

HOW CAN THE COHESION POLICY BE USED TO FINANCE PROJECTS IN THE MOUNTAINS?

TOURISM

WHAT IS IT?

The Cohesion Policy is the European Union's largest investment policy. It offers funding to reduce socio-economic and territorial disparities across the European Member States and regions. In article 174 of the European Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union, this policy recognises that particular attention has to be paid to mountain areas.

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES?

Over the 2021–2027 period, the Cohesion Policy will deliver on five objectives:



Smarter Europe

innovation, digitalisation, economic transformation and support to SMEs



Greener Europe

carbon-free, green energy, climate change adaptation



More connected Europe

strategic transport, digital networks, connectivity



More Social Europe

quality employment, education, skills, social inclusion and equal access to healthcare



Europe closer to citizens

locally-led strategy, sustainable urban and rural development

HOW MUCH DOES IT AMOUNT TO?

In total, €392 billion – almost a third of the total EU budget – has been set aside for the Cohesion Policy over the 2021–2027 period. Funds are channelled through four main funds:

- 1 The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- 2 The Cohesion Fund (CF)
- 3 The European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)
- 4 The Just Transition Fund (JTF)



The European Union has launched Next Generation EU, a programme to support recovery with an additional €776.5 billion through the Cohesion Policy over the 2021–2027 period.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Every 7 years, the European Union adopts a set of principles and priorities for the Cohesion Policy at European level. National and regional authorities in each Member State are then responsible for defining and implementing their own Operational Programme(s), alongside the European Union. These Programmes describe the specific priorities and actions that can be financed locally through the Cohesion Policy. In addition to these programmes, the Cohesion Policy is implemented through the Interreg programmes, which fund cooperation projects between regions from different countries.



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HOW WILL THE COHESION POLICY SUPPORT INVESTMENT IN MOUNTAIN TOURISM?

Mountain areas are major tourist destinations in Europe. In 2018, 13% of trips made by Europeans were to mountainous areas. Tourism is an important economic sector for Europe's mountains as it provides jobs and fosters economic activity. It also helps **promote the natural and cultural heritage** of these territories. However, mountain tourism faces many challenges. The sector is exposed to climate change, which impacts the snow cover and winter tourism. Jobs in tourism are also highly **dependent on seasonality**. In addition, mountain tourism is faced with the need to promote heritage while at the same time protecting it, thus avoiding over-tourism and developing more sustainable tourism practices.

Through its Objective 2 "A Greener Europe", the Cohesion Policy can support the diversification of tourism activities and the creation of **year-round tourism models** and more sustainable tourism practices. In addition, Objective 4 "A More Social Europe" can enhance the **creation of skilled and sustainable jobs** and improve capacity building and training for mountain tourism actors. Finally, funds can also be allocated through Objective 5 "A Europe Closer to Citizens", which aims to support the sustainable development of rural mountainous areas and **promote local and bottom-up initiatives**.

What is this factsheet for? This factsheet aims to give you some **practical examples** of how the Cohesion Policy will be used to finance the fight against climate change across Europe's mountain regions between 2021 and 2027.

GET INSPIRED!



INTERREG POCTEFA

Relevant objective: To develop cross-border areas as sustainable tourism destinations through the promotion of a common cultural heritage.

How are mountain areas taken into consideration?

The list of suggested activities specifically mentions mountain areas, which represent a significant part of the regions covered by the programme.

What type of projects can be financed?

- Schemes to diversify tourism, such as supporting active and nature tourism, experiential/sensory tourism, sports, thermal tourism, ecotourism and agrotourism
- Schemes to de-seasonalise mountain tourism and increase the attractiveness of the Pyrenean area for non-specialised mountain visitors, such as families and elderly people
- Valorisation of local assets for touristic purposes, such as gastronomy, crafts, linguistic and cultural diversity

Examples of beneficiaries: Public authorities, development agencies, economic actors in the tourism industry, associations in the tourism or cultural and creative sectors, research organisations.



More information: <https://www.poctefa.eu>
Contact: Working Community of the Pyrenees
info@poctefa.eu



Check out the list of eligible areas in
France, Andorra and Spain



OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME - NORTH AEGEAN REGION

Relevant objective: To reinforce social, economic and environmental development, culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and security in non-urban areas.

How are mountain areas taken into consideration? This programme underlines the need to overcome desertification and support the development of “mountainous and semi-mountainous inner zones of the larger islands of the Region”.



What type of projects can be financed?

- Protection and promotion of cultural and natural resources
- Schemes to develop the skills of workers, unemployed people and vulnerable populations
- Support for local agencies to build capacity for planning, managing and implementing the strategies for spatial development

More information: <https://www.e-pepba.gr/>
Contact: Managing Authority of the North Aegean Region
info@e-pepba.gr



North Aegean Region
(Greece)

INTERREG ITALY - CROATIA

Relevant objective: To foster a more strategic and coordinated management of tourism that valorises cultural heritage, supports alternative and special interest tourism, and boosts employment in the sector, while at the same time lowering the regional vulnerability to the sector.

How are mountain areas taken into consideration?

The list of suggested activities specifically mentions mountain areas, which represent a significant part of the regions covered by the programme.

What type of projects can be financed?

- Projects that promote experiential tourism in peripheral areas and encourage the development of coordinated offers and itineraries between coastal and inner areas
- Territorial marketing campaigns to boost the diversification of tourism in peripheral areas
- Creation of cross-border brands and pilot projects on sustainable tourism, information campaigns and training activities for public authorities and tour operators on sustainable tourism
- Joint studies to assess the trends, flows and impact of tourism



Examples of beneficiaries: Public bodies and authorities, private companies, tourism organisations, NGOs, civil society organisations, local action groups.

More information: <https://www.italy-croatia.eu>
Contact: Joint Secretariat Head Offices - Italy
js.italy-croatia@regione.veneto.it
Joint Secretariat Branch Offices - Croatia
js.it-hr.branch-offices@mrrfeu.hr



Check out the list of eligible
areas in Italy and Croatia



INTERREG POLAND-SLOVAKIA

Relevant objective: To protect the national and cultural heritage while enabling a more sustainable and integrated tourism.

How are mountain areas taken into consideration?

The programme specifically targets tourist destinations in mountain areas and Natura2000 sites and is therefore open to beneficiaries from these areas.

What type of projects can be financed?

- Revitalisation of cultural monuments, extension of trails
- Development and promotion of joint tourist offers, initiatives and products to foster the economic development and maintain local jobs



Examples of beneficiaries: Natura2000 sites, private companies, public authorities, NGOs

More information: <https://pl.plsk.eu>
Contact: Managing Authority - Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy
agnieszka.lubienska@mfipr.gov.pl



Check out the list of eligible areas in Poland and Slovakia



WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM THESE FUNDS?

Public and private organisations can receive funding under the Cohesion Policy, as long as they bring added value to the implementation of projects. These organisations may participate as project partners but may also contribute as observers or external experts. Private individuals are not generally accepted as project partners in territorial programmes but can benefit from funds under the FSE+. The Operational Programmes above provide a non-extensive list of potential beneficiaries.

This document was prepared in early 2022 and it is based on the draft version of the Operational Programmes. Therefore, part of its content might be subject to change. The final text of the Operational Programmes financed through the 2021–2027 Cohesion Policy will be available at the following QR code:



WHAT IS MONTANA174?

Montana174 is a communication campaign to inform you – mountain citizen - on the many opportunities offered by the Cohesion Policy in mountain areas. In mountains, the Cohesion Policy gives funds to reinforce digital and social innovation, accelerate climate mitigation and adaptation, support tourism, foster youth employment and enhance mobility.

www.montana174.org



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