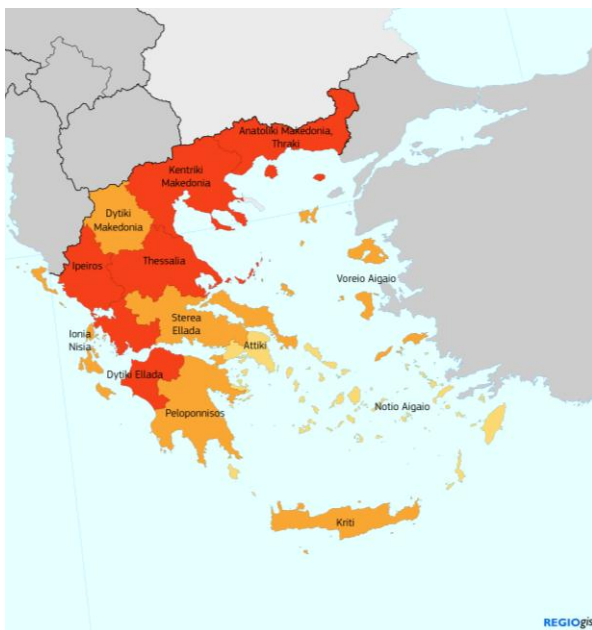


Cohesion Policy and Greece

In 2014-2020, Greece will manage **eighteen operational programmes** under EU Cohesion Policy. From these, thirteen regional programmes will receive funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF), two national programmes will receive funding from the ERDF and ESF, one national programme will receive funding from the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund, one national programme will receive funding from the ESF and a national technical assistance programme will receive funding from the ERDF, ESF and the Cohesion Fund.



Structural Funds (ERDF and ESF) eligibility 2014-2020

- Less developed regions
(GDP/head < 75 % of EU-27 average)
- Transition regions
(GDP/head between \geq 75 % and < 90 % of EU-27 average)
- More developed regions
(GDP/head \geq 90 % of EU-27 average)

How much will the EU invest in Greece from 2014-2020?

For 2014-2020, Greece has been allocated **€15.35 billion** (current prices) in total Cohesion Policy funding:

- **€7.03 billion** for less developed regions (Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, Central Macedonia, Thessaly, Epirus, Western Greece)
- **€2.31 billion** for transition regions (Western Macedonia, Continental Greece, Ionian Islands, Peloponnese, Crete, North Aegean Islands)
- **€2.53 billion** for more developed regions (Attica, South Aegean Islands)
- **€3.25 billion** under the Cohesion Fund
- **€231.7 million** for European Territorial Cooperation
- **€171.5 million** for the Youth Employment Initiative.

Of this, ESF in Greece will represent a minimum of **€3.33 billion**. The actual share will be set in light of the specific challenges the country needs to address in the areas covered by the ESF.

What are the main funding priorities for Greece?

Priorities for Greece are set out in the Partnership Agreement approved by the European Commission on 23 May 2014. The principal objectives are;

Support and promote competitiveness and innovation

Tackle and mitigate the severe effects of the economic, and social crisis with particular focus on high unemployment (especially youth) and

Trigger and pursue reforms to modernise and ensure an efficient public administration.

The strategy identifies five pillars to build upon the "exit strategy" from the crisis, namely:

- Competitiveness and openness of SMEs
- Development of human resources & active social inclusion,
- Low carbon economy,
- Key network infrastructure and
- Modernization of the state.

What results have been achieved so far?

The total allocation from Cohesion Policy funding for the 2007-2013 period was € 20.4 billion.

Since the start of the 2007-2013 funding period, the ERDF and Cohesion Fund have helped Greece to:

- create more than 21 000 jobs (over 20 000 of these jobs in SMEs);
- start-up more than 2 400 businesses and invested directly in over 30 000 SMEs;
- extend coverage of broadband internet to 800 000 additional citizens;
- improve urban transport to the benefit of over 27 000 people;
- invest in water projects benefiting over 450 000 people.

Funds provide investment for a wide variety of projects such as enhancing the employability and up skilling of young people and the long-term unemployed and combating poverty. The ESF provided training for over 4 million people.

A series of measures were adopted in view to better reply to the country's needs in time of crisis and to improve absorption in 2013, namely:

- An amount of € 1.3 billion has been paid to Greece as a result of the increase of the co-financing rate to 95 % (top-up). Moreover, this measure reduced the requirements for national co-financing from the national budget by the same amount;
- A list of 181 co-funded priority projects of high investment value was identified in close collaboration between the Greek authorities and the European Commission in important sectors which aim to produce visible results and boost the economy, competitiveness and employment. These projects should prove to be a key driver for the absorption of funds and represent a total value of approximately € 11.2 billion;
- EU Cohesion Policy funding has been blended with the European Investment Bank (EIB) by creating a Guarantee Fund for SMEs to support EIB global loans. € 500 million from the structural funds are guaranteeing potential global loan from EIB for € 1 billion;
- A youth initiative with support from the European Social Fund to support actions that help to decrease the high rate of unemployment of young people in Greece is also under implementation.

Cohesion Policy success stories

ERDF projects

• Athens Metro

The Athens metro network is one of the most modern in Europe. Its construction, including the extensions co-financed by the ERDF, has changed the face of public transportation in Athens. It has reduced congestion -reducing traffic jams on the main roads, reducing commuting times from 40 minutes to 10, freed up car parking spaces in the city, cut traffic emissions and reduced traffic accidents. It has also given new life to the neighbourhoods located near the metro stations, which have been significantly upgraded. Most businesses in the vicinity of metro stations have benefited and real estate value has gone up.

Total cost for projects completed and projects in progress: € 4.7 billion (EU contribution: € 1.9 billion)

• Corallia Clusters Initiative

Corallia Clusters Initiative is a public-private partnership, aiming at boosting competitiveness, entrepreneurship and innovation, in knowledge-intensive and exports-oriented technology segments, where Greece has the capacity to build a sustainable innovation ecosystem. Corallia's vision is the promotion of "Innovation Made in Greece" in order to fuel growth and boost competitiveness in business sectors where Greece can attain a world-wide competitive advantage through the establishment of innovation clusters. In 2006, Corallia, with seed money from the Greek government and the European Union, tested this clustering idea with 13 micro-electronics companies (mi-cluster). There are now more than 60 companies and 30 universities involved in the micro-electronics cluster. Together, they are responsible for more than €188 million in exports, according to March 2012 results. The products range from sensor networks and mobile technology to solar energy equipment and micro-chips for studying DNA. Other clusters are now developed following the Corallia micro-electronics model, such as the Hellenic Space Technologies and Applications Cluster (si-cluster) and the Innovative Gaming Technologies and Creative Content cluster (or in short gi-cluster)

Total cost: € 38 million (EU contribution: €35 million)

• E-Prescription

The E-Prescription project concerns the development of an electronic prescribing system for the issuance, control and liquidation orders for drugs prescription, medical procedures and medical visits. The idea is to develop a system that monitors all the stages involved in the process of prescribing drugs or laboratory test referrals from monitoring their issuance until payment of the final beneficiaries. The project scope includes supply services and equipment installation, software development, training and support of commissioning of the system and its users.

The project is expected to have benefits for the Greek public budget by reducing the over-prescription of medication and unnecessary treatments. It began as a pilot project to contribute to the reduction of high spending in the Greek Health sector (MoU objective is to save € 1 billion per year).

Total cost: € 25 million (EU contribution: € 21 million)

• Restoration of the Acropolis monuments

Regional policy contributed to the construction of the new Acropolis Museum which opened in 2009 and continues to contribute to the conservation and restoration of the Acropolis monuments. The restoration is the continuation of a complex project started in the programming period 2000-2006 and aims at protection, restoration, conservation and promotion of the monuments on the Athenian Acropolis. The works are performed under self-supervision of the Acropolis Restoration Service. The project is a very good example of synergy between culture and tourism, making the various archaeological sites also sources of development of activities while respecting their cultural value.

Total cost: € 64 million (EU contribution: € 49 million)

ESF projects

• Grants for enterprises to recruit unemployed graduates

A programme co-financed by the ESF aims to improve job prospects for unemployed people under the age of 35 who hold a first degree, post-graduate title or a PhD. The programme subsidises employment in companies for 24 months, while the employers commit to preserving these positions for at least 3 more months. The programme, which was launched in June 2012 and has been well received by employers, is expected to create 7 200 jobs (6 535 posts have already been filled).

Total cost: € 108 million (ESF contribution varies from 80-90 % of the costs, depending on the category of region)

- **Better public services and a business-friendly environment**

Greece's Business Environment Observatory aims to improve cooperation between the public administration and the business and scientific communities. The Observatory helps to identify administrative obstacles, assess their impact on the business environment and make policy recommendations for reform. It carries out studies on areas that have a significant impact on the development of entrepreneurship and the reinforcement of the competitiveness of the economy.

Total cost: €2 million (ESF contribution: €1.7 million)

Find out more about EU cohesion policy projects in Greece

For more project examples, as well as links to the complete list of beneficiaries of EU cohesion policy funding, see the following websites:

- [European Commission Regional Policy website](#)
- [European Social Fund website](#)