

Outline of the future of EU-funded Programmes as set by the European Commission

The European Union and the participating countries target to strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion. The European and national funds shall contribute to reducing disparities, and to reducing the backwardness of the least favored areas, promoting sustainable development and addressing environmental challenges.

Five Policy Objectives are identified and will be supported by those funds;

PO1: a more competitive and smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation

In accordance with PO1 the following specific objectives are set by;

- (i) Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies;”
- (ii) Reaping the benefits of digitization in order to deliver public services more effectively, easily, quickly and at a lower cost.
- (iii) Enhancing sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in SMEs, including by productive investments;
- (iv) Developing skills for smart specialization, industrial transition and entrepreneurship; to identify the most promising areas for sustainable economic development based on the region's distinctive structures and knowledge base.
- (v) Enhancing digital connectivity.

PO2: a greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe by promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation and risk prevention and management

In accordance with PO2 the following specific objectives are set by;

- (i) promoting energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- (ii) (ii) promoting renewable energy
- (iii) developing smart energy systems, grids and storage at outside TEN-E;
- (iv) promoting climate change adaptation, and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches;
- (v) promoting access to water and sustainable water management;
- (vi) promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy;

- (vii) enhancing protection and preservation of nature protection, biodiversity, and green infrastructure and reducing all forms of pollution;
- (viii) promoting sustainable multimodal urban mobility, as part of transition to a net zero carbon economy;

PO3: a more connected Europe by enhancing mobility and regional ICT connectivity by;

- (i) developing, climate resilient, intelligent, secure, sustainable and intermodal TEN-T;
- (ii) developing and enhancing sustainable, climate resilient, intelligent and intermodal national, regional and local mobility, including improved access to TEN-T and cross-border mobility;

PO4 : a more social and inclusive Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights by;

- (i) enhancing the effectiveness and inclusiveness of labour markets and access to quality employment through developing social infrastructure and promoting social economy;
- (ii) improving equal access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and lifelong learning
- (iii) promoting the socioeconomic integration of marginalised communities, and disadvantaged groups including people with special needs
- (iv) promoting the socio-economic integration of third country nationals, including migrants through integrated actions
- (v) ensuring equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems,
- (vi) enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation;

PO5: a Europe closer to citizens by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of all types of territories urban, rural and coastal areas and local initiatives by:

- (i) fostering the integrated and inclusive social, economic and environmental development, culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism, and security in urban areas;
- (ii) fostering the integrated and inclusive social, economic and environmental local development, culture, natural cultural heritage, sustainable tourism and security, in areas other than urban areas . The EU funds should address the problems of disadvantaged areas, notably rural areas and areas which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps.