. It collects financial, physical and statistical data that is needed for programme monitoring as well as for the interim and final appraisals. It verifies payment claims in sight of payment to Lead partners.

The Joint Secretariat is also in charge of implementing the information system that is open and available to operators and to the public for the implementation of the programme: schedule, progress, contacts, phone details, website.

Within each participating state, the MED programme is taken in charge through two specific functions:

- A regulatory function related to the responsibility of each participating state as regards monitoring and control of activities, procedures and expenses of project partners in the respective participating countries
- A function of coordination of the implementation of the programme on national territory and a contribution to the general animation of the programme in relation with the MA and the JS to which they entrusted management

Each participating state can freely organise its national body and has the possibility to set up support bodies such as National Committees as consultative bodies.

National co-financing for operations must be provided according to the respective national mechanisms of States covered by the Cooperation Programme. Clear evidence of such mechanisms and procedures must be provided as soon as the Programme is validated by the EU Commission.

In order to ensure the transnationality of the programme and help mainstreaming of projects, each Member State sets up National Contact Points (NCPs) in coherence with their administrative system. NCPs can be individuals or administrative bodies. They are in direct contact with national stakeholders and provide information on the programme, on the calls for projects and on administrative requirements for the submission of applications. NCPs are coordinated by their National Authorities. Decentralised structures of the programme might also be set up to support the programme implementation.

According to article 126 of the CPR, the **Certifying Authority** is responsible in particular for drawing up and submitting to the Commission payment applications and certifying that these result, from reliable accounting systems, are based on verifiable supporting documents and have been subject to verifications by the Managing Authority.

The Certifying Authority is also responsible for drawing up the annual accounts, certifying the completeness, accuracy and veracity of the annual accounts and that the expenditure entered in the accounts complies with applicable Union and national rules and has been incurred in respect of operations selected for funding in accordance with the criteria applicable to the cooperation programme and complying with Union and national rules.

According to article 127 of the CPR, the **Audit Authority** ensures that audits are carried out on the management and control systems, on an appropriate sample of operations and on the annual accounts. It draws up an audit opinion on the annual accounts for the preceding accounting year and an annual control report setting out the findings of the audits carried out during the preceding accounting year.

The Audit Authority (CICC) is an inter-ministerial commission reporting, not to the ministries which manage the various funds, but to the Prime Minister who appoints its members. It collectively makes decisions regarding the topics coming under its jurisdiction; it comprises, for two thirds, members of General Inspectorates of ministries, independent by status and tradition.

For the MED programme, the Audit Authority is assisted by a Group of Auditors composed of a representative from each State participating in the programme.

The representatives of the participating states to the Group of Auditors shall not be involved in any other management or certification activity under the MED programme. An independence certificate is requested from each of them.

5.3.2. Organisation of the assessment and selection of operations

For 2014-2020, common principles will be applied to the different types of calls (*e.g.* thematic calls, targeted calls, and strategic calls for projects). Modalities will be specified for each call.

For any type of calls, the JS will proceed to an eligibility check and then to the quality evaluation of the applications.

Selection process

1. The JS checks the eligibility criteria of the application. Proposals that are not eligible are rejected by the decision of the Monitoring Committee
2. The JS proceeds to the quality check of the application. It proposes to the Monitoring Committee the list of eligible applications with its appreciation
3. The Monitoring Committee proceeds to the selection of projects
4. The Managing Authority informs each applicant about the results of the selection process

The JS and the Monitoring Committee might require the support of external experts during the selection process.

In specific cases agreed by the MC, project partners might also be asked to come to present their project to the Monitoring Committee in the programming meeting

The evaluation of applications by the Joint Secretariat and the projects selection by the Monitoring Committee is done on the basis of objective criteria specified in the **Evaluation Grid as approved by the Monitoring Committee** and explained in the Implementation Guide of the Med cooperation programme.

These criteria have been defined according to strategic orientations of the MED programme and the willingness to promote focused and efficient transnational projects (relevant objectives, output and activities, target groups, strength of partnerships, involvement of key actors, sustainability...).

According to EU regulation 1299/2013, operation selected under transnational cooperation shall involve beneficiaries from at least two participating countries, at least one of which shall be from a Member State.

Once the selected projects have been approved by the Monitoring Committee, the Managing Authority and the Lead partners sign individual **Subsidy Contract** for each project. The contract includes also eventual IPA funding allocated to the operation.

Non availability of IPA funds has no consequences on the approval of ERDF partners in the same project; the project would be implemented by ERDF partners without the IPA partners, if affected by the mentioned non availability of funds

The project selection process is set out in further detail in each call for projects and in the Implementation guide.

5.3.3. Arrangement for management verification and related quality controls

As regards the financial management and control of the cooperation programme, **each participating State of the programme** verifies that the co-financed products and services have been delivered and that expenditure declared by the beneficiaries has been paid and that it complies

with applicable Union and national law, the cooperation programme and the conditions for support of the operation (art. 25(4) CTE Regulation).

Each Member and Partner State shall designate the body or person responsible for carrying out such verifications in relation to beneficiaries on its territory ('controller(s)').

For the MED programme, such verifications are carried out by the controllers designated according to each participating State's control system.

Designated controllers (internal or external) shall be fully independent from the beneficiary controlled.

Member and Partner States shall ensure that their management and control systems are set up in accordance with the provisions stated in EU regulations and that the systems function effectively.

The Managing Authority shall ensure that the expenditure of each beneficiary participating to and operation have been verified by a designated controller.

In order to simplify administrative procedures and improve the management of the programme, the Managing Authority promotes harmonisation and coordination activities between the national control systems by establishing a network of persons in charge of the first level control.

Following these verifications, the **Joint Secretariat** receives from each project the regular progress report compiled by the Lead Partner including a payment claim.

For all payment claims, the Joint Secretariat:

- verifies compliance between the output and the approved subsidy contract in terms of expenditure, resources and eligibility of expenditure;
- verifies the reality of expenditure declared by the beneficiaries with the reception of copies of certificates from each partner and a list of documents supporting expenditure
- ensures the physical outputs by certain elements annexed to the progress reports
- verifies publicity requirements for EU funding (photos, communication tools, press articles, etc.);

At programme level, the Managing Authority:

- checks the accuracy of payment claims submitted and determines the amount of subsidy to be paid in relation to the provisions of the subsidy contract (cofinancing rate and maximum amount of subsidy) and in relation to the total amount of verified and certified expenditure;
- validates and transmits, after verification, the payment claim to the Certifying Authority;
- checks follow-up actions in case of irregularities;
- ensures the sound financial management and undertakes on-the-spot checks on the basis of a sampling exercise;

On-the-spot verifications

The on-the-spot verifications shall be performed by the MA/JS at the level of beneficiaries. The frequency and coverage of the on-the-spot verifications shall be proportionate to the amount of public support to an operation and the level of risk identified and audits by the

Audit Authority for the management and control system as a whole. The Managing Authority draws up and, once approved by the Monitoring Committee, applies the criteria to define the intensity of verifications.

5.3.4. Coordination among the members of the group of auditors

For the MED programme, the Audit Authority is assisted by a Group of Auditors composed of a representative from each Member and Partner State participating in the programme and carrying out the functions provided for in Article 127 of the CPR.

Each participating State shall be responsible for audits carried out on its territory. Each representative from each participating State shall be responsible for providing the factual elements relating to expenditure on its territory that are required by the Audit Authority in order to perform its assessment.

The Group of Auditors draws up its own rules of procedure and is chaired by the Audit Authority.

The auditors are functionally independent from controllers who carry out verifications under Article 23 of ETC Regulation.

5.3.5. Procedure for the signature of the grant offer letter and subsidy contract

Following the decision of the Monitoring Committee, the Managing Authority will use a standard form of subsidy contract which is approved by the Monitoring Committee and lays down further details concerning the responsibilities and liabilities of the beneficiaries. The subsidy contract is signed by the Managing Authority and the project Lead beneficiary.

Resolution of complaints

The procedures set in place for the resolution of complaints are differentiated according to the object of the complaint.

Complaints related to assessment and selection: Project lead applicants will be informed in writing about the reasons why an application was not eligible or approved, providing details on the reason for non-eligibility/approval. Any complaint related to the assessment shall be submitted by the lead applicant to the MA/JS that, in collaboration with the MC, will examine and provide its position regarding the merit of the complaint.

Complaints related to decisions made by the MA/JS: Any complaints in relation to decisions made by the MA/JS on the basis of the subsidy contract or MC decisions shall be submitted by the project applicant/beneficiary to the MA/JS that will examine and provide in due time an answer (in collaboration with the MC if necessary). Where courts, public prosecution offices or other national institutions are competent in relation to the object of the complaint, the applicant/beneficiary has the right to turn also to these authorities in France, where the MA/JS are located.

Complaints related to first and second level control have to be lodged against the responsible national authority according to the applicable national rules

Further information on the procedure for the submission of complaints will be laid down in the relevant programme documents communicated to applicants and beneficiaries. Such procedures will be in line with addresses and guidance from EC as well as with national provisions on the matter.

The complaint procedure template proposed by INTERACT will be used and adapted whenever necessary.

5.4. Apportionment of liabilities among the participating States in case of financial corrections imposed by the Managing Authority or the Commission

Recovery of payments from beneficiaries

The recommendations and corrective measures might result from any type of control implemented (checks by the Managing Authority, by the Member States and Partner States, by the Certifying Authority, system and operations audits, audits by the European Commission and by the European Court of Accounts).

According to article 27 of the ETC Regulation, the Managing Authority shall ensure that any amount paid as a result of an irregularity is recovered from the project via the lead beneficiary. Beneficiaries shall repay the lead beneficiary any amounts unduly paid.

If the lead beneficiary does not succeed in securing repayment from other beneficiaries or if the Managing Authority does not succeed in securing repayment from the lead or sole beneficiary, the participating state on whose territory the beneficiary concerned is located shall reimburse the Managing Authority the amount unduly paid to that beneficiary.

Details on the procedure will be included in the description of the management and control system to be established in accordance with Article 72 of Regulation (EC) No 1303/2013 (CPR).

In parallel to / after reimbursement of the irrecoverable amount by the Participating State to the Managing Authority, the participating State holds the right to secure repayment from beneficiary located on its territory, if necessary through legal action. For this purpose the Managing Authority and the Lead beneficiary shall assign their rights arising from the subsidy contract and the partnership agreement to the participating State concerned.

The Managing Authority shall be responsible for reimbursing the amounts concerned to the general budget of the Union in accordance with the apportionment of liabilities among the participating States as laid down in the cooperation programme and in Article 27 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 [ETC].

In the case of irregularities discovered by the Court of Auditors or by the European Commission, which result in certain expenditures being considered ineligible and in a financial corrections being the subject of a EC decision on the basis of Articles 144 to 147 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 [CPR], the financial consequences for the participating States are laid down in the section "*liabilities and irregularities*" below. Any related exchange of correspondence between the EC and the Member and Partner States will be copied to the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat. The latter will inform the Certifying Authority, the Audit Authority and the Group of Auditors.

Apportionment of liabilities among the participating States

The participating State will bear liability in connection with the use of the programme ERDF and IPA funding as follows:

- for expenditure related to project partners located on its territory, liability will be born individually by each participating State;
- in case of a systemic irregularity or financial correction (the latter decided by the EC), the participating States will bear the financial consequences in proportion to the relevant irregularity detected on the respective participating State territory. Where the systemic irregularity or financial correction cannot be linked to a specific participating State territory, the participating States shall be responsible in proportion to the ERDF/IPA contribution paid to the respective national project partners involved;

5.5. Use of the Euro

(Reference: Article 28 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

In accordance with Article 28 (b) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, expenditure incurred in a currency other than the Euro shall be converted into Euro by the beneficiaries in the month during which expenditure was submitted for verification to the controller in accordance with Article 23 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013.

The conversion shall be verified by the controller in the participating State in which the beneficiary is located.

5.6. Involvement of partners

(Reference: point (c) of Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Actions taken to involve the partners in the preparation of the cooperation programme, and the role of those partners in the preparation and implementation of the cooperation programme, including their involvement in the monitoring committee (regional and local authorities, competent urban and other public authorities, economic and social partners, relevant bodies representing civil society (including environmental partners), non-governmental organisations, and bodies responsible for promoting social inclusion, gender equality and non-discrimination).

5.6.1. Summary of the process of the preparation of the cooperation programme

The cooperation programme has been elaborated following the code of conduct of the EU Commission.

The CP preparation process took place during 2 years starting in May 2012 with the setting up of a Task Force for the preparation of the CP and closed in September 2014 with the submission for the EC adoption of the final draft of the CP approved by the participating state.

The Joint Task Force has been set up, by written procedure, on February 29th, 2012, by the MED participating states in order to lead the preparation process of the future programme. During its first meeting held on May 10th, 2012 in Marseille, internal rules of procedure setting up the mission, the decision making process and the composition of the Task Force was adopted (maximum of 3 persons per MS including a representative of the National Contact Points and of the regional authorities, representative of the EC, of the MA and JS).

The MED JS has been assigned the role of the Secretariat of the TF whose meetings have been coordinated by an external Moderator, selected through a public tender in the framework of

the Technical Assistance of the MED OP 2007-2013 and in charge of the drafting of the CP document.

In order to ensure a general coherence of the CP contents with the European regulatory framework, the indicative time plan of the programming process was constantly updated taking into account the evolution of draft EU regulation and the consultation processes.

The Task Force launched a call for applications towards institutions willing to act as the future MA: the procedure was closed in March 2013 with the appointment of the PACA Region as the MA of the CP MED 2014-2020.

The TF decided to contract some external experts for the execution of specialised tasks related to the CP preparation such as the moderation and drafting process (as mentioned above), the diagnosis and the SWOT analysis, the *ex-ante* analysis, the elaboration of the programme indicators system and the strategic environmental evaluation.

The Task Force set-up a restricted working group mandated to accompany the preparation of the indicator system. Its members have been appointed by the participating states among their own national experts. This working group gathered 4 MS representatives plus MA and JS.

A total number of 12 TF meetings took place during all the preparation process.

Most of the documents have been distributed in both the official languages of the Programme (English and French).

Description of the involvement of the partners

For the preparation of the MED programme, partners have been involved through consultation processes implemented in each participating states and through a consultation launched on the programme level.

The first step of the national consultations closed by June 2013. Results of national consultation have been synthesised and presented to the Task Force.

Following national consultations, the MED programme launched on its website its own public online consultation on the programme priorities between the 7 October and the 22 November 2013 whose results have been presented to the Task Force the 12th December 2013.

Between February and April 2014 the consultation of the Environment Authority and of the participating States concerning the impact of the programme on the environment has also been achieved.

Selection of partners

According to the European Code of Conduct on Partnership, a partnership representative of the eligible area has been involved in the CP preparation by including (a) relevant national, regional, local, urban and other public authorities, (b) economic and social partners and (c) bodies representing civil society, including environmental partners, non-governmental organisations, and bodies responsible for promoting equality and non-discrimination.

The consultation within the MED programme has followed the "General principles and minimum standards for consultation of interested parties by the Commission"⁴⁸. Thus the Program-

⁴⁸ "Towards a reinforced culture of consultation and dialogue – General principles and minimum standards for consultation of interested parties by the Commission". Brussels, 11.12.2002 COM(2002) 704 final

me has ensured that the principles of openness and accountability, effectiveness and coherence have been applied when consulting its stakeholders.

There were three types of stakeholders to be consulted: (a) stakeholders included in the national/regional lists provided by the participating state, (b) MED project partners and (c) Programme's target groups having a possibility to connect to the websites (programme, regions, state).

The notification about the survey has been sent out by e-mail to 6693 addresses (2832 from the participating state lists and 3861 from the Programme's lists), from which 6655 received the email at least once. The Programme has respected a proportional representativeness of all Member-States in the invitations sent by email.

List of partners involved in the consultation process

General statistic data

1051 persons have accessed the survey webpage. 444 persons started responding to the survey, 279 of which finalized it. They represent 389 different structures.

Representativeness

The rate of contributors per participating states of the Programme compared to the rate of inhabitants at Programme level reveals that all countries have been represented in a rather equitable way. However, we can notice that Italy and Greece have been somehow underrepresented, whereas Croatia and Cyprus have been overrepresented.

Types of structures represented

The most represented structures are:

- Regional authorities
- University/ research centre/ technological centre /scientific park
- Local authorities

It is worth mentioning that 7,4% were representing enterprises / SMEs and economic operators, which is a significant score if compared to the low participation of this type of structures in the MED programme 2007-2013.

Domains of expertise

All domains of expertise were represented. The most represented being nevertheless:

- Education and training,
- Energy efficiency,
- Governance and partnership,
- Institutional cooperation and networks of cooperation,
- Regional planning and development,
- Sustainable management of natural resources.

Action taken to facilitate the participation of partners

The MED programme informed partners about the launch of the consultation process on its website and national authorities informed relevant bodies, authorities and partners in their respective country.

The stakeholders included in the lists provided by the participating countries, the project partners, the subscribers of the MED newsletter and the Programme's instances have been invited to answer the survey via an e-mail. The email included a short explanatory note and the link to the Programme website for access to the consultation. Several reminders were sent during the consultation period.

Main added value of the partnership in the preparation of the cooperation programme

In the preparation of the cooperation programme, the main added value of partners has been to provide detailed information on needs and priorities at territorial level for a wide range of institutions and bodies. Especially, partners identified in the survey issues considered as the most important ones among the thematic objectives and investment priorities proposed by the regulation and pre-selected by the Task Force of the MED programme. It helped to highlight priorities and to rank issues to be taken into account in the strategy of the programme.

Partners also helped to better identify types of actions and actions that should be supported within each Investment Priority. This was necessary to propose operational and need-based types of actions able to generate concrete and measurable results.

Main results of the consultation with partners

The main result of the consultation is the ranking of themes from the most to the least important for the implementation of the MED programme 2014-2020. The result is the following:

- Strengthening research, technological development and innovation
- Energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use
- Enhancing institutional capacity and governance (macro-regional cooperation)
- Cultural and natural heritage
- Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management
- Protecting biodiversity, soils and ecosystems
- Promoting sustainable transports
- Promoting low-carbon development strategies

For the different themes, one can observe main convergence with the proposal of the cooperation programmes and some divergence listed and explained below.

Choice of intervention themes

Partners mention research and innovation as the main priority for the MED area which is also the first priority for the MED CP.

Energy efficiency and renewable energy are considered as the second priority by partners. However, even these issues are of strategic importance, they are granted less importance in the

CP. The reason is that they are already strongly supported by national and regional programmes and that the MED programme should intervene only in a complementary way with specific focus on strategies, capacity building and change of habits for example.

Institutional capacity and governance (in relation with the setting up of macro-regional strategies) is considered as a key issue by the partners (third choice). This is also considered as a major preoccupation by the programme authorities but questions are raised concerning the methodology that should be used to improve transnational cooperation on issues that are rather political. With the setting-up of the Adriatic/Ionian macro-region and considering the progress that could be done in transnational cooperation at Mediterranean level, it was relevant to integrate this issue in the priorities of the programme. However, this can be done only in a limited way taking into account important institutional and political conditions that must be met to progress in this direction (not depending on the authorities of the programme).

Partners rank “protection of cultural and natural heritage”, “climate change and risk prevention” and “biodiversity” in 4, 5 and 6 position, respectively. For the MED programme, environmental issues represent the second most important preoccupation with research and innovation. These themes are closely interconnected and represent an important potential of transnational cooperation projects.

Sustainable transports and the promotion of low-carbon development strategies are considered as less important by partners (seventh and eighth position). Regarding transports, it is coherent with the limited involvement of partners on this issue between 2007 and 2013. For 2014-2020, the needs in the field of sustainable transports are very different from one participating state to another which justifies the intervention of the MED programme (but in a limited way) to share experiences at transnational level.

Regarding low carbon development strategies, the issue has been largely covered by energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable transport already mentioned.

Choice of priority actions

In a general way, the types of actions suggested by partners for each intervention field are coherent with the ones developed in the cooperation programme (networking, strategy building, adoption and share of innovative tools, implementation of common systems, transfer of practices, etc.). With the consultation, we observe that partners highlight in particular actions dedicated to change habits and behaviours especially in the fields of energy and protection of the environment. One can also mention the importance given to capacity building of public authorities in the different intervention fields and of the improvement of skills and knowledge both for institutions and individuals as final beneficiaries.

5.6.2. Description of the involvement of partners in the implementation of the cooperation programme and involvement in the Monitoring Committee

During the implementation of the programme, partners will be invited to participate to workshops and seminars for the preparation of calls. These events will be based on exchange and consultation processes to gather opinion and proposals for the drafting of terms of reference and the launch of calls (existing results, state of the art, on-going initiatives, etc.).

The programme will pay a specific attention to the participation of the following actors:

- National Committees as multilevel and cross-sectoral consultative bodies, when existing

- Social partners to be properly involved
- The participation of the civil society and end users to be strengthened
- To further develop and make better use (including effective dissemination of developed knowledge) of existing networks involving citizens, business, NGOs and other partners
- Partnerships with bodies specialised in non-discrimination to be integrated in policy planning

Public procurement rules

Parts of activities in an operation may be subcontracted to third entities by LPs or PPs.

When spending ERDF funds by means of public contracts/concessions, the contracting entities will have to respect EU public procurement rules and in particular:

- (i) Directives 2004/18/EC and 2004/17/EC,
- (ii) Directives 2014/23/EU, 2014/24/EU and 2014/25/EU once transposed into national legislation,
- (iii) Directives 89/665/EEC and 92/13/EEC and
- (iv) the general public procurement principles derived from the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

When spending ERDF funds, rules on procurement are mandatory. Private bodies, non-governmental organisations and international organisations have to respect the spirit of the public procurement regulations.

With regard to the contracting entities of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, they should respect the public procurement obligations undertaken under their respective Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU.

SECTION 6 Coordination

6.1. Coordination with the other ESI Funds (ERDF, ESF, Cohesion Fund, EAFRD, EMFF), particularly in relation to programmes under the Investment for Growth and Jobs Goal

The MED transnational cooperation programme is one of the EU intervention tools that are implemented in Mediterranean regions. For its elaboration, it has been necessary to take into account the results of national consultations where the design of regional and national programmes under the Investment for Growth and Jobs Goal represented a major stake (Obligation for ERDF regional and national programmes to concentrate 80% of funds at national level on two or more of the thematic objectives set out in point 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Article 9 of the Common regulation with 20% specifically dedicated to Thematic Objective 4).

For the elaboration of the MED programme, the choice of Thematic Objectives, Investment Priorities and Specific Objectives took into account the priorities highlighted in the Partnership Agreements of respective countries involved in the programme and the main challenges raised in regional and national programmes of Investment for Growth and Jobs Goal. The Objective of the MED programme is to support complementary actions and avoid overlapping in the different priority axes:

Axis 1: Research and Innovation is a major preoccupation of regional and national programmes in each country participating to the programme. The MED programme proposes a strong focus on this issue but with a specific attention paid to the transnational dimension of innovation activities (transnational networks, clusters, etc.).

Axis 2: Regional and national programmes must concentrate a significant part of their budget on the promotion of low carbon economy and the reduction of GHG emission. Although the exchange of transnational experience is necessary, the need of strong investments and the influence of national regulations give a major role to national and regional programme. For this reason, the MED programme proposes more limited interventions on this field with a targeted approach focused on capacity building and awareness raising.

Axis 3: Due to the concentration principles of regional and national programmes on thematic objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4, environmental issues are less taken into account in these programmes. However, these issues are of major importance in MED regions for environmental and economic reasons. The area is subject to strong human pressures and to global environmental changes that necessitate adapting its development model. For this reason, and to complement regional and national programmes, the MED programme highlights this issue.

Axis 4: The main objective of this axis is to improve transnational governance processes in the Mediterranean. It proposes to explore cooperation possibilities on Mediterranean sustainable development issues. A specific 'platform' project will be elaborated and carried out. In order to coordinate multilateral and intergovernmental cooperation during the programming period, a network of authorities will be put in place in the programme area. This network will help to organize interministerial and interregional workshops around priority themes that need coordinated responses in the Mediterranean. The Lead Partners of 'Horizontal projects' in charge of capitalizing the work of several MED thematic projects, are asked to feed in information to these working groups, that in their turn, can propose mainstreaming actions based at least partly on MED project results. The programme will in such way create a systematic

mechanism of capitalization and exchange between its own results and the mainstream policies, especially Structural Funds programmes in the Regions.

Interregional working groups targeting specifically the capitalization potential between MED projects and regional ERDF/ESF/EARDF programmes and composed of regional Managing authorities, can be established under the 'platform' project.

In addition to Axis 4, and in a more general approach, during the implementation of the MED programme, National Contact Points are asked to get informed about the implementation of ERDF regional and national programmes and transmit to the Managing Authorities information that could be useful for the MED transnational programme (needs, gaps, success and failures, change in strategic orientations, etc.). National Contact Points also disseminate information about the MED programme to the Managing Authorities of regional and national programmes to let them know about activities and projects outputs that could be useful for them. The MED programme can also be used to finance preliminary studies for the preparation of projects that could be further developed with the support of regional and national programmes.

Exchange is particularly promoted with multi-fund regional and national programmes including both ERDF and ESF activities.

National Contact Points can also grant a specific attention to regions under the "convergence" objective and regions receiving grants from the Cohesion Fund.

Regarding the EAFRD and the EMFF, the MED programme is not developing significant activities dedicated to agriculture or fisheries. However, the objectives of sustainable development, the protection of the natural environment, conflicts of use of land or at sea or the diversification of tourism activities constitute relevant issues for MED projects. Especially, the promotion of the "Blue growth" represents also an opportunity to explore coordination or capitalisation of activities with the EMFF.

For this reason, a direct contact with the EMFF support unit (Farnet) has been established and the MED programme will receive adequate information on activities financed in the framework of Flag's (Fisheries local action groups) in the MED area. Thus the complementarity of MED projects and their links with Flag's when relevant, can be assured during the programming period. This is particularly important for the activities foreseen under the Priority Axis 3.

6.2. Coordination with other Union instruments (Horizon 2020, LIFE , the Connecting Europe Facility, COSME, Erasmus for All, Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, Programme for Social Change and Innovation, the Internal Security Fund – Borders and Visa, etc.)

The 2007-2013 *in-itinere* evaluation of the MED programme has been the occasion to highlight linkages and possible synergy effects between the MED programme and other thematic EU programmes, in particular with Horizon 2020, COSME, LIFE, ERASMUS FOR ALL, Programme for a Social Change and Social Innovation (PSCI), Creative Europe, Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), Civil Protection⁴⁹.

⁴⁹ See annex 1: Chart of the MED Programme *In Itinere* evaluation. Benchmarking Phase 1. November 2012

In the preparation phase of the 2014-2020 period, the MED programme used specific mechanism to highlight potential synergies, avoid duplication and identify fields where additional financial support would be needed. One can mention:

- A specific identification of the relevant programmes, instruments and policies that represent an interest according to the orientations of the MED programme (provided by the *in-itinere* evaluation)
- Specific “capitalization” calls to implement in the MED Territory relevant achievements coming from EU thematic projects
- Specific MED calls as first step of larger projects that would be financed by other thematic programmes

For the MED programme, the connections between the 11 thematic objectives for 2014 and 2020 and the thematic EU programme are highlighted in table (23bis). The MED programme can contribute to finance projects in coherence with these thematic programmes when relevant.

Horizon 2020, the programme for the Competitiveness of enterprises and SMEs (COSME) and Connecting Europe Facility present a high level of coherence with the objectives of smart growth (Thematic Objective 1, 2 and 3). The Connecting Europe Facility presents also quite important connection with the objective of sustainable growth with the necessity to reduce GHG emissions and support sustainable transports.

In order to find complementarities and synergies between MED projects and the above mentioned thematic programmes, a system of thematic referent persons has been set up in the MED JS. There are two thematic referent persons for each thematic Priority Axis (1,2, and 3), and they have the task of following the relevant thematic programmes of their sector, establishing direct exchange with them, and coordinating the evaluation of project proposals under their specific theme. This mechanism will ensure that the MED project proposals take into account the activities financed in thematic programmes and build complementarities and synergies with them. The thematic referents contribute to the specific Terms of Reference for each call for projects (there is a ToR for each specific objective) and make sure that the ToR already takes into account the complementarity and orients the project proposals accordingly.

Interreg MED Programme 2014-2020

Connections between the 11 thematic objectives for 2014 and 2020 and the thematic EU programme

EU 2020	Priority Objectives	Horizon 2020	COSME	LIFE	Erasmus for all	PSCI	Creative Europe	CEF	Civil protection
Smt	1 – RDT and Innovation								
Smt	2 – ICT								
Smt Sus	3 – SME competitiveness								
Sus	4 – Less CO2 economy								
Sus	5 – Climate Change/risks								
Sus	6 – Environment								
Sus	7 – Sustainable transport								
Inc	8 – Employment and mobility								
Inc	9 – Social inclusion/Poverty								
Smt Inc	10 – Skills and education								
Smt/Sus /Inc	11 – Institutional capacities								

	Strong coherence between the thematic objective and the thematic programme
	Average coherence between the thematic objective and the thematic programme
	No connection between the thematic objective and the thematic programme

1: EU 2020: strategy for growth: Smt: smart – Sus: sustainable – Inc: inclusive

2: Horizon 2020: New R&D and innovation programme combining FP7 and part of the current CIP

3: COSME: Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs (Entrepreneurship component of CIP)

4: Erasmus for all: new programme for education, training, youth and sport (picking up on the seven current programmes including LLP and Youth in Action).

5: PSCI: Programme for Social Change and Social Innovation, picking up on the PROGRESS and EURES programmes

6: Creative Europe: programme combining in particular the current CULTURE and MEDIA programmes

7: CEF: Connecting Europe Facility: including in particular Marco Polo and TEN-T

6.3. Coordination with CEF, ENI, IPA and EDF

For the MED programme there is a key issue with the proximity of the ENI CBC Mediterranean programme and the creation of the Adriatic-Ionian programme ADRION, whose territory is also partly covered by the MED programme.

In order to strengthen its transnational dimension and improve the cooperation with other programmes like Adrion, Balkan Med or Alpine Space, the MED programme will take into account the objectives and results of these programmes when implementing its capitalisation activities, strategic projects and in self-evaluation.

The cooperation with ENI CBC MED and with ADRION will be especially important regarding the definition of the content of calls for projects and the share of projects results. This could be done with consultation and exchange of data on projects achievements.

Furthermore, as mentioned previously, the MED programme includes in its eligible territory Mediterranean States candidates or potential candidates to the European Union. European funds are made available to these States to facilitate their political and economic reforms, while preparing to assume the rights and obligations related to the accession to the EU. Thus Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro participate to the programme with the Instrument for Pre-Accession assistance funds. The management of these funds is integrated into the system of management and control of the MED programme and is under the responsibility of the Managing Authority.

As regard the ENI CBC programme and the ADRION programme, coordination activities can be implemented with the definition of calls or the organisation of common/coordinated events.

At the time of the submission of the CP, these cooperation programmes are not finalised enough to analyse in detail strategies, objectives and cooperation possibilities with the MED programme.

As far as it is feasible the MED programme will establish direct contacts with all relevant cooperation programmes under its eligibility area and will try to initiate joint data sharing and research for complementarity of projects. This may mean for instance data comparison for projects financed in cross-border programmes and those financed by MED, when there is a MED partner or partners located in the area of the cross-border programme, and a potential for overlapping but also for synergies exist. Joint capitalization events for specific themes relevant to both cross-border/other transnational programmes and for MED, can be envisaged.

Interreg MED Programme 2014-2020

Common investment priorities between the MED programme and other ETC programmes *(according to information available at the date of submission of the MED CP)*

	1. a	1. b	2. a	2. b	2. c	3. a	3. b	3. c	3. d	4. a	4. b	4. c	4d	4. e	4.f	4. g	5. a	5. b	6. a	6. b	6. c	6. d	6. e	6.f	6. g	7. a	7. b	7. c	7. d	7. e	10 .a	10 b	11
MED Programme																																	
Adriatic-Ionian programme																																	
Balkan-Mediterranean programme																																	
Danube Programme																																	
South-West programme																																	
Central Europe Programme																																	
Alpine Space Programme																																	
ENI CBC MED programme																																	

6.4. Coordination with relevant national funding instruments that contribute to the same or similar objectives as the cooperation programme or complement its interventions

During the elaboration of the MED cooperation programme, participating countries highlighted the fact that some fields of intervention were already largely covered by national and regional policies and by ERDF regional programmes. It is for instance the case for the promotion of energy efficiency, renewable energy or risk prevention.

In this case, the programme adapted the budget allocated to these issues and focused its activities on types of interventions complementary to actions already implemented. It does not finance large scale facilities or infrastructures but supports the conception of strategies, the improvement of policies and the enhancement of experiences that vary from one MED region to another.

In other domains, coordination and complementarity with national instruments rely essentially on the transnational dimension of the programme that allows actors to develop or strengthen regional and national initiatives with mutualisation of means and exchange of results at transnational level.

During the implementing period, the programme will in particular lean on the governance and coordination effort provided within the 'platform' project of the Priority Axis 4, in order to ensure cooperation and complementarity with national and regional funding instruments. Equally, the National Contact Points should act as transmitters of information between the MED programme and relevant national/regional programmes, in order to ensure complementarity and impact of MED financing in regard to mainstream policies.

6.5. Coordination with EIB

As a transnational cooperation programme, the MED programme can be used to explore intervention fields, provide studies, support scientific research, establish networks or finance feasibility studies to prepare the ground for wider initiatives that would be financed by other intervention tools.

This possibility can be used by stakeholders to prepare a second generation of projects that would eventually be financed by the European Investment Bank.

SECTION 7

Reduction of the Administrative burden for beneficiaries

(Reference: point (b) of Article 8(5) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/201317)

A summary of the assessment of the administrative burden for beneficiaries and, where necessary, the actions planned accompanied by an indicative timeframe to reduce administrative burden

7.1. Assessment of the administrative burden

The main sources of administrative burden in the 2007-2013 period were the huge volume of data received from beneficiaries and the time needed to assess reports and authorise the payments.

Regarding **the huge volume of data received by the beneficiaries**, a distinction can be made between the application stage and the implementation period.

The procedure to be respected in order to submit the final application included, in some of the calls, up to 9 different documents, all of them to be sent in both hard and electronic copies. Some flexibility rules regarding the eligibility criteria were approved during the programming period, but they were not enough to reduce the administrative burden. Rules were not easily understood by beneficiaries and many formal mistakes motivated the ineligibility of numerous projects.

As for the implementation period, Lead Partners had to submit every six months a progress report, a payment claim and certificates of the controllers in both hard and electronic copies. A list of deliverables only had to be submitted electronically.

However, the main difficulty for Lead Partners during the implementation period was the coordination of a complex set of different national eligibility rules within a same project. Every national First Level Control system had its own procedures, templates and delays.

As a consequence, at both Programme and project level, enormous human resources were employed to accumulate and verify documents rather than focus on controlling the delivery of outputs and achievements of objectives, thus **the time needed to assess reports and authorise the payments** was very long.

The main conclusion is that the time and cost required for the assessment, management and control of MED projects in the 2007-2013 period was disproportionate and, therefore, certain flexibility and simplification are needed.

7.2. Main actions planned to achieve a reduction in administrative burden

The main actions planned to achieve a reduction in the administrative burden are the following:

- The approval of general rules on eligibility of expenditure

- The use of simplified cost options in some budget categories (in accordance with Articles 67 and 68 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and with Article 19 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)
- The use of simplified implementation tools (harmonised, whenever possible with the other ETC Programmes)
- The electronic exchange of information between beneficiaries and programme bodies
 - The dematerialization process
 - The electronic signature (when possible)

The approval of general rules on eligibility of expenditure

The ETC Regulation provides in its Article 18(1) that the Commission shall set up specific rules on eligibility of expenditure for cooperation programmes by means of a delegated act.

The delegated act on eligibility of expenditure (Commission Regulation (EU) No 481/2014) contains general provisions and five sections related to staff costs, office and administrative expenditure, travel and accommodation costs, external expertise and services costs, and finally equipment expenditure.

These five budget lines applicable to all ETC programmes are the ones within which all expenditure incurred during the implementation of a project shall be declared.

A guidance on individual costs eligible under each of the budget lines is provided in a set of fact sheets issued by the INTERACT programme. In this way, all beneficiaries can work with a set of harmonised core rules and focus on programme specific conditions only, when they work across different programmes.

Article 18(2) of the ETC Regulation provides that the States participating in the Monitoring Committee shall establish additional rules on eligibility of expenditure for the cooperation programme as a whole.

The use of simplified costs options, in accordance with Articles 67 and 68 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and with Article 19 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, may be proposed under the relevant budget lines.

At the same time, new implementation tools set up by the programme are uploaded in the Programme information system.

These tools take into account, whenever possible, the harmonisation work that is coordinated by the INTERACT programme together with the other ETC programmes. Harmonised implementation tools are one of the main simplification measures that aim at reducing the administrative burden for both ETC programme bodies and beneficiaries, shifting the focus of programme implementation towards results and quality.

Taking into account the experience of the 2007-2013 period, sound financial management requires that all the national First Level Control systems use the common implementation templates and the simplified elements in the calculation of costs.

Controllers must adapt their working methods and practices. However, the change of the system will give them time and resources to focus more on areas that address the greatest risk (as the public procurement procedures, for instance).

The bodies responsible for the First Level Control in the different Member States hold regular coordination meetings regarding the implementation of the common eligibility rules, the

simplified cost options and the harmonised tools. These meetings are held to improve the quality of the checks and to reduce the possible discrepancies in the application of the shared rules.

The electronic exchange of information between beneficiaries and programme bodies

A system for the electronic exchange of information between beneficiaries and programme authorities must be in place no later than on December, 31st 2015, as set up in Article 122(3) of the CPR and in the Implementing Act on the rules concerning electronic information exchange with beneficiaries ("e-Cohesion").

Regarding the communication with beneficiaries, this exchange covers the whole life span of the projects, from the application and the signature of the Subsidy Contract until the submission of all documents related to project implementation as well as the progress report and the certification of expenditures.

Furthermore, a process of dematerialization of documents is put in place through the programme's on line monitoring tool. This process includes the production of documents using information already entered in the tool for the whole project life in compliance with the "*only once*" principle, as well as the storage of relevant documents for the management and implementation of the project. This process will reduce significantly the amount of paper and the transfer of documents, and will allow gathering all documents in the same place making them available to everybody at any time: programme bodies, beneficiaries and controllers.

Finally, a secure electronic signature system in the same platform, in compliance with the Directive 1999/93/EC, should be available in order to guarantee the autonomy of the electronic audit trail and to reduce considerably the existing administrative burden.

SECTION 8

Horizontal Principles

(Reference: Article 8 (7) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

8.1. Sustainable development

The Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) state: *“Member States and the Commission shall ensure that environmental protection requirements, resource efficiency, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity and ecosystem protection, disaster resilience and risk prevention and management are promoted in the preparation and implementation of Partnership Agreements and programmes.”* (art.8).

The Strategic Environmental assessment (SEA) and the *Ex-ante* evaluation provided inputs to ensure that the MED programme respect the principle of sustainable development.

At the programme level, a specific attention is paid to this principle with the choice of thematic objectives and investment priorities. The fight against the consequences of climate change, the reduction of the impact of human activities on the environment and the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity are supported by investment priorities 6.c and 6.d. The reduction of GHG emission is supported by investment priorities 4.c and 4e.

In a transversal way, in the different Priority Axes, beneficiaries are asked to promote eco-innovations aiming to make a more sustainable use of natural resources.

More precisely, beneficiaries are requested to describe in their project proposals the efforts they will undertake to reduce the project's 'carbon footprint'. The Programme bodies (MC, MA, JS, NCP) will also address this issue in relation to the implementation of their tasks.

In line with the principle of sustainable development, projects applications are evaluated using the following criteria:

- projects which have a positive effect on the environment or which conserve, enhance or rehabilitate existing endowments will be preferred to those that are neutral from this perspective;
- projects that have a potentially harmful effect on the environment will be excluded;
- actions designed to raise environmental awareness and compliance both within the economic and administrative sectors, and among the general public, including acknowledgement that a high level of environmental performance can provide a long term competitive advantage will be supported.

As guidance for the project evaluation process, the following aspects will be considered:

- Contribution to efficiency in the use of resources (e.g. energy efficiency, renewable energy use, reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, air quality measures in particular reduction of PA and NO₂, efficient water supply, waste-water treatment and water reuse, sustainable land use, waste management and recycling etc.)
- Contribution to the development of green infrastructures
- Contribution to sustainable integrated urban and regional development
- Contribution to better awareness for the adaptation to climate change and risk prevention

- Promotion of employment opportunities, education, training and support services in the context of environment protection and sustainable development

In application forms, a special chapter is dedicated to sustainable development criteria. A special eye is kept to project proposals giving clear measurable output indicators on environmental issues (where applicable according to the objectives of the project). Lead partners will provide a logical framework in which it will be clearly indicated how environmental issues are taken into account (activities of the project, results, specific objectives, global objectives).

Whether projects are directly concerned by sustainable development issues or not, they are invited to take specific measures to reduce the impact of projects implementation on the environment. This can include for example:

- use of video conference to reduce travelling
- publications on FSC-certified paper
- use of “green public procurement” procedures and innovative public procurement where appropriate
- use of short supply chains in the implementation of projects activities
- raising awareness of partners, beneficiaries and target groups on sustainability issues
- promotion of activities with limited use of energy and natural resources

These measures shall also be taken into account at programme level for managing and monitoring activities.

It is noted that measures taken for simplification and reduction of administrative constraints mentioned in part 7.2 of the Cooperation Programme are likely to reduce the environmental impact of the programme through the use of electronic communication and the rationalization of the use of paper documents.

More detailed guidelines on how to interpret the main principles outlined in the CP might be provided in the Terms of reference of each call for projects.

8.2. Equal opportunities and non-discrimination

The Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) state: *“Member States and the Commission shall take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation during the preparation and implementation of programmes, concerning monitoring, reporting and evaluation”* (art. 7).

8.2.1. Target groups and measures taken to reduce risks of discrimination

Considering its nature and main objectives, the MED programme does not target specific group concerned by risks of discrimination. It is neither supporting the direct development of infrastructures (excepted for pilot projects) susceptible to have an impact on groups at risk of discrimination.

Target groups of the programme are mainly institutional partners, public and private bodies that are not specifically concerned by this risk. Some specificities can however be identified in the MED area with the growing number of elderly people and unemployed youth. In the different thematic objective, the use of ICT can be a means to improve access of these popu-

lations to information and services. While developing e-services, the involvement of representatives of these groups in the conception/implementation of projects is encouraged.

8.2.2. Initiative to mainstream non-discrimination principles in project selection and implementation

In each application form, applicants will be asked to explain whether groups at risk of discrimination are concerned by their project and the measure taken to avoid discrimination and/or improve the integration of these groups as partners or end-users. In the selection process, non-discrimination will be considered as a transversal dimension of the qualitative evaluation of projects.

In the MED programme, a particular attention will be paid to the groups at risk of socio-economic discrimination due to the consequences of the economic crisis (young people Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET), disabled ...) and to elderly people that represent a growing part of the population. Partners will have to take into account information and communication measures so that the different categories of population can benefit of the result of the projects.

Depending of the fields of intervention, calls for projects might also include specific non-discrimination requirement or actions providing support to these populations.

8.2.3. Monitoring and evaluation measures

During the life of projects, equal opportunities and non-discrimination will constitute one of the monitoring and evaluation criteria used by the programme. The programme will make sure that the initiatives foreseen in applications are respected, notably concerning committing the end-users and the actions of information and communication towards groups at risk of discrimination.

8.2.4. Specific actions to be taken to promote equal opportunity and prevent discrimination with reference to the specific investment priority

In the MED programme, there is no Investment Priority or objective specifically dedicated to equal opportunity and non-discrimination.

However, these questions are especially relevant for specific objectives focused on end-users like the promotion of energy efficiency or the access to sustainable transport systems (investment priorities 4.c and 4.e). Projects are asked to identify and to take into account the different categories of people concerned, including those potentially subject to discrimination measures.

8.3. Equality between men and women

Equality between women and men is an important value of the European Union and is set out in of the Treaty on the European Union. Article 3 states that the Union shall “*combat social*

*exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child*⁵⁰.

Equality between women and men is also included in the consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (art.8)⁵¹ and in the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR): *“Member States and the Commission shall ensure that equality between men and women and the integration of gender perspective is promoted in the preparation and implementation of programmes”*⁵².

8.3.1. Contribution of the programme to the promotion of equality between men and women

For the MED programme, gender equality does not constitute an explicit priority among thematic objectives and investment priorities. The issue is taken into account as a horizontal priority in the conception, selection and evaluation of projects.

8.3.2. Actions planned to ensure the integration of the gender perspective at operational level

The issue can be approached in different manners, from increasing the number of women in management activities to raising the number of women in the R-D sector through equal treatment in terms of pay.

While it may be hard to imagine that inequalities of gender opportunities are significantly reduced with the means of the MED programme, equality principles can be highlighted by paying special attention to initiatives that may have a positive impact in the long-run by contributing to a change of attitude.

Project proposals giving practical indications on measures that will be implemented to reduce gender differences in management, retribution, decision-making and job opportunities are appreciated within the evaluation. Measures may also concern the conciliation between professional and family activities, awareness raising among the population or gender analyses within the partner institutions.

In any case, project promoters must take into account the principle of equality between men and women in the conception and implementation of their project. The terms of reference of calls for projects might provide more precise instructions on this subject.

8.3.3. Monitoring and evaluation measures

Evaluators will consider the significance given to the gender perspective in the projects and if specific targets have been set out. In order to measure the promotion of equality between men and women, the involvement of women and men can be considered in the following way:

- counting the number of men and women participating to projects and activities
- counting the number of women benefitting from funding

⁵⁰ Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union - TITLE I: COMMON PROVISIONS - Article 3 (ex article 2 TEU), Official Journal L115 , 09/05/2008 P. 0017 - 0017

⁵¹ Article 8, Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union, Official Journal of the European Union C 83/49 of 30.3.2010.

⁵² Article 7, CPR, COM(2011) 615 final/2, Brussels, 14.3.2012, p. 34

- highlighting how much support and for which measures women and men are receiving funding

In any case, applicants must explain the relevance of gender equality for their project, the measures implemented or the reasons why it is not considered as an applicable issue for the project.

8.3.4. Specific actions to be taken to promote gender equality with reference to the specific investment priority

In the MED programme, there is no Investment Priority or objective specifically dedicated to gender equality.

However, as for non-discrimination measures, this question can be taken into account for specific objectives focused on end-users like the promotion of energy efficiency or the access to sustainable transport systems (investment priorities 4.c and 4.e). In these cases, projects can apply specific measures to women and include specific monitoring tools to measure the progress made.

SECTION 9

Separate elements

9.1. Major projects to be implemented during the programming period

(Reference: point (e) of Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Not relevant for the MED CP

9.2. Performance framework of the cooperation programme

Table 24: The performance framework of the cooperation programme

Priority axis	Indicator or key implementation step	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)
1	1.1.a Number of operational instruments to favour innovation of SMEs	Instruments	8	44.00
1	FI Expenses declared to the EC	Euro	12,667,625.00	84,450,833.00
2	2.1.a Number of available planning tools to monitor and manage energy consumption in public buildings	Tools	3	5.00
2	2.2.a Number of planning tools to develop energy plans including local RES	Tools	3	5.00
2	2.3.a Number of instruments available to foster the use of LC transport solutions, including multimodal ones	Instruments	3	5.00
2	FI Expenses declared to the EC	Euro	7,917,266.00	52,781,771.00
3	3.1.a Number of instruments available to enhance the development of sustainable and responsible tourism	Instruments	10	17.00
3	3.2.a Number of joint governance plans	Plans	18	36.00

Interreg MED Programme 2014- 2020

Priority axis	Indicator or key implementation step	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)
3	FI Expenses declared to the EC	Euro	13,459,352.00	89,729,012.00
4	4.1.a Number of stakeholders (structures) involved in supported initiatives (per category representing public and private stakeholders)	Organisations	200	1,200.00
4	FI Expenses declared to the EC	Euro	3,166,906.00	21,112,708.00

9.3. Relevant partners involved in the preparation of the cooperation programme

- National authorities
- Regional authorities
- Local authorities / Metropolises / cities
- Local and regional development agencies / Public development bodies / public operators
- Land and maritime planning authorities
- Universities / Research centres / Technological centres / Scientific parks
- SMEs / Economic operators / Representatives of economic operators / Networks and clusters
- Chambers of Commerce, of industry, of agriculture
- Non-governmental organisations
- Training bodies
- Ports authorities / Maritime authorities
- Transport authorities
- National environmental authorities of the 13 Member and Partner States involved in the Environmental Consultation phase

9.4. Applicable programme implementation conditions governing the financial management, programming, monitoring, evaluation and control of the participation of third countries in transnational and interregional programmes through a contribution of ENI and IPA resources

(Reference: Article 26 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

In a general way, rules applicable to ERDF partners are applied to IPA partners regarding the implementing conditions for the financial management, programming, monitoring, evaluation and control. However, the following issues will have to be considered:

- IPA partners cannot be Lead Partners in the MED projects;
- IPA entities under private law are not eligible to the MED programme;
- IPA funds can only finance operations located in IPA countries;
- IPA funds can only be spent on IPA countries;
- In accordance with Title IV, Section 3, Chapter 3 of Regulation (EU, EURATOM) No 966/2012 (Financial Regulation) and with Part Two, Title II, Chapter III of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, rules on external action procurement shall apply to IPA partners;
- A mechanism of advance payments at project level will only apply for IPA partners and not for ERDF partners, as it was already the case in the last programming period. This mechanism is to be described in the description of management and control systems;
- Financing Agreements between the European Commission, the Managing Authority and the Governments of Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania are to be signed regarding the implementation of IPA assistance integrated in the MED Programme;
- In accordance with Article 26 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 (ETC Regulation), these Financing Agreements will establish the MED Programme implementation conditions governing the financial management, programming, monitoring, evaluation and control of the IPA funds.

ANNEXES (uploaded to SFC 2014 as separate files)

- Draft report of the ex-ante evaluation, with an executive summary (mandatory)
(Reference: Article 55(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)
- Confirmation of agreement in writing to the contents of the cooperation programme
(Reference: Article 8(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)
- A map of the area covered by the cooperation programme (as appropriate)
- A citizens' summary of the cooperation programme (as appropriate)

Glossary

Baseline

Each result indicator requires a baseline value (art. 6, ERDF regulation, art. 5, CF regulation; art. 16, ETC regulation). A baseline is the value of a result indicator at the beginning of the programming period (for example, the number of start-ups in that year for a priority that intends to drive up the number of start-ups in a region). It can be available from statistical or administrative data⁵³.

Beneficiary

Partner of a MED project receiving ERDF funds (or IPA funds in Mediterranean candidate or potential candidate countries)

Blue growth

Blue Growth is the long term strategy to support sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors as a whole. It recognises that seas and oceans are drivers for the European economy with great potential for innovation and growth. It is the Integrated Maritime Policy's contribution to achieving the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Capacity building

"Capacity building" focuses on understanding the obstacles that inhibit people, institutions and public authorities from realizing their developmental goals while enhancing the abilities that will allow them to achieve measurable and sustainable results.

Capitalisation

Organisation of data concerning the implementation of programmes, projects, their impacts, the methods used in order to make the accumulated experience usable for other programmes, projects or stakeholder groups.

Cluster

A business cluster is a geographic concentration of interconnected businesses, suppliers, and associated institutions in a particular field. Clusters are considered to increase the productivity with which companies can compete, nationally and globally.

Creative industries

Industries that use culture as an input and have a cultural dimension. They include architecture and design, which integrate creative elements into wider processes, as well as subsectors such as graphic design, fashion design or advertising (Working group of EU Member States experts (open method of coordination) on cultural and creative industries, 2012: Policy Handbook).

Cultural heritage and cultural resources

Cultural heritage is composed of tangible heritage including buildings and historic places, monuments, etc.⁵⁴ and intangible cultural heritage which refers to practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills etc. (*UNESCO 2003: Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage*).

⁵³ Guidance document on monitoring and evaluation – ERDF and cohesion fund, Concepts and recommendations, EU Commission, March 2014.

⁵⁴ UNESCO: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/cairo/culture/tangible-cultural-heritage/>

Cultural resources comprise both elements, the tangible and intangible cultural heritage, encompassing current culture, including progressive, innovative and urban culture. These resources can be valorised among others in cultural and creative industries.

Economic operator

According to the article 1(8) of EU Directive 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council March 31st, 2004 on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts, is considered as “economic operator” any natural or legal person or public entity or group of such persons and/or bodies which offers on the market, respectively, the execution of works and/or a work, products or services. As such, competition rules don't depend on the legal status of each institution involved (public or private) but on the nature of the activity realised.

Economics operators are able to be direct beneficiaries of aid as partners in projects (not as Lead partners) under the General Block Exemption Regulation, *de minimis* or any notified State Aid Scheme applicable to the region in which the activity is being undertaken.

Energy efficiency

Energy efficiency improvements refer to a reduction in the energy used for a given service (heating, lighting, etc.) or level of activity. The reduction in the energy consumption is usually associated with technological changes, but not always since it can also result from better organisation and management or improved economic conditions in the sector ("non-technical factors") (World Energy Council: Energy Efficiency Policies around the World: Review and Evaluation, 2008).

Environmental protection

Any activity that maintains the balance of the environment by preventing contamination and the deterioration of the natural resources, including activities such as: a) changes in the characteristics of goods and services, and changes in consumption patterns; b) changes in production techniques; c) waste treatment; d) recycling; e) prevention of landscape degradation (IUCN, 2011: Definitions).

Green growth

Green growth is about fostering economic growth and development while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which our well-being relies. To do this, it must catalyse investment and innovation which will underpin sustained growth and give rise to new economic opportunities⁵⁵.

Indicator

An indicator can be defined as a way of measuring an objective to be met, a resource committed, an effect obtained, a gauge of quality or a context variable. An indicator should be made up by a definition.

Output indicator

Output indicators relate to activity. They are measured in physical or monetary units (e.g. number of firms supported, number of action plans elaborated, etc.).

Result indicator

⁵⁵ OECD, Towards Green Growth, Monitoring Progress, Glossary of terms and definitions, 2011

Result indicators relate to the objectives of Priority axes. They relate to the effects on direct beneficiaries brought about by a programme. They provide information on changes, for example, behaviour, capacity or performance of beneficiaries. Such indicators can be physical (reduction energy consumption, increase of a competence, etc.) or financial (additional financial resource mobilised, decrease of an expense, etc.).

Innovation

Innovation is about creation of new products, new processes, new technologies, new organisation systems... Thus, innovation can be technological and non-technological with the objective to improve the functioning of institutions, the efficiency of strategies implemented or the competitiveness of economic operators.

Key actors

The "key actors" are the institutions or individuals which play an important role in the field of action of the project and who are likely to contribute in a significant way to its realization. They have both political and administrative competences and technical capacities to implement the actions required for the project

Macro-regional strategy

A macro-regional strategy is an integrated framework endorsed by the European Council, which may be supported by the European Structural and Investment Funds among others, to address common challenges faced by a defined geographical area relating to Member States and third countries located in the same geographical area. In this framework they benefit from strengthened cooperation contributing to achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion.

Multimodal transport

Multimodal transport is understood as the carriage of persons or goods by at least two different modes of transport. Environmentally friendly transport solutions are those allowing a significant reduction of emissions of CO₂, NO_x as well as of noise.

Non-profit organisation

A non-profit organization (abbreviated "NPO", or "non-profit" or "not-for-profit") is an organisation whose primary objective is to support an issue or matter of private interest or public concern for non-commercial purposes. Non-profit organisations can make benefits but these benefits must be reinvested in its activity.

Operation

A project, contract, action or group of projects selected by the managing authorities of the programmes concerned, or under their responsibility, that contributes to the objectives of a priority or priority.

Pilot actions

A pilot action means the implementation of schemes of an experimental nature to test, evaluate and/or demonstrate its feasibility with the aim to capitalise on those results and transfer practices to other institutions and territories.

Public equivalent body (according to the Directive 2004/18/EC)

Any legal body governed by public or private law:

- established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest, not having an industrial or commercial character , and

- having legal personality, and
- either financed, for the most part, by the State, regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed by public law, or subject to management supervision by those bodies, or having an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, more than half of whose members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities or by other bodies governed by public law.

Quadruple helix

Innovation model involving institutional bodies, research sphere, business sector and citizens in the process.

Regional actors

Regional actors are all main stakeholders operating at regional level in a specific thematic field independently from their legal status, thus comprising the public as well as the private sector. These sectors include different types of entities such as public administrations, infrastructure and services providers and operators, agencies including RDA, interest groups, NGOs, re-search centres, education facilities, enterprises including SMEs, business support organisation, etc.

Remote areas

An area is considered “remote” if less than half of its residents can drive to the centre of a city of at least 50 000 inhabitants within 45 minutes⁵⁶.

Renewable energy sources

Renewable energy sources are a diverse group of technologies that capture their energy from existing flows of energy such as sunshine, wind, water, biological processes, and geothermal heat flows.

Rural area

Rural areas are all areas outside urban clusters. Urban clusters are clusters of contiguous grid cells of 1km² with a density of at least 300 inhabitants per km² and a minimum population of 5000⁵⁷.

Sea basin strategy

A structured framework of cooperation in relation to a given geographical area, developed by Union institutions, Member States, their regions and where appropriate third countries sharing a sea basin. Such a strategy takes into account the geographic, climatic, economic and political specificities of the sea basin.

Sensitive areas

Areas with undisputed environmental qualities, taking into account the quality of the landscape or the presence of rare or endangered species. The term can also apply to land without any real intrinsic value, yet considered vulnerable due to the pressure exerted upon it, for instance by urban development or intensive tourism: reserves and natural parks; Natura 2000 areas; special protection areas; special areas of conservation; wetland; biogenetic reserves.

⁵⁶ Eurostat 2011 (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Regional_typologies_overview)

⁵⁷ Eurostat 2011 (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Regional_typologies_overview)

Small and medium-sized enterprise

Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC

Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises are defined according to their staff headcount and turnover or annual balance-sheet total.

- A medium-sized enterprise is defined as an enterprise which employs fewer than 250 persons and whose annual turnover does not exceed EUR 50 million and/or whose annual balance-sheet total does not exceed EUR 43 million.
- A small enterprise is defined as an enterprise which employs fewer than 50 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 10 million.
- A micro-enterprise is defined as an enterprise which employs fewer than 10 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 2 million.

Smart specialisation strategy

Smart specialisation strategy means the national or regional innovation strategies which set priorities in order to build competitive advantage by developing and matching research and innovation strengths with business needs. It addresses emerging opportunities and market developments in a coherent manner, while avoiding duplication and fragmentation of efforts, and may take the form of (or be included in) a national or a regional research and innovation (R&I) strategic policy framework.

Social innovation

Social innovations are new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships or collaborations (Murray et. al: Open Book of Social Innovation, 2010). Fields of activity are among others work integration, social services, education and research, culture and recreation, health etc.

Sustainable development

The concept of sustainable development refers to a form of economic growth which satisfies society's needs in terms of well-being in the short, medium and - above all - long terms. It is founded on the assumption that development must meet today's needs without jeopardising the prospects of future generations. In practical terms, it means creating the conditions for long-term economic development with due respect of the environment.

The Copenhagen world summit for sustainable development (March 1995) stressed the need to combat social exclusion and protect public health.

The Treaty of Amsterdam included an explicit reference to sustainable development into the recitals of the EU Treaty.

Target groups / end users

The target groups or end users concern individuals and/or organisations directly positively affected by the activities and results of operations. Not necessarily receiving a financial grant and even not directly involved in the operation, the target groups may exploit project outcomes for their own benefits.

Target value

A quantified objective expressed as a value to be reached by an indicator (out-put or result indicator), within a given time frame.

