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INTERREG ITALY-CROATIA PROGRAMME 2021 - 2027

Call Announcement

4th Call for Proposals

(Version 1.0 - 11 June 2026)

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OF COOPERATION**



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Introduction

The INTERREG VI-A Italy–Croatia 2021-2027 Programme, a [Cross-Border Cooperation Programme¹](#) in the framework of European Territorial Cooperation, launches the 4th Call for Capitalisation project proposals, aiming to support the transfer, adaptation and scaling-up of existing solutions across different Interreg Programme areas, with a specific focus on sustainable tourism.

This 4th Call for Proposals is launched in coordination with the [Interreg Mediterranean Multi-Programme Mechanism \(MMM\)](#) whose participating Programmes have agreed on a common framework to capitalise and improve the transferability and scalability of already achieved solutions beyond their own areas of cooperation. The MMM is a pilot coordination initiative focused on sustainable tourism, aiming at strengthening synergies among Interreg Programmes by improving the joint monitoring of results and fostering the creation of a value chain among projects, supporting the transfer, scaling-up and mainstreaming of existing solutions, as well as the development of shared policy recommendations.

The proposals submitted under this Call are capitalisation projects. In this context, proposals must build on at least one output developed under a MMM Programme different from Italy - Croatia which has to be re-used, adapted or scaled-up in the Interreg Italy - Croatia Programme area.

This document is part of the “[Application Package for the 4th Call for proposals](#)” available for applicants. The Application Package consists of:

- Call announcement (present document)
- MMM Terms of Reference (Annex 1 to the Call Announcement)
- Joint list of MMM outputs (Annex 2 to the Call announcement)
- Project selection procedure
- Assessment criteria (Annex 1 to the Project selection procedure)
- Guidelines for Applicants
- Off-line simplified Application Form templates (*for information purposes*)
- Off-line declaration templates for the Lead Partner, Project and Associated Partners (*for information purposes*)
- Subsidy Contract template (*for information purposes*)

¹ EC Implementing Decision C(2022) 5935 and subsequent modifications.





Further information and useful documents for the application process can be found in section 11 of this document. The present Call is implemented through the Joint electronic monitoring system (Jems).

The Call for proposals is governed by EU Regulations², the Interreg Programme and the present document. Italian legal framework shall be applied wherever needed. In terms of State aid, General Block Exemption Regulation³ and the de minimis Regulations⁴ apply to the present Call for proposals.

1 - Programme overview

The Programme area's greatest potential and core driver for development is represented by the Adriatic Sea: indeed, the strengths deriving from the maritime dimension are numerous, from the strategic position and good performance of ports in the area, to the impressive richness of biodiversity and the strong attractiveness of the region for coastal tourism flows. Thus, the Programme intends to exploit these opportunities by focusing the cooperation efforts on the blue economy domains, in consistency with the EU Blue Economy strategy. Moreover, synergies and complementarities with other funding instruments at EU, national, regional level including National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRP) and EUSAIR are fostered. In 2023, the Interreg Italy-Croatia Programme joined the "Interreg Mediterranean Multi-Programme Mechanism" strategic framework. The Mechanism now expanded to include 10 Interreg Programmes: Euro-MED, Italy–France Maritime, NEXT MED, Greece–Cyprus, Italy-Malta, Italy–Tunisia, Italy–Slovenia, IPA South Adriatic and IPA ADRIION.

This Mechanism fosters coordination among Interreg Programmes, joint monitoring and policy alignment, with a specific focus on sustainable tourism, aiming to strengthen the transfer, re-use and impact of existing solutions across the Mediterranean area.

² ERDF Regulation (EU) 1058/2021, Interreg Regulation (EU) 1059/2021, Common Provision Regulation (EU) 1060/2021

³ Regulation (EU) 651/2014 art. 20 and 20 A

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2831/2023, Regulation (EU) 717/2014 and Regulation (EU) 1408/2013, please note that it will not be allowed to cumulate de minimis aid.



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2 - Addressed area

The 4th Call for Capitalisation Projects is addressed to the whole Programme area, covering the following NUTS III regions:

Italy: Teramo, Pescara, Chieti (Abruzzo Region), Brindisi, Lecce, Foggia, Bari, Barletta-Andria-Trani (Apulia Region), Ferrara, Ravenna, Forlì-Cesena, Rimini (Emilia-Romagna Region), Pordenone, Udine, Gorizia, Trieste (Friuli Venezia Giulia Region), Pesaro e Urbino, Ancona, Macerata, Ascoli Piceno, Fermo (Marche Region), Campobasso (Molise Region), Venezia, Padova, Rovigo (Veneto Region);

Croatia: Primorsko-goranska, Ličko-senjska, Zadarska, Šibensko-kninska, Splitsko-dalmatinska, Istarska, Dubrovačko - neretvanska (Adriatic Croatia region), Karlovačka (Pannonian Croatia region).



3 - Objectives and features of the Call

The INTERREG VI-A Italy–Croatia 2021-2027 Programme intends to select high-quality cross-border projects in which organisations can cooperate to address common relevant thematic issues and very tangible needs in the area.

Particular importance is placed on the relevance of the partnerships as well as on the importance of the cross-border approach of each project. These are therefore coherently evaluated in the project assessment. As the Programme addresses common challenges affecting the cooperation area, all project proposals must be jointly developed and implemented by the participating partners, ensuring collaboration throughout the project lifecycle.

The 4th Call for Capitalisation projects is conceived as a targeted call under Specific Objective 4.1 – *Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation* - aiming to maximise the value, transferability and impact of existing project outputs developed within the Mediterranean Multi-Programme Mechanism (MMM) participating Countries.





Capitalisation Approach:

This Call is implemented in coherence with the [Italy-Croatia Programme Capitalisation Plan](#), which provides the strategic framework for strengthening the transferability, durability and uptake of project results across the Programme area and beyond.

Project proposals are expected to build on already achieved results, rather than developing entirely new outputs. To this end, all proposals must be based on at least one output developed under an MMM Programme other than the IT-HR Programme. These outputs must be selected from the MMM “Joint List of outputs” (Annex 2 to the Call announcement), which serves as the reference framework for the capitalisation process.⁵

Within this framework, applicants are expected to take on the role of “takers” by reusing outputs produced by previously funded projects and made available in the MMM database (“givers”). The proposal should aim to ensure the effective deployment of these outputs in a new territorial and institutional context through a structured capitalisation process. This process is expected to address one or more key phases, including transfer, adaptation, testing, and scaling up depending on the nature of the selected output and the overall scope of the project.

To support this process, proposals may include a combination of activities such as capacity-building and knowledge exchange, collaborative learning formats, pilot or demonstration actions, targeted stakeholder engagement initiatives aimed at facilitating the uptake, use and integration of the selected outputs, as well as communication and outreach initiatives, where these contribute to their effective uptake and integration.

Capitalisation Process: Transfer, Adaptation, Testing and Scaling-Up

Project proposals must clearly demonstrate a coherent approach to capitalisation, outlining how selected outputs will be taken up, adapted and embedded in a new context through the following steps:

⁵ The responsibility for ensuring compliance with intellectual property rights (IPR) in relation to the selected outputs lies entirely within the project partners and not with the IT-HR Programme





Transfer

Projects must ensure the effective transfer of selected outputs to the Italy–Croatia Programme area. This involves identifying the relevant outputs, clearly understanding their original scope and function, as well as demonstrating their applicability to the new context.

Adaptation

Outputs can be adjusted, where needed, to reflect the specific territorial, institutional or regulatory conditions in which they are applied. This may involve refining methodologies, tailoring tools or revisiting governance or implementation arrangements.

Testing

Adapted outputs can be validated through pilot actions or demonstration activities. Testing should take place in real or near-real conditions. This phase can allow applicants to assess feasibility, effectiveness, and user acceptance, while refining the outputs based on practical experience and stakeholder feedback.

Scaling-up

Projects can ensure that validated outputs are further expanded and embedded beyond the pilot phase. Scaling-up may include replication across additional territories, uptake by new stakeholders, and, where relevant, integration into policies, strategies or institutional frameworks, with a view to ensuring long-term sustainability and impact.

In line with the above, project proposals shall:

- Support the integration of these outputs into policies, strategies or practical applications, ensuring their long-term impact.
- Primarily focused on the valorisation and transfer of existing outputs rather than on the creation of entirely new ones.
- Demonstrate a clear and direct link with the selected output, including its origin, relevance and transfer potential to the new context.
- Define a coherent set of activities reflecting the capitalisation process (transfer, adaptation, testing and scaling-up), proportionate to the scope of the project.

Project outputs may take different forms depending on the nature of the selected output and its application context. These may include, for example, adapted tools, methodologies or services, solutions





tested in real or near-real conditions, policy-oriented outputs such as recommendations or implementation measures, as well as cooperation or governance arrangements among stakeholders, supporting their effective uptake, durability and transferability.

The involvement of the organisation(s) that originally developed the selected output is not mandatory but is recommended, as it can strengthen the effectiveness of the capitalisation process. Where these organisations are not eligible to participate as full partners under the Programme eligibility rules, they may still be involved as Associated Partners. This would allow them to contribute with their expertise and ensure continuity of knowledge, although not being part of the formal partnership structure.

The topics addressed by this Call are defined in the MMM Terms of Reference, which applicants are required to consult and follow when developing project proposals.

Applicants may submit proposals in line with the activities identified in the MMM Terms of Reference (Section I). Proposals are expected to contribute to the achievement of Specific Objective 4.1, as defined in the Programme Intervention Logic, by focusing on a limited number of targeted and coherent actions, directly linked to the capitalisation of the selected output(s).

Duration

The duration of the projects must be between a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 18 months. An extension of up to 6 months may be granted in duly justified cases and in compliance with the rules specified in the Programme Implementation Manual.

4 - Financial Aspects

The Programme will allocate 5.859.000 EUR from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to the 4th Call for Capitalisation projects.⁶ If additional resources become available at Programme level, they may be eventually allocated to the projects according to the ranking list.

The ERDF co-financing rate is equal to 80% of total eligible costs of the project.

The share of expenditure not covered by ERDF funds (equal to 20% of total eligible costs of the project) shall be ensured by national or partner co-financing sources. For Italian organisations, the national co-financing is ensured by the State (Fondo di Rotazione).⁷

⁶ The availability of these resources is subject to the European Commission's pending decision on the approval of the updated version of the Interreg Programme (IP).

⁷ Ex Law n. 183/1987 and CIPESS Decree n. 78/2021.





State-aid assessment could entail the possible reduction of public contribution as described in the [Programme Implementation Manual](#) (PIM).

Budget size of the projects

The Programme expects to fund projects with a minimum of EUR 500.000 to a maximum of EUR 1.000.000 from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

/! Point of attention: to ensure a significant contribution to achieving the Capitalisation project objective, applicants must allocate sufficient funds per project partner. For Capitalisation projects a minimum amount of 80.000 € ERDF per partner is compulsory.

Available financing options

For Capitalisation Projects three financing options, combining real costs and simplified cost options (SCO), are available. The financing option is selected individually by each project partner participating in the Capitalisation project proposal.

Infrastructure and works cost category is not admissible within the 4th Call nor are Investments in infrastructure. Only equipment items from the list defined in the PIM (Chapter 5.6.5) could be admissible as investment provided that these represent core components and are essential for the output to be capitalised.

In addition to the financing options and SCOs, the 4th Call also foresees the reimbursement, as Lump sums, of preparation costs in the fixed amount of 18.200,00€ (ERDF + co-financing per project) and closure costs fixed amount of 3.000,00€ (ERDF + co-financing per partner).

The information on financing options and the use of SCOs is described in the [Programme Implementation Manual](#) and summarised in the Guidelines for Applicants.

5 - Eligibility of applicants

General provisions

Institutions/entities willing to participate in the 4th Call for proposals must fulfill all the following criteria:



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- Be established under the national law of Italy or Croatia (except for international organisations, see below);
- Have their official seat or seat of operations in the Programme area, as long as the official seat is active for at least twenty-four months and the seat of operation is active for at least six months before the date of publication of this Call Announcement and its location in the area is demonstrated through official documentation (e.g. through a public register or equivalent), to be uploaded in Jems with the Application Form⁸;
- Be endowed with legal personality⁹.

The following organisations can apply for funding:

- National, regional and local public bodies¹⁰ and their associations;¹¹
- Private entities (Profit and Not-for-profit organisations);
- International organisations acting under the national law of an EU Member State or under the international law¹²

Assimilated Partners

Italian and Croatian public entities that are located outside the Programme area (both with its legal and operational seats) are eligible as Assimilated partners, only if they:

- are competent in their scope of action for certain parts of the Programme area;
- carry out activities that are beneficial for the Programme area.

Assessment of the competence is performed by the relevant National Authority of the country in which the assimilated partner is located.

⁸ Private entities must be established for a duration that allows the Programme to check the financial capacity according to the criteria explained below.

⁹ Art. 200, 2. c) Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509: Entities without legal personality under the applicable national law, will be eligible provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the entities and that the entities offer equivalent guarantees for the protection of the Union equivalent to those offered by legal persons. In particular, entities shall have a financial and operational capacity equivalent to that of a legal person. The representative of the applicant shall prove that those conditions are satisfied.

¹⁰ Including bodies governed by public law as defined in Article 2(4) of Directive 2014/24/EU on public procurement fall under this category, established in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 as amended.

¹¹ Including European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) established in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1082/2006 as amended.

¹² These organisations must explicitly accept all requirements deriving from the EU Treaty and the regulations applicable in the framework of the Interreg Italy-Croatia Programme by providing an ad-hoc declaration signed by these institutions that can be requested by the Managing Authority prior to granting the funds.





Assimilated partners have equal rights and obligations as do applicants located within the Programme area and their budgets should be developed following the same principles and constraints applicable to Lead Applicants and Project partners.

Financial Capacity of Private Applicants

The financial capacity of private Lead Applicants is going to be assessed during the eligibility assessment. If the Lead Applicant is ineligible, the project proposal shall be rejected. Differently, the financial capacity of private project partners is going to be assessed only for those project proposals which are recommended for financing and, in case the project partner is found ineligible, the Lead Applicant will be required during the condition clearing to remove the ineligible partner from the project or to replace it with an eligible partner, with a suitable proposal to safeguard the project objectives and activities. The financial capacity is going to be assessed through the information included in the Balance sheets and profit and loss accounts of the last two financial years¹³ and a bank reference letter¹⁴, which should be based on financial accountability and generally applied principles to assess financial capacity of private entities¹⁵.

6 - Provisions applying to the Lead Applicant and 4th Call specificities

Lead Applicant

The Lead Applicant is in charge of coordinating the generation and submission of the proposal.

In compliance with the 'Lead Partner principle', if the proposal is approved, the Lead Applicant assumes the role of Lead Partner (LP) and takes full financial and legal responsibility for the implementation of the entire project.

All eligible applicants listed in the previous paragraph (Eligibility of Applicants') can act as Lead Applicant, except for International organisations acting under international law.

¹³ Eligible private organisations must have the approved and submitted to the competent authority financial documents related at least to the last two financial years previous to the submission of the project proposal.

¹⁴ A bank reference letter shall indicate the "Degree of trust" between the applicant and the banking system. This document declares the financial reliability of the organisation applying for the funds. The bank reference letter generally includes that the applicant has always met its bank commitments and has adequate solvency requirements.

¹⁵ The Programme provides an [explanatory document](#) concerning the assessment of the financial capacity of private applicants, which is based on financial accountability generally applied principles. However, the result of the assessment performed by the Programme, in compliance with the rules set for this 4th Call for Proposals, has to be considered the only valid for determining the financial capacity of private applicants.





Each organization can take part in a maximum of two proposals as Lead Applicant. Therefore, only the first two proposals received, based on the chronological order of submission into Jems, will be considered. Should the organisation infringe this rule, rejection of the additional proposal will occur.

The following public institutions can be considered as “per department”:

- Ministries,
- Regions/Counties,
- Universities/Research institutions.

“Department” is understood as an organizational unit with financial and administrative autonomy and having technical and administrative staff to ensure its functioning. Thus, each single department within the above listed institutions shall be considered as a separate applicant.

⚠ Point of attention: Considering that the Programme intends to finance high-quality project proposals, interested organisations are strongly encouraged to limit their participation to a maximum of two proposals also as a partner in addition to two proposals as LP.

7 - Partnerships

The Programme encourages applicants to ensure geographic balance and establishes the following requirements for the partnerships:

Capitalisation projects
• at least three eligible partners, out of which at least one Italian, and one Croatian • Maximum number of partners is eight (including the Lead Applicant)

Partnerships should demonstrate a clear capacity to transfer, adapt and implement the selected output(s), including access to relevant territories, stakeholders and policy levels.





Associated Partners

The participation of Associated Partners is envisaged, although not compulsory. These are entities without a project budget, who may also be based outside the Programme area or in third countries. They are expected to contribute to the achievement of the project's objectives and demonstrate an added value for the partnership.

In the context of this Call, Associated Partners play a key role in supporting the capitalisation process. They may include organisations that originally developed the selected output, contributing to its transfer, adaptation and re-use.

Their involvement is strongly encouraged, as it increases the quality and credibility of the proposal and represents a key enabler for effective capitalisation and reuse of outputs.

The number of Associated Partners shall not exceed the number of project partners.

Additional information about their participation can be found in the [Programme Implementation Manual](#).

8 - Call timeline

Deadline for submission

The 4th Call for proposals opens on 15/06/2026 and it is organised in a "single-step" procedure.

The Lead Applicants must submit the project proposals by 15/09/2026 at 2.00 PM.

After the deadline above, the Jems system will automatically prevent any further submission of project proposals.

The Managing Authority (MA) reserves the right to postpone the Call for Proposal's deadline in case of duly justified circumstances.

Assessment procedure

The selection of project proposals is carried out by the Monitoring Committee, on the basis of the assessment performed by the Joint Secretariat. More information is available in the Project selection procedure.

The following chart illustrates the project selection steps:





Upon completion of the assessment, the submitted applications reaching the minimum quality thresholds will be ranked.

The Monitoring Committee of the Programme reserves the right not to commit all available resources depending on the quality of submitted applications. Results of the assessment process will be published on the [Programme website](#).

Contracting procedure

Considering the time necessary for the assessment process, the expected number of applications and the internal administrative procedures, contracting should take place approximately in Spring 2027. Therefore, applicants should plan to start the activities by the end of the first semester of 2027.

In any case, the actual starting date of projects will be the one included in the Application Form resulting from the Condition Clearing process.



9 - How to apply

Project proposals must be submitted in English language and only through [Jems](#). Timely registration in the Jems system is highly recommended. No other method of submission will be accepted, and applications submitted in any other way will be automatically rejected.

In order to confirm the willingness of the Lead Applicant to submit the proposal, the legal representative, or a duly delegated person, shall sign the Lead Partner's Declaration through a valid e-signature (certificate compliant with the Regulation on the Electronic IDentification Authentication and Signature eIDAS¹⁶) or, in case of a handwritten signature, also sending a valid ID-document of the signatory.

The Lead Applicant is in charge of the submission of the project proposal on behalf of the whole partnership and it needs to be registered in Jems to be able to create and submit valid proposals.

For more information on how to fill-in the Application form see the [Guidelines for Applicants](#).

10 - Complaints

According to Article 69 (7) of Regulation (EU) 1060/2021, the Programme set up a complaint procedure in order to find an amicable and mutually acceptable solution to avoid any form of litigation between the MA and the Lead Applicant.

Information for applicants regarding the complaint procedure during the selection process is available in Project selection procedure.

11 - Assistance and other resources

The Joint Secretariat (JS) is based in Venice, with an Antenna in Zadar, and can be contacted, by Lead Applicants only, at any time for any queries related to project development and application at:

js.italy-croatia@regione.veneto.it

js.it-hr.antenna@mrrfeu.hr

Other useful information

The Programme offers the following support and tools for the applicants available at [Programme website](#):

¹⁶ Regulation (EU) 910/2014.





- Videopills
- FAQs
- Updates on the infodays (days and location)
- Glossary
- Partner search tool
- Consultations with the JS (specific procedure to be followed for the request)

Useful documents for the development of the proposals

EU Policy Framework documents

- [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1060](#) - Common Provisions Regulation (CPR)
- [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1059](#) - Interreg Regulation
- [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1058](#) - ERDF Regulation
- [Regulation \(EU, Euratom\) 2024/2509](#) - Financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union

Interreg Italy-Croatia 2021-2027 documents available at the [Programme website](#)

Home > Implementation > Programme Documents > Programme

- Interreg Programme (IP)
- Programme Intervention logic
- Contribution to EUSAIR Flagships
- Programme Capitalisation plan
- [Report from the Conference "Paths that last - Collaborating for a Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean"](#)

Home > Implementation > Programme Documents > Evaluation

- SEA Environmental Report

Home > Implementation > Project Implementation Documents > Project and Financial Management

- Programme Implementation Manual (PIM)
- Private Beneficiary financial capacity
- DNSH procedure





Home > Jems > Jems Implementation Manuals

➤ Manual for Submitting Project Applications in Jems

12 - Summary: Main Features and Requirements of the Call

Main Feature	Capitalisation Projects
Max. n. of project proposals per LP	2 as LP* *Ministries, Regions/counties, Universities/Research centers counted per department
Recommended n. of project proposals per Project Partner	2 as PP* *Ministries, Regions/counties, Universities/Research centers counted per department
Min. no. of Partners	3 partners (at least 1 IT and 1 HR)
Max. no. of Partners	8 partners
Min. budget per partner (ERDF)	80.000
Min duration	12 months
Max duration	18 months
Indicative start	1st semester 2027
ERDF contribution	80%
Min. financial size of each project (ERDF)	500.000
Max. financial size of each project (ERDF)	1.000.000

