

# Cohesion Policy support for sustainable tourism (2021-2027)



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# EU Cohesion Policy support for sustainable tourism

**ERDF a traditional ally of European regions** in their efforts to add value to geographical assets and the cultural, historical and natural heritage, invest in tourism in an efficient and sustainable manner, and foster cross border cooperation in culture and tourism.

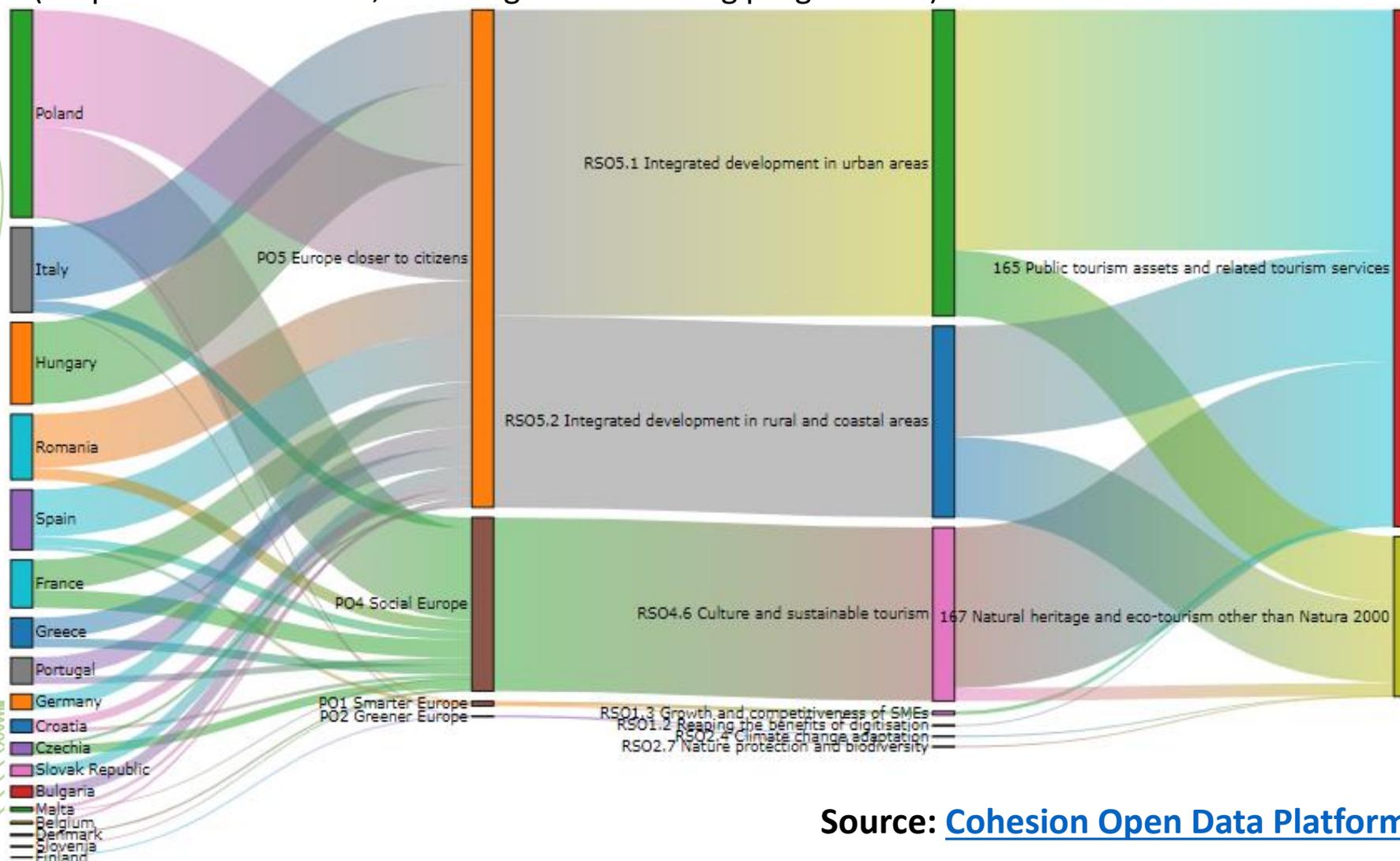
Recognising **transformative power of sustainable tourism** in socioeconomic and territorial development, especially in areas dependent on the sector

**EU cohesion policy funds (especially ERDF):** supporting green and digital transformation, strengthening resilience and long-term sustainability, and fostering capacity of the sector as a driver of socioeconomic and territorial development, social inclusion and social innovation, **in view of the Tourism Transition Pathway:**

- Eligible under all 5 policy objectives
- Dedicated ERDF Specific Objective under Policy Objective 4 (“A more social and inclusive Europe”): Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation
- As part of integrated sustainable territorial strategies under Policy Objective 5 (“A Europe closer to citizens”)

# EU Cohesion Policy support for sustainable tourism

**2021-2027 ERDF direct support for sustainable tourism: EUR 4.2 billion\***  
(EU planned allocations; including under Interreg programmes)



\* Based on the information of tourism-related intervention fields. Tourism might also benefit from additional indirect support from digitalisation, greening, SME support, territorial cooperation, inclusion that might not have been specifically framed for tourism.

Source: [Cohesion Open Data Platform](#)

# EU Cohesion Policy support for sustainable tourism

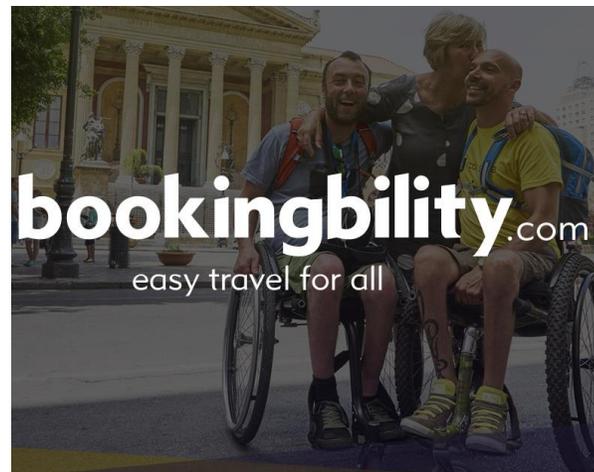
Example of actions included in 2021-2027 programmes:

- **Measures to diversify the tourism offer** by investing in **diverse forms of tourism** and in **lesser-known destinations of high potential** (including through constructing, renovating or converting tourism infrastructure, developing new sustainable tourism products or routes and valorising local assets)
- **Support for the green and digital transformation** of the tourism ecosystem (including for the uptake/development of new digital technologies, green and quality certifications in SMEs, energy efficiency, circular economy and smart business models, ... )
- Improving the **accessibility** of tourism sites and products and **activities fostering social inclusion** through tourism
- Support for **social economy and social innovation** in the field of sustainable tourism, seeking to create quality jobs and opportunities for employment, particularly for vulnerable communities
- Support innovative **participatory governance and management models** in the field of tourism
- **Promotion** campaigns
- Supporting sustainable tourism as part of **integrated territorial investments**

## Examples of 2014-2020 ERDF co-financed projects



**[Electro-solar river boat](#)**  
**(Saintes, France)**



**[Accessible Accommodation Portal](#)**  
**(Italy)**



**[Sustainable cross-border peatland tourism](#)**  
**(Slovakia, Poland)**



**[Tourism training centre and hotel](#)**  
**(Brussels, Belgium)**

# European Urban Initiative – Innovative Actions



**Sustainable tourism** – one of the three topics of the [second call for proposals](#), with an overall indicative budget for the call of EUR 120 million from ERDF

## Prompts for urban authorities:

- Diversifying tourism offer towards varied forms of smart, sustainable and accessible tourism
- Driving the green and digital transformation
- Fostering social inclusion and innovation through tourism
- Innovative destination management models
- Strengthening the role of cities as gateway into the wider tourism regional setting
- New tourism governance models

**Selected cities** – to be announced in May - will be able to profit from **up to EUR 5 million each** for the testing of urban innovative solutions, in view of the Transition Pathway for Tourism

# Urban Agenda for the EU – Partnership on Sustainable Tourism



Thematic partnership launched in 2022:

- **22 members** (Cities/Urban authorities, National authorities, European/national city umbrella associations, European Institutions and other stakeholders)
- Coordinated by the municipalities of **Genoa (IT)** and **Galati (RO)**

With the **Tourism Transition Pathway as a guiding document**, an Action Plan is currently being developed with actions in the following areas:

- **environmental impact** of tourism in cities
- boosting the contribution of tourism to **urban socio-cultural and economic development**
- tackling the **unbalanced growth** and the congestion of tourism flows in cities

Supports **Better Regulation, Better Funding** and **Better Knowledge** based on an integrated and stakeholder-led approach

# EU Macro-Regional Strategies

Tourism as a priority area in all strategies - developed targeted objectives in the area of sustainable tourism in view of unlocking the full potential of respective macro-regions.

In 2021-2027 - dedicated Interreg transnational programmes, some of which envisage support for tourism projects

## Baltic Sea

- Transnational tourism development in remote and rural areas
- Investing in people, skills and technology in the tourism industry
- Protection and sustainable utilisation of cultural heritage and natural resources in tourism destinations

## Danube Region

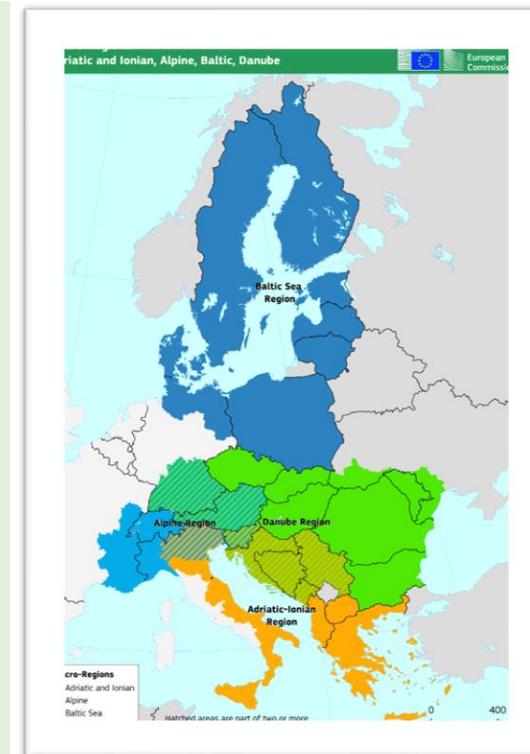
- Cooperation and networking in economic development based on tourism
- Develop the Danube region tourism brand
- Establish Danube as important destination (including in cruise, green and cycling tourism)
- Promote short and long stays

## Adriatic and Ionian Region

- Diversification of tourism offer
- Sustainable tourism management (innovation and quality)

## Alpine Region

- Increase of the economic potential of strategic sectors, including tourism



# European Strategy for Outermost Regions

Commission Communication (May 2022) '[Putting people first, securing sustainable and inclusive growth, unlocking the potential of the EU's outermost regions](#)'

- supporting investment in the tourism sector in the outermost regions and ensuring that EU funds, e.g. the cohesion policy funds, support this sector's recovery and sustainable development.
- Transition Pathway as a guiding document for relevant actions in the outermost regions – relevant pledges
- Most of Cohesion Policy programmes targeting outermost regions have included targeted sustainable tourism support under ERDF



**Call for proposals to support sustainable maritime and coastal tourism in the outermost regions**

**(under European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund Programme)**

- 2 selected projects: , one on blue tourism and the other on underwater archaeological heritage
- Total support of EUR 2 million

# Questions?

