

Interreg



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IPA ADRION

IPA ADRION 1st call for proposals

Overview of the outcomes of the quality assessment of the eligible project proposals

February 2024

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Preface

The present document provides an overview on the quality assessment process and the outcomes of the quality assessment performed by the MA/JS. Further checks as reported in the Programme Manual (namely anti-fraud and respect of an infringement within the scope of Article 258 TFEU) shall be performed following the approval of the IPA ADRION MC.

1. Overview of the eligible applications

Following the decisions adopted by the IPA ADRION Monitoring Committee (MC) through written procedure No. 14/2023, the Joint Secretariat (JS) sent all the Lead Applicants a communication informing about the outcomes of the admissibility and eligibility checks.

The Lead Applicants – on behalf of their partnerships, had 10 working days (i.e.: until 7 December 2023) for the submission of a formal complaint.

Out of the 33 rejected project proposals and 20 eligible ones suffering from the loss of a project partner or associated one, 20 complaints have been received.

In accordance with the programme rules and the Complaint Committee Rules of Procedure, the Managing Authority scheduled the Complaint Committee Meeting that took place online on 19 December 2023. The Complaint Committee approved the analysis performed by the MA/JS and all complaints were rejected as considered as not grounded.

Following the outcomes of the Complaint Committee the number of eligible applications to be assessed according to the quality criteria remained unchanged in respect of the outcomes sent to the IPA ADRION through written procedure No.14/2023: the overall number of the project proposals to be assessed against the quality criteria is 189, distributed according to Specific Objectives as in the following table:

Specific Objective	Submitted applications	Eligible applications
<i>S.O 1.1 - Strengthening innovation capacities in the Adriatic - Ionian region</i>	88	75
<i>S.O 2.1 - Enhancing resilience to climate change, natural and man-made disasters in the Adriatic- Ionian region</i>	39	31
<i>S.O 2.2 - Supporting circular economy development in the Adriatic- Ionian region</i>	36	30
<i>S.O 2.3 - Supporting environment preservation and protection in the Adriatic Ionian region</i>	29	25
<i>S.O 2.4 - Supporting sustainable multimodal urban mobility in the Adriatic -Ionian region</i>	20	18
<i>S.O 3.1 - Strengthening a carbon neutral smart mobility in the Adriatic- Ionian region</i>	10	10
Total	222	189

In accordance with the decision of the Complaint Committee, letters to the complainants were sent by 10 January 2024.

In relation to the received complaints, the Complaint Committee suggests the Monitoring Committee to discuss the following items in view of the future calls:

- 1) It is stressed that Declarations of the LPs and PPs need to be supported by applicants' hierarchy, which must be aware of the engagement of their organisation in the project. In case the applicant chooses the electronic signature, it has to be compliant with all the necessary quality standards: the minimum ones are those present in the PADES signature, which is also the most commonly used. It has to be checked whether the use of PADES electronic signature can be commonly accepted in all programme participating countries.
- 2) It is suggested to adopt a more flexible approach towards those applicants which do not report their correct legal status. The legal check performed by the NCPs is the only binding one.
- 3) It is stressed that the modification of the templates is forbidden: a warning must be included in the templates as well.
- 4) It is suggested to explore the possibility – from a technical point of view - to include the “*do not harm principle*” declaration in the application form.

2. Quality assessment process

2.1 Assessment methodology

Each eligible application has been assessed according to the criteria reported in Annex 4 of the Programme Application Manual. The assessment has been performed in accordance with the methodology approved in July 2023 by the Monitoring Committee; each project proposal, therefore, has been double independently assessed either by: 1) Internal assessors (JS team), and 2) External assessors, Or by: 3) Two external assessors.

2.2 Selection and involvement of the external experts

With reference to the external experts (EE), the expression of interest published in June 2023 brought to the identification of 70 experts, mainly coming from the programme area. The selection criteria, as reported in the expression of interest were:

- Have a university degree.
- Have at least seven years of professional experience after the university degree in positions acquired preferably in the selected Specific Objectives of the Programme.
- Have a good knowledge of the Adriatic Ionian cooperation area and its challenges; knowledge on the territorial needs of the IPA countries related to enlargement considered an asset.
- Have a good understanding of Cohesion Policy and European Territorial Cooperation (Interreg) with a focus on transnational cooperation and/or international cooperation.
- Have a proven track record in similar work (i.e.: assessing applications of ETC or applications under programmes directly managed by the European Commission or international funding programmes, and of applying scoring system and making recommendations for selection).
- Be independent from projects partners and/or future projects implementation.
- Be fluent in speaking, reading and writing in English (at least C1 level or equivalent).

- Be computer literate.

Each expert could submit its candidature in one or more of the thematic fields covered by the Programme's Priorities. According to ART-ER rules, the maximum number of projects assigned to each external expert could not be higher than 10.

The analysis of the received CVs was performed by ART-ER in cooperation with MA/JS and brought to the elaboration of the following roster of experts:

Specific Objective	Number of Eligible experts
S.O 1.1 - Strengthening innovation capacities in the Adriatic - Ionian region	37
S.O 2.1 - Enhancing resilience to climate change, natural and man-made disasters in the Adriatic- Ionian region	15
S.O 2.2 - Supporting circular economy development in the Adriatic- Ionian region	18
S.O 2.3 - Supporting environment preservation and protection in the Adriatic Ionian region	17
S.O 2.4 - Supporting sustainable multimodal urban mobility in the Adriatic -Ionian region	10
S.O 3.1 - Strengthening a carbon neutral smart mobility in the Adriatic- Ionian region	4

The following **37 experts** have been involved in the assessment of the 1st call for proposals:

Expert name	Nationality
1. Themistoklis Hadjiconstantinou	GR
2. Elke Dall	AT
3. Adele Bucella	FR/UK
4. Kirill Dimanoupoulos	GR
5. Lada Vetrini	IT
6. Nikolaos Hadjisavvas	GR
7. Nemanja Davidovic	RS
8. Alberto Bonetti	IT
9. Gianluca Sarti	IT/SI
10. Lisa Cowey	UK
11. Djuro Kutlaca	RS
12. Anna Sirocco	IT
13. Ilija Papac	HR/BIH
14. Sotirios Serdenis	GR

15.Yiorgo SIMOS	GR
16. Dragan Saric	BiH
17. Georgios Papadopoulos	GR
18.Dimitrios Karavatos	GR
19.Eleni Giannopoulou	GR
20.Minja Maric	ME
21. Stefano Marani	IT
22.Spyridon Arseniou	GR
23.Zlatan Musić	BiH
24.Dimitrios Ghertsos	GR
25.Dimitrios Karavatos	GR
26.Aikaterini Sagona	GR
27.Marin Miletic	HR
28.Branka Zizic	ME
29.Viktoria Dobravec	HR
30.Rovena Preka	IT/AL
31.Mandica Barnjac	HR
32.Senad Hromic	BiH
33.Vassilis Mitsios	GR
34.Haris Catic	BiH
35.Aurora Maria Losacco	IT
36.Saksida Jernej	SI
37.Giuseppe Mella	IT

A meeting with the EE took place on 21 September 2023 online via Zoom platform.

The EE were provided with the necessary tools and guidance (programme documents, internal assessment manual, slides, explanatory notes, feedback on the performed assessment, practical examples). Communication and updates were ensured via phone calls, emails and meetings via teams or zoom. The event was registered and made available to all the experts involved.

2.3 Assessment process

According to the approved methodology, the quality assessment is structured into two main phases:

1. Strategic assessment criteria - whose main aim is to determine the extent of the project's contribution to the achievement of Programme objectives (contribution to Programme results), by addressing joint or common target group needs;

2. Operational assessment criteria - whose main aim is to assess the feasibility of the proposed project, as well as its value for money in terms of resources used vs. results delivered.

In relation to what above the strategic and operational assessments are composed by the following criteria:

Strategic assessment criteria (Group 1)	Criteria
	Relevance
	Intervention Logic
	Partnership
	Cooperation Character

Operational assessment criteria (Group 2)	Criteria
	Workplan
	Communication
	Budget

Only the project proposals having reached an overall score of at least 36/60 (60% of the overall score related to strategic elements) have progressed to the Operational assessment and appraised according to the criteria of group 2. Project proposals which did not pass the strategic assessment have not been recommended for funding.

As far as the Operational Assessment is concerned, the proposals not reaching at least 30/50 (60% of the overall score related to operational assessment) have been rejected.

Peer review

Each project proposal had been assessed twice; the two experts worked independently in order to avoid influencing each other.

The two independent assessments related to the same eligible project proposal were subject to a peer review characterized by the following steps:

- 1) Exchange of views between the two assessors on the outcomes of the assessment highlighting shared/diverging opinions.
- 2) Review of the project proposal assessments to come to shared conclusions.

In case the assessment was performed by two independent assessors, the peer review has been coordinated by the JS.

In case of persistent diverging opinions (more than 15 points difference persists at overall project final score), a third assessment performed by a different independent assessor has been activated.

Overall, 24 project proposals have been characterized by a third evaluation distributed as follows per each SO:

Specific Objective	Number of project proposals
SO 1.1	10
SO 2.1	2
SO 2.2	6
So 2.3	3
SO 2.4	3

Overall harmonization

Both grids have been reported in one project assessment fiche; the final score awarded to the single project is the average score of those attributed by the two assessors.

All grids have been counterchecked by the JS to ensure consistency between the use of wording and scores, and the adequacy of conditions for improvement among all assessed project proposals. Only those proposals having passed the quality assessment (Strategic and Operational) with a score of at least 66/110 (60% of the overall maximum score) have been recommended for funding and submitted to further checks (i.e. double funding; antifraud etc).

Project proposals not reaching the minimum overall score have been rejected.

Documents provided to the IPA ADRION MC

Each final assessment grid includes the following information:

- a) Summary of the project proposal (copy and pasted from section A.1 of the application form);
- b) Financial information on the requested budget;
- c) List of partners, highlighting those that were excluded during the admissibility and eligibility checks;
- d) Overview of the overall final score per each assessor and the project average score;
- e) Detailed assessment grids according to the strategic and operational steps, including the assessment per each sub-criterion and related score;
- f) Outcomes of the state aid checks;
- i) Information on the final decision – (approved/ approved under conditions/ rejected);
- j) Conditions for improvement or reasons for rejection;
- k) Proposed revised budget.

Together with the assessment grid a ranking list per each specific objective is also provided.

2.4 State aid checks

The State Aid checks have been performed only on those applications which successfully passed the strategic and operational assessment with a score of at least the minimum one envisaged by the assessment methodology (66/110) (60% of the overall maximum score).

State aid checks have been performed by prof. Carlo E. Baldi.

The outcomes of the state aid checks highlighted the presence of indirect state aid relevant activities/potential indirect state aid activities in 6 out of the 96 recommended for funding projects.

With “indirect aid” it is intended that state aid relevant activities that do not affect the beneficiaries/project partners, but second layer beneficiaries which benefit from the activities of the project and partners themselves. Details are provided in the table below:

ID and Acronym	Outcomes of the state aid analysis
25 SUSBEX	<p>The project intends to raise the competitiveness of the SMEs by reinforcing their potential for innovative solutions and capacity to apply the principles of business excellence and provide high quality products and services, contributing to regional development and identify, adopt and implement sustainable practices on a systematic basis and become more sustainable.</p> <p>WP2 (Activity 2.1 and 2.2) foresees the implementation of activities that can bring advantages to the companies that will be involved. This advantage constitutes State aid. It must be quantified monetarily and may be recognized to each beneficiary either pursuant to the general de minimis regulation, or pursuant to article 20a of regulation no. 651/2014, if the amount does not exceed 22,000 euros.</p>
182 SMASH	<p>The project foresees some training activities within WP2. As to any indirect aid to entities outside the partnership, <u>if the training activity envisaged by WP2 are aimed at companies</u>, this would represent an advantage for them constituting State aid. If this is the case, the amount corresponding to the value of the training must be charged to each beneficiary enterprise in accordance with the general de minimis regulation or article 20a of Regulation No 651/2014, if the amount does not exceed EUR 22,000.</p>
232 BFC	<p>The project foresees activities such as fine-tuning and needs analysis, where trained facilitators from each partner will support at least 70 SMEs in capacity-building and mentoring activities. PP8 is the partner responsible of the training (WP2).</p> <p>If the training activities and workshops envisaged in WP2, in which the 70 companies will be involved and are intended to test a model, <u>it is assumed that the companies will not receive a specific benefit</u>. If, on the other hand, beyond this purpose, the enterprises will receive a direct advantage for their business, this advantage will constitute State aid.</p> <p>In this case, the advantage will have to be quantified in terms of commercial value of the service. If not exceeding €22,000 per company, it can be granted to each beneficiary pursuant to art. 20a of Regulation No 651/2014. Alternatively, it may be granted under the general de minimis regulation.</p>
284 ABBA	<p>The project will develop, test and validate two solutions of innovation support services for strengthening the innovation capacities of early-stage blue economy deep tech innovators working on advanced technologies; support the scaling-up and uptake of 30 early-stage blue economy deep tech concepts, promoting sustainable blue economy innovations; facilitate the development of 12 proof of concepts through transnational open innovation partnerships; foster transnational collaboration to increase blue economy RDI performance.</p>

	<p>The partnership consists of university, innovation intermediary, chamber of commerce, cluster, tech park, and local and regional development agencies.</p> <p>None of them carries out economic activity within the project; no one therefore receives State aid.</p> <p>The project however involves 30 companies (see WP2 above) that can present their innovative technologies to a targeted audience comprising potential investors, industry experts, & stakeholders in the blue economy. This represents an advantage that will have to be quantified in terms of commercial value of the service. If not exceeding €22,000 per company, it can be attributed to each beneficiary pursuant to art. 20a of Regulation No 651/2014. Alternatively, it may be granted under the general de minimis regulation. All partners are involved in these activities.</p>
<p>395 FENESTRAE</p>	<p>The project aims at promoting the upscale of innovations related to the adaptive control of building envelope, and windows in particular, for energy saving and reduced environmental impact. Promotion and development of innovative technologies (commercially and non-commercially available yet) on which the expertise of the partners involved is already significant, like electrochromic, photo(electro)chromic, thermochromic materials and devices, and materials enabling the smart behaviour of building envelopes, together with ICT technologies devoted to their effective control, will be a relevant part of the partnership interaction during the project.</p> <p>For each technology proposed, full awareness of potential benefits deriving from building integration will be achieved by means of numerical simulations on specific buildings.</p> <p>The final part of the project activities will aim at a scale-up of advanced technologies at the basis of the proposed solutions, in pilot actions including installation of several prototypes of materials and devices, to easily demonstrate the impact of such systems on users' comfort and mitigation of energy use as well.</p> <p>Data obtained, technology features and beneficial effects on indoor comfort, energy savings would be reported and publicly available through workshops, public seminars in schools and municipalities and other dissemination opportunities created ad hoc by partners in each country.</p> <p>The partnership is composed by university and technical local research institute, development public and private agencies managing business incubators that can foster networking and dissemination of the innovation and a technical partner expert in financing action.</p> <p>Partners are not undertakings and, in any case, do not carry out economic activity within the project framework. They are therefore not beneficiaries of State aid. As regards other entities involved in the project, it must be clarified whether the consulting system envisaged by WP3 involves the provision of free advice (paid by the project) to companies. If this was the case, the value of such consultancy must be quantified and the corresponding amount may be recognized pursuant to art. 20a of regulation 651/2014, if included within the limit of 22,000 euros per company, or in de minimis, pursuant to regulation 2023/2831.</p>

<p>489 ESSENTI4</p>	<p>The project proposes to create a joint Adriatic-Ionian platform, shared standardized methodology and digital tools to boost the green transition of SMEs, which promotes deeper integration between Adriatic-Ionian SMEs and public stakeholders responsible for SME support, by creating shared new and original policy proposals, digital tools and educational/training curricula.</p> <p>The partnership is made up of business support organizations, sector agencies, incubators, business consulting companies. Their skills complement each other and are necessary for the realization of the project. Even if several of them are businesses, or carry out economic activity, they will not gain a competitive advantage from participating in the project. They are therefore not beneficiaries of State aid.</p> <p>As regards to any indirect aid to the companies that will be involved in the project activities, while the training activities envisaged by WP2 do not entail selective advantages (all materials will be freely available to everyone), the mentorship that the 18 companies that will participate in WP4 pilot actions will benefit from could result in a quantifiable advantage for them. It will be necessary to evaluate whether the support they will benefit from qualifies as specific personalized consultancy. If this were the case, the value of such consultancy must be quantified and that amount may be recognized as State aid, pursuant to art. 20a of regulation 651/2014 (within the limit of €22,000 per undertaking) or in de minimis, pursuant to regulation 2023/2831.</p>
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In relation to what above, ad hoc conditions for improvement have been drafted for the affected projects; the topics shall also be discussed during the negotiation process.

2.5 Double funding checks

MA/JS with the support of the external experts also performed the checks in order to exclude that the activities to be funded have been already granted to the same potential beneficiaries by Interreg Danube and EURO MED programmes.

These checks have taken place only on those applications that successfully passes the quality assessment phase.

Checks did not highlight any potential risk with Interreg Danube and Euro MED.

In some cases, similar activities have been detected with other programs as Horizon or Central Europe that will be subject of discussion during the negotiation process, in order to avoid any possible double funding issue.

2.6 Quality assessment overview

The overall outcomes of the assessment process are summarized in the following table:

Programme Specific Objective (SO)	Number of the projects admitted to the quality assessment	Number of the projects “recommended for funding”	Number of the projects “rejected”
S.O 1.1	75	31	44
S.O 2.1	31	16	15
S.O 2.2	30	16	14
S.O 2.3	25	17	8
S.O 2.4	18	10	8
S.O 3.1	10	6	4
Total	189	96	93

The overall outcomes of the assessment process demonstrate a positive trend in respect of the calls of the previous programming period. They show that the capacity of stakeholders of the area to propose solutions suitable for the development of the area has increased. Such progress can be also attributed to the 2014-2020 ADRION programme intervention in the area.

Below, per each SO, the main findings of the assessment process are provided.

2.6.1 Specific Objective 1.1

Overall, 31 project proposals (41%) of the submitted eligible proposals have been positively appraised on strategic and operational phase and therefore recommended for funding. As for the 1st call in general, it is evident a positive trend of SO 1.1, as the success rate is increased in respect of the other calls of the previous programming period.

Submitted application	Eligible application	Recommended for funding applications
88	75	31

Out of the 75 eligible project proposals, 44 (56%) have not passed the strategic phase. The main weaknesses detected that brought to the rejection of the project proposals are the following:

- Proposals not in line with the 1st call focus and its indicative actions;
- Mere research project proposals;
- Project intervention logic not aligned to the programme intervention logic;
- Transnational relevance not evident;
- Not appropriate partnerships to manage an innovation project (e.g.: quadruple helix ties missing; private partners being service providers; concentration of academic institutions; lack of competent institutions in the thematic domains tackled);

- Lack of future sustainability (especially, but not only, political/institutional sustainability, for example for the adoption and implementation of Strategies/Action plans);
- Loss of a partner undermining in some cases the feasibility of the project activities;
- Budget not proportionate to the partner roles and project activities.

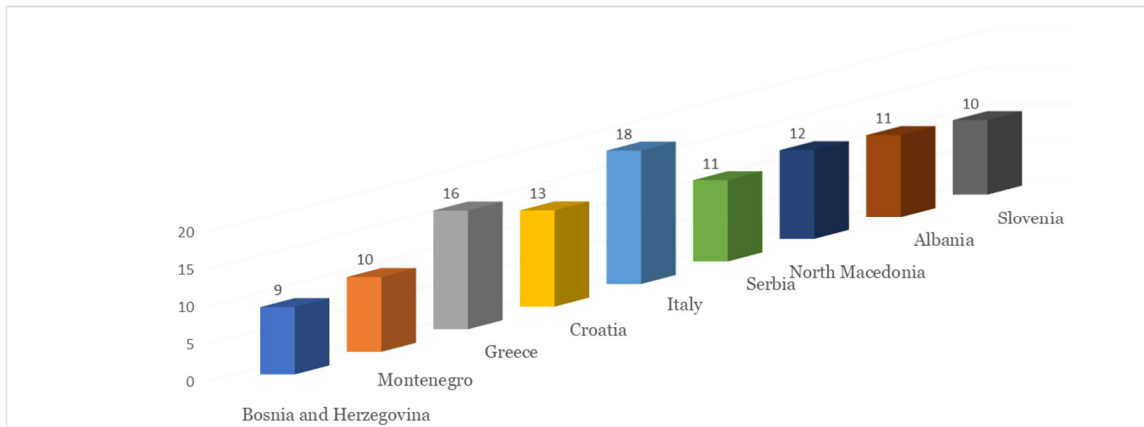
Applications recommended for funding

Based on the availability of funds indicated in the 1st call for proposal and the ranking list, the following 12 project proposals are recommended for funding:

ID number	Acronym	Project title	Lead Applicant country
290	INTERREGIONALOGISTICCLUSTER	Promoting Interregional logistic clustering in Adrion Area.	GR
284	ABBA	Adriatic-Ionian Sustainable Blue Economy Alliance for upscaling SMEs	GR
219	MISSION	Multidisciplinary strategic partnership providing innovative solutions to reduce pollutants dispersion in water	IT
171	ADRURAL	Empowering ADRION rural communities to innovate	GR
107	ARCA	Artificial intelligence platform to prevent climate change natural hazards	IT
131	PADRION	Public Administrations facing digital transformation as a community in the ADRION area	IT
454	BLUNEW	Blue economy Network for sustainable innovation	SI
256	GROWTH4BLUE	Generating Regional Opportunities for Workforce Transformation and High-tech Innovation in the Blue Economy of the Adriatic-Ionian Region	GR
406	GOTOTWIN	Advancing Renewable Energy in the Adriatic Ionian Region through the Use of Digital Twins	MK
278	INNOVABLUE	Innovation network for development of solutions and technologies for sustainable blue economy in the Adrion region	HR
142	GREENSMES	Enhancing SMEs' modernization and green innovation and transition towards successful	IT

		sustainability by transnational collaborative practices and tools.	
510	LANDS	Land and Soil Sensors System	HR

Partners involved in the proposed recommended for funding – including the lead partners - are **110** as depicted in the graphic below:



The recommended for funding projects involve ca 24% body governed by public law institutions (BGPL): 41% public institutions and 35% private bodies. There is an increase of the private institution’s involvement in respect of the previous calls.

The average EU budget of the recommended for funding proposals is of MEUR 1.348.434,51.

The main topics tackled by the recommended for funding projects are the following:

Sustainable Blue economy	4
Energy transition and renewable energies	1
SMEs modernization and development	1
Clustering creation	1
Environmental challenges	4
Digitalization	1

Based on these topics, capitalization clusters can be activated on the thematic of “Sustainable Blue Economy”; “Environmental challenges, including climate change adaptation” as well as “SMEs modernization, clustering and digitalization”.

Contribution to EUSAIR

All the recommended for funding contribute - directly and indirectly - to almost all the EUSAIR Pillars. Some projects specifically contribute to the following EUSAIR flagships:

- TSG1 - Blue Economy - Flagship – Blue technologies - Fostering quadruple helix ties in the fields of marine technologies and blue biotechnologies for advancing innovation, business development and business adaptation in blue bio-economy.
- TSG 2 - Energy – Flagship - Power networks and market for a green Adriatic-Ionian region.

- TSG3 - Environmental Quality – Flagship - Protection and enhancement of natural terrestrial habitats and ecosystems.

Indicative actions covered

As far as the indicative actions are concerned, all the indicative actions foreseen under the 1st call are covered by the projects recommended for funding except for No.1. The table below indicates the projects recommended for funding per each indicative action. Please note that some projects tackle more than one indicative action:

1. Develop transnational Smart Specialization Strategies in the main areas of specialization of the Adriatic Ionian area (especially in the following main sectors: energy, ICT systems and technologies, energy and sustainable environment, disaster prevention, smart mobility, innovative production technologies and advanced materials, blue economy).	
2. Promote and set-up multi-level governance schemes to facilitate transnational cooperation models to address challenges in common areas of specialization.	406 GOTOTWIN
3. Uptake, up-scale and test advanced technologies through pilot and joint actions, policies, tools and processes, particularly in, but not limited to, the main fields of interest of S3 (sectors as indicated in the first indicative action).	284 ABBA 454 BLUNEW 256 GROWTH4BLUE 406 GOTOTWIN 278 INNOVABLUE 143 GREENSMES 510 LANDS
4. Promote and encourage the development of transnationally designed innovations (technical and non-technical innovation, including services) through pilot and joint actions contributing to face societal and environmental challenges like energy efficiency or climate change.	219 MISSION 171 ADRURAL 107 ARCA 510 LANDS
5. Promote the development of transnational partnerships, cluster-to-cluster cooperation, innovative networks, and similar initiatives	454 BLUNEW 256 GROWTH4BLUE 278 INNOVABLUE
6. Promote digital divide reduction by enhancing digital solutions in the private and public sector, and digital capacity building.	131 PADRION
7. Support the development of transnational and macro-regional clusters in the emerging sectors as advanced packaging; biopharmaceuticals, blue economy industries, mobility tech, logistical services, environment industries, etc. (sectors as indicated in the first indicative action).	290 INTERREGIONALCLUSTER
8. Promote actions and measures supporting SMEs development and modernization including intellectual property, technical and financial issues; testing solutions closer to the market (i.e.: proof of concept mechanisms, etc.), as well as the introduction of quality and sustainable requirements.	143 GREENSMES

Project proposals recommended for funding refer to the S3 sectors and cross cutting priorities of the countries involved, but do not develop transnational S3 strategies as such. Such action may be proposed in the next call.

Contribution to the programme output and result indicators

The table below summarizes the contribution of the recommended for funding to the program output indicators. In some cases, double counting has been detected; therefore, the final forecast figures will be presented to the ADRION IPA MC after the negotiation phase:

Output indicators	CP	Target value AF
RCO83_1.1: Strategies and action plans jointly developed	22	33
RCO84_1.1: Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects	44	60
RCO116_1.1: Jointly developed solutions	22	45
RCO87_1.1: Organisations cooperating across borders	132	335
RCO83_1.1: Strategies and action plans jointly developed	22	33

The table below summarizes the contribution of the recommended for funding to the program result indicators. Result indicators are for the first time introduced in the programme; therefore, the stakeholders understanding is not yet completely clear. In some cases, double counting has been detected; therefore, the final forecast figures will be presented to the ADRION IPA MC after the negotiation phase.

Programme Result indicators	CP	Target value AF
RCR104_1.1: Solutions taken up or up scaled by organisations	17	112
RCR79_1.1: Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations	17	29
RCR84_1.1: Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	66	256

2.6.2 Specific Objective 2.1

Overall, 16 project proposals (52%) of the submitted eligible proposals have been positively appraised on strategic and operational phase and therefore recommended for funding. It is a good performance in respect of the previous calls in the previous programming period.

Submitted application	Eligible application	Recommended for funding applications

39	31	16
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Out of the 31 eligible project proposals, 15 (48%) have been rejected. The main weaknesses detected that brought to the rejection of the project proposals are the followings:

- Project intervention logic not aligned to the programme intervention logic;
- Partnership not adequate for the thematic tackled to guarantee the achievement of the foreseen objectives;
- Transnational cooperation character and added value not clear;
- Unclear benefit for the Programme area, due to missing links to regional-national-local policymakers;
- Workplan not properly and clearly designed;
- Budget not proportional to the partner roles and project activities.

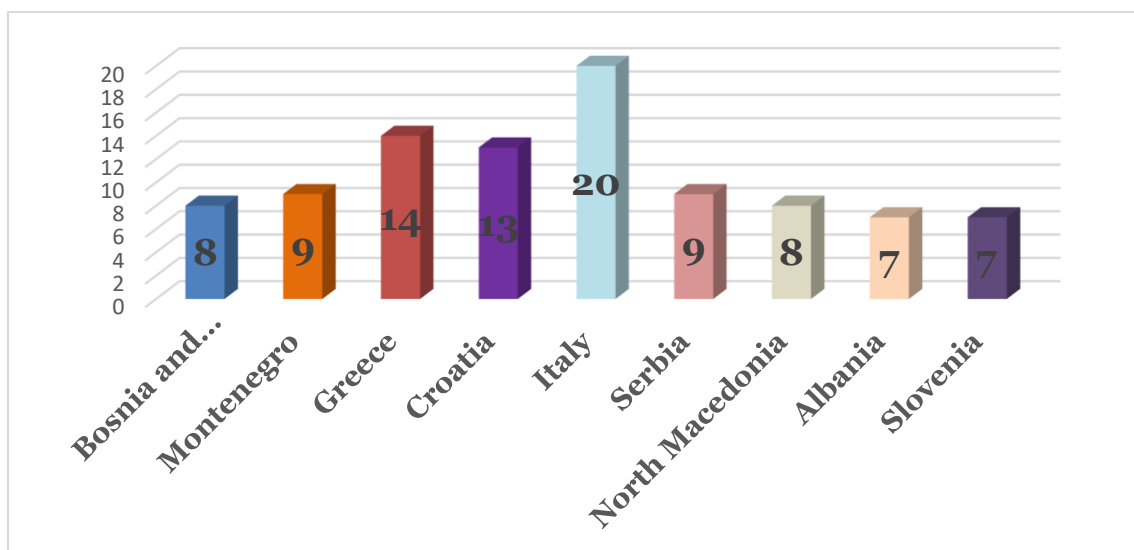
Applications recommended for funding

Based on the availability of funds indicated in the 1st call for proposal and the ranking list, the following 11 project proposals are recommended for funding:

ID number	Acronym	Project title	Lead Applicant country
374	URBANFLOODS	Promoting Urban Resilience Through an Integrated Advanced Decision Support System for Flood Control	GR
227	Recipe2024	Resilience and Protection of Critical Entities in Europe	HR
297	AQUA	Enhancing Water Management for Climate Change Resilience in Adriatic-Ionian area	IT
419	Prevent	Pollution Reduction and Early-warning for Vulnerable Ecosystems in Adriatic-Ionian Territories	IT
288	AINATURE	Exploitation of AI for the protection of the natural resources in the ADRION region	GR
428	PRIMES	Preventing drought Risks by Making resilient communitiES in the Adriatic-Ionian Region	IT
172	BEALERT	Early warning system connected to an Artificial Intelligence module to improve the preparedness of local responsiBLE for risk mAnagement reducing cLimate changE Risk of local communiTies	IT

208	Grecale	emerGency communication enhancement for REsilienCe to nAturaL risks and recovery from disastErs	GR
414	AIMS	Development and testing of a shared, AI-based predictive model for a coordinated use of big data and for a joint Monitoring System of landslides risk in the Adriatic-Ionian region	IT
530	ARIANNA	AdRIAtic-ionian Nature based solutioNs enhAncement	IT
223	RES2FIRE	Models and Tools for Enhancing the Resistance and the Resilience to Wildfire in Natural Protected Areas and Wildland-Urban Interfaces	IT

The 11 recommended for funding projects involve overall **95 partners** (lead partners included) – represented in the graphic below:



The recommended for funding projects involve ca 11,5% body governed by public law institutions (BGPL): 71,5% public institutions and 17% private bodies.

The average EU budget of the recommended for funding proposals is of MEUR 1.220.590,76.

The main topics tackled by the recommended for funding projects are the following:

System-level approach on transnational civil protection disaster management	2
AI tools used for early detection and monitoring systems	2
Marine pollution and spillover of pollutants	1

Prevention of wildfires	2
Prevention of floods	2
Preventing water scarcity, water management	2

On all the indicated topics, a capitalization cluster can be activated. In addition to those another one on projects applying “Nature-Based Solutions” can be activated as well, since quite all the projects foresee such type of solution.

Contribution to EUSAIR

All the recommended for funding contribute to quite all the EUSAIR Pillars directly and indirectly. The contribution to Pillar 3 – Environmental Quality is privileged among the others due to the type of intervention of the projects recommended for funding. There is no clear evidence of specific contribution to EUSAIR flagships.

Indicative actions covered.

As far as the indicative actions focus of the 1st call in SO 2.1 are concerned, we can say that all the indicative actions focus of the 1st call are covered by the projects recommended for funding. The table indicates the projects recommended for funding per each indicative action:

2. Develop and implement integrated joint transnational strategies and measures aimed at enhancing the resilience to climate change of coastal, river basins, rural and mountainous areas through a harmonised framework of standards and indicators and use of already existing research results and contributions to EU platforms (e.g.: EU Risk 1Data Hub, Climate-ADAPT).	297 AQUA 428 PRIMES
4. Develop and implement transnational joint action plans to coordinate measures addressed to natural and man-made disaster prevention and standardized responses (e.g.: intense rainfalls, floods, landslides, heatwaves, heat islands, draughts, wildfires, oil spill, plastics at sea, river contamination etc.) by prioritizing nature-based solutions instead of traditional grey infrastructures.	374 URBANFLOODS 227 Recipe2024 419 Prevent 530 ARIANNA 223 RES2FIRE
5. Collect compelling information and use it to develop advocacy material to strengthen synergies and increase preparedness among local/regional/national civil protection bodies on natural and man-made risks.	172 BEALERT 208 Grecale
7. Implement pilot actions for a shared and coordinated use of big data for modelling, early forecasting and warning systems to reduce climate change risks.	288 AINATURE 414 AIMS 172 BEALERT

Contribution to the programme output and result indicators

The table below summarizes the contribution of the recommended for funding to the program output indicators. In some cases, double counting has been detected; therefore, the final forecast figures will be presented to the ADRION IPA MC after the negotiation phase:

Output indicators	CP	Target value AF
RCO116_2.1: Jointly developed solutions	9	20
RCO83_2.1: Strategies and action plans jointly developed	28	25
RCO84_2.1: Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects	18	25
RCO87_2.1: Organisations cooperating across borders	114	155

The table below summarizes the contribution of the recommended for funding to the program result indicators. Result indicators are for the first time introduced in the programme; therefore, the stakeholders understanding is not yet completely clear. In some cases, double counting has been detected; therefore, the final forecast figures will be presented to the ADRION IPA MC after the negotiation phase.

Programme Result indicators	CP	Target value AF
RCR104_2.1: Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations	9	35
RCR79_2.1: Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations	21	28
RCR84_2.1: Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	57	322

2.6.3 Specific Objective 2.2

Overall, 16 project proposals (53%) of the submitted eligible proposals have been positively appraised on strategic and operational phase and therefore recommended for funding.

Submitted application	Eligible application	Recommended for funding applications
36	30	16

Out of the 30 eligible projects, 14 (47%) were rejected due to the following main reasons:

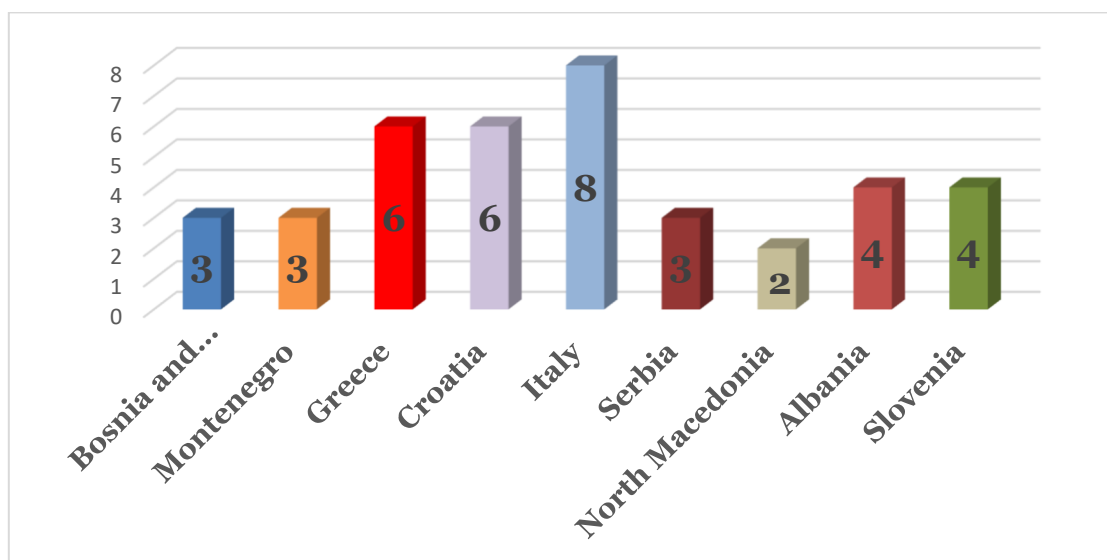
- Not clear understanding of the specific territorial needs.
- Not clear understanding of the SO 2.2 thematic focus.
- Research oriented projects, more suitable for other funding schemes.
- Project intervention logic not aligned to the programme intervention logic.
- Not clear definition of the project outputs and results.
- Partnership missing the presence of national/regional authorities that guarantee the sustainability of the project outputs and results.
- Weak management structures.
- Concentration of activities and functions on Lead Partner and unclear role of the partners.
- Budget overestimated.

Applications recommended for funding

Based on the availability of funds indicated in the 1st call for proposal and the ranking list, the following 4 project proposals are recommended for funding:

ID number	Acronym	Project title	Lead Applicant country
267	CAROUSEL	Creating A marketplace fOr Up-cycled productS sEcond Life	IT
177	CIRCUS	Circular economy Strategies, action plans, and Solutions for agrifood systems transition in ADRION coastal communities	IT
373	FULAR	Shaping new paths towards FUrniture circuLARity	GR
294	JOINABLE	JOINT approAch to Blue circuLar Economy - for Adriatic and Ionian Region	HR

The 4 recommended for funding projects involve overall **39 partners** (lead partners included) – represented in the graphic below:



The partners of the recommended for funding projects are 13% body governed by public law institutions (BGPL): 54 % public institutions and 33% private bodies.

The average EU budget of the recommended for funding proposals is of ca MEUR 1.230.084,83.

The main topics tackled by the recommended for funding projects are the following:

Marketplace for up-cycled products	1
Sustainability and circularity in the furniture sector	1
Circularity in the agrifood sector	1
Blue circular economy	1

Due to the low number of projects funded under such SO, two options have been thought for the capitalization activities:

- Involve all the 4 projects in one cluster denominated “*Circular Economy in Production and Consumption*”: Promoting the circular economy models in various sectors, (such as furniture, aquatic environments, agrifood, and sports) to increase awareness on the importance of circular economy practices among policymakers, businesses and consumers; OR
- Explore the integration of circular economy principles with initiatives for protecting and preserving nature and biodiversity, taking into account the projects funded in the framework of SO 2.3 through the creation of a cluster denominated “*Integrating Circular Economy and Environmental Protection Across Sectors*”.

Contribution to EUSAIR

Even though the current EUSAIR Action Plan and related pillars do not specifically focus on circular economy, it offers the possibility to integrate circular economy practices, by promoting sustainable use and reuse of resources, minimizing waste and promoting responsible resource management in the Adriatic-Ionian Region.

Overall, SO 2.2 contribute directly and indirectly to the Pillar 1 – Blue growth and Pillar 3 – Environmental Quality. Some of the projects contribute specifically to the following EUSAIR flagships:

- TSG1 Blue Growth - Flagship 1 -Fostering quadruple helix ties in the fields of marine technologies and blue biotechnologies for advancing innovation, business development and business adaptation in blue bio-economy, with regard to the action Allowing development of novel eco-friendly end products that serve circular economy.
- TSG1 Blue growth – Flagship 3 - Maritime and marine governance and services - Bolstering capacity building and efficient coordination of planning and local development activities for improving marine and maritime governance and blue growth services.

Indicative actions covered

As far as the indicative actions focus of the 1st call in SO 2.2 are concerned, all the indicative actions of the 1st call are covered by the projects recommended for funding. The table indicates the projects recommended for funding per each indicative action:

1. Collect compelling information, implement exchange of experience, and test actions to develop advocacy material to increase knowledge and preparedness among policy makers and public administrators on the potentials of circular economy, and test actions/ experience exchange for practical implementation.	177 CIRCUS
2. Identify and implement transnational action plans and strategies to enhance and/or scale up circular economy at regional/national/macro-regional level (e.g.: setting up transnational/networks for secondary raw materials, creating transnational marketplaces for recycling/up-recycling products).	267 CAROUSEL 373 FULAR
7. Set in place joint actions and innovation networks to test science-based solutions aimed at collecting and recycling marine litter (e.g.: plastic litter, plastic fishing gear etc.).	294 JOINABLE

Contribution to the programme output and result indicators

The table below summarizes the contribution of the recommended for funding to the program output indicators. In some cases, double counting has been detected; therefore, the final forecast figures will be presented to the ADRION IPA MC after the negotiation phase:

Output indicators	CP	Target value AF
RCO116_2.2: Jointly developed solutions	8	18
RCO83_2.2: Strategies and action plans jointly developed	12	8
RCO84_2.2: Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects	24	12
RCO87_2.2: Organisations cooperating across borders	48	63

The table below summarizes the contribution of the recommended for funding to the program result indicators. Result indicators are for the first time introduced in the programme; therefore, the stakeholders understanding is not yet completely clear. In some cases, double counting has been detected; therefore, the final forecast figures will be presented to the ADRION IPA MC after the negotiation phase.

Programme Result indicators	CP	Target value AF
RCR104_2.2: Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations	6	48
RCR79_2.2: Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations	9	8
RCR84_2.2: Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	24	54

2.6.4 Specific Objective 2.3

Overall, 17 project proposals (68%) of the submitted eligible proposals have been positively appraised on strategic and operational phase and therefore recommended for funding. S.O 2.3 is the specific objective that has the highest success rate compared to the other SOs. Such result is very positive in respect of the previous programming period, where the number of the projects dealing with environmental issue was low due to the low quality of the project proposals submitted.

Submitted application	Eligible application	Recommended for funding applications
29	25	17

Out of the 25 eligible projects, 8 (32%) were rejected due to the following main reasons:

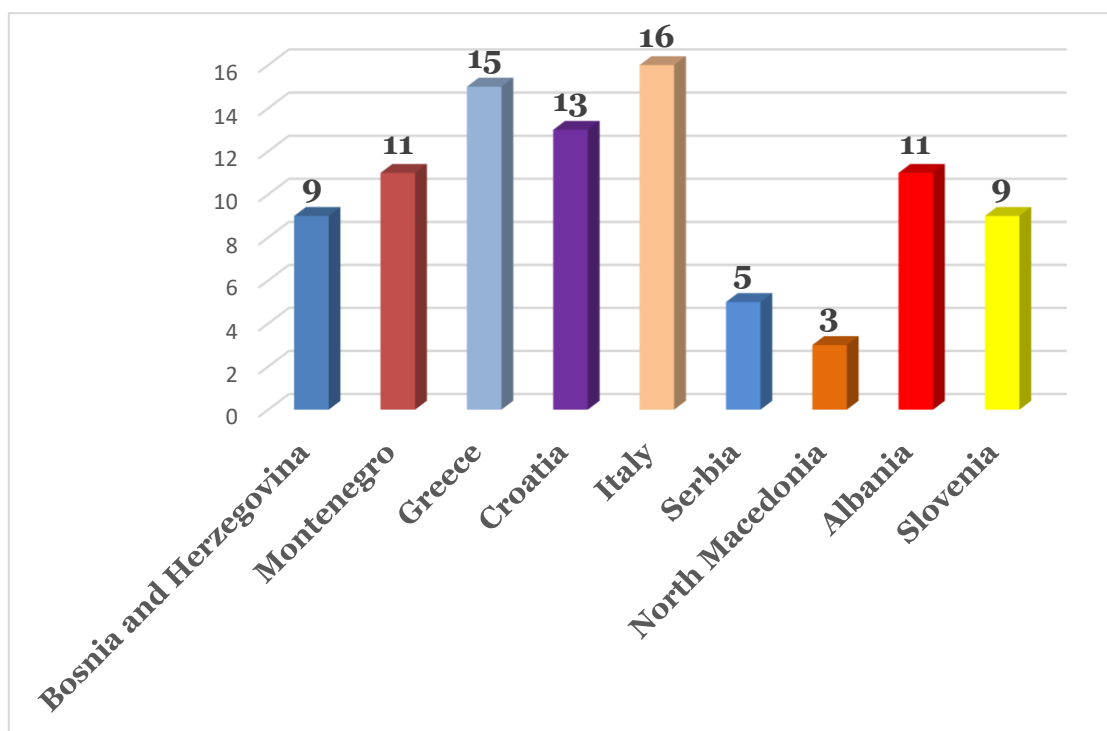
- Project intervention logic not aligned to the programme intervention logic.
- Ownership, durability and transferability of the outputs and results not clearly presented.
- Workplan not properly and clearly designed.
- Budget of the pilot actions not clearly defined.

Applications recommended for funding:

Based on the availability of funds indicated in the 1st call for proposal and the ranking list, the following 10 project proposals are recommended for funding:

ID number	Acronym	Project title	Lead Applicant country
367	4PETHABECO	Strengthening cooperation to address socio-environmental challenges of EUSAIR flagship PET HAB ECO	IT
389	CRADLES	Creating Resilient Areas to Develop Lifecycles and Ecosystem Services	HR
222	BIOMIMICRY	Promoting biomimicry-inspired habitat design solutions for biodiversity protection and restoration	SI
235	ECOBREEDS	Policies and strategies for environmental protection and preservation of pastoral systems and local livestock breeds in the Adriatic Ionian region	GR
447	BLUEQ	Applied Solutions for Monitoring Coastal Habitats and Quantifying Blue Carbon Storage: An Integrated Approach for Sustainable Ecosystem Management	GR
151	PREBIODUNES	PREserving BIOdiversity in coastal DUNES from tourism pressure	IT
239	ECOBASE	Eco-Friendly Nature-based solutions to mitigate soil degradation	GR
96	SAMESEA	SustainAble Management of marinE Sentinel spEcies and human Activities interaction	IT
176	TETHYS4ADRION	Enhancing Cross-Border Cooperation for Riverine Plastic Litter Reduction in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas	SI
205	TEAMFORADRIAS	Transnational mussEls preservAtion systeM FOR the ADRIatic Sea	IT

The 10 recommended for funding projects involve overall **92 partners** (lead partners included) – represented in the graphic below:



The 10 recommended for funding projects involve partners whose status is 1% body governed by public law institutions (BGPL): 62 % public institutions and 37% private bodies.

The average EU budget of the recommended for funding proposals is of ca MEUR 1.381.281,84.

The main topics tackled by the recommended for funding projects are the following:

Protection and restoration of terrestrial habitats and populations of large carnivores	1
Restoration and conservation of nursery areas and management of blue carbon ecosystems	3
Provision of Ecosystem Services (ES)	1
Reducing soil and plastic pollution	2
Transnational harmonization of the application of maritime monitoring	1
Development of habitat design solutions in rural and urban areas	1
Habitat/Birds Directive implementation in Mediterranean coastal dune environments	1

Based on the topics covered by the project proposals recommended for funding, the following capitalization clusters can be activated: “Reducing soil and plastic pollution” and “Restoration and conservation of nursery areas and management of blue carbon ecosystems”.

Contribution to EUSAIR

All the recommended for funding contribute mainly to the Pillar 3 - Environmental Quality, but also to the Pillar 1 -Blue Growth. Some of the projects contribute specifically to the following EUSAIR flagship:

- TSG3 – Flagship 2 - Protection and enhancement of natural terrestrial habitats and ecosystems: The flagship will try to establish protection and enhancement of natural terrestrial habitats and ecosystems, with particular attention to the ecological connectivity of blue and green corridors/infrastructure.

Indicative actions covered

As far as the indicative actions are concerned, all the indicative actions foreseen under the 1st call are covered by the projects recommended for funding except for No.3, 5 and 11. The table indicates the projects recommended for funding per each indicative action:

1. Define and implement policy frameworks, strategies and related implementation to protect and enhance natural terrestrial and sea habitats, including protected areas and areas under Habitat and Birds Directives	151 PREBIODUNES 389 CRADLES 235 ECOBREEDS 447 BLUEQ 96 SAMESEA
2. Test solutions to protect and restore flora and fauna (with particular attention to algae/poseidonia oceanica, large carnivores, pollinating insects, migrators, fishes), also envisaging the use of blue and green infrastructure.	205 TEAMFORADRION 367 4PETHABECO 222 BIOMIMICRY
3. Identify and transfer good practices and innovative solutions addressing the presence of alien marine species and the preservation of native flora and fauna in terrestrial environments.	
5. Define action plans to reinforce the implementation of existing/new Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Maritime Spatial Planning and the MSFD (EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive) as well as the implementation of the UN Barcelona Convention, in particular with regard to the management and monitoring of marine protected areas.	
7. Define and implement legally binding agreements with key actors to reduce plastic discharge into the sea.	176 TETHYS4ADRION 239 ECOBASE
11. In the framework of Maritime Spatial Planning, develop and implement joint strategies on Adriatic and Ionian seas to safeguard biodiversity also taking into account the conflicting sea exploitation: tourism, commercial and recreational shipping, aquaculture plants, settlements of offshore wind parks, oil and gas extraction etc.	

Indicative actions No.3, 5 and 11 that are not covered by the proposed recommended for funding projects may be proposed in the next call.

Contribution to the programme output and result indicators

The table below summarizes the contribution of the recommended for funding to the program output indicators. In some cases, double counting has been detected; therefore, the final forecast figures will be presented to the ADRION IPA MC after the negotiation phase:

Output indicators	CP	Target values AF
RCO116_2.3: Jointly developed solutions	19	19
RCO83_2.3: Strategies and action plans jointly developed	38	21
RCO84_2.3: Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects	38	63
RCO87_2.3: Organisations cooperating across borders	114	154

The table below summarizes the contribution of the recommended for funding to the program result indicators. Result indicators are for the first time introduced in the programme; therefore, the stakeholders understanding is not yet completely clear. In some cases, double counting has been detected; therefore, the final forecast figures will be presented to the ADRION IPA MC after the negotiation phase.

Programme Result indicators	CP	Target values AF
RCR104_2.3: Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations	14	58
RCR79_2.3: Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations	28	23
RCR84_2.3: Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	57	125

2.6.5 Specific Objective 2.4

Out of the overall 18 eligible projects submitted in the frame of S.O. 2.4, 10 (55%) - positively passed quality assessment, whereas the remaining 8 (45%) - have been rejected, all at the strategic phase.

Submitted application	Eligible application	Recommended for funding applications
20	18	10

The main reasons that brought to the rejection of the project proposals are the following:

- Lack of proper specific territorial analysis in relation to the tackled topic– i.e. projects merely sharing Programme challenges instead of defining specific goals and objectives tailored for the project scope.
- Logical framework not aligned to the programme logic framework.
- Overestimation of staff costs.
- High costs for project management and coordination (both internal and external).
- Unclear costs for equipment along with poor description of pilot actions.
- Inadequate project partnership to tackle the topic of urban mobility within which the local level (i.e. cities or competent local administrations for urban mobility matter) is missing or not adequately represented).

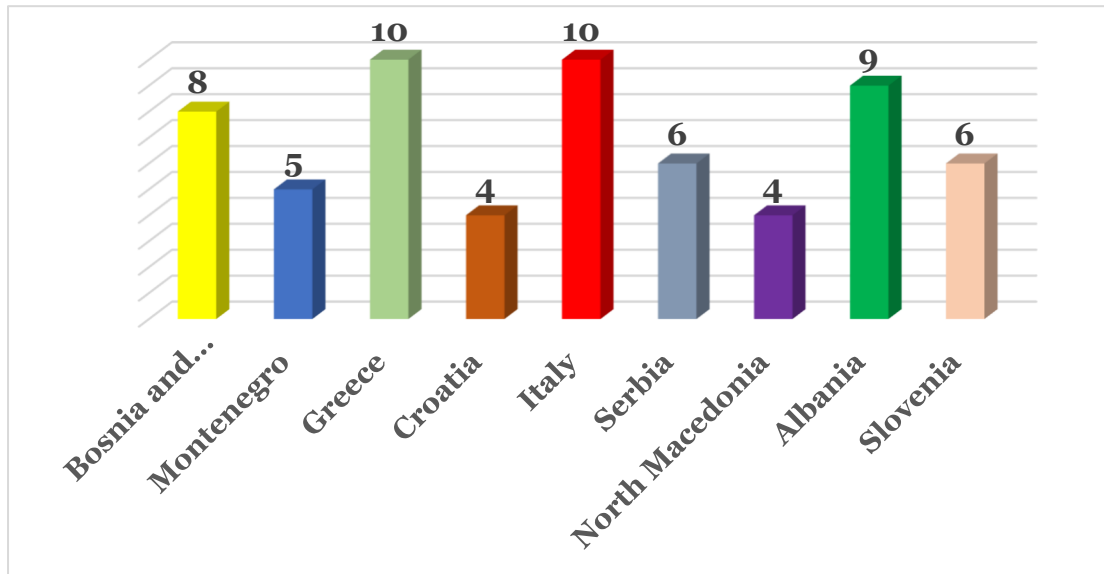
- High concentration of university / scientific institutions.
- Participation of private partners, as service providers (so called *disguised partners*);
- Lack of an effective ownership, durability and sustainability of project outputs and results that limit the concrete impact at the urban level.

Applications recommended for funding

Based on the availability of funds indicated in the 1st call for proposal and the ranking list, the following 7 project proposals are recommended for funding:

ID number	Acronym	Project title	Lead Applicant country
397	MISSION	Multi-modal Inclusive Smart urban mobility SolutIOns	IT
109	TERRAIN	Twinning and Engagement in net-zero tRanport tRAnsItioN	GR
322	ADRIAMOVE	Active Development of sustainable Mobility Solutions for Enhanced Electric Transport in the Adriatic-Ionian Area	IT
53	CITYMOVE	Communities Innovating Traffic Yielding a Multimodal Optimized Vicinal Environment	ME
134	SMARTMOBAIR	Smart Mobility in Adriatic Ionian Region Urban Areas	IT
215	ADCCAM2ZERO	Adopting CCAM 2ZERO through ADRION Programmed Partnerships	GR
368	LAMO	Local Authorities on the path to a sustainable Urban Mobility in the Adriatic/Ionian region	GR

The 7 recommended for funding projects involve overall **62 partners** (lead partners included) – represented in the graphic below:



The legal status of the partners recommended for funding projects is for 84% public institutions; and 8% body governed by public law institutions (BGPL) and 8% private bodies.

The average EU budget of the recommended for funding proposals is of ca MEUR 1.097.459,73.

All the recommended for funding projects pertain to the topic of urban mobility that can be as follows disentangled into the following sub-topics (multiple choice):

Intelligent Transport System solutions	6
Sustainable urban mobility plans (SUMPs)	4
Active modes (e.g.: cycling, walking) including electro-mobility related solutions	6

Regarding the capitalization clusters to be activated with regard to S.O. 2.4, it is proposed to have one overall Thematic cluster on “*Sustainable urban mobility*” including all the 7 recommended for funding projects with a broader scope and eventual sub-focuses on specific issues if this is the case (such as electromobility; cycling facilities; digitalization).

Contribution to EUSAIR

All the recommended for funding projects generally contribute directly and indirectly to EUSAIR Strategy. Some of the projects contribute specifically to the following Flagships:

- TSG 2 - Transport – Flagship 1 - The Adriatic-Ionian Multi-Modal Corridors (ref. to action “Adriatic-Ionian Cycle Route”).

Indicative actions covered

The recommended for funding projects assure a full coverage of all the indicative actions of S.O. 2.4 included in the 1st call for proposals. One project proposal tackles more than one indicative action. The table indicates the projects recommended for funding per each indicative action:

1.Elaborate joint actions to develop and implement intelligent transport system solutions devoted to a better infrastructure use and new mobility services to improve sustainable, clean and smart mobility systems and smart management of traffic flows for cities and functional urban areas.	397 MISSION 109 TERRAIN 322 ADRIAMOVE 53 CITYMOVE 134 SMARTMOBAIR 215 ADCCAM2ZERO
2. Set in place joint actions aimed at promoting the active involvement of citizens, tourism actors and economic operators in the development of sustainable urban mobility plans (SUMPs) both in cities and in functional urban areas.	109 TERRAIN 53 CITYMOVE 215 ADCCAM2ZERO
3. Support the shift towards sustainable and accessible urban public transport and active modes (e.g.: cycling, walking) through the implementation of joint pilot actions, by also taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the electro-mobility revolution.	397 MISSION 109 TERRAIN 322 ADRIAMOVE 53 CITYMOVE 134 SMARTMOBAIR

Contribution to the programme output and result indicators

The table below summarizes the contribution of the recommended for funding to the program output indicators. In some cases, double counting has been detected; therefore, the final forecast figures will be presented to the ADRION IPA MC after the negotiation phase:

Output indicators	CP	Target values AF
RCO87_2.4: Organisations cooperating across borders	42	164
RSO84_2.4: Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects	14	56

The table below summarizes the contribution of the recommended for funding to the program result indicators. Result indicators are for the first time introduced in the programme; therefore, the stakeholders understanding is not yet completely clear. In some cases, double counting has been detected; therefore, the final forecast figures will be presented to the ADRION IPA MC after the negotiation phase.

Programme Result indicators	CP	Target value AF
RCR84_2.4: Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	21	85
RCR104_2.4: Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations	10	33

2.6.6 Specific Objective 3.1

Overall, 6 project proposals (60%) of the submitted eligible proposals have been positively appraised on strategic and operational phase and therefore recommended for funding, whereas the remaining 4 have been rejected, all at the strategic phase.

Submitted application	Eligible application	Recommended for funding applications
10	10	6

The main weaknesses detected that brought to the rejection of the 4 (40%) project proposals are the following:

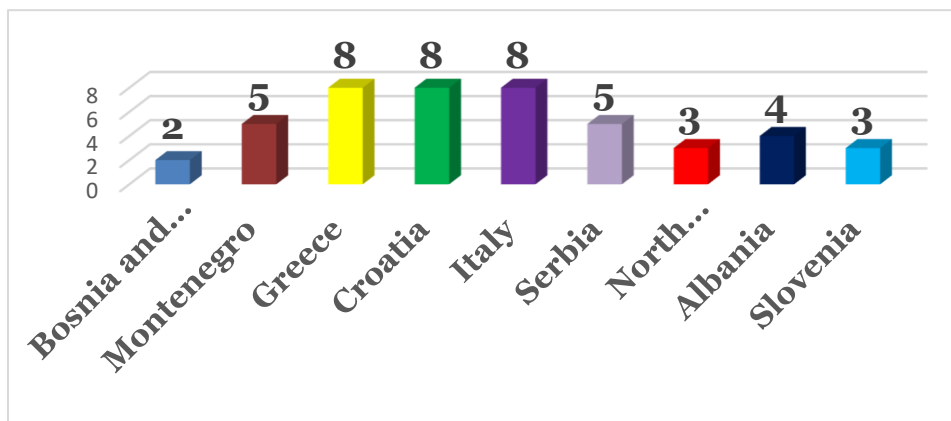
- Overambitious goals not supported by proposed workplan (e.g. decarbonisation of ports vs pilot action limited to acquiring of small number of electro-cars.
- Focus on tourism issues instead of sustainable transport ones.
- Low innovation level of the proposed solutions.
- Unclear financial and institutional capacity of the proposed partnership.

Applications recommended for funding

Based on the availability of funds indicated in the 1st call for proposal and the ranking list, the following 5 project proposals are recommended for funding:

ID number	Acronym	Project title	Lead Applicant country
73	SuperAlfuel	Sustainability of Alternative fuels in the ADRIION area	GR
298	WATERBRIDGING	Sustainable and Seamless Waterways Bridging Adriatic-Ionian region	IT
46	ADRIREC	ADRIatic ports for Renewable Energy Communities	IT
62	CIRASIM	Cold IRoning ASsessment Implementation Model	HR
527	AIMPRESS	Adriatic-Ionian Maritime oPeRational Efficiency and Sustainable Scheme	GR

The 7 recommended for funding projects involve overall **46 partners** (lead partners included) – represented in the graphic below:



The legal status of the partners recommended for funding projects is for 63% public institutions; and 24% body governed by public law institutions (BGPL) and 13% private bodies.

The average EU budget of the recommended for funding proposals is of ca MEUR 1.272.287,01.

The main topics tackled by the recommended for funding projects are the following (multiple choice):

Environmental performance and energy efficiency for low carbon port systems	6
Adoption of alternative fuels /RES in port transport and infrastructures	4
Dematerialization of port transport	1
Motorways of the sea and Short Sea Shipping	2

As far as capitalization cluster is concerned, with regard to S.O. 3.1 it is proposed to activate a cluster involving all 6 recommended for funding projects, on the topic of “Sustainable multimodal maritime transport”, with a special focus on port areas.

Indicative actions covered

As far as the indicative actions are concerned, all the indicative actions foreseen under the 1st call are covered by the projects recommended for funding except for No.1. The table indicates the projects recommended for funding per each indicative action:

1. Set in place transnational cooperation actions to develop and/or improve sustainable smart mobility systems to strengthen urban-rural linkages and implement innovative sustainable transport solutions, including forms of participatory governance to improve multimodal and low carbon mobility for passengers, tourists, and commuters of the Adriatic-Ionian region.	
3.Support environmental performance and energy efficiency for low carbon port systems and related infrastructures – such as noise reduction, air quality, decrease of CO2 emissions - through the adoption of pilot actions testing innovative technologies, circular economy solutions, energy sustainability and harmonised regulatory standards for maritime/river transport.	73 SuperAlfuel 298 WATERBRIDGING 46 ADRIREC 62 CIRASIM 527 AIMPRESS

4.Strengthen the role of the Adriatic-Ionian transport sector within the upcoming TEN-T policy through pilot actions and the implementation of shared solutions aimed at boosting the role of ICT, in particular with regard to the dematerialization of transport procedures, especially in maritime port areas.	527 AIMPRESS
5.Enhance the development of the Motorways of the Seas (MoS) concept as an alternative to overstretched land transport through targeted strategies and action plans, aimed at making full use of maritime transport resources as well as inland waterways in the logistics chain.	298 WATERBRIDGING
7.Support the increase of Short Sea Shipping (SSS) in the Adriatic-Ionian Sea basin as sustainable transport mode through joint developed actions, including the promotion of the use of alternative fuels/modes and last / first mile environmentally friendly solutions.	73 SuperAlfuel 46 ADRIREC 62 CIRASIM

Indicative actions No.1 not covered by the proposed recommended for funding projects may be proposed in the next call.

Contribution to EUSAIR

The recommended for funding projects contribute specifically to the implementation of the following Flagship:

- TSG 2 - Flagship 1 - The Adriatic-Ionian Multi-Modal Corridors (ref. to action “Adriatic-Ionian Green/Smart Port Hubs Concept”)

Contribution to the programme output and result indicators

The table below summarizes the contribution of the recommended for funding to the program output indicators. In some cases, double counting has been detected; therefore, the final forecast figures will be presented to the ADRION IPA MC after the negotiation phase:

Output indicators	CP	Target values AF
RCO116_3.1: Jointly developed solutions	9	10
RCO117_3.1: Solutions for legal or administrative obstacles across border identified	5	4
RCO83_3.1: Strategies and action plans jointly developed	22	15
RCO84_3.1: Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects	18	11
RCO87_3.1: Organisations cooperating across borders	54	30

The table below summarizes the contribution of the recommended for funding to the program result indicators. Result indicators are for the first time introduced in the programme; therefore, the stakeholders understanding is not yet completely clear. In some cases, double counting has been detected; therefore, the final figures will be presented to the ADRION IPA MC after the negotiation phase.

Programme Result indicators	CP	Target values AF
RCR104_3.1: Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations	7	17
RCR79_3.1: Joint strategies and action plans taken up by organisations	16	16
RCR82_3.1: Legal or administrative obstacles across borders alleviated or resolved	3	2

3. Allocation of funds – MA proposals

Overview of the assessment process and proposed scenarios

Overall, the outcomes of the assessment seem showing a general increase of capacity and know-how of potential beneficiaries, underlined by a relevant improvement of the quality rate compared to what experienced by the programme area in the programming period 2014-2020: out of 189 eligible applications, 96 (51%) have a score equal or higher the minimum one for being recommended for funding. The overall minimum rate for being recommended for funding has been reached by 43% of the 222 submitted project proposals.

Increased of capacity is also mirrored by the encouraging forecast quantification of output and result indicators, even though they are more demanding compared to those of the previous programming period, and the contribution to the latter is a new requirement.

Programme Specific Objectives	No of projects «Recommended for funding»	No of projects «Rejected»	Total No projects admitted to the quality assessment
SO 1.1	31	44	75
SO 2.1	16	15	31
SO 2.2	16	14	30
SO 2.3	17	8	25
SO 2.4	10	8	18
SO 3.1	6	4	10
TOTAL	96	93	189

The number of project proposals which have passed the minimum requirements for being granted outcomes cannot, however, be granted even with the full allocation of the programme budget as outlined in the table below¹:

Programme Specific Objectives (S.O)	CP 2021-2027 Budget without TA pursuant to Article 27(1) (a1)	1° Call for proposals devoted resources (INTERREG funds)	Resources needed to finance all the recommended for funding (INTERREG funds)
S.O 1.1	28.828.850,44	16.720.734,00	41.069.568,23
S.O 2.1	24.156.588,47	14.010.826,00	19.431.050,14
S.O 2.2	10.065.245,20	5.032.623,00	20.387.381,33
S.O 2.3	24.156.588,47	14.493.952,00	22.884.707,25
S.O 2.4	8.723.212,50	8.723.212,00	11.642.820,95
S.O 3.1	11.183.605,77	6.710.164,00	7.519.315,60
TOTAL	107.114.090,85	65.691.511,00	122.934.843,50

¹ Resources needed to fund all 1st call recommended for funding projects: 187% of the 1st call resources or 115% of the CP resources.

In relation to the above, MA/JS submits to the attention of the MC the following three scenarios regarding the approval of project proposals for discussion.

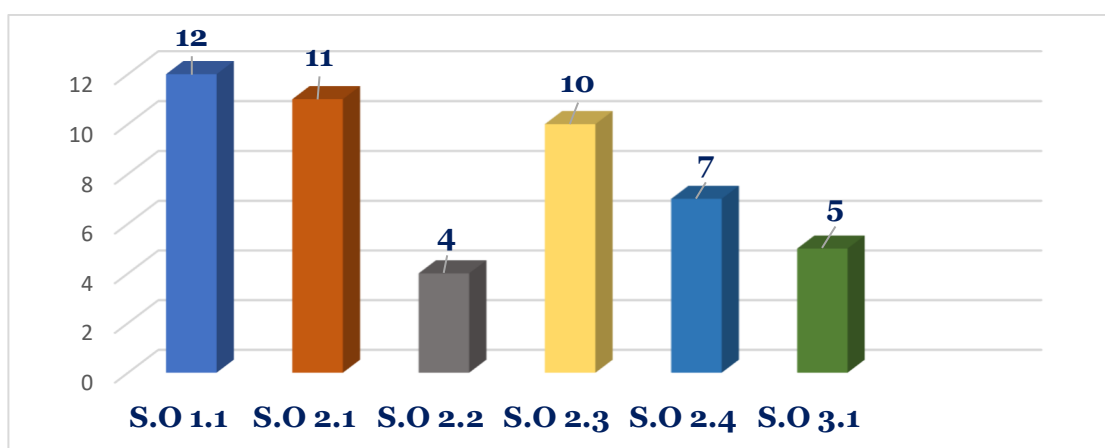
Scenarios have been conceived having regard to the following elements:

- a) Coverage of indicative actions as per the call announcement.
- b) Allocation of financial resources and consequences on the 2nd call for proposals.
- c) Forecast quantification of output and result indicators.

3.1 Scenario 1

This scenario envisages to allocate the financial resources as reported in the call announcement (MEUR 65,69 Interreg funds): only those projects that can be fully covered by available financial sources shall be granted. Overall, **49 project proposals** will be granted.

The graphic below indicates the number of projects granted in the 1st scenario distributed per Specific Objective (SO):

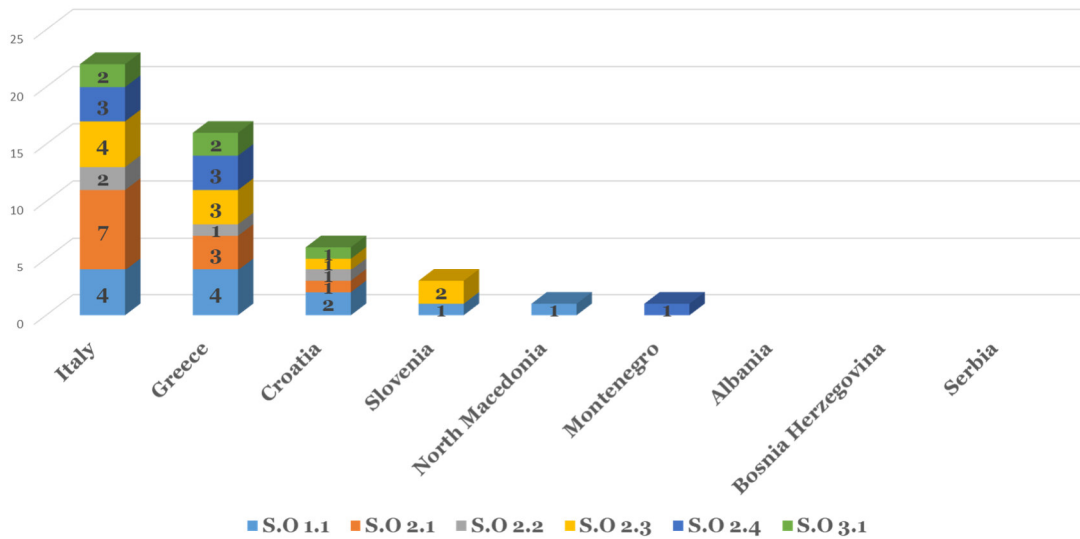


More specifically, the projects falling under this scenario are the following:

SO 1.1	SO 2.1	SO 2.2	SO 2.3	SO 2.4	SO 3.1
290 INTERREGIONALLOGISTICCLUSTER	374 URBANFLOODS	267 CAROUSEL	367 4PETHABECO	397 MISSION	73 SuperAlfuel
284 ABBA	227 Recipe2024	177 CIRCUS	389 CRADLES	109 TERRAIN	298 WATERBRIDGING
219 MISSION	297 AQUA	373 FULAR	222 BIOMIMICRY	322 ADRIAMOVE	46 ADRIREC
171 ADRURAL	419 Prevent	294 JOINABLE	235 ECOBREEDS	53 CITYMOVE	62 CIRASIM
107 ARCA	288 AINATURE		447 BLUEQ	134 SMARTMOBAIR	527 AIMPRESS
131 PADRION	428 PRIMES		151 PREBIODUNES	215 ADCCAM2ZERO	
454 BLUNEW	172 BEALERT		239 ECOBASE	368 LAMO	
256 GROWTH4BLUE	208 Grecale		96 SAMESEA		
406 GOTOTWIN	414 AIMS		176 TETHYS4ADRION		
278 INNOVABLE	530 ARIANNA		205 TEAMFORADRI		
142 GREENSMES	233 RES2FIRE				
510 LANDS					

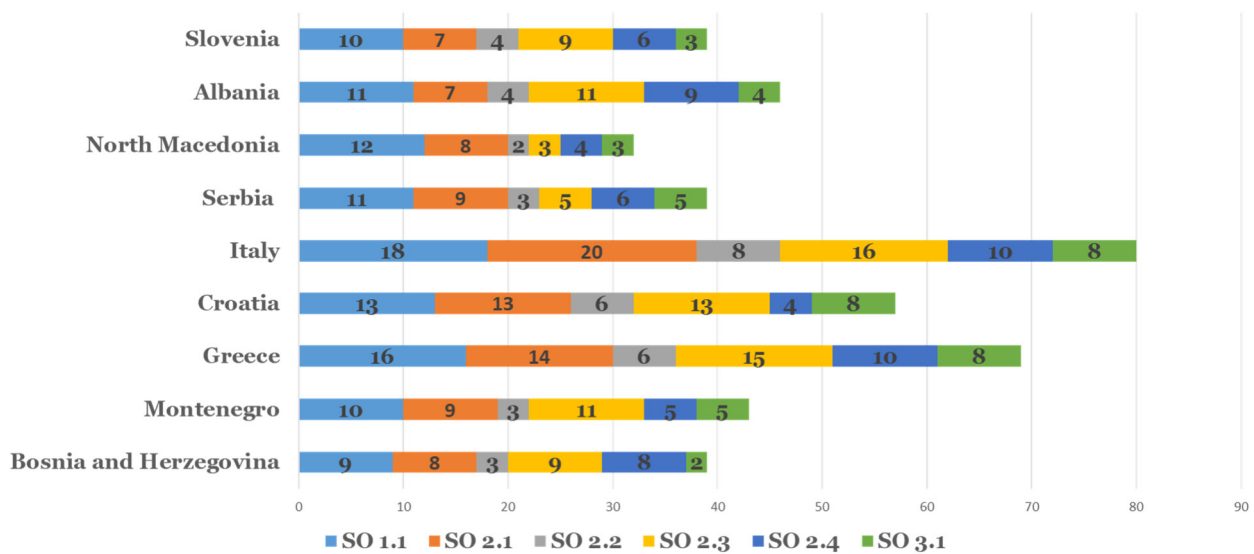
The projects falling under this scenario are also reported in Annex 1 disentangled per SO and highlighted in blue.

The lead partners of the to be granted projects are located in the following Participating Countries:

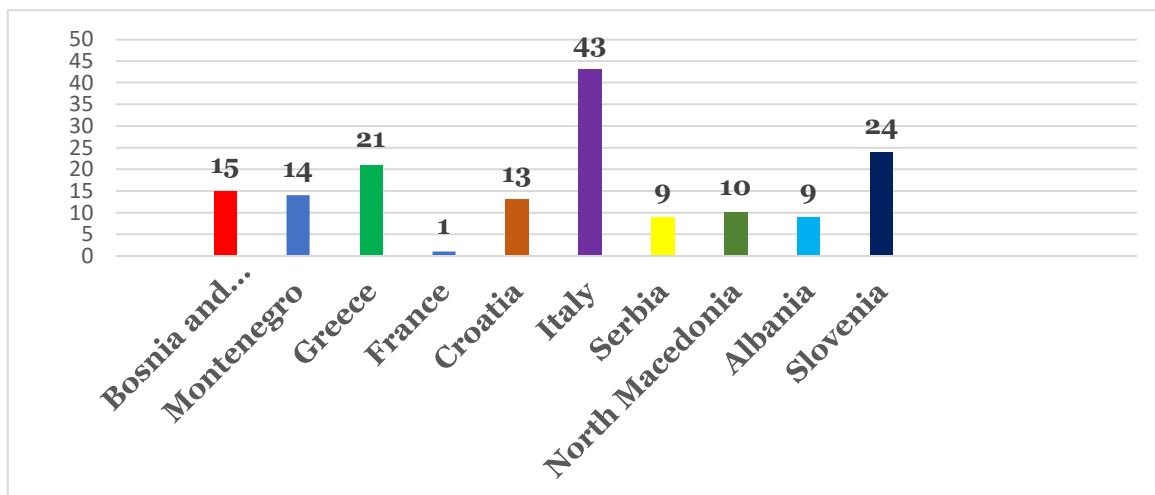


The 49 projects involve 444 financing partners, whose location in the IPA ADRION Participating Countries is depicted below.

Overall, with the exception of Italy and Greece, which traditionally have a long history in projects participation, it can be noted a fair partners distribution per participating countries, both ERDF and IPA ones.



The project proposals included in the 1st scenario foresee the involvement of 159 associated partners, disentangled as follows per Participating Country:



As far as the eligible indicative actions are concerned, all with the exception of the following five have been covered by the to be granted projects:

<p>SO 1.1</p>	<p>1. Develop transnational Smart Specialization Strategies in the main areas of specialization of the Adriatic Ionian area (especially in the following main sectors: energy, ICT systems and technologies, energy and sustainable environment, disaster prevention, smart mobility, innovative production technologies and advanced materials, blue economy).</p>
<p>SO 2.3</p>	<p>3. Identify and transfer good practices and innovative solutions addressing the presence of alien marine species and the preservation of native flora and fauna in terrestrial environments.</p> <p>5. Define action plans to reinforce the implementation of existing/new Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Maritime Spatial Planning and the MSFD (EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive) as well as the implementation of the UN Barcelona Convention, in particular with regard to the management and monitoring of marine protected areas.</p> <p>11. In the framework of Maritime Spatial Planning, develop and implement joint strategies on Adriatic and Ionian seas to safeguard biodiversity also taking into account the conflicting sea exploitation: tourism, commercial and recreational shipping, aquaculture plants, settlements of offshore wind parks, oil and gas extraction etc.</p>

SO 3.1	1. Set in place transnational cooperation actions to develop and/or improve sustainable smart mobility systems to strengthen urban-rural linkages and implement innovative sustainable transport solutions, including forms of participatory governance to improve multimodal and low carbon mobility for passengers, tourists, and commuters of the Adriatic-Ionian region.
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The table below provides a financial projection of the left resources available to the second call for proposals and the indicative number of project proposals to be granted, based on the 1st call maximum budget dimension for the project proposals:

S.O	CP 2021-2027 Budget without TA pursuant to Article 27(1) (a1)	1st call allocation of funds 1st scenario	Available funds 2nd call	Indicative number of projects to be granted in 2nd call (max Interreg budget – 1,5 MEUR) (No projects rounded)
S.O 1.1	28.828.850,44	16.181.214	12.647.636,38	8
S.O 2.1	24.156.588,47	13.426.498	10.730.090,08	7
S.O 2.2	10.065.245,20	4.920.339	5.144.905,88	3
S.O 2.3	24.156.588,47	13.812.818,42	10.343.770,05	7
S.O 2.4	8.723.212,50	7.682.218,08	1.040.994,42	
S.O 3.1	11.183.605,77	6.361.435,04	4.822.170,73	4
Total	107.114.090,85	62.384.523	44.729.567,54	29

Pros and cons of this scenario are listed below:

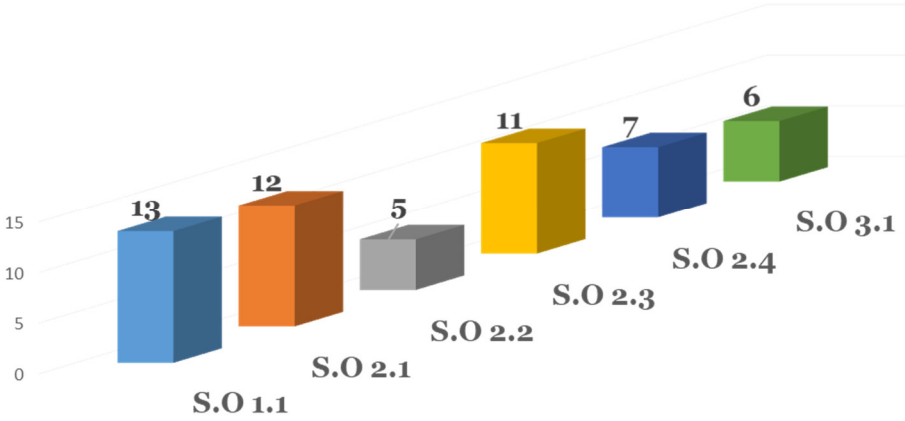
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More resources to be devoted to the 2^o Call: in addition to the resources initially planned when MC decided the allocation to the standard calls, as this scenario envisages that only those projects that can be fully covered by available financial sources shall be granted, MEUR 3,3 Interreg funds would be available. • As the MC decided that not granted indicative actions shall be granted in the 2nd call, additional resources shall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all projects with scores equal or higher the minimum necessary to be considered as recommended for funding shall be granted. • Projects whose budget is not supported by Interreg resources in full shall not be granted. Overall, MEUR 3,3 Interreg funds will not be allocated. • Slower fed of Technical Assistance than expected.

<p>mitigate the potential increased number of topics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available SO 2.4 resources (MEUR 1) could be used in the future for other scopes (e.g. consider the use of flexibility according to Art. 19.5-6 Interreg Regulation) as that SO shall not be further granted. • Overall, as far as 2nd call is concerned, all SOs will have enough financial resources to ensure fair competition, eventually taking profit from the flexibility offered by the Interreg Regulation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential higher risk in meeting the first financial performance target in 2026.
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3.2 Scenario 2

This scenario envisages the allocation of a slight increase of financial resources (+ MEUR 2,7 Interreg funds) to grant those projects whose budget was not fully covered by 1st call allocation.

According to this scenario, additional 5 projects are recommended for funding – i.e.: 54 in total - one per each SO with the exception of SO 2.4, whose funds, according to the CP, are already allocated in full.

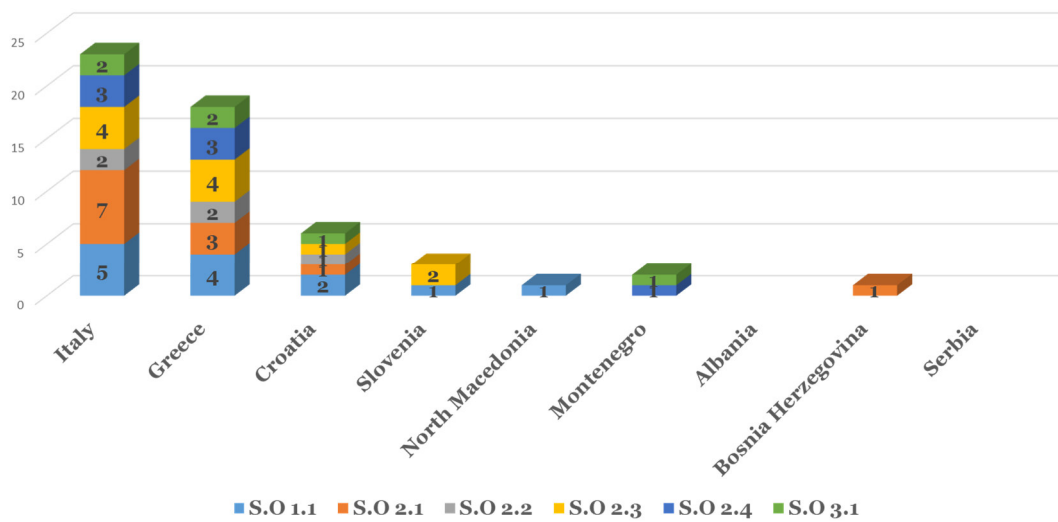


More specifically, the projects falling under this scenario are the following:

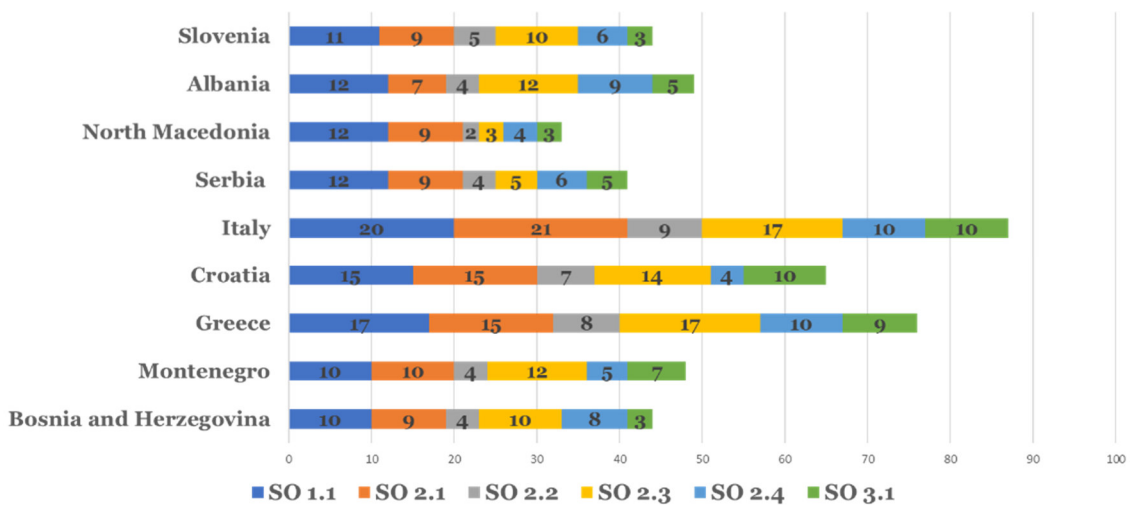
SO 1.1	SO 2.1	SO 2.2	SO 2.3	SO 2.4	SO 3.1
290 INTERREGIONALLOGISTICCLUSTER	374 URBANFLOODS	267 CAROUSEL	367 4PETHABECO	397 MISSION	73 SuperAlfuel
284 ABBA	227 Recipe2024	177 CIRCUS	389 CRADLES	109 TERRAIN	298 WATERBRIDGING
219 MISSION	297 AQUA	373 FULAR	222 BIOMIMICRY	322 ADRIAMOVE	46 ADRIREC
171 ADRURAL	419 Prevent	294 JOINABLE	235 ECOBREEDS	53 CITYMOVE	62 CIRASIM
107 ARCA	288 AINATURE	289 ADRIONSPORTS	447 BLUEQ	134 SMARTMOBAIR	527 AIMPRESS
131 PADRION	428 PRIMES		151 PREBIODUNES	215 ADCCAM2ZERO	21 GREENROUTES
454 BLUNEW	172 BEALERT		47 SAMESEA	368 LAMO	
256 GROWTH4BLUE	208 Grecale		239 ECOBASE		
406 GOTOTWIN	414 AIMS		176 TETHYS4ADRION		
278 INNOVABLUE	530 ARIANNA		205 TEAMFORADRI		
142 GREENSMES	233 RES2FIRE		271 PROMONT		
510 LANDS	220 NBS4RESILIENCE				
232 BFC					

The projects falling under this scenario are reported also in Annex 1 disentangled per SO and highlighted in blue and green.

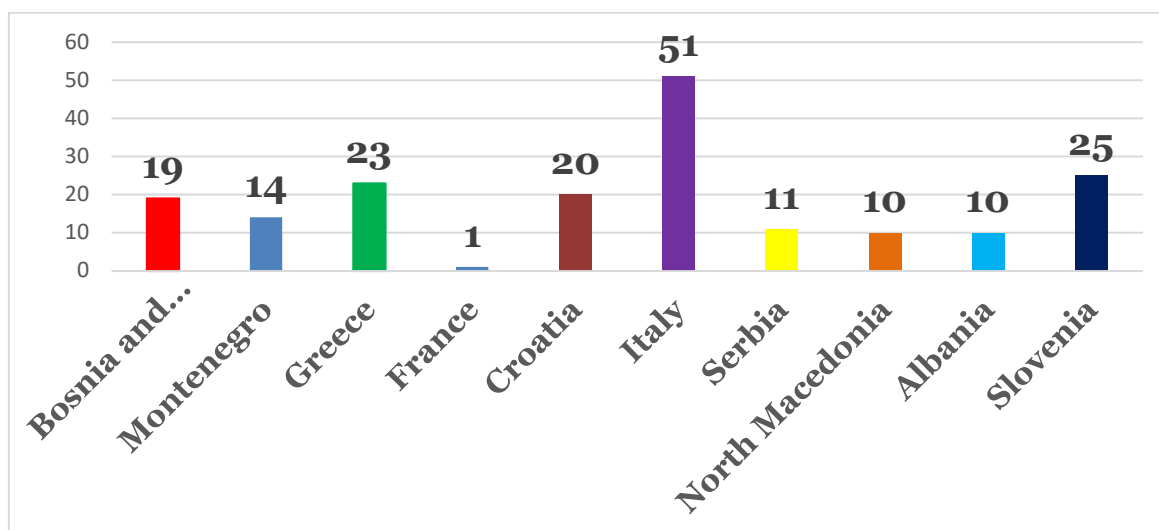
The lead partners of the to be granted projects are located in the following Participating Countries:



The 54 projects involve 487 financing partners, whose location in the IPA ADRION Participating Countries is depicted below. Increased number of partners keeps the overall picture described in the 1st scenario substantially unchanged.



The project proposals included in the 2nd scenario foresee the involvement of 184 associated partners, disentangled as follows per participating country:



As far the eligible indicative actions are concerned, the situation remain unchanged. The same indicative actions reported in the 1st scenario remain uncovered (indicative action No.1 for SO 1.1; No 3, 5, 11 for SO 2.3; No 1 for SO 3.1).

The table below provides a financial projection of the left resources available to the second call for proposals and the indicative number of project proposals to be granted, based on the 1st call maximum budget dimension for the project proposals:

S.O	CP 2021-2027 Budget without TA pursuant to Article 27(1) (a1)	1 st call allocation of funds 2 nd scenario	Available funds 2 nd call	Indicative number of projects to be granted in 2 nd call (max Interreg budget – 1,5 MEUR) (No projects rounded)
S.O 1.1	28.828.850,44	17.287.196	11.541.654,15	8
S.O 2.1	24.156.588,47	14.428.036	9.728.552,38	6
S.O 2.2	10.065.245,20	6.282.890	3.782.355,70	2
S.O 2.3	24.156.588,47	15.257.602,69	8.898.985,78	6
S.O 2.4	8.723.212,50	7.682.218,08	1.040.994,42	
S.O 3.1	11.183.605,77	7.519.315,60	3.664.290,17	3
Total	107.114.090,85	68.457.258	38.656.832,60	25/26

Pros and cons of this scenario are listed below:

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional granted projects positively contribute to programme overall financial performance (decommitment risk) and would contribute to an early higher feeding of the Technical Assistance. • Interreg left resources of SO 2.4 (MEUR 1) could be used in the future for other scopes (e.g. consider the use of flexibility according to Art. 19.5-6 Interreg Regulation). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all projects with scores equal or higher the minimum necessary to be considered as recommended for funding shall be granted. • Less resources to be devoted to the 2^o Call than initially planned. • If 1st calls rules are confirmed for the 2nd call (i.e.: max Interreg budget: MEUR 1,5), resources for SO 2.2 will be limited. • As the MC decided that not granted indicative actions shall be granted in the 2nd call, this could increase applicants' expectations vs limited resources.

3.3 Scenario 3

This scenario intends to award the overall good quality rate of the received project proposals compared to the previous programming period by increasing the initially allocated Interreg funds by ca 20% for each SO, when possible.

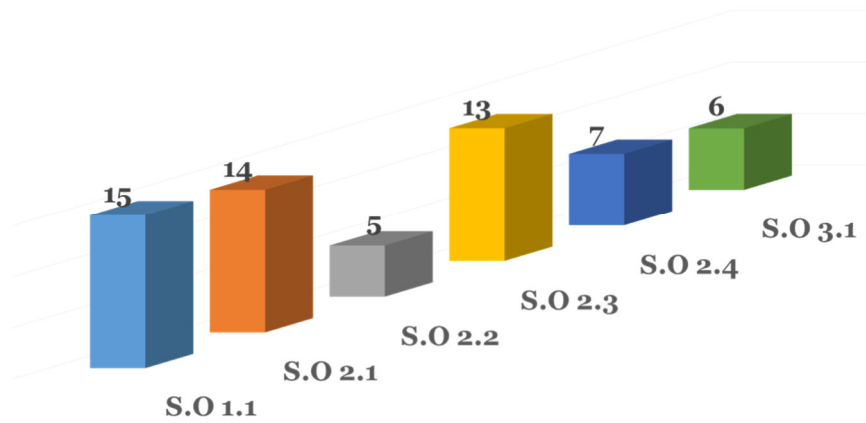
Compared to the first scenario, MEUR 11 Interreg funds would be allocated and would grant additional 6 projects, namely:

- SO 1.1: + 2 projects.
- SO 2.1: + 2 projects.
- SO 2.3: + 2 projects.

The remaining SOs will not be affected by this proposal due to different reasons:

- SO 2.4: no additional funds are available.
- SO 3.1: all possible projects proposed for funding have been already granted
- SO 2.2: to avoid the complete allocation of resources under 1st call.

The overall number of projects to granted would be **60**, distributed per Specific Objective (SO) according to the following:

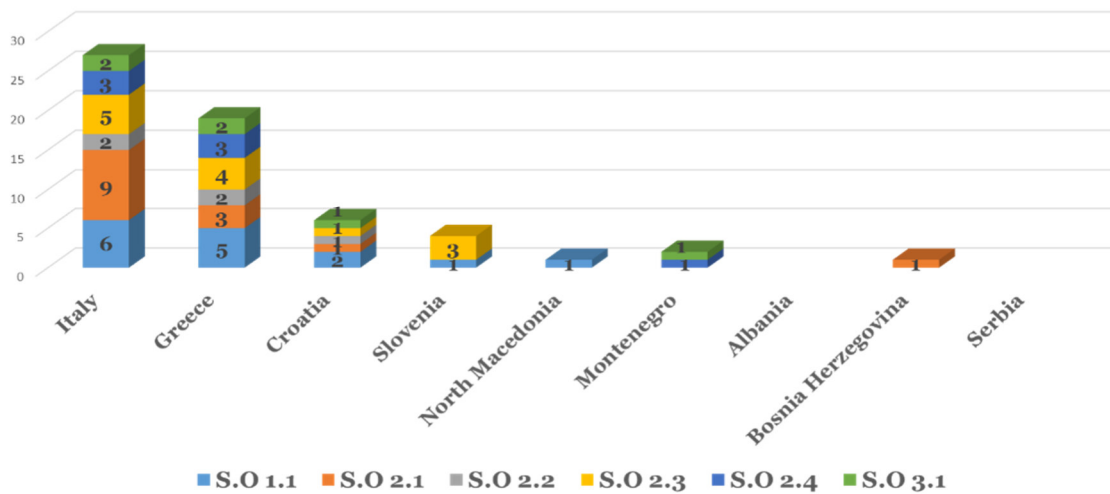


The projects falling under this scenario are the following:

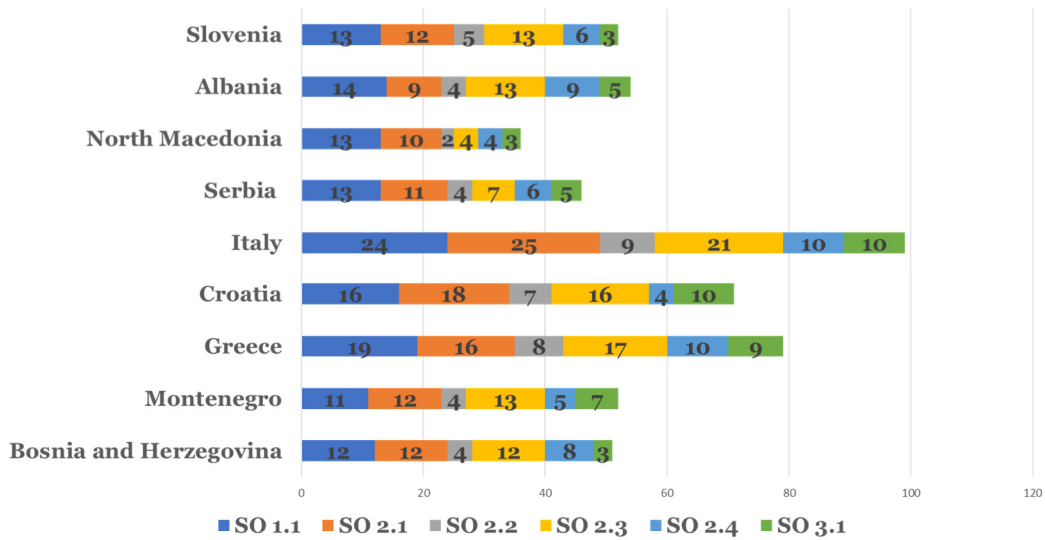
SO 1.1	SO 2.1	SO 2.2	SO 2.3	SO 2.4	SO 3.1
290 INTERREGIONALOGISTICCLUSTER	374 URBANFLOODS	267 CAROUSEL	367 4PETHABECO	397 MISSION	73 SuperAlfuel
284 ABBA	227 Recipe2024	177 CIRCUS	389 CRADLES	109 TERRAIN	298 WATERBRIDGING
219 MISSION	297 AQUA	373 FULAR	222 BIOMIMICRY	322 ADRIAMOVE	46 ADIREC
171 ADRURAL	419 Prevent	294 JOINABLE	235 ECOBREEDS	53 CITYMOVE	62 CIRASIM
107 ARCA	288 AINATURE	289 ADRIONOSPORTS	447 BLUEQ	134 SMARTMOBAIR	527 AIMPRESS
131 PADRION	428 PRIMES		151 PREBIODUNES	215 ADCCAM2ZERO	21 GREENROUTES
454 BLUNEW	172 BEALERT		239 ECOBASE	368 LAMO	
256 GROWTH4BLUE	208 Grecale		96 SAMESEA		
406 GOTOTWIN	414 AIMS		176 TETHYS4ADRION		
278 INNOVABLUE	530 ARIANNA		205 TEAMFORADRI		
142 GREENSMES	233 RES2FIRE		271 PROMONT		
510 LANDS	220 NBS4RESILIENCE		200 ADRISKY		
232 BFC	445 NATURED		140 ADRIPLAST		
395 FENESTRAE	103 ASAP				
198 A4SUSTINNO					

The projects falling under this scenario are reported also in Annex 1 disentangled per SO and highlighted in blue, green and pink.

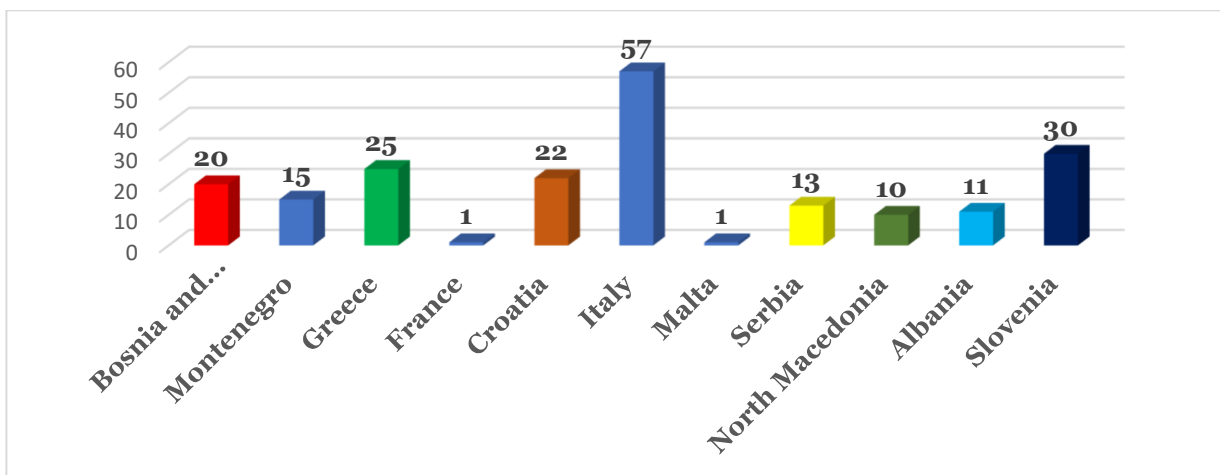
The lead partners of the to be granted projects are located in the following Participating Countries:



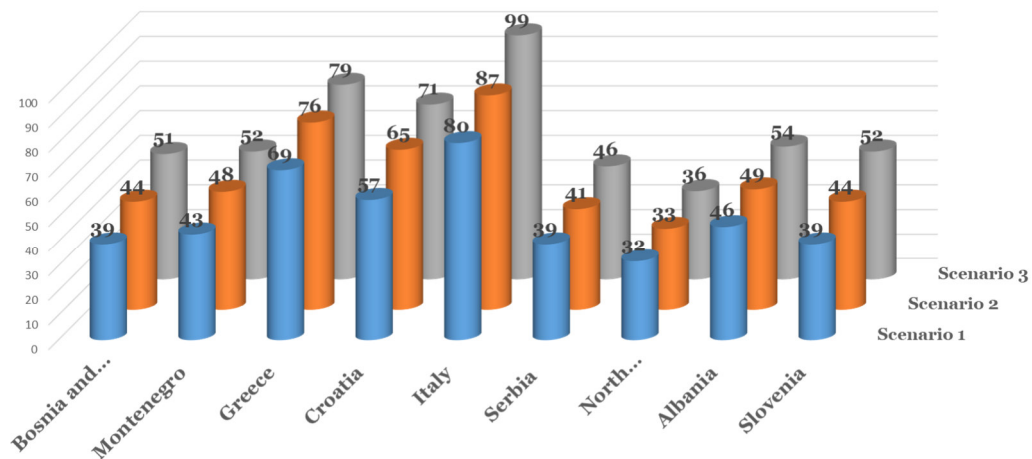
The 60 projects involve 540 financing partners, whose location in the IPA ADRION Participating Countries is depicted below. Increased number of partners keep the overall picture described in the first scenario substantially unchanged.



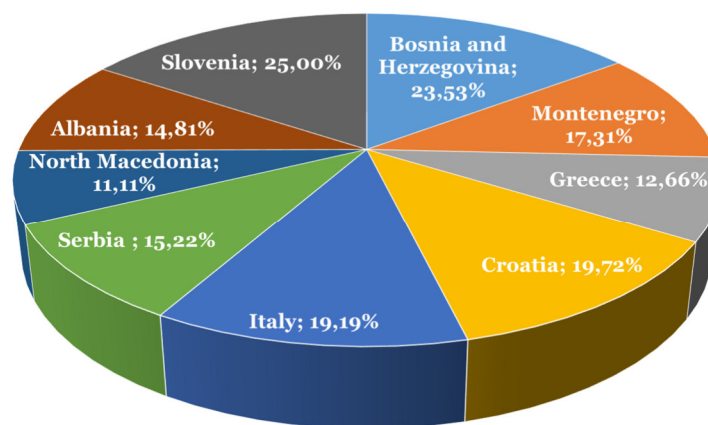
The project proposals included in the 3rd scenario foresee the involvement of 205 associated partners, disentangled as follows per Participating Country:



The table below shows, in terms of absolute figures, the involvement of financing partners according to the proposed three scenarios:



Irrespective to the absolute figures, the percentage of increased number of partners stretches from +11,11% of North Macedonia to 25% of Slovenia.



As far the eligible indicative actions are concerned, the situation remain unchanged. The same indicative actions reported in the 1st scenario remain uncovered (indicative action No.1 for SO 1.1; No 3, 5, 11 for SO 2.3; No 1 for SO 3.1).

The table below provides a financial projection of the left resources available to the second call for proposals and the indicative number of project proposals to be granted, based on the 1st call maximum budget dimension for the project proposals:

S.O	CP 2021-2027 Budget without TA pursuant to Article 27(1) (a1)	1 st call allocation of funds 3 rd scenario	Available funds 2 nd call	Indicative number of projects to be granted in 2 nd call (max Interreg budget – 1,5 MEUR)

				(No projects rounded)
S.O 1.1	28.828.850,44	20.213.868	8.614.982,43	6
S.O 2.1	24.156.588,47	16.936.329	7.220.259,05	5
S.O 2.2	10.065.245,20	6.282.890	3.782.355,70	2
S.O 2.3	24.156.588,47	17.976.419,18	6.180.169,29	4
S.O 2.4	8.723.212,50	7.682.218,08	1.040.994,42	
S.O 3.1	11.183.605,77	7.519.315,60	3.664.290,17	3
Total	107.114.090,85	76.611.040	30.503.051,06	19/20

Pros and cons of this scenario are listed below:

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional granted projects positively contribute to programme overall financial performance (decommitment risk) and would contribute to an early higher feeding of the Technical Assistance Interreg left resources of SO 2.4 (MEUR 1) could be used in the future for other scopes (e.g. consider the use of flexibility according to Art. 19.5-6 Interreg Regulation). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all projects with scores equal or higher the minimum necessary to be considered as recommended for funding shall be granted. Less resources to be devoted to the 2^o Call than initially planned. If 1st calls rules are confirmed for the 2nd call (i.e.: max Interreg budget: MEUR 1,5), resources for SO 2.2 will be limited. As the MC decided that not granted indicative actions shall be granted in the 2nd call, this could increase applicants' expectations vs limited resources. Possible need of redistributing financial resources among priority axes (ref. to Art. 19.5-6 Interreg Regulation).

4. Next steps

As indicated in the preface of this document, the assessment of the 1st call applications requires further checks to be considered as finalized:

- Anti-fraud checks**

The anti-fraud check consists of the verification of previous fraudulent behaviours or other fraudulent practices by the partners involved in the project proposals.

According to the assessment manual approved in July 2023 by the IPA ADRION MC, the anti-fraud check shall take place only on those applications which successfully passed all the previous checks described in the appraisal process.

In accordance with the European Commission recommendation, IPA ADRION uses the ARACHNE database for performing the checks; however, since the database is not applicable to IPA and Greek potential beneficiaries, other tools will be used in order to ensure that all potential beneficiaries are checked in a fair way.

Based on the different tools in use the following procedures will apply:

- **MA** will perform the checks on potential beneficiaries of Croatia, Italy and Slovenia based on **ARACHNE database**.
- The **NCPs of Albania; Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and North Macedonia** will perform the checks on their potential beneficiaries with the support of EU Delegations located in their countries of reference, using the **EDES (Early Detection and Exclusion System) database**.
- **Greece NCP** will follow an **ad hoc procedure** set in place in cooperation with JS. The Greek NCP will analyse the documentation enclosed in a self-declaration submitted by the potential beneficiaries.

To ensure consistency of verifications through all the tools used, all verifications must exclude the following:

- Economic operators in financial distress: exclusion of an economic operator from participation in a procurement procedure if the operator is the subject of insolvency or winding-up proceedings.
- Economic operators convicted for crimes: exclusion of an economic operator if the operator or any member of the administrative, management or supervisory body has been the subject of a conviction.
- Economic operators convicted for tax evasion: exclusion of an economic operator if the operator is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions.

The MA/JS in the first week of February 2024 (5 to 9 February 2024) will send to the affected NCPs the list of potential beneficiaries to be checked, which shall be returned with the outcomes of the checks.

In case the fraudulent behaviour/practice affects

- a) the lead applicant: the project proposal is rejected.
- b) a project partner: it is excluded from the project proposal; in case the exclusion of such partner(s) leads to non-fulfilment of the minimum partnership requirements or if the proposal experiences the exclusion of up to two partners, the project proposal is rejected.

Outcomes of the anti-fraud checks are uploaded on JEMS and included in the project assessment grid to be submitted to the MC.

- **Checks according to ex art. 22.4 lett. i) of Interreg Regulation**

Provision in art 22(4)i)

In selecting operations, the monitoring committee or, where applicable, the steering committee shall:

- *Ensure that selected operations are not directly affected by reasoned opinion by the Commission in respect of an infringement within the scope of Article 258 TFEU that puts at risk the legality and regularity of expenditures or the performance of operations.*

INTERACT programme has provided guidance in this respect to the programmes, trying to avoid imposing a disproportionate administrative burden to them.

INTERACT has advised the programmes to perform these checks **in the database of infringements excluding some policy areas** that are quite distant from the EU Cohesion policy objectives (example: Home Affairs; Budget; Enlargement etc), and concentrating the checks on areas of highest relevance for the programmes (e.g. Environment; energy; mobility and transport; maritime spatial planning etc), making a plausibility check.

The checks should ensure the programmes that the operations funded do not contribute to a potential infringement of EU legislation.

Based on the guidelines provided, the MA/JS will search in the database of infringements that the **objective of the project does not match to the subject of a decision of the Commission.** These checks will take place only on the selected for funding projects, following the approval by the IPA ADRION MC. In case of potential risks, NCPs and MC members will be contacted for clarification. The outcomes of these checks will be communicated to IPA ADRION MC.

- **Negotiation process**

Following the approval of the selected applications to be funded by the IPA ADRION MC, JS will inform accordingly all the applicants on the outcomes of the assessment process and organize the “Lead Partner seminar” with the funded projects starting in this way the negotiation process.

The negotiation process is foreseen to support the beneficiaries through targeted guidance to fulfil the conditions for improvement set in the assessment grid.

The Lead Partner Seminar is foreseen to take place online in the second week of March 2024. The plenary meeting involving all the funded projects will be followed by bilateral meetings with the selected operations, explaining in detail the conditions for improvement and the revisions foreseen in the AF in order to be funded. The revision of the AF will be done through the use of JEMS.

During the negotiation phase the Lead Partners will prove the existence of the signatory person and provide the power of signature. Lead Partner and project partner declarations characterized by

missing elements allowed according to admissibility/ eligibility procedures at the time of submission of the project proposal will be required to re-submit them.

Following the finalization of the negotiation process, the MC will be informed accordingly, whereas the lead partners will receive a communication that indicates the conclusion of such phase along with the final project budget and Interreg funds share.

- ***Contract signature***

All the selected for funding projects that have fulfilled all the conditions for improvement set forth by the MC, a Subsidy Contract will be offered by the MA. Considering that the negotiation process takes at least two rounds of negotiation, it is expected that the negotiation process is concluded in end of April 2024 / beginning of May 2024. The MA needs up to one month from the conclusion of the negotiation process to send to the LP the subsidy contract, due to internal budgetary procedures.

LP has one month for accepting the subsidy offer sent by the MA/JS. Following the aforementioned the deadline, the MA offer loses its validity. If the signed contract is not received within the set deadline, the offer shall be considered as not accepted and the first project(s) in the ranking list with scores equal or higher the minimum one to be considered of good quality but not granted due to the limited available resources will be contacted to offer the grant.

- ***Meetings with beneficiaries***

Following the signature of the Subsidy Contracts, MA/JS will organise a meeting with the LP of the 1st call for proposals – “Implementation Seminar” on the implementation rules and requirements. The Implementation Seminar is expected to take place in the second May 2024 in Bologna in presence.

The implementation Seminar will tackle the following main topics:

- Legal obligations (Subsidy Contract and Partnership Agreement)
- Guidelines on how to start with the right foot;
- Audit trail;
- Implementation rules;
- Guidelines on reporting at partner and project level;
- Monitoring of performance and mid-term review;
- Minor and major modifications;
- Communication requirements;
- Use of JEMS
- Etc.

- ***Supporting documentations***

The 1st call for proposals beneficiaries will be supported in the implementation of their projects by the following supporting documentation:

- 1st call Implementation Manual;

- JEMS Guidelines;

1st call Implementation Manual will be sent for approval to the ADRION IPA MC within March 2024.

In addition to the aforementioned documents, beneficiaries will be supported daily by the assigned project and financial officers.

- ***Calendar of the activities***

The table below provides an overview of the calendar of activities related to the 1st call for proposals starting phase based on the information provided above:

2024	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
Anti-fraud checks					
Checks according to ex art. 22.4 lett. i) of Interreg Regulation					
Lead Partner Seminar					
Negotiation Process					
Contracts signature					
1st Call Implementation Manual					
Implementation Seminar					