



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT

Interreg - IPA CBC 
Greece - Albania

**Managing Authority of European Territorial
Cooperation Programmes**
**Joint Secretariat of the Interreg IPA CBC
Programme “Greece-Albania 2014-2020”**
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4th CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS
INTERREG IPA CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME
“GREECE-ALBANIA 2014-2020”

1. Context

The Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme “Greece–Albania 2014-2020” is a cross border co-operation Programme co-financed by the European Union under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II).

The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance for the period from 2014 to 2020 (‘IPA II’) shall support the beneficiaries listed in Annex I of the Regulation (EU) No.231/2014 in adopting and implementing the political, institutional, legal, administrative, social and economic reforms required by those beneficiaries in order to comply with the Union's values and to progressively align to the Union's rules, standards, policies and practices, with a view to Union membership. Through such support, IPA II shall contribute to stability, security and prosperity in the beneficiaries listed in Annex I of the Regulation (EU) No.231/2014.

Within this framework, the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme “Greece – Albania 2014-2020” consists of three Priority Axes and four Thematic Priorities, which are:

- **Priority Axis 1:** Promotion of the environment, sustainable transport & public infrastructure
- **Priority Axis 2:** Boosting the local economy
- **Priority Axis 3:** Technical Assistance

Priority Axis 1 will be implemented via two thematic priorities focusing on:

4th Call for project proposals
Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation programme “Greece – Albania 2014-2020”

1. Thematic Priority (c): Promoting sustainable transport, information and communication networks and services and investing in cross-border water, waste and energy systems and facilities
2. Thematic Priority (b): Protecting the environment & promoting climate change adaptation & mitigation, risk prevention & management

Priority Axis 2 will be implemented via two thematic priorities focusing on:

1. Thematic Priority (d): Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage
2. Thematic Priority (g): Enhancing competitiveness, the business environment and the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, trade and investment through, inter alia, promotion and support to entrepreneurship, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises, and development of local cross-border markets and internationalisation

The overall strategy of Interreg IPA Cross-border cooperation programme “Greece - Albania 2014-2020” is: “to find the balance between sustainable regional development and enhancement of cross-border cooperation among local population & regional institutions, in accordance with EU & national policies, in order to address common challenges through joint interventions”

The Programme’s budget allocated for the period 2014-2020 is 54.076.734,00€. This amount consists of **45.965.222,00€** EU contribution and **8.111.512,00€** national contributions. The national counterpart rate for both Greece and Albania is 15%. For the 4th Call for project proposals, for the project beneficiaries from Albania, the 15% of the national counterpart will be covered by the beneficiaries own contribution.

2. Documents of reference

Before submitting any project proposals, applicants are invited to consult the Cooperation Programme approved by the European Commission (Decision C(2015) 5482 of 30-07-2015, as amended by the Decision C(2017) 6809 of 12-10-2017 and C(2018) 559 of 14-02-2018), Regulation (EU) No.231/2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II), Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No.447/2014 (implementing Regulation (EU) No.231/2014) and the relevant annexes attached to this call. These documents are available on the Programme’s website at www.greece-albania.eu, on the Managing Authority’s website at <http://www.interreg.gr> and on the website of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania <http://www.punetejashtme.gov.al/>.

3. Priority Axes, Thematic priorities, Specific objectives

The present call for project proposals is open for both Priority Axis and for two (2) related Specific Objectives of the programme, namely:

Table 1: Priority Axis, Thematic Priority, Specific Objective and Targeted interventions

Priority Axis	Thematic Priority	Specific Objective	Indicative type of actions
1. Promotion of the environment, sustainable transport & public infrastructure	(b) Protecting the environment & promoting climate change adaptation & mitigation, risk prevention & management	1.3 Increase energy-efficiency and the use of RES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small scale investments in energy efficiency and use of RES in public buildings and public spaces; • Smart energy saving by using advanced Information and Communications Technology (ICT); • Joint public awareness initiatives for energy efficiency and the use of RES in residences and businesses.
2. Boosting the local economy	(d) Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage	2.1 Preserve cultural and natural resources as a prerequisite for development of the cross border area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration schemes between businesses and non-businesses (e.g. museums) in the tourism/culture area; • Rehabilitation/protection/promotion of cultural assets of cross-border significance; • Cross-border area-wide cultural initiatives; • Rehabilitation of buildings of special architectural and cultural characteristic; • Construction / Rehabilitation of infrastructures for the promotion of local products or/and cultural products (e.g. exhibition centers, local auction places, upgrading and consolidation interventions of local, biological markets, musical and theatre scenes); • Construction / Rehabilitation of camps, environmental and agro touristic parks.

The expected results that the participating countries seek to achieve with Union support are:

- Under Specific Objective 1.3
 - Reduced overall energy consumption in the public sector
 - Increased share of energy from RES in the public sector
 - Increased population awareness regarding energy efficiency.
- Under Specific Objective 2.1
 - Contribution to growth in the tourist business sector.
 - Improve capacity to sustainably use natural and cultural resources in the cross-border area.

4th Call for project proposals
Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation programme “Greece – Albania 2014-2020”

- Preserve/protect/promote cultural and natural assets.

4. Budget available

The total available budget for the 4th call is 9.000.000,00 € (of which 7.650.000,00€ Union Support and 1.350.000,00€ National Counterpart) and is **indicatively** allocated per Priority Axis / Specific Objective, as follows:

Table 2: Budget Available for Beneficiaries

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	INDICATIVE BUDGET ALLOCATION (€)		
	EUROPEAN UNION CONTRIBUTION	NATIONAL COUNTERPART	TOTAL BUDGET
1.3 Increase energy-efficiency and the use of RES	4.250.000,00	750.000,00	5.000.000,00
2.1 Preserve cultural and natural resources as a prerequisite for tourism development of the cross border area	3.400.000,00	600.000,00	4.000.000,00
TOTAL BUDGET	7.650.000,00	1.350.000,00	9.000.000,00

The Union Support rate is 85%.

In case where the indicative amount foreseen for the Specific Objective cannot be used due to the insufficient quality or the low number of proposals received, the Joint Monitoring Committee reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds the other Specific Objective, with the conditions of Programme amendment (if applicable).

After the evaluation, a ranking list of the evaluated project proposals **per Specific Objective** will be drawn up. In addition, a reserve list of projects may also be drawn. The Joint Monitoring Committee may decide to finance or not the projects on the reserve list.

5. Eligible Partnerships

Project proposals must include **at least** one beneficiary from the Programme area of each country participating in the Programme. National authorities may be considered as beneficiaries from the programme area according to their competences.

All beneficiaries should be entitled to implement the project activities.

All projects shall be developed and managed according to the Lead Partner Principle. Beneficiaries shall appoint a Lead beneficiary among themselves that shall assume responsibilities according to the Lead Partner principle. The Lead beneficiary will represent the entire partnership towards the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat and will ensure the sound implementation of the entire project.

Each applicant cannot participate in more than two (2) project proposals (both as beneficiary and as Lead Beneficiary). In case of universities and research centres/institutes the above-mentioned limitation is considered per department (faculty for Albania). If an applicant does not conform to the previous rule, as explicitly stated above, **all of its project proposals will be rejected.**

4th Call for project proposals
Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation programme “Greece – Albania 2014-2020”

Beneficiaries shall cooperate in the development and implementation of operations. In addition, they shall cooperate in either the staffing or the financing of the operations or both.

The total number of beneficiaries should not be less than two (2) and must not exceed four (4) including the Lead beneficiary for both Specific Objectives.

This call for proposals is only addressed to:

- a. national, regional or local **public authorities**;
- b. **bodies governed by public law**¹, having legal personality, other than legal entities defined under paragraph a, established for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest (needs not having an industrial or commercial character), and which fulfil at least one of the following conditions:
 - I. be financed, for the most part, by the national, regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed by public law or
 - II. be subject to management supervision by those bodies or
 - III. have an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, more than half of whose members are appointed by the national, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law;
- c. **private organisations (ONLY FOR SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 2.1)**: non-profit organizations founded according to applicable legal framework/law in the respective country can be eligible under the following conditions:
 - I. they do not have a commercial or industrial character or activities
 - II. they are non-profit² and have a legal personality.

Bodies governed by public law (under category b. above) and private organisations (under category c. above) must be operational for at least 24 months before the launching of the call for proposals. If a body governed by public law or a private organization is participating through a branch located at the Programme area, the branch must be operational for at least 24 months before the launching of the call for proposals.

It should be noted that private entities not falling under the above categories b. and c. are not eligible.

Further information about the eligibility of partnerships and the Lead Partner Principle is provided in the Programme and Project Manual (Part A. Programme Guide).

6. Project size

The threshold of the total project budget upon submission for each Specific Objective is provided in the following table:

¹ *Bodies governed by public law as defined in Article 1(9) of Directive 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:134:0114:0240:EN:PDF>) and in compliance with the national legislation of each participating country.*

² *Profit is the making of gain in business activities for the benefit of the owners of the business (paying out dividends).*

4th Call for project proposals
Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation programme “Greece – Albania 2014-2020”

Specific Objective	Minimum (€)	Maximum (€)	Minimum per beneficiary (€)
1.3 Increase energy-efficiency and the use of RES	1.000.000,00	2.000.000,00	200.000,00
2.1 Preserve cultural and natural resources as a prerequisite for tourism development of the cross border area	500.000,00	1.000.000,00	100.000,00

7. Duration

The project activities shall not be physically completed or fully implemented before the application for funding is submitted.

Projects should be concluded within a maximum period of **twenty four (24) months**, after the signing of the Subsidy Contract between the Managing Authority and the Lead Beneficiary.

8. Eligibility of expenditure

Eligibility of expenditure for beneficiaries from Greece commences on the 1st of January 2014. Eligibility of expenditure for beneficiaries from Albania commences on the 22nd of September 2014.

The final date of eligibility of expenditure should be the end date of the subsidy contract in force and under no circumstances may exceed the 31st of December 2023.

Eligibility rules on activities and related expenditure are described at the Programme and Project Manual, in the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 481/2014 of 4 March 2014, the Ministerial decision on Management and Control System (for Greek beneficiaries) with regard to specific rules on eligibility of expenditure for Cooperation Programmes.

9. How to apply – deadline

In order to submit a project proposal, the applicant must refer to the Applicant’s Package and to all relevant documents for this call for proposals. Project Proposals should be submitted according to the guidelines given below:

The Project Proposal must be submitted electronically to the Programme’s Managing Authority/ Joint Secretariat (JS) via MIS. The Monitoring Information System (M.I.S.) is an information and management system for projects co financed under the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) and the Community Support Framework (CSF).

A Project Proposal consists of the digital version of the following documents that have to be uploaded into the MIS of the programme:

A. Electronic submission of the project proposal into the MIS of the programme,

The submission of the project proposal to the MIS is obligatory. The fields of the MIS system are in accordance with the fields of the Application Form (excel file) apart for the detailed description sheet.

4th Call for project proposals
Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation programme “Greece – Albania 2014-2020”

B. The digital version of the following documents that have to be uploaded into the MIS of the programme:

1. The “*Application Form*” as it is produced by the MIS in **PDF** format. The Lead Beneficiary has to print the file that is produced by the MIS, sign and stamp it and upload it in the MIS.
2. The Application Form in excel file. Regarding the excel file, only the following sections is obligatory to be filled in:
 - a. Cover Page: Title and Acronym
 - b. Project Identification: only Priority Axis, Thematic Priority, Specific Objective
 - c. Detailed description: all section
3. The “Partnership Declaration” (standard form provided), completed, stamped and signed by all the participating beneficiaries, uploaded in PDF format;
4. The “Declaration of not generating revenues” (standard form provided) completed, stamped and signed by the Lead beneficiary, uploaded in PDF format. In case of revenue generating project, a cost - benefit analysis should be attached, using the “Guide to Cost-benefit Analysis of Investment Projects - Economic appraisal tool for Cohesion Policy 2014-2020” at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/cba_guide.pdf;
5. The “Co-Financing Statement and Non-Double Financing” completed, stamped and signed by each beneficiary separately, uploaded in PDF format.
6. The “State aid declaration” (standard form provided) completed, stamped and signed by Greek beneficiaries separately, uploaded in PDF format;
7. The “Declaration for the non-distribution of profits” (standard form provided), completed, stamped and signed only by beneficiaries under category of article 7.c (private organisations)
8. The “Specification of Budget Costs” (standard form provided), completed for the total project budget, uploaded in excel format;
9. The “Maturity Sheet” per beneficiary (standard form provided), completed, stamped and signed by each beneficiary separately;
10. The relevant Bills of Quantities and Costs (BoQ) to the foreseen infrastructure activities by the beneficiaries, which must be stamped and signed by the Legal Representative, uploaded in PDF format. The JS may also request additional documentation for clarification of the above issues, during the evaluation procedure;
11. Decision of the designated body or similar decision by the Legal Representative of each Project Beneficiary, according to the respective national legislation, stating its agreement for submitting the particular project proposal, signed and stamped, uploaded in PDF format;

The JS may also request additional documentation for clarification of the above issues, during the evaluation procedure.

4th Call for project proposals
Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation programme “Greece – Albania 2014-2020”

All the required documents of the proposal must be electronically submitted at the latest until the 31/01/2019, 23:59 local time (Eastern European standard time). In case the proposal is submitted after the above date and time, it will not be considered as eligible.

10. State Aid

In cases where, during the proposal submission and/or evaluation, it derives from the compatibility check that there are indications of State Aid, then the clauses of the Regulations of 1407/2013 (De Minimis) or 651/20141 (GBER) are applied. Especially, articles 14 (Regional investment aid), 53 (Aid for culture and heritage conservation) and 56 (Investment aid for local infrastructures) are applied.

11. Evaluation procedure

The aim of the evaluation procedure is to select the best project proposals, according to the criteria set out in Annex “Project Selection Criteria”, in order to best achieve the expected results of the 4th Call for proposals and contribute to the fulfilment of the objectives of the Programme itself.

The evaluation procedure consists of two main steps: STEP 1 - Evaluation of project proposals, and STEP 2 - Eligibility of beneficiaries:

Evaluation of project proposals

After submission, each project proposal will be evaluated based on specific selection criteria and will be subjected to a two-phase selection procedure, carried out by the Joint Secretariat (JS) as referred in the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme “Greece-Albania 2014-2020” (Section: Submission of Proposals and Selection of Operations).

This evaluation will result to a list for projects to be approved (pre-approval) under the condition of the evaluation for the eligibility of the beneficiaries participating in them.

Eligibility of beneficiaries

The eligibility of the beneficiaries is carried out by the Joint Secretariat (JS) with the support of Operating Structure (OS).

Following the decision of the Joint Monitoring Committee for the pre-approval of the project proposals described above, the Lead beneficiaries will be asked to submit in hard copy the below mentioned documents:

1. For bodies governed by public law (of article 5.b above) official documents providing evidence that the requirements of article 5.b of this call are met. In case that the nature of a public body is not clearly delivered from the submitted documents, the JS or MA may request additional documentation for clarification.
2. For private organisations (of article 5.c above) :
 - Statutes including all modifications for the past 2 years.
 - Official document indicating the composition of the administrative/managerial or supervisory board.
 - Official document indicating the supervision by national, regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed by public law (if applicable)
 - Official document indicating the sources of the body’s revenues, during the last two years preceding the presentation of the project proposal.
 - Declaration for the non-distribution of profits.

4th Call for project proposals
Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation programme “Greece – Albania 2014-2020”

- Any official document certified by a public administration authority, providing that the organisation operates for at least two years before the launch of the specific call for proposals.
3. For bodies governed by public law (of article 5.b above) and for private organisations (of article 5.c above) the existence of a branch within the Programme area or the participating countries is documented with at least one of the following documents:
- Official document for the establishment/registration of a branch issued by the competent Public Authority (e.g. Tax Service of the respective country)
 - Copy of the rental contract, submitted to and validated by the respective Public Authority (e.g. Tax Service of the respective country)
 - Payroll sheet, validated by the competent Public Authority (e.g. Ministry of Labour)
 - Operational costs bills (e.g. electricity, telephone etc.)

For bodies governed by public law (of article 5.b above) that have been established by a Law or Presidential Decree, the submission of a copy of the respective Official Government Gazette where the establishment of the branch is being mentioned is sufficient.

In any case, the documents above must provide evidence that the branch was established and in operation for the period required by the call under each type of beneficiary/category of beneficiary.

4. The Legal Entity Form (standard form provided), filled in, stamped and signed by the each beneficiary in Albania.

The template of the respective form is also available on:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/?header_description=DEVCO+Prag+to+financial+and+contractual+procedures+applicable+to+external+actions+financed+from+the+general+budget+of+the+EU+and+from+the+11th+EDF&header_keywords=ePrag%2C+europa

The MA ensures that the evaluation procedure is carried out in accordance with the requirements of the 4th call for project proposals and the approved selection criteria.

The evaluation procedure is analytically described in Annex, “Project Selection Criteria”.

Additional information

To obtain additional information on the project application procedure, please contact:

Ministry of Economy & Development

Managing Authority of European Territorial Cooperation Programmes / Unit B2

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570 01, Thessaloniki, Greece

Tel: +30 2310 469600 Fax: +30 2310 469602

Email: interreg@mou.gr

Website: <http://www.interreg.gr>

Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs

Albanian National Authority

Address: Bulevardi “Gjergj Fishta”, Nr. 6,

Mr Gentian Xhaxhiu

Tel: +355 692612213

4th Call for project proposals
Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation programme “Greece – Albania 2014-2020”

Email: Gentian.Xhaxhiu@mfa.gov.al

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Joint Secretariat

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570 01 Thessaloniki, Greece

Tel: +30 2310 469680 Fax: +30 2310 469602

Email: jts_gral@mou.gr

Website: www.greece-albania.eu

All relevant information and documents shall be available on the Programme website, which is a key communication tool between the programme management bodies (MA, JS) and the potential beneficiaries.

Information Sessions regarding this call shall take place in both countries. The date and time of these events will be concurrently announced on the Managing Authority’s website at <http://www.interreg.gr>, on the Programme’s website at <http://www.greece-albania.eu> and on the site of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania <http://www.punetejashtme.gov.al/>

Potential applicants may pose questions in written to the Managing Authority/Joint Secretariat, no later than eleven (11) days before the deadline for the submission of proposals. The answers shall be agreed by both the national authorities and will be published at the above sites. Answers shall be published no later than six (6) days before the deadline for the submission of proposals.

Potential applicants are invited to regularly consult the above sites.

Special Secretary for ERDF & CF Funded Sectoral OPs

Evgenia Fotoniata

Annexes:

A. Applicant’s Package documents:

1. Application Form
2. Partnership Declaration
3. Declaration of not generating revenues
4. Co-Financing Statement and Non Double Financing
5. State Aid Declaration
6. Declaration for the non-distribution of profits
7. Specification of Budget Cost
8. Maturity Sheet
9. Bill of Quantities and Costs
10. Legal Entity Form

B. Supporting Documents:

1. 4th Call for project proposals
2. Programme and Project Manual
3. Project Selection Criteria
4. User Guide for electronic submission
5. Partnership Agreement
6. Subsidy Contract
7. Specification of Budget Cost Manual
8. Guidance for the eligibility of expenditures