

INTERREG MED Programme 2014-2020

Citizens' Summary

Priorities for the 2014-2020 programming period

The MED Programme is one of the instruments for the implementation of the EU **cohesion policy**. With this policy the EU pursues harmonious development by strengthening its economic, social and territorial cohesion and by stimulating growth in the EU regions and participating countries.

The programme is a continuation of the transnational cooperation programme MED 2007-2013, that has financed 150 cooperation projects in the domains of innovation, environment, maritime transport, and mediterranean governance. Via the website of this previous programme (www.programmemed.eu) the public has access to the programme's **virtual library**, presenting main deliverables of previously financed projects. In many cases these can be used as part of the State of the art for proposals of new cooperation projects.

The general orientations for the coming years have been set up in the EU 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, together with the Territorial Agenda 2020, provides the overall strategic framework for EU cohesion policy 2014-2020 and as such for the MED Programme .

For this period, the Commission proposed certain important changes to the way the cohesion policy should be implemented:

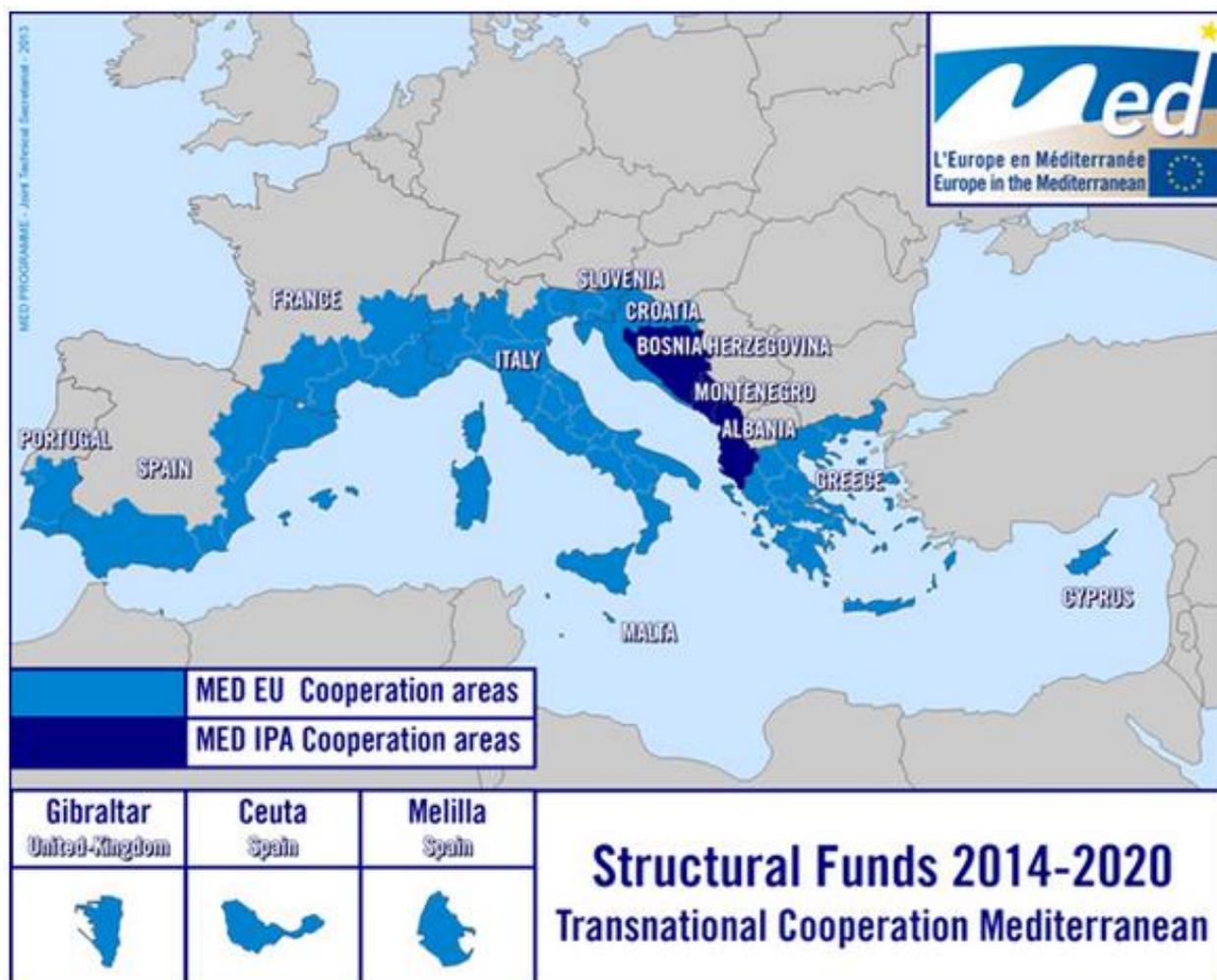
- ★ Concentrating funding on a smaller number of priorities focused on the Europe 2020 strategy
- ★ Improving the quality of projects (involvement of end users, result oriented actions, share of achievements with wider territories and regional programmes)
- ★ Simplifying the procedures and reducing the administrative burden for stakeholders

Cooperation area of the MED cooperation programme

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 eligible regions of the MED area.

It includes 57 regions from 10 different EU countries and 3 candidate countries. It is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) with € 224,322,525 ERDF for the 2014-2020 period.

The programme is bilingual (English and French).



For the overall cooperation area, a cofinancing rate of 85% ERDF is applied.

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. The cofinancing rate of economic operators will depend on the regime to be applied.



Priorities of the MED cooperation programme

The main purpose of the MED Programme is to contribute to the long term development of the Mediterranean area and strengthen transnational cooperation between regions and participating countries. This objective will be supported by the implementation of the following 4 priority Axes:

Priority axis 1: Innovation capacity

Innovation and competitiveness is highlighted in the strategy UE 2020. It is a major challenge in MED regions facing international competition, and contributes to overcome the economic crisis. In this cooperation area, a specific attention must be paid to the fields of blue and green growth that represent significant development perspectives.

Types of actions consist mainly in the development of clusters and networks, development of models and tools, transfer of knowledge, as well as awareness-raising and capitalization activities.

Key target groups are SME's and structures accompanying them, public authorities and research bodies.

Priority Axis 2: Low-carbon economy

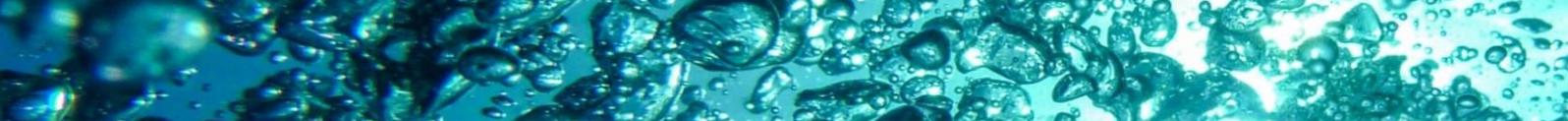
Low carbon economy is a key issue for territorial sustainable development and for EU objectives (reduction of Green House Gas emissions (GHG), increase energy efficiency and promotion of renewable energy). In the MED area, the challenge is to develop solutions adapted to various regional contexts from densely urbanised areas with dense transport networks to rural areas and islands with more limited access to energy resources.

In this Priority axis, foreseen activities consist in strategy building, capacity building, awareness raising, training and changing practices. Feasibility studies and analyses, elaborating policy plans, services and tools, will also form part of activities. This Priority Axis can support small-scale investment and pilot projects (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, NGO's and civil society structures. The latter might play an important role in regard to the mobilisation of end users.

Priority Axis 3: Environment

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



For this Priority Axis, the main activities foreseen are focused on analysis, studies, policy-planning and strategy development, but also on transfer of practices and policy implementing measures.

The Axis is especially focused on the protection of natural and cultural heritage, biodiversity, the development of human activities in coherence with environmental change which represent enormous challenges to the MED area.

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

Priority Axis 4: Enhancing Mediterranean governance

This priority axis is experimental and challenging, 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 via thematic Priorities (especially within the Priority Axis 3), this Axis will support only a limited number of integrated cooperation projects. They should involve regional, national and international bodies to improve decision making processes and foster common views and strategies in the MED area.

Territorial and integrated approach of the MED Programme

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 with high level of attractiveness, important concentration of activities and fragility of natural and cultural resources.



Urban areas as centers of innovation and socioeconomic activities and which are confronted to strong environmental challenges with pollution and GHG emissions.



Islands that cover 4% of the Mediterranean and represent a major economic, environmental and cultural dimension of the MED area. They are both at the crossroads of the main communication axes and in a situation of geographical isolation



Rural and remote areas characterised by rural activities and low density of population. Their development is hampered by geographical isolation and/or demographic and environmental changes.



In their project, stakeholders are asked to take into account these specificities in order to contribute to innovation, reduce environmental impact of human activities or improve socioeconomic development of respective territories.

The MED Programme gives also the possibility, through the Axis 4, to support the development of multilateral coordination frameworks with the **macro-regional approach**.

In these territories, beneficiaries must promote an **ecosystemic intervention logic** based on the coordination between different fields of intervention relevant to their project (economic development, environmental impact, tourism, management of natural resources, energy, transport, etc.).



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Priority axes of the MED territorial cooperation programme

