

MedCoopNet

Mapping Mediterranean Cooperation Networks and Governance

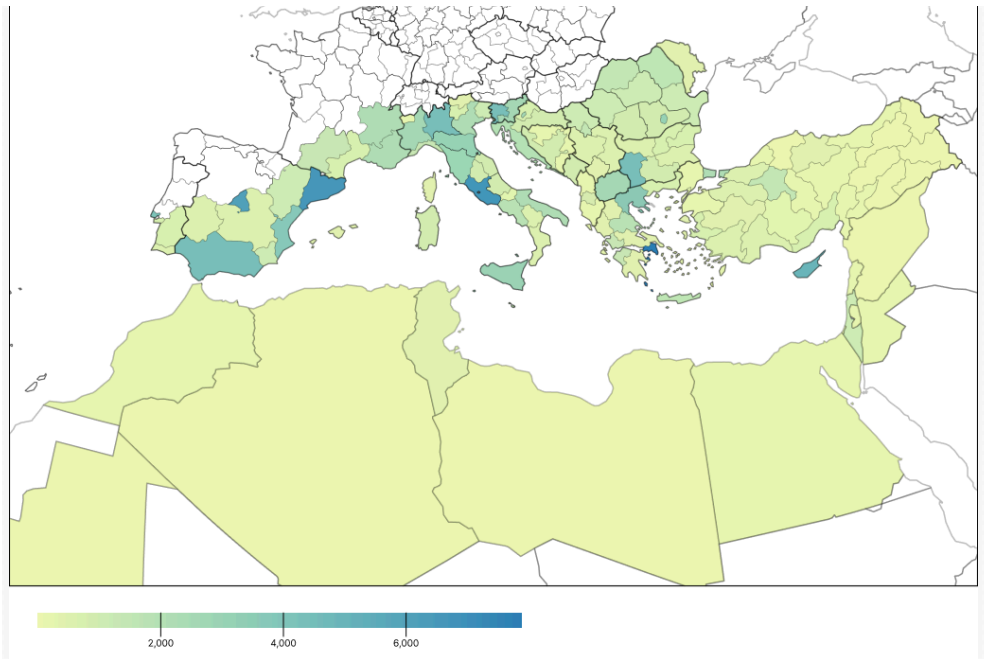
Cooperation across the Mediterranean, read through the projects funded by the European Union

44,685 projects	50,152 organisations	€29.9 bn of EU funding	6 EU programmes
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2014 – mid-2025 · 2021–2027 is covered in part, with the projects available in spring 2025.

Map 1 • Total number of MedCoopNet projects by region (NUTS)

Projects with at least one partner in the region, 2014 – mid-2025. Darker blue = more projects.



Why MedCoopNet

Information on EU-funded cooperation in the Mediterranean exists, but it is spread across the databases of individual programmes. MedCoopNet brings it together in a single database to answer four questions:

- 1 How much cooperation takes place?

2 Who cooperates?
- 3 On which themes?

4 What patterns does cooperation follow?

Who made it possible

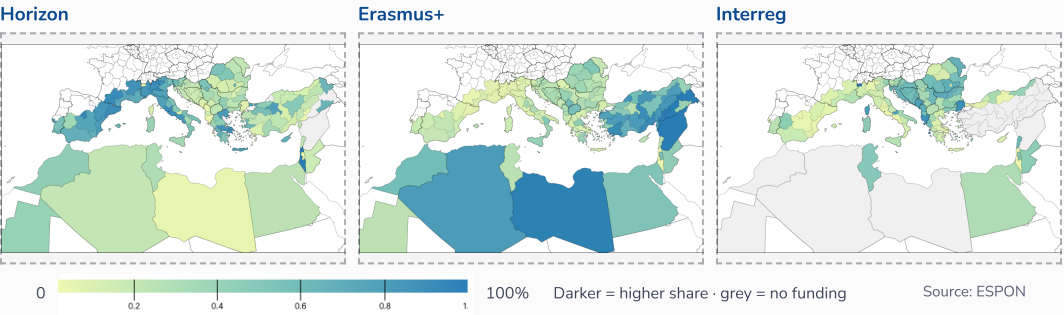
An ESPON targeted analysis funded by the ESPON 2030 Cooperation Programme (January 2025 – June 2026), carried out by SIRIS Academic. It was proposed by nine stakeholders led by the Emilia-Romagna Region. The idea was born within the governance projects of the Interreg Euro-MED Innovative Sustainable Economy Mission, and the study is promoted by the Mission's Institutional Dialogue Project.

Proposed by: Emilia-Romagna Region (lead) · Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region · Autonomous Region of Sardinia · Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds of Croatia · Government of Catalonia · Metropolis of Nice Côte d'Azur · Region of Crete · CPMR Intermediterranean Commission · UNEP/MAP Secretariat.

What the database covers

Area	A broader definition of the Mediterranean: EU Mediterranean regions and neighbouring countries, from Mauritania to Moldova – EU, Western Balkans and Moldova, Middle East, North Africa.
Projects	Those with partners from at least two countries in this area.
Programmes	Horizon 2020/Europe, Interreg (43 programmes in 2014–2020, 18 in 2021–2027), Erasmus+, LIFE, Creative Europe, EMFAF.
Detail	Partners located down to NUTS-3 level, six types of organisation, three thematic classifications. Organisations and themes were classified with AI techniques and human validation.

Maps 2–4 · Weight of each programme in the region's EU funding

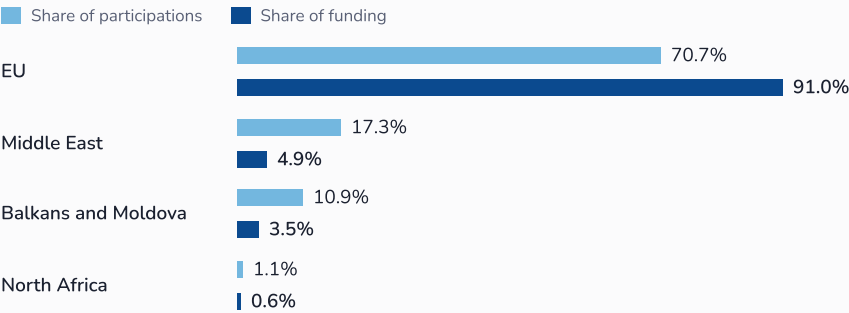


Each programme has its own role

PROGRAMME	PROJECTS	EU FUNDING	SHARE	AVG / PROJECT
Horizon 2020 / Europe	10,823	€21.1 bn	70.5%	€1.96 m
Erasmus+	28,685	€4.1 bn	13.8%	€144,000
Interreg	3,755	€3.8 bn	12.7%	€1.02 m
LIFE	461	€0.6 bn	2.1%	€1.34 m
Creative Europe	888	€0.2 bn	0.7%	€247,000
EMFAF	73	€46 m	0.2%	€625,000

Cooperation is concentrated in a few countries and regions

Italy (€8.9 bn), Spain (€6.6 bn) and Greece (€4.0 bn) receive nearly two thirds of all funding. Every EU Mediterranean country cooperates with Italy in at least 47.9% of its projects. Partners outside the EU take part more than they are funded.



A small number of actors receive a large share of the funding

Universities and research organisations are 6.9% of the organisations but receive 44% of the funding. In Horizon, the top 5% of actors account for over 55% of participations. While this reflects the selective nature of competitive research funding and is not specific to the Mediterranean, it also means the capacity built through participation accumulates unevenly across the region.



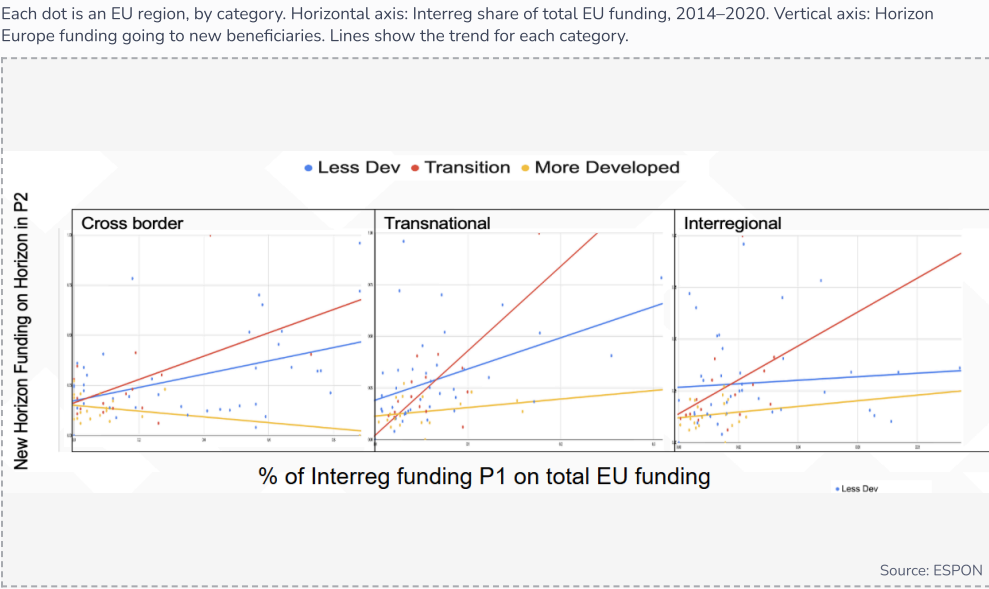
Two ways of reading the themes

Projects are read in two ways. The top-down approach assigns projects to one or more of the six Horizon Europe thematic clusters and of the Sustainable Development Goals. It answers questions that start from a policy area – for example, which projects, and how much funding, relate to climate action. Bottom-up, a topic-modelling technique groups projects according to the content of their titles and abstracts into 80 "MedCoopNet topics". It answers questions such as what Mediterranean cooperation projects actually work on, and brings out themes that cut across the predefined categories.

Does Interreg prepares the ground for Horizon?

In EU regions where Interreg weighed more in 2014–2020, a larger share of Horizon Europe funding later went to newcomers. The link is clearest in transition and less developed regions, and for transnational cooperation it is over five times stronger than for cross-border. It is a correlation, not proof of causation.

Figure 4 · New Horizon beneficiaries (2021–2027) and Interreg participation (2014–2020)



Explore MedCoopNet

Read the report and explore the data on the platform.



Final report

The full analysis: data, methods and policy findings.



Interactive dashboard

Filter by programme, geography, theme, period and type of organisation; compare regions; download the data.