

Regional programs

ERDF RP and ESF+ RP 2021 - 2027

of the Umbria region

SYNTHESIS

**European Regional Development
Fund Regional Programme**

ERDF RP

2021 - 2027



The **European Regional Development Fund Regional Programme (ERDF RP)** for Umbria was approved by the European Commission on 28 November 2022.

The ERDF RP will make available resources totalling **Euro 523,662,810.00 for the 2021-2027 period**.

STRATEGY

The ERDF 2021-2027 programming strategy is based on a sustainable, inclusive, and widespread growth. The Umbria RP sets itself the following challenges:

1. implementing policies aiming to improve the capacity to innovate and compete, investing greater resources in research and innovation in the sectors identified in the Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3) and in close synergy with Horizon Europe;
2. focusing on the growth of productivity, concentrating both on identifying and removing inhibiting factors and on promoting improving factors; working to shift the production system to more technology-intensive sectors and to “rejuvenate” traditional sectors through the promotion of innovation and internationalisation at all levels;
3. promoting actions that combine economy with environmental quality and sustainability;
4. supporting culture with a view to innovation and social inclusion;
5. implementing territorial strategies aimed at supporting paths of social and economic inclusion and environmental sustainability, promoting the central role played by “inner” rural areas and enhancing the identity of urban areas.
6. ensure the sovereignty and security of the European Union by reducing its strategic dependencies in key sectors; enhance competitiveness by strengthening its resilience and productivity through the development and manufacturing of critical technologies.

Within the framework of **research and innovation**, the Region aims to increase the number and size of innovative companies in knowledge-intensive sectors with high growth potential; promote knowledge exchanges between research institutions and production sectors, especially SMEs, through partnerships and training; encourage the digitisation of citizens, businesses and public administrations; support production investments by SMEs for the technological, green, and digital transformation of innovative processes for the production of goods and services.

In 2024, with the implementation of the STEP Regulation, the Region is committed to supporting those strategic sectors aligned with territorial specializations, also in the form of clusters, such as aerospace, nanotechnologies, biotechnologies, artificial intelligence—fostering technological cross-pollination and cross-sector fertilization among productive sectors and development stakeholders, including therapeutic biotechnologies, molecular biology, chemistry, sustainable and precision agriculture, sustainable textiles, mechanics, automotive, and the production of “green” steel.

In the area of **climate and energy**, investments are planned to improve energy efficiency and promote renewable technologies, both in enterprises and in public buildings.

Priority is given to investments aimed at increasing seismic resilience, protecting biodiversity, and building green infrastructure in order to restore the ecosystem in urban areas, which are more vulnerable to climate change and air pollution.

Within the framework of a green economy, the circular economy theme takes on a primary role, both for the proper disposal and recycling of waste, and for aid to businesses so they can reduce the impact of their production on the environment while focusing on the development of new sustainable products and materials.

It also aims to improve **sustainable urban mobility**, particularly in the major urban centres.

Two other issues are of fundamental importance for a region like Umbria: the enhancement of culture in synergy with policies related to **social and cultural welfare** and the “**territorial strategies**”, implemented in cooperation with other policy objectives, aiming to promote the economic and social development of the region’s major urban areas and identified inner rural areas.

THE PROGRAMME

The ERDF Regional Programme is organised into 5 priorities, plus the Technical Assistance supporting the Programme's management. Each priority is made up of specific objectives consisting of several actions aimed at pursuing specific targets.

Priority 1

Research and innovation

The revitalisation of the production system, R&D activities, synergies and collaboration among SMEs, large companies, and research centres, investment in green technologies and the circular economy, sustainable and data-driven choices, implementation of secure clouds: the Region will create the conditions conducive to the growth of a smart, high-potential industry.

Priority 2

Combatting climate change

A rational use of energy, decarbonisation of the energy system, self-production of energy through renewable sources, circular economy, prevention of natural disasters and seismic retrofitting, consolidation of natural areas, and integration of urban green spaces to combat climate change are the challenges that the Region is setting for itself as it embarks on an ecological transition that will lead it toward a green economy.

Priority 3

Sustainable urban mobility

New ways of living the city, concepts of proximity, sustainability, and accessibility. Rethinking the boundaries for safe pedestrian and bicycle travel, including through the quality of local public transport, integrated with digital systems, to help decongest traffic and contribute significantly to improving air quality. The Region aims to redesign the city in a safe, green, and usable way.

Priority 4

Innovative and social culture

The community as a driving force for culture and regional heritage: valorising spaces, places, and facilities for the participation of the citizenry. The Region promotes the wellbeing of inhabitants and tourists through cultural welfare practices. Indeed, tourism becomes sustainable and culturally inclusive, with the active and responsible participation of the community.

Priority 5

Cohesion and sustainability

Territorial strategies at the heart of cohesion policies. Education, mobility, health, services, social inclusion, and economic development are just some of the issues that constitute the constant and challenging tasks of inner rural and urban areas which, in ways that are sometimes diametrically opposed, encapsulate the essence of our region.

Priority 7 and 8

Digital, Deep Tech, and Biotechnologies

Clean and Efficient Technologies

With the aim of ensuring the sovereignty and security of the European Union, reducing strategic dependencies, and enhancing competitiveness by strengthening resilience and productivity, STEP pursues a dual objective:

- to support the development or manufacturing of critical and emerging technologies and their respective supply chains;
- to address shortages in labour and essential skills for all types of quality jobs supporting the aforementioned objective, particularly through lifelong learning, education, and training projects.

PRIORITIES / SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES / ACTIONS

Priority 1 - A more competitive region: Research & Innovation

Specific objective 1.1 – Developing and strengthening the capacity for research and innovation and the introduction of advanced technologies

- Action 1.1.1 - Strengthening of the technological transfer and entrepreneurial discovery processes
- Action 1.1.2 - Strengthening of innovation chains and support to R&D projects
- Action 1.1.3 - Support for innovative start-ups and the development of spin-offs, incubators/ accelerators

Specific objective 1.2 – Enabling citizens, businesses, research organisations, and public authorities to reap the benefits of digitisation

- Action 1.2.1 - Digital transformation: access and use of public services and information by businesses and citizens
- Action 1.2.2 - Digital skills and digital facilitation tools
- Action 1.2.3 - Support for the digitisation of businesses
- Action 1.2.4 - Support for the digitisation of the regional tourism and cultural system

Specific objective 1.3 – Strengthening the sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in SMEs, also through investments in production

- Action 1.3.1 - Support for the innovative production investments of SMEs
- Action 1.3.2 - Support for the internationalisation of SMEs
- Action 1.3.3 - Strengthening of the financial and capital structure of SMEs
- Action 1.3.4 - Support for tourism, tourism services, cinema, audio-visual, cultural and creative, and social enterprises

Specific objective 1.4 – Developing skills for smart specialisation, industrial transition, and entrepreneurship

- Action 1.4.1 - Improvement of managerial skills following the guidelines of the Intelligent Specialisation Strategy

Priority 2 - A more sustainable region: Combatting climate change, transition toward a zero-emission, circular economy

Specific objective 2.1 – Promoting energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions

- Action 2.1.1 - Support for the energy efficiency of businesses
- Action 2.1.2 - Support for energy efficiency in public buildings, structures, and facilities (including residential buildings)

Specific objective 2.2 – Promoting renewable energy

- Action 2.2.1 - Support to businesses for the production of energy from renewable sources
- Action 2.2.2 - Public support of renewable energy

Specific objective 2.4 – Promoting climate change adaptation, disaster risk prevention, and resilience, taking ecosystem approaches into consideration

- Action 2.4.1 - Prevention of natural and seismic risks

Specific objective 2.6 – Promoting the transition toward a circular and efficient economy from the standpoint of resources

- Action 2.6.1 - Support to businesses for the circular economy
- Action 2.6.2 - Support of the public circular economy

Specific objective 2.7 – Strengthening the protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity, and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution

- Action 2.7.1 - Protection, restoration, and sustainable use of Natura 2000 sites
- Action 2.7.2 - Protection of nature and biodiversity, natural heritage and resources, green and blue infrastructure

Priority 3 - A more connected region: Sustainable urban mobility

Specific objective 2.8 – Promoting sustainable multimodal urban mobility as part of the transition to a zero net carbon economy

- Action 2.8.1 - Soft mobility
- Action 2.8.2 - Strengthening of regular local public transport in urban areas

Priority 4 - A more inclusive region: Innovative and social culture

Specific objective 4.6 – Strengthening the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion, and social innovation

- Action 4.6.1 - Redevelopment of local areas for better inclusion, innovation, and sustainability

Priority 5 - A region closer to its citizens: Cohesion, sustainability, and appeal

Specific objective 5.1 – Promoting integrated and inclusive social, economic, and environmental development, culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism, and safety in urban areas

- Action 5.1.1 - Implementation of territorial strategies for urban authorities
- Action 5.1.2 - Increase of the administrative capacity of urban authorities

Specific objective 5.2 – Promoting integrated and inclusive social, economic, and environmental development, culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism, and safety in non-urban areas

- Action 5.2.1 - Implementation of territorial strategies for inner rural areas
- Action 5.2.2 - Administrative capacity measures for inner rural areas

Priority 7 - Support for the development of critical technologies in the digital, deep tech, and biotechnology sectors

Specific objective 1.6 – Investments in all critical strategic technologies contributing to the objectives of the STEP platform

- Action 1.6.1 - Support for investments in digital technologies, deep tech innovation, and biotechnologies

Priority 8 - Support for the development of critical technologies in the clean and resource-efficient technology sectors

Specific objective 2.9 – Investments contributing to the development or manufacturing of clean and resource-efficient technologies

- Action 2.9.1 - Support for clean and resource-efficient technologies

RESOURCES

The allocation of the financial resources ensures compliance with the thematic concentrations envisaged by the EU regulations that provide for specific contributions to climate change objectives, sustainable urban development, and respect for biodiversity.

POLICY OBJECTIVE	NAME	FINANCIAL RESOURCES	%
OP1	A more competitive region	202.757.090,00	38,72%
OP2	A more sustainable region	144.481.220,00	27,59%
OP3	A more connected region	45.674.700,00	8,72%
OP4	A more inclusive region	9.000.000,00	1,72%
OP5	A region closer to its citizens	72.000.000,00	13,75%
OP6	Technical Assistance	18.328.214,00	3,50%
OP7	Digital, deep tech and biotechnologies	26.421.586,00	5,05%
OP8	Clean and resource-efficient technologies	5.000.000,00	0,95%
TOTAL		523.622.810,00	100%

**European Social Fund Plus
Regional Programme**

ESF+ RP

2021 - 2027



The **ESF Plus Regional Program (ESF+ RP)** for Umbria was approved by the European Commission on 23 November 2022.

The ESF+ RP will make available resources totalling **Euro 289,692,900.00 for the 2021-2027 period**.

STRATEGY

The ESF Plus Regional Programme (RP) 2021-2027 for Umbria was prepared in accordance with the priorities dictated by the Partnership Agreement and the challenges outlined in the 2020 country-specific recommendations, in complementarity and synergy with the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP).

The action of the regional programme is meant to counter some of the disparities in access to services of general interest; the intention is therefore to address so-called "market failures" by intervening in a significant manner in favour of the most disadvantaged groups and those furthest away from the labour market, which public policies have been less able to intercept up to now, and with mechanisms that anticipate professional and employment needs that have not yet fully emerged from the market, thus reinforcing the ultimate purpose of cohesion policy. The programme is aimed at broadening the employment base, with particular reference to young people and women, improving people's skills for rapid integration into transitional markets, increasing the quality of work, developing the region's economic and social innovation, facilitating and encouraging participation in the economic development of all citizens, and promoting social mobility, so as to ensure maximal economic and social, territorial, gender and generational cohesion.

The complementarity with the actions benefiting enterprises in the ERDF, as well as with the NRRP projects, must propel enterprises themselves to become the biggest creators of employment.

The choice of the intervention instruments is based on the belief that there is a need to promote wide-ranging actions, which can intercept potential users more easily and are characterised by facilitated management. The implementation difficulties encountered in the previous programming period due to the fragmentation of the interventions, the often limited financial size of the planned instruments, the sectoral integration that was taken as a reference for programming, and the difficulties encountered in managing the actions make necessary a significant leap forward.

THE PROGRAMME

The ESF+ Regional Program is organised into 4 priorities:

1. **Employment**
2. **Education and training**
3. **Social inclusion**
4. **Youth employment**

in addition to the **Technical Assistance** supporting the Programme's management.

Each priority is made up of specific objectives consisting of several actions aimed at pursuing specific targets.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The strategy of the ESF+ RP 2021-2027 is based on a sustainable, inclusive, and widespread growth, setting the following challenges/**specific objectives**:

- a. improving access to employment and activation measures for all jobseekers, especially young people;
- b. modernising labour market institutions and services;
- c. promoting gender-balanced labour market participation;
- d. promoting the adaptation of workers, enterprises, and employers to change;
- e. improving the quality, inclusiveness, effectiveness, and labour market relevance of education and training systems;
- f. promoting equal access to and completion of inclusive and quality education and training, particularly for disadvantaged groups;
- g. promoting lifelong learning;
- h. fostering active inclusion to promote equal opportunities, non-discrimination, and active participation and improve employability, particularly of disadvantaged groups;
- k. improving equal and timely access to quality, sustainable, and affordable services.

RESOURCES

The allocation of the financial resources must ensure compliance with the thematic concentrations provided for by the Italy-European Union Partnership Agreement, with particular reference to the issues of youth employment (to which 18.4% of the programme is devoted; the minimum to be ensured is 15%) and social inclusion – meant as a systemic approach that goes beyond the sphere of “social policies” as they have been addressed so far by Umbria's public policies, extending to the issues of work-life balance and a focus on boys and girls of all ages.

PRIORITY	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	RESOURCES €	%
Employment	a) Employment	28.245.184,00	9,8%
	b) Modernisation of labour market institutions	14.580.000,00	5,0%
	c) Gender equality	31.660.000,00	10,9%
	d) Worker adaptation	21.000.000,00	7,2%
		95.485.184,00	33,0%
Education and training	e) Effectiveness of education and training systems	3.200.000,00	1,1%
	f) Promoting equal access to training	23.000.000,00	7,9%
	g) Lifelong learning	5.257.000,00	1,8%
		31.457.000,00	10,9%
Social inclusion	h) Inclusion of the disadvantaged	36.600.000,00	12,6%
	k) Access to inclusion services	63.318.000,00	21,9%
		99.918.000,00	34,5%
Youth employment	a) Employment	51.245.000,00	17,7%
		51.245.000,00	17,7%
TA		11.587.716,00	4,0%
		11.587.716,00	4,0%
TOTAL ESF+ RP 21/27		289.692.900,00	100,0%

CONTENTS

Employment: The transition to a more digital and sustainable economy offers new opportunities that will require new skills to meet evolving job requirements and needs. The new programming will pay particular attention to measures aimed at increasing integration/reintegration in the labour market, structuring customised interventions for the development of skills in response to business demand and needs (or the self-employed in the case of self-employment), with a focus on groups that have been most affected by the crisis, including young people, women, the long-term unemployed, and the inactive population.

When implementing the interventions, integration with other national employment policies (e.g. PON IOG and PON SPAO) will have to be assessed, thus ensuring a “sustainable” financial dimension of the interventions. In particular, it will be possible to support female employment by implementing measures that offer new and qualified job opportunities, assisting women in obtaining stable employment, starting up businesses, or self-employment paths, taking into account the persistent under-representation of women in training courses in the so-called STEM professions, something that also exists in Umbria. The process of modernising labour market institutions and services, as well as that of adapting and bringing education and training systems closer to businesses, will require a number of different measures that can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of active policies, also using digitisation processes. In agreement with the social partners and companies, actions will be promoted to support the employment transitions of workers also in sectors other than their sector of origin (by modifying the current conditionality system) and to facilitate job placement with reskilling and up-skilling measures.

The new programming will give greater centrality to measures aimed at strengthening and modernising labour market services, starting with their digitalisation, adopting a “digital first” strategy similar to that of other European countries, with the use of the digital channel for all services, from digital recruitment to profiling, to the allocation of a package of services, to the monitoring of active search actions, and to the possibility for companies to contact workers who meet the requirements. In the design and implementation of active policy interventions – and with a view to total synergy and integration, also in financial terms – account will be taken of the measures, targets, and actions that will be identified and implemented under the GOL Programme.

With regard to vocational training, considering the need to create a larger employment base, the Region intends to intervene to promote quality employment and, above all, to be consistent with the needs of the local economic fabric and the needs of businesses; the Region is striving to strengthen the entire vocational training chain, with the aim of ensuring greater continuity and synergy among the various pathways and enriching the training to offer thanks to a process of constant monitoring and attention to local needs.

Education and training: the ESF+ RP 2021-2027 will act taking into account both the results obtained in the 2014-2020 programming and the changing needs of the labour markets and businesses. Actions will be implemented to improve the quality and effectiveness of the education and training systems, including through system actions, and to improve basic skills, including the skills needed for the ecological and digital transition. Equally important is the updating of the regional system of professional and training standards, which must maintain its capacity to meet the professionalism needs expressed by the regional system and the evolving trends of the economic and production system, with particular reference to the tourism/cultural and environmental heritage/entertainment sector. In the area of lifelong learning, there will be a strengthening of the general adult training interventions not included in the range of already-activated learning in formal, informal, and non-formal contexts. These will be calibrated on key competences to be specifically qualified as to the priorities and types of interventions, in connection with the needs of the territory, with the regional system of active labour policies, and with the regional system of qualification standards and certification of competences.

Social inclusion: Umbria has demonstrated a good capacity for social resilience to the pandemic crisis, achieved also through a use of EU funds mindful of the need to increase the degree of social

cohesion. This is an objective that becomes more evident in the ESF+ RP 2021-2027, the intention of which, in line with EU indications, is to support a broad strategy to foster social inclusion and combat social exclusion. For all the Specific Objectives of a social nature, there is a confirmation of an organisation of integrated interventions in the regional strategy, which are also present in the 2014/2020 programming. This effectively coordinates the various devices and financial sources available at the regional, national, and EU level, also by experimenting with different implementation methods, in three areas: collaboration agreements with municipalities; interventions of regional competency addressing disadvantaged persons; and system actions under regional authority. In this sense, with reference to the area of social innovation, interventions should be strengthened to develop innovative local social and health welfare systems, aimed at upgrading the services of the territorial network or promoting new ones, combining local development and the welfare system.

In addition, with the aim of combining the development of education with social inclusion, interventions to **support the right to study** will be planned, in a continuation of the actions of the last phase of the 2014-2020 programming for Umbria: needy and deserving students in compulsory education, actions for the improvement/enhancement of “leFP” (Education and Vocational Training) pathways, right/duty with a raising of quality and innovation in teaching methods, and actions for the strengthening of work-based learning. These are pathways that support the school inclusion of minors and young people with disabilities and, subsequently, social and socio-occupational inclusion with dedicated pathways and services.

Youth employment: This is an extremely important issue for Umbria, both in terms of the number of young people employed and the quality of their employment. The main idea is to work decisively on the quality of human capital. The training to offer for the fulfilment of the training right/duty and the education and vocational training pathways (leFP) must be accompanied with interventions aimed at strengthening Higher Technical Education (ITS) – also in consideration of the employment results achieved in the 2014-2020 programming – and Higher Technical Education and Training (IFTTS) paths. Another major aim is to create employment opportunities through research grants for the placement of young people in companies.

THE TRANSVERSAL PRINCIPLES

Apart from the priority, several transversal principles form the basis for the implementation of the Programme actions:

- **Making the new generations count**, aiming to guarantee more space and value for young people in companies, universities, the research system, and institutions, promote merit and talent, combat the dropping out of school, and promote qualified entry into the world of work.
- **Combatting gender inequalities**, focusing on fully involving women in the processes of growth and cohesion by pursuing quality in work, countering cultural stereotypes, implementing reconciliation policies, and strengthening the network of welfare services.
- **Full participation**, the objective of which is to strengthen the leading role of communities, with particular attention devoted to inner rural and mountain areas, in order to redress inequalities and generate cohesive development.
- **Simplification of procedures and formalities** designed to promote and facilitate access to opportunities and services by citizens and businesses.

ERDF RP



Who to contact for further information:

<https://www.regione.umbria.it/programmazione-fesr/programma-operativo-regionale-2021-2027>

UMBRIA REGION – Regional Council

ERDF and NRRP Programming, Steering, Control, and Monitoring Service

progcomunitaria@regione.umbria.it

ESF+ RP



Who to contact for further information:

<https://www.regione.umbria.it/programma-fse-operativo-regionale-2021-2027>

UMBRIA REGION – Regional Council

ESF Programming, Steering, Control, and Monitoring Service

autoritagestionefse@regione.umbria.it