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NEXT MED

Interreg NEXT MED Programme

Text of the first call for proposals

Version 1.0

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REGIONE AUTÒNOMA
DE SARDIGNA
REGIONE AUTONOMA
DELLA SARDEGNA

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Introduction

Interreg NEXT MED is a Programme funded by the European Union (EU) that supports transnational cooperation through the financing of joint projects which aim at making the Mediterranean area more resilient to the shared challenges it faces.

NEXT MED is part of Interreg¹, a key instrument of the European Union which promotes European territorial cooperation across borders by means of joint programmes, projects and networks among national, regional and local actors from different EU Member States and among EU actors and adjacent non-EU countries, partner countries, overseas countries and territories (OCTs).

With a budget of €253 million, Interreg NEXT MED aims at contributing to smart, sustainable, fair development for all across the Mediterranean basin by supporting balanced, long-lasting, far-reaching cooperation and multilevel governance. The programme mission is to finance cooperation projects that address joint socio-economic, environmental and governance challenges at Mediterranean level such as the uptake of advanced technologies, competitiveness of SMEs and job creation, energy efficiency, water management, climate change adaptation, transition to a circular and resource efficient economy, education and training, health care.

The cooperation area, home to over 200 million people, covers over 100 eligible territories of 15 countries: 13 of them which already participated in the previous editions of the programme - Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Jordan, Malta, Palestine, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia - and two new members, namely Algeria and Türkiye.

Reference documents

For preparation and implementation of projects, Applicants are invited to consult the following documents:

- Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund;
- Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments;
- Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions;

¹ Available at https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/cooperation/european-territorial_en



- Interreg VI-B NEXT Mediterranean Sea Basin (NEXT MED) Joint Operational Programme approved by Commission Implementing Decision C(2022) 9543 of 12 December 2022;
- Guidelines for Grant Applicants, meant for supporting Applicants in project design and development.

All these documents can be consulted on the Programme website (<https://www.interregnextmed.eu>).

Priorities and budget of the call for proposals

The first call for proposals addresses the 4 Priorities of the Programme and related 9 Specific Objectives. Each proposal shall **indicate one Specific Objective only within the concerned Priority**. The evaluation of the Application Form will be done in relation with the Priority and Specific Objective under which it was submitted.

The total EU contribution available for this call for standard projects is **€103.633.273,00** indicatively distributed amongst the 4 Priorities and 9 Specific Objectives as follows:

Priority	Specific Objective	EU co-financing	Project co-financing	Total
1. A more competitive and smarter Mediterranean	TOTAL	29.996.208,00 €	3.666.204,00 €	33.662.412,00 €
	1.1 Research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies	11.998.483,00 €	1.466.482,00 €	13.464.965,00 €
	1.2 Sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in SMEs	17.997.725,00 €	2.199.722,00 €	20.197.447,00 €
2. A greener, low-carbon and resilient Mediterranean	TOTAL	43.640.857,00 €	5.333.883,00 €	48.974.740,00 €
	2.1 Energy efficiency and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	10.910.215,00 €	1.333.470,00 €	12.243.685,00 €
	2.2 Climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience taking into account ecosystem-based approaches	10.910.214,00 €	1.333.471,00 €	12.243.685,00 €
	2.3 Access to water and sustainable water management	10.910.214,00 €	1.333.471,00 €	12.243.685,00 €
	2.4 Transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	10.910.214,00 €	1.333.471,00 €	12.243.685,00 €
3. A more social and inclusive Mediterranean	TOTAL	21.997.219,00 €	2.688.549,00 €	24.685.769,00 €
	3.1 Equal access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and lifelong learning through developing accessible infrastructure, including by fostering resilience for distance and on-line education and training	14.958.109,00 €	1.828.213,00 €	16.786.323,00 €



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	3.2 Equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family- and community-based care	7.039.110,00 €	860.336,00 €	7.899.446,00 €
	TOTAL	7.998.989,00 €	977.654,00 €	8.976.643,00 €
4. A better cooperation governance for the Mediterranean (Interreg Specific Objective)	4.1 Other governance actions: Fostering local governance models and processes through cross-sectoral, multilevel and cross-border partnerships, encouraging the cooperation and dialogue between citizens, civil society actors and institutions in view of addressing issues of joint interest at local level through transnational exchanges, bottom-up and participatory approaches	7.998.989,00 €	977.654,00 €	8.976.643,00 €

Type of projects

For this call for proposals, the Programme has defined three different categories of projects, each of them with a set of specific features as described below:

- **Thematic projects:** this type of projects represents the bulk of the call for proposals and can be submitted under Priorities 1, 2, and 3 (while Priority 4 shall be considered as exclusively dedicated to “Governance projects”, see below). Thematic projects should be conceived as having a significant **demonstration** and **pilot** dimension, focusing on the joint development and testing of innovative, breakthrough solutions that contribute to addressing the challenges related to the concerned priority and relevant specific objective. **Scale-up** of already developed solutions using existing results which efficiency has been proven in the frame work of previous initiatives and implemented projects should be considered by potential applicants.
- **Youth-oriented projects:** the youth strand aims to enable young people to take action in Interreg NEXT MED Programme through their participation in the design and implementation of projects. Youth-oriented projects can be submitted only under Priorities 1, 2, and 3 and are allocated maximum 20% of the budget for these Priorities. In order to be considered as a project under the Youth strand, project proposals shall meet at least one of the following eligibility criteria:
 - partnership including at least 2 organisations whose majority of staff involved in the management is aged 18-30;

and/or





- partnership including at least 2 organisations whose core mission is to work for the benefits of young people (demonstrating at least two years of experience prior to the date of the launching of the call in leading or participating in projects addressing youth with similar managed budget as for the share of the requested grant).

Moreover, all proposals shall have the **scope to deliver mainly for young people** according to the definition provided above (the consistency and coherence of the project proposal with this scope will be assessed during the evaluation phase).

- **Governance projects:** related exclusively to Priority4 “A better cooperation governance for the Mediterranean” and related Specific Objective 4.1, the purpose of these projects is to improve the capacities of public authorities (relevant regional, local, urban and other public authorities) and other stakeholders (economic and social partners, research institutions and universities, bodies representing civil society) to design and effectively deliver public services that aim at the socio-economic and environmental well-being of citizens and places, specifically on a local scale (regional/municipal level).

Who may apply?

Applicants and partners must be established in the eligible territories of the countries participating in the Programme (as detailed below) and they shall meet the eligibility criteria indicated in the Guidelines for Applicants.

COUNTRIES	ELIGIBLE REGIONS
Algeria	Tlemcen; Ain-Temouchent; Oran; Mostaganem; Chlef; Tipaza; Boumerdes; TiziOuzou; Bejaia; Jijel; Skikda; Annaba; El-Tarf; Alger.
Cyprus	Whole country
Egypt	Matruh; Al Iskandariyah (Alexandria, alex.); Al Buhayrah (Al Beheira);Kafr-Ael-Sheikh; Al Sharqiyah (Al Sharkia); Al Daqahliyah (Al Dakahlia); Damietta; Al Ismailiyah (Al Ismailia); Port Said; Governorate of Cairo.
France	Languedoc-Roussillon; Midi-Pyrénées; Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur; Corse.
Greece	Αττική/Attiki;ΒόρειοΑιγαίο/Voreio Aigaio; ΝότιοΑιγαίο/Notio Aigaio; Κρήτη/Kriti; Ανατολική Μακεδονία, Θράκη/AnatolikiMakedonia, Thraki; Κεντρική Μακεδονία/Kentriki Makedonia; Δυτική Μακεδονία/Dytiki Makedonia; Ήπειρος/Ipeiros; Θεσσαλία/Thessalia; Ιόνια Νησιά/IoniaNisia; ΔυτικήΕλλάδα/DytikiElláda; ΣτερεάΕλλάδα/Sterea Elláda;Πελοπόννησος/Peloponnisos.
Israel	Whole country



Italy	Liguria; Campania; Puglia; Basilicata; Calabria; Sicilia; Sardegna; Toscana; Lazio.
Jordan	Whole country
Lebanon	Whole country
Malta	Whole country
Palestine	Whole country
Portugal	Algarve.
Spain	Catalunya; Comunitat Valenciana; Illes Balears; Andalucía; Región de Murcia; Ciudad de Ceuta; Ciudad de Melilla.
Tunisia	Zaghouan; Kairouan; SidiBouz; Manouba; Siliana; Le Kef; Gafsa; Kebili; Tataouine; Jendouba; Beja; Bizerte; Ariana; Tunis, Ben Arous, Gabes, Mahdia, Medenine, Monastir, Nabeul, Sfax, Sousse.
Türkiye	Tekirdağ, Edirne, Kırklareli; Balıkesir, Çanakkale; İzmir; Aydın, Denizli, Muğla; Manisa, Afyonkarahisar, Kütahya, Uşak; Antalya, Isparta, Burdur; Adana, Mersin; Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Osmaniye.

The **project partnership** shall represent a **minimum of three (3) eligible countries** including at least one (1) EU Mediterranean Country (EUMC) and one (1) Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC).

The **same organisation can apply only once as Applicant** (Lead Partner) under each Specific Objective. No limitation applies for the participation of the same organization at partner level. In case an organisation participates in more than one (1) project as Applicant under the same Specific Objective, all concerned projects submitted under that Specific Objective will be rejected.

The partnership shall **not include more than two (2) organisations from the same country**.

Please note that this call for proposals is launched under suspension clause. Partners located in Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC) eligible territories may apply but can only receive Programme funds if their respective country has signed a Financing Agreement (FA) with the European Commission **by the 30th of June 2024**.

The updated list of countries which have signed the Financing Agreement can be found on the Programme website.

The possible situations regarding project proposals with partners from MPCs which have not signed the Financing Agreements before the said deadline are the following:





Case type	Condition	Applicant	Total N. of partners in the partnership	N. of Project Partners (PP) coming from MPC not having signed involved in the partnership	Outcomes
1	Applicant from MPC not having signed FA by the deadline of submission	MPC not having signed FA	Regardless of the number of partners	Regardless of the number of partners	Rejection of the whole proposal
2.a	Partnership involving only 3 organisations	EU or MPC having signed the FA	2	1	The PP from MPC not having signed the FA can be replaced with a similar PP from another MPC having signed the FA
2.b	Partnership involving only 3 organisations	EU or MPC having signed the FA	2	2	Rejection of the whole proposal
3.a	Partnership involving 4 or 5 organisations	EU or MPC having signed the FA	3 or 4	2	Rejection the whole proposal
3.b	Partnership involving 4 or 5 organisations	EU or MPC having signed the FA	3 or 4	1	The PP from MPC not having signed the FA can be replaced with a similar PP from another MPC having signed the FA
4	Partnership involving at least 6 organisations	EU or MPC having signed the FA	5 or more	1 or 2	Up to a max. of 2 PPs can be replaced with similar PPs from other MPCs having signed the FA

In the event of replacement of one or two partners (2.a, 2.b, 3.b and 4 options), the Managing Authority will ask the Applicants facing the situations indicated in the above table, to provide the new partner(s) details as well as the related partner statements within 30 calendar days from the its request.

This means that the concerned project proposals will go through an additional evaluation





process after the requested documents have been provided. Failure in providing them after the deadline of the 30 calendar days will cause the rejection of the proposal.

Financial requirements

The minimum and maximum EU contribution to projects is reported below and it is linked to the different type of projects.

Type of project	Minimum EU co-financing	Maximum EU co-financing	Maximum total eligible costs
Thematic	€ 1.500.000	€ 2.500.000	€ 3.000.000
Youth strand	€ 500.000	€ 1.000.000	€ 1.200.000
Governance	€ 1.000.000	€ 1.300.000	€ 1.500.000

The EU contribution cannot exceed 89% of the project total eligible costs and the project co-financing must be at least 11% of the total eligible costs².

The co-financing provided with the Applicant's and partners' own resources, or with public or private (national/regional/local) sources other than the European Union Budget and the European Development Fund, shall cover the remaining budget costs.

When preparing the budget, **at least 50%** of the project total eligible costs shall be dedicated to activities to be implemented in the Mediterranean Partner Countries territories.

An organisation may be allocated up to a maximum of 35% of the project total eligible costs. The only exception occurs where there is only one partner from a Mediterranean Partner Country, which might manage 50% of the project total eligible costs.

Project duration

The estimated project duration shall not be lower than 24 months and must not exceed 36 months.

Submission of project proposals

Applications must be submitted using the online Application Form. The online application form will be available indicatively by the 1st of February 2024 (the MA will inform potential Applicants about its availability through the Programme website). In the meanwhile, for the drafting of the proposal, Applicants can use the courtesy application form. Please note that the submission of a proposal can be possible only if using the e-form.

² Beneficiaries from Italy, Greece and Türkiye are entitled to receive national contribution to provide project co-financing. The conditions and modalities will be set by the respective National Authorities and they will be published in the Programme webpage.





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All documents included in the Application Pack can be downloaded from the Programme website.

Proposals must be submitted only in one of the following languages: English or French.

The deadline for the submission of project proposals is **28th of March 2024 at 1 pm (CET)**.

Responsibility for the procedure

Responsibility for the administrative procedures of this call for proposals lays on Sardinia Region, in the person of the Director of the Operational and Authorising Unit of the Managing Authority.

Additional information

The conditions for submission of project proposals and the selection and award criteria are detailed in the Guidelines for Grant Applicants which are an integral part of the Application Pack.

Questions related to the call for proposals may be submitted either in English or French and no later than 15 calendar days before the deadline for the submission of the proposals through the dedicated "Frequently Asked Questions" section of the Programme website.

In case of differences between the Arabic, English and French versions of the documents of the call, the English version shall prevail.

For further information, please visit the Programme website.

**The Head of the Operational
and Authorising Unit
Managing Authority of the
Interreg NEXT Med Programme**



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