

**Announcement by the Managing Authority publicising the third call for proposals
for the INTERREG VI-D Territorial Cooperation Programme
Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands (MAC) 2021-2027**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Regulation (EU) No 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund, establishes in Article 3 that the objective of Interreg is to support cooperation between the outermost regions themselves and with overseas countries and territories or with third countries or neighbouring partners, or with regional integration and cooperation organisations, or with several of them, in order to facilitate their regional integration and harmonious development in their neighbourhood (Interreg D).

In this context, the Interreg MAC European Territorial Cooperation Programme 2021-2027 forms part of Chapter 4 (Interreg D) in accordance with the provisions of Article 3.4 of the aforementioned Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021.

The intensification of cooperation between the outermost regions (ORs) and neighbouring countries has been a fundamental pillar of the European Union (EU) strategy for these regions since 2004. This strategy has been renewed and strengthened to adapt it to the current situation and challenges through the European Commission's Communication "Putting people first, ensuring sustainable and inclusive growth and unlocking the potential of the EU's outermost regions", adopted on 3 May 2022. Among the priorities for EU action in support of the recovery and sustainable and inclusive growth of the ORs is cooperation with other European regions, with neighbouring countries and beyond, with a particular focus on Interreg and cooperation with Global Europe.

The Interreg MAC Territorial Cooperation Programme has established itself in recent decades as the main instrument for promoting the regional integration of these regions into their geographical areas of reference, highlighting the importance of regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations in promoting sustainable economic development and strengthening political stability.

In this regulatory context, the outermost regions of the Canary Islands, the Azores and Madeira and the Member States of Spain and Portugal presented the INTERREG VI-D Madeira-Azores-Canary Islands (MAC) Cooperation Programme for the period 2021-2027, which was approved by the European Commission through Decision C (2022) 6877 of 21 September 2022. In 2025, the programme was amended to incorporate funding from the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - NDICI (Global Europe). This amendment was approved by the European Commission through Decision C (2025) 4763 of 14 July 2025.

The territorial scope of the Programme includes , Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Mauritania, Sao Tome and Principe, and Senegal , countries that have agreed to be part of the MAC cooperation area for the period 2021-2027.

The Programme Monitoring Committee approved these rules for the third call for proposals on 21/10/2025.

2. PURPOSE OF THE CALL

The purpose of this third call is to promote the submission of applications for cooperation projects, on a competitive basis, within the framework of the INTERREG VI-D MAC 2021-2027 Programme, in accordance with these rules for obtaining ERDF funding.

The planned actions will be subject to the provisions of European regulations on Structural Funds and the programme approved by the European Commission.

Each application must fall within one of the Specific Objectives of Priorities 1, 2 and 4 (Smart MAC, Green MAC and Mobility MAC) of the Programme, demonstrating its contribution to the expected results and indicators.

3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

3.1. Territorial scope

The ERDF aid available may be applied throughout the eligible territory of the Programme:

- Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands.
- Autonomous Region of Madeira.
- Autonomous Region of the Azores.
- African partner countries: Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Mauritania, Sao Tome and Principe, and Senegal.

ERDF beneficiaries may also incur project implementation costs in any other territory, within or outside the European Union, provided that such operations contribute to the objectives of the MAC programme (Article 37.1 of the Interreg Regulation).

Where all or part of an operation is implemented outside the programme area within or outside the Union, the selection of that operation shall require the express approval of the Managing Authority at the relevant meeting of the Steering Committee.

3.2. Time frame

Project expenditure will be eligible from 21/10/2025 (date of approval of the rules by the Monitoring Committee) until the end date of each project.

Projects may be implemented until 31/12/2029, the final date of eligibility for expenditure of the Interreg MAC 2021-2027 programme.

4. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION

The ERDF aid allocated to this call amounts to € 53.259.030. The financial distribution by Priorities and Specific Objectives is as follows:

PRIORITIES AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES			ERDF (€)	TOTAL COST (€)
SO 1.1	Development and improvement of research and innovation capacities and the implementation of advanced technologies		16.637.013	19.572.957
OE 1.3	Strengthening sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in these, including through productive investments.		8.819.903	10.376.356
TOTAL P1	MAC SMART	IMPROVING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF COMPANIES THROUGH AN ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION INNOVATIVE AND SMART	25.456.916	29.949.313
OE 2.1	Promoting energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions		7.722.667	9.085.491
OE 2.2	Promotion of renewable energy in accordance with Directive (EU) 2018/2001, in particular the sustainability criteria set out therein		2.447.950	2.879.942
SO 2.4	Promoting climate change adaptation, disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches		3.572.188	4.202.574
OE 2.6	Promoting the transition to a circular and resource-efficient economy		4.848.422	5.704.025
OE 2.7	Promoting the protection and conservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution		6.121.308	7.201.539
TOTAL P2	MAC GREEN	ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION, SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GREEN AND BLUE ECONOMY, FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE, RISK AND DISASTER PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT	24.712.535	29.073.571
OEI2	Mobility and migration management		3,089,579	3,634,799
TOTAL P4	MAC MOBILITY	IMPROVEMENT OF MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AT ORIGIN AND DESTINATION	3,089,579	3,634,799
TOTAL CALL			53.259.030	62.657.682

The ERDF co-financing percentage for the programme is 85% of the total eligible cost, meaning that each beneficiary will be reimbursed 85% of the validated expenses paid.

4.1. Budget limits per project

The total budget requested for projects must be within the following amounts:

Policy objective	Priority		Minimum TOTAL COST requested (€)	Maximum TOTAL COST requested (€)
PO1	1	Smart MAC	500,000	5,000,000
OP2	2	Green MAC	500,000	5,000,000
OEI 2	4	MAC Mobility	250,000	2,000,000

4.2. Advances

An advance payment of 5% of the ERDF allocated to beneficiaries of approved projects may be granted to those who request it, except for private companies.

5. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

All projects co-financed by the Programme must demonstrate a strong cooperation component, both in their design and implementation, with a clear focus on results.

Projects must comply with the general guidelines of the Programme and the following requirements:

- Comply with the eligibility requirements,
- Have at least one beneficiary from one of the three European regions covered by the programme (Azores, Madeira, Canary Islands) and one participant from one of the seven African partner countries of the programme (Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Mauritania, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Senegal).
- Fitting exclusively into one of the programme's investment priorities and responding to one of its specific objectives.
- Have a clear focus on results and the capitalisation of those results.
- Contribute to the objectives and fulfilment of the Programme's indicators.
- Be compatible with national and European policies, particularly in the areas of sustainable development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, and gender equality.

- Contribute to the development of the cooperation area in accordance with their respective strategies and plans.
- Comply with the provisions of the Eligibility Rules approved by the Monitoring Committee regarding the expenses included in the project budget.

6. TYPES OF PARTNERS

For each specific objective, the Programme establishes a non-exhaustive list of potential project partners:

- + Public administrations and public and private law entities linked to them.
- + Universities, research centres, technological institutes and foundations.
- + Chambers of commerce, business and professional associations, and other socio-economic organisations.
- + Private companies (only in Specific Objective 1.1).
- + Other public or private non-profit entities.

All projects will have the following partners:

1. ERDF beneficiary partners: entities located in the European regions of Madeira, the Azores and the Canary Islands that apply for ERDF aid.
2. Partners from African third countries: these are entities from the territories of Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Mauritania, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Senegal, which are part of the cooperation area and are not eligible to apply for ERDF support.

Projects may also have associated participants: these are entities from within or outside the programme's cooperation area whose participation is justified in terms of achieving the project's objectives and which do not apply for ERDF assistance.

ERDF beneficiary partners must have a registered office, office or permanent establishment in the territory of one of the three European regions covered by the programme.

Partners must have the technical and economic skills and capacities to carry out the proposed actions.

All projects will be led by a **Lead Partner**, who will be financially and legally responsible for the project as a whole, ensuring the proper management of the project itself before the Managing Authority and the rest of the programme's management and control structures.

The Lead Partner must be an entity located in one of the three regions of the Programme belonging to the European Union (Madeira, the Azores and the Canary Islands) and must fulfil its responsibilities as set out in Article 26 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 (Interreg Regulation).

Private companies, partners from African third countries and associated entities may not be Lead Partners.

Each of the partners in the partnership shall be responsible for the implementation of the actions assigned to them as described in the project.

The participation of private companies in projects is subject to the following limitations:

- + They may only be ERDF beneficiaries in O.E.1.1.
- + Their participation must add value to the project, promoting the transfer of the results achieved to the market, and must be adequately justified in the project.
- + They may not be the lead partner in the project.
- + They may not receive advance payments.
- + They may not receive more than one hundred thousand euros (€100,000) in ERDF aid, so the maximum budget per company and project will be one hundred and seventeen thousand six hundred and forty-seven euros (€117,647), plus the partner's own contribution.

In addition, in order to be eligible for ERDF aid, private companies applying as beneficiaries under O.E 1.1 must meet the following requirements:

- Be up to date with their tax and social security obligations, having regularised their tax and social security situation with the Tax Authorities, Social Security and the entities paying the incentives.
- They must not have any convictions or penalties that would result in the loss of the possibility of obtaining subsidies or other public aid.
- Not be considered a company in crisis in accordance with the provisions of Article 2. 18) of Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 of 17 June and not be in bankruptcy proceedings.
- Have been in existence for at least 3 years;
- The average turnover for the last three years must be at least one and a half times the average annual value of the budget in the application form.

7. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications must be submitted electronically using the programme's management tool, **e-MAC**, which can be accessed via the programme's website: www.interregmac.org.

The application must be registered by the **Lead Partner** and completed in one of the languages provided (Spanish or Portuguese).

The opening and closing dates for the submission of project applications will be published on the programme website: www.interregmac.org.

8. EVALUATION AND SELECTION

All projects submitted will participate in the selection process on a competitive basis.

Phase 1: Eligibility check.

All project applications submitted will undergo an initial eligibility check to verify compliance with the formal requirements necessary for the evaluation of the project, in accordance with the **eligibility conditions** approved by the Monitoring Committee and set out in the document "*Methodology for the evaluation and selection of projects*".

If it is found that the project does not meet the eligibility requirements, it cannot be corrected and will therefore be excluded from the evaluation process.

Phase 2: Evaluation.

The evaluation of project applications will be carried out jointly by the Joint Secretariat (JS), the Regional Governments of the Canary Islands, the Azores and Madeira, and the national representatives of the African partner countries of the Programme, in accordance with the **evaluation criteria** set out in the Annex to these rules.

Phase 3: Selection.

Once the evaluation has been completed, the Steering Committee will take the following documents into account when making its decisions:

- Terms and conditions of the call for proposals.
- Application forms for eligible projects.
- Evaluation sheets for these projects.
- List of projects ranked according to the score obtained, including at least the following elements: priority, specific objective, code, acronym, title, participating entities, region/country, funding requested (ERDF/NDICI where applicable) and total cost.
- Percentage of implementation (declared expenditure) by beneficiaries in projects from the 1st Interreg MAC 21-27 call for proposals.

The Steering Committee may adopt, by consensus, the following types of duly justified decisions:

- Approval of projects based on the application submitted.
- Approval of projects subject to any of the following decisions:
 - Adjustment of the total project budget and/or the aid requested.
 - Merger of several projects with similar partners and/or themes.
 - Modifications to the partnership.

- Modulation of the aid according to the percentage of implementation (declared expenditure) of the beneficiaries in projects from the 1st Interreg MAC 21-27 call.
- Rejection of projects.
- Approval of a reserve list of projects to be activated depending on financial availability.

Once the selection process has been completed, the Programme Management Authority will notify the Lead Partners of all project applications submitted of the Steering Committee's decision by email.

9. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All information relating to the Programme and all the documentation necessary for the submission of project applications is available on the Programme website (www.interregmac.org). Information on the identification and contact details of the Joint Secretariat and the regional and national authorities of the Programme is also available.

The Joint Secretariat, the Managing Authority and the regional authorities of the Canary Islands, the Azores and Madeira will provide support in resolving any queries regarding the submission of applications during the call for proposals period.

Technical questions relating to the e-MAC computer system should be addressed to the Joint Secretariat, preferably by email to: info@interregmac.org.

10. ANNEXES

ANNEX I

ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS

		Responsible
CONDITIONS VERIFIED AUTOMATICALLY		
1	Online submission within the deadline established in the call for applications.	e-MAC
2	Submission of the completed form.	e-MAC
3	ERDF budget within the limits established in the call for proposals.	e-MAC
4	Total duration of the project within the timeframe established in the call for proposals.	e-MAC
5	Applies the simplified costing methods established by the programme.	e-MAC
6	EU horizontal principles are respected	e-MAC
7	The Lead Beneficiary is an eligible entity (it is not a private company or a third-country entity)	e-MAC
8	The beneficiaries are included in the type of beneficiaries provided for in the programme.	e-MAC
9	There is transnationality in the partnership (<u>participation of at least one entity from the European territory of the programme and one entity from a third country</u>)	e-MAC
10	An annex is attached to the form (it will be checked that it is correct at a later stage: PowerPoint summary of the project presentation, maximum 10 slides)	e-MAC
CONDITIONS VERIFIED BY DOCUMENTATION		
1	The mandatory attachment is as required in the call for proposals (PowerPoint summary of the project presentation, maximum 10 slides)	SC

- e-MAC Computerised management system for the Interreg MAC programme
- SC: Joint Secretariat of the Interreg MAC programme.

In any case, the submission of the project application in the e-MAC system does not presuppose compliance with the eligibility conditions.

ANNEX II
EVALUATION CRITERIA

GENERAL EVALUATION CRITERIA (70% OF THE TOTAL)			
To what extent...?		Responsible	Weighting
STRATEGIC CRITERIA			60%
Relating to the context of the cooperation project: relevance and cooperative nature	The project contributes to the achievement of the Specific Objective for which it is submitted	SC	70%
	There is a clear benefit from cooperation for the partnership, the project's beneficiaries and the project's area of action	SC	20%
	Contribution to the EU's horizontal principles.	SC	10
			20
Relating to the project's intervention logic: objectives, results and expected outputs	The project's objectives, results and outputs are clearly defined, relevant and consistent.	SC	50%
	Contribution of the project to programme indicators	SC	50%
			60
Relating to the partnership	Coherence of the partnership for project implementation	SC	100
			20%
SUBTOTAL			100%
OPERATIONAL CRITERIA			40%
The project description is clear, coherent and detailed		SC	50
The project's communication and dissemination plan is detailed, appropriate and effective in reaching the target audience and stakeholders.		SC	20%
The financial plan is consistent with the work plan.		SC	30%
SUBTOTAL			100

- JMS: Joint Management Secretariat of the Interreg MAC programme.

OTHER CRITERIA 30% OF THE TOTAL		
EVALUATION CRITERIA BY SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE (90% OF OTHER CRITERIA)		
To what extent...?	Responsible	Rate

PRIORITY 1. SMART MAC - Improving the competitiveness of businesses through innovative and smart economic transformation

SO 1.1 Development and improvement of research and innovation capacities and the implementation of advanced technologies.

The project is compatible and complementary with other regional, national and/or European interventions and contributes to other broader macro-regional and sea basin strategies (Atlantic Strategy).	GR	30%
Relevance of the entities participating in the project as agents of regional innovation systems in the cooperation area	GR	30
The project improves the transfer of scientific and technological knowledge to the business sector.	GR	20%
The project responds to the priorities defined in regional smart specialisation strategies (RIS 3) and especially to the key sectors of tourism, the green economy and the blue economy.	GR	20%

SO 1.3 Strengthening the sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in these, including through productive investments.

The project is compatible and complementary with other regional, national and/or European interventions and contributes to other broader macro-regional and sea basin strategies (Atlantic Strategy).	GR	30
Relevance of the entities participating in the project as agents supporting the productive fabric.	GR	30
The project supports the business fabric in strategic sectors and activities (tourism, green and/or blue economy) or new market niches that promote the diversification of economic activity and job creation.	GR	40%

PRIORITY 2. GREEN MAC - Ecological transition, support for the development of a green and blue economy, combating climate change, risk and disaster prevention and management.		
SO 2.1 Promoting energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.		
The project is compatible and complementary with other regional, national and/or European interventions and contributes to other broader macro-regional and sea basin strategies (Atlantic Strategy).	GR	30
Relevance of the entities participating in the project for implementing energy efficiency measures and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.	GR	30
Relevance of products, processes and/or new technologies in the field of energy efficiency that result in greater energy consumption efficiency (especially in the tourism sector, businesses or public infrastructure)	GR	40%
OE 2.2 Promotion of renewable energy in accordance with Directive (EU) 2018/2001, in particular the sustainability criteria set out therein.		
The project is compatible and complementary with other regional, national and/or European interventions and contributes to other broader macro-regional and sea basin strategies (Atlantic Strategy).	GR	30%
Relevance of the entities participating in the project in the field of renewable energy.	GR	30
Relevance of actions to promote greater penetration of renewable energies (mainly wind, solar and marine or other alternative energies such as biomass or geothermal)	GR	40
SO 2.4 Promoting climate change adaptation, disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches.		
The project is compatible and complementary with other regional, national and/or European interventions and contributes to other broader macro-regional and sea basin strategies (Atlantic Strategy).	GR	30
Relevance of the entities participating in the project in the fight against climate change and the prevention and management of natural disasters.	GR	30
Priority nature of the intervention in relation to risks caused by climate change or risks and natural disasters not directly linked to climate change, such as seismic and volcanic risks, forest fires and marine and coastal pollution	GR	40

OE 2.6 Promoting the transition to a circular and resource-efficient economy.		
The project is compatible and complementary with other regional, national and/or European interventions and contributes to other broader macro-regional and sea basin strategies (Atlantic Strategy).	GR	30
Relevance of the entities participating in the project to promote the circular economy.	GR	30
The project proposes relevant circular economy measures that add value to the competitiveness of the productive fabric with a clear focus on environmental sustainability.	GR	40
OE 2.7 Promoting the protection and conservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution.		
The project is compatible and complementary with other regional, national and/or European interventions and contributes to other broader macro-regional and sea basin strategies (Atlantic Strategy).	GR	30
Relevance of the entities participating in the project as agents for sustainable environmental management, conservation and protection.	GR	30
The project proposes actions relevant to the development of green and/or blue infrastructure or the protection of the natural environment and biodiversity of the territory	GR	20%
The project is carried out in areas of the Natura 2000 network and/or other protected natural areas in the territory.	GR	20

PRIORITY 4. MAC MOBILITY - Improving migration management at origin and destination		
OEI2 Mobility and migration management.		
The project is compatible and complementary with other regional, national and/or Community interventions, especially the ESF.	GR	30
Relevance of the entities participating in the project to address aspects of the migration phenomenon	GR	30
Relevance of actions, prioritising those related to unaccompanied immigrant minors and those territories of origin, transit or destination of migratory flows.	GR	40

- In the process of evaluating the criteria for the Specific Objectives of Priority 2 (Green MAC), regional officials will consult with the respective Environmental Authorities so that, where appropriate, they may issue their assessment within the established deadline. If no assessment is issued within the deadline, positive silence will apply.
- RG: Regional Government (Canary Islands, Azores, Madeira)

ASSESSMENT BY NATIONAL AUTHORITIES IN THIRD COUNTRIES		
(10% OF OTHER CRITERIA)		
To what extent...?	Responsible	Weighting weighting
The project is relevant to the country's strategic priorities and consistent with the Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP) adopted by the European Commission.	RN TP	50%
The country's entities participating in the project are relevant and have the capacity to implement it.	RN TP	50%

- RN TP: National Programme Manager in each of the African partner third countries.