

## Frea Project

### Joint Action Plan - Activity 1.5 *“Model of intervention - Toolbox”*

Model step

SYNTHESIS ON FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES GUIDE



## Index

1. Model step	3
2. SYNTHESIS ON FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES GUIDE	4
2.1 EUROPE	4
2.2 ALBANIA	13

## 1. Model step

A standard model based on financial advice documents, enterprise creation quick referral guide, synthesis on funding opportunities, communication tips&tricks, project management templates, and a handbook for actors will be developed. The set of tools will form a complete “toolbox”. In this document, you will find a Guide on main financial opportunities, with a particular focus on tourism.

## 2. SYNTHESIS ON FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES GUIDE

### 2.1 EUROPE

The EU plays a complementary role in tourism policy by supporting and coordinating actions taken by member states and candidate countries.

Tourism has suffered an unprecedented shock due to the coronavirus pandemic, which has drastically reduced tourist flows and, consequently, the revenues of companies operating in the sector. The European Commission has launched measures and put forward proposals to mitigate the impact of this crisis.

Beyond the immediate shock, the tourism sector is facing other longer-term challenges related to its green and digital transformation, competitiveness, sustainability, and resilience.

For the period 2021-2027, several programmes are planned that could be used to finance actions in the tourism sector, under direct or shared management, including those created to mitigate the impact of the pandemic.

#### **GUIDE TO EU TOURISM FUNDING**

The Commission has published an online guide on EU tourism funding. This guide highlights the wide range of funding programmes funded by the new budget, the 2021-2027 MFF, and Next Generation EU. These resources support the transition to a more digital, sustainable, and inclusive EU.

The guide helps to find appropriate funding. Contains links to the relevant EU programme websites with the latest developments (such as annual work programmes

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or calls for proposals) and further details per programme.

To get inspiration, you can also see concrete examples of projects funded by previous EU programmes. The guide is available in all EU languages through a high-quality machine translation tool.

[https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide\\_en](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide_en)

Below is an overview of the EU funding sources for tourism in 2021-2027 and the types of actions supported on the basis of Annex I to the [European Court of Auditors' Special Report 27/2021: EU support for tourism.](#)

### **Creative Europe programme**

EU programme to support the cultural and creative sectors, including the audiovisual sector. Funds cooperation projects or platforms, including cultural events in the form of music and performing arts festivals; film festivals and markets; promotion of the city through culture; Development of the creative aspects of sustainable cultural tourism and the design and fashion sectors, and promotion and representation of these sectors outside the EU.

[https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide/creative-europe-programme\\_en?prefLang=it](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide/creative-europe-programme_en?prefLang=it)

### **Digital Europe programme**

EU programme to support the digital transformation of European society and economy. Its ultimate objective is to support the strategic autonomy of the European

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single market. Funds the creation of data spaces: [Common European Data Space for Cultural Heritage](#) (support to the digital transformation of the European cultural heritage sector) and Common European Mobility Data Space (support to interoperability); and the [European digital innovation pole network](#) (including support for SMEs in the tourism sector in their digital transformation).

[https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide/digital-europe-programme\\_en?prefLang=it&etrans=it](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide/digital-europe-programme_en?prefLang=it&etrans=it)

## **Programme Erasmus+**

EU programme in the fields of education, training, youth, and sport. These are key areas that support citizens in their personal and professional development. It also supports projects on mobility, skills development, and employability of young people in tourism, digital skills in cultural heritage, hospitality learning, and innovation research in the tourism sector.

[https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide/erasmus\\_en?prefLang=it](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide/erasmus_en?prefLang=it)

## **Horizon Europe programme**

Research and innovation framework programme, starting 2021-27. It has a budget of around EUR 95.5 billion for the period 2021-27 (at current prices), including EUR 5.4 billion from NextGenEU to stimulate economic recovery and make the EU more resilient for the future, and a strengthening of EUR 4 billion.

The programme promotes the development of new approaches, concepts and practices for sustainable, accessible, and inclusive cultural tourism (research activity

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in cluster 2).

[https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide/horizon-europe\\_en?prefLang=it&etrans=it](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide/horizon-europe_en?prefLang=it&etrans=it)

### **Single Market Programme (SMP)**

EU programme which aims to provide member countries with the tools to recover from the COVID-19 crisis. The ultimate goal is to make the single market stronger and more resilient. Annex 2 focuses on improving the competitiveness of enterprises (including the tourism sector), in particular SMEs, and supporting their access to markets. Albania participates in the SMP Programme, but only in the strand for 'Competitiveness of SMEs'

[https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide/single-market-programme-smp\\_en?prefLang=it](https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funding-guide/single-market-programme-smp_en?prefLang=it)

### **INTERREG EUROPE Programme 2021-2027**

Interreg Europe is the Programme that supports regional and local governments across Europe to improve the design and implementation of regional, local, and territorial development policies. It promotes experimentation and the exchange of knowledge and experience in this area, particularly by public authorities, management authorities, agencies, research institutes, and thematic organisations.

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/>

## **INTERREG EURO-MED 2021-2027 Programme**

Interreg Euro-Med 2021-2027 aims to contribute to the transition towards a climate-neutral and resilient society, fighting global changes that impact the resources of the Mediterranean while ensuring sustainable growth and the well-being of citizens.

<https://interreg-euro-med.eu/>

## **INTERREG IPA ADRION 2021-2027 Programme**

IPA ADRION acts as a political promoter and innovator of governance, promoting European integration between partner states, exploiting the rich natural, cultural, and human resources surrounding the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, and improving economic cohesion, social and territorial in the Programme area.

<https://www.interreg-ipa-adrion.eu/>

## **The Interreg IPA CBC Italy-Albania-Montenegro Programme**

The Programme is co-funded by the European Union through the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA II) and is managed by Puglia Region, which participates together with another Italian Region, Molise; Albania and Montenegro participate with the entire territory. The objective is to promote economic growth and to intensify cooperation in the low Adriatic area, by implementing joint actions between national and regional institutional and non-profit actors and by fostering smart, inclusive, and sustainable development.

The Programme supports project initiatives related to the following priority axes:

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1. Strengthening the cross-border cooperation and competitiveness of SMEs
2. Smart management of natural and cultural heritage for the exploitation of cross-border sustainable tourism and territorial attractiveness
3. Environment protection, risk management, and low carbon strategy
4. Increasing cross-border accessibility, promoting sustainable transport service and facilities, and improving public infrastructures

<https://interreg.eu/programme/interreg-ipa-cbc-italy-albania-montenegro/>

### Interreg IPA CBC Greece – Albania Programme

The Interreg” Greece – Albania” programme supports cooperation between the two countries.

The projects (activities) approved under the Programme are implemented in the following areas:

- **Greece** (regional units): Grevena, Kastoria, Florina, Arta, Thesprotia, Ioannina, Preveza, Zante, Corfu, Kefalonia, Lefkada
- **Albania** (regions): Vlorë, Gjirokastër, Korçë and Berat

The proposed projects must include at least two bodies/ organisations, one per country, and contribute to the Programme’s objectives:

- Increase the capacity of cross-border infrastructure in transport, water, and waste management
- Increase the effectiveness of environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources
- Increase energy efficiency and the use of RES
- Improve the effectiveness of risk prevention and disaster management with a focus on forest fires
- Preserve cultural and natural resources as a prerequisite for tourism development
- Support entrepreneurship, business survival, and competitiveness.

<https://interreg.eu/programme/interreg-greece-albania/>

## **IPA III 2021-2027 Programme**

The Pre-accession Assistance Programme (IPA III, the third edition of the Instrument for Pre-Accession) supports candidate and potential candidate countries in transforming their societies, legal systems, and economies along the path to EU membership. It is an investment in the future of the EU, making Europe safer and more prosperous by supporting the stability and prosperity of its closest neighbours.

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/IT/legal-content/summary/ipa-iii-the-instrument-for-pre-accession-assistance-2021-2027.html>

## **IPARD PROGRAMME**

IPARD is an integral part of the broader EU pre-accession strategy under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). Through this tool, the EU provides the beneficiary countries with financial and technical help, with the aim of developing their farming, food production, and rural development structures in a sustainable way, aligning their agricultural and rural development policies with the EU's common agricultural policy and adapting their agriculture and food sector with the EU food, hygiene, and environmental standards.

[https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/news/european-commission-will-support-agriculture-and-rural-development-pre-accession-countries-over-2022-03-23\\_en](https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/news/european-commission-will-support-agriculture-and-rural-development-pre-accession-countries-over-2022-03-23_en)

## Support from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (BERS)

The projects funded by the EBRD cover a wide range of sustainable practices and related market trends in the tourism sector. There are 3 programmes with particular relevance for the tourism sector.

<https://www.ebrd.com/albania.html>

## The EU's tourism dashboard

The EU Tourism Dashboard is an online knowledge tool developed by the European Commission, aimed at promoting and monitoring (1) green and digital transitions and (2) the socio-economic resilience factors of the European tourism ecosystem.

The dashboard provides visualizations of tourism-relevant data and indicators collected from reliable and available sources concerning the tourism ecosystem, To enable profiling and monitoring of progress made by EU countries towards EU policy objectives. The indicators of the EU Tourism Scoreboard are organised under the green, digital, and socio-economic policy pillars. In addition, the dashboard offers a set of basic tourist descriptors to provide further context for the characteristics of tourist destinations in terms of demand, supply, and tourist offer. The dashboard currently covers all EU-27 Member States, Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland, and is aimed at tourism decision-makers and operators as a main public to guide policies and strategies in the tourism ecosystem.

The current public version of the dashboard is the result of a consultation process launched in mid-2021, at the request of the Council of the European Union. EU Member States and other international organisations have contributed to the consultation and will continue to monitor and advise on the development of the EU

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### Tourism Scoreboard.

The EU Tourism Scoreboard was developed by DG GROW and the Joint Research Centre, with the collaboration of Eurostat, the Environment DG, and in consultation with the EU Member States through the Advisory Committee on Tourism. The European Commission would like to thank the following organisations for their contributions in the form of data or advice: Euro Control, European Travel Commission, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, United Nations World Tourism Organization, and Foundation for Environmental Education.

<https://tourism-dashboard.ec.europa.eu/?lng=it&ctx=tourism>

### Rural toolkit

The rural toolkit is a comprehensive guide to EU funding and support opportunities for rural areas in the European Union. The objective is to help local authorities, institutions, stakeholders, businesses, and individuals to seek out and exploit existing EU funds, programmes, and other funding and support initiatives and to promote development in rural areas.

The rural toolkit provides practical information, examples, and direct links to existing programmes. Applications must be submitted via the official web pages of each initiative.

The guide is part of the European Commission's long-term vision for stronger, connected, resilient, and prosperous rural areas in the EU. It shows how the initiatives and practices supported by EU funding programmes and policies can help rural communities revitalize their territories.

<https://funding.rural-vision.europa.eu/?lng=en>

## 2.2 ALBANIA

### Albania Investment Development Agency (AIDA)

The main objective of the Directorate of MSME & Projects within AIDA is to provide services to support Albanian small and medium enterprises through technical assistance, capacity building, information on markets, and customs, support for promotion, fairs, business missions, market research, and general sectorial publications, such as surveys, online information on export markets, database of importers and exporters, etc. AIDA also provides support to MSMEs with public government grants and the provision of donor funding through implementation projects; support for increasing the innovative and technological capacity of MSMEs, enabling the renewal and improvement of products and services, as well as the technology they use, through the provision of mechanisms based on increasing technical capacity and innovation capabilities; creating an innovation-friendly environment, as well as assisting start-up businesses.

The Directorate of MSME & Projects can assist entrepreneurs, associations or other business organizations by assisting them free of charge in other areas found in the link below:

<https://aida.gov.al/nmvm-eksporte/nmvm/sherbimet/>

### Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation - The “Revitalization Bonus”

Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation is awarding grants for the program “Revitalization Bonus”, part of the National Fund for the Care of Material Cultural Heritage. This is an initiative of the Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation for the restoration and revitalization of buildings in historical centers in order to raise the capacities for tourism by creating sustainable business models mostly in the hospitality and tourism sector, and to generate income and employment for the community. This initiative is a grant-in-aid, for all those individuals who are the owners of a building in the historical centers of cities and have the initiative to further

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develop it by contributing not only to local economic development but to a sustainable tourism sector.

The program started in 2022 when 96 individuals applied and 41 winning projects in Shkodër, Krujë, Berat, Gjirokastrë, Korce, Përmet, Pogradec, etc. were supported through this initiative.

The “Revitalization Bonus” during 2023, as an annual fund, had supported the owners and legal users of objects that are an integral part of historical urban ensembles, historical centers, and archaeological areas or have cultural property status, by impacting the capacities in cultural tourism as one of the most required attractions for visitors.

Visit the link below to update on the next call for applications:

<https://meki.gov.al/en/newsroom/shpallja-e-thirrjes-bonusi-i-rijetesimit-2/>

## National Strategy on Tourism 2024-2030

In October 2024, the Ministry of Tourism and Environment presented the National Strategy of Tourism 2024-2030. The government anticipates significant development in the tourism sector over the next seven years, supported by various fiscal instruments and favorable loan terms for investors. The number of people employed in tourism is expected to exceed 73,000 by 2030, up from around 42,000 last year, representing an increase of 31,000 individuals or 42.1%.

A substantial rise is also expected in the number of beds available, which will be accompanied by an increase in the number of tourists and, consequently, the number of overnight stays. This growth will be achieved not only through the creation of new accommodation capacities but also by formalizing existing accommodation units.

The strategy envisions that by 2030, the country will have 477,000 registered beds compared to 270,000 last year—an increase of over 207,000 beds or 76%.

Part of the strategy is also investment opportunities. As so, please follow the institutions below for future possible opportunities in tourism:

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Ministry of Tourism and Environment: <https://turizmi.gov.al/strategjia-e-turizmit/>

Albanian Investment Cooperation: <https://www.aicorporation.al/sq/>

Albanian Investment Fund: <https://www.albaniandf.org/>

National Agency of Tourism: <https://akt.gov.al/>

Website of Municipalities