



Commissione europea

DIREZIONE GENERALE IMPRESE

Programmi dell'Unione europea a sostegno delle PMI

**Una rassegna delle principali possibilità di
finanziamento a disposizione delle PMI europee**

L'Unione europea fornisce **assistenza alle piccole e medie imprese** (PMI) degli Stati membri e spesso anche dei paesi candidati all'adesione. Questa assistenza assume **forme diverse** quali sovvenzioni, prestiti ed in alcuni casi garanzie. Il sostegno viene fornito direttamente oppure tramite i fondi strutturali dell'Unione europea che sono gestiti a livello nazionale. Le PMI possono anche usufruire di una serie di misure d'assistenza non finanziaria sotto forma di programmi e servizi di supporto loro destinati.

Questa guida mira a presentare i programmi europei a disposizione delle PMI e contiene brevi informazioni nonché l'indicazione dei principali siti Web per ogni programma. Si noti che la guida non è esauriente.

I programmi di sostegno sono stati divisi nelle seguenti **quattro categorie**:

1. Possibilità di finanziamento direttamente aperte alle PMI

Questi finanziamenti sono per lo più tematici e si prefiggono obiettivi specifici: ambiente, attività di ricerca, istruzione. Essi sono ideati e realizzati da diversi servizi della Commissione europea. Le PMI possono presentare direttamente domanda per questi programmi, di norma a condizione di presentare progetti sostenibili, transnazionali e che apportino un valore aggiunto significativo.

Il sostegno dell'Unione europea consiste in sovvenzioni che generalmente coprono il 50% dei costi di un progetto.

2. Fondi strutturali

I fondi europei di sviluppo regionale costituiscono una tra le più importanti fonti di finanziamento per le PMI per mezzo di differenti programmi tematici ed iniziative comunitarie attuati a livello regionale. I beneficiari dei fondi strutturali ricevono un contributo diretto al finanziamento dei loro progetti.

Si noti che la gestione dei programmi e la selezione dei progetti avvengono a livello nazionale e/o regionale.

3. Strumenti finanziari

La maggior parte di questi strumenti sono disponibili solo indirettamente, tramite gli intermediari finanziari nazionali. Per mezzo del programma pluriennale 2001-2005 la Commissione rende disponibili più di 350 milioni di €. Gli strumenti finanziari sono gestiti dal Fondo europeo per gli investimenti.

4. Altri tipi di sostegno

Questi consistono generalmente in iniziative d'assistenza non finanziaria, principalmente nel campo dell'internazionalizzazione.



Maggiori informazioni



Importante!

1. Possibilità di finanziamento direttamente aperte alle PMI

Ambiente ed energia

• LIFE III - Ambiente

LIFE III, lo strumento finanziario per l'ambiente, è uno tra gli strumenti principali della politica ambientale dell'Unione europea:

- l'obiettivo specifico di LIFE-Ambiente è contribuire allo sviluppo di tecniche e di metodi innovativi ed integrati, oltre che al futuro sviluppo della politica comunitaria in materia ambientale;
- le proposte di progetto possono essere presentate da tutti i soggetti giuridici stabiliti negli Stati membri e la partecipazione delle PMI è particolarmente incoraggiata;
- le proposte vanno presentate da un singolo richiedente, ma possono prevedere la collaborazione di altri partecipanti nell'ambito di un apposito partenariato.

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/life/home.htm>

Per altre fonti di finanziamento connesse all'ambiente consultare le pagine Web della Direzione generale Ambiente:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/funding/intro_en.htm

• Energia intelligente per l'Europa (2003-2006)

Si tratta del nuovo programma pluriennale per iniziative nel campo dell'energia, che:

- fornisce un sostegno finanziario ad iniziative a livello locale, regionale e nazionale nel campo delle fonti rinnovabili d'energia, dell'efficienza energetica e degli aspetti energetici dei trasporti;
- rafforza quanto fatto nel campo delle fonti rinnovabili di energia (ALTENER) e dell'uso efficiente dell'energia (SAVE); aggiorna le attività internazionali esistenti (COOPENER) ed introduce un nuovo settore d'azione, l'energia nel campo dei trasporti (STEER).

http://europa.eu.int/comm/energy/intelligent/index_en.html

• Programma Marco Polo (2003-2010)

Il programma Marco Polo mira a ridurre la congestione stradale, migliorare le prestazioni ambientali del sistema di trasporto merci della Comunità e rafforzare l'intermodalità, contribuendo così ad un sistema di trasporti efficiente e sostenibile.

- A tal fine il programma sostiene iniziative nel campo del trasporto merci, della logistica e in altri mercati interessati.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/transport/marcopolo/index_en.htm



Per maggiori informazioni circa la politica energetica europea consultare il sito Web della Direzione generale Energia e Trasporti:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/energy/index_en.html

Innovazione ed attività di ricerca

- **Il sesto programma quadro di ricerca e sviluppo tecnologico (2002-2006)**

Il nuovo programma quadro mira ad assegnare più del 15% dei fondi complessivamente disponibili ad iniziative volte a sostenere le attività di ricerca e l'innovazione nelle PMI.

- Nell'ambito del sesto programma quadro le PMI potranno partecipare alle sette nuove priorità tematiche (mediante le "reti d'eccellenza" ed i "progetti integrati") e beneficeranno altresì di una serie di provvedimenti speciali miranti a promuovere la loro partecipazione (iniziative speciali di formazione, valutazione su misura, inviti a presentare proposte indirizzati specialmente alle PMI).
- *Help-Desk* per le PMI della Direzione generale Ricerca: research-sme@cec.eu.int

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/index_en.html

- **EUREKA – Una rete per le attività di ricerca e sviluppo orientate al mercato**

Eureka è una rete paneuropea per organizzazioni industriali che svolgono attività di R&S orientate al mercato.

- Grazie alla collaborazione internazionale tale iniziativa sostiene la competitività delle imprese europee creando collegamenti e reti d'innovazione in 34 paesi: <http://www.eureka.be>
- La pagina intitolata "*Finanziare il vostro progetto*" (*Financing your project*) fornisce informazioni sulle possibilità di finanziamento a livello nazionale e contiene un elenco dei coordinatori nazionali dei progetti: <http://www.eureka.be/ifs/files/ifs/jsp-bin/eureka/ifs/jsps/publicFinancing.jsp>

- **eContent (2002-2005)**

eContent è un programma pluriennale creato per incoraggiare lo sviluppo dei contenuti digitali europei nelle reti globali e promuovere la diversità linguistica nella società dell'informazione:

- il programma eContent sostiene la disponibilità, l'impiego e la distribuzione dei contenuti digitali europei, ed in particolar modo dei progetti innovativi e sostenibili sotto il profilo economico e finanziario che comportino collaborazioni multinazionali ed intersettoriali;

- i finanziamenti sono disponibili nell'ambito di tre linee d'intervento (valorizzazione delle informazioni del settore pubblico, incremento della produzione di contenuti, sviluppo del mercato dei contenuti digitali);

<http://www.cordis.lu/econtent/>

• eTEN

Questo programma ha lo scopo di favorire l'introduzione di servizi elettronici di dimensione transeuropea basati sulle reti di telecomunicazioni. Il suo principale obiettivo è "una società dell'informazione per tutti".

- eTen comprende sei aree tematiche che verranno affrontate mediante proposte. Fra queste aree figura la partecipazione delle PMI all'economia elettronica al fine di migliorare la loro concorrenzialità.

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/programmes/eten/index_en.htm

Per informazioni su altri programmi ed iniziative che contribuiscono allo sviluppo della società dell'informazione consultare il sito Web della Direzione generale Società dell'informazione:

http://europa.eu.int/information_society/index_en.htm



CORDIS (Servizio comunitario d'informazione in materia di ricerca e sviluppo)

Questo portale Web, destinato a chi si occupa d'innovazione in Europa, propone circa 30 000 pagine Web riguardanti tutti gli aspetti della politica perseguita dall'Unione europea in tema di attività di ricerca e d'innovazione (www.cordis.lu). Si segnalano in particolare:

- *Financing Innovation*: il sito sulle possibilità di finanziamento nell'ambito del programma della Commissione europea a favore dell'innovazione e delle PMI. <http://www.cordis.lu/finance/src/schemes.htm>
- *SME Tech Web*: il sito per le PMI ad indirizzo tecnologico, con particolare riguardo a quelle che desiderano innovare ed internazionalizzarsi. <http://sme.cordis.lu/home/index.cfm>



Sul sito Web CORDIS è disponibile **un elenco dei punti nazionali di contatto per le PMI** nel contesto del sesto programma quadro. La Commissione europea sostiene la costituzione di tale rete di punti nazionali di contatto per il sesto programma quadro, destinata a fornire informazioni pratiche, assistenza e formazione a potenziali partecipanti e contraenti. <http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/npc.htm>



La rete degli Innovation Relay Centre (IRC)

- Si tratta di una rete di centri situati nell'Unione europea ed al di fuori di essa, che forniscono assistenza sul piano locale nell'intento di promuovere le collaborazioni in ambito tecnologico e il trasferimento di tecnologie.
- I centri, per lo più ospitati da organizzazioni pubbliche, forniscono un servizio di

sostegno all'innovazione agevolando e promuovendo il trasferimento di tecnologie innovative tra le PMI europee.

- La rete è composta da 71 centri e da 250 uffici regionali, situati in 33 paesi.
- Per trovare il vostro punto locale di contatto con la rete consultare il sito:
<http://irc.cordis.lu/whoswho/home.cfm>

Istruzione e formazione

• SOCRATES

Il programma d'azione della Comunità europea nel campo dell'**istruzione** (2000-2006) contempla la possibilità per le PMI di partecipare ad alcune iniziative nell'ambito delle seguenti azioni SOCRATES:

COMENIUS: cooperazione europea nel campo dell'istruzione scolastica (iniziative 2 e 3);

ERASMUS: programma europeo nel campo dell'istruzione superiore (iniziativa 3);

GRUNDTVIG: istruzione degli adulti ed altri percorsi educativi (iniziativa 1);

LINGUA: promozione dell'insegnamento e dell'apprendimento delle lingue;

MINERVA: cooperazione europea nel campo delle tecnologie dell'informazione e della comunicazione (TIC) nonché dell'apprendimento aperto ed a distanza nel settore dell'istruzione.

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates.html>

• LEONARDO DA VINCI

Il programma LEONARDO DA VINCI mira a promuovere un'Europa delle conoscenze ed a consolidare uno spazio europeo di cooperazione nel settore della **formazione**:

- il programma sostiene iniziative innovative transnazionali volte a stimolare le conoscenze, le capacità e le abilità necessarie ad una integrazione completa nella vita lavorativa e al pieno esercizio della cittadinanza;
- le proposte possono venir presentate da imprese private o pubbliche, ed in particolare da PMI ed imprese artigianali, oltre che da imprese che operano nel settore della formazione professionale:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/leonardo2_en.html

È possibile ottenere ulteriori informazioni presso le agenzie nazionali Leonardo da Vinci:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/leonardo2/nalist2_en.html



La pagina "*Programmi di finanziamento*" sul sito Web della Direzione generale Istruzione e cultura fornisce una panoramica di tutti gli attuali inviti a presentare proposte:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/calls/callg_en.html

Salute e sicurezza

L'Agenzia europea per la sicurezza e la salute sul lavoro sostiene iniziative volte ad aiutare le PMI a migliorare i livelli di salute e sicurezza sul lavoro:

<http://agency.osha.eu.int/>

2 . Fondi strutturali

I fondi strutturali sono stati ideati nell'intento di contribuire a ridurre le disparità nello sviluppo regionale ed a promuovere la coesione economica e sociale nell'Unione europea. La Commissione europea cofinanzia pertanto operazioni a livello regionale ed orizzontale negli Stati membri mediante programmi relativi ad **agricoltura, politica regionale, occupazione e questioni sociali**.



Si noti che la gestione dei programmi e la selezione dei progetti avvengono a livello nazionale e/o regionale.

Tre obiettivi

Per migliorare l'efficacia dei provvedimenti di natura strutturale per il periodo 2000-2006 sono stati fissati tre obiettivi, nell'ambito dei quali sono previsti provvedimenti specifici per le PMI:

- **obiettivo 1 - Sviluppo delle regioni meno favorite:** sviluppare e rafforzare le strutture di sostegno alle PMI;
- **obiettivo 2 - Rilancio delle regioni in difficoltà:** promuovere l'imprenditoria e creare occasioni alternative di lavoro nelle regioni in cui le industrie tradizionali su larga scala sono in fase di declino;
- **obiettivo 3 - Modernizzare i sistemi di formazione e incrementare l'occupazione:** promuovere lo sviluppo delle risorse umane.

I tre obiettivi dei fondi strutturali sono realizzati per mezzo di quattro strumenti e quattro iniziative comunitarie.

Quattro strumenti ...

- **FESR: Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale**

Finanzia infrastrutture, investimenti in grado di creare posti di lavoro, progetti di sviluppo locale e iniziative di sostegno alle imprese di piccole dimensioni:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/funds/prord/prord_it.htm

- **FSE: Fondo sociale europeo**

Promuove la reintegrazione di disoccupati e gruppi svantaggiati nel mercato del lavoro finanziando principalmente programmi di formazione e sistemi di sostegno all'assunzione:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/esf2000/index-en.htm

- **SFOP: Strumento finanziario di orientamento della pesca**

Aiuta ad adeguare e modernizzare il settore della pesca:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/funds/prord/prords/prdsd_it.htm

- **FEAOG: Fondo europeo agricolo di orientamento e di garanzia**

http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/fin/index_it.htm

... e quattro iniziative comunitarie

L'Unione europea ha anche ideato quattro programmi specifici, noti col nome d'iniziative comunitarie, destinati a trovare soluzioni comuni a problemi che interessano l'intera Unione. Ogni iniziativa è finanziata da un solo fondo.

- **INTERREGIO III**

- Promuove la cooperazione transfrontaliera, transnazionale ed interregionale;
- è finanziato dal FESR.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/interreg3/index_it.htm

- **URBAN II**

- Sviluppo sostenibile delle aree urbane: sostiene strategie innovative per il risanamento delle città e delle zone urbane degradate;
- è finanziato dal FESR.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/urban2/index_it.htm

- **EQUAL**

- Mira ad eliminare i fattori che determinano disuguaglianze e discriminazioni nel mercato del lavoro;
- è finanziato dal FES.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equal/index_it.html

- **LEADER+**

- Mira a riunire le persone che operano nelle società e nelle economie rurali per

prendere visione delle nuove strategie locali di sviluppo sostenibile;

- è finanziato dal FEAOG:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/rur/leaderplus/index_it.htm



Il sito Web della Direzione generale Politica regionale, http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/index_en.htm, fornisce informazioni sulle iniziative prese dall'Unione europea a sostegno dello sviluppo regionale, ed offre in particolare:

- un elenco delle autorità competenti per la gestione dei fondi strutturali in ogni regione:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/manage/authority/authority_en.cfm

- la banca dati "Regional Development Programmes 2000-2006", che contiene riepiloghi dei programmi ufficialmente adottati dalla Commissione europea per ogni regione:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/country/prordn/index_en.cfm

3. Strumenti finanziari



Si noti che questi programmi non forniscono direttamente finanziamenti alle PMI, ma si avvalgono di norma dei servizi d'intermediari finanziari. Obiettivo di questi programmi è aumentare il volume dei crediti a disposizione delle PMI ed incoraggiare le banche a sviluppare la loro capacità di credito alle PMI.

Fondo europeo d'investimento (FEI)

L'attività del FEI si basa su due strumenti, che risultano entrambi complementari ai prestiti globali erogati dalla BEI agli intermediari finanziari che sostengono le PMI:

- gli strumenti del FEI relativi ai **capitali di rischio** consistono in investimenti in partecipazioni ai fondi di capitali di rischio ed agli incubatori che sostengono le PMI, in particolare quelle di recente costituzione e con un indirizzo tecnologico;
- gli **strumenti di garanzia** del FEI consistono nella fornitura di garanzie ad istituzioni finanziarie che concedono crediti alle PMI:

<http://www.eif.org/>

Oltre alla propria politica d'investimenti e a quella per conto della Comunità europea il FEI gestisce i **seguenti tre programmi** nell'ambito degli **strumenti finanziari del programma pluriennale a favore delle PMI**:

- **Sportello MET per l'avviamento**

Lo sportello MET mira a fornire capitali di rischio a PMI innovative grazie ad investimenti in fondi specializzati di capitali di rischio.

- **Iniziativa per il capitale di avviamento**

Questa iniziativa è complementare allo sportello MET e sostiene i costi legati ai fondi di capitali di avviamento e agli incubatori in cui già investe il FEI.

- **Strumento di garanzia PMI**

Obiettivo dello strumento di garanzia per le PMI è facilitare la disponibilità di prestiti alle piccole imprese o a quelle di nuova costituzione tramite garanzie congiunte ai sistemi nazionali di garanzia e programmi di garanzia reciproca.

Lo strumento di garanzia per PMI copre:

- garanzie su prestiti,
- garanzie su microcrediti,
- garanzie per partecipazioni,
- garanzie di prestiti TIC.

<http://www.eif.org/>

Banca europea per gli investimenti (BEI)

Compito dell'istituzione finanziaria dell'Unione europea è contribuire all'integrazione, allo sviluppo equilibrato ed alla coesione economica e sociale dei paesi membri:

<http://www.eib.org/>



*La BEI finanzia unicamente **progetti di grandi dimensioni**, dei quali tuttavia le PMI possono beneficiare indirettamente (ad esempio incubatori, parchi scientifici, dispositivi di garanzia ...)*

- **"Prestiti globali"**

La BEI propone alle PMI, tramite intermediari finanziari, prestiti globali che contribuiscono ad aumentare il volume dei finanziamenti a disposizione delle PMI e ad abbassare i tassi d'interesse.

- **Iniziativa Innovazione 2000**

Questa iniziativa è stata varata dalla BEI per sostenere gli investimenti atti a promuovere la società dell'informazione, le attività di ricerca e sviluppo, l'innovazione e la competitività oltre che a valorizzare il capitale umano:

- i finanziamenti della BEI sono indirizzati a cinque settori, tra cui lo sviluppo delle PMI e dell'imprenditorialità;
- a questa iniziativa verrà associato un programma di prestiti per 12-15 miliardi di € nel corso dei tre prossimi anni.

<http://www.eib.org/i2i/en/index.htm>

Banca europea per la ricostruzione e lo sviluppo (BERS)

La Banca europea per la ricostruzione e lo sviluppo, istituita nel 1991, usa gli investimenti come strumento per promuovere l'economia di mercato e la democrazia in 27 paesi distribuiti tra il Centro Europa e l'Asia centrale. Fornisce il finanziamento di progetti alle banche, ed indirettamente alle industrie e alle imprese.

<http://www.ebrd.com/> (selezionare "SME" nella sezione "Countries and sectors").

- **Dispositivo di finanziamento UE-BERS per le PMI** (per i paesi candidati dell'Europa centrale ed orientale)

Il dispositivo di finanziamento per le PMI è stato ideato per incoraggiare la crescita e lo sviluppo delle PMI agevolando l'accesso a prestiti e l'acquisizione di partecipazioni in collaborazione con intermediari finanziari locali dei paesi candidati.

<http://ebrd.com/country/index.htm> (selezionare "SME" nella sezione "Countries and sectors").

Iniziativa Gate2Growth "Accesso ai finanziamenti"

Si tratta di un portale destinato ad imprenditori in rete, investitori, fornitori di servizi e reti tematiche sostenuto dalla Commissione europea.

- Obiettivo primario dell'iniziativa G2G è sostenere gli imprenditori innovativi in Europa.
- G2G fornisce strumenti, infrastrutture e servizi di sostegno agli imprenditori innovativi ed ai loro sostenitori, aiutandoli in particolare a definire un **piano aziendale**.
- Uno dei principali scopi dell'iniziativa G2G è stabilire contatti tra investitori ed imprenditori innovativi per mezzo di una banca dati.

<http://www.gate2growth.com>

4. Altri tipi di sostegno

Relazioni esterne e cooperazione internazionale

• AL Invest

Si tratta di una rete di operatori europei e latino-americani che cooperano per organizzare riunioni tra imprese attive nello stesso settore.

- Ogni anno la Commissione cofinanzia riunioni settoriali per società europee e latino-americane che cercano di stabilire legami commerciali ed alleanze strategiche.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/al-invest/index_en.htm

• Asia Invest

Si tratta di un'iniziativa dell'Unione europea mirante a promuovere e sostenere la cooperazione economica tra le imprese dell'Unione europea e dell'Asia.

- Il programma fornisce assistenza ad organizzazioni intermedie per agevolare collaborazioni reciprocamente vantaggiose e possibilità di accordi di cooperazione tra PMI.
- Asia Invest opera da cinque anni e per il prossimo quinquennio (2003-2007)

dispone di fondi per finanziamenti a progetti pari a 35 milioni di €.

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/asia-invest/html2002/main.htm>

- **Asia IT&C**

Asia IT&C mira a migliorare la qualità delle collaborazioni tra Europa ed Asia nella ricerca di soluzioni e norme innovative compatibili nell'ambito delle TIC.

- I candidati ed i partner ammessi a partecipare al programma sono organizzazioni senza fini di lucro, in particolare quelle che si occupano di PMI (quando si tratti di organizzazioni a fini di lucro le PMI possono essere ammesse a partecipare al programma in qualità di "fornitrici di servizi" nel quadro delle attività svolte in collaborazione).

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/asia-itc/html/main.htm>

- **Programma di formazione per dirigenti (ETP - Executive Training Program) in Giappone e Corea**

Obiettivo dell'ETP è aiutare i dirigenti delle imprese europee ad affrontare i mercati giapponese e coreano.

- Il programma di formazione, che si svolge nel paese interessato, è una combinazione di corsi di lingua, seminari sull'ambiente in cui operano le imprese ed esperienze dirette di lavoro presso società locali.
- Qualsiasi impresa dell'Unione che operi in Giappone o Corea, esporti in tali paesi o disponga di una chiara e dimostrabile strategia d'esportazione o d'investimento nei confronti di tali paesi può chiedere di partecipare al programma (il 50% dei partecipanti sono PMI).

www.etp.org

- **"Gateway to Japan"**

- Il programma "Gateway to Japan" sostiene l'esportazione di prodotti europei verso il mercato giapponese.
- Il programma consiste in attività volte ad integrare e valorizzare la promozione delle esportazioni effettuate dai singoli Stati membri in otto settori industriali dell'UE ai quali si attribuisce un elevato potenziale in Giappone.
- Ogni quadriennio vengono realizzate 32 manifestazioni.

<http://www.gatewaytojapan.org/index.jsp>



Per altre regioni geografiche ed altri paesi si veda la pagina "*Programmi e progetti*" sul sito Web di EuropeAid, l'ufficio di cooperazione dell'Unione europea:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/index_it.htm

Inviti a presentare proposte

EuropeAid, l'ufficio di cooperazione dell'Unione europea, pubblica **gare d'appalto ed inviti a presentare proposte** sul suo sito Web nell'ambito dei programmi di relazioni esterne (PHARE, ISPA, SAPARD, MEDA, ALA...), ad alcuni dei quali possono partecipare anche le PMI.

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/cgi/frame12.pl>



Dove trovare aiuto a livello locale

La rete degli Euro Info Centre (EIC)

La rete degli EIC conta 300 centri situati in 42 paesi. Oltre che negli stati membri, gli EIC sono infatti presenti anche nei paesi candidati, nelle regioni ultraperiferiche, nei paesi dello spazio economico europeo ed in quelli del Mediterraneo.

Fondata nel 1987, la rete EIC è stata creata dalla Commissione europea per assistere le PMI e metterle così in condizione di sfruttare pienamente le opportunità offerte dal mercato unico europeo.

La missione della rete è quella di **informare, consigliare e assistere le imprese** sulle varie tematiche comunitarie, nonché di garantire alla Commissione un **ritorno d'informazioni** sulla reale incidenza delle misure comunitarie che interessano le PMI.

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/networks/eic/eic.html>



Altre fonti d'informazione

- ✓ **Direzione generale IMPRESE** – Commissione europea:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/index_en.htm

- ✓ **Banca dati sulle misure e iniziative di sostegno a favore delle imprese**

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/smie/index.htm>

- ✓ **Informazione sui servizi pubblici transfrontalieri in Europa:** questo portale fornisce informazioni e servizi per aiutare cittadini ed imprese europei a svolgere attività transfrontaliere.

<http://europa.eu.int/public-services>

- ✓ La banca dati "**Aiuti e prestiti**" sul server Europa fornisce una panoramica di tutti i programmi e gli strumenti dell'Unione.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgc/aides/index_it.htm

- ✓ **TED, tenders electronic daily:** banca dati sugli appalti pubblici pubblicati nella Gazzetta ufficiale dell'Unione europea:

<http://ted.publications.eu.int/CD/application/pif/resources/shtml/common/home/home.html>

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

EuropeAid Co-operation Office
Geographical Co-ordination Unit
for the Mediterranean Region and the Middle East



EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

INFORMATION NOTE



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EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

The European Union and its Member States have long been financing and co-financing numerous activities in the Mediterranean region. The activities financed through EU channels are either directly funded from the EU budget or the European Investment Bank's (EIB) own resources allocated by the EU Member States. A large part of the activities financed by the EU budget is managed by the European Commission's EuropeAid Co-operation Office. Other Directorate-Generals of the European Commission also provide some funding opportunities. In this respect, the funding opportunities in this information note are organised as follows:

I. EU ACTIVITIES FINANCED FROM THE EU BUDGET

1.1. EU Activities Managed by EuropeAid

- The MEDA Programme
- The Middle East Peace Process
- European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)
- Decentralised Co-operation
- Co-financing with NGOs
- Food Aid and Food Security
- Promotion of the full integration of the environmental dimension in the development process of developing countries
- Promotion of the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests and other forests in developing countries
- Integration of gender issues in development co-operation

1.2. EU Activities Managed by Other Directorate-Generals of the European Commission

- Directorate-General Education and Culture
 - Jean Monnet Project
 - Tempus
- Directorate-General Environment
 - LIFE-Third Countries
 - Community Framework for Co-operation to Promote Sustainable Urban Development
- ECHO: Humanitarian Aid Operations
- Directorate-General for Research
 - EU's Research framework Programme

II. EU ACTIVITIES FINANCED OUTSIDE THE EU BUDGET

European Investment Bank (EIB)

I. EU ACTIVITIES FINANCED FROM THE EU BUDGET

The European Union's activities in the Mediterranean region are mostly carried out through a call for proposals or procurement procedure. The following sections provide general information on who can benefit and how to benefit from the EU funds available to different actors in the Mediterranean region. It is important to note that the information provided below is of an indicative nature. The specific criteria for participation in the calls for proposals and tenders are determined by the relevant notice published in conjunction with each call or tender and it is only that information and those criteria included that have legal bearing.

All substantial tendering opportunities and contribution schemes managed by EuropeAid are published in the Official Journal of the European Union and announced on the European Commission's EuropeAid Co-operation Office website.

1.1. EU ACTIVITIES MANAGED BY EUROPEAID

The majority of the EU supported activities in the Mediterranean region, financed or co-financed by the EU budget, are carried out through the MEDA programme for both bilateral and regional co-operation.

The Mediterranean Partners are also eligible to participate in some other programmes or initiatives along thematic lines, which are also financed or co-financed by the EU budget.

For all these EU programmes managed by EuropeAid, additional information, including tender procedures and announcements, can be found at the following websites:

EuropeAid Co-operation Office: http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/index_en.htm

Tender Procedures: www.europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/tender/gestion/index_en.htm

Search engine for calls for tenders and for proposals:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/cgi/frame12.pl>

EuropeAid Co-operation Office organigram:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/general/org_graph_en.pdf

Official Journal of the European Union: http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/search/search_oj.html

The European Commission Delegations in the Mediterranean Region:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/med/link_deleg_en.htm

Mailing address: The European Commission, EuropeAid Co-operation Office, 1049 Brussels, Belgium
The European Commission Switchboard: +32 2 299 11 11.

The MEDA Programme

The establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership between the EU Member States and 12 Mediterranean Partners¹ in 1995 provided a comprehensive and cohesive framework of co-operation for the activities supported by the European Union in the Mediterranean. The MEDA programme (budget line 19080201), as the main financial instrument of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, supports a set of measures and objectives set by the Barcelona Process aiming at supporting economic transition, developing a better socio-economic balance, and fostering regional integration for free trade by the year 2010 through a multi-sectoral approach. The

¹ Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey.

MEDA programme, currently in its second programming period (2000-2006) with a budget of € 5,350 million, consists of bilateral co-operation and regional co-operation instruments.

A large part of the resources are channelled through bilateral funding to the eligible Partners: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and the Palestinian Authority. The rest of the resources are devoted to regional activities.

Who might benefit from the MEDA projects?

Beneficiaries may include States and regions as well as local authorities, public agencies, local or traditional communities, organisations supporting business, private operators, co-operatives, mutual societies, universities, associations, foundations and non-governmental organisations.

How to benefit from the MEDA programme?

The European Commission, in collaboration with the Mediterranean Partners, defines the priorities for each country in the Country Strategy Papers and in the National and Regional Indicative Programmes. For the region as a whole, a Regional Strategy Paper and a Regional Indicative Programme is also established. In accordance with the priority areas, the list of projects financed each year is included in the yearly National Financing Plan for each Partner and the Regional Financing Plan.

These projects are then announced regularly and throughout the year on the European Commission's EuropeAid Co-operation Office's website. The criteria for participating in each call for tender or call for proposals are included in the relevant documentation, also available from EuropeAid's website. After the announcement, the projects are managed by the European Commission Delegations in the Mediterranean countries.

Where to obtain additional information?

EuropeAid Co-operation in the Middle East and the Southern Mediterranean Region:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/med/index_en.htm

Information on the EU's Middle East and Mediterranean Policy:

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/med_mideast/intro/index.htm

Information on the MEDA Programme:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/MEDA.htm

This programme is mainly co-ordinated by the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate B Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East, Unit B1 Co-ordination for the Mediterranean Region. E-mail: europeaid-info@cec.eu.int

The Middle East Peace Process (MEPP)

The Middle East Peace Process aims to help provide a solid foundation at the civil society level for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. It gives priority to initiatives that have the potential to act as a bridge between large audiences in Israeli and Arab societies in order to promote mutual understanding. It also aims at creating channels of communication on an informal level and to support civil society initiatives.

In the context of the Middle East Peace Process, EU funded projects are mainly financed through the Community Operations Connected with the Israel/PLO Peace Agreement (19080300).

How to benefit from MEPP projects?

Following the announcement of a call for proposals, proposals can be submitted in accordance with the instruction given in the notice. The notice and the relevant documentation will be available at the European Commission's EuropeAid website.

Where to obtain additional information?

Additional information can be obtained at the following websites:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/med/regional/middleeastpeaceprcs_en.htm

http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgc/aides/forms/aidcoll_en.htm

The European Commission Delegations in the Mediterranean Region:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/med/link_deleg_en.htm

European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)

European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (budget lines 19040300 and 19040400) provides aid to projects in the EU and third countries. Activities principally aim at promoting and defending human rights and fundamental freedoms, supporting the democratisation process, and providing support for measures to promote respect for human rights and democratisation by preventing conflict and dealing with its consequences.

The total budget of the initiative is € 150 million for the period 1999-2004. The EU level of contribution might vary between € 300,000 and € 1,500,000.

Who might benefit from European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights?

Regional and international organisations, non-governmental organisations, national, regional and local authorities and official agencies, EU-based organisations and public or private-sector institutes and operators might benefit from the initiative with the condition that their headquarters are either in an EU Member State or in the beneficiary third country.

How to benefit from the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights?

Eligible partners might submit proposals following a call for proposals announced in the European Commission's EuropeAid website. In addition, projects developed with international and regional organisations, including the specialised UN agencies, might also benefit from the available funds.

The European Commission launches calls for proposals under EIDHR throughout the year. The announcements for relevant calls for proposals are listed at the EuropeAid website under the heading 'other' of the tender search engine.

Where to obtain additional information?

For more information on the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR):
http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/eidhr/index_en.htm

Additional information on the initiative can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F3 Democracy, Human Rights and Thematic Support. Additional information on micro-projects can be obtained from the European Commission Delegation in the beneficiary country in question.

Decentralised Co-operation

Decentralised co-operation operations and initiatives in the developing countries (budget line 21021300) aim to promote a more participatory approach to development, responsive to the needs and initiatives of the populations in the developing countries, to contribute to the diversification and reinforcement of civil society and grassroots democracy in the countries concerned and to the mobilisation of decentralised co-operation agents in the EU and the developing countries in pursuit of these objectives within the structured programmes. All developing countries are eligible for operations to promote decentralised co-operation.

Who might benefit from Decentralised Co-operation programme?

Decentralised co-operation agents in the European Union or the developing countries, namely: local authorities, non-governmental organisations, local traders' associations and local citizens' groups, co-operatives, trade unions, women's and youth organisations, teaching and research institutions, churches and any non-governmental associations likely to contribute to development and that are located in a EU Member State or the beneficiary country, might benefit from the available funds.

How to benefit from Decentralised Co-operation programme?

The launch for a call for proposals for decentralised co-operation is announced in the European Commission's EuropeAid website. All the necessary documentation is also published with the notice. The announcements for relevant calls for proposals are listed at the EuropeAid website under the heading 'other' of the tender search engine.

Where to obtain additional information?

EuropeAid's decentralised co-operation programme's website:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/ong_cd/intro_coop_en.htm

Additional information can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal Operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F2 NGO co-financing.

Co-financing with non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

Co-financing with non-governmental organisations programme (budget line 21020300) aims, among others, at co-financing European NGOs' activities in developing countries particularly in the fields of strengthening civil society and participatory development, promotion and defence of human rights and democracy, the role of women in development, and sustainable

development. Protection of threatened cultures, especially endangered indigenous cultures and protection and improvement of the circumstances and of the rights of children in the developing countries are also among the priorities of the programme.

Who might benefit from Co-financing with NGOs programme?

The NGOs, whose headquarters are located in EU Member States, whose co-financed operations are mainly decided by their headquarters and whose main funding originates in the EU, can benefit from the programme. Priority is given to networks and consortia of NGOs that prove their ability to support development operations proposed by the partners in the developing countries and the nature and scope of their links with similar organisations in the developing countries. Consequently, NGOs in the partner countries where the operation is planned to take place can also benefit from the programme but only on the initiative of a European NGO and in collaboration with a European NGO.

How to benefit from Co-financing with NGOs programme?

The launch for a call for proposals is announced on the European Commission's EuropeAid website. All the necessary documentation is published along with the notice. Announcements for relevant calls for proposals are listed on the EuropeAid website under the heading 'other' of the tender search engine. In general, the launch for calls for proposals takes place once a year.

Where to obtain additional information?

EuropeAid's website for Co-financing with NGOs programme:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/ong_cd/intro_ong_en.htm

Additional information can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal Operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F2 NGO co-financing.

Food Aid and Food Security

This world-wide Food Aid and Food Security programme (budget lines 21020100 and 21020200) aims at bringing assistance to developing countries facing food deficit problems - temporary and mainly structural - linked to poverty. This programme is particularly active in post-crisis situations and implements the link that must exist between relief, rehabilitation and development. Eligible countries are food-insecure countries, countries in situations of crisis, post-crisis or structural food shortage. The EU contribution levels usually vary between 90% for NGO programmes and 100% for grant aid programmes.

Who might benefit from Food Aid and Food Security programme?

Beneficiary country governments, international agencies and northern and southern NGOs as well as the NGO network EnronAid might benefit from the programme.

How to benefit from Food Aid and Food Security programme?

In the case of NGOs, a call for proposals is announced at the European Commission's EuropeAid website. All the necessary documentation is also published along with the notice. For international organisations and governments, a financing application is necessary prior to financing agreement. The relevant information can be obtained at the EuropeAid website under thematic programmes and projects.

Where to obtain additional information?

European Programme for Food Aid and Food Security:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/foodsec/index_en.htm

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/resal/>

Additional information can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal Operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F5 Food Security and Thematic Support.

Promotion of the full integration of the environmental dimension in the development process of developing countries

With the aim of integrating the environmental dimension into the development process, this programme (budget line 21020500) promotes the implementation of policies, strategies, tools and technologies in line with sustainable development. The programme has a budget of € 12 million per year and the EU contribution covers the totality of the project costs only in a limited number of cases.

Who might benefit from the programme?

International organisations, states, regions, regional bodies, decentralised departments, public agencies, private operators, non-governmental organisations, co-operatives and local communities that have their headquarters in either the EU or the beneficiary country, might benefit from the available funds.

How to benefit from the programme?

The launch for a call for proposals for the programme is announced on the European Commission's EuropeAid website. All the necessary documentation is published along with the notice. The announcements for relevant calls for proposals are listed on the EuropeAid website under the heading 'other' of the tender search engine.

Where to obtain additional information?

In addition to announcements for calls for proposals and tenders at the EuropeAid website, the European Commission's Secretary General's Grants' website provides additional information about this programme at the following website:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgc/aides/forms/aidco18_en.htm

Further information can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal Operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F4 Social and Human Development, Environment and Thematic Support.

Promotion of the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests and other forests in developing countries

This programme (budget line 21020500) aims at promoting the conservation and sustainable management of tropical and other forests in developing countries through raising the status of forests in national policies, promoting the production and use of wood and non-wood forest products from sustainably managed resources, ensuring the participation of forest-dependent people in policy formulation. The programme has a budget of € 30 million per year and the EU contribution is normally 80% of the total eligible cost of a project.

Who might benefit from the programme?

International organisations, states, regions and regional bodies, decentralised departments, public agencies, private operators and industries, co-operatives, local communities, non-governmental organisations and associations representing local people, in particular forest-dependent people, might benefit from the funds available under the programme. Beneficiaries have to be based either in an EU Member State or in the beneficiary developing country. International public sector organisations and other duly justified entities are eligible even if their headquarters is outside the EU and is not in an eligible developing country.

How to benefit from the programme?

Grants are generally awarded following a call for proposals. The launch for a call for proposals for the programme is announced on the European Commission's EuropeAid website. All the necessary documentation is published along with the notice. The announcements for relevant calls for proposals are listed on the EuropeAid website under the heading 'other' of the tender search engine.

Where to obtain additional information?

In addition to announcements for calls for proposals and tenders at the EuropeAid website, the European Commission's Secretary General's Grants' website provides additional information about this programme at the following website:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgc/aides/forms/aidco17_en.htm

Further information can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal Operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F4 Social and Human Development, Environment and Thematic Support.

Integration of gender issues in development co-operation

This programme (budget line 21020600) aims at supporting the mainstreaming of gender analysis in all areas of development co-operation, supporting and facilitating the inclusion of actions addressing major gender disparities, and developing and promoting local public and private capacities in developing countries for mainstreaming the gender dimension in the

development effort. The programme has an average budget of € 2 million per year and the EU contribution covers the totality of the project costs only in a limited number of cases.

Who might benefit from the programme?

Public authorities, government agencies, decentralised departments, regional bodies, universities, research centres, traditional and local communities, trade unions, non-governmental organisations, public utility associations, associations representing local people (particularly women), co-operatives and agricultural and craft-based credit institutions might benefit from the funds available under the programme. Beneficiaries have to be based either in an EU Member State or in the beneficiary developing country.

How to benefit from the programme?

Grants are generally awarded following a call for proposals. The launch for a call for proposals for the programme is announced on the European Commission's EuropeAid website. All the necessary documentation is published along with the notice. The announcements for relevant calls for proposals are listed on the EuropeAid website under the heading 'other' of the tender search engine.

Where to obtain additional information?

In addition to announcements for calls for proposals and tenders at the EuropeAid website, the European Commission's Secretary General's Grants' website provides additional information on this programme at the following website: http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgc/aides/forms/aidco25_en.htm

Further information can be obtained from the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, Directorate F Horizontal Operations and RRD (Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Link), Unit F4 Social and Human Development, Environment and Thematic Support.

1.2. EU ACTIVITIES MANAGED BY OTHER DIRECTORATE-GENERALS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Jean Monnet Project

The Jean Monnet Project (budget line 15020100) 'European Integration in University Studies' is a European Commission information project, undertaken at the request of universities, whose aim is to facilitate the introduction of European integration studies in universities by means of start-up subsidies.

Mediterranean Partners can also participate, on a co-financing basis, in the setting up of projects concerning European integration issues under the Jean Monnet scheme. In this light, the European Commission co-finances Jean Monnet Chairs (full time teaching posts devoted to teaching European integration), permanent courses on European integration, European modules consisting of short programme of European studies, and European Centres of Excellence.

At the moment, the programme covers 48 countries throughout the world and has a total budget of € 3.5 million. A large part of the grants is allocated to EU Member States and Candidate Countries. In all cases grants may not exceed 80% of the total project cost and for third countries EU support for Jean Monnet Centres may not exceed a total of € 30,000, and for Chairs € 15,000 for the start-up period of three years.

Who might benefit from the Jean Monnet programme?

University-level academic institutions established in the Mediterranean Partner countries are eligible to participate in the Jean Monnet programme. The participation is also open to a wide range of other countries.

How to benefit from Jean Monnet programme?

Candidates are required to submit an application for each proposed project in response to the yearly call for proposals announced on the European Commission's Directorate-General Education and Culture website. All the information needed for the application and the supporting documents are provided on the Jean Monnet programme's website.

Where to obtain additional information?

Jean Monnet Programme's home page:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/ajm/index_en.html

Directorate-General Education and Culture's call for proposals website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/calls/callg_en.html

Additional information can be obtained from the European Commission's Directorate-General Education and Culture, Directorate A Education, Unit Higher Education: Socrates-Erasmus, Jean Monnet.

Tempus

Mediterranean Partners can participate in the Tempus programme aimed at restructuring higher education in the partner countries. Their participation in Tempus, however, is funded by the MEDA programme and does not involve an increase of the funds available under the MEDA budget line (B7-4100).

Tempus encourages institutions in the EU Member States and the partner countries to engage in structured co-operation through the establishment of 'consortia'. The 'consortia' implement Joint European Projects (JEPs) with a clear set of objectives. Such projects may receive financial aid for two or three years.

Tempus also provides Individual Mobility Grants (IMGs) to individuals working in Higher Education institutions to help them work on certain specified activities in other countries.

Who might benefit from the Tempus programme?

Universities and higher education institutions in the eligible countries, among which the Mediterranean Partners can benefit from the programme.

How to benefit from the Tempus programme?

Following a call for proposals announced by the European Commission, proposals can be submitted by a consortium of institutions from the partner countries and the EU Member States. Further details are included in the respective calls for proposals.

Where to obtain additional information?

The Tempus programme is managed by the European Commission, Directorate General Education and Culture, Unit Tempus Programme - USA/Canada agreements. Technical assistance is provided by the European Training Foundation (<http://www.etf.eu.int/>).

The Tempus Programme home page: <http://www.etf.eu.int/tempus.nsf>

Directorate-General Education and Culture:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/tempus/index_en.html

Directorate-General Education and Culture's calls for proposal website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/calls/callg_en.html

Additional information can be obtained from the national sources of information and contact points in each eligible country. The list of national sources of information is also provided at the Tempus programme's website.

LIFE-Third Countries

LIFE, the Financial Instrument for the Environment, introduced in 1992, is one of the spearheads of the European Union's environmental policy. LIFE co-finances projects through LIFE-Nature, LIFE-Environment and LIFE-Third Countries. Among others, the Mediterranean Partners can benefit from funding allocated under LIFE-Third Countries (budget line 07030300).

The objective of LIFE-Third Countries is to contribute to the establishment of capacities and administrative structures needed in the environmental sector and in the development of environmental policy and action programmes in third countries bordering the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea other than Central and East European countries.

The European Union has allocated over € 38 million (6% of the total available funds for LIFE) to LIFE-Third Countries for the period 2000-2004. The EU funding for the projects within LIFE-Third Countries supports two types of action: technical assistance projects and accompanying measures. The rate of Community co-financing can be up to 70% of the maximum cost of technical assistance projects and 100% for accompanying measures.

Who might benefit from LIFE-Third Countries?

LIFE-Third Countries is primarily intended to support the efforts of national administrations in implementing, updating and developing environmental policies and action programmes in the eligible countries.

However, LIFE Third Countries is also open to persons or companies/organisations of whatever legal status provided that they reside/are established in one of the eligible countries and to governmental and non-governmental organisations, technical assistance bodies and regional networks which have an international status and operate in the Mediterranean and/or Baltic regions for the protection of the environment.

How to benefit from LIFE-Third Countries?

Proposals for projects are transmitted to the Commission by the national authorities of the third countries in question or by international organisations working for the protection of the environment in the geographic area in question. The yearly calls for proposals are then announced in the European Commission's LIFE-Third Countries' website.

Technical assistance projects are eligible for LIFE-Third Countries if they:

- are of interest to the Community, notably through their contribution to implementing regional and international guidelines and agreements;
- promote sustainable development at international, national or regional level;
- provide solutions to major environmental problems in the region and the relevant sector.

Priority is given to projects which will promote co-operation at a cross-border, transnational, or regional level.

Where to obtain additional information?

Life Programme Home Page: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/home.htm>

Life-Third Countries, Call for Proposals 2004 (including the application guide):

http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/funding/life-tc_call2004/index.htm

Additional information on who to contact and a list of national contact points in the Mediterranean Partner countries can be obtained from <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/contact/index.htm>.

Community Framework for Co-operation to Promote Sustainable Urban Development

As third countries that have concluded Association Agreements with the EU, the Mediterranean Partners are also eligible to participate in Urban Development through a network of local authorities. This Community Framework for co-operation (budget line B4-3050) is a legal instrument allowing the Commission to provide financial and technical support to networks of local authorities in promoting sustainable urban development.

A total of € 14 million is allocated for the period 2001-2004. Support for projects is available for a maximum of 3 years and projects financed under other Community programmes are not eligible for funding under this co-operation framework. The level of the financial contribution cannot exceed 95% of the eligible costs.

Who might benefit from Urban Community Framework?

Networks of local authorities which comprise members from at least four EU and EFTA countries. The networks may also include Central and Eastern European Countries, Cyprus and Malta as well as other countries, which have concluded Association Agreements with the European Union.

How to benefit from Urban Community Framework?

Following a call for proposals announced by the European Commission, proposals can be submitted by networks of local authorities from eligible countries. Further details are included in the respective call for proposals. All the necessary documentation is available on the website.

Where to obtain additional information?

The European Commission's Urban Community Framework home page:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/funding/urban_en.htm

Additional information can be obtained from the European Commission's Environment Directorate-General, Unit B3: Territorial Dimension.

Humanitarian Aid Operations: ECHO

The European Commission's humanitarian aid office ECHO (budget line 23020100), with a total budget of € 400-500 million, finances humanitarian aid operations. They aim to save and preserve life during emergencies and natural disasters and their immediate aftermath. ECHO might also organise operations to provide assistance and relief to people affected by longer-lasting crises arising, in particular, from outbreaks of war.

ECHO operations might consist of the distribution of food and hygiene items, providing shelter, medical aid, water and sanitation programmes, rehabilitation, health and psycho-social support and self-sustainability projects. Provision is also made for the financing of operations to ensure preparedness for risks of natural disasters. The EU funding for these humanitarian operations may cover the totality of the costs.

Who can apply for ECHO funds?

ECHO's assistance is channelled through European NGO's, the UN and other international organisations such as the Red Cross. The majority of these organisations are signatories to ECHO's Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA).

How to benefit from ECHO operations?

Expressions of interest in becoming an ECHO partner should be sent in writing to ECHO, European Commission, 1049 Brussels, Belgium. ECHO will then ask the organisation to send a number of documents in order to process the application. The organisation's administrative and financial management capacities, technical and logistic capacity, its experience, its readiness to take part in a co-ordination system will be evaluated.

Where to obtain additional information?

ECHO's home page: http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/index_en.htm

Additional information can be obtained from ECHO 2, Central and Eastern European countries, NIS, Mediterranean countries, and the Middle East.

The EU's Research Framework Programme

The Framework Programme is the EU's main instrument for research in Europe. It covers a period of five years and has been implemented since 1984. The sixth Framework Programme (FP6) is fully operational since January 1st 2003. FP6 aims to contribute to the creation of a true "European Research Area", an internal market for science and technology. It fosters scientific excellence, competitiveness and innovation through the promotion of better co-operation and coordination between relevant actors at all levels.

Who might benefit from the sixth Framework Programme?

Any legal entity, i.e. any natural or legal person established under national, international or EU law can apply. In practical terms this means that the programme covers a large variety of potential participants such as research groups at universities or research institutes, companies intending to innovate, small and medium sized enterprises, SME associations, public administrations, undergraduate students, early stage researches, experienced researchers, acknowledged world-class researches, organisations and persons from third countries.

How to benefit from the sixth Framework Programme?

FP6 does not cover all areas of science and technology; a limited number of thematic priorities have been identified (life sciences, information society technologies, nanotechnologies, aeronautics and space, food quality and safety, sustainable development, citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society). Detailed descriptions of these areas and specific topics will be given in the calls for proposals so potential participants have to check carefully if their ideas for projects fit within the scope of these priorities and topics. In general, the EU only contributes a certain percentage of the total costs of a project, so participants have to mobilise their own resources accordingly. It should be noted that projects have to be transnational, that is, only a consortium of partners from different member and associated countries can apply for mobility and training actions. FP6 also provides possibilities and funding for organisations from third countries. Calls have strict deadlines which are enforced to the minute. Proposals are evaluated and selected by the European Commission with the help of independent external experts. Successful proposals will lead to a contract between the European Commission and participants.

Where to obtain additional information

General information on research:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/research>

General information on the Sixth Framework Programme:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6>

Information on research programmes and projects:

<http://www.cordis.lu>

Additional information can be obtained from the Information and Communication Unit of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research

II. EU ACTIVITIES FINANCED OUTSIDE THE EU BUDGET

European Investment Bank (EIB)

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is a major credit provider to the Mediterranean Partners. Between 1992 and 2003, the EIB lent a total of € 13.2 million to these countries.

On 18 October 2002, the Finance Ministers of the 15 EU Member States and 12 Mediterranean Partner Countries launched the European Investment Bank's new Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP).

Under FEMIP, the Bank plans to inject € 8 to 10 billion in the Mediterranean Partners by 2006: over € 7 billion from own resources, around € 250 million in risk capital entrusted to it from the EU budget under the MEDA funds, as well as some € 100 million in technical assistance provided by the EU in application of the decisions of the Barcelona European Council of March 2002.

Who might benefit from EIB financing facilities?

The EIB offers various financial services to support projects, depending on eligibility and project category:

- Loans for SMEs through an intermediary (Global loans) for local authorities or firms with fewer than 500 employees and having fixed assets of up to € 75 million.
- Venture capital to strengthen the equity base of high-technology SMEs and those with strong growth potential.
- Direct loans (also known as Individual loans) for promoters in both the public and private sectors, including banks.
- Structured Finance Facility (SFF) for priority projects by complementing the commercial banks and capital markets. These operations will be undertaken chiefly in the countries of the European Union, but also in third countries.

How to benefit from EIB financing facilities?

Requests for credits financed in the framework of global loans should be addressed directly to one of the intermediary banks and financing institutions which operates at national, regional or local level. Requests for venture capital should be addressed directly to an intermediary (see www.eif.org for the list). Requests for individual loans can be addressed directly to the EIB, without specific formalities, either to its headquarters in Luxembourg, or to one of its external offices.

Where to obtain additional information?

The EIB home page: <http://www.eib.org>

For EIB activities in the Mediterranean region: <http://www.eib.org/lending/med/en/index.htm>

For additional information, you may contact Information and Communications Department, European Investment Bank. Telephone: (+352) 4379 3146, fax: (+352) 4379 3189.