

BRUSSELS' PULSE #2

-NEWS-

EU Cohesion policy: launch of the new EU Social Progress Index 2020

The Commission is publishing the [2020 EU Social Progress Index](#) (EU-SPI) to help policymakers and stakeholders to develop better policies and key investment priorities with clear and measurable objectives to address social issues across the Union.

Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, Elisa Ferreira, commented, "The EU-SPI measures the capacity of EU's Member States and regions to meet people's basic human needs, to enhance and sustain the quality of their lives, and to ensure living conditions at their full potential. It is a useful tool to fine-tune interventions of regional development programmes and to direct EU funds towards those areas able to significantly increase living standards."

Going beyond GDP to reflect better societal development, the 2020 EU-SPI reveals that social disparities still vary greatly across EU regions. Nordic countries perform quite well while southeast countries lag behind. Most EU regions perform well in basic human needs, such as nutrition and basic medical care, water and sanitation, shelter and personal security... [More](#)

New European Research Area: Council adopts conclusions

The Council has adopted a set of conclusions on a major overhaul of the European Research Area (ERA) in the years to come. These conclusions, together with the Commission communication entitled "A new ERA for research and innovation", are two key milestones in efforts to build a common research area that is more tangible and impactful for researchers, innovators and citizens throughout Europe. According to the Council, the new ERA should **link better research & innovation with relevant policy areas**, notably with the European education area and the various industrial ecosystems. In these conclusions, the Council stresses the need for the Commission and the member states to **co-create and jointly implement a new ERA** that enables all EU member states, research institutions, scientists, businesses and citizens to benefit alike. The Council highlights the importance of a **continued openness to international collaboration** for achieving the goals of the new ERA and supporting Europe's role as a global leader, which will contribute to further attracting talents and investments... [More here.](#)

Commission disburses €8.5 billion under SURE to five Member States

The European Commission has disbursed €8.5 billion in the third instalment of financial support to five Member States under the SURE instrument. As part of today's operations, Belgium has received €2 billion, Hungary €200 million, Portugal €3 billion, Romania €3 billion and Slovakia €300 million. This support, in the form of loans granted on favourable terms, will assist these Member States in addressing sudden increases in public expenditure to preserve employment. Specifically, they will help cover the costs directly related to the financing of national short-time work schemes, and other similar measures they have put in place as a response to the coronavirus pandemic, including for the self-employed. With today's disbursement, 15 Member States have received around €40 billion under the EU SURE instrument between the end of October and the end of November. Once all SURE disbursements have been completed, Belgium will have received €7.8 billion, Hungary €504 million, Portugal €5.9 billion, Romania €4.1 billion and Slovakia €631 million... [More](#)

Commission renews its commitment to strengthen fundamental rights in the EU

The European Commission presents a new Strategy to strengthen the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the EU. Fundamental rights cannot be taken for granted. The new Strategy confirms a renewed commitment to ensure that the Charter is applied to its full potential. As of next year, the Commission will present an annual report, which will look into how the Member States apply the Charter in a selected thematic area. Věra Jourová, Vice-President for Values and Transparency,

underlined, “This year marks 20 years since the Charter – the European bill of rights - was first proclaimed. It is the embodiment of the values of our Union. The Charter has the same legal value as the Treaties. I want people to know who and where to turn to if their rights are breached.” Commissioner for Justice, Didier Reynders said, “Recently, new fundamental rights challenges have emerged; the Coronavirus pandemic and its related restrictions are a telling example. The developments we have seen in society call for a renewed commitment to ensure that the Charter is applied to its full by the EU and its Member States. More than ever, we must put the Charter at the centre of our work and ensure people can effectively access their fundamental rights.”... [More](#)

[European Democracy Action Plan: making EU democracies stronger](#)

The European Commission is presenting its [European Democracy Action Plan](#) to empower citizens and build more resilient democracies across the EU. Standing up to challenges to our democratic systems from rising extremism and perceived distance between people and politicians, the Action Plan sets out measures to promote free and fair elections, strengthen media freedom and counter disinformation. More concretely, the Commission will propose legal action on political advertising that will address the sponsors of paid content and production and distribution channels, including online platforms, advertisers and political consultancies, clarifying their respective responsibilities. The Commission will also recommend measures to tackle safety of journalist and present an initiative to protect them from strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs). Finally, the Commission will steer efforts to overhaul the existing Code of Practice on Disinformation, strengthening requirements for online platforms and introducing vigorous monitoring and oversight. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said: “With the digital revolution under way, citizens must be able to make choices where views can be expressed freely. Facts have to be distinguished from fiction, and free media and civil society must be able to participate in an open debate, free from malign interference. Therefore the EU is taking action to make our democracies in the EU more resilient.”... [More](#)

[Digital Decade: Commission launches Action Plan to support recovery and transformation of the media and audio-visual sectors](#)

The Commission adopted an [Action Plan](#) to support the recovery and transformation of the media and audiovisual sector. These sectors, particularly hit by the coronavirus crisis, are essential for democracy, Europe's cultural diversity and digital autonomy. The Action Plan focuses on three areas of activity and 10 concrete actions, to help the media sector recover from the crisis by facilitating and broadening access to finance, transform by stimulating investments to embrace the twin digital and green transitions while ensuring the sector's future resilience and empower European citizens and companies... [More](#)

[LIFE programme: over €280 million in EU funding for environment, nature and climate action projects](#)

The European Commission has approved an investment package of more than €280 million from the EU budget for over 120 new [LIFE programme](#) projects. This EU funding will trigger total investments of nearly €590 million to help meet these projects' ambitious goals for environment, nature, and climate action. **This amount represents a 37% rise compared to last year.** The projects will help to achieve the [European Green Deal](#) objectives by supporting the [EU Biodiversity Strategy](#) and the [Circular Economy Action Plan](#), contributing to the [green recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic](#), and helping Europe become a climate-neutral continent by 2050, among others. Many of the new projects are cross-country projects involving several Member States .. [More here](#)

[Commission announces winners of the 2020 European Social Innovation Competition](#)

The three projects, selected for addressing this year's challenge 'reimagine fashion' in the best way, will receive a prize of €50,000 each. The winning participants are: [resortecs](#)[®]; - a Belgian start-up that helps simplify the process of reusing and recycling textiles; [Snake](#) - a Croatian digital platform that enables users to wear outfits in augmented reality; [WhyWeCraft: Cultural Sustainability in Fashion](#) - a Romanian legal support mechanism for craftspeople and designer. In addition, every year the jury awards an 'Impact Prize' to one of the participants who reached the semi-finals in the previous year's competition, based on results that the project achieved over the past twelve months. The 2020 winner

is [Empower](#), a company that adopted a new technology to enable circular economy, by allowing the deposit and collection of plastic waste for financial reward ... More [here](#).

Web Summit: EIB finances Worldsensing with €10 million to develop next-generation industrial monitoring solution

The European Investment Bank (EIB) will provide a €10 million financing to support the R&D strategy of the Spanish start-up Worldsensing, a widely recognised Internet of Things (IoT) pioneer that focuses on designing IoT solutions for monitoring sensors and operates in more than 60 countries. The EIB long-term and advantageous financing of Worldsensing will support the company's innovation efforts aimed at increasing its production capabilities, developing a portfolio of new products and at enhancing the company's commercial and distribution network. The agreement was announced today at Web Summit by EIB Vice-President Ricardo Mourinho Félix and Worldsensing CFO David Deprez... [More](#)

Commission welcomes the political agreement on the Interreg Regulation

The Commission welcomes political agreement reached by the European Parliament and EU Member States on the Commission's proposal for post-2020 European Territorial Cooperation programmes ("Interreg"). This is the third file related to cohesion policy where trilogue negotiations are concluded pending the final approval of the legal texts by the European Parliament Plenary and the Council. Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, Elisa Ferreira, said: "I welcome today's political agreement on the Interreg Regulation. This programme supports and facilitates territorial cooperation, with a view to overcoming formal and informal obstacles that prevent border regions from growing and developing to their full potential. It also facilitates cooperation of regions at external borders, addressing their specific development needs and contributing to a safer and more secure Europe. We are here at the heart of the European project". With a budget of €8 050 million, the 6th generation of Interreg will support cooperation between regions, citizens and economic stakeholders over their respective land and maritime borders. The new legislation will also cover the cooperation between regions at transnational level in the framework of the Macro regional and Sea basin Strategies: Baltic, Ionian/Adriatic and Black seas, Danube and Alps... [More](#)

EU-US: A new transatlantic agenda for global change

The European Commission and the High Representative are putting forward a proposal for a [new, forward-looking transatlantic agenda](#). While the past years have been tested by geopolitical power shifts, bilateral tensions and unilateral tendencies, the victory of President-elect Joe Biden and Vice-President-elect Kamala Harris, combined with a more assertive and capable European Union and a new geopolitical and economic reality, present a once-in-a-generation opportunity to design a new transatlantic agenda for global cooperation based on our common values, interests and global influence.

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, said: "We are taking the initiative to design a new transatlantic agenda fit for today's global landscape. The transatlantic alliance is based on shared values and history, but also interests: building a stronger, more peaceful and more prosperous world. When the transatlantic partnership is strong, the EU and the US are both stronger. It is time to reconnect with a new agenda for transatlantic and global cooperation for the world of today."

Josep Borrell, EU High Representative/Vice-President, said: "With our concrete proposals for cooperation under the future Biden administration, we are sending strong messages to our US friends and allies. Let's look forward, not back. Let's rejuvenate our relationship. Let's build a partnership that delivers prosperity, stability, peace and security for citizens across our continents and around the world. There's no time to wait – let's get to work."... [More](#)

EU report notes continued implementation of the reform agenda though challenges remain

Ahead of the informal meeting of the members of the [EU-Ukraine Association Council](#) on 8 December, the European Union has published its annual Association Implementation Report on Ukraine. The

report outlines Ukraine's implementation of reforms under the [EU-Ukraine Association Agreement](#) over the past year.

“Despite Russia's destabilising actions, conflict in the east and the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, Ukraine has continued to make progress on its reform path. It is crucial that Ukraine's political leaders continue these efforts and make reforms irreversible, particularly regarding the rule of law. The Ukrainian people expect it”, said the High Representative/Vice-President, Josep Borrell.

Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Olivér Várhelyi added: “The EU will continue to support Ukraine in taking forward the reform agenda, to fully implement and reap the benefits of the Association Agreement, and to mitigate the negative impact of the coronavirus crisis. We expect Ukraine to uphold the shared common values of democracy, rule of law, respect for international law and human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. Our joint objective is to support Ukraine's strategic orientation towards closer integration with the European Union.”... [More](#)

Equality: City of Jönköping in Sweden wins 2021 Access City Award

Jönköping, in the south of Sweden, made continuous improvements in both the new and old areas of the city, in collaboration with disability organisations. The city also created a local ‘Access City Award’, for businesses or organisations that worked with their customers to improve accessibility. Out of 50 applications, Jönköping was designated the winner of the 11th edition of the Access City Award at the online ceremony on 1 December.

Announcing the winner, Commissioner for Equality, Helena Dalli said: “Creating a barrier-free Europe is about more than buildings and pavements. It is about commitment to change that improves people's quality of life and that enables persons with disabilities to participate in society on an equal basis with others. Accessibility is important for everyone, and it is indispensable for persons with disabilities. I will ensure that this crucial subject remains in the forefront of our actions. The upcoming Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 will be our main instrument to further improve all areas of the lives of persons with disabilities.”

The city of Bremerhaven in Germany and the city of Gdynia in Poland are the second and third place winners of the 2021 Access City Award...[More](#)

Towards a stronger and more resilient Schengen area

The first ever Schengen Forum, convened today by the Commission, allowed for constructive exchanges towards building a stronger and more resilient Schengen area. The videoconference gathered Members of the European Parliament and Home Affairs Ministers with the aim of fostering cooperation and political dialogue and rebuilding trust.

Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Margaritis Schinas, said: “This discussions showed a strong collective commitment to preserve and strengthen Schengen. For the last 35 years, we have built an entire Schengen architecture to better protect the area without controls at internal borders. And we must continue to build on and improve that architecture going forward.”

Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson, said: “The coronavirus pandemic has shown how much we need Schengen. Moving freely within the EU is a daily necessity for millions of Europeans for work or school for instance. It's also crucial for companies transporting goods around Europe. Schengen can be our lifeline when it comes to Europe's economic recovery post-coronavirus. That is why our discussions today on building a more resilient Schengen are so important.”... [More](#)

EU greenhouse gas emissions fell in 2019 to the lowest level in three decades

The Commission has adopted its annual [EU Climate Action Progress Report](#), covering the EU's progress in cutting greenhouse gas emissions in 2019. Greenhouse gas emissions in the EU-27 decreased by 3.7 % year-on-year, while GDP grew by 1.5%. Emissions have now been reduced by 24% compared to 1990 levels.

Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal, said: “The European Union is proving it is possible to reduce emissions and grow your economy. However, today's report again confirms we need to step up our efforts across all sectors of the economy to reach our common goal of climate neutrality by 2050. The transition is feasible if we stick to our commitment and seize the opportunities of the recovery to reboot our economy in a greener, more resilient way and create a healthy, sustainable future for all.”... [More](#)

Commission welcomes the political agreement on the transitional rules for the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

The Commission welcomed the political agreement between the European Parliament and EU Member States in the Council on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) rules for the transitional period of 2021-2022. These rules are based on the principle of continuity of the [current CAP rules](#) while also including new elements to ensure a smooth transition. This agreement also covers the integration of the European Recovery Instrument (ERI) funds into the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), allowing the farming and rural economies to recover and be resilient in the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic.

The national allocations during this transitional period will be those agreed for the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework. In the meantime, the Commission continues to support the efforts to finalise the agreement on the next long-term budget and NextGenerationEU as soon as possible so that all new programmes can start on 1 January 2021.

Agriculture and Rural Development Commissioner, Janusz Wojciechowski, said: “I welcome the political agreement on the transitional rules for the CAP. This provides much needed certainty for our farmers, especially in these unprecedented times. The CAP will continue to support our farmers and agri-food producers, while increasing our environmental and climate ambition also thanks to the recovery funds for rural development. We will now work towards reaching an agreement on the CAP reform swiftly.”. [More](#)

EU Cohesion policy: Commission and EBRD promote innovative use of data in public procurement involving EU funds

The European Commission, the [European Bank for Reconstruction and Development](#) (EBRD) and the [Open Contracting Partnership](#) are joining forces to improve the quality and transparency of public tenders co-funded by EU funds in Greece and Poland. Thanks to their support, two pilot projects will provide expertise and hands-on support to public authorities in both countries, with a focus on digital innovation.

By promoting the smart use of innovation and open data, the two pilots will help public administrations to better plan, implement and monitor the procurement of works, goods and services. This will improve the use of public resources and increase opportunities for businesses, especially for small and medium companies (SMEs). Moreover, thanks to a cooperation with local civil society organisations, this initiative will also favour transparency of public spending and stimulate citizens' participation in the monitoring of investments with a direct impact on the community, such as investments in sustainability, local development and social inclusion... [More](#)

Streamlining public procurement within the EU for more efficient public spending

The Council has adopted a set of conclusions centred on how efficient public procurement rules and practices, combined with increased public spending, can accelerate the economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and lead to a sustainable and more resilient EU economy.

In these conclusions, the Council calls on all authorities involved, be it European, national or regional, to coordinate closely their actions for achieving the following objectives:

- Enhancing efficiency of public procurement to boost recovery and to tackle future crises,-

Setting the right incentives for innovative and sustainable investment and growth in the EU through public procurement,

- Contributing through public procurement to a more resilient EU economy.

The Council calls in particular on the Commission and the member states to use public procurement as a strategic tool to foster sustainable and innovative growth, while reducing administrative burdens and compliance costs at the same time.

Furthermore, the conclusions focus on the need for a level playing field in public procurement to ensure fair competition for a competitive European economy...[More](#)

- OPPORTUNITIES -

Geographical indication protection at EU level for non-agricultural products

There is currently no harmonised mechanism for the protection of geographical indications of non-agricultural products. Those products often make an important part of local identity, attract tourism and are an important source of jobs. A uniform system could help producers stay competitive and cooperate in niche markets, provide consumers with better visibility and authenticity indications for these products, and boost regional economies. The Commission would like to hear your views. This roadmap is open for feedback for 4 weeks. Feedback will be taken into account for further development and fine tuning of the initiative. The Commission will summarise the input received in a synopsis report explaining how the input will be taken on board and, if applicable, why certain suggestions can't be taken up. Feedback received will be published on this site and therefore must adhere to the [feedback rules here](#).

Innovation Fund: Small-scale call application step-by-step

Are you looking for funding to support your [#CleanTech](#) solution? Did you know the [#InnovationFund](#) can help your [#smallscale](#) project? Mark in your calendar our [#InfoDay](#). [INEA - Innovation and Networks Executive Agency](#) and [#DGCLIMA](#) will guide you through the application process and explain you the key award criteria. On Wednesday **9 December 2020**, INEA is organising together with DG Climate Action a webinar to present the recently launched [small-scale call for projects](#) under the [Innovation Fund](#). Speakers from INEA and DG CLIMA will introduce the call for projects and the step-by-step application process as well as some key features of the call and selection criteria. During the webinar, participants can interact with speakers via [Slido](#) using the event code [#IFSS](#). Agenda and more information can be found [here](#).

Dissemination of ESPON results among the scientific community – call for early career researcher

The ESPON EGTC is launching a Call for Competition to contract a maximum of 20 early career researchers (PhD and/or Postdoc students) to promote the uptake of ESPON territorial evidence within the scientific community. The call for competition shall run for a period of 14 months. The interested researchers can submit their application by e-mail to: tenders@espon.eu **until 15 December 2020 (first cut-off date)**. All the applications submitted until this date will be evaluated and selected researchers will be contacted to initiate a negotiated procedure. Afterwards, all applications received at the end of each calendar month will be evaluated and, in case budget is still available,

selected researchers will be contacted to initiate further negotiated procedures. More information [here](#).

COS-START-2020-3-05: Strategic alliances for the uptake of advanced technologies by SMEs on the economic recovery

This call for proposals aims to contribute to the European Commission's recovery package via the **establishment of strategic alliances between tech-savvy SMEs and the traditional SMEs** facing the need to adapt to the post-crisis economic environment, focusing on the benefits of adopting advanced technologies. The final objective of this call for proposals is to contribute to a **wider spreading and diffusion of advanced technologies across SMEs in Europe** and boost **economic recovery**. The specific objective of the action is to launch **two pilot projects** focused on **building alliances among traditional and tech-savvy SMEs through industrial cluster organisations** in order to promote SME collaboration and technology adoption within specific industrial ecosystems .. More [here](#).

2020 CEF Telecom calls for proposals

Up to **€67.4** million is foreseen from the 2020 CEF Telecom Work Programme for grants managed by INEA in the area of Generic Services. The grants under CEF Telecom will help European public administrations and businesses to hook up to the core platforms of the digital services that are the object of the calls .. [here](#).

Deadline for EU Industry Week event proposals extended

The application deadline has been extended for organisations wishing to organise an EU Industry Week event next year. The new deadline to submit proposals is **13 December**, for events which should take place between January and March 2021. Organising an event gives an opportunity for organisations to boost their visibility while also contributing to the discussions on European Union industrial policy sparked by EU Industry Week. Approved events will be labelled as 'EU Industry Week events' and will be promoted on the EU Industry Days website .. More [here](#).

CALL FOR PILOT PROJECTS: UIA Transfer Mechanism

Use the URBACT Method to understand, adapt and prepare the re-use of an UIA innovative solution. Building on the success of the URBACT Transfer Network model, URBACT and Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) have developed a pilot transfer mechanism for completed UIA projects. The pilot will finance up to **four networks** whose aim will be to adapt the UIA innovations and develop an investment plan to fund their implementation. Each network will comprise 4 partners including the UIA lead city ...More [here](#).

- EVENTS -

The Green. The Digital. The Healthy. Cutting-edge tech innovations compete for EIT Awards 2020

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is celebrating 28 entrepreneurs from across Europe nominated for the EIT Awards 2020. These outstanding innovators have been nominated for their endurance and creativity, recognising their ground-breaking products and services accelerating Europe's transition to a greener, healthier, and more digital future. This year's Awards ceremony will be held virtually on **08 and 09 December**, showcasing the achievements of successful graduates, entrepreneurs and innovators supported by the EIT Community. More information [here](#).

Smart development and Clusters in European Green Deal

The aim of “Smart Development and Clusters in the European Green Deal” event is to create an open virtual lab to share and debate social and technological innovations needed to reach climate neutrality in each European City, local communities, and villages as well as creating a matchmaking opportunity to establish a community of competences (Cluster) to contribute to ensuring the Circular Economy through Europe. This is a matchmaking event for facilitating consortium building for H2020-European Green Deal call for proposals (deadline Jan.26th).

The topics for discussion focus on digital technologies, energy technologies, mobility technologies, and tested frameworks for urban environment, social, and cultural innovation. The event is intended to support a partnership following the quadruple helix approach for uniting and focusing expertise in Green and Circular Economy with the overarching aim to enable cooperation between Industry, R&D/Academia, Government and civil society.

Event will be held on **December 10th, between 11h00 - 12h30 CET**. Registration and more information can be found [here](#).

DATA Management for Sustainable Tourism

The online workshop on Data management for sustainable tourism is the first technical event organized by BEST MED. It has the purpose to present the overall goals of the project and, in particular, to showcase the results of its study activities coordinated by the Regional Tourism Agency of Lazio Region. The workshop is an opportunity to analyse and compare goals and management models of existing Tourism Observatories in the Mediterranean area at national, regional and local level. It intends to provide information on relevant EU funded projects and existing standards on data management for tourism, especially on official statistics (Eurostat System), big data for tourism management, use of sustainability indicators. The event will be held online the 09-10 December 2020.. More [here](#).

Virtual International Partnering – Innovation in Environment & Energy & Circular Economy

The **Virtual International Partnering & Knowledge Platform - Innovation in Environment & Energy & Circular Economy** brings together companies and research organisation from across Europe and worldwide. This is a unique opportunity, organised in the framework of the Enterprise Europe Network, jointly supported by the **EEN Sector Groups Environment, Intelligent Energy and the Thematic Group Circular Economy**, to generate new contacts for business, technical cooperation and R&D. The model is time- and cost-efficient and results in business! The webinar will be held, online, the **9 December 2020** .. More [here](#).

- CALLS -

Call for proposal 2020- Towards Climate-Neutral and Socially Innovative Cities

The strategic long-term vision published by the Commission for a prosperous, modern, competitive and climate-neutral economy calls for a drastic reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The European Commission’s Green Deal proposes a new growth strategy that aims to preserve the planet for future generations. It should serve as the compass to emerge from the present COVID-19 crisis and offers the opportunity to bounce forward and accelerate our progress towards meeting the EU climate change objectives. It sets an ambitious target of a 50%-55% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. Through its roadmap for action it outlines a long-term vision for the environment, involving all sectors of the economy, geared towards reaching the goal of climate neutrality.

Deadline of submitting the proposals: 26th of January, 2021

More information [here](#).

COSME Call 2020 - Boosting the uptake of digitalisation, innovation and new technologies in tourism through transnational cooperation and capacity building

This action is to support the digital transformation of tourism entrepreneurs, particularly SMEs and start-ups, and boost innovation along the tourism value chain through the integration of tourism businesses and stakeholders in transnational and inter-regional innovation ecosystems as well as territorial partnerships and cooperation. The action will provide support to tourism SMEs and start-ups through among others, capacity building, training, coaching, technical assistance, prototyping, business matchmaking, financial advice, awareness raising.

The general objective of the action is to boost the uptake of digitalisation and innovation by tourism SMEs through transnational cooperation and capacity building.

The action aims at:

- reinforcing transnational and cross-border cooperation, in particular integration of tourism businesses and stakeholders in transnational and inter-regional innovation ecosystems to enable smart and sustainable growth of tourism SMEs;
- fostering SMEs' capacity and skills to improve their use of new digital technologies, resulting in new business models in tourism;
- fostering innovative solutions for improving tourism management and the tourism offer through cooperation within the tourism ecosystem, including public-private partnerships

Deadline of submitting the proposals: February 11th, 2021

Global Budget: **8 M€**

More information [here](#).

Call for proposals 2020 - BlueInvest Grants: Investing in Blue Innovation

The grants offered to SMEs in this blue economy window call for proposals shall help advance market-readiness of new products, services or processes. Activities could, for example, include trials, prototyping, validation, demonstration and testing in real environment conditions, and market replication. A sustainable blue economy can also contribute significantly to European Green Deal objectives, including the biodiversity, circular economy, digital earth and farm to fork strategies and the transition to a climate-neutral economy. It can help communities and industries hit hard by the coronavirus or migration of key workers to recover through a more resilient economy with reduced carbon and environmental footprint and competitiveness on a global scale. Also branded as 'BlueInvest Grants', this call for proposals belongs to a package of measures set up under the '[BlueInvest platform](#)' encompassing assistance services for investment readiness and EUR 75 million worth of liquidity made available in 2020 for investing equity in funds specialising entirely or mostly in the blue economy or co-investing in particular companies.

The objectives of this call for proposals are to:

- bring to market new products, services, processes, and business models in blue economy value chains and help advance their market-readiness;
- develop sustainable and innovative blue economy in Europe's sea basins;
- de-risk investment in these projects to facilitate their access to other financing schemes for the next stages of their activities.

Deadline of submitting the proposals: February 16th, 2021

Global Budget: **20 M€**

More information [here](#).

Call for proposals 2020 – Developing and implementing local integration strategies through multi-stakeholder partnerships

Integration is a multi-sectoral issue that requires the mobilisation of many stakeholders encompassing different aspects of society. The coordination and timely intervention of these stakeholders is key for an early start of the integration process, as well as for its success. As integration takes place mostly at local level, it is particularly important to coordinate the interventions of different stakeholders through locally focused strategies and plans. The development and implementation of these strategies and of related actions should be based on a comprehensive and integrated approach. It should also encompass an effective consultation and cooperation involving third-country nationals (TCNs) wherever possible, in order to take into account their views and experiences. In this context, the European Commission has already put in place the Urban Agenda Partnership.

Deadline of submitting the proposals: 16th of February, 2021.

More information [here](#).

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