



European Territorial Cooperation

MED COOPERATION PROGRAMME 2014-2020

Final Version



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NUTS regions covered by the cooperation programme	<p>Albania: Entire country</p> <p>Bosnia Herzegovina: Entire country</p> <p>Croatia : Entire country</p> <p>Cyprus : Entire country</p> <p>France: Corse, Languedoc-Roussillon, Midi-Pyrénées, Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur, Rhône-Alpes</p> <p>Greece : Entire country : Anatoliki Makedonia. Thraki; Kentriki Makedonia; Dytiki Makedonia; Thessalia; Ipeiros; Ionia Nisia; Dytiki Ellada; Sterea Ellada; Peloponnisos; Attiki; Voreio Aigaio; Notio Aigaio; Kriti</p> <p>Italy : Abruzzo, Apulia, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Emilia-Romagna, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Lazio, Liguria, Lombardy, Marche, Molise, Piedmonte, Sardinia, Sicily, Tuscany, Umbria, Valle D'Aoste, Veneto.</p> <p>Malta (entire country)</p> <p>Montenegro : Entire country</p> <p>Portugal : Algarve; Alentejo; Lisbon</p> <p>Slovenia : Entire country: Western Slovenia; Eastern Slovenia</p> <p>Spain : Andalusia; Aragon; Catalonia; Balearic islands; Murcia; Valencia; and the two autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla</p> <p>United-Kingdom : Gibraltar</p>

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 eligible regions of the MED area. 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 has a total budget 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 regard to the regulations, territorial and policy needs and challenges, and lessons from previous cooperation programme. It presents the overall strategy and objectives of the programme.

Geographic coverage

Following the Commission decision drawing 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:

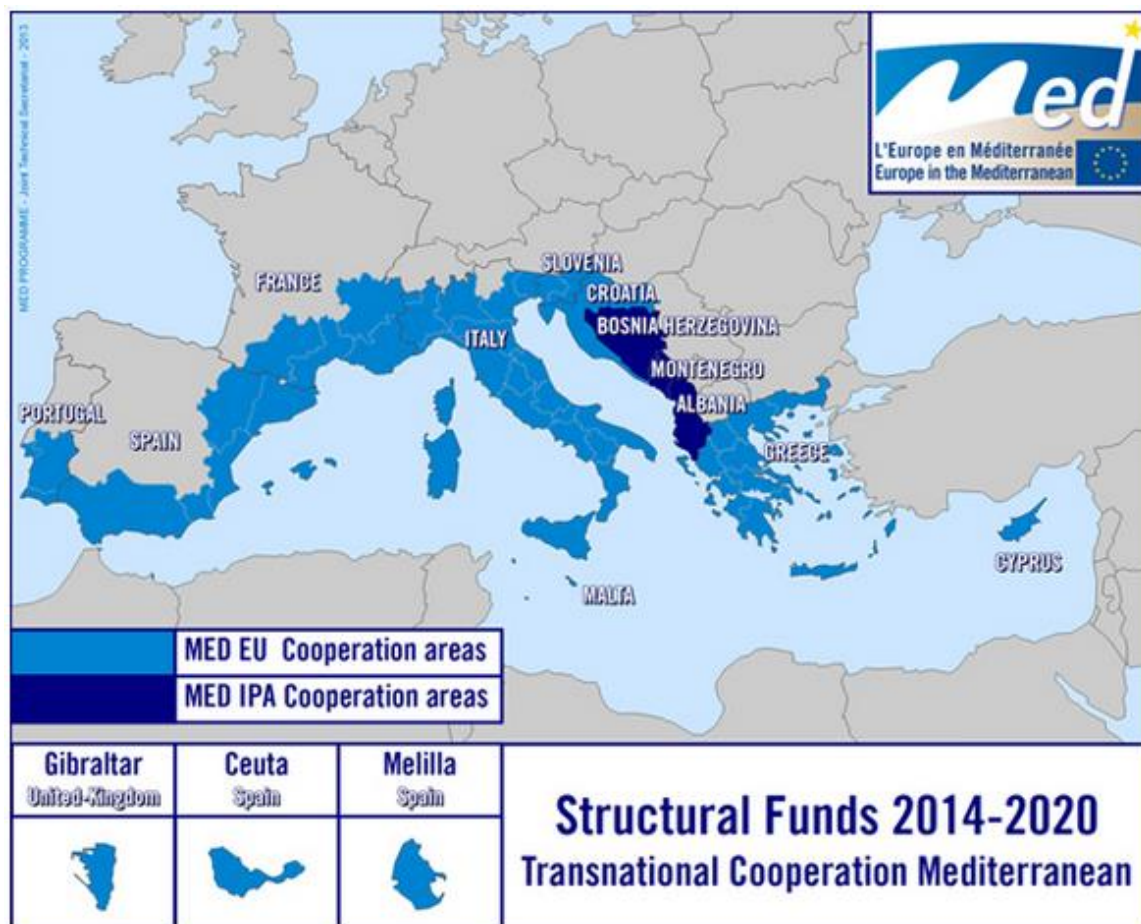
a) The Member States:

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

b) The Partner States:

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

- Albania
- Bosnia 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 all 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

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 to stimulate growth in the EU regions and participating countries.

The policy aims to reduce existing disparities between 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 and for local and regional public bodies confronted to tighter budget constraints.

From a strategic point of view, 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. Europe 2020 is an agenda for the whole Union, taking into account Member States' different starting points, needs and specificities to promote growth for the whole EU. Europe 2020 has three mutually reinforcing priorities:

- Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation.
- Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive 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

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).

strategic framework for 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**. These are accompanied by a **Common Strategic Framework** (CSF) setting out key actions to address 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 2014-2020, the Commission proposed certain important changes to the way cohesion policy should be designed and implemented. Among the major hallmarks of the proposal are the following:

- Concentrating funding on a smaller number of priorities 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 side to clearly identify the real needs of beneficiaries and end-users. This requires also to ensure that the capitalisation process and the external communication effectively reach the final target groups and end users and that these end users effectively use 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...)

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.**

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

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 bodies 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 the 2014-2020 programme strategy (more targeted objectives with a coherent budget allocation).

Activities related to innovation but also to certain 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 finally selected.

This showed the necessity to adapt the application and selection process with the objective to reduce the number of applications by better focusing the content of the call, to reduce the administrative burden for project promoters and for 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 2014-2020, 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 projects already implemented, has been improved with the setting up of the online “MED Library”. This tool is still being completed and is available for 2014-2020.

Integrated management of ERDF/IPA funds

The MED programme decided in 2010 to use the possibility offered by the EU Commission to directly manage IPA funding 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 which 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 part is to highlight the overall needs of the cooperation area. More precisely, the aim is to identify the kinds 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 Lisbon, 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 area of the European Union.

The territory has **extremely diverse natural, physical and geographic characteristics**. It enjoys a maritime coastline of more than 15 000 kilometres and fertile arable plains, which 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 large areas of participating countries, but equally of small islands, including the small Member States of Malta and Cyprus, and also island regions such as 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 as a place to live 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 are important assets (especially for agriculture and tourism) but also represent sources of fragility.

Even if there are indeed 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 to 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

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.

ecological deficit in 2009⁷, i.e. the environmental capital of the area was used more quickly than it was renewed. 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, and 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 impacts of climate change is on water, particularly in the way climate change is rapidly 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).

b) Demographic data

Today, the MED territory is home to 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.

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

⁸ Plan Bleu, *ibidem*

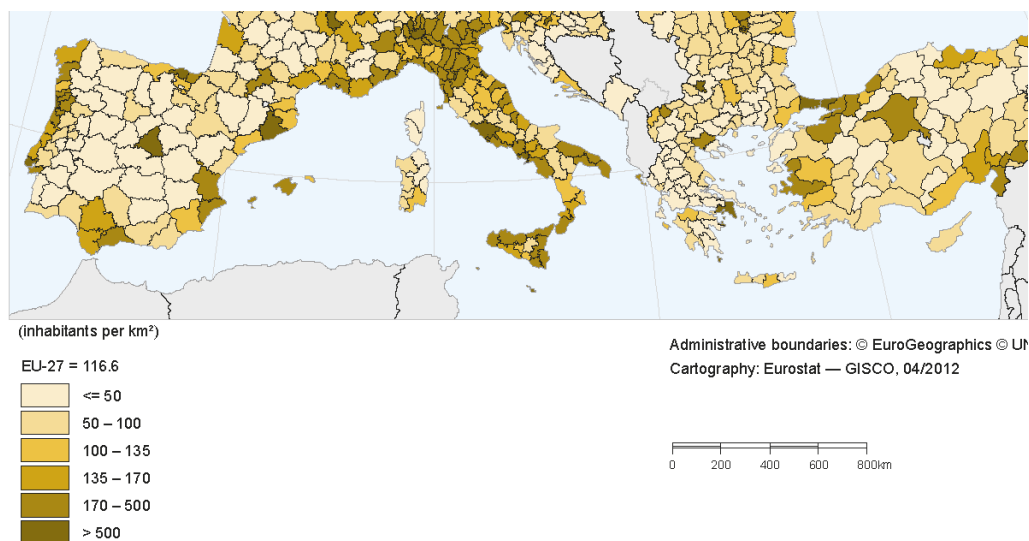
⁹ Eurostat, population au 1^{er} janvier 2012

¹⁰ Eurostat, population on 1st January 2012

¹¹ Eurostat, population density on 1st January 2011

¹² Eurostat, population density on 1st January 2011

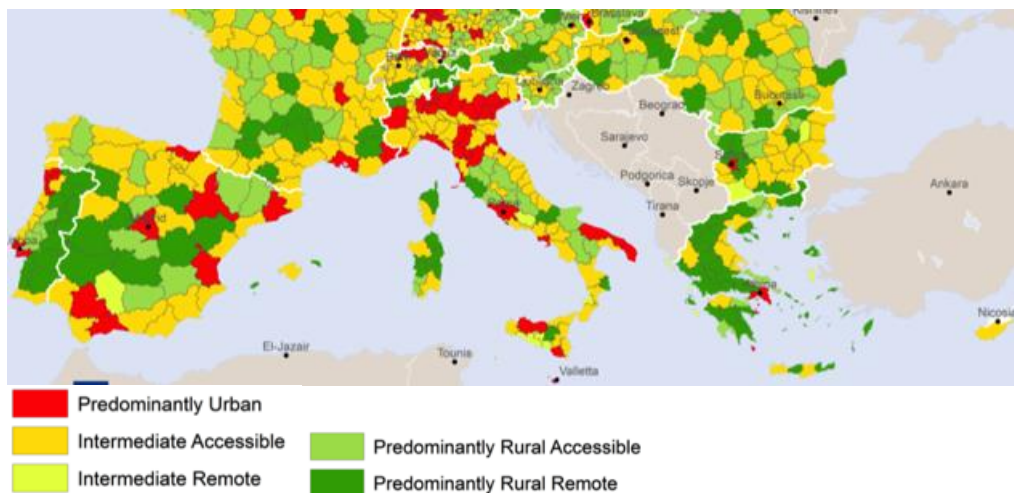
Map 1 Population density in the MED space (Eurostat/GISCO, 2010)



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 MED programme for 2007-2013, its population stood at 110 million. Today, it stands at 122 million (*without the 3 new regions eligible for 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 appeal 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 to the problem of waste 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 to 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.

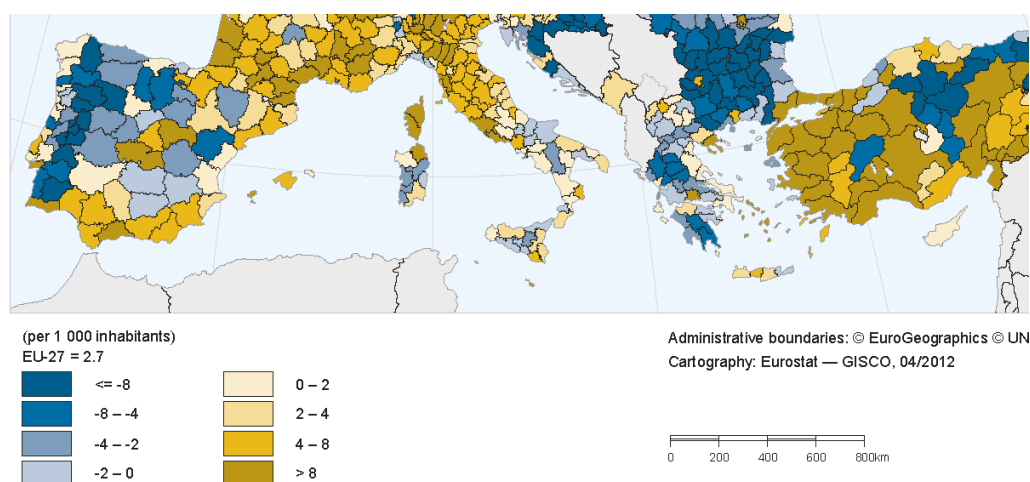
In order to reduce these effects, policies introduced at a regional scale have included the setting up of marine protected areas, (in 1982), and the introduction of a protocol concerning specially protected areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean (in 1995)¹⁵.

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 appeal of the MED space also has 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 (see Map 3).

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



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

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

¹⁴ Plan Bleu, ibidem

¹⁵ Plan Bleu, ibidem

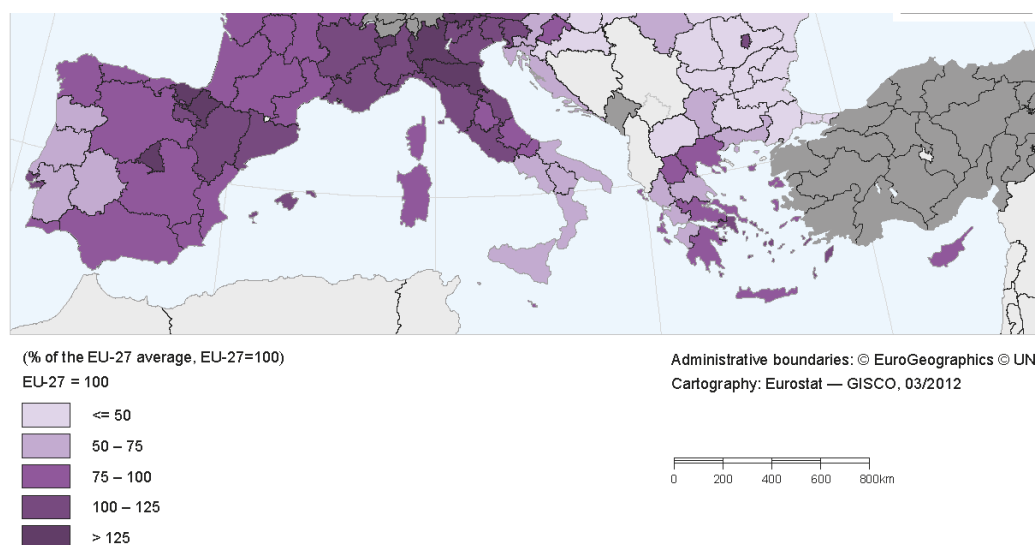
Another characteristic of the MED space is that it has (a) a **lower proportion of young people in its population than the EU average** (15% against 15,6%). and (b) a **higher proportion of elderly people than the European average** (19.2% against 17,8%).

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)



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

The map n°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 for Greece, Portugal, Cyprus, and to a lesser degree 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

¹⁶ Eurostat data, 2010, processing Technopolis, 2013

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

¹⁸ See MED OP 2007-2013, p.10

¹⁹ Sources: EUROSTAT 2014

- 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 notes 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;

- **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., which are 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 of issues related to "Blue Growth");

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 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, ports activities, marine and environmental industries, etc.

The “blue growth” GVA (Growth Added Value) 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.

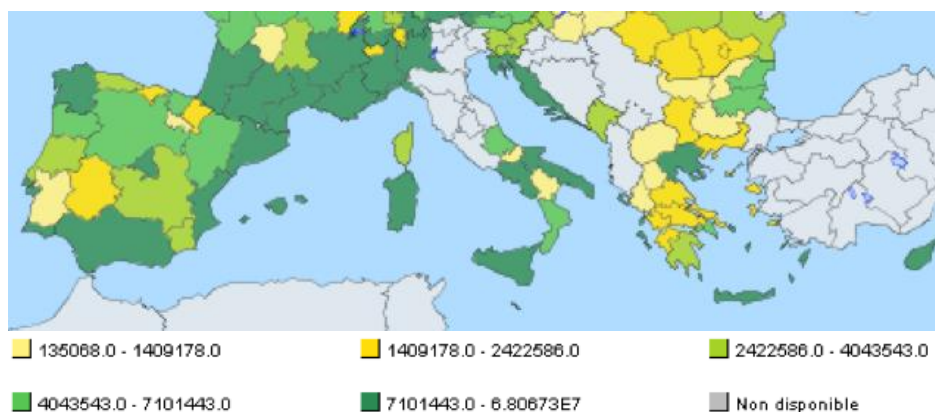
The first three countries, Italy, Greece and Spain, represent 81% of this activity.

By sub-region, the Western Mediterranean (Spain, France and Tyrrhenian coast of Italy) account for 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 appealing 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 numbers of tourists and in terms of the tourism revenues generated).

In 2012, the countries of the MED space (+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).

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 (to 2030) is for a constant increase of 3.3% a year in world tourist arrivals. While growth is set to be strongest in Asian and

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>

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 innovations in services. 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 examples).

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some regions leaders in R&D (Rhône Alpes, Trentino, Catalonia, Lombardy, Slovenia...) - Some high skill industrial sectors (agriculture, agribusiness, chemicals, materials...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GDP per capita 12% lower than EU average - Low investment in R&D - Low proportion of research personnel in the population - Low number of patent applications - Innovation models more based on diversification than breakthrough innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economy seriously affected by the economic and debt crisis - Increasing competition from southern and eastern countries
Information and communication technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wide coverage of high-speed broadband - Increasing use of ICT by individuals and businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of high-speed broadband - R&D sectors specialised in ICT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant inequalities between regions and territories in term of ICT use
Competitiveness of SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appeal 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) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong influence of traditional business (low and medium technology sectors) - Incremental innovation producing limited added value in SMEs - Low productivity of business - 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High business rate creation in some MED regions (Portugal, Slovenia, France...) - Increasing clustering of SMEs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Favourable conditions for the production of renewable energy (climate, natural resources) - Heightened awareness about the need for a shift towards a low carbon economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development potential for renewable energy not fully exploited - MED countries committed to reduce GHG emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant increase in the cost of low carbon energy
Climate change and risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of a European framework and national policies for the reduction of CO₂ emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing commitment to sustainable development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased risk of natural disasters due to climate change - High costs involved in repairing the damage caused by natural disasters
Protection of the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extremely rich environmental heritage (sea, mountains, arable lands, forests, rivers, wetlands...) - Many protected areas (NATURA 2000, areas of Mediterranean importance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development environmental protection measures (protected areas...) - A potential for the use of renewable energies - Shift from traditional waste processing towards cleaner methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General good quality of transport networks - Overall satisfactory accessibility, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geographical fragmentation and isolation of numerous territories (Islands, remote areas) - Badly manage urban development, notably 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good position of islands and MED regions as hubs for tourists and trade - Development of multimodal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transport is a major source of pollution - Lack of European coordination

	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	in coastal areas - Dependence of MED territories of 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	transport systems - Reinforcement of existing railway network	of the communication system - Competition with north and central European urban centres
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Inclusive growth

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Employment and labour mobility	- Appeal of the MED area universities - High level mobility of students	- Low employment level, especially for youth and women - High territorial disparities for 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing competition from other countries and areas in the world - Challenge to reach the objectives of the EU 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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, independency) - 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to better promote social innovation in connection with key socioeconomic sectors (tourism, energy, transports...) - Need to better take into account socioeconomic issues and the 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, lack 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 transports 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 relates on 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 on air pollution and GHG emission due to economic activities, housing and transports.

Despite the fact that many protected areas have been set up in MED regions, protection measures and management must adapt 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 parts could be taken into account with the following adaptations.

The economic development, promotion of research and innovation is a key challenge for the area and one of the main preoccupations of the EU 2020 strategy. Strong efforts and operational tools are deployed through regional operation 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 on well targeted development and innovation fields, such as the sectors of blue and green growth. 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 is 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 intervention of the programme (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 approach²³. 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).

²³ On this issue, see the Opinion of the EESC “Towards an EU Macro-Regional Strategy to develop economic, social and territorial cohesion in the Mediterranean, ECO/342, Brussels, 10 December 2013

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 2014-2020, 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 get organized, 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 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 Herzegovina, Montenegro and Albania) with the upcoming EU strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) that is built upon the following four pillars: 1. Blue Growth; 2. Connecting the Region; 3. Environmental quality; 4. Sustainable tourism.

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 +, 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 thematic calls, targeted calls or strategic calls launched by the MED programmes 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 coordination 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 relevant actors from environment protection, transport, tourism etc. work together. 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 and towards overall 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** 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.

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 that 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 regarding 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 projects partners and that they reach large number of end-users.

The programme will especially support the constitution of multilevel and intersectoral working teams and partnership 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 one 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 answer to 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 period 2014-2020, with the setting up of a EU strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region, (EUSAIR), the MED programme can provide support on issues relevant with 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 its 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 scales 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 implementation of actions, there is a clear distinction between “beneficiaries” and “target groups” or “end-users”. In the context of the Programme, beneficiaries are bodies and organisations which 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) are pre-defined reflecting the challenges Mediterranean regions are facing.

The cornerstone 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 evaluation of results
- The complementarity with other EU regional and thematic programmes
- The specificities of transnational cooperation programmes

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 remote areas

Thematic Objective 4: Supporting the shift toward 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 sustainable development policies for more efficient valorisation of natural resources and cultural heritage in coastal and adjacent maritime areas

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 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 the implementing actions improving 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 project 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 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 (urban, coastal, islands and remote areas), projects will have to involve relevant stakeholders of sectors and institutions 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 transports 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, 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 2007-2013, three additional regions have been accepted to participate to the MED programme: Lisbon (Portugal); Midi-Pyrénées (France); Valle 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 has been 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 Lisbon as a capital region. Furthermore, the involvement of the region of Lisbon 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 quite similar to the MED programme (research/innovation, environment, accessibility, sustainable urban development...). This region has a significant experience in scientific fields related to satellite observation, oceanography, meteorology and irrigation, which is an added value for the MED programme.

The region of Valle D’Aoste is participating to the Euroregion Alps-Mediterranean but was not involved in the 2007-2013 MED programme. This region has preoccupations in issues like natural risks, climate change, accessibility which are coherent with the priorities of the MED programme. 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 <i>1000 characters each</i>
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 (...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to reduce GHG emission in Mediterranean regions - Weak energy efficiency in the existing residential sector and other buildings in MED regions - Insufficient energy autonomy requiring higher energy saving and energy efficiency - Insufficient knowledge of owners, managers and public authorities regarding 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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

	mobility and mitigation relevant adaptation measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 - Need for transport and logistics as leverages to boost the competitiveness of the MED area
Thematic Objective 6 Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	Investment priority 6c Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 and promoting ecosystem services including NATURA 2000 and green infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High environmental resource 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	Developing and coordinating macro-regional and sea-basin strategies (<i>ETC regulation</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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: Innovation capacity (*Thematic Objective 1*)

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.

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 2007-2013 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 MED 2014-2020 priorities supported this, as the domain was rated by stakeholders as the most important one 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: Low-carbon economy (*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 the 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 already provide important support.

Foreseen activities consist of capacity building, awareness-raising, strategy building, training and changing practices, (not only 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 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 3 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 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, 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 52.781.771 € representing around 20% of the overall budget of the programme.

Priority Axis 3: Environment (*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 on transfer of practices and policy implementing measures. Pilot projects with investments are not likely to be frequent, although some amount of pilot projects to test tools or services, are probable.

The domains chosen for the CP: protection of natural and cultural heritage, development of human activities in coherence with environmental change and climate change, 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: in particular public authorities, but also associations and NGO's, research bodies, and to some extent enterprises.

In the 2007-2013 period, however, there has been difficulty in finding relevant project proposals for natural risks prevention and for cultural heritage.

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 strategies. The budget level has been adjusted taking this into account. The budget for this axis is 89.729.010 € representing 34% of the overall budget of the programme.

Priority Axis 4: Enhancing Mediterranean coordination (*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 the Priority 3), the budget level should be adjusted to the estimated possibilities to mobilize key stakeholders, which are in particular 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 21.112.707 € Representing around 8% of the overall budget of the programme.

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	32%			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) involved in transnational activities concerning key sectors of the MED area
2.	44.864.505	20%			4. Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors	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 action plans including initiatives for public building stock

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

						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
							2.3 To increase capacity to use existing low carbon transport systems and multimodal connections among them	Share of urban plans/strategies which include low carbon transport and multimodal connections soft actions
3.	76.269.659	34%			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 sustainable development policies for more efficient valorisation of natural resources and cultural heritage in coastal and adjacent maritime areas	Share of integrated regional development strategies applying sustainable management objectives for cultural and natural heritage sites
						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	8%			11. Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities	Enhancing governance in the Mediterranean	4.1 To support the process of strengthening and developing	Number of joint thematic action plans allowing to implement coordinated

					and stakeholders (...)		multilateral coordination frameworks in the Mediterranean for joint responses to common challenges	strategic operations ²⁷
Technical Assistance	13.459.352	6%			NA	NA	7	

²⁷ Such as depollution of coasts, fight against sea litter, wastewater management, integrated coastal zone management plans, maritime spatial planning.

SECTION 2. PRIORITY AXES

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

Section 2.A. Description of the priority axes other than technical assistance**2.A.1. Priority Axis 1**

ID	PRIORITY AXIS 1
Title	<p><i>“Promoting Mediterranean innovation capacities to develop smart and sustainable growth”</i></p> <p><i>The Priority Axis 1 aims to strengthen innovation capacities of public and private actors of Mediterranean regions and support smart and sustainable growth.</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p>

- ☐ The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments
- ☐ The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments set up at Union level
- ☐ The entire priority axis will be implemented through community-led local development

2.A.2. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective*Not applicable***2.A.3. Fund and calculation basis for the Union support**

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

2.A.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.A.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	<p><i>To increase transnational activity of innovative clusters and networks of key sectors of the MED area</i></p> <p><i>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).</i></p> <p><i>The objective is especially to improve empowerment of these actors with, within and between existing clusters, economic sectors and networks.</i></p>
Expected results	<p>Reinforced, empowered and increasingly transnational innovation clusters and networks in the key sectors of the MED area</p> <p>MED regions are characterised by insufficient innovation capacities with a lack of cooperation between actors of the quadruple helix.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Green growth includes new materials, biotechnologies and biochemical, eco-construction, energy, agriculture, agribusiness, agro-tourism, bio-agriculture and bio food, transformation, valorisation and commercialisation of products, etc.</p> <p>Blue growth concerns all the activities having strong links with the Mediterranean Sea, including maritime, coastal and cruise tourism, creative industries, coastal and marine resources, protection of biodiversity, blue energy (algae, thermic energy, waves), blue</p>

	<p>biotechnology (food, health, cosmetics), sustainable management of ports, marine and environmental industries, etc.</p> <p>Creative industries can be promoted when actions are connected to green and blue growth sectors which can be the case regarding design activities, multimedia, or cultural activities in relation with tourism.</p> <p>Social innovations can be promoted especially regarding 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).</p> <p><u>Main change sought:</u></p> <p>For this specific objective, the main change sought is to improve the innovation framework conditions, strengthen and empower innovation clusters and networks, in particular 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)...).</p> <p>Activities include the evolution of existing clusters and networks, with increasing partnerships or increasing share / transfer of innovation between actors of the quadruple helix.</p> <p>In a general way, a specific attention will be paid to the promotion of eco-innovations aiming to promote sustainable development principles (smart use of resources, reduction of environmental impact of activities, etc.).</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>
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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 Value²⁸ (2023) <i>100 char. max</i>	Source of Data <i>200 char. max</i>	Frequency of reporting <i>100 char. max</i>
IP 1.b SO 1.1	Share of innovative clusters (i.e. including RDI activities) involved in transnational activities concerning key sectors of the MED area	Innovative clusters (%)		2013		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statistics from clusters/networks' list (sub-indicator n°1) - Survey realised on a representative sample of identified clusters (33%) in order to assess the existence of transnational activities, services and tools 	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)

²⁸ Target values can be qualitative or quantitative

2.A.6. Actions to be supported under the investment priority

2.A.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 priority1.b	<i>“Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector (...)”</i>
<p>1. <u>Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives</u></p> <p><i>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></p> <p><u>Specific objective 1.1: To increase transnational activity of innovative clusters and networks of key sectors of the MED area</u></p> <p><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 the 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 on the key intervention fields (blue growth and green growth).</i></p> <p><u>Designing common approaches and strategies at the transnational level</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designing improved innovation systems and processes, using novel economic models and public/private partnerships - Supporting private sector (private financial operators, private and public owned financial partnerships, enterprises) to develop and implement innovative financing instruments and tools for green energy sectors (RES, EE, Eco-innovation, etc.) - Developing or identifying, benchmarking and adapting services and decision support tools for innovation - Elaborating innovative public tenders and other proposals to promote demand-driven innovation in the public and private sector - Drafting public policies for innovation - Establishing and further strengthening transnational innovation networks and clusters and supporting internationalisation - Increasing cooperation between research, SMEs and the public sector to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship (e.g. improvement of products, processes, strategies, reduction of administrative barriers of innovation, improvement of public services efficiency, etc.) <p><u>Pilot demonstration activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Testing transnational innovation systems or processes in key sectors or locations combining identified models and mechanisms with new services and tools, 	

demonstrating their added value and/or transfer potential

- Deploying improved services and decision support tools in key sectors or locations, demonstrating their added value and/or transfer potential
- Testing public policies supporting innovation

Transfer, dissemination and capitalisation activities

- Training public authorities in demand-driven innovation (public tenders, procedures...)
- Training cluster managers and members and public authorities on stimulating interdisciplinary cooperation
- Set up challenging actions for stimulating innovation in SMEs and interdisciplinary cooperation
- Transferring improved transnational systems or processes to other territories or relevant sectors
- Interest raising for innovation among end-users in relevant sectors
- Integrating new technologies
- Creating or strengthening sustainable active networks or of cooperating actors of the quadruple helix system in the relevant sectors (research bodies, public authorities, private actors and end users), with a link to existing or foreseen European networks and platforms (ex: Sevilla S3 platform, INTERREG EUROPE thematic platforms...)
- Engaging Regions (beyond direct partnership) to strengthen connections and cooperation of existing smart specialisation strategies at transnational level (cooperation platforms...)
- Strengthening existing clusters and networks and increasing their connectivity and synergies at MED level
- Empowering social actors on innovation
- Implementing public policies for innovation

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
- 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.A.6.2. The 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	<i>“Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector (...)”</i>
<p>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.</p> <p>Eligible applications go through a quality check going more into the detail regarding their objectives, the strategy used and the means available.</p> <p>The quality criteria will especially include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 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 <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>One operation might contain one or several modules depending on its strategy and main objectives.</p> <p><u>Outline of the different modules</u></p> <p>Module 1: a module dedicated to the design of common approaches and the elaboration of</p>	

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.A.6.3. The planned use of financial instruments

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

Investment priority 1.b	<i>“Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector (...)”</i>
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.A.6.4. Planned use of major projects

Not applicable

2.A.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 <i>200 char. Max.</i>	Frequency of reporting <i>100 char. Max.</i>
IP 1.b <i>SO 1.1</i>	Number of operational instruments to favour innovation of SMEs	Experiences	70	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	% of expenses declared to the EC	percentage	100%	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of enterprises receiving grants	Enterprises	35	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	Enterprises	4.000	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of transnational innovation clusters supported	Clusters	10	Programme monitoring tools	annually

2.A.1. Priority Axis 2

ID	PRIORITY AXIS 2
Title	<i>Fostering low-carbon strategies and energy efficiency in specific MED territories: cities, islands and remote areas</i>
	<i>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.</i>

- ☐ The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments
- ☐ The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments set up at Union level
- ☐ The entire priority axis will be implemented through community-led local development

2.A.2. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective

Not applicable

2.A.3. Fund and calculation basis for the Union support

Fund	ERDF
Calculation Basis (<i>total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure</i>)	44.864.505 €

2.A.4. 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.A.5. Specific objective 2.1

ID	2.1
Specific objective	<i>To raise capacity for better management of energy in public buildings at transnational level</i>
	<i>The specific objective is to reduce energy consumption in buildings by raising capacities, promoting the use of innovative solutions, increasing awareness and the involvement of public administrations and people towards energy efficiency solutions</i>
Expected results 3500 char. max.	<p><i>Increased capacity of building owners and managers to develop and implement energy efficiency practices in public buildings in the MED area</i></p> <p>In Mediterranean regions, buildings represent one of the main sources of GHG emission. The majority of the housing stock requires heavy upgrading of isolation and cooling systems which is currently partly financed by national, regional and EU thematic programmes.</p> <p>Besides financing support and the development of innovative techniques, materials or isolation systems, progress can be made regarding the capacity of owners and managers to promote energy efficiency (addressing to the lack of awareness, increasing knowledge, improving the commitment on energy efficiency measures...). On these issues, stakeholders can refer 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 buildings²⁹.</p> <p>Because many programmes already support the upgrade of infrastructures, the MED programme will intervene on the qualitative aspect by supporting exchange of experience, practices and innovative projects for public building owners and managers. This shall be done with the involvement also of end users of public buildings to ensure coherence of capacity building measures.</p> <p><u>Main change sought:</u></p> <p>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.</p> <p>The MED programme will be especially focused on the way energy</p>

²⁹ Ljubljana declaration, Responding to Challenges Regarding Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy in Mediterranean Buildings, Ljubljana, 2013.

	<p>efficiency innovative solutions are promoted, disseminated and adopted by public buildings owners, managers and end users.</p> <p>It includes the mobilisation of bodies in charge of public or public owned buildings, of housing and construction, of end-users, the dissemination of innovative systems, awareness raising and information activities, the use of carbon footprint tools, collective actions with quantitative objectives regarding the management of energy consumption, etc.</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>
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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 Value³⁰ (2023)	Source of Data <i>200 char. max</i>	Frequency of reporting <i>100 char. max</i>
IP 4.c <i>SO 2.1</i>	Share of regional, sub-regional and local energy efficiency action plans including initiatives for public building stock	Action plans (%)		2012		-Literature review -Desk research on the sample of action plans	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)

³⁰ Target values can be qualitative or quantitative.

2.A.6. Actions to be supported under the investment priority

2.A.6.1. A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported

Investment priority 4.c	<i>“Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructure, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector”</i>
<p>1. <u>Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives</u></p> <p><i>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></p> <p><u>Specific objective 2.1: To raise capacity for better management of energy in public buildings at transnational level</u></p> <p><i>In order to improve energy efficiency in public buildings, it is essential to promote interventions at strategic, political and operational level. 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 the improvement of knowledge and competences, adaptation of habits and behaviours which represent a key dimension of the success of energy efficiency measures.</i></p> <p><u>Designing common approaches and strategies at transnational level</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elaborating services or tools to raise capacities of public authorities, owners and managers for better energy efficiency in public buildings - Drafting public policies for the reduction of energy consumption (rules and policies implemented by public authorities) - Developing demand-focused strategies and policies to improve energy efficiency (e.g. smart metering, distribution of smart consumer applications, etc.) <p><u>Pilot demonstration activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elaborating and testing services and tools for capacity building (knowledge, competencies, information, good practices...) - Testing public policies for the reduction of energy consumption - Setting up pilot activities on innovative management approaches to increase the capacity of public bodies to improve energy performance in public buildings <p><u>Transfer, dissemination and capitalisation activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizing tailored events to improve capacities of public authorities, building owners, managers, relevant businesses and end users for the reduction of energy consumption - Training public authorities about the change of habits in terms of energy consumption - Organising training events to raise capacities of public authorities in energy consumption management - Implementing public policies for the reduction of energy consumption 	

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

- Local and regional and national authorities
- Energy department and energy agencies
- Association of SMEs and economic operators (energy, building, housing...)
- End users and civil society for the promotion of energy efficient solutions

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 for energy and low carbon technologies
- Public and private energy suppliers
- Economic operators
- Association of users

2.A.6.2. *The 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	<i>“Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructure, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector”</i>
<p>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.</p> <p>Eligible applications go through a quality check going more into the detail regarding their objectives, the strategy used and the means available.</p> <p>The quality criteria will especially include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 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, 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.A.6.3. The planned use of financial instruments

Investment priority 4.c	<i>“Supporting energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use in public infrastructure, including in public buildings, and in the housing sector”</i>
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.A.6.4 Planned use of major projects

Not applicable

2.A.6.5. 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.
IP 4.c <i>SO 2.1</i>	Number of available planning tools to manage energy consumption in public buildings	Tools	13	Programme monitoring tools	annually
IP 4.c <i>SO 2.2</i>	% of expenses declared to the EC	Percentage	100	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of strategies to develop energy consumption management plans for public buildings	Models	13	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of target groups participating in capacity raising activities on energy efficiency	Participants	570	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of regions and sub-regions engaged (through charters, protocols, MoU) in developing energy	Territories	208	Programme monitoring tools	annually

	efficiency plans/strategies				
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2.A.4. 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.A.5. Specific objectives 2.2. and 2.3.

ID	2.2
Specific Objective	<p><i>To increase the share of renewable local energy sources in energy mix strategies and plans in specific MED territories</i></p> <p><i>The specific objective is to increase the share of renewable energy sources in local/territorial energy mix strategies taking into account the specificities and diversity of MED territories</i></p>

Expected results	<p><i>Increased inclusion of local renewable energy sources MED territories</i></p> <p>Regarding renewable energy, the characteristics of MED regions 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.</p> <p>Regions already get important support from ERDF regional and national programme and other thematic programmes to develop infrastructures. However, mass energy production must be complemented by local based solutions to better answer to specific needs and constraints and ensure sufficient and permanent energy supply in all territories.</p> <p>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 areas, rural areas).</p> <p><u>Main change sought</u></p> <p>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 and the strengthening of such strategies, taking into account territorial specificities.</p> <p>Smart cities approach will be supported especially regarding energy management systems and the adaptation between energy production and consumption.</p> <p>Blue energy sources represent important development perspectives at territorial level and will be supported in energy mix strategies (especially biomass and micro-algae).</p> <p>Forest biomass and agriculture biomass (including agriculture waste)</p>
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	<p>constitute also significant green energy sources to be developed in MED regions.</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>
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ID	2.3
Specific Objective	<p><i>To increase capacity to use existing low carbon transport systems and multimodal connections among them</i></p> <p><i>The specific objective is to increase the use of sustainable transport systems by developing connectivity and low-carbon mobility plans and implementing rail and sea services and applications for passengers and freight in the 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).</i></p>

Expected results	<p><i>Enlarged capacity to use low carbon transport systems in MED regions</i></p> <p>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 of the transport modality among the shores of the Mediterranean.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>As the development of infrastructures and transport systems is largely financed by other programmes, the MED programme 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 actions directed to supporting transnational rail/maritime public transport services for passengers and freight (cuttings 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.</p> <p>An improved freight and passengers transport system will boost the competitiveness of the MED territorial and economic systems, as well as of MED cities.</p>
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	<p><u>Main change sought</u></p> <p>For this specific objective, the main change sought is an increase of end-users having a better access to and using sustainable transports systems.</p> <p>Projects could focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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; – awareness raising activities. <p><i>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.</i></p>
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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 <i>100 char.</i>	Baseline Year	Target Value³¹ (2023) <i>100 char.</i>	Source of Data <i>200 char.</i>	Frequency of reporting <i>100 char. max</i>
IP 4.e SO 2.2	Share of renewable energy from local sources, in energy mix of MED islands and rural areas	% of local RES in energy mix strategies		2010 (Eurostat last available data)		-Regional statistics regarding -Survey on a sample and extension of result on MED area	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)
IP 4.e SO 2.3	Share of urban plans/strategies which include low carbon transport and multimodal connections soft actions	Plans providing soft actions oriented towards sustainable transport (%)		2014		-Desk research on LC transport -Survey on a sample of urban centres and FUA and extension of result to all MED area	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)

³¹ Target values can be qualitative or quantitative.

2.A.6. Actions to be supported under the Investment Priority

2.A.6.1. A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported

Investment priority 4.e	<i>“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”</i>
<p><u>1. Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives</u></p> <p><i>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></p> <p><u>Specific Objective 2.2: To increase the share of renewable local energy sources in energy mix strategies and plans in specific MED territories</u></p> <p><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, the specificities of geographical areas and the 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.</i></p> <p><u>Designing common approaches and strategies at transnational level</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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) to develop and implement innovative financing instruments and tools for renewable energy sources - Elaborating plans for constant availability of renewable local energy sources - Drafting public policies <p><u>Pilot demonstration activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	

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 a MED Region
- Strengthening the capacity of the public sector to develop and implement innovative local energy services, incentives and financing schemes
- Implementing public policies

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

- Elaborating smart low-carbon transport models and IT systems facilitating the use of sustainable transports by users
- Elaborating connectivity and mobility plans with low-carbon transport systems
- Conducting studies, fostering connectivity plans using low carbon transports within and between islands
- Elaborating analysis/studies regarding the existing and the potential freight/passengers services in the MED area.
- Developing 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
- Drafting public policies

Pilot demonstration activities

- Testing ITC systems for low-carbon transport models using, for example, living labs approaches
- Testing solutions to facilitate use of sustainable transports by end users
- Testing models for improvement of multimodal connections between transport systems and among MED territories
- Implementing public pilot services for the transport of passengers and/or goods by train and/or ship in a multimodal perspective.
- Testing public policies

Transfer, dissemination and capitalisation activities

- Transferring models to optimise the urban and sub-urban multimodal links
- Transferring results and models to optimise and promote public optimised passengers and freight services in the MED area
- Educating and informing citizens to use sustainable means of transport.
- Raising awareness of the MED economic actors on the strategic role of sustainable transport systems for their competitiveness
- Implementing public policies

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 potential of development of renewable energy solutions and necessity to protect land, sea, natural and cultural resources
- Islands and rural areas for the potential of development 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 with energy resources
- Energy agencies
- Local, regional and national authorities and agencies competent with 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.A.6.2. The guiding principles for the selection of operations

Investment priority 4.e	<i>“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”</i>
<p>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.</p> <p>Eligible applications go through a quality check going more into the detail regarding their objectives, the strategy used and the means available.</p> <p>The quality criteria will especially include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 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 <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>One operation might contain one or several modules depending on its strategy and main objectives.</p> <p><u>Outline of the different modules</u></p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Module 2: a module dedicated to pilot activities where project partners will have the</p>	

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.A.6.3. The planned use of financial instruments

Investment priority 4.e	<i>“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”</i>
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.A.6.4 Planned use of major projects

Not applicable

2.A.6.5 Output indicators

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

ID	Output Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data <i>200 char.</i>	Frequency of reporting <i>100 char.</i>
IP 4.e SO 2.2	Number of planning tools to develop energy plans including local RES	tools	13	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	% of expenses declared to the EC	percentage	100	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Population of	population	15% of	Programme	annually

	islands covered by plans		population (1.600.000)	monitoring tools	
	Population of other rural areas covered by plans	population	5% of population (1.200.000)	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of models to develop action plans including local RES in energy mix	models	13	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of regions and sub-regions engaged (through charters, protocols, MoU) in increasing share of local RES in energy mix	territories	208	Programme monitoring tools	annually
IP 4.e SO 2.3	Number of ICT available to foster the use of LC transport solutions, including multimodal ones	tools	6	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	% of expenses declared to the EC	percentage	100	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of models to develop urban plans including low carbon transport and multimodal connections soft actions	models	7	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of pilot actions implemented to foster the use of LC transports	pilots	12	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Population involved in awareness raising activities	population	300.000	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of urban areas engaged (through charters, protocols, MoU) in developing urban plans/strategies including low	territories	56	Programme monitoring tools	annually

	carbon transport and multimodal connections soft actions				
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2.A.1. Priority Axis 3

ID	PRIORITY AXIS 3
Title	<p><i>“Protecting and promoting Mediterranean natural and cultural resources”</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p>

- ☐ The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments
- ☐ The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments set up at Union level
- ☐ The entire priority axis will be implemented through community-led local development

2.A.2. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective

Not applicable

2.A.3. Fund and calculation basis for the Union support

Fund	ERDF
Calculation Basis for the Union support (public or total)	76.269.659 €

2.A.4. Investment Priority 6.c

INVESTMENT PRIORITY 6.c

“Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage”

2.A.5. Specific objective 3.1.

ID	3.1
Specific Objective	<p><i>To enhance sustainable development policies for more efficient valorisation of natural resources and cultural heritage in coastal and adjacent maritime areas</i></p> <p><i>The specific objective is to enhance sustainable development policies and increase the coordination of strategies between territories at interregional and transnational level to better protect and valorise natural and cultural heritage in coastal and maritime adjacent areas.</i></p>
<p>Expected results</p> <p><i>3500 char. max.</i></p>	<p>Improved development policies for better protection of natural and cultural heritage</p> <p>In MED regions, and especially in coastal areas, natural and cultural heritage are confronted to strong demographic, economic and urban pressure.</p> <p>Changes are already noticeable on the environment, and the issue of water management is a key subject for most of MED regions (agriculture, urban development, tourism...).</p> <p>One main challenge is to improve governance practices and policies and to better manage conflicting interests (economic development, tourism, use of scarce resources, environmental changes...).</p> <p>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.).</p> <p>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...).</p> <p>The objective is to ensure that development of economic activities, and most of all tourism, will be pursued with stronger attention</p>

	<p>paid to environmental changes and to the impact of these activities on natural and cultural heritage.</p> <p><u>Main change sought</u></p> <p>For this specific objective, the main change sought is an improvement of strategies, policies and plans for a more efficient valorisation of natural resources and cultural heritage in coastal and maritime areas.</p> <p>It includes improvement of coastal zone management and maritime spatial planning, the adaptation of public policies, economic activities and planning tools, a better cooperation between stakeholders, coordinated actions between public authorities of different MED territories, an increase of transnational and interregional cooperation and action plans, an increase of the number of regions involved in such strategies.</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>
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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 Value³² (2023)	Source of Data <i>200 char. max</i>	Frequency of reporting <i>100 char. max</i>
IP 6.c SO 3.1	Share of integrated regional development strategies applying sustainable management objectives for cultural and natural heritage sites	Regional integrated strategies (%)		2014		Survey on a sample of MED regions Compared study of the level of integration and operability of strategies	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)

³² Target values can be qualitative or quantitative.

2.A.6. Actions to be supported under the investment priority

2.A.6.1. A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported

Investment priority 6.c	<i>“Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage”</i>
<p><u>1. Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives</u></p> <p><i>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></p> <p><u>Specific Objective 3.1: To enhance sustainable development policies for more efficient valorisation of natural resources and cultural heritage in coastal and adjacent maritime areas</u></p> <p><i>To reach this objective, a specific attention is paid to the involvement and to the cooperation capacities of public authorities, concerned by the protection and valorisation of natural resources and cultural heritage. Actions will contribute to improve knowledge and decision making capacities, including a better use of observation, monitoring and planning tools. In the MED area, a specific attention is paid to coastal and maritime areas. A strong cooperation between actors is essential to generate cumulative effects at transnational level.</i></p> <p><u>Designing common approaches and strategies at transnational level</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing decision support tools - Drafting transnational and interregional action plans and integrating existing plans and strategies - Drafting public policies - Developing innovative and integrated strategies for development of sustainable tourism respecting cultural and natural heritage - Developing integrated strategies and tools for the management of conflicts for the use of natural resources - Developing integrated strategies and tools to reduce the use of resources, enhancing their efficiency and decoupling economic growth from resources consumption - Improving land and water management - Improving the implementation of strategies and tools to better take into account weather events, drought, floods, land and coastal erosion in economic and tourism development strategies <p><u>Pilot demonstration activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Testing implementation of common systems of prevention and intervention (observation, analysis, communication, exchange of data, etc.) - Testing public policies - Pilot actions to combine mass tourism with the protection of MED natural and cultural heritage - Testing regional and inter-sectoral resource management plans to promote 	

resource efficiency and green growth

- Testing common standards and systems better taking into account climate change effects on the development of human activities
- Developing observation, analysis, communication and intervention tools

Transfer, dissemination, capitalisation activities

- Implementing and animating sustainable cooperation systems between the authorities in charge of the management and the update of strategies and solutions
- Adopting action plans by public authorities
- Sharing technologies, know-how and standards
- Implementing public policies
- Integrating existing plans and strategies at interregional and transnational level
- Harmonising environmental management concepts and tools at transnational level
- Valorisation of cultural heritage and in particular improving management of heritage sites
- Transferring systems for the labelling and funding of green and fair products respecting and promoting MED cultural and natural heritage

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

- Local, regional and national public authorities
- Environment department, economic development departments of local, regional and national authorities
- Environment agencies
- Protected areas management organisations
- Land owners and land users
- Tourism agencies and tourism organisations
- Universities and research centres
- Economic operators
- Non-governmental organisations / Citizen / tourists / end users

3. Specific territories targeted

- Coastal, marine and rural areas for their fragility facing human activities; coastal areas and islands for the importance of their cultural and natural heritage and attractiveness for seasonal activities
- Rural, coastal and touristic areas for the impact of weather events on landscape and natural resources

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

- Local, regional and national public authorities
- Economic development and tourism departments of local, regional and national

authorities

- Regional development agencies
- Environment agencies
- Intermediary bodies involved in territorial development processes
- Research centres
- Economic operators

2.A.6.2. *The guiding principles for the selection of operations*

Investment priority 6.c	<i>“Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage”</i>
<p>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.</p> <p>Eligible applications go through a quality check going more into the detail regarding their objectives, the strategy used and the means available.</p> <p>The quality criteria will especially include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 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 <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>One operation might contain one or several modules depending on its strategy and main objectives.</p> <p><u>Outline of the different modules</u></p> <p>Module 1: a module dedicated to the design of common approaches and the elaboration of</p>	

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.A.6.3. The planned use of financial instruments

Investment priority 6.c	<i>“Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage”</i>
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.A.6.4. Planned use of major projects

Not applicable

2.A.6.5. 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.
IP 6.c <i>SO 3.1</i>	Number of cultural and natural heritage sites covered by sustainable tourism evaluation tool	Sites	272	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	% of expenses declared to the EC	Percentage	100%	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of territorial authorities participating in supported transnational joint projects to mitigate natural aleas and threats	Territories	140	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of planning tools for better protection of natural and cultural heritage	Tools	15	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of strategies applying sustainable management criteria	Strategies	22	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of regions and sub-regions engaged (through charters, protocols, MoU) in implementing regional development strategies	Territories	280	Programme monitoring tools	annually

	respectful of cultural and natural heritage				
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2.A.4. 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.A.5. Specific objective 3.2.

ID	3.2
Specific Objective	<i>To maintain biodiversity and natural ecosystems through strengthening the management and networking of protected areas</i>
	<i>The specific objective is to adapt and improve protection measures in order to decrease threats to 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 cooperation with the Barcelona Convention is needed.</i>

Expected results	<p><i>Decreased threat on ecosystems via better integration of protected areas in territorial development strategies</i></p> <p>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.</p> <p>They are however confronted to a strong pressure and conflicts of use due to the urbanisation process, agricultural and industrial activities, transport, etc.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Integrated environmental management requires a comprehensive approach to natural resources, planning and management involving the different level of authorities (local, regional and national).</p> <p>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</p>
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	<p>mechanisms. It will ensure that MED ecosystems are better taken into account in existing public policies.</p> <p><u>Main change sought</u></p> <p>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.</p> <p>The resolution of the Bologna Charter and especially the need to improve the cooperation between regional partners in Mediterranean coastal areas will be considered (<i>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</i>).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Cooperation should be improved especially at transnational level with more efficient share of knowledge and better coordination of policies aiming to improve awareness and protection of fragile areas and species.</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>
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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 Value³³ (2023) <i>100 char.</i>	Source of Data <i>200 char.</i>	Frequency of reporting <i>100 char.</i>
IP 6.d SO 3.2	Share of protected areas meeting their conservation goals and objectives (thanks to their improved management)	Protected areas (%)		2014		- 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)

³³ Target values can be qualitative or quantitative.

2.A.6. Actions to be supported under the investment priority

2.A.6.1. A description of the type and examples of actions to be supported

Investment priority 6.d	<i>“Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure”</i>
<p>1. <u>Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives</u></p> <p><i>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></p> <p><u>Specific Objective 3.2: To maintain biodiversity and natural ecosystems through strengthening the management and networking of protected areas</u></p> <p><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.</i></p> <p><u>Designing common approaches and strategies at transnational level</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 <p><u>Pilot demonstration activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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...) <p><u>Transfer, dissemination and capitalisation activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising awareness of the population about protected areas and mediating risks of conflict of users - Training local stakeholders and organise knowledge transfer to communicate about areas to protect - Enlarging protection plans to new areas - Animating networks for the development of strategies - Implementing public policies 	

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

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

2.A.6.2. *The guiding principles for the selection of operations*

Investment priority 6.d	<i>“Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure”</i>
<p>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.</p> <p>Eligible applications go through a quality check going more into the detail regarding their objectives, the strategy used and the means available.</p> <p>The quality criteria will especially include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 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.A.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments

Investment priority 6.d	<i>“Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure”</i>
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.A.6.4. Planned use of major projects

Not applicable

2.A.6.5. Output indicators

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

ID	Output Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data <i>200 char.</i>	Frequency of reporting <i>100 char.</i>
IP 6.d <i>SO 3.2</i>	Number of joint governance plans	Plans	80	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	% of expenses declared to the EC	Percentage	100%	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Surface of habitats supported to attain a better conservation status	hectares	1.250.000	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of protected areas engaged (through charters, protocols, MoU) in implementing management strategies	Areas	50	Programme monitoring tools	annually

2.A.1 Priority Axis 4

ID	PRIORITY AXIS 4
Title	Enhancing Mediterranean Governance
	<i>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 strategies.</i>

- ☐ The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments
- ☐ The entire priority axis will be implemented solely through financial instruments set up at Union level
- ☐ The entire priority axis will be implemented through community-led local development

2.A.2. Justification for the establishment of a priority axis covering more than one thematic objective

Not applicable

2.A.3. Fund and calculation basis for the Union support

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

2.A.4. Investment priority 11

INVESTMENT PRIORITY 11
“Enhancing governance in the Mediterranean”

2.A.5. 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
	<i>The specific objective is to develop the cooperation process and agreements by strengthening on-going initiatives and strategies at macro regional and sea basin level on issues of Mediterranean and European importance. This process will include authorities of all eligible participating countries and will necessitate multilevel</i>

	<i>discussion processes involving local, regional and national authorities. When needed to strengthen capitalisation activities, prepare strategic calls or improve the assessment of the MED programme activities and projects, a network of national authorities can receive direct support under the Axis 4.</i>
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Expected results 3500 char. max.	<p><i>Enhanced capacities for multilateral coordination in the Mediterranean</i></p> <p>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 development strategies on the overall area in key sectors like maritime safety, transports, energy or pollution is challenging.</p> <p><u>Main change sought</u></p> <p>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.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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, 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
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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 Value³⁴ (2023) <i>100 char. max</i>	Source of Data <i>200 char. max</i>	Frequency of reporting <i>100 char. max</i>
IP 11 SO 4.1	Number of joint thematic action plans allowing to implement coordinated strategic operations ³⁵	Joint action plans (number)		2014		Desk research: listing and classification of existing integrated strategies and joint action plans	Twice during the programming period (2019/data 2018, 2023/data 2022)

³⁴ Target values can be qualitative or quantitative.

³⁵ Such as depollution of coasts, fight against sea litter, wastewater management, integrated coastal zone management plans, maritime spatial planning.

2.A.6. Actions to be supported under the investment priority

2.A.6.1. Description of the type and examples of actions to be supported

Investment priority 11	“Enhancing Mediterranean Governance”
<p>1. <u>Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives</u></p> <p><i>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></p> <p><u>Specific objective 4.1: “To support the process of strengthening and developing multilateral coordination frameworks in the Mediterranean for joint responses to common challenges”</u></p> <p><u>Knowledge management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Studies, diagnoses, context analyses - Consultation processes <p><u>Networking and strategy building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings, workshops, seminars between actors - 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 <p>2. <u>Identification of the main target groups</u> (non-exhaustive list)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decision makers/politicians - Regional and national authorities - Socioeconomic players concerned by key intervention fields (maritime safety, transport, energy, pollution...) - Economic operators <p>3. <u>Specific territories targeted</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To be determined according to the needs of the key intervention fields. All MED territories are concerned by this investment priority <p>4. <u>Types of beneficiaries</u> (non-exhaustive list)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - European, national, regional and local authorities - Research centres - Decision makers / politicians 	

2.A.6.2. *The guiding principles for the selection of operations*

Investment priority 11	<i>“Enhancing Mediterranean Governance”</i>
<p>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.</p> <p>Eligible applications go through a quality check going more into the detail regarding their objectives, the strategy used and the means available.</p> <p>The quality criteria will especially include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 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 <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>One operation might contain one or two modules depending on its strategy and main objectives.</p> <p><u>Outline of the different modules</u></p> <p>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 intervention fields and improve common understanding of Mediterranean context, challenges and perspectives.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	

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.A.6.3. Planned use of financial instruments

Where applicable

Investment priority 11	“Enhancing Mediterranean Governance”
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.A.6.4. Planned use of major projects

Not applicable

2.A.6.5. Output indicators

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

ID	Output Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data <i>200 char. max.</i>	Frequency of reporting <i>100 char. max.</i>
IP 11 <i>SO 4.1</i>	Number of stakeholders (structures) involved in supported initiatives (per category representing public and private stakeholders)	Organisations	1.200	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	% of expenses declared to the EC	Percentage	100	Programme monitoring tools	annually
	Number of thematic transnational joint action plans (on themes covered by other SO)	Action plans	3	Programme monitoring tools	annually

2.A.7. Performance framework

Table 5: The performance framework of the priority axis

Priority Axis	Indicator or Type	ID	Indicator or key implementation steps 255 char. max.	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018 255 char.max.	Final target (2023)	Source of data 200 char. max.	Explanation of the relevance of the indicator, where appropriate 500 char. max.
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	Experiences	30	70	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	% of expenses declared to the EC	1.1.b		Percentage	20	100	Programme monitoring tools	
2	Number of available planning tools to manage energy consumption in public buildings	2.1.a	Available planning tools: planning tools include specific and targeted actions plans, IT solutions	Tools	5	13	Programme monitoring tools	Increasing capacity of building owners and managers requires providing them with the necessary means to develop and implement energy efficiency

			allowing data collection for auditing and assessment, assessment grids, management tools for public authorities, building managers and users, guides and other information supports					practices for their building stocks. Therefore, planning tools are essential to reach the expected result of this objective.
2	% of expenses declared to the EC	2.1.b		Percentage	20	100	Programme monitoring tools	
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	5	13	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. Indeed, the Programme, due to its transnational features (no investment in infrastructures), cannot directly ensure the increase use of local RES, but can support

								the elaboration of strategies targeted to this aim.
2	% of expenses declared to the EC	2.2.b		Percentage	20	100	Programme monitoring tools	
2	Number of ICT available to foster the use of LC transport solutions, including multimodal ones	2.3.a	IC technologies : refer to information systems for transport users and managers (traffic information, integrated information systems on public transports, car sharing management tools...)	Tools	3	6	Programme monitoring tools	Enlarging the capacity to use low carbon transport systems requires adapted ICT to provide users with information and solutions that would encourage and facilitate the use of LC solutions. Therefore, developing or making available ICT are essential to reach the expected result of this objective
2	% of expenses declared to the EC	2.3.b		Percentage	20	100	Programme monitoring tools	
3	Number of cultural and natural heritage sites covered by sustainable tourism evaluation tools	3.1.a	Cultural and natural heritage site: remarkable sites registered under the UNESCO World Heritage programme and other national categorisation from bodies	Sites	17	272	Programme monitoring tools	Improving development policies for better protection of natural and cultural heritage should increase the number of cultural and natural sites subject to measurable sustainable criteria. Therefore, the evaluation of sites is

			managing tourism in remarkable sites					part of the improved policies in action.
3	% of expenses declared to the EC	3.1.b		Percentage	20	100	Programme monitoring tools	
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	34	80	Programme monitoring tools	Decreasing threat on 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	% of expenses declared to the EC	3.2.b		Percentage	20	100	Programme monitoring tools	
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	204	1200	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.
4	% of expenses declared to the EC	4.1.b		Percentage	20	100	Programme monitoring tools	

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

7000 char. max.

2.A.8. 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	7.178.321 €
	061 Research and innovation activities in private research centres including networking	6.604.055 €
	062 Technology transfer and university-enterprise cooperation primarily benefiting SMEs	7.465.453 €
	063 Cluster support and business networks primarily benefiting SMEs	7.465.453 €
	064 Research and innovation processes in SMEs (including voucher schemes, process, design, service and social innovation)	7.178.321 €
	065 Research and innovation infrastructure, processes, technology transfer and cooperation in enterprises focusing on the low carbon economy and on resilience to climate change	7.178.321 €
	067 SME business development, support to entrepreneurship and incubation (including support to spin offs and spin outs)	7.178.321 €
	073 Support to social enterprises (SMEs)	7.178.321 €
	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)	7.178.321 €
	079 Access to public sector information (including open data e-Culture, digital libraries, e-Content and e-Tourism)	7.178.321 €
2	009 Renewable energy: wind	4.486.451 €
	010 Renewable energy: solar	4.486.451 €
	011 Renewable energy: biomass	4.935.096 €
	012 Other renewable energy (including hydroelectric, geothermal and marine energy) and renewable energy integration (including storage, power to gas and renewable hydrogen infrastructure)	4.037.803 €
	013 Energy efficiency renovation of public infrastructure, demonstration projects and supporting measures	5.832.386 €
	014 Energy efficiency renovation of existing housing stock, demonstration projects and supporting measures	5.832.386 €
	043 Clean urban transport infrastructure and promotion (including equipment and rolling stock)	7.626.966 €
	044 Intelligent transport systems (including the introduction of demand management, tolling systems, IT monitoring,	7.626.966 €

	control and information systems)	
3	019 Commercial, industrial or hazardous waste management	5.956.660 €
	021 Water management and drinking water conservation (including river basin management, water supply, specific climate change adaptation measures, district and consumer metering, charging systems and leak reduction)	5.956.660 €
	023 Environmental measures aimed at reducing and/or avoiding greenhouse gas emissions (including treatment and storage of methane gas and composting)	5.163.454 €
	085 Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, nature protection and green infrastructure	17.305.586 €
	086 Protection, restoration and sustainable use of Natura 2000 sites	17.297.959 €
	087 Adaptation to climate change measures and prevention and management of climate related risks e.g. erosion, fires, flooding, storms and drought, including awareness raising, civil protection and disaster management systems and infrastructures	6.147.335 €
	091 Development and promotion of the tourism potential of natural areas	6.147.335 €
	092 Protection, development and promotion of public tourism assets	6.147.335 €
	094 Protection, development and promotion of public cultural and heritage assets	6.147.335 €
4	096 Institutional capacity of public administrations and public services related to implementation of the ERDF or actions supporting ESF institutional capacity initiatives	8.972.901 €
	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	8.972.900 €
5	121 Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection	12.347.352€
	122 Evaluation and studies	392.000€
	123 Information and communication	720.000€

Table 7: Dimension 2: Form of finance

Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
1	01 Non-repayable grant	71.783.208 €
2	01 Non-repayable grant	44.864.505 €
3	01 Non-repayable grant	76.269.659 €
4	01 Non-repayable grant	17.945.801 €
5	01 Non-repayable grant	13.459.352 €

Table 8: Dimension 3: Territory type

Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
1	01 Large Urban areas (densely populated > 50 000 population)	32.302.444 €
	02 Small Urban areas (intermediate density > 5 000 population)	32.302.444 €
	03 Rural areas (thinly populated)	7.178.320 €
2	01 Large Urban areas (densely populated > 50 000 population)	15.702.577 €
	02 Small Urban areas (intermediate density > 5 000 population)	15.702.577 €
	03 Rural areas (thinly populated)	13.459.351 €
3	01 Large Urban areas (densely populated > 50 000 population)	19.067.415 €
	02 Small Urban areas (intermediate density > 5 000 population)	19.067.415 €
	03 Rural areas (thinly populated)	38.134.829 €
4	04 Macro regional cooperation area	17.945.801 €
5	07 Not applicable	13.459.352 €

Table 9: Dimension 6: Territorial delivery mechanisms

Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
1	07 Not applicable	71.783.208 €
2	02 Other integrated approaches to sustainable urban development	31.405.153 €
	05 Other integrated approaches to sustainable urban/rural development	13.459.352 €
3	04 Other integrated approaches to sustainable rural development	38.134.830 €
	05 Other integrated approaches to sustainable urban/rural development	38.134.829 €
4	07 Not applicable	17.945.801 €
5	07 Not applicable	13.459.352 €

2.A.9. 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.	

Section 2.B. Description of the priority axis for technical assistance

2.B.1. Priority Axis 5

ID	PRIORITY AXIS 5
Title	Technical Assistance

2.B.2. Fund and calculation basis for union support

Fund	ERDF
Calculation Basis (total eligible expenditure or eligible public expenditure)	13 459 352 €

2.B.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 ³⁶	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
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³⁶ Required only where the Union support to technical assistance in the cooperation programme exceeds EUR 15 million

	<p>achievements, reimbursement of expenditure, etc.) are timely executed.</p> <p><u>Main change sought</u></p> <p>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.</p>
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ID	5.2
Specific objective	<i>To improve the support to applicants and beneficiaries and to strengthen the involvement of relevant partners in the programme implementation</i>

Expected results .³⁷	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><u>Main change sought</u></p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 ...).</p>
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2.B.4. Result indicators

³⁷ Required only where the Union support to technical assistance in the cooperation programme exceeds EUR 15 million

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

2.B.5. Actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the specific objective

2.B.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
<p><u>1. Types and examples of actions and expected contribution to the specific objectives</u></p> <p><i>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></p> <p><u>Specific Objective 5.1: Actions to effectively implement the cooperation programme</u></p> <p>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.</p> <p>Indicative actions supported under specific objective 5.1 are listed below and refer to principles and tasks described in Sections 5.3 and 7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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.B.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
	Established Joint Secretariat	No.	1	Observation
	Calls for proposals successfully launched and closed	No.	--	Observation
	Operations approved following calls for proposals	No.	100	Programme e-Monitoring System
	Periodic progress reports of operations monitored and paid	No.	600	Programme e-Monitoring System
	Information and communication measures and tools developed	No.	--	Observation
	Independent programme evaluations implemented (ex-ante and during programme implementation)	No.	2	Observation
	Programme e-Monitoring System developed and implemented	No.	1	Observation
	Network of national controllers established	No.	1	Observation
	Audits on programme management and control system and on operations	No.	--	Programme e-Monitoring System

	Information documents addressed to applicants and beneficiaries	No.	--	Observation
	Consultation, information, training and exchange workshops for applicants and beneficiaries organised	No.	--	Observation
	Established national Contact Points	No.	9	Observation
	Studies, reports and surveys on strategic matters concerning the programme	No.	--	Observation

2.B.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	12.347.352€
5	122: Evaluation and studies	392.000€
5	123: Information and communication	720.000€

Table 13: Dimension 2: Form of finance		
Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
5	01: Non-repayable grant	13 459 352 €

Table 14: Dimension 2: Territory type		
Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
5	07: Not applicable	13 459 352 €

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	11.126.571	16.246.299	23.200.743	42.155.613	42.998.724	43.858.700	44.735.875	224.322.525
IPA amounts (where applicable)								
ENI amounts (where applicable)								
Total								

3.2.A. 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		3.040.000	536.471	536.471	0	3.576.471	85%		
	ENI									
Priority axis 2	ERDF (possibly incl. amounts transferred		44.864.505	7.917.266	7.125.539	791.727	52.781.771	85%		

	from IPA and ENI) ³⁸									
	IPA		1.900.000	335.294	335.294	0	2.235.294	85%		
	ENI									
Priority axis 3	ERDF (possibly incl. amounts transferred from IPA and ENI) ³⁹		76.269.659	13.459.351	12.651.790	807.561	89.729.010	85%		
	IPA		3.230.000	570.000	570.000	0	3.800.000	85%		
	ENI									
Priority axis 4	ERDF (possibly incl. amounts transferred from IPA and ENI) ⁴⁰		17.945.801	3.166.906	3.166.906	0	21.112.707	85%		

³⁸ 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

³⁹ 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

⁴⁰ 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

	IPA		380.000	67.059	67.059	0	447.059	85%		
	ENI									
Priority axis 5	ERDF (possibly incl. amounts transferred from IPA and ENI)		13.459.352	3.364.838	3.364.838	0	16.824.190	80%		
	IPA		950.000	167.647	167.647	0	1.117.647	85%		
	ENI									
Total	ERDF		224.322.525	40.575.986	36.443.173	4.132.813	264.898.511	84,68%		
	IPA		9.500.000	1.676.471	1.676.471	0	11.176.471	85%		
	ENI									
Total	Total all Funds		233.822.525	42.252.457	38.119.644	4.132.813	276.074.982	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).

3.2.B. 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	76.269.659	13.459.351	89.729.010
Priority axis 4	Thematic objective 11	17.945.801	3.166.906	21.112.707
Priority axis 5	Technical assistance	13.459.352	3.364.838	16.824.190
TOTAL		224.322.525	40.575.986	264.898.511

Table 18: The indicative amount of support to be used for climate change objectives*(Reference: Article 27(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)*⁴¹

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	21 534 963 €	10%
Priority axis 2	44 864 505 €	20%
Priority axis 3	57 827 654 €	26%
Priority axis 4	10 049 649 €	4%
Total	134 276 771 €	60%

⁴¹ 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)

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. Each one of them must also deal with the rising pressure of human activities, climate change which requires an adaptation of public policies and behaviours of all the actors to ensure long term sustainable development. In a cross-cutting way, spatial planning is a key issue to promote sustainable development, foster a more efficient use of resources and manage conflicts between stakeholders.

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), 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 crossroad 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 management 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 (agribusiness 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.

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 (position or post)
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 EU Member 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; Each IPA Member State shall designate the body or person responsible for carrying out the verifications defined in Article XXX of Regulation XXX	The responsible body will be included in the agreement to be signed by each Member State after the adoption of the CP.
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 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).	The responsible body will be included in the agreement to be signed by each Member State after the adoption of the CP.

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. These recruitments are open to candidates from any EU Member State and from any Partner State participating in the MED programme.

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 MC 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 MC 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.

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 the case of targeted and strategic calls, 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.

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 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.

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 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 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 [ETC], and by way of derogation from Article 133 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 [CPR], expenditure incurred in a currency other than the Euro shall be converted into Euro by the beneficiaries in the month during which expenditure was incurred. 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 (...) 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 (...) technical meetings and (...) 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 (...) 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, nongovernmental 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 Commission⁴²”. Thus the Programme 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:

1. Regional authorities
2. University/ research centre/ technological centre /scientific park
3. 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

⁴² “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

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:

1. Strengthening research, technological development and innovation
2. Energy efficiency, smart energy management and renewable energy use
3. Enhancing institutional capacity and governance (macro-regional cooperation)
4. Cultural and natural heritage
5. Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management
6. Protecting biodiversity, soils and ecosystems
7. Promoting sustainable transports

8. 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

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 one: 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 two: 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 three: 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 four: 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. The connexion is less direct with regional programmes as it will necessitate the involvement of a wider range of actors, including national and international ones.

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, where relevant, transmit to the Managing Authorities basic 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.

Taking into account the fact that the MED programme is not specifically dedicated to ESF priorities, the coordination with ESF programmes will be less systematic. Exchange is 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.

6.2. Coordination with other Union instruments (Horizon 2020, LIFE +, the Connecting Europe Facility, COSME, Erasmus for All, Asylum and Migration Fund, Programme for Social Change and Innovation 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, complementarities have been observed with Horizon 2020, COSME, LIFE, ERASMUS FOR ALL, Programme for a Social Change and Social Innovation (PSCI), Creative Europe, Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), Civil Protection⁴³.

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

⁴³ See annex 1: Chart of the MED Programme In Itinere evaluation. Benchmarking Phase 1. November 2012

Facility presents also quite important connection with the objective of sustainable growth with the necessity to reduce GHG emissions and support sustainable transports.

Table 23: Connections between the 11 thematic objectives for 2014 and 2020 and the thematic EU programme

EU 2020 ¹	Priority objectives	Horizon 2020 ²	COSME ³	LIFE	Erasmus for all ⁴	PSCI ⁵	Creative Europe ⁶	CEF ⁷	Civil protection
Smt	1 - RDT and Innovation								
Smt	2 - ITC								
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								

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



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

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 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 South-East Europe, 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 will be especially important regarding the definition of the content of calls for projects and the share of projects results. This could possibly be done with consultation and exchange of data on projects achievements.

Furthermore, as mentioned previously, the programme includes within 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, 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, ENI CBC and other cooperation programmes are not finalised enough to analyse in detail strategies, objectives and cooperation possibilities with the MED programme.

Common investment priorities between the MED programme and other ECT 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	4.d	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	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.

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 2007-2013 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 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 beneficiaries had to submit every six months a progress report, a payment claim and the 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 beneficiaries 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, and **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 2007-2013 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
 - 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 contains general provisions and five sections related to staff costs, office and administrative expenditure, travel and accommodation costs, external expertise and services costs, and 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 participating States 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 will be proposed under some of the budget lines and for selected cost categories.

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 the 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 31 December 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 all, programme bodies, beneficiaries and controllers, at any time.

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 programmes 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, 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.

Targets 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 populations 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 socioeconomic 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 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*⁴⁴.

Equality between women and men is also included in the consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (art.8)⁴⁵ 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”⁴⁶.

a) 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.

b) 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.

c) 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

⁴⁴ Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union - TITLE I: COMMON PROVISIONS - Article 3 (ex article 2 TEU), Official Journal 115 , 09/05/2008 P. 0017 - 0017

⁴⁵ 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.

⁴⁶ 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.

d) 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)

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

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:

- Financing Agreements between the European Commission, the Managing Authority and the Governments of Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Albania are to be signed regarding the implementation of IPA assistance integrated in the MED programme;
- These Financing Agreements will take into account the specific rules to be applied in accordance with the IPA II Regulation (No 231/2014), the Implementing Act and the provisions regarding the contractual procedures for the for EC External Actions;
- A mechanism of advance payments for IPA partners, as it was already the case in the last programming period, is to be developed in the description of management and control systems;
- IPA partners cannot be Lead Partners in the MED projects
- IPA economic operators are not eligible to the MED programme

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 data⁴⁷.

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, concerning 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).

⁴⁷ Guidance document on monitoring and evaluation – ERDF and cohesion fund, Concepts and recommendations, EU Commission, March 2014.

Cultural heritage and cultural resources

Cultural heritage is composed of tangible heritage including buildings and historic places, monuments, etc.⁴⁸ and intangible cultural heritage which refers to practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills etc. (*UNESCO 2003: Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible 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 of 31 March 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.

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 opportunities⁴⁹.

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.

⁴⁸ UNESCO: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/cairo/culture/tangible-cultural-heritage/>

⁴⁹ OECD, Towards Green Growth, Monitoring Progress, Glossary of terms and definitions, 2011

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

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 to, for example, the 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, or 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, research 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 minutes⁵⁰.

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 5000⁵¹.

⁵⁰ Eurostat 2011

(http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Regional_typologies_overview)

⁵¹ Eurostat 2011

(http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Regional_typologies_overview)

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; ...

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 (output or result indicator), within a given time frame.