



Project
- The Magic of Synergies -

Ref. No CB007.2.12.002



DEVELOPING JOINT SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PROGRAMME IN THE CROSS- BORDER AREA ELIN PELIN AND LESKOVAC

- E-guide on EU funding for the tourism sector (2014-2020)-

Place: Elin Pelin & Leskovac

Data: June 2021.

DISCLAIMER

This document has been produced with the assistance of the European Union through the Interreg-IPA CBC Bulgaria-Serbia Programme, CCI No 2014TC16I5CB007. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the Municipality of Elin Pelin and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union or the Managing Authority of the Program.



ОБЩИНА ЕЛИН ПЕЛИН



TURISTICKA ORGANIZACIJA LESKOVAC



**Centar za razvoj Jablaničkog
i Pčinjskog okruga**



This electronic guide for European financing for tourism was prepared under the project "The Magic of Synergies", in implementation of contract № CB007.2.12.002, as part of the cross-border cooperation program Interreg Bulgaria-Serbia.

**The text was prepared in the period May, 2021 - June, 2021.
Bulgaria, Sofia, 2021**

Contents

I. Introduction	4
1. Purpose of the e-guide	4
2. Target audience.....	4
3. Guidelines for working with the e-guide	5
II. Presentation of the possibilities for European financing for tourism	8
1. European Fund for Strategic Investments.....	8
2. European Regional Development Fund.....	9
3. Cohesion Fund	11
4. European Social Fund.....	12
5. European Agricultural fund for rural development	13
6. European Maritime and Fisheries Fund	15
7. LIFE.....	16
8. Horizont 2020	18
9.COSME	21
10. Creative Europe Programme.....	23
11. Erasmus +	25
12. Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)	28
13. IPARD II Programme of the Republic of Serbia.....	29
III. Examples for the different programmes	34
IV Conclusion.....	51
VI. References	51

I. Introduction

This toolkit was prepared under the project "The Magic of Synergies". The leading partner in the project is the municipality of Elin Pelin, Bulgaria. Project partners are Leskovac Tourist Organization, Republic of Serbia and Development Center - Jablanica, Pcinja County, Republic of Serbia.

Among the goals of the project are:

- To create a synergistic effect of the joint influence of the participants in the field of connecting festivals, development of common policies for tourism development and new tourist products in the cross-border region Elin Pelin and Leskovac;
- Carry out marketing activities aimed at tour operators and tourism service providers to promote new joint tourism products (new festivals);
- To increase the capacity of participants in the cross-border region of Elin Pelin and Leskovac to implement a model for sustainable tourism development by sharing best practices, experience and know-how.

1. Purpose of the e-guide

The purpose of this e-guide is to provide those interested in creating tourism in the cross-border destination Elin Pelin - Leskovac side useful and practical information and guidelines for opportunities for European funding of ideas and projects, contact the sustainable development of Elin Pelin Leskovac as an attractive tourist program destination. The management does not present specific programming approved for funding during the multiannual financial framework 2014-2020.

The guide can be seen as a step-by-step tool in the process of selecting and applying for European Union funding for a specific program, as well as a guide to quickly and easily identify appropriate programs, and can apply for funding from various stakeholders. - from private enterprises, through public institutions and incorrect organizations, to individuals.

2. Target audience

The purpose of this e-guide is to provide stakeholders in the development of tourism in the cross-border destination Elin Pelin - Leskovac useful and practical information and guidelines for opportunities for European funding of ideas and projects related to the sustainable development of Elin Pelin - Leskovac as an attractive tourist destination. The e-guide present the programs approved for funding during the multiannual financial framework 2014-2020.

The guide can be seen both as a useful tool for working in the process of selecting and applying for funding from the European Union under a specific program, and as a guide for quick and easy identification of appropriate programs for which different stakeholders can apply for funding - from

private enterprises, through public institutions and non-governmental organizations, to individuals.

3. Guidelines for working with the e-guide

The information on European funding for tourism for the period 2014-2020 in this guide is presented in a way that facilitates and makes more convenient the work with the diversity of data, as the presentation of each program follows the structure presented below:

- What is the respective program
- Who can apply for it
- What are the activities for which funding can be applied
- When and how to apply
- What is the funding as a type and level

In order to orientate more quickly among the many programs, below is a table summarizing who can apply for which program. The identification of the programs for which an enterprise, organization, institution or individual can apply that is the first step in the process of selecting and applying for European funding. The relevant calls for proposals/tenders/applications must then be identified, as well as the specific documents and call forms examined in detail. These documents and forms are provided with each call in the form of an information package or a 'manual' with advice on how to prepare and submit the proposal/offer/application. For some programs, especially cross-border and trans-European programs, it is useful or necessary to work with partner(s), and many of the program websites themselves offer the possibility to search for a partner when needed. The last step in the process of selecting and applying for a program, respectively, is the timely submission of the proposal/offer/application.

Readers of this guide should consider the different types of financial support that the European Union can provide. These are the so-called direct and indirect financing. The European Union provides direct funding through grants or indirect funding through financial intermediaries. Grants are submitted through special calls for proposals. In most cases, these grants co-finance projects related to EU policy objectives, such as improving European cooperation in research or education. Among the main characteristics of the grant are the following:

- Beneficiaries have the results of their activities.
- Under no circumstances the same costs could be funded twice by the EU (the non-cumulative grant rule).
- Grants cannot be awarded for actions that have already been completed (retroactive prohibition rule).

LIFe - NCFF			+												
LIFe - PF4										+					
Horizont 2020 - MSCa	+														
Horizont 2020 - LeIT	+														
Horizont 2020 - Reflective	+														
Horizont 2020 – SME Instrument										+					
COSME - Access										+					
COSME - Tourism															
COSME - EfE			+												
Creative Europe Programme - TCP												+			
Creative Europe Programme – European Networks							+								
Creative Europe Programme - ECOC							+								
Erasmus + Mobility									+						
Erasmus + Masters													+		
Erasmus + Others			+										+		
Employment and Social Innovation (easi) - Progress			+												
Employment and Social Innovation (eaSI) - EURES								+					+	+	
Employment and Social Innovation (eaSI) - Financial								+		+					+

II. Presentation of the possibilities for European financing for tourism

1. European Fund for Strategic Investments

What is it?

As an initiative launched jointly by the European Commission and the EIB Group (European Investment Bank and European Investment Fund), the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) aims to help address the current EU investment gap by mobilizing private financing for strategic investments. The EFSI can support, among other things:

- Strategic infrastructure, including digital, transport and energy
- Education, research, development and innovation
- Development of energy from renewable sources and resource efficiency
- Small enterprises and companies with medium market capitalization

Who can apply?

All legal entities (any public body, company, in particular SMEs, research organizations, universities, non-governmental organizations, tourism clusters, etc.) through financial intermediaries.

What are the activities for which funding can be applied?

Any type of useful transaction or investment for the development of legal activities (of SMEs). Throughout the European Union, including cross-border projects (no geographical quotas). Such activities may, for example, focus on:

1. Road infrastructures (regional airports, ports, etc.)
2. Energy efficiency for hotels and tourism resorts
3. Restoration of abandoned industrial land for recreational use
4. Agreements for financing SMEs in the field of tourism
5. Establishment of "investment platforms" (IP) for tourism

When and how to apply?

Applications for loans or bank guarantees are submitted to financial intermediaries (commercial banks, etc.) supported by the EFSI.

What is funding as a type and level?

The type and level of EFSI funding varies. Contributions from the EFSI and the ESIF (European Structural and Investment Funds) can be pooled at project, financial instrument and investment platform level.

2. European Regional Development Fund

What is it?

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is one of the five "European Structural and Investment Funds" (ESIF)¹⁰. Under ESIF rules, each Member State has to draw up a strategic plan indicating its 2014-2020 objectives & investment priorities for the use of these Funds. Once the European Commission's observations adequately taken into account, this plan becomes a "Partnership Agreement". Member States also have to draw up "Operational Programmes" breaking down priorities listed in the Partnership Agreement into concrete actions. "Operational Programmes" (OP) are implemented by Managing Authorities set up by the Member States (at national, regional or another level).

The ERDF aims to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the European Union by correcting imbalances between its regions. It may provide essential support to improve the competitiveness and quality of tourism at regional and local levels, notably in areas in (industrial / rural) decline or those undergoing urban regeneration.

ERDF support may go to 11 "thematic objectives and investment priorities" in line with the Europe 2020 policy priorities. The most relevant for the tourism sector probably are:

- Research and innovation (N°1)
- Information and Communication Technologies (N°2)
- Competitiveness of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (N°3)
- Shift to a low-carbon economy (N°4)
- Environmental protection and resource efficiency (N°6)
- Employment and support for labour mobility (N°8)
- Education, skills and lifelong learning (N°10)

ERDF not only supports regional and national programmes in the Member States. It also finances "European Territorial Cooperation" (ETC) which covers Cross-border co-operation programmes (known as Interreg A),¹¹ Transnational co-operation programmes (known as Interreg B, between regions from several EU Member States – see below) and Interregional co-operation programmes (known as Interreg C, working at pan-European level). Moreover ETC may contribute to "Macro-regional strategies"

Who can apply?

All legal persons (any public body, company and in particular SMEs, research organisations, universities, non-governmental organisations, tourism clusters)

What are the activities for which funding can be applied?

These programs may for instance support:

- tourism-related research, technological development and innovation, including service innovation and clusters (tourism service incubators, living labs, demonstration projects, ...)
- the development of tourism-related ICT products (apps, data mining, ...)
- the development of innovative tourism services, in particular in less favoured and peripheral regions with underdeveloped industrial structures and strongly dependent on tourism (new business models, exploitation of new ideas, ...)
- the development of high value-added products and services in niche markets (health tourism, tourism for seniors, cultural and ecotourism, gastronomy tourism, sports tourism, etc.) by mobilising specific local resources and therefore contributing to smart regional specialisation
- clustering activities¹³ among different tourism industries as well as with creative industries, to diversify regional tourism products and extend the tourism season (e.g. in the nautical and boating tourism industry, as well as for the cruise industry).
- activities connecting the coastal regions to the hinterland for more integrated regional development
- measures to improve energy efficiency and renewable energy use among tourism SMEs
- the protection, promotion¹⁴ and development of natural and cultural tourism assets and related services
- small-scale cultural and sustainable tourism infrastructure¹⁵
- measures in favour of entrepreneurship, self-employment and business creation as well as the internationalisation of tourism SMEs and clusters
- vocational training, skills upgrading

When and how to apply?

The specific ERDF Programs available should be checked to ensure that the project meets the selection criteria and investment priorities. The application procedures of the relevant managing authority should be followed (some have an ongoing, procedure others only accept applications at certain times).

The Managing Authority can provide information and advice for each stage of the project application.

For loans or bank guarantees, an application should be submitted to financial intermediaries (commercial banks, etc.), assisted in particular by JEREMIE.

What is funding as a type and level?

- The type and level of funding vary across Programmes, depending on the needs and choices of each Member State. The ERDF allocation may be disbursed through grants to individual recipients and consortia; loans, venture capital and credit guarantees through Financial Instruments¹⁶; or public procurement (for support services, feasibility studies, etc.). For grants, the maximum co-financing rate is 50% for the most developed regions, 60% for transition regions (and in exceptional cases 80%) and 85 % for the less developed regions.

3. Cohesion Fund

What is it?

The Cohesion Fund (CF) is one of the five "European Structural and Investment Funds" (ESIF). Under ESIF rules, each Member State has to draw up a strategic plan indicating its 2014-2020 objectives investment priorities for the use of these Funds. Once the European Commission's observations adequately taken into account, this plan becomes a "Partnership Agreement". Member States also have to draw up "Operational Programmes" breaking down priorities listed in the Partnership Agreement into concrete actions. "Operational Programmes" (OP) are implemented by Managing Authorities set up by the Member States (at national, regional or another level).

In order to reduce economic and social disparities and to promote sustainable development, the Cohesion Fund is aimed at Member States whose Gross National Income (GNI) per inhabitant is less than 90 % of the EU average²¹. According to the investment and infrastructure needs specific to each Member, the CF may support

- Investment in the environment, including areas related to sustainable development and energy which present environmental benefits²²
- Trans-European transport networks (TEN-T) in the area of transport infrastructure

Who can apply?

All legal entities (any public body, company and in particular small and medium - sized enterprises, research organizations, universities, non - governmental organizations, tourism clusters, etc.)

What are the activities for which funding can be applied?

They depend on the needs of each eligible Member State as defined in its operational programs.

When and how to apply?

The specific programs available should be checked to ensure that the project meets the selection criteria and investment priorities. The application procedures of the relevant managing authority should be followed (some have an ongoing procedure, others only accept applications at certain times). The Managing Authority can provide information and advice for each stage of the project application.

What is funding as a type and level?

Grants. Level of funding set out in the calls prepared by the managing authorities. Maximum co-financing rate: 85%.

4. European Social Fund**What is it?**

The European Social Fund (ESF) is one of the five "European Structural and Investment Funds" (ESIF)²⁵. Under ESIF rules, each Member State has to draw up a strategic plan indicating its 2014-2020 objectives investment priorities for the use of these Funds. Once the European Commission's observations adequately taken into account, this plan becomes a "Partnership Agreement". Member States also have to draw up "Operational Programmes" (OP) breaking down priorities listed in the Partnership Agreement into concrete actions. These OPs can cover entire Member States and/or regions, or be cooperation programmes involving more than one country. "Operational Programmes" are implemented by Managing Authorities set up by the Member States (at national, regional or another level).

The ESF aims in particular to improve employment and (workers) mobility as well as the level of professional qualifications in the EU.

Who can apply?

All legal entities operating on the labor market or in the field of education and training (e.g. small and medium enterprises, chamber of commerce, trade union organization, foundation, NGO, etc.).

What are the activities for which funding can be applied?

Eligible actions are listed in the "Operational Programmes" prepared by each member state. Depending on their choices, funding from the European Social Fund may be used, among other things, for:

- training workers to help companies having to cope with restructuring or a lack of qualified workers
- training people in difficulty and those from disadvantaged groups to get better skills and jobs
- supporting mutual learning, establishing networks, and disseminating and promoting good practices and methodologies in the domain of social innovation

Most actions are regional or national, but the ESF can also support transnational and inter-regional co-operation, depending on the approach defined in Operational Programmes.

When and how to apply?

Member States shall manage the ESF operational program, which shall include the promotion of ESF funding opportunities, the provision of specific information and the selection of appropriate projects.

What is funding as a type and level?

ESF is providing grants. All projects have to be co-financed, with a maximum EU contribution of 50% to 85% (95% in exceptional cases) of the total project costs depending on the relative wealth of the region ("More developed regions", "Transitions regions" or "Less developed regions"). The level of funding varies widely, depending of the project and the Operational Programme.

ESF may also support actions through financial instruments including microcredits and guarantee funds.

5. European Agricultural fund for rural development

What is it?

The "European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development" (EAFRD) aims, among other things, at promoting economic development in rural areas. Funds for rural development are allocated by Managing Authorities appointed by the Member States. Depending on the needs and choices of each Member State, support may be granted to:

1. the diversification of farmers into non-agricultural activities
2. the development of non-agricultural SMEs in rural areas and engaged in sustainable & responsible tourism
3. the restoration / upgrading of the cultural and natural heritage of villages and rural landscapes.

Who can apply?

- Any natural or legal person active in rural areas (farmer, forestry company, SMEs operating in rural areas and others)
- "Local Action Groups" (LEADER – CLLD)

What are the activities for which funding can be applied?

Eligible actions are listed in the national and regional "Rural Development Programmes" (RDP) prepared by the Member States. Depending on their choices, these RDPs may fund:

- vocational training and skills acquisition actions (courses, workshops, coaching and others; for instance on how to develop rural tourism), demonstration activities and information actions
- advisory services to help farmers, forest holders, other land managers and SMEs in rural areas to improve their economic performance
- business start-up aid as well as investments for non-agricultural activities in rural areas (rural accommodation, shops, restaurants, guided tours, ...)
- drawing up and updating of plans for the development of municipalities and villages in rural areas²⁸
- investments for public use in recreational infrastructure, tourist information and small scale tourism infrastructure
- studies and investments associated with the maintenance, restoration and upgrading of the cultural and natural heritage of villages, rural landscapes and high nature value sites, including related socio-economic aspects, as well as environmental awareness actions
- co-operation involving at least two entities (creation of clusters and networks; co-operation among small operators in organising joint work processes and sharing facilities and resources and for the development and/or marketing of tourism services relating to rural tourism)

When and how to apply?

It is first necessary to check which is the managing authority responsible for the program, corresponding to the location and scope of the project. The designated managing authority shall publish on its website information on the submission of an application. The managing authorities are listed on the websites of the Ministries of Agriculture.

What is funding as a type and level?

The EAFRD is providing grants, with a minimum contribution rate of 20 %. Each "Rural Development Program" prepared by the Member States includes a table setting out a specific EAFRD contribution rate for each type of operation. Where applicable, this table indicates separately the EAFRD contribution rate for less developed regions and for other regions. The RDP also defines what is considered as small-scale infrastructure. For co-operation actions, support is limited to maximum 7 years.

6. European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

What is it?

Replacing the European Fisheries Fund, the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) has among its priorities to increase employment and territorial cohesion in coastal and inland communities depending on fishing and aquaculture. This should be achieved by

1. the promotion of economic growth, social inclusion, creation of jobs and supporting labour mobility in these communities;
2. the diversification of activities within fisheries and into other sectors of maritime economy.

Each Member State is allocated a share of the total Fund budget in relation with the size of its fishing industry. It then draws up an "Operational Programme", saying how it intends to spend the money. Once the programme approved by the Commission, it is up to the Managing Authority set up by each Member State (at national or regional) to implement it.

Managing authorities responsible for the implementation of EMFF operational programmes delegate a number of tasks to "Fisheries Local Action Groups" (FLAGs). These partnerships between fisheries actors and other local private/public stakeholders design local development strategies. FLAGs also manage a budget to support technically and financially the implementation of their local strategy via specific projects.

Under these local strategies, funding is available in particular for cultural fisheries and maritime cultural heritage. This can cover tourism-related projects, such as eco-tourism, pesca tourism and fishing tourism³³, local gastronomy (fish and seafood restaurants), accommodation, tourist trails, diving, etc.

Who can apply?

All legal and natural persons in coastal and inland communities.

What are the activities for which funding can be applied?

The EMFF may support operations such as:

1. studies;
2. projects, including test projects and cooperation projects;
3. conferences, seminars, fora and workshops;
4. public information and sharing best practice, awareness raising campaigns and associated communication and dissemination activities such as publicity campaigns, events, the development and maintenance of websites, stakeholder platforms;
5. professional training, life-long learning and the acquisition of new professional skills enabling professionals of the fisheries sector or their life partners to enter into tourism activities or to carry out complementary activities in the field of tourism.

When and how to apply?

It is first necessary to check which is the managing authority responsible for the program, corresponding to the location and scope of the project. The designated managing authority shall publish on its website information on the submission of applications: List of national authorities.

What is funding as a type and level?

The EMFF provides grants to co-finance projects, along with national funding. The operational programme of each country establishes the EMFF contribution rate applicable to each of the objectives. The maximum EMFF contribution rate is 75% of the eligible public expenditure. The minimum EMFF contribution rate is 20%.

7. LIFE

What is it?

LIFE is the financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation projects throughout the EU. The priority areas of its sub-programme for environment are:

- Environment and Resource Efficiency
- Nature and Biodiversity³⁵
- Environmental Governance and Information³⁶.

The priorities areas of its sub-programme for climate action are:

- Climate Change Mitigation (contributing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions)
- Climate Change Adaptation (contributing to increase resilience to climate change)
- Climate Governance and Information

Who can apply?

GRANTS FOR "TRADITIONAL PROJECTS"

- all legal persons (SMEs, NGOs, public authorities and others)

LOANS AND/OR BANK GUARANTEES - NCFE

- all legal persons

LOANS AND/OR BANK GUARANTEES - PF4EE

- SMEs and mid-cap larger companies (mainly)

What are the activities for which funding can be applied?

The most relevant actions are probably those envisaged under the so-called "Traditional Projects", which may take different forms:

- pilot projects assess the effectiveness of a method/approach that is new or has been used in a different (geographical, ecological, socio-economic) context; they compare its results with those produced by best practices, in order to determine if the method should be tested on a larger scale (i.e. in a demonstration project) and inform stakeholders;
- demonstration projects test and evaluate a method/approach that is new or has been used in a different context; they inform other stakeholders of the results and, where appropriate, encourage them to apply these methods / approaches³⁸;
- best practice projects apply appropriate, cost-effective and state-of-the-art techniques, methods and approaches taking into account the specific context of the project
- information, awareness and dissemination projects related to one of the priority areas.

If LIFE does not finance big infrastructure projects, it may support investment in "Green Infrastructure" through grants and loans/bank guarantees - see below, NCFE (Natural Capital Financing Facility) and PF4EE (Private Financing for Energy Efficiency instrument). Green Infrastructure (GI) refers to a network of high quality natural and semi-natural areas³⁹, which is designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services from the protection of biodiversity to the quality of water. These services also include recreational and touristic activities.

Green Infrastructure is made of different things, from hedgerows, fish ladders or motorway overpass for bears to measures concerning entire ecosystems such as free-flowing rivers. As some ecosystems extend beyond national boundaries⁴⁰, there may be EU-level GI projects.

When and how to apply?

For grants, the LIFE funding page should be checked. With the exception of "traditional projects", applicants can use the application form provided in the LIFE application package (available on the same page) and submit it to the "Small and Medium Enterprises Executive Agency" (EASME). Proposals for "traditional projects" must be created and submitted through the eProposal tool. Applicants may consult the relevant national LIFE contact points in the Member States when preparing the proposal.

For loans or bank guarantees, apply to financial intermediaries (commercial banks, etc.) supported by the Natural Capital Financing Facility (NCFF) or the Private Energy Efficiency Financing Facility (PF4ee).

What is funding as a type and level?

GRANTS FOR "TRADITIONAL PROJECTS". € 500.000 to 1,5 million, with a maximum co-funding rate of 60 %, except for projects targeting priority habitats & species (75 %).

LOANS AND/OR BANK GUARANTEES - NCFF. The "Natural Capital Financing Facility" (NCFF) supports selected financial intermediaries providing loans/bank guarantees for Green Infrastructures (see above) and other types of upfront investment foreseen in revenue-generating or cost-saving pilot projects. This may concern payments for ecosystem services (e.g. programs to protect and enhance forestry, biodiversity, to reduce water or soil pollution) as well as pro-biodiversity and adaptation businesses (e.g. sustainable forestry, agriculture, aquaculture, eco-tourism). During the 2014-2017 pilot phase, targeted projects must be located in the EU-28 and ideally have a size of EUR 5-15 million.

LOANS AND/OR BANK GUARANTEES - PF4EE. For small energy efficiency investments, capable of using energy savings to repay up-front borrowing. This instrument helps financial intermediaries to increase their lending activities & to offer better conditions for investment between € 40.000 and 1.125.000 (loan maturity from 4 to 20 years).

8. Horizont 2020

What is it?

Bringing together three previous programmes / initiatives⁴³, "Horizon 2020" is the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020). It is made of "programme sections" (also called "pillars"), some being divided in sub-sections. The most interesting sections for tourism probably are:

- "Excellent Science"
 - sub-section MSCA ("Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions") for career development and

training of researchers – with a focus on innovation skills – in all scientific disciplines through worldwide and cross-sector mobility

- "Industrial Leadership"
 - sub-section programme LEIT ("Leadership in Enabling and Industrial Technologies"), among other things, for greater competitiveness of the European cultural and creative sectors by stimulating ICT innovation in SMEs Technologies.
- "Societal Challenges"⁴⁴
 - sub-section programme "Europe in a changing world - Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies", hereafter Reflective, to address in particular the issues of memories, identities, tolerance and cultural heritage.
- "SME instrument" for high-potential SMEs to develop ground-breaking innovative products, services or processes able to face global market competition

Who can apply?

MSCA, LEIT & REFLECTIVE

- All natural or legal persons (any public body, company, research organisations, universities, non-governmental organisations and others) regardless of their place of establishment or residence, but possessing the operational and financial capacity to carry out the proposed research tasks⁶⁰.
- SMEs from creative industries (particularly but not exclusively targeted by LEIT)
- ICT technology providers (particularly but not exclusively targeted by LEIT)

SME INSTRUMENT

- SMEs

What are the activities for which funding can be applied?

MSCA

"Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions" funds in particular (a) "Individual Fellowships" enabling researchers to work on projects within or outside Europe; (b) "Innovative Training Networks" offering joint research training and/or doctoral programmes, implemented by universities, research institutions and non-academic organisations; and (c) "Research and Innovation Staff Exchange" enabling staff exchange i.a. between academic and non-academic sectors. See MSCA Pocket guide

LEIT

This sub-section programme funds "Innovation Actions"⁴⁷ and "Coordination and Support Actions" of interest for the tourism sector. "Innovation Actions" should, among other things, develop

innovative Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) products, tools, applications & services for the cultural and creative sectors (e.g. 3D, augmented reality, advanced user interfaces, visual computing).⁵⁰ Proposals should clearly demonstrate their high commercial and innovation potential. "Coordination and Support Actions" focus on non-research activities such as disseminating results and promoting the use of ICT-driven innovation thanks to a sustainable network of 'multipliers'. They could also contribute to connect SMEs from the creative sectors with appropriate sources of funding (e.g. loans, venture capital, business angels' investment, crowd-funding and others) and with international business networks.

REFLECTIVE

This sub-section programme funds in particular "Research & Innovation Actions", "Innovation Actions" and "Coordination and Support Actions" on transmission of European cultural heritage, the preservation of European coastal and maritime cultural landscapes⁵³, digital cultural assets and virtual museums, 3D modelling of cultural heritage⁵⁵ and innovative models for re-use of cultural heritage⁵⁶.

SME INSTRUMENT

The SME instrument supports the assessment of the technical and commercial feasibility of an innovative concept as well as the development of a business plan. If the feasibility study concludes that this concept has potential but requires additional funding before it can be commercialised, the SME instrument may support the development and demonstration phases. Last but not least, it may facilitate access to risk finance.

When and how to apply?

For more information on application procedures, see the Research and Innovation Participation Portal and the H2020 online guide. For additional assistance, contact Horizon 2020 Support. Partners can also be found for different types of cooperation in the Enterprise Europe (EEN) database.

What is funding as a type and level?

MSCA. Grants at all stages of researchers' careers, from PhD candidates to highly experienced researchers. "Individual Fellowships": duration of 12 to 24 months; EU contribution calculated on the basis of a 'researcher unit cost' of € 4650/month + € 800/month for research costs + € 650/month for management costs of the hosting institution. "Innovative Training Networks" ("European Training Networks"): research and innovation training for 3 to 36 months; maximum EU contribution of € 3 186 000. "Research and Innovation Staff Exchange": project of up to 4 years, offering grants for secondment of staff members for 1 month to 1 year; EU contribution of € 4500€ per month.

LEIT & REFLECTIVE. For "Research & Innovation Actions", grants for projects typically lasting 36 to 48 months, with an average EU contribution of € 2 to 5 million over that period. The grant may cover 100% of the total eligible costs. For "Innovation Actions", grants for projects typically lasting 30 to 36 months, with an average EU contribution of € 2 to 5 million over that period. The grant may cover 100% of the total eligible costs for non-profit organisations and 70% maximum for profit-making entities. For "Coordination and Support Actions", grants for projects typically lasting 12 to 30 months and an average EU contribution of € 500.000 to 2 million over that period. The grant covers 100% of the total eligible costs.

SME INSTRUMENT. For feasibility assessment, grants of € 50.000 (lump sum) with a typical duration of 6 months, covering maximum 70 % of total cost of the project. For innovation development & demonstration projects, grants of € 500.000 to 2,5 million (indicative range), with a typical duration of 1 to 2 years, covering 70 % of total cost of the project as a general rule). As for risk finance, this instrument allows financial intermediaries to offer SMEs better loans, guarantees or counter-guarantees as well as hybrid, mezzanine or equity finance.

9.COSME

What is it?

COSME is the EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). It supports SMEs in four areas:

- facilitate access to finance for SMEs through the "Loan Guarantee Facility" and the "Equity Facility for Growth"
- improving access to markets (notably thanks to the services provided by the Enterprise Europe Network)
- improving framework conditions for the competitiveness and sustainability of Union enterprises, notably thanks to the Tourism Action Plan
- promoting entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial culture, notably thanks to the Erasmus, for young entrepreneurs exchange scheme

Who can apply?

ACCESS TO FINANCE

- SMEs

TOURISM ACTION PLAN

1. All legal persons (SMEs, NGOs, public authorities and others)

ERASMUS FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

1) Entrepreneurs

What are the activities for which funding can be applied?

ACCESS TO FINANCE

Any type of useful transaction or investment for the development of legitimate SMEs activities.

TOURISM ACTION PLAN

Some of the Tourism Action Plan's objectives⁶⁸ are pursued through calls for Proposals and calls for tenders open to the tourism sector. These may concern, among other things:

- the development and/or promotion of sustainable transnational thematic tourism products (linked, for instance, European routes dedicated to specific aspects of our cultural and industrial heritage, cycling trails, eco-tourism, maritime and sub-aquatic areas, etc.).
- the development and/or promotion of niche products exploiting synergies between tourism and creative industries at European level (e.g. European Route around high-end products)
- transnational public and private partnerships developing tourism products targeting specific age groups (e.g. seniors and youth) to increase tourism flows between European countries during the low and medium seasons
- capacity building schemes for "accessible tourism" (i.e. to all, regardless of their physical limitations, disabilities or age) whereby destination managers, entrepreneurs and others can learn from experienced and successful 'accessible' operators, create synergies with other operators along the supply chain, explore new market opportunities and way to make business.

ERASMUS FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

This exchange scheme allows young entrepreneurs to spend 1 to 6 months with an experienced entrepreneur⁶⁹ based in another European country and ready to act as a mentor. Young entrepreneurs and their hosts get to discover new European markets or business partners, different ways of doing business, and possibly decide to continue their collaboration on the longer-term (e.g. joint ventures, sub-contracting activities, contractor-supplier relationships). For young entrepreneurs, this action also eases the successful start of their business or strengthens their new enterprise. As for host entrepreneurs, they benefit from fresh ideas from a motivated new entrepreneur who may have specialised skills or knowledge which complement yours.

When and how to apply?

For grants, more information on calls for proposals and application procedures can be found on the website of the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME), managing CoSME, and on the portal of participants in research and innovation.

For loans, loan guarantees, equity or venture capital, the EU search engine can be used to find financial intermediaries (commercial banks, etc.) located in the country and supported by the loan guarantee mechanism or the capital mechanism for growth.

As regards the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs exchange scheme, the application can be submitted online or through a dedicated contact point.

What is funding as a type and level?

ACCESS TO FINANCE. Interventions (loans, guarantees) supported by the Loan Guarantee Facility: duration of minimum 12 months and maximum 10 years; amount below or equal to € 150.000 for any type of SME, and above under specific conditions.

TOURISM ACTION PLAN. Grants for projects typically lasting 18 months, with an average EU contribution of € 250.000. Contracts for studies and analyses of variable duration and amount.

ERASMUS FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS. Grants covering part of travel and subsistence costs during the visit. Depending on the country of stay, the monthly financial assistance ranges from € 560 to € 1.100.

10. Creative Europe Programme

What is it?

The Creative Europe programme helps cultural and creative organisations to operate transnationally, the circulation of works of culture as well as the mobility of cultural players. Bringing together 3 pre-existing programmes (Culture, MEDIA and MEDIA Mundus), "Creative Europe" is made of 3 parts:

- the "Culture sub-programme" for cultural & creative sectors
- the "Media sub-programme" for the audio-visual industries⁷¹
- the Cross-sectoral strand for joint projects between the cultural & creative sectors and the audio-visual industries.

Who can apply?

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS

- All legal persons⁷⁴ active in the cultural and creative sectors; they must have had a legal personality for at least 2 years on the date of the deadline for submission of applications.

EUROPEAN NETWORKS

- Networks active in the cultural and creative sectors, consisting of at least 15 member organisations (legal persons) established in at least 10 participating countries; these European networks must have had a legal personality for at least 2 years on the date of the deadline for submission of applications.

EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF CULTURE

- Cities

What are the activities for which funding can be applied?

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS

The "Culture sub-programme" funds transnational activities within and outside of the EU, aimed at developing, creating, producing, disseminating and preserving goods and services which embody cultural, artistic or other creative expressions. This encompasses activities to develop skills, competences and know-how, including how to adapt to digital technologies; to test new business and management models; to organise international cultural activities, such as touring events, exhibitions, exchanges and festivals; as well as to stimulate interest in, and improve access to, European cultural and creative works. The programme will not support projects including pornographic or racist material or advocating violence.

EUROPEAN NETWORKS

The "Culture sub-programme" supports European networks (i.e. structured groups of organisations) that strengthen the capacity of the cultural and creative sectors to operate transnationally and internationally, adapt to change and promote innovation⁷². A limited number of networks with broad coverage will be supported across a balanced range of sectors. Greater synergies between existing networks are welcomed in order to reinforce their organisational and financial structure and avoid duplication of efforts.

EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF CULTURE

The title of "European Capital of Culture" is awarded each year to one city in two Member States, according to a chronological list of eligible Member States set for 2020-2033 (Croatia and Ireland in 2020; Romania and Greece in 2021 ...). These cities have to create a cultural programme specifically for that year. The "Culture sub-programme" supports the implementation of this programme which has to highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share, as well as to promote greater understanding between European citizens.⁷³

CROSS-SECTORAL STRAND

The Cross-sectoral strand will facilitate loans to cultural & creative enterprises and organisations. It will also support transnational activities across the cultural, creative and audio-visual sectors, for instance to exchange experiences and know-how relating to new business and management models.

When and how to apply?

Information on calls for proposals and application procedures is available on the website of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency and through the information offices of the Creative Europe program.

As far as European Capitals of Culture are concerned, stakeholders should expect a competition to be announced in their own country (6 years before the country in turn hosts). The body responsible for this competition (usually the Ministry of Culture) publishes a call for applications.

What is funding as a type and level?

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS. For "smaller scale cooperation projects" (max 48 months and implemented by a consortium of at least 3 partners from 3 different participating countries.), grants up to € 200.000 representing maximum 60% of the eligible budget. For "larger scale cooperation projects" (max 48 months and implemented by a consortium of at least 6 partners from 6 different participating countries), grants up to € 2 million representing maximum 50% of the eligible budget.

EUROPEAN NETWORKS. Action grants awarded under a 3-year Framework Partnership Agreement, which shall not exceed € 250.000 per year. Maximum co-financing rate of 80% of total eligible costs.

EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF CULTURE. Each city holding the European Capital of Culture title gets € 1.5 mil (Melina Mercouri prize), provided that it meets a number of criteria and has implemented the recommendations of EU panels.

CROSS-SECTORAL STRAND. A financial guarantee facility of up to €750 million will be established in 2016 to allow financial intermediaries lending more to these sectors.

11. Erasmus +

What is it?

"Erasmus+" aims to boost skills and employability, as well as modernising Education and Training. In addition to the new sport action and the Youth in Action programme, it brings together 6 other pre-existing programmes:

- the Lifelong Learning Programme (Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius and Grundtvig)
- Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink and the programme for cooperation with industrialised countries

Who can apply?

MOBILITY PROJECTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION / VET

- Universities and other higher education institutions / Professional or vocational schools
- All legal persons active in the labour market or in the fields of education & training (e.g. SMEs, chamber of commerce, trade union, foundation, NGO and others)

JOINT MASTER DEGREES

- Universities and other higher education institutions (applying on behalf of a consortium)
- All legal persons that contributes directly and actively to the delivery of the Joint Master Degree (e.g. SMEs, chamber of commerce, trade union, foundation, NGO and others)

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS / KNOWLEDGE ALLIANCES / SECTOR SKILLS ALLIANCES

- All legal persons (e.g. higher education institution, SMEs, chamber of commerce, trade union, foundation, NGO, cultural organization, library, museum and others)

EUROPEAN SPORT EVENTS

- All legal persons active in the field of sport, established in a Program Country⁷

What are the activities for which funding can be applied?

In order to promote innovation and employability, the program supports:

- earning opportunities for individuals through Mobility Projects for Higher Education Students and Staff, a loan guarantee scheme to help Master's degree students financing their studies abroad and Mobility Projects for VET Learners and Staff (Vocational Education and Training);
- cooperation between educational institutions, businesses, local and regional authorities and NGOs, mainly through Joint Master Degrees (i.e. high-level integrated international study program of 60, 90 or 120 ECTS); Strategic Partnerships (allowing organizations from different socio-

economic sectors to develop and disseminate, among other things, innovative practices leading to high quality teaching, training, learning and youth work); Knowledge Alliances (a/ to develop innovative and multidisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning⁷⁵; b/ to stimulate entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills among teaching staff and workers; c/ to facilitate the exchange, flow and co-creation of knowledge between higher education and enterprises); and Sector Skills Alliances⁷⁶ (to design and deliver joint vocational training program and teaching / training methodologies, with particular focus on work-based learning, providing learners with the skills required by the labour market);

- not-for profit European sport events encouraging participation in sport and physical activity.

When and how to apply?

The Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency (eaCa) is responsible for implementing centralized actions (joint master's degrees, strategic partnerships, knowledge union and sports activities). It publishes invitations to submit proposals on its website. Applications are submitted online.

For actions not managed directly by the eaCa (mobility projects), proposals must be submitted to the National Agency of the country where the applicant organization is established.

What is funding as a type and level?

MOBILITY PROJECTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS. Traineeships (work placement) abroad in an enterprise or any other relevant workplace for 2 to 12 months (excl. travel) in any program country⁸⁰. EU grant for each trainee ranging from 300 to 700 € per month (depending on the hosting country living costs) and travel costs of up to 1.100 €.

MOBILITY PROJECTS FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING LEARNERS. Traineeships in any relevant workplace for apprentices and students in vocational training schools, from 2 weeks to 12 months (excl. travel) in any program country. EU support for each trainee ranging from 18 to 112 € per day (depending on the hosting country living costs) and travel costs of up to 1.100 €.

JOINT MASTER DEGREES. Grants of € 2 to 3 million, covering 4 to 5 year projects (depending if the Master lasts for 1 or 2 years).

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS. Grants of maximum € 300.000 for Partnerships lasting 2 years and € 450.000 for Partnerships lasting 3 years.

KNOWLEDGE ALLIANCES. Grants of € 700.000 for a 2-year Alliance; € 1 million for a 3-year Alliance.

SECTOR SKILLS ALLIANCES. Grants of € 700.000 for a 2-year Alliance; € 1 million for a 3-year Alliance.

EUROPEAN SPORT EVENTS. Grants of up to € 2 million for sport event involving participants from at least 12 program countries.

12. Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)

What is it?

The "Employment and Social Innovation" (EaSI) programme promotes a high level of quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating social exclusion and poverty, and improving working conditions. It brings together:

- PROGRESS (Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity)
- EURES (European job mobility) and
- EaSI Guarantee Financial Instrument (dedicated to microfinance and social entrepreneurship finance)

Who can apply?

PROGRESS

- Higher education institutions (Universities) and research institutes
- Public authorities - Employment services
- Social partners
- Experts in evaluation and in impact assessment

EURES

- Public authorities - Employment services
- Jobseekers (EU nationals and those legally living in an EU country)
- Enterprises - SMEs

EaSI Guarantee Financial Instrument

- Enterprises - Micro-entrepreneurs
- Individuals
- Enterprises - Social enterprises

What are the activities for which funding can be applied?

PROGRESS supports analytical work useful for policy-making, social innovation and social policy experimentation (i.e. testing innovative policies on a small scale and up-scaling the most successful ones, including with the European Social Fund support).

EURES supports workers' mobility and helps companies recruiting in another European country via targeted mobility schemes⁸¹ (e.g. "Your First EURES Job" for jobseekers between 18-30 years)⁸². Besides job matching and job placement support, these schemes may cover part of the SMEs costs of training newly-recruited workers and helping them settle in. They may also help job-seekers to pay for interview trip and/or moving abroad to take up a new job.

EaSI GUARANTEE FINANCIAL INSTRUMENT may be used to help the setting up or development of small businesses / social enterprises, including for investment, leasing, and working capital needs, as well as the acquisition of licenses and other start-up costs. Financing cannot be used to cover credit lines such as overdrafts or short-term revolving facilities.

When and how to apply?

Detailed information on the individual calls for proposals or the calls for tenders under PROGRESS can be found on the relevant website. The Guide to Your First Job with EURES should be considered for the Workers' Mobility Scheme. For microcredits and microloans, one of the microcredit providers should be contacted.

What is funding as a type and level?

PROGRESS. For grants, each call for proposals is setting a maximum level of funding. Budget available under calls for tender also varies.

EURES (under "Your first EURES job"). For SMEs, a grant to cover part of the cost of training newly-recruited workers and helping them settle in (integration programme). For job-seekers, a flat-rate allowance (or lump-sum) to cover expenses incurred for interview trips⁸⁷ and/or to settle in another country after s/he got the job.

EaSI Guarantee Financial Instrument. The microcredit providers supported by the instrument may offer direct or counter-guarantees, different forms of loans (max. € 25.000) and equity investments. For more information, see European Investment Fund. As for social enterprises, financial intermediaries provide loans and other financial instruments (max. €500.000 per social enterprise, on condition it is not listed on the stock market and with an annual turnover not exceeding €30 million).

13. IPARD II Programme of the Republic of Serbia

Instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA II) is a kind of an assistance to countries that are potential candidates for the EU membership or countries that have received the status of a candidate country for accession to the European Union in order to implement the stabilization and accession process in accordance with their specifics. The priority area of agriculture and rural development is intended for the EU membership candidate countries with the aim to prepare themselves for the implementation and management of Common Agricultural Policy.

IPARD II Programme period 2014-2020 offers support to investments in the amount of 175 million euros, and is intended for strengthening the competitiveness within the sector of agri-food production and processing, which will further provide assistance to gradual compliance with the EU standards in the area of hygiene, food safety, veterinary, animal welfare and environmental protection, as well as diversification of rural economy.

The programme also supports establishing of producers groups, rural infrastructure, trainings, including the Extension Service, agro-ecological schemes, as well as local initiatives; and candidate countries for the EU membership, through this programme, are preparing for using funds of the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

IPARD II Programme has been approved by the EU and adopted by the Republic of Serbia and it is being realized through the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and the Directorate for Agrarian Payments.

This is the first kind of any assistance intended directly for the beneficiaries, i.e. agricultural producers- both physical persons and legal entities, including the following regions: a Belgrade Region, Vojvodina Region, Šumadija and West Serbia Region and South and East Serbia Region.

The measure that is supporting the development of rural tourism aims to increase the level of development of economic activities in rural areas with the possibility of creating new jobs, and to increase the income of agricultural holdings is measure 6 – Farm Diversification and Business Development.

Rural tourism as part of the general socio-economic context

Analysis of rural tourism in Serbia shows that it already contributes to the rural economy and has great potential for further development. Vojvodina, Western Serbia and Central Serbia have good examples and significant experience in rural tourism. It is estimated that there are more than 32,000 beds (registered and not registered) available for touristic use on rural holdings. It is estimated that a total of RSD 10 billion of income are derived from rural tourism (5 billion from accommodation services and 5 billion are direct revenues). This represents 16% of the RSD 62 billion of total direct tourism GDP, which was calculated for Serbia in 2010 by the World Tourist Organization.

The Serbian tourism strategy takes into consideration the potential to develop rural tourism in Serbia, but not as a priority product. Thus, rural tourism has been included in the product portfolio as being positioned on the bottom of the list of priorities in terms of its attractiveness and competitiveness. However, there are other products which highly correlate with rural tourism such as mountains and lakes, spas and wellness, touring, special interest and nautical attractions.

The 2007, the Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia defined 4 tourist

clusters “not based on administrative borders which presently exist in the country, but primarily on the rational strongholds and various kinds of economies of experience”. These four tourist clusters that cover all the Serbian territory are: Vojvodina, Belgrade, South-Eastern Serbia and South-Western Serbia.

The promotion of rural tourism destinations does not leverage the synergies between the cultural, natural and village tourism products and the rural tourism product. Primarily, domestic tour operators are selling some rural tourism activities in Serbia, with limited interest shown in the international and regional market. The promotion of rural accommodation is not used and packaged as part of a holistic product which integrates rural activities with accommodation. Although the internet is used as a promotion tool, its use is not, in general, widespread for booking purposes yet.

Regarding the aforementioned points, the involvement of Serbia in two macro-regional strategies (i.e. the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (COM (2010) 715) and the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (COM (2014) 357)) is particularly relevant for SMEs and rural tourism. Both macro-regional strategies identify specific strategic priorities in their Action Plans, which can be reached through projects implemented in the framework of this program.

Analysis of rural tourism shows that it already contributes to the rural economy and has great potential for further development (see chapter 3.4). The focus of diversification in the IPARD II will be put on rural tourism because of already long tradition of support through national support schemes in the past and because of great potential and need for further development of that sector. Furthermore, rural areas in Serbia are characterized by diversity of landscapes and biological features, rich cultural heritage and natural resources. Diversification of the rural economy through higher level of services and activities related to rural tourism will reduce dependence on agricultural income and provide the conditions for stable additional income for those households which survival can not only be linked to agriculture. This type of support will contribute to less economically developed and socially vulnerable rural areas. On the other hand, activities in rural tourism expand the range of additional services available to the rural population, as well as services and products which are based on traditional knowledge, technology, natural resources and cultural heritage.

What is it?

The IPARD measure: “Farm diversification and business development” contributes to rural economy diversification and decreased dependence of rural areas on agricultural income and creates conditions for the small agricultural holdings. The IPARD measure: “Farm diversification and business development” will support rural tourism and thus give the possibility for farmers to apply and diversify their activities and income. An analysis of rural tourism in Serbia shows that it already contributes to the rural economy and has great potential for further development. Furthermore, rural

areas are characterized by a diversity of landscapes, rich biodiversity, cultural heritage and natural resources.

In addition, the national support schemes will provide funding for the beekeeping sector and honey production as well as for the aqua-culture sector.

Diversification of economic activities in the rural areas widens the range of services available to rural population and encourages products and services based on traditional knowledge and technology, natural resources and cultural heritage and will be supported with national support measures, rural tourism projects within the IPARD measure: "Farm diversification and business development" will be focused on zones showing an appropriate development potential. Economic diversification should encourage growth, employment and sustainable development in rural areas, and thereby contribute to better territorial balance, both in economic and social terms, increasing directly the income in rural areas by developing non-agriculture activities.

Who can apply?

- Natural persons registered as agricultural producers in rural areas or members of the farm household diversifying on or off farm activities;
- Legal entities established or operating in rural areas in the range of micro and small sized enterprises as defined in the Law on Accounting (*OG of the RS No. 62/2013* and its subsequent modifications). Legal entities, in the same range, established outside rural areas are also eligible if supported investments/activities are located in rural areas.

Wine and spirits sector

- Legal entities and entrepreneurs in the sector of wine and spirit production

What are the activities for which funding can be applied?

Specific objectives

- Investment support to the development of tourist facilities and services to the agricultural producers and other economic operators in the rural areas, and thus the expansion of economic activities in the country in the field of rural tourism;
- Support the development of tourist recreational activities, especially for family and children's tourism.

Eligible activities

Investment in construction and/or reconstruction and/or equipping of the facilities for the provision of tourism and hospitality services, such as rooms, restaurants and other facilities, including facilities for storage, sales, recreation, playing, keeping of animals, tourist camps, improving outdoors

facilities (for riding, fishing in inland waters, cycling, themed trails, a riding trails) and other facilities/mechanization, machinery and equipment in the service of tourism/catering.

Wine and spirits sector

- Construction expansion/renovation and equipping of facilities for production, bottling and storage of wine and spirits, and tasting rooms for wine-tourism and other forms of rural tourism, as well as the arrangement of space in the winery and distillery;
 - Equipment for production of wines and spirits and raw materials (glass bottles, closure caps, corks and labels);
 - Laboratory equipment (excluding glassware) for internal use;
- Support for the promotion of PDO PGI products and their sale;
- Construction/expansion/renovation of plants for wastewater treatment and prevention of air pollution;
 - Construction of plants for energy generation from renewable resources for own consumption (solar power, hydroelectric power, wind turbines, biomass power plants, exchanger pumps)

What is funding as a type and level?

Aid intensity, expressed as the share of public support in the eligible expenditures of the investment amounts up to 65%.

EU co-financing rate is 75% of the public aid.

Recipients can apply with more than one project during the IPARD Program. The application for the next investment project can be submitted after finalisation (final payment) of the previous investment project.

A recipient can claim the support, irrespective of the total value of the investment, for eligible expenditure within the following ceilings:

- Minimum EUR 20,000;
- Maximum EUR 300,000.

Recipient can apply for up to three projects and receive a total support of maximum EUR 400,000 of public support from the IPARD II Program.

III. Examples for the different programmes

1. European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI)

Framework loan to improve the energy efficiency of hotels and tourist resorts? (Source: EIB Projects; <http://www.energiespositif.fr>)

In November 2015, EIB decided to grant a € 500 mil credit line to the "Caisse des Dépôts" and its agent the "Société pour le logement intermédiaire" (SLI) to finance their affordable rental housing construction programme. The SLI Group can use this credit line over 5 years to fund loans of up to 25 years. The objective is to build 13.000 affordable rental housing units in areas where there is a shortage by 2019. The SLI will finance small scale projects (less than € 50 mil) for new homes that will fall into the "Nearly Zero Energy Building" category. The energy savings will help householders to repay their loans.

Third-party financing companies for energy efficiency renovation of private housing in the Île-de-France also got EFSI financing (€ 100 mil to "SEM Energies Posit'If"). This will fund the insulation of the buildings and windows as well as renovation of the heat generation and distribution system in the buildings, ventilation systems, and electric appliances which are part of the joint tenancy area (lights, pumps, etc.). The use of renewable energies (e.g. biomass or solar thermal collectors) may also be included in the works.

The aggregation of a lot of small projects at a regional or national level could also be an option for ageing hotels and tourism resorts that are not energy efficient.

EU contribution: € 500 mil (approved Feb 2016) - Level of EU funding: 33 %

2. European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

Krimml Waterfalls used to develop health tourism initiative (Austria) (Source: Inforegio database ; www.hohe-tauern-health.at)

Tourism in the Oberpinzgau region of the Hohe Tauern National Park was stagnating. The regional authorities therefore set out to develop new tourism products exploiting scientific evidence about the health benefits of a prominent local feature: the highest waterfalls in Europe with a drop of 380 m. In 2006, a Salzburg-based University had indeed set up a scientific laboratory near the Krimml Waterfalls to study the finely dispersed highly concentrated aerosol produced by the water hitting the floor. It demonstrated the benefits of this natural aerosol for people suffering from asthma and allergies: a daily stroll around the waterfalls can reduce the symptoms with positive effects lasting over a few months. Together with other local features (low pollution, low levels of fungal spores, and a short flowering season), this made this part of the National Park an ideal place for treatment or cure.

With the support of the ERDF programme "Strengthening Regional Competitiveness Salzburg

2007–13", a feasibility study looked at the allergologic conditions hotels had to fulfil to be part of this new health-tourism package, how they could be certified and whether a sufficient number of hotels could be found. Eleven local hotels did undergo the required renovation/adaptation measures to offer anti-allergic certified rooms. Collaboration with the regional hospital was also developed to help hotels providing access to medical services as part of their 'premium product'. The ensuing promotion campaign has targeted persons with allergies and guests with high health awareness (appreciating allergy-friendly accommodations and high-quality diet).

The idea then spread to the local wood and construction industry, with a leading woodworking company joining the initiative to work with a university institute on the construction of 'allergy-proof' wood products (from furniture to houses).

Finalist of the RegioStars Award 2012, this project is an example of how a traditional sector can innovate in a rural area by working with scientific partners. It concretely illustrates what "smart specialisation" is. Local hotels benefited (with the number of overnight stays during the summer season going from 60.000 in 2008 to 78.000 in 2010) but beyond that it contributes to position the entire region including the National Park.

EU contribution: € 125.000 - Level of EU funding: 25 %

WW2 Heritage project (BE, FR, NL, UK) (Source: Territorial Cooperation projects - KEEP; www.worldwar2heritage.com/)

The Second World War has had a lasting impact on the landscape of the Channel and the North Sea. Many physical remains such as bunkers and fortifications still remain but are derelict and inaccessible to the public. The same goes to some extent for the memories of eye-witnesses.

Supported by the "2 Seas cross-border Operational Programme",¹⁸ the WW2 Heritage project aimed to ensure the preservation of this heritage and improve access to it. Combining physical and intellectual heritage is indeed the best way to learn about this historical period. The 10 partners, each responsible for key WW2 heritage sites and expert in interpreting this heritage, made an inventory of the physical relics, collected WW2 eye-witness accounts and improved access to this heritage. They also developed the touristic potential of these sites by creating a range of interactive and digital applications as well as "discovery trails" for pedestrians, cyclists and cars. A free App called WWII Heritage is for instance leading visitors on a cross-border discovery route in the regions of Zeeland, West-Flanders, Nord-Pas-de-Calais and the South-East of England (<http://www.worldwar2heritage.com/en/routes>).

EU contribution: € 2.108.055 (2011-2014) - Level of EU funding: 50 %

ATRIUM – European Route on the architecture of totalitarian regimes (Source: Territorial Cooperation projects - KEEP; <http://www.atrium-see.eu/>)

New forms of architectural and urban design were developed from the 1920s with the Fascist regime in Italy to the 1960s with the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. This legacy of a terrible past was seen as useful for local development, if valorised properly.

This was the objective of the "Architecture of Totalitarian Regimes in Urban Managements" project funded by the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme. It started with a selection of buildings & places of particular signification such as Forlì in Italy, Thessaloniki in Greece or Dimitrovgrad in Bulgaria. A transnational Manual for the preservation & economic valorisation of such heritage was prepared. Participants collected and catalogued digitally photograph archives, films, oral testimonies, furniture, etc. Promotion materials were produced and training organised to create new tourism services. In 2014, ATRIUM became a European Cultural Route certified by the Council of Europe.

EU contribution: € 1.407.076 (2011-2013) - Level of EU funding: 73 %

Co-operation projects between oceanographic museums in the South Baltic region (Source: Territorial Cooperation projects - KEEP; <http://www.balticmuseums.org/>)

The South Baltic Programme has supported two projects (BalticMuseums 2.0 & BalticMuseums 2.0 Plus) for the development of cross-border tourism information on four oceanographic museums: the "German Oceanographic Museum", "Gdynia Aquarium" in Poland, the "Lithuanian Sea Museum" and the "Museum of the World Ocean" in Kaliningrad. As the partner museums are a main tourist attraction in their respective region, these projects are contributing to regional economic development.

With the help of local universities, these partners have developed a joint website (www.balticmuseums.net), with a joint online ticketing system, and attractive benefits for those who visit at least two museums in one year. This was followed by the joint development of so-called "e-guides". These electronic guidance systems offer tailor-made tours (e.g. for parents with kids) in several languages. Their content and material have been designed to build on the museums' complementarity.

The BalticMuseums 2.0 Plus also included a promotion campaign around these new features, using web-based marketing activities (e.g. search engine optimisation, search engine advertisements) and more traditional means (e.g. newsletters, flyers, free-cards, promotion via tourist organisations).

EU contribution: € 1.911.555 (2008-2014) - Level of EU funding: 85 %

Incrediblue – online platform for booking private leisure boats (Greece)

Developed by a Greek Start-up based in Volos-Thessaly, Incrediblue is an online platform connecting boat owners across the Mediterranean with potential renters. It provides booking services similar to those of air-bnb or Uber. With more than 2100 boats and crew (sailing boats, catamarans, motor yachts ...) listed on its website, Incrediblue allows guests.

Digital tourism in Wales – Alice in Wonderland (UK) (Source: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/; <https://www.youtube.com/>)

The "Digital Tourism Business Framework" (DTBF) programme developed by Visit Wales provided an ICT diagnostic service to 738 individual businesses, a web platform (sharewales.com) to share learning across the industry, 44 grants to improve business performance through digital technologies and a range of digital marketing activities linked to a new Visit Wales website (which doubled its traffic with 3.5 million sessions in 2014 alone).

Forty new digital products aimed specifically at improving tourists' experience have been developed thanks to DTBF. These include digital interpretation at Llanelly House, one of the finest Georgian town house in Wales (interactive touchscreens in key places of this building, gaming, etc.) as well as the development of immersive e-digital trails in Llandudno. Building on the town's links with the Alice in Wonderland books (Alice Liddell, the little girl who inspired Lewis Carol, was spending her holidays there), "Follow the white rabbit" is a 3D augmented reality App with Alice, the White Rabbit, Mad Hatter, ..., guiding visitors through landscapes and classic Victorian features where Alice lived.

EU contribution: € 6.528.439 (2009-2015) - Level of EU funding: 55 %

3. Cohesion Fund (CF)

Flood management along the Tisza river (Hungary) (Source: Inforegio database)

Part of a program called "Improvement of Vásárhelyi Plan", this project aimed at tackling flood problems of Tisza valley in Eastern Hungary. Funded by the 2007-2013 Hungarian "Operational Programme Environment and Energy", it allowed building a reservoir delimited by dykes, with controllable water intake/outlet structures. An environmental monitoring system was also put in place to measure its impact on the natural habitat. This 99 million m³ water reservoir contributed to reduce flood waves and manage the surrounding natural landscape. This benefited nature-based tourism in the area.

EU contribution: € 45.415.314 (2007-2013) - Level of EU funding: 82 %

4. European Social Fund (ESF)

Stimulating rural tourism by cooking with local products (Source: European Social Fund list of projects)

The ESF supported the "Cooking with local produce" training programme organised in the Vercors district (France) by AFRAT, the association for training rural people in tourism activities. Drawing on the practices and history of the terroir, this training combined theory and practice, introducing students to local producers and arranging work experience (hostels, country restaurants, rural hotel businesses, gîtes and tourist activity centres). All participants (apprentice cooks) found work at the end of the programme. Cooking with local products proved to stimulate tourism business in the area.

EU contribution: € 52.776 (2010) - Level of EU funding: 50%

Training programme for tourism managers and supervisors in Malta (Source: European Social Fund list of projects & tourism.gov.mt)

In 2011 the Malta Tourism Authority received EUR 3 million from the Maltese government and the ESF (25%-75% co-financing) for its training programme "Advance: Training Tourism Leaders". The programme was organised around two platforms: one for 450 senior managers and a second for 300 middle management and supervisors in the tourism sector. Teaching was provided by 12 foreign experts. Training sessions were held in leading tourism establishments and one-to-one mentoring was offered.

EU contribution: € 3,5 million (2008-2013) - Level of EU funding: 85%

Developing an alternative way of presenting Slovenia's capital city to tourists (Source: European Social Fund list of projects)

The Bosnian Cultural Association of Slovenia has received ESF funding for its "Alternative Ljubljana" project to include 'alternative sights' into Ljubljana's tourist offering. The intention is to offer visitors of Slovenia's capital city a 'multicultural path' combining traditional Slovenian culture with the culture of immigrants, such as German, Italian and Jewish communities, and minorities coming from other parts of the former Yugoslavia. The project also aims to reduce youth unemployment through training (how to make videos helping visitors and residents explore the rich history, architecture and culinary delights of the city ...).

Promoting the role of women entrepreneurs in cultural routes (Source: <http://rutas.legadoandalusi.es/>)

The "El Legado Andalusi" Foundation is supporting the development of cultural routes around the 800-year Hispano-Muslim legacy in the south of Spain. In July 2012, the Foundation held an ESF co-funded European seminar on how rural women entrepreneurs can participate in boosting tourism and economic development along such 'cultural routes' across Europe.

5. European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

"Routes without barriers" - Accessible Tourism in Portugal and Spain (Source: Rural Development Programme project database; <http://www.terrasdentro.pt>)

This LEADER (trans-national cooperation) project promoted "accessible tourism" for people with disabilities in four Local Action Group territories in Portugal and Spain. The partners have each adapted a museum space with fully accessible facilities; created an interactive website accessible to all users; undertaken many awareness-raising actions, including a new accessible tourism guide; etc. Tourism services and attractions in each LAG area are now more 'inclusive'.

EU contribution: €160.000 (2010-2012) - Level of EU funding: 40%

"At the Saddler" – Bulgaria (Source: Rural Development Programme project database)

The Lovech province, located in the central Bulgarian mountains, has beautiful landscape and a strong tradition in handcraft production. Hristo Hristov, specialised in manufacturing leather and particularly saddlery products, decided to build a guest house in Apriltsy and renovate a building to be used as workshop for saddler craft products. The small guest house 'At the Saddler' can host up to 4 people. The workshop is used for exhibitions of the craft products and demonstrate how the products are made, giving tourists the possibility to practice. Together to horseback tours, these activities are expected to lead to an increased production and sales as well as help to promote local traditions.

EU contribution: € 15.144 (2013-2014) - Level of EU funding: 30%

"In den Bongerd" - Therapeutic Holiday Houses for the Disabled (Source: Rural Development Programme project database; Project website)

The Stek family wanted their fruit company business to provide new services to the disabled or the chronically ill. Their orchard was equipped with paved paths, making this peaceful environment accessible to these persons and their families. Tailored medical care was made available through cooperation with a local organisation. Recreation residence facilities of the company now provide extra income to the fruit company.

EU contribution: €68.768 (2009-2010) - Level of EU funding: 20%

6. European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

Discovery of shell fish farming in the Pays d'Auray (Brittany – France) (Source: Farnet)

The Pays d'Auray has been shaped by fishing and shell fish farming. These sectors are however under pressure because of a significant residential demand (secondary residences). A public–private partnership was therefore set up to develop a targeted tourism offer for the discovery of fishing and shell fish farming (support for the creation of an 'Oyster house'; programming of visits to shell fish farming sites, processing companies, the auction at Quiberon; discovery routes, links between producers, restaurant owners and consumers, etc.).

EU contribution: € 500.000 – Level of EU funding: 42%

Multi-functional fish restaurant, shop & work space (North Jutland - Denmark) (Source: Farnet)

Hune, a small town of 3 000 inhabitants situated 40 km away from one of the top Danish tourism destinations (city of Aalborg), has beautiful beaches but lacked restaurants and shops focusing on high quality fish products. An itinerant fishmonger, Mogens Klausen decided setting-up his own restaurant, combined with a fish shop and a smoke house (which compensates the low activity of the restaurant during the autumn/winter season). He contacted the North Jutland FLAG that provided him with technical and financial support. Open all the year, his complex has created 6 all-year full-time jobs for local people, staff increasing to 20 Full Time Equivalents during the summer season.

EU contribution: €22.500 – Level of EU funding: 3,3%

Fishing Village Anno 1906 (Bremen - Germany) ((Source: Farnet)

The objective of this project was to increase the attractiveness of the run down and somewhat industrial looking harbour area of Bremerhaven. A local fish wholesaler based in the harbour and the local FLAG cooperated to establish a small, rustic fishing village at the port entrance, made up of 11 thatched huts based on traditional fishing huts from the year 1906. Restaurants, shopping possibilities (clothes and fish) and sightseeing were arranged as a "maritime attraction world" focused around fish. The oldest existing "fish packing hall IV" (established 1906) was also refurbished. Around 15 trading companies and gastronomes are now offering their products and services in these halls.

EU contribution: € 158.000 – Level of EU funding: 40%

7. LIFE

Development of sustainable tourism in the Slitere national park (Latvia) (Source: LIFE Projects database; Polprop-Natura website)

Selected among best LIFE-environment projects 2012, POLPROP-NATURA aimed at developing a sustainable tourism-management model for Natura 2000, using Slitere National Park as its demonstration site. There is a growing demand for ecotourism but many tourists are unaware of Natura 2000 purposes and do not always behave appropriately on its sites.

Led by Latvian development agency "Lauku Ceļotājs", the project created five new sustainable tourism products for the area (park guide; plant finder featuring common but attractive species instead of exposing rare and sensitive species; attractions in and routes to less sensitive zones of the park; cheap and simple touring route marking method; ...).

It also developed a monitoring methodology providing key data for new tourism initiatives and conducted an awareness-campaign on Natura 2000, coupled with the distribution of a guide on sustainable nature-based tourism products in the 14 national parks in the Baltic countries.

As a result, there was an increase in the number of visitors, the length of their stay and the amount of money they spent on average on the park territory. The number of companies that offer services/products to visitors increased from 23 to 48. Tourist accommodation providers, (nature) guides, catering services (cafes, farms offering tasting of produce and meals on request), producers of traditional smoked fish, equipment rental companies, craftsmen all benefitted.

EU contribution: € 244.900 (2009-2012) - Level of EU funding: 49 %

Tourism for conservation in the Burren and Cliffs of Moher geopark (Ireland) (Source: LIFE Projects database; Geopark-LIFE)

Burren area has a rich and diverse range of flora and fauna, archaeological monuments and traditional cultural practices. The concentration of tourists - 90% during summer months - however has serious environmental implications (use of resources ...). Moreover, whilst the Cliffs of Moher (one of the highest sea cliffs in Europe) attracts up to one million visitors a year, another desirable tourism location only 20 km away – the Black Head Loop Walk – attracts fewer than 3 000 visitors annually.

The "Burren Tourism for Conservation" project (also called Geopark LIFE project) aims to reconcile tourism development with conservation of biodiversity and cultural heritage. Reducing the impact of tourism on the Burren is indeed a way to increase its 'carrying capacity'. Pilot actions include a resource management programme for about 100 enterprises (dealing with the use of sun pipes bringing sunlight into dark parts of a building, installation of smart meters ...) and improvement of 4 monuments and 3 natural sites (long-term protection measures of a site while tourism activity can

take place around it). The lessons of its pilot actions will be shared, notably through tool kits, offering a 'tourism for conservation' methodology of value to local communities in Europe.

EU contribution: € 1.108.872 (2012-2017) - Level of EU funding: 50 %

Campaign for the reduction of smoking related litter on beaches (Greece) (Source: LIFE Projects database; LIFE-amos)

Marine litter is one of the most serious environmental problems of the 20th Century. It has an adverse effect on human health and the economy, affecting tourism, industry and the fisheries sector.

Coordinated by an NGO (Mediterranean SOS Network), the project aims to improve the aesthetic value of beaches and boost hygiene, as well as diminishing the need for expensive clean ups. This relies on an integrated information campaign for the prevention/reduction of smoking-related litter in coastal areas of Greece.

EU contribution: € 299.709 (2013-2015) - Level of EU funding: 50 %

8. Horizont 2020

CHESS – personalised interactive stories in museums and cultural sites (Source: <http://www.chessexperience.eu/>; <http://cordis.europa.eu/>)

Cultural heritage institutions must make their collections more engaging especially for the young 'digital natives', while exploiting recently developed digital libraries. At the same time, new mobile devices (smartphones, tablets) allow the widespread deployment of apps used in museums and cultural sites to improve visitor's experience.

CHESS (Cultural Heritage Experiences through Socio-personal interactions and Storytelling) therefore used various techniques for delivering personalised interactive stories. Often including an augmented reality interface, these cultural 'adventures' adapt continuously to the individual profiles and preferences of their visitors. They were tested in different sites; most notably two world-renowned museums, the New Acropolis Museum, and the Cité de l'Espace in France.

In order to achieve this, CHESS had to conduct interdisciplinary research in personalization and adaptivity, digital storytelling, interaction methodologies, and narrative-oriented mobile and mixed reality technologies, with a sound theoretical basis in museological, cognitive, and learning sciences.

EU contribution: € 2.859.712 (2011-2014) – Level of EU funding: 67%

UnderSafe - Keeping underground tourist destinations safe (Source:

<http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/>; <http://cordis.europa.eu/>)

Caves, catacombs and tunnels are becoming increasingly popular, with an estimate of more than 1.800 underground tourist attractions in Europe (primarily in Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain and France). About 27 million people visit these attractions every year in Europe. It is therefore necessary to ensure that they are safe and environmentally friendly. Owing to the UnderSafe project, a polished consortium (made of technological SMEs, a company exploiting a touristic salt mine and a polytechnic university) has been developing a wireless intelligent system providing round-the-clock detection and early warning about potential dangers to tourists, guides and professionals working underground.

Thanks to a special necklace or bracelet, users access a central monitoring system via all popular mobile devices. Alerts are issued when people enter non-visitor areas or unstable zones, when a visitor remains immobile for an extended period of time, or when someone falls behind a group. The system also provides environmental control of the underground facility in terms of physical parameters (e.g. humidity, temperature) and gas sensing (e.g. carbon dioxide, oxygen, carbon monoxide). Thanks to this, it can for instance calculate the maximum number of visitors a site can accommodate without destroying flora and fauna or ancient drawings. It will also include structural sensors to detect rock falls and landslide movement.

EU contribution: € 1.045.400 (2011-2013) – Level of EU funding: 75%

OntoWiki for enterprise knowledge management, e-learning and e-tourism (Source:

<http://cordis.europa.eu/>)

Specialised activities lead to specialised terminologies and concepts. This makes it hard to communicate and share knowledge within a company, a sector, Ontologies, glossaries, thesauruses, are developed to facilitate communication between human beings and computers, among human beings as well as among computers.

A free open-source software, OntoWiki is an ontology editor and a knowledge acquisition system. Developed at the University of Leipzig, it has a large and active user base. This project allowed upgrading OntoWiki and adapting it to the needs of SMEs engaged in e-tourism. It helped preparing for the commercial exploitation of this semantic collaboration software.

EU contribution: € 943.800 (2008-2011) – Level of EU funding: 64%

CrossCult: reuse of digital cultural heritage (Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/>; <http://www.crosscult.eu/>)

CROSSCULT aims at boosting the development of new businesses exploiting the rich European digital cultural heritage. This could be done by using digital cultural assets for the re-interpretation of European (hi)stories. The project will create unique cross-border perspectives by connecting existing digital historical resources and by creating new ones through the participation of the public (citizen viewpoints on artefacts to digitalise).

CROSSCULT will be implemented through 4 real-world flagship pilots involving a total of 8 sites across Europe. It will be realized through the participation of 11 partners and 14 associate partners including computer scientists, social sciences and humanity researchers, historians and private companies, from 7 European countries.

EU contribution: € 3.503.358 (2016-2019) – Level of EU funding: 95%

RICHEs - Renewal, Innovation and Change in Cultural Heritage (Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/>; <http://www.riches-project.eu/>)

Ubiquitous digital technologies force us to ask key questions: how can Cultural heritage (CH) institutions renew and remake themselves? How should an increasingly diverse society use our CH? How can the EU citizen, alone or as part of a community, play a vital co-creative role? What are the limitations of new technologies in representing and promoting CH? How can CH become closer to its audiences of innovators, skilled makers, curators, artists, economic actors? How can CH be a force in the new EU economy?

This research project will, among other things, cover copyright/IPR issues, the commoditisation of CH and performance-based CH. Evidence-based reports, recommendations and guidelines will be produced for use by policy-makers, national agencies and CH practitioners.

EU contribution: € 327.900 (2013-2017) – Level of EU funding: 100%

ALHTOUR: Health Tourism Living Lab (Source: <http://cordis.europa.eu/>)

The ALHTOUR project aims at strengthening scientific excellence and innovation capacity in technologies for independent living applied to the health tourism which is identified as a key driver for territorial development. It will contribute to exploit opportunities offered by Silver Economy and demands for active and healthy ageing.

Concretely partners from 4 European Regions will put in place a "Health Tourism Living Lab" around the University of Lisbon. ("A living lab is a user-centred, open-innovation ecosystem, often operating in a territorial context (e.g. city, agglomeration, region), integrating concurrent research and innovation processes within a public-private-people partnership." - Wikipedia). Partners will engage

in knowledge transfer by leveraging on academic excellence of Universities in these 4 Regions as well as on complementarities and synergies among their Smart Specialization Strategies.

EU contribution: € 1.175.205 (2016-2018) – Level of EU funding: 100%

9. COSME

EuroVelo 13 – Iron Curtain Trail (AT, CZ, DE, EE, FI, LT, LV, PL) (Source: Europa)

The "Iron Curtain Trail" (ICT) is part of the European cycle route network (EuroVelo) initiated by the European Cyclists' Federation. The ambition of Eurovelo is to develop high-quality cycling routes linking all countries in Europe, to be used by long-distance cycle tourists as well as by local people for short leisure journeys.

The ICT (Eurovelo 13) follows the line which forcibly divided Europe into East and West for half a century. It reminds people and nations about the Cold War and the achievements of the new democratic order in Europe. It could become a flagship of 'Brand Europe' with few negative environmental impacts and many positive social and economic benefits.

This project focuses on the northern section of the ICT. It aims to develop/promote transnational touristic package along that section as well as to facilitate the emergence of public-private partnerships around cyclo-tourism.

EU contribution: € 200.000 (2014-2016) – Level of EU funding: 75 %

Discovering European rural areas with the Limes App (<http://www.mobilise-europe.mobi/limes>; <http://limes.per-rlp.de/limes-app-4/>)

The former fortified border of the Roman Empire, the limes, runs through 10 European countries, mostly in rural areas. Part of this important element of the European cultural heritage is already a designated UNESCO world heritage but is not sufficiently known from European and international tourists. While these countries have numerous museums, historic routes, archaeological sites and beauty spots along the Limes, these single places were indeed not yet linked.

With the support of the CIP programme between 2011 and 2013, the "European Mobile and Mobility Industries Alliance" therefore developed the LIMES-Mobile App in test regions in three European countries: Lower Austria, Ruse in Bulgaria and Rhineland-Palatinate in Germany ("Large Scale Innovative and Mobile European Services Culture Tourism in Rural Areas"). Thanks to this App, European history becomes alive following the limes. Other Regions have followed and the App now also exists in a 3D version.

European AstroTourism Route (BG, EL, ES, IT, PT) (Source: Europa)

Astro-tourism is on the increase in the global tourist offer. The project therefore aims at the development of a route of European sites of astronomical interest, encompassing treasures from prehistory to the present day. It will, among other things, evaluate European assets and potential, produce guides on selected observatories, test stargazing sessions, organise thematic routes (some of them at night), communicate on the results of the demo experiences, ... This route should eventually invite the traveller to discover the universe through the European sky as well as the European scientific contribution to astronomy.

EU contribution: € 200.000 (2013-2015) – Level of EU funding: 75 %

European Itinerary of Top Chocolate (BE, DE, ES, FR, IT, UK) (Source: <https://ec.europa.eu/easme/>)

Many European luxury industries are among the most creative ones (fashion, perfumes, etc). Their world reputation should be further exploited to increase tourist flows around niche products during the low and medium seasons. CHIELI (Chocolate Heritage in European Life and Identity – The European Chocolate Way) aims at creating, developing and promoting a new European Route around high-end chocolate.

EU contribution: € 400.000 (2015-2016) – Level of EU funding: 75 %

10. Creative Europe Program

Supporting the tourism information network of industrial heritage in Europe (Source: Creative Europe projects; <http://www.erih.net/>)

North West Europe was the cradle of the Industrial Revolution. Dealing with industrial heritage sites is expensive, calling for innovative solutions. As they are part of a common European heritage, it was decided to support trans-European co-operation aimed at encouraging the appreciation, understanding, protection and promotion of this heritage.

The network ERIH (European Route of Industrial Heritage) was launched in 1999 as an Interreg II C project. It delivered a Master Plan with concrete ideas and activities to promote European Industrial Heritage. This Plan is progressively implemented thanks to further EU funding. A European brand for industrial heritage was for instance developed, backed by a corporate design, logo, seal of quality, signage and print products thanks to the former EU Culture Programme (2002-2007). A Route System was put in place between important industrial heritage sites ("Anchor Points") possessing a well-developed tourism infrastructure. ERIH has also worked on making Industrial Heritage attractive to children and young people. With more than 1.000 industrial heritage sites in 43 countries, ERIH presents the most comprehensive cultural and tourism inventory of industrial heritage in Europe.

The 2015 grant aims at ensure the network's long-term sustainability by providing additional services and benefits to its members. These will include market research, experts' database, cross-marketing, ..., but also support for the exchange of experience and cultural co-operation (joint events, audience development, cultural and artists exchange etc.). The grant will help reinforcing ERIH secretariat and establishing national chapters and international thematic task forces.

EU contribution: € 184.143 (2015-2016) – Level of EU funding: 60%

Follow the Vikings (Source: Creative Europe projects; <http://www.destinationviking.com/>)

The "Follow the Vikings" project brings together a network of partners members of the "Destination Viking Association". Its objective is to make the transnational Viking heritage accessible and understandable to a world-wide audience. Its key components are:

- Audience Development (through a variety of means including the use of new technologies such as social media, mobile applications, website);
- Building Competence in Business Models (through sharing best-practice and expert advice at a seminar on business development);
- Strengthening the International Network;
- International Touring Event to promote interest in Viking heritage and heritage tourism (by organising a travelling group of Viking actors and artists to Viking markets and similar events throughout Europe).

EU contribution: € 1.960.000 (2015-2019) – Level of EU funding: 50%

Lux Scientia – A European Constellation (Source: <http://www.culturefund.eu/projects/lux-scientia-a-european-constellation>)

The project allowed a trans-European collaboration between three European light festivals cooperated (Artichoke trust in the UK, Skyway in Poland and Valgusfestival in Estonia). Three artists, one from each host country, were asked to create a lightwork with the three cities concerned in mind. Their installation was shared by each city. Promoting the cities as places of dynamic discussion and innovative art increased their visibility as European cultural hubs.

Lux Scientia also provided the opportunity for resident artists and scientists to discuss the scientific and aesthetic aspects of light, culminating in a London symposium in February 2012. The debate contributed to raise awareness of a shared European heritage, foster mutual understanding and celebrate the cultural diversity of the three countries.

EU contribution: € 199.300 (2011-2012) – Level of EU funding: 50%

11. Erasmus +

Innoguide 2.0. Stimulating innovation among tourist guides (BE, NL, DK, FI, HR) (Source: Erasmus+ platform; <http://www.innoguidetourism.eu/>)

In our fast changing globalised world, tour guides have to deal with culturally diverse audiences that care for the environment and look for tours engaging all their senses. This demands a new set of skills and competences.

In order to help guides becoming more innovative and creative (including thanks to new technologies), 10 partners from 8 European countries have therefore joined forces to develop an online platform called "Innoguide" with the support of the former EU Lifelong Learning Programme. This platform, among other things, provides: (a) free of charge e-learning modules on intercultural, sustainable and experiential tour guiding; (b) videos with good practice examples for inspiration; (c) blogs for partners; and (d) a toolkit for guide organisations / companies to integrate these topics in their work.

Thanks to Innoguide 2.0., teaching materials will be updated and the current "Moodle" platform upgraded to become more dynamic and interactive for guides, guide trainers and guide organisations. Different train-the-trainer workshops will also be organised. Last but not least, various service design tools ("Innoguide self-scan") and Corporate Social Responsibility support will be developed to help guide organisations to become more entrepreneurial and competitive.

EU contribution: 273.555 € (2014-2016) - Level of EU funding: 100%

E-learning platform on alternative mobility and sustainable tourism (AT, IT, SI, UK) (Source: Erasmus+ platform; <http://www.streetproject.eu/>)

Many peripheral areas need a stronger integration with urban nodes. These areas are often rich in ecological and cultural heritage but suffer from poor accessibility and connectivity.

The S.T.R.E.E.T. project (Sustainable Transport Education for Environment and Tourism) will contribute to create new opportunities for peripheral areas by applying mobility management competences to non-urban environments and creating a new professional profile as Expert for Sustainable Mobility and Tourism. Five partners will design and implement a training programme targeting young unemployed or underemployed persons.

An e-learning Platform with an on line basic course open to all participants will be developed. A number of young participants will then be selected to participate to a training activity abroad. This activity will focus on the analysis of selected case studies (analysis of innovative solutions and problem solving approaches, ...), through an intensive programme lasting 5 days. Once the project complemented, the S.T.R.E.E.T. Platform will remain on line to progressively supply more courses

focused on specialist topics. It will also become a virtual job placement space with a network of enterprises offering jobs or internships.

EU contribution: 343.510 € (2015-2018) - Level of EU funding: 100%

HECTOR - Educational programmes for managing European Cultural Routes (Source: <http://culture-routes.net/projects/european-projects/hector-project>)

HECTOR project (HERitage and Cultural Tourism Open Resources for innovative training schemes related to the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe) is funded by Erasmus+ Key under Action 2 "Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices".

The partners work on the identification and development of educational programmes in the field of heritage and cultural tourism management related to Cultural Routes certified by the Council of Europe. Coordinated by the European Institute of Cultural Routes, it involves the University of Paris 1 Sorbonne (France), the University of Barcelona (Spain), the University of Bologna (Italy) and the Fondazione Federico II (Italy).

EU contribution: € 248.125 (2014-2016) - Level of EU funding: 100%

Attractiveness of European higher education in Heritage and Cultural Tourism (Source: <http://www.herculesproject.eu/>)

Supported by the former "Erasmus Mundus Programme", the Hercules project produced a student online guide and a database about post-graduate courses on Heritage and Cultural Tourism in France, Germany, Italy and UK. This encourages students from developing countries (starting with the Maghreb) to attend these courses. It is in turn helping these countries to take full advantage of their rich heritage, thanks to qualified and trained professionals on tourism management of cultural wealth.

Moreover, the project facilitated the exchange of experiences among higher education institutions of Europe and third countries via its website, conferences and a Summer Seminar on the "Management of World Heritage Cultural Sites" in Assisi (Italy).

EU contribution: € 298.918 (2011-2013) - Level of EU funding: 100%

Learning mobility for Polish higher vocational school (Source: Erasmus+ platform)

Learning mobility is essential for a sector as internationalised as tourism. Thanks to Erasmus+ the "Academy of Hotel Management and Catering Industry" managed to send 247 of its students and teachers abroad. This contributed to keep this institution (holder of an "Erasmus Charter for Higher Education" award) popular and competitive in the market of higher vocational education.

EU contribution: € 429.860 (2014-2015) - Level of EU funding: 100%

Work placements in Spain and Ireland for Austrians apprentices (Source: Erasmus+ platform)

There is a big need for skilled workers with linguistic skills in the Austrian hospitality industry. Thanks to this "Irish Austrians" project, 32 apprentices from the vocational school of tourism in Bad Gleichenberg (Austria) will benefit from work placements in Valencia (Spain) and in Kilkenny (Ireland). They will in particular discover everyday life and mentality in the host country, enhance their team skills through shared experience and knowledge exchange and develop their language skills.

EU contribution: € 35.439 (2015-2016) - Level of EU funding: 100%

12. Employment and Social Innovation Fund (EaSI)

Microcredit for starting a business in the tourism sector (Source: Progress Microfinance - Portraits of entrepreneurs (EIF))

António Mendes Carvalho was a young Portuguese waiter who had been working under precarious conditions in a restaurant for several years. He was able to start his own restaurant on the Algarve coast in the South of Portugal thanks to a loan from a microcredit provider (Millennium BCP) with a Progress Microfinance guarantee.

EU loan: 7.000 €

Mobility of (young) workers thanks to EURES (Source: EURES news)

Germany was searching for qualified personnel for seasonal employment in the tourist sector. Cooperation between EURES Germany and Bulgaria helped Bulgarian jobseekers to fill that gap.

The Sheraton Frankfurt Airport Hotel is among companies using the EURES network. Confronted with a shortage of skilled jobseekers, it hired highly-qualified jobseekers from Greece and Romania for front-office positions. For such hotels, there is an additional advantage to have employees from different nationalities: not only they speak several languages, but it also creates a multicultural environment that makes their guests feel more comfortable.

Conferences and studies funded by PROGRESS (Source: Europa - GROWTH)

The PROGRESS programme co-funded in 2009 a major conference on "Tourism Industry: Employment and Labour Market Challenges" which reviewed new challenges and issues relevant to the tourism industry at the European level.

PROGRESS also funded a study on "Hotels and Restaurants: Comprehensive Sectoral Analysis of Emerging Competencies and Economic Activities in the European Union" (April 2009) which mapped structures, trends and drivers of change in skills needs.

IV Conclusion

In the present guide for European financing for tourism were considered and presented the specific programs under which the interested parties in the cross-border tourist destination Elin Pelin - Leskovac can apply for activities for the period 2014-2020.

The information provided includes an overview of each program, as well as more specific and practical guidelines related to the persons and activities for which funding can be applied. In order to maximize the benefit and practical orientation of the management, it contains summarized information, presented in tabular form, respectively the programs for which various organizations and institutions and different enterprises can apply. In this way, the guide, in addition to being a guide for choosing and application for concrete programs, can also be used as a kind of guide, with the help of which the interested parties in the cross-border destination could find more quickly and easily the programmes useful for themselves. Especially for those who are better known and/or have already applied for funding under previous European programs, the guide also includes information on the correspondence between the programs of the two multiannual financial frameworks for the periods 2007-2013 and 2014. presents a broader view of the different funding opportunities.

VI. References

1. EU Funding for the tourism sector, 2014-2020, European Commission
2. Guide for financing from the European Union, 2014-2020, Republic of Bulgaria, Ministry of Tourism