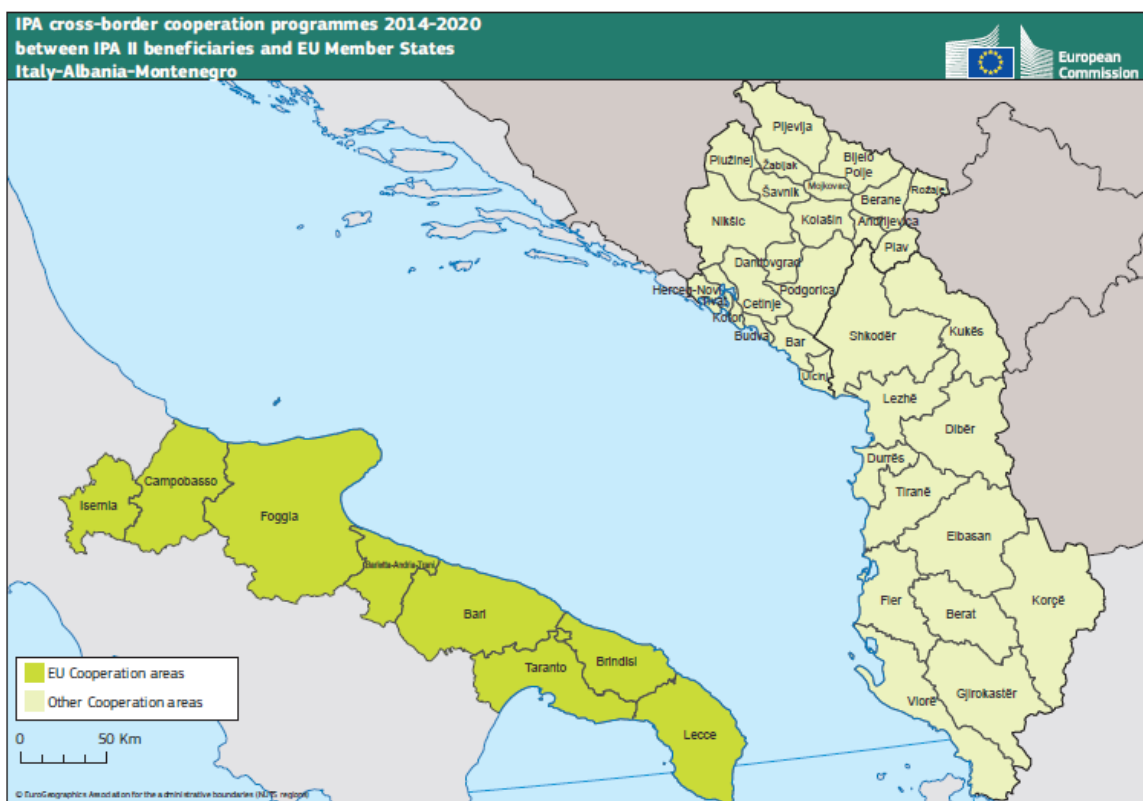


Interreg - IPA CBC



Interreg IPA II Cross-border Cooperation Programme

Italy-Albania-Montenegro 2014-2020



CITIZEN SUMMARY

June 2015

PROGRAMME ELIGIBLE AREAS

Italy:	NUTS III: Provinces of Foggia, Bari, Brindisi, Lecce, Barletta-Andria-Trani (BAT), Taranto, Isernia and Campobasso
Albania:	The entire country
Montenegro:	The entire country

PROGRAMME FINANCIAL ENVELOPE

The programme is co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) and has a total budget of 92.707.555, 00 EUR (including 15% National co-financing).

TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS

The population in the Programme Area has an overall decrease over the past decade, but there is a significant population exchange due to immigration, especially between Italy and Albania.

In terms of **economic development** the Programme Area lags behind the European economy .Its innovation system is weak, characterised by low R&D investment, low employment in high-technology sectors, small number of patents, insufficient cooperation networks, and inadequate collaboration between public research and businesses.

Conditions in the **employment market** of the entire Programme area are fairly critical. The unemployment rate is more than double the EU-28 average rates. Youth and women unemployment rates are particularly high in all participating regions, reflecting very small integration of women into the labour market.

These conditions are made more critical by the economic and debt crisis affecting the economy of the area, with different impacts due to the trend of the crisis. However, there are already good neighbourly relations and there are traditional economic sectors and clusters which can be developed through the Programme, and new opportunities regarding key specialization sectors such as food processing, tourism, green economy could through the cross border cooperation.

The **tourism sector**, as driver of a smart and sustainable economic development therefore, offers substantial opportunities in terms of economic growth and employment.

Regarding the **cultural and historical heritage** the Area is a culturally diverse European region that has unique cultural and historical heritage, a wide set of valuable natural areas in terms of landscape and rich biodiversity, including large areas of forests, agricultural land, mountainous areas, watercourses and coastlines and old culinary traditions offering a variety of eno-gastronomic and folk craft products. The opportunity is to enchase the importance of tourism in the local economy by promoting this heritage, by developing common models for sustainable tourism management at macroregional level, by promoting lesser known destinations, through better links to traditional tourist offers.

Additionally, cultural resources can be valorised among others in cultural and creative industries that, in the recent years, are driving the new economy. Based on ideas rather than physical capital, the creative economy straddles economic, political, social, cultural and technological issues and is at the crossroads of the arts, business and technology.

As far as the **protection of the environment** is concerned and with reference to the water cycle management, the Programme Area is characterised by a lack of integrated plans for the optimisation of the water cycle management and it suffers with wastages and a high consumption levels, either when water is used for civil, industrial or agriculture scopes. Additionally, the area is missing common models, developed

according to EU standards, for the safeguarding and the exploitation of local biodiversity and marine and maritime landscapes, along with inland water landscapes.

Energy policy is perceived as one of the key challenges of the coming decade at European, but also at global level. In order to ensure the achievement of the EU 2020 goals, Member States need to invest in measures, which support the shift towards a resource-efficient and low-carbon European economy that is efficient in the way it uses all resources, to decouple economic growth from resource and energy use, reduce CO2 emissions, enhance competitiveness and promote greater energy security.

Since a substantial part of energy used in cities is related to buildings, EU legislation has put a specific focus on energy self-sufficiency of (public) buildings and the maximisation of heat-energy savings.

The efficient use of energy can make an important contribution to achieving a low-carbon economy, to combating climate change and will imply in many cases positive effects on air quality.

The Programme Area is fragmented on two sides of the Adriatic-Ionian Sea and this specifies the pattern of spatial interactions. The high territorial fragmentation constrains the potential for integrated territorial development and accessibility. The road transport on land bound routes dominates in the Programme area. The connections to the hinterland are poor with many bottlenecks on multimodal connections, while coordination is also inadequate. Regarding the railway, the density of network is lower than the EU average and presents average low standards both as regards the rail infrastructure and services, passengers and goods, and a limited railway mobility especially at international level.

Furthermore, **transport systems** are characterized by low interoperability and it's necessary to better organize the use of existing transport infrastructures and corridors with the aim to enhance the potential of the regions to function as hubs for tourists and trade, improving the intra and interregional connectivity. The enhancement of sustainable cross border connections and the improvement of skills and capacities of public and private transport actors in sustainable transport management are of critical importance in order to achieve this goal.

PROGRAMME GENERAL GOAL

The main goal of the Programme is to enhance the coordination in the Programme area to tackle common challenges in order to boost and integrate territorial development. It aims to enable regional and local stakeholders from eligible areas to exchange knowledge and experiences, to develop and implement pilot actions, to test the feasibility of new policies, products and services, and to support investments in the programme chosen sectors.

PROGRAMME PRIORITY AXES AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The Programme supports project interventions under the following priority axes and specific objectives:

PRIORITY AXIS	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE (S)
1. Strengthening the cross-border cooperation and competitiveness of SMEs	1.1. Enhance the framework conditions for the development of SME's cross-border market.
2. Smart management of natural and cultural heritage for the exploitation of cross border sustainable tourism and territorial attractiveness	2.1. Boost attractiveness of natural and cultural assets to improve a smart and sustainable economic development. 2.2. Increase the cooperation of the key actors of the area for the delivery of innovative cultural and creative products.

3. Environment protection, risk management and low carbon strategy	<p>3.1. Increase cross-border cooperation strategies on water landscapes.</p> <p>3.2. Promoting innovative practices and tools to reduce carbon emission, and to improve energy efficiency in public sector.</p>
4. Increasing cross border accessibility, promoting sustainable transport service and facilities and improving public infrastructures.	<p>4.1. Increase coordination among relevant stakeholders to promote sustainable cross border connections in the cooperation area.</p>

TYPES OF PROJECTS

The Programme supports the following kind of project interventions:

- Standard projects
- Strategic projects
- Thematic projects