

EU Funding for greenways in the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2021-2027)

- Priorities for the next Period 2021-2027.
 - **Coronavirus EU Recovery Plan. (Proposal of the EC)**
- Importance of the 'Smart specialisation strategy' (RIS-3) for obtaining European funds.
- Policy objectives, specific objectives and ideas of actions greenways related.
- Recommendations.

This note intends to provide a general idea of the main features of the next multiannual financial framework (MFF) 2021-2027, to help EGWA members and greenways network to incorporate their priorities related to tourism, but also about mobility and other key topics linked in a wide sense with greenways, in their regional strategy documents.

It is a summary of the note [Note about Tourism in Regional Strategic Documents: Smart Specialisation Strategy \(RIS3\) and Regional Operational Programs \(ROP\) 2014-2020 / 2012-2027](#) prepared in the framework of the Interreg Europe project "[OurWay](#)", which includes priorities regarding the current financial period (2014-2020) and the next one +2021, as well as recommendations for the updating of the RIS3, which was sent you past 5/May ([see newsletter](#)).



It is very important that greenways and other non motorized itineraries are expressly included in the priorities of the next Operational Programmes (OPs) so that European funds can be obtained to carry out projects in this area. If they are not included in the OPs, they will not be eligible and not financed.

It includes a table with the political and specific objectives of the forthcoming regional policy and additionally a proposal of actions greenways related in a wide sense, which may fit in with the various specific objectives, is included as suggestion. The list is

indicative and not exhaustive; of course, there may be other actions related to greenways and aimed at achieving the political and specific objectives, or they may be formulated differently.

➤ **Priorities for the next Period 2021-2027**

From 11 'thematic objectives' in the 2014-2020 period, the new Regional and Cohesion Policy will now focus its resources on **5 Policy Objectives /investment priorities**:

- ✓ PO1 a **Smarter Europe**, through innovation, digitisation, economic transformation and support to small and medium-sized businesses
- ✓ PO2 a **Greener, carbon free Europe**, implementing the Paris Agreement and investing in energy transition, renewables and the fight against climate change
- ✓ PO3 a more **Connected Europe**, with strategic transport and digital networks
- ✓ PO4 a more **Social Europe**, delivering on the European Pillar of Social Rights and supporting quality employment, education, skills, social inclusion and equal access to healthcare
- ✓ PO5 **Europe closer to citizens**, by supporting locally-led development strategies and sustainable urban development across the EU.
- ✓ Horizontal issues:
 - administrative capacity building,
 - cooperation outside the programme area.

In the next financial period, Regional development investments will strongly focus on objectives 1 and 2 : 65% to 85% of ERDF and Cohesion Fund resources will be allocated to these priorities, depending on Member States' relative wealth.

https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/2021_2027/.

○ **Coronavirus EU recovery plan.**

European Commission has put forward its [proposal](#) for a major recovery plan, **by investing in a green, digital and resilient Europe**.

Proposed: Next Generation EU of €750 billion as well as targeted reinforcements to the long-term EU budget for 2021-2027 (€1100 billion) will bring the total financial firepower of the EU budget to €1.85 billion.

This aid package will be linked to the Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2021-2027, whose priorities are outlined in this note.

Member States will have to present a national plan with investment proposals, that must clearly show their green and digital ambitions.

➤ **Importance of the 'Smart specialisation strategy' (RIS3) for obtaining European funds**

In the current financial period (2014-2020) the smart specialisation strategy RIS3 is a ex-ante condition for ROP, is an obligation for European regions and Member States to qualify for European funds from cohesion policies.

The purpose of RIS3 is to identify, through the joint work of public players and the business sector, the areas of research and innovation in which the region can aspire to stand out, based on its existing and emerging competitive advantages.

In the next financial period (2021-2027) will be a "**enabling condition**". *The 'enabling conditions' continue the approach of the ex-ante conditionalities introduced for the 2014-2020 funding period. (...)*

The region sets the priorities for innovation and development, and these priorities are then integrated into the development plans and operational programs. The priorities of RIS3 - have to be consistent with the Operational Programs, which can provide European funding for these actions.

➤ **Policy Objectives (PO), specific objectives and ideas of actions greenways related.**

Policy Objectives and specific objectives for the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund (*) and Suggestions of Indicative Actions relevant to sustainable tourism / mobility -related investments (general and explicit for greenways). (2021-2027)

Policy objective	Especific objectives (art.2) Annex II	Indicative actions sustainable tourism / active mobility /greenways related
<p align="center">1. A smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation</p> <p align="center"><i>Smarter Europe, through innovation, digitisation, economic transformation and support to small and medium-sized businesses</i></p>	<p>(1.i) Enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business incubators, virtual or not, for tourism services; demonstration projects for new tourism-related services, etc. • Introduction of innovative products/services or processes in tourism SMEs and micro-SMEs (e.g. innovation in tourism product sales and reservation systems; electric bike rental and innovation in delivery and pick-up systems; recharging points). • Creation of cycling and nature tourism clusters integrating R&I centres / participating in innovation ecosystems linked to tourism (e.g. cycle tourism, accesible tourism, nature, cultural) / sustainable mobility . • Sectoral and thematic actions to support innovation (e.g. for cycle tourism / specific territories); improvements in digitisation; set up observatories to follow up the use of the infrastructure (e.g. installation of counters for bicycle and pedestrian users on greenways and cycle paths). • Innovation support for SMEs and micro-SMEs in the tourism sector.
	<p>(1.ii) Reaping the benefits of digitisation for citizens, companies and governments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate relevant digital content for the tourism sector (APP's GIS, Augmented Reality, 360° images, etc.), to promote specialization for new niche markets. • Promote cooperation and multi-sectoral synergies through ICTs (technological developments for cycle tourism, hiking, cultural tourism, accessible, active, gastronomic, wine tourism, ...) • ICT applications for SMEs in the tourism sector, to improve management.
	<p>(1.iii) Enhancing growth and competitiveness of SMEs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - Business incubators, virtual or not, for tourism services; demonstration projects for new tourism-related services, etc. • Support services for SMEs in the tourism sector to improve their capacity for innovation, internationalisation, promotion of new services, clusters, business incubators. • e-tourism; integration of tools related to cultural and creative industries - GIS, augmented reality, virtual reality, GIS; 360° images (...). • Mentoring for SMEs and micro SMEs in the tourism sector.
	<p>(1.iv) Developing skills for smart specialisation, industrial transition and entrepreneurship.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote entrepreneurship in the tourism sector, integrating new technologies for the product development (e.g. addressed to cycle tourism, cultural tourism, nature, outdoor tourism, outdoor, ...); aimed at different target groups • Training in tourism product, digitalization for companies and digital promotion. • Training in technical, management, entrepreneurship, competitiveness skills, with ICT support • Training for the conversion of tourism companies in decline to new products of emerging tourism (tourism cycle, nature tourism, ...).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring for SMEs and micro SMEs in the tourism sector.
<p>2. A greener, low-carbon Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate adaptation and risk prevention and management</p> <p><i>a Greener, carbon free Europe, implementing the Paris Agreement and investing in energy transition, renewables and the fight against climate change</i></p>	(2.i) Promoting energy efficiency measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy efficiency measures for the tourism sector . • Promotion of energy improvement nearby thematic routes, cultural and/or nature. • Promotion of energy improvement in leisure and recreation facilities.
	(2.ii) Promoting renewable energy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of the use of renewable energies in tourism and leisure SME's. • Promotion of the use of renewable energies in companies linked to the use of natural resources and agrifood nearby thematic routes.
	2.(iii) Developing smart energy systems, grids and storage at local level.	Promotion of digital energy management in companies linked to the use of natural resources and agri-food industry, around thematic routes.
	(2.iv) Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and disaster resilience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions to promote decarbonisation and sustainable mobility in all types of territories (urban, peri-urban or rural areas). • Promoting the use and transformation of abandoned transport infrastructure for sustainable mobility and its combined use for tourism. • Promotion of risk prevention plans (fire, flood, erosion) and adaptation to climate change; early warning systems for the population in thematic route environments (e.g. greenways). • Adaptation strategies / fighting climate change in local and greenway environments (revegetation,). • Promote and develop sustainable tourism based on decarbonization.
	(2.v) Promoting sustainable water management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions to promote the sustainable water management around thematic routes / greenways .
	(2.vi) Promoting the transition to a circular economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions to promote the transition to a circular economy around thematic routes / greenways .
	(2.vii) Enhancing biodiversity, green infrastructure in the urban environment, and reducing pollution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions for the conservation, protection and restoration of the natural heritage and biodiversity in protected areas and Natura 2000, nearby thematic routes and greenways . • Development of green infrastructure by using the greenways . • Monitoring of uses in Natura 2000 and Greenways .
	3. A more connected Europe by enhancing mobility and regional ICT connectivity	(3.i) Enhancing digital connectivity.
(3.ii) Developing a sustainable, climate resilient, intelligent, secure and intermodal TEN-T.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities for the adaptation of TEN-T infrastructure to ensure the continuity of bicycle infrastructure for long-distance cycling paths such as the EuroVelo routes. (1)

<p><i>a more Connected Europe, with strategic transport and digital networks</i></p>	<p>(3.iii) Developing sustainable, climate resilient, intelligent and intermodal national, regional and local mobility, including improved access to TEN-T and cross-border mobility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage intermodality bicycle + train / boat..
	<p>(3.iv) Promoting sustainable multimodal urban mobility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of cycling infrastructure in urban areas
<p>4. A more social Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights</p> <p><i>a more Social Europe, delivering on the European Pillar of Social Rights and supporting quality employment, education, skills, social inclusion and equal access to healthcare</i></p>	<p>(4.i) Enhancing the effectiveness of labour markets and access to quality employment through developing social innovation and infrastructure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Support to the creation of social economy and/or social integration enterprises around thematic routes / including greenways
	<p>(4.ii) Improving access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and lifelong learning through developing infrastructure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Actions to promote digital literacy
	<p>(4.iii) Increasing the socio-economic integration of marginalised communities, migrants and disadvantaged groups, through integrated measures including housing and social services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions of social integration around thematic routes and greenways, through training, specific campaigns, promotion of business creation (...) • Innovatory socio-economic projects related to tourism, to fight against social inequality and to stimulate social cohesion
	<p>(4.iv) Ensuring equal access to health care through developing infrastructure, including primary care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation of abandoned buildings, for social centres and health promotion by means of physical activity, nearby greenways • Health promotion on greenways (healthy walks, cycling courses and activities for groups with specific needs) (??)
<p>5. A Europe closer to citizens by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of urban, rural and coastal areas and local initiatives</p> <p><i>a Europe closer to citizens, by supporting locally-led development strategies and sustainable urban development across the EU.</i></p>	<p>(5.i) Fostering the integrated social, economic and environmental development, cultural heritage and security in urban areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and implementation of local/regional strategies in cities of all sizes, for the renewal, protection and promotion of the local natural and cultural heritage, in order to foster sustainable economic development and stable and quality employment. Stakeholders participation.
	<p>5.ii Fostering the integrated social, economic and environmental local development, cultural heritage and security, including for rural and coastal areas through community-led local development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Development and implementation of common local/regional strategies for the renewal, protection and promotion of local natural and cultural heritage, in order to promote sustainable economic development and stable and quality employment. Integration of stakeholders in the strategies required

Horizontal - Implementation	(a) improve the capacity of programme authorities, and bodies linked to the implementation of the Funds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in European associations and thematic networks to favour the exchange of knowledge and the integration of good practices in the implementation of the actions
	(b) enhance cooperation with partners both within and outside a given Member State.	
(*) Policy objectives set out in Article [4(1)] of COM/2018/375 final - 2018/0196 (COD) and specific objectives for the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund Article 2 of COM/2018/372 final - 2018/0197 (COD)		
(1) "Where applicable as part of a broader project of common interest, actions may include activities for the adaptation of TEN-T infrastructure to ensure the continuity of bicycle infrastructure for long-distance cycling paths such as the EuroVelo routes. These activities may include relevant adaptation of traffic signaling systems or the addition of infrastructure dedicated to cyclists and pedestrians, such as tunnels, bypasses, bridges, aerial cycling and walkways and protected cycling paths. They may cover activities extending along TEN-T routes or at crossings between TEN-T routes and long-distance cycling paths. https://ecf.com/what-we-do/european-funding/eurovelo-cycling-and-ten-t		
<p>The colors mark the link to tourism/greenways related actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - red = more direct link - blue = link very possible, and essential in PO1 and PO2, depending on the priorities of the Operational Programmes <p>Classification and suggestion of actions sustainable tourism / active mobility greenways related in a wide sense, proposed by MMZ- European Greenways Association - www.aevv-egwa.org</p>		

➤ Recommendations

- ✓ Please be aware / transmit to your **regional authorities** the importance that **greenways and non-motorized routes are integrated into the Regional Strategy Documents** (as OPs and RIS3) in order to be eligible and funded in the next financial period 2021-2027. **If they are not included, they will not be eligible and not financed.**
- ✓ **Propose specific actions** related to **greenways** and **non-motorized itineraries** e.g.as infrastructures for active and sustainable mobility for tourism & local people, to be included in your OPs (and *Coronavirus recovery plans*).

> See the managing authorities in the EU member states on the [Commission's website](#)

About OurWay: OUR WAY project aims to contribute to the conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage in Europe using Greenways by means of the improvement of policy instruments related to the cultural and natural quality of the territories involved, including tools for their governance and developing specific measures for their promotion and preservation.

Many thanks for your comments, ideas and for sharing your experience.

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10 June 2020 www.aevv-egwa.org - info[at]aevv-egwa.org