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# Understanding the call for proposals' main eligibility and financial rules

First call for proposals online information event  
23 January 2024

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# Main eligibility rules

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# Understanding the call for proposals' main eligibility rules

## Key facts and figures

- Open to the **4 Programme Priorities** and **9 Programme Specific Objectives**;
- EU funds allocated: **€ 103.633.273,00** (financial allocation per specific objective);
- **Up to 89%** of projects total costs covered by the EU contribution;
- **Minimum** contribution at project level: **11%** of the total costs;
- **3 types of projects**: Thematic, Youth-oriented and Governance;
- **Minimum 3** different participating countries in partnerships;
- **At least 1 Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC)** and **1 European Union Mediterranean Country (EUMC)** in partnerships.

**A proposal shall refer to one Programme Specific Objective only**



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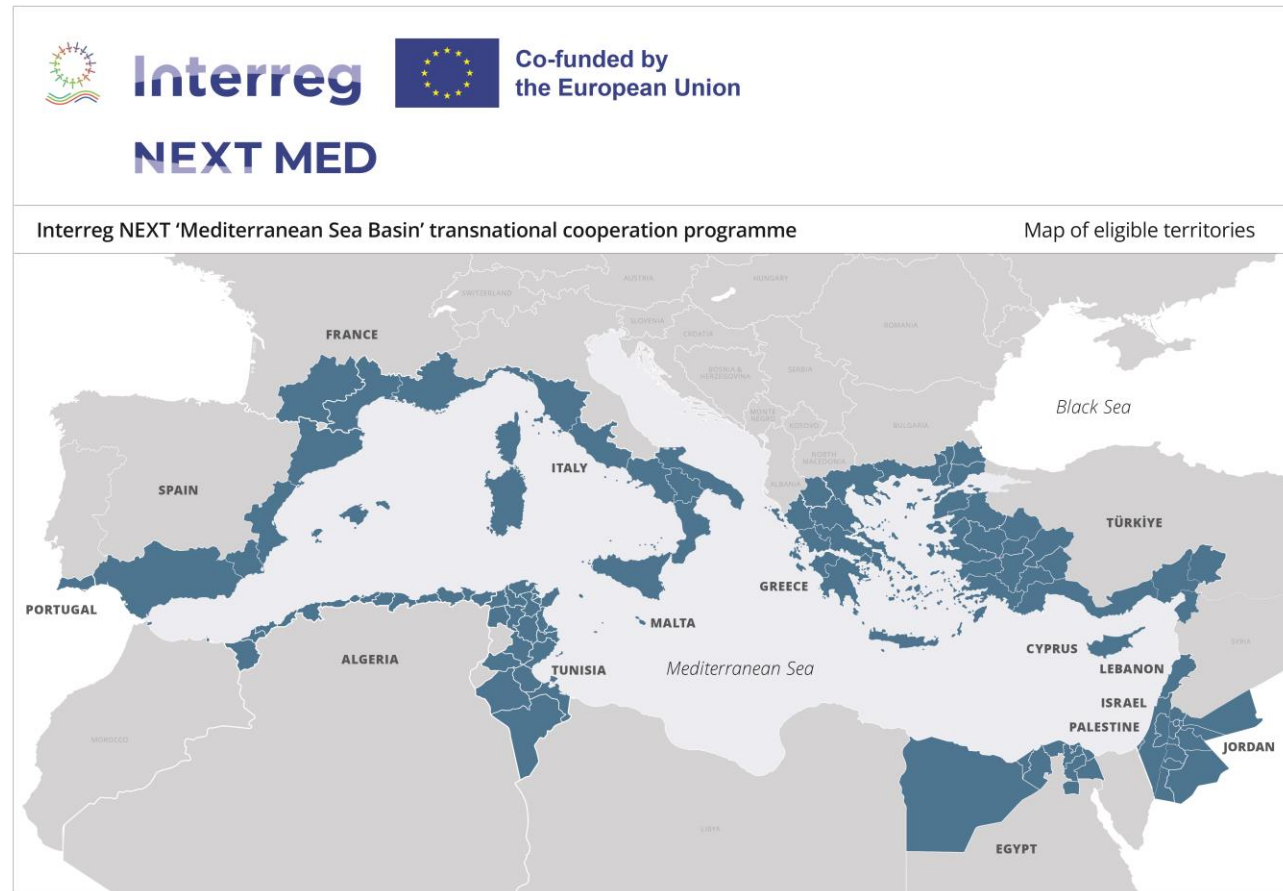
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# Geographical eligibility



## 15 participating\* countries:

- **Mediterranean Partner Countries:** Algeria, Egypt, Israël, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Tunisia, Türkiye
- **EU Mediterranean Countries:** Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain

## General rules (par. 4.3.1 Guidelines for Applicants):

- Applicants and Partners must be established in eligible territories of these countries **ONLY (max. 2 organizations from the same country);**
- Unlike for ENI CBC MED, **adjoining regions can't participate** anymore

\*Eligibility of Mediterranean Partner Countries to be confirmed upon signature of a financial agreement with the European Commission



# Geographical eligibility

Eligibility of applicants and partners (*non-exhaustive list*)

Participation is allowed for legal entities (not physical persons) with legal status of:

- **Public bodies** (national and local administrations, other public bodies);
- **Bodies governed by public law\***;
- **Private Bodies** (enterprises, NGOs, associations and other no profit organisations, etc.);
- **International Organisations** (with limitations) set up by intergovernmental agreements and accepting specific programme obligations through a specific declaration to be submitted.

The applicant and the partners shall be **legally registered** in the **eligible territories** since **at least two years from the launching date of this first call!**



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\*As defined by art. 2(4) of Directive 2014/24/EU (in MPCs those obliged to follow national rules - check with National Contact Points)



# The first call for proposals

Specific rules for geographical eligibility (4.3.1 GfA)

For some organizations, participation is allowed only under certain conditions!

## International Organizations

- Only if they have an **operational office** in the eligible area
- Do not contribute to the fulfilment of the minimum geographic partnership requirement

## Ministries and other national public administrations (outside eligible territories)

- Only if activities carried out in and **for the full benefit of the Programme eligible regions**
- The project activities should be implemented **by the existing local structure** (if any)

## Decentralized organisations

- Only if the decentralized office has been **established at least 2 years before the deadline** set for the submission
- The office has the **capacity to undertake legal obligations and assume financial responsibility**



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# The first call for proposals

## Eligibility of territories - activities

- **General rule:** project activities must be implemented in eligible territories of the countries represented **in the partnership**.
- Exceptions for geographical activities implementation: specific activities outside the eligible area may be included, provided that their **added value** to the Programme area is well **justified**. Their eligibility will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.



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# The first call for proposals

Other types of organisations that can be involved in a project

- **Associates:** organisations involved in the project but they **cannot receive project funding**. Travel and accommodation may be paid by the Applicant or PP and is included in the 15% flat rate. They **cannot participate in procurement procedures** launched by the project. No geographical requirements but a specific declaration to be submitted in order to prove their involvement.
- **Subcontractors:** some activities can be outsourced by Applicant and partners but not the whole project implementation (bulk of the project). **Applicant and partners cannot be sub-contracted by themselves.**

Under **no circumstances** can project partners or associates be subcontracted by the project!



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# The first call for proposals

## Specific requirements

Conditions to be met:

- The same organisation can apply **only once as Applicant under each Specific Objective**;
- **No limitation** applies for the participation **at partner level**;
- The same organization **cannot be awarded\*** more than **2 grants as Lead Partner** under this call for proposals.

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!**



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\*In case more than two proposals from the same Applicant are preselected according to the rules for this call, only the two best ranked proposals will be retained in the list to be financed



# The first call for proposals

## Suspension clause

- The first call for proposal was launched with a **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 (FA) can be found on [www.interregnextmed.eu](http://www.interregnextmed.eu)**
- In case you involve MPC partners that have not signed the FA, Applicants will be given **30 calendar days to replace** the partner: **one or two partners maximum** can be replaced according to the partnership composition (see Text of the Call for Proposal). The **Applicant** itself **can never be replaced!**



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\* 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





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# Main financial rules

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# Understanding the call for proposals' main financial rules

## Key facts and figures

- **11 % minimum** of **co-financing** to be provided by **Applicant and all partners**
- **50 % minimum** of EU funds must be allocated to the **Mediterranean Partner Countries**
- **35 % maximum** of EU funds may be allocated to a **single partner**
- **40 % maximum** of EU funds may be allocated to a to the **staff cost category**
- Cost category "**Travels and accommodation**" is fixed at a **flat rate of 15% of staff costs**
- Cost category "**Administrative costs**" is fixed at a **flat rate of 15% of staff costs**

**VAT is eligible** for all Interreg NEXT MED projects of the first call for proposals!



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# The financial 'Golden Rule' of the Programme

## The 50% rule

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**.

The criterion is fulfilled in the following cases:

At **least 50%** of the project total eligible costs is allocated **to the partners from the Mediterranean Partner Countries**

Or

In case the financial allocation to partners from Mediterranean Partner Countries is lower than 50%, **the difference up to the minimum of 50%** shall be justified by **activities implemented by the EU Applicant and/or partner/s and/or International Organisations in the Mediterranean Partner Countries**



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# Budget

## Cost categories

1. Staff costs – **Max. 40%**
2. Travel and Accommodation costs – **15% flat rate of staff costs**
3. Infrastructure and Works
4. Equipment costs
5. External expertise and service costs
6. Office and administrative costs – **15% flat rate of staff costs**

Any eligible cost must fit under one of these cost categories

**No preparation costs** will be eligible under Interreg NEXT MED



# Eligible costs: main eligibility criteria

An expenditure will be accepted as eligible by the MA if :

- it is **real, reasonable, justified** as well as **related** and **necessary** to the implementation of the project;
- It is **indicated in the budget**;
- It is incurred and paid **directly by the applicant/partners**;
- It is **supported** by **expenditure and payment** documents and it is incurred **during the implementation** of the project;
- It is **recorded in the accounts** of the project partner;
- It respects the applicable **rules on procurement**;
- It is **not** subject to **double financing**;
- It respects the **EU rules of branding and communication**;
- It does **not contradict** the specific eligibility criteria set under **each cost category**.



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