

European Territorial Cooperation

ADRION

Interreg V-B ADRIATIC-IONIAN COOPERATION PROGRAMME 2014-2020

Citizens' Summary



European Union

European Regional Development Fund

DRAFTING OF THE PROGRAMME DOCUMENT WAS CO-FUNDED BY THE SOUTH EAST EUROPE PROGRAMME

Citizens' Summary of the ADRION Cooperation Programme

STRATEGY OF ADRION PROGRAMME 2014-2010

The overall objective of the Interreg V-B Adriatic-Ionian 2014-2020 programme (hereinafter ADRION) is to act as a policy driver and governance innovator fostering the European integration among Partner States (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia), taking advantage from the rich natural, cultural and human resources surrounding the Adriatic and Ionian seas and enhancing economic, social and territorial cohesion in the Programme area.

The European Commission in its Regulation No 1299/2013 defines in the preamble that *“transnational cooperation should aim to strengthen cooperation by means of actions conducive to integrated territorial development linked to the Union’s cohesion policy priorities”*.

For smart growth, ADRION will give special attention to the promotion of innovation in a number of fields (e.g. Blue and Green Growth, energy, transport, tourism), which outline important competitive advantages of the area. It will support partnerships in order to strengthen clusters, networks, economic sectors, value chains, and increase the interaction among stakeholders in the Partner States.

Concerning sustainable growth, taking into account the pressure observed in urban, lowlands and coastal Adriatic and Ionian areas, the ADRION Programme will seek to conciliate the demand and pressure of different uses, promote low input/low emissions activities, exploit in a sustainable way renewable resources, reduce the impact of human activities on natural resources, and improve the protection of maritime and terrestrial biodiversity and habitats. In these fields, 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 ADRION 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. Key in this aspect is the preparation of the ground through transnational actions, especially in areas where transnational cooperation is absolutely necessary, as is the case of semi-closed sea interventions. In this respect, Maritime Spatial Planning, Integrated Coastal Zone Management, maritime safety, transport, energy or pollution of the Adriatic and Ionian Seas in conjunction to the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the principles of UNEP MAP and the Barcelona Convention can play a significant role

The ADRION Programme addresses inclusive growth through the valorisation of competitive advantages and the creation of employment opportunities along with the enhancement of connectivity options and the protection of public environmental goods.

Among the Seven Flagship Initiatives identified by the EU2020 strategy, the ADRION Programme objectives will be aligned with the Innovation Union to improve framework conditions for research and innovation, to the Resource Efficient Europe to help decoupling economic growth from the use of resources.

Transnational cooperation is nevertheless characterised by some inherent challenges, which can be summarised as:

- Coverage of large areas with a high diversity of regions and often conflicting interests;
- Limited budgets in relation to the covered area, population and time frame, which often contradict the scope and objectives of cooperation initiatives;
- Delivering mainly intangible results.

In the case of the ADRION Programme, it has also to address the political dimension of the integration of the Western Balkans to the EU.

For these reasons, and because of the novelty of the programme, ADRION will:

- Focus on a limited number of Thematic Objectives,
- Give emphasis on the formation of partnerships supporting the integration of all Partner States,
- Fully optimise synergies and complementarities among selected Thematic Objectives, align them to the pillars of the EUSAIR and mobilise follow-up activities implemented under the ADRION label.

Furthermore, the territorial needs and challenges surrounding the transnational Programme area will be taken into account.

The objective shall be to better identify development potential and bottlenecks in specific sectors (innovation, environment, tourism, accessibility and the interconnections among them) at transnational level, to support stakeholders promoting novel approaches and sharing knowledge.

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

The programme will especially support the constitution of multilevel and intersectoral working teams and partnerships to overcome administrative and sectoral bottlenecks, with the involvement of citizens, and local/regional/ national/international bodies. At territorial level, a key issue will be to reduce conflicts of land 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 ADRION territories (economic activities, quality of the environment, safety, etc.), thus focusing more on activities and results.

From the action and output point of view, taking into account its strategy, the ADRION Programme is mainly delivering:

- Networking structures;
- Joint management systems and cooperation agreements;
- Strategies and action plans;
- Methodologies and tools and
- Pilot actions.

THE ADRION PROGRAMME AREA

For the period 2014-2020, the overall Programme budget amounts to EUR **117.918.198** including European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) - EUR 83.467.729 -, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) - EUR 15.688.887,00 - and national contributions - EUR 18.761.582.

The Programme takes into consideration the experience of the 2007-2013 Operational Programmes (OPs), in particular the transnational South-East Europe programme (SEE) and the cross-border programme IPA CBC Adriatic whose eligible areas overlap with those of

ADRION. It also takes into account the results of the SEE *in itinere* evaluation and the overall programme achievements of the previous programming period.

Following the Commission decision drawing up the list of eligible regions and areas for the transnational strands of the ETC, ADRION covers the following areas:

- a) The ERDF Partner States:
 - IT Italy: 12 regions and 2 provinces;
 - SI Slovenia: 2 regions;
 - EL Greece: 13 regions;
 - HR Croatia: 2 regions;
- b) The IPA Partner States:
 - AL Albania;
 - BA Bosnia and Herzegovina;
 - ME Montenegro;
 - RS Serbia.

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 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.

PROGRAMME PRIORITY AXIS

For the ADRION programme the following four Thematic Objectives (TO) and five Investment Priorities (IP) have been selected:

Priority Axis 1: *Innovative and Smart Region*

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 (...);
 - **Specific Objective 1.1:** *Support the development of a regional Innovation system for the Adriatic-Ionian area.*

Priority Axis 1 (TO1) focuses on innovation and aims to promote competitiveness of the entire Programme Area and boost the creation of new jobs. As the territorial analysis demonstrated, the ADRION area is struggling toward building up efficient research and innovation systems. For this reason, this Axis shall grant specific attention to Blue Growth

and to all the activities having strong links with the sea (such as marine and environmental industries, energy, tourism, culture connectivity).

The Union support to this Priority Axis is of EUR 19.691.658.

Priority Axis 2: Sustainable region

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

- **IP 6c:** Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage;
 - **Specific Objective 2.1:** *Promote the sustainable valorisation and preservation of natural and cultural assets as growth assets in the Adriatic-Ionian area;*
- **IP 6d:** Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure;
 - **Specific Objective 2.2:** *Enhance the capacity in transnationally tackling environmental vulnerability, fragmentation and the safeguarding of ecosystem services in the Adriatic-Ionian area.*

Priority Axis 2 (TO6) is acknowledging the rich natural and cultural heritage of the ADRION area both as a growth asset for tourism but also as a value *per se*. The ADRION Programme tries to combine the different interests of tourists, residents and economic operators, by promoting sustainable tourism, valorisation of the heritage and - last but not least - environmental protection as a condition *sine qua non* for the sustainability of tourism and heritage utilisation. The approach directly addresses the territorial dimension both as a chance for rural and less developed areas to grow, but also as a platform for the debate on spatial uses in the congested and much sought coastal zones.

The Union support to this Priority Axis is of EUR 45.472.376.

Priority Axis 3: Connected region

Thematic Objective 7 Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures

- **IP 7c** Developing and improving environment-friendly (including low-noise) and low-carbon transport systems including inland waterways and maritime transport, ports, multimodal links and airport infrastructure, in order to promote sustainable regional and local mobility
 - **Specific Objective 3.1: Enhance capacity for integrated transport and mobility services and multimodality in the ADRION area.**

Priority Axis 3 (TO7) is containing a territorial dimension *per se* by addressing connectivity in the context of the disparities in space between West and East but also across the dominating Adriatic and Ionian seas in the core of the ADRION area. The Programme is focusing on multimodality, logistics and environmental friendly and low carbon transport and mobility, contributing thus to the conciliation of the different uses and needs among regions and users.

The Union support to this Priority Axis is of EUR 17.708.524.

Priority Axis 4: Supporting the governance of the EUSAIR

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, and in support of actions under the ESF to strengthen the institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administration.

IP 11: Specific Objective 4.1: Facilitate the coordination and implementation of the EUSAIR by enhancing institutional capacity of public administrations and key stakeholders and by assisting the progress of implementation of joint priorities.

The Priority Axis 4 constitutes the framework for providing operational and administrative support to the key EUSAIR governance structures at the two main levels: the coordinating level represented by the Governing Board (GB), and the implementation level represented by the Thematic Steering Groups (TSGs). The “key implementers” are the National Coordinators, Pillar Coordinators and members of the Thematic Steering Groups. Support to EUSAIR governance structures will be provided through assistance and coordination mechanisms, including support to the functioning of networks, intended to facilitate the GB and the TSGs in the fulfilment of their respective roles.

To fully exploit the potential offered by the EUSAIR, it is paramount to ensure adequate support to EUSAIR governance structures and heterogeneous stakeholders (local, regional, national, EU, economic and social actors, civil society, etc.) and to facilitate the process of coordination between different programmes and funds in the Adriatic Ionian Region as a whole and in each Partner State in particular.

The Union support to this Priority Axis is of EUR 9.775.995

The programme managing bodies are hosted in Bologna (Italy).

PA 1
**INNOVATIVE
AND SMART
REGION**

PA 2
**SUSTAINABLE
REGION**

PA3
**CONNECTED
REGION**

P4
**SUPPORTING
THE
GOVERNANCE
OF EUSAIR**

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

**Thematic
Objective 6:**
**Protecting the
environment and
promotion
resource
efficiency**

**Thematic
Objective 7:**
**Promoting
sustainable
transport and
removing
bottlenecks in
key network
infrastructures**

**Thematic
Objective 11:**
**Enhancing
institutional
capacity of public
authorities and
stakeholders and
efficient public
administration**

IP 1.b
**SO 1.1: *Support
the development
of a regional
Innovation
system for the
ADRION area***

IP 6c:
**SO 2.1: *Promote
the sustainable
valorisation and
preservation of
natural and
cultural assets as
growth assets in
the ADRION area***

IP 7c
**SO 3.1: *Enhance
capacity for
integrated
transport and
mobility services
and multimodality
in the ADRION
area***

IP 11
**SO 4.1: *Facilitate
the coordination
and
implementation
of the EUSAIR by
enhancing
institutional
capacity of public
administrations
and key
stakeholders and
by assisting the
progress of
implementation
of joint priorities.***

IP 6d:
**SO 2.2: *Enhance the
capacity in
transnationally
tackling
environmental
vulnerability,
fragmentation
and the
safeguarding of
ecosystem
services in the
ADRION Area***