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ANNEX

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**on the approval of the annual work plan for 2024 of the Partnership for Research and
Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA)**



PRIMA
PARTNERSHIP FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA

ANNEX

ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2024

for the Partnership for Research and
Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA)



The PRIMA programme is supported
by Horizon 2020, the European Union's
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**PRIMA Partnership for Research and Innovation
in the Mediterranean Area**

Decision\ (EU) 2017/1324
Delegation Agreement H2020 PRIMA

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Annual Work Plan 2024
for the Partnership for Research and Innovation
in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA)

Glossary

AC	Associated Country
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CIHEAM	Centre International de Hautes Études Agronomiques Méditerranéennes
CoP	Community of Practice
EEA	European Environment Agency
EC	European Commission
EIP	European Innovation Partnership
EIT	European Institute of Innovation & Technology
ENI-CBC-MED	Cross Border Cooperation Within the European Neighbourhood Instrument - Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
H2020	Horizon 2020
HE	Horizon Europe
IA	Innovation Action
ICARDA	International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
IO	International Organisation
JPI	Joint Programming Initiative
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MED	Mediterranean
MedECC	Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
MPCs	Mediterranean Partner Country
NCPs	National Contact Points
NFA	National Funding Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PRIMA	Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area
PRIMA-IS	PRIMA- Implementation Structure
PSC	PRIMA Stakeholder Community
PS	Participating States
PSIAs	Participating States' Initiated Activities
R&I	Research and Innovation
RIA	Research and Innovation Action based on Horizon 2020 rules
RoC	Rules of Contest
RfP	Rules for Participation
SAC	Scientific Advisory Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRIA	Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
TC	Third Country
TRL	Technology Readiness Level
UfM	Union for the Mediterranean
UNEP-MAP	United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan
WEFE	Water Energy Food Ecosystems

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Introduction

PRIMA is a long-term partnership aiming to foster joint research and innovation approaches among Participating States with a regional focus on the Mediterranean region to improve water availability, sustainable agriculture, and sustainable food production in a region heavily distressed by climate change, urbanisation, and population growth.

PRIMA aims to support the transition towards greener, more inclusive, healthier Mediterranean societies' transformation, bringing the EU Green Deal to South Mediterranean countries. Through its programme, PRIMA will contribute to solving water scarcity, food security, nutrition, health, well-being, and migration problems contributing significantly to the [2030 United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) in the Mediterranean Region.

The scale of the research and innovation necessary to address the challenges in the Mediterranean area is immense due to the systemic character of the major bottlenecks. An appropriate mobilisation and provision of financial resources, a new technological and organisational framework, and enhanced capacity development are needed to reach these ambitious goals.

Through a collaborative, cross-boundary approach among the PRIMA Participating States, the PRIMA programme focuses on common problems, aligning national programmes and increasing the required scale and scope by pooling financial and intellectual resources. With this aim, PRIMA Participant States have developed a long-term [Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda](#) (SRIA), representing the cornerstone of strengthening research and innovation efforts.

The joint efforts will improve Mediterranean citizens' health and livelihoods, encouraging economic growth, and inducing more sustainable Mediterranean societies and stability. PRIMA SRIA is the reference document for all the actors involved in PRIMA towards implementing the initiative.

As of 10 April 2018, the PRIMA programme counts 19 Participating States (PS): Algeria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey. The Partnership has a robust strategic dimension based on equal footing applied through co-decision, co-financing and co-management and a distinctive geographical focus on the Mediterranean Region.

Based on the Decision (EU) 2017/1324 of the European Parliament and the Council of 4 July 2017 ([PRIMA Decision](#))¹, (Article 5 (1) thereof) the PRIMA programme runs from 7 August 2017 to 31 December 2028. The European Union (EU) has decided to support the programme with a maximum financial contribution of EUR 220 000 000 (Article 3 (1) of Decision (EU) 2017/1324) from the Horizon 2020 programme's Societal Challenge 2 ('Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine, maritime and inland water research, and the bio-economy) and Societal Challenge 5 ('Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials') and Industrial Leadership (Nanotechnologies, advanced materials, advanced manufacturing and processing, biotechnology). The Union's financial contribution conditions are outlined in Article 4 of Decision (EU) 2017/1324.

The programme is implemented by the PRIMA Foundation, established in Barcelona in 2017 as a dedicated implementation structure, which has been entrusted by the European Commission to manage the budget implementation tasks of the PRIMA programme under Article 185 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

The PRIMA Implementation Structure, legally established as a private entity under Spanish law in Barcelona, Spain, is also referred to in this document as "PRIMA-IS".

¹ Decision (EU) 2017/1324 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2017 on the participation of the Union in the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) jointly undertaken by several Member States (OJ L 185, 18.7.2017, p. 1).

Implementation of the PRIMA programme: PRIMA thematic areas

The PRIMA-IS implements the PRIMA programme based on Annual Work Plans.

PRIMA Annual Work Plans are developed in compliance with the objectives and provisions set out in Decision (EU) 2017/1324, based on the priorities described in the PRIMA SRIA under the three thematic areas addressed by the programme, namely:

1. **Thematic Area 1** Integrated and sustainable management of water for arid and semi-arid Mediterranean areas
2. **Thematic Area 2** Sustainable farming systems under Mediterranean environmental constraints
3. **Thematic Area 3** Sustainable Mediterranean food value chain for regional and local development

The existing threats to natural resources, such as climate change, demographic and economic growth, political instability, and forced migration, are intensified by the onset of globalisation. These strains exacerbate the resource pressure, thereby affecting the economies of the involved nations and their neighbours. This is especially prominent in the Mediterranean region, where these conditions are particularly acute. The European Union (EU) has been keenly aware of the importance of the Water, Energy, Food, and Ecosystems (WEFE) nexus in tackling these issues.

The WEFE Nexus approach presents a transparent and well-informed framework for navigating trade-offs and synergies, all the while maintaining the integrity and sustainability of ecosystems.

The resource nexus approach is vital as it brings into focus the interconnections among resources. Moreover, the Nexus approach promotes cross-cutting social themes effectively, including gender empowerment, stakeholder engagement, human rights, and poverty eradication.

PRIMA, in its bid to effectively manage these challenges, is vigorously promoting the WEFE Nexus approach. It ensures this comprehensive, integrated strategy infuses all of its actions. This shift in paradigm advocates for moving beyond traditional sector-based thinking, focusing instead on achieving all-encompassing security and sustainability of resources – water, energy, food.

PRIMA will mainstream an integrated (nexus) approach in all its calls moving beyond traditional sectoral thinking to achieve overall security and sustainability of all resources (water, energy, food) whilst provides an informed and transparent framework for determining the proper trade-offs and synergies that maintain the integrity and sustainability of ecosystems.

PRIMA programme structure

The PRIMA Programme is structured along a three-section funding scheme, as illustrated in Figure 1. In principle, PRIMA actions and activities are implemented following [Horizon 2020 rules for participation](#) (RfP) and Articles 6 and 7 of the [PRIMA basic act](#). Nonetheless, specific rules concerning participation and funding rates apply to the activities implemented with national funds. Each of the sections refers to the following:

Section 1: Actions and activities organised, managed, and funded by the PRIMA-IS² with EU funds according to H2020 Rules.

Section 1 encompasses:

- 1.1 Actions organised and funded by PRIMA-IS through transnational calls (EU contribution),
- 1.2 Activities supporting programme operations funded (EU contribution) and implemented by the PRIMA-IS.

Section 2: Activities selected following transnational open and competitive calls for proposals organised by PRIMA-IS and funded by the national funding bodies of PS.

Section 2 encompasses:

- 2.1 Activities following transnational calls organised by PRIMA-IS and funded by the PRIMA Participant States,
- 2.2 Activities supporting programme operations funded and implemented by the PRIMA-IS.

Section 3: Activities organised, managed, and funded by the PS.

Section 3 encompasses:

- 3.1 Activities under the national programmes of the Participating States, including transnational projects referred to as "Participating States' Initiated Activities" (PSIAs),
- 3.2 Activities organised and funded by PS supporting PRIMA programme implementation are "Other Activities" in this document.

While Section 1 actions and activities are funded by EU funds from the H2020 Research and Innovation Framework Programme, Section 2 and Section 3 activities are funded by Participating States funds. Section 1 and Section 2 call activities, including proposal evaluation and selection, are managed by PRIMA-IS. The Participating States entirely manage Section 3 activities. As for the Rules of participation, Section 1 actions follow H2020 RfP, while Section 2 and Section 3 are implemented according to national regulations.

The following Figure illustrates for each Section (1, 2, or 3) the source of funds (whether EU financial contribution or Participant States' contributions), the entity managing the calls and the rules of participation in PRIMA activities.

² In line with Article 3(3), point (a), of Decision (EU) 2017/1324, this funding is covered by Union financial contribution. However, where appropriate, PS may also arrange for financial contributions to cover costs of indirect actions funded by PRIMA-IS (Article 5(2), point (a)).

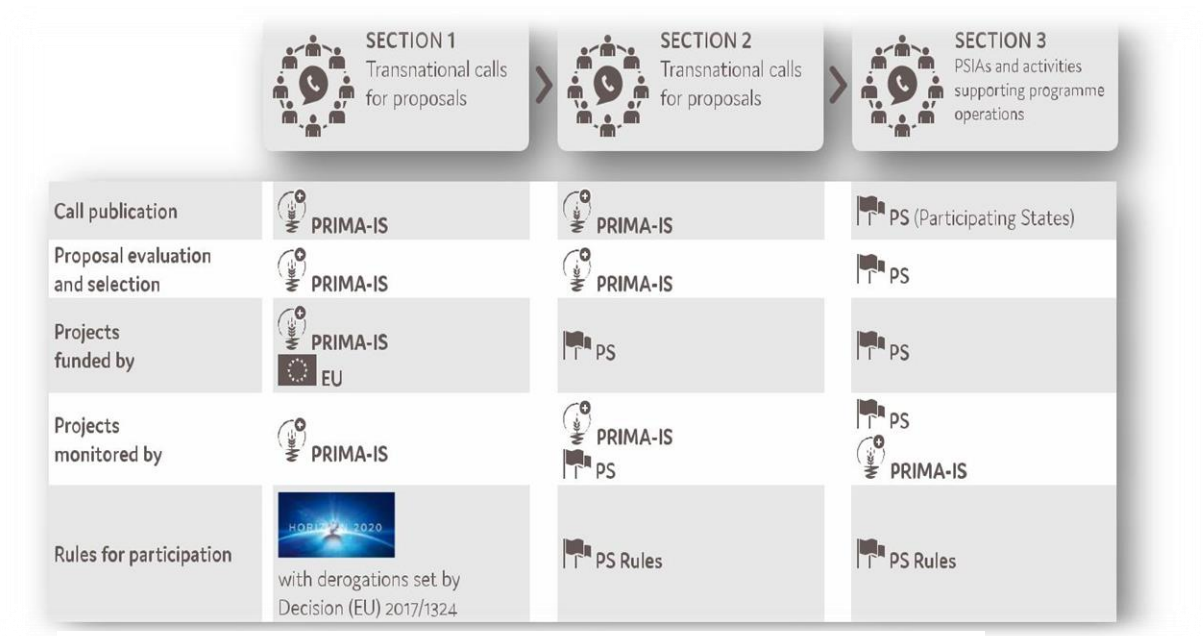


Figure 1 PRIMA programme architecture

PRIMA AWP2024 rationale

Mainstreaming the WEF nexus PRIMA calls

The Mediterranean basin's unique geographical, topographical, and climatic features make it particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. This underscores the need for swift action to fortify the region's farming and food systems, making them more sustainable, enhance food security, and encourage the sustainable use of shared water resources.

Highlighted in the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\) report](#), the Mediterranean is undergoing climate change effects at a pace significantly faster than the global average. This leads to year-round, accelerated warming of the region's air and sea surfaces, presenting profound threats to its ecosystems, economy, and societal well-being. The fallout from these changes, including heightened frequency and intensity of heatwaves, droughts, wildfires, and water scarcity, significantly influences critical sectors such as agriculture and energy production. These have major ramifications on public health and the overall quality of life. The escalating global warming rate in the Mediterranean region, the world's driest area, is severely compromising water resources, thereby posing a critical threat to food security.

Middle East and North Africa countries are more severely impacted by these challenges, further compounded by increasing populations, urbanisation, supply restrictions from exporting countries, price surges due to frequent droughts, and the persistent unrest in Ukraine.

Prompt action is paramount to fortify the resilience of the region's agricultural and food systems, which could encompass strategies like advanced water conservation measures, efficient irrigation techniques, and the cultivation of drought-resistant crops. Within this context, Research and Innovation (R&I) collaboration is essential for devising sustainable, transformative solutions to enhance regional resilience.

The PRIMA programme plays a crucial role by advocating for R&I cooperation, issuing annual calls for proposals funded jointly by its Participant States and the EU under the H2020 EU Framework Programme. These calls foster the deployment of innovative solutions that promote sustainable development and resilience across the Mediterranean region while simultaneously enhancing inter-nation cooperation and coordination.

Events like COP27 including the first-ever [Mediterranean Pavilion co-organized by PRIMA, the Union for the Mediterranean \(UfM\), and the United Nations Environment Programme – Mediterranean Action Plan \(UNEP-MAP\)](#), underscore the urgent need for international R&I cooperation to encourage transformative adaptation measures in the Mediterranean region. Such cooperation can support the development and application of these measures, fostering knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, and the co-creation of solutions tailored to the Mediterranean's specific needs.

The Mediterranean region faces significant challenges beyond climate change, including an increasing demand for water, food, and energy. The population of the Mediterranean is estimated to increase from 520 million in 2020 to 580 million inhabitants in 2050, 60 million more than in 2020.³ This increase is anticipated to add significant pressure on water, energy, and food resources in urban areas, particularly in cities that are already facing water scarcity and other resource constraints.

The Mediterranean Water Scarcity and Drought Report⁴ projects a 23% increase in water demand by 2050, driven by population growth, urbanization, and climate change. This increase in demand will exacerbate existing water scarcity issues and put significant pressure on water resources in the region. As per the [Mediterranean Energy Perspectives 2020 report](#), energy demand in the region is estimated to increase by 43% by 2040, caused by population growth and economic development. This increase in energy demand will put pressure on existing energy infrastructure and increase greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to the region's climate change challenges. The [State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021 report](#), notes the increase in undernourished people in the Near East and North Africa region, including many Mediterranean countries. This increase in food insecurity will put additional pressure on already strained food systems in the region.

Addressing these challenges will require a coordinated effort from stakeholders across the region, toward the adoption of an integrated approach to resource management embodied by the [Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems \(WEFE\) Nexus approach](#) can help strike a balance between the different sectors and avoid prioritizing specific resource uses. This approach has gained prominence in the context of fundamental EU policies, such as the [European Green Deal](#).

The nexus approach has also been cited during the [UN Water Conference 2023](#) where attention was driven to the need to supporting the achievement of many of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through close linkages with, for example, climate, environment, energy, food security, and health.

Given its universal importance and specific relevance for the Mediterranean region for more efficient and sustainable resource use, also stipulated in the “Atlas – The Gateway to the Future of the Mediterranean”⁵, PRIMA has embraced this approach since 2019 and successfully implemented cross-cutting R&I calls under a dedicated “Nexus theme”. Through the Nexus theme, PRIMA has brought together research teams from different countries across the region, as well as actors from various fields, to develop and implement innovative solutions that promote more efficient and sustainable resource use. These solutions are designed to be replicable at national and regional levels and to facilitate the uptake of best practices in the region.

PRIMA's Annual Work Plan 2024 (AWP2024), the last annual work plan foreseen within its programming period per Decision (EU) 2017/1324, has mainstreamed the WEFE nexus approach into all its topics under the three thematic areas of "water management," "farming systems," and "agri-food value chain." PRIMA acknowledges the necessity of adopting an integrated approach that contemplates the direct and indirect interconnections between water, energy, food, and ecosystems to aptly address the systemic nature of the challenges facing the Mediterranean region. By integrating the WEFE Nexus approach across all of

³ Nations Unies, World Population Prospects: The 2019 Revision.

⁴ European Commission, Directorate-General for Environment, Margat, J., Detot, S., Carmi, N., et al., Mediterranean water scarcity and drought report: technical report on water scarcity and drought management in the Mediterranean and the water framework directive, European Commission, 2011.

⁵ European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Zamel, D. et al., Publications Office of the European Union, 2023, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2760/38718> <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/23e55403-ab92-11ed-b508-01aa75ed71a1/language-en> 9.

PRIMA's topics, PRIMA aims to foster the development of innovative solutions that navigate the complex interplay between water, energy, food, and ecosystems.

In alignment with this goal, PRIMA, through the [WEFE4MED project](#), acting as Community manager, supported the establishment of Mediterranean WEFE Nexus community of practice to ensure that Nexus solutions emerging from R&I activities could be applied broadly across the region. This community is set to promote cross-institutional collaboration, facilitate the exchange of knowledge, particularly in relation to concrete Nexus demonstration sites in the Mediterranean.

These sites serve as real-world showcases of the Nexus approach in action. By linking these demonstration sites and leveraging them as testing grounds for amplifying solutions and formulating policies, the community of practice offers unique value compared to other Nexus platforms. It presents a distinctive framework where pragmatic application and theoretical understanding can combine to create meaningful change, advancing the collective knowledge and practice of the WEFE Nexus approach in the Mediterranean region. While the initial participants in this community are demonstration sites supported by PRIMA, our vision is not confined to these locations. We aspire to involve the larger Mediterranean Region and establish links with other Nexus-related demonstration sites.

PRIMA AWP2024 orientation lines

Water management in the Nexus

➤ Sustainability of Mediterranean irrigated agriculture through the implementation of the WEF Nexus approach

Incorporating the nexus approach to irrigation practices that consider the interconnections between water, energy, food, and ecosystems can be an effective approach to promoting sustainable development and resilience in the Mediterranean region. These practices can help to minimize negative impacts on the environment and ecosystem while enhancing the benefits of irrigation for agriculture and food security.

Topic rationale

The lack of a nexus approach in PRIMA-funded projects focusing on irrigation in the Mediterranean region means that the projects may not be considering the interconnections and trade-offs between water, energy, food, and ecosystems. For example, water use for irrigation can affect not only the availability and quality of water resources but also the energy required to pump and distribute water. It can also affect the ecological services provided by freshwater ecosystems, such as the provision of habitat for fish and wildlife.

By considering the interconnections between water, energy, food, and ecosystems, irrigation practices can be designed to minimize negative impacts on the environment and ecosystem while enhancing the benefits of irrigation for agriculture and food security. For instance, sustainable irrigation practices that minimize water use and increase energy efficiency can help reduce the impact on freshwater ecosystems and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

➤ Innovative water accounting approaches under crisis conditions: climate change and external shocks

Water scarcity and depletion, as well as competition among users, are high in many areas of the Mediterranean Region. Weak water policies, planning, investment, and allocation have also made sustainable, equitable, and reliable delivery of water to households, agriculture, and other water-using sectors increasingly complex.

Defining target levels of sustainable water withdrawal and consumption for different sectors and users, water accounting can help balance the competing demands of water for agriculture, industry, and households, while also preserving the environment and supporting energy and food production. Additionally, external shocks like the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine have worsened the food and energy crises and disrupted water supply systems, creating new demands for water and exacerbating existing water-related issues such as water scarcity and contamination.

Topic rationale

PRIMA has funded projects addressing only partially water accounting approaches, none of them so far, focus on water accounting as a primary objective.

Water accounting is crucial for effective water resource management during times of crisis in the Mediterranean region, but accessibility of data is key for its effectiveness. Real-time monitoring and data analysis through new technologies and data sources such as remote sensing, data analytics, and machine learning can provide accurate and timely information on water availability and use, leading to informed decision-making related to water allocation, pricing, and infrastructure investment.

This can enhance the gathering, analysis, and communication of information related to water flows, fluxes, stocks, and consumption, improving water resource management in the Mediterranean region in the face of changing climate and socio-economic shocks.

Farming systems in the Nexus

- **Transformative adaptation of Mediterranean dry farming systems using water harvesting techniques to address extreme drought in arid and semi-arid environments.**
- **Revitalising agroforestry practices for sustainable land use and climate resilience in the Mediterranean Region**

Both topics address the impact of climate change on agriculture in the Mediterranean region and propose innovative approaches to promote sustainable and resilient agricultural practices. The first topic proposes the use of water harvesting techniques to address extreme drought in arid and semi-arid environments, while the second topic suggests revitalizing agroforestry practices for sustainable land use and climate resilience. Both topics emphasize the importance of transformative adaptation to address the challenges of climate change in the region.

Topic rationale

Most of the PRIMA funded projects aim to address the impacts of climate change on agriculture in the Mediterranean Region by focusing on incremental and system adaptation levels. While these approaches are essential in the short term, transformative adaptation is necessary to address the long-term impacts of climate change by fundamentally changing social, economic, and political systems to create a more sustainable future. Transformative adaptation refers to fundamental changes in social, economic, and political systems to create a more sustainable future, while mitigation aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to limit global warming.

It is also important to note that both adaptation and mitigation are necessary to achieve sustainable development goals, as adaptation reduces the vulnerability of natural and human systems to climate change, while mitigation aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to limit global warming. Therefore, it is crucial to promote projects that address both adaptation and mitigation simultaneously for effective climate change action.

Both proposed topics can contribute to transformative adaptation by promoting sustainable and resilient agricultural practices that can reduce the vulnerability of natural and human systems to climate change. They can also help to mitigate the impacts of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions through sustainable land use and water management practices. Therefore, it is important to promote projects that address both transformative adaptation and mitigation for effective climate change action in the Mediterranean region.

Food value chain in the Nexus

- **Increasing efficiency and sustainability of preservation and storage of food products with green technologies**

Good preservation and storage are essential for ensuring food security, especially in regions where resources are scarce, such as the Mediterranean where the food sector always remained in search of eco-friendly and sustainable solutions to tackle food safety challenges. Conventional preservation should be coupled with low energy consuming technologies that run on renewable energy. The use of green solutions would be a desirable substitute for conventionally available preservation techniques. Overall, by incorporating these energy-saving technologies into food preservation and storage systems, it is possible to improve food security and reduce waste in resource-limited areas, such as the Mediterranean region.

Topic rationale

PRIMA projects funded so far, are making efforts to decrease post-harvest food loss and waste by developing cost-effective and sustainable technologies. However, there is a need to focus on achieving net-zero energy in the entire food value chain in the Mediterranean region by adopting a holistic approach that considers energy-efficient transportation and logistics, sustainable food processing, and renewable energy sources. Achieving net-zero energy in the food value chain is crucial to promote sustainable development and reduce the environmental impact of food production and distribution.

To achieve this goal, it is important to adopt smart and cost-effective solutions that are adapted to the needs and limitations of smallholders in the Mediterranean region. Supporting smallholders in adopting these solutions can not only help achieve net-zero energy in the food value chain but also contribute to their economic development and improve their livelihoods.

Adopting renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lower the overall energy consumption of the food value chain. Moreover, implementing energy-saving measures throughout the food value chain, such as using energy-efficient lighting and equipment in food processing and storage facilities, can also lead to cost savings for businesses while reducing the environmental impact of food production, processing, and transportation.

➤ Leveraging urban and local food systems for sustainable food systems

Recognizing the importance of urban and peri-urban food systems involves acknowledging the benefits they bring in terms of economic stability, social value, and environmental impact. This includes endorsing local food production methods such as farmers' markets and community-supported agriculture, as well as supporting informal food sectors. These systems can enhance food security, create jobs, reduce environmental footprints, and improve local food system resilience. Crucially, effective food procurement strategies⁶ are a key factor in this scenario, which can not only promote sustainable food production and consumption but also provide opportunities for policy integration across various sectors. This harnesses the purchasing power of the public sector to create sustainable product markets, promote healthier food options, and stimulate local economies.

Topic rationale

In light of expanding urban areas and the escalating influence of climate change, the Mediterranean Region faces a formidable challenge. By 2050, the population is expected to reach 580 million, predominantly concentrated in urban and coastal regions. Amid these complexities, farmers markets emerge as a practical and pragmatic solution.

Farmers markets serve as linchpins in fortifying food security and safety. Their direct access to locally grown produce reduces reliance on intricate and vulnerable food supply chains, thereby enhancing the resilience of food systems. Furthermore, these markets actively promote sustainability. They champion environmentally conscious farming practices and cultivate responsible consumption patterns, effectively reducing the ecological footprint of food production. Beyond the exchange of food, farmers markets catalyse economic development within local communities. They support smallholder farmers, create job opportunities, and safeguard traditional food cultures, particularly benefiting marginalized populations.

To unlock the full potential of farmers markets, the Region requires supportive policy frameworks and infrastructure. These encompass policies that not only encourage the establishment of markets but also ensure fair competition, provide essential financial and technical support, and facilitate well-equipped facilities and efficient transportation networks. While many PRIMA projects strive to enhance food

⁶ When addressing food procurement strategies, it's useful to refer to strategic frameworks developed by the European Union (EU) related to Green Public Procurement (GPP). These frameworks include: The [EU Public Procurement Directive](#); [EU Green Public Procurement Criteria](#); [Communication on Public Procurement for a Better Environment](#); Public Procurement for a Circular Economy; Food & Catering – [GPP Product Sheet](#).

security and safety in the Mediterranean, a specific focus on the informal food sector has been somewhat lacking. The informal sector holds immense significance in the region. It not only offers a diverse array of traditional and locally sourced foods, enriching the cultural heritage and identity of the area but also serves as a critical food source for low-income communities, especially in urban areas where formal food systems may be less accessible or unaffordable. Moreover, the informal sector actively contributes to the conservation and promotion of local agrobiodiversity. Communities possess invaluable knowledge about traditional crop varieties, animal breeds, and agroforestry systems honed over generations to adapt to local conditions and yield a wide range of nutritious foods.

However, it's essential to recognize that the informal food sector does present certain challenges, primarily regarding food safety and hygiene, as it often operates without sufficient regulation or oversight. Additionally, accessing resources and support to enhance operations, such as technical assistance or financial backing, can be challenging for this sector. Recognizing the significance of the informal food sector in the Mediterranean Region, it becomes crucial to address these challenges and enhance its sustainability and resilience. Effective food procurement strategies play a pivotal role in this endeavour. These strategies not only promote sustainable food production and consumption but also offer opportunities for policy integration across various sectors. Leveraging the purchasing power of the public sector can help foster sustainable product markets, promote healthier food options, and stimulate local economies.

Policy context

The PRIMA Annual Work Plan 2024 is guided by the 2030 UN Agenda of Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement, and key EU policy initiatives such as the [European Green Deal](#) and the new [EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change](#). It contributes to important EU policy initiatives such as the [Farm to Fork Strategy](#), [Food 2030 Governance and systems change Pathway](#), and the [EU Water Framework Directive \(WFD\)](#). The activities also align with the green transition: climate resilience, energy, and environment key action identified in the “Joint Communication on a renewed partnership for the Southern Neighbourhood” called “The new Agenda for the Mediterranean”, which will guide the cooperation 2021-2027 with the Southern Neighbourhood countries. These priorities align with the UfM policy framework, including UfM Ministerial Declaration on the UfM Water Agenda, the UfM Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate Change, and the [Valletta Declaration on Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation through Research and Innovation](#). The cooperation based on equal footing in line with the Barcelona Declaration, will contribute to narrowing the R&I and socio-economic divide in the Southern and Eastern neighbourhoods, thereby enhancing peace and stability.

PRIMA Actions in 2024 calls

The AWP 2024 is structured around four calls for proposals:

- Three Section 1 separate calls, each addressing a specific topic.
- One multi-topic Section 2 call, encompassing three distinct topics.

Within the AWP 2024, two types of actions are envisaged: Innovation Actions (IAs) and Research and Innovation Actions (RIAs). IAs focus on demonstrating the validation of technology or organizational models and their replication in the market. RIAs, on the other hand, explore new areas and technologies, aiming to advance research and innovation in these domains.

PRIMA's plan is to fund approximately thirty projects through the 2024 calls, aiming for a well-balanced mix of initiatives. These projects will encompass demonstrators with new technologies or organizational innovations, falling within the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) range of 6-8. Additionally, there will be research activities with lower TRL, typically in the range of 3-5, laying the groundwork for future innovations and capitalization potential.

As a guiding principle, Research and Innovation Actions featured in the AWP 2024 are designed to integrate socio-economic aspects, including social sciences. This approach ensures active engagement with society and facilitates access to research outcomes. PRIMA requires that the gender dimension is adequately integrated in its projects, complying with [Article 16 of Regulation \(EU\) No 1291/2013](#).

In the evaluation process of proposals, the inclusion of the gender dimension will be assessed by the evaluators, alongside other relevant aspects of the proposal. This evaluation criterion will be in line with PRIMA's commitment to fostering gender equality and inclusivity in all funded projects, as stipulated in the evaluation rules ([Section 5.1.7](#) and [Section 5.2.6](#)).

PRIMA encourages consortia to apply to their project a ["Multi-Actor Approach" \(MAA\)](#)

“A Multi-Actor Approach should ensure genuine and sufficient involvement of a targeted diversity of actors, essentially the (end-) users of the project results completed with some useful intermediaries who can bring in further useful knowledge, such as farmers/farmers' groups, foresters/foresters' groups, advisors, food processors, businesses, consumer associations, local communities, citizens, civil society organisations including NGOs etc. The genuine and sufficient involvement of such actors should occur all along with the project: from participation in planning the project and experiments to implementation, the dissemination of results, and a possible demonstration phase. Building blocks for the project proposal are expected to come from science, practice, and intermediaries ("co-creation"). End-users and practitioners are to be involved, not as a study object, but to use their local knowledge and/or entrepreneurial skills for developing solutions and creating "co-ownership" of results, which speeds up the acceptance and take-up of new ideas.”

In the PRIMA Annual Work Plan for 2024, all proposals are strongly encouraged to include capacity-development activities at individual, organizational, and/or community levels. These activities are meant to develop capacities in various areas and may include specific training activities that align with the proposed topics.

Supporting activities to increase the impact.

During the first six years of implementation, the PRIMA programme has been focused on implementing innovative solutions in water management, farming systems, and food value chain. These solutions have been developed to address the challenges and realities of the region and have been piloted and demonstrated on the ground. However, to bring these solutions to the market, PRIMA project consortia need support to develop effective exploitation strategies, business plans, and go-to-market strategies.

Stimulating an entrepreneurial mindset is crucial to help the consortia achieve their goal of reaching the market. By taking advantage of the services provided by [the Horizon Result Booster](#), PRIMA project consortia achieving the appropriate level of maturity, could improve the commercialisation potential of their results, enhance the impact of their activities, and promote sustainable practices. By working with the Result Booster, PRIMA project consortia could be supported to identify funding strategies, explore implementation options, and create new job opportunities. This support can help PRIMA projects to overcome barriers and bring their innovations to the market, contributing to the achievement of sustainable development goals.

Synergies and Complementarities of European and International Initiatives

Synergies with EU programmes and initiatives

- Project proponents should consider and actively seek synergies with national, regional, and EU research and innovation programmes such as Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe projects, with EU Missions in Horizon Europe and with other relevant EU programmes such as the [Interreg Euro-MED](#), the [Water and Environment Support \(WES\)](#), the [SwitchMed programme](#), the EU initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in the Western Mediterranean Region ([WESTMed Initiative](#)), mainly focusing on priority 6 concerning Sustainable consumption and production. PRIMA will seek synergies with the regional, multi-country and bilateral Flagship initiatives 7, 9, 10, 11, 12 as described in the Joint Staff Working Document accompanying the Joint Communication on the Renewed partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood ” [A New Agenda for the Mediterranean.](#)”
- PRIMA will further strengthen cooperation with the ENI Cross-Border Cooperation ([ENI-CBC MED](#)), and its successor the [Interreg NEXT MED programme 2021-2027](#) pushing both organisations' shared interest in supporting regional integration and development. This common objective will be achieved by creating thematic clusters based on a joint analysis of PRIMA and ENI-CBC MED and Interreg Next Med projects. Thematic clusters will be instrumental in fostering knowledge exchange, strengthening synergies and complementarities among projects, benchmarking results cross-contamination, and enhancing links with a broader community of stakeholders.
- In this Annual Work Plan 2024, PRIMA proposes topics in close collaboration with EU Missions: notably [Mission “A Soil Deal for Europe”](#). The collaboration with the EU missions can help to align PRIMA's activities with the EU's strategic priorities and promote synergies between the different initiatives. Moreover, PRIMA intends to collaborate closely with the EU Partnerships with a similar thematic focus, as the [European Partnership Water Security for the Planet](#) and the EU [Partnership Rescuing Biodiversity to Safeguard Life on Earth](#). PRIMA will also explore collaborations with EU Horizon Europe Mission Adaptation to Climate change and EU partnerships planned to start in 2024, such as [Safe and sustainable food systems for people, planet & climate; Agro-ecology living labs and research infrastructures; Agriculture of data; Animal health and welfare](#). Collaborations will be also sought with [relevant new candidate EU Partnerships proposed in the 2025/2027 Strategic planning](#) such Forests and Forestry for a Sustainable Future; Solar Photovoltaics. Those collaborations will ensure PRIMA complement its strategic priorities and avoid overlapping.
- PRIMA is complementary to the [Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture \(FNSSA\)](#) priority of the [EU-African Union research and innovation cooperation](#). The FNSSA priority allows PRIMA partners to further pan-African and cross-European collaboration. As a program focused on promoting sustainable practices in the food value chain in the Mediterranean region, PRIMA can contribute to achieving the goals of the FNSSA priority by sharing knowledge and best practices, promoting capacity-building and collaboration, and facilitating the transfer of technologies and management practices. By collaborating with the FNSSA priority, PRIMA partners can further extend their reach and impact, promoting sustainable development across Europe and North Africa. This collaboration can help to enhance resource efficiency, reduce food losses, improve food safety and quality, and mitigate the impacts of climate change in both regions. Overall, the complementarity between PRIMA and the FNSSA priority presents an opportunity for advancing sustainable development goals and achieving food and nutrition security in the Mediterranean region and beyond.

Synergies with EU infrastructures

[LifeWatch, a European Research Infrastructure Consortium \(ERIC\)](#), plays a crucial role in supporting scientists investigating biodiversity and ecosystem functions for societal benefit. In collaboration with PRIMA, LifeWatch ERIC acts as a valuable data source and provides a

platform for storing and sharing PRIMA data. The collaboration between PRIMA and LifeWatch ERIC aims to address biodiversity and ecosystem research and sustainable management in the context of global climate change. LifeWatch ERIC serves as a valuable source of data for PRIMA projects and provides a platform for storing and sharing PRIMA data. This partnership benefits both organizations and encourages the participation of more Mediterranean countries, particularly young researchers, in LifeWatch ERIC.

- In addition to collaborating with LifeWatch ERIC, PRIMA-IS seeks interaction with other European research infrastructures operating in various fields such as genomics, phenomics, precision agriculture, and food science. Some examples of such infrastructures include the Food and Health roadmap ESFRI, European Infrastructure for Plant Phenotyping (EMPHASIS), and [METROFOOD-RI](#), Infrastructure for promoting Metrology in Food and Nutrition.

The goal of seeking interaction with these research infrastructures is to enhance research capabilities, foster innovation, and address critical challenges related to biodiversity, agriculture, and food science in the Mediterranean Region.

Synergies with relevant regional organisations

- PRIMA is fully supporting the dialogue outcomes of the [Union for the Mediterranean](#) (UfM) [Environment Task force](#) to implement UfM post-2020 Environment Agenda, so-called "Towards 2030: Agenda for a Greener Med Contributing to achieving the Environmental SDGs in the Mediterranean" ([2030GreenerMed Agenda](#)) aiming to operationalise the [UfM Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate](#) adopted in Cairo on the 4th October 2021. PRIMA has been indicated in the Declaration among the initiatives and [MEDECC](#) and [BLUEMED](#)⁷, enhancing cooperation and research on climate action and the environment.

The PRIMA programme is consistent with UfM R&I regional platform's Roadmaps adopted during the UfM ministerial meeting in June 2022. The UfM R&I platform aims to promote cooperation in research and innovation in the Mediterranean region by building partnerships, sharing knowledge, and developing new technologies and management practices. The platform focuses on three roadmaps: climate change, renewable energy, and health.

The PRIMA program aligns with the UfM R&I platform's Roadmaps in several ways, as it focuses on promoting sustainable practices in the food value chain, enhancing resource efficiency, and mitigating the impacts of climate change in the Mediterranean region. By developing new technologies and management practices, promoting capacity-building and collaboration, and sharing knowledge and best practices, PRIMA can contribute to achieving the goals of the UfM R&I platform's Roadmaps.

- PRIMA is also collaborating with UfM, FAO, CIHEAM and [One Planet network's Sustainable Food Systems Programme](#) in a Multi-stakeholder Sustainable Food Systems Platform in the Mediterranean to foster a common understanding of the complex environment of Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) in the global context. The platform aims to foster a common understanding of the complex environment of sustainable food systems (SFS) in the global context, promote sustainable practices, and enhance regional cooperation in the Mediterranean. The platform brings together experts, policymakers, researchers, practitioners, and other stakeholders to share knowledge, develop new technologies and management practices, and promote capacity-building and collaboration.

Through its collaboration with the Multi-stakeholder Sustainable Food Systems Platform, PRIMA can further extend its reach and impact in promoting sustainable practices in the food value chain in the Mediterranean. The platform can provide a valuable platform for sharing knowledge and best practices, developing new technologies and management practices, and promoting capacity-building and collaboration.

Moreover, the platform can contribute to enhancing regional cooperation and promoting sustainable development in the Mediterranean by aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations, promoting resource efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and enhancing food security and food safety. Overall, the collaboration between PRIMA and the Multi-stakeholder Sustainable Food Systems Platform can help to advance the goals of sustainable development in the Mediterranean region and beyond.

Dissemination of PRIMA outcomes

A [PRIMA networking meeting \(PRIMA Project's Day\)](#) will be organised in the third quarter of 2024. This event will provide an opportunity for consortia representatives involved in PRIMA projects to collaborate, share knowledge, and identify opportunities to improve the effectiveness of their results. By bringing together representatives from different PRIMA projects, the networking meeting will create a platform for cross-collaboration and the sharing of best practices. This can help to identify synergies between projects and avoid overlapping themes, which will ultimately lead to a more effective and impactful implementation of the PRIMA projects.

⁷ Initiative for Blue Jobs and Growth in the Mediterranean Region

Furthermore, the networking meeting can provide a forum for discussing challenges and opportunities facing the consortia, as well as identifying potential areas for future research and innovation. This can help to foster a culture of innovation and collaboration within the PRIMA community and support the development of solutions to some of the most pressing challenges facing the Mediterranean region.

PRIMA strategic workshop

The focus of the workshop will be on discussing the best practices and results of these projects and identifying opportunities for replication and scaling up of successful practices. Scaling up and out can involve increasing the geographical coverage of a practice or increasing its scope to include a larger number of beneficiaries. This can be achieved through partnerships and collaborations with other organizations, including public and private sectors, to ensure that the practice is integrated into wider policies and programs.

The workshop will also provide an opportunity to discuss how research and innovation can be effectively integrated into policy-making and decision-making processes to address the region's most pressing challenges related to water, energy, food, and ecosystems. The interactive sessions and discussions will aim to identify potential solutions, strategies, and actions to accelerate the adoption and implementation of sustainable and resilient practices in the Mediterranean region.

The PRIMA strategic workshop will serve as a valuable platform for experts and stakeholders to collaborate, share their experiences and insights, and contribute to the development of practical solutions for the sustainable development of the Mediterranean region, aligned with the EU Green Deal deliverables such as the Farm to Fork Strategy, Circular Economy Action Plan, Zero Pollution Action Plan, and the Biodiversity Strategy.

1 Section 1: Actions and activities organised, managed, and funded by the PRIMA-IS with EU funds, according to H2020 Rules.

1.1 Actions organised and funded by PRIMA-IS through transnational calls (EU contribution)

In Section 1, activities of the PRIMA programme are supported along with the following types of actions: Innovation Actions (IAs) and financial contributions given as rewards following the publication of a contest (Prizes) as defined in Section [5.1.4](#) of this document.

IAs refer to TRL 6-8 (see Section [5.1.6](#) of this document). IAs should include activities directly aiming at producing plans and arrangements or designs for new, altered, or improved products, processes, or services. For this purpose, they may include prototyping, testing, demonstrating, piloting, large-scale product validation, and market replication. Organisational innovation activities⁸⁻⁹ could also be included.

IA actions under Section 1 will encompass topics under the three thematic areas (water management (quality and quantity), farming systems, and food value chain) with a focus on the sectoral interdependencies among them (Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus). This means that PRIMA-IS will launch three calls in Section 1 for 3 Innovation Actions as referred to in Section [5.1.4](#) of this document. These calls will mobilise the Euro-Mediterranean scientific communities, stakeholders and private entities submitting proposals expected to produce a positive socio-economic impact in the Mediterranean area.

Participation of private entities (in their diversity, e.g., companies/enterprises, SMEs, start-ups, non-profit organisations, NGOs) will be encouraged in the research consortia, jointly with public research organisations, universities, and end-users. Participants in these calls will have to submit a proposal to the PRIMA-IS that will be evaluated by peer review.

The PRIMA-IS will check proposals according to the eligibility conditions in Section [5.1.3](#) of this document. Proposals are evaluated, selected, funded and monitored according to the [Rules for Participation of Horizon 2020](#) (see Section [5.1.7](#), Section 1) according to a two-stage submission process and are centrally managed by the PRIMA-IS. Successful projects will be funded directly by the PRIMA-IS through the signature of grant agreements between the selected consortia and the PRIMA-IS. The grant agreements will be based on the [PRIMA Model Grant Agreement](#) (PRIMA MGA), based on the Horizon 2020 Model Grant Agreement.¹⁰

In addition, a financial contribution in Prizes, the “PRIMA Woman Greening Food Systems Award in Mediterranean Region” is included in this Annual Work Plan (see Section [5.1.4](#) of this document for general definition). The prizes we propose for this year are to recognise and uplift the essential role women play in innovating and transforming food systems in the Mediterranean region towards greater sustainability and resilience. The award intends to spotlight these women and their initiatives, aiming to augment visibility and thus empowering women across the region to continue their significant contributions towards the future of sustainable and resilient food systems. Beyond this, the award is envisioned to foster further innovation within green food systems and advance gender equality within the food systems sector.

Explicitly targeted at women and women-led organizations within the Mediterranean Region, the award acknowledges their significant contributions to greening food systems. Nominees should have instigated innovative techniques, practices, or policies that have substantially impacted food security and environmental sustainability within their communities or broader region. In this way, the award not only gives recognition but also serves as an inspiration for further progress and innovation in the sector.

⁸ Definition of organisational innovation: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2006:323:0001:0026:EN:PDF>.

⁹Organisational innovation means the implementation of a new organisational method in the undertaking's business practices, workplace organisation or external relations.

¹⁰ http://prima-med.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/h2020_mga_prima_multi_en.pdf

1.1.1 Section 1 Calls Topics

Thematic Area 1-Water management in the Nexus:

Topic 1.1.1-2024 (IA) Sustainability of Mediterranean irrigated agriculture through the implementation of WEFE Nexus approach.

Thematic Area 2-Farming systems in the Nexus:

Topic 1.2.1-2024 (IA) Transformative Adaptation of Mediterranean dry farming systems using water harvesting techniques to address extreme drought in arid and semi-arid environments.

Thematic Area 3-Food value chain in the Nexus:

Topic 1.3.1-2024 (IA) – Developing cost-effective and sustainable technologies adapted to Mediterranean Food Systems to decrease food loss and waste.

Thematic Area Water management in the Nexus

Topic 1.1.1-2024 (IA) Sustainability of Mediterranean irrigated agriculture through the implementation of the WEFE Nexus approach.

	Thematic Area Water management in the Nexus
Alignment with SRIA	Priority 1.2 Water sustainability in the Mediterranean Region should be ensured through improved technical tools coupled with socio-economic tools and governance, organisational and/or business models to define water-use limits in certain key areas under present and future global change scenarios. Priority 1.4 Use of alternative water resources Priority 2.2 Developing sustainable and productive agro-ecosystems OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES - 2/LAND AND WATER SUSTAINABILITY - 4/ SMART AND SUSTAINABLE FARMING
Alignment with EU policies	European Green Deal EU energy policies Water Framework Directive (WFD)

Challenge

Irrigated agriculture is a critical source of food and income in the Mediterranean region. However, with around 30% of the cropland being irrigated, agriculture is the largest consumer of freshwater¹¹. As a result, the sector faces multiple challenges including water scarcity, energy insecurity and environmental degradation, which can threaten the sustainability of the entire value chain.

Due to high population density and semi-arid climatic conditions, the Mediterranean features among the most water-scarce regions, posing serious constraints on irrigation. Because of competition with domestic and industrial uses, but also of a mix of policies that have encouraged excessive expansion of irrigated areas, irrigation allotments had often to be capped or reduced in several countries. Considering the expected increase in population, urbanization, and economic growth, together with changes in rainfall patterns and increasing temperatures associated with climate change, irrigation will further bear the brunt of future water shortages.

In recent years, government subsidized pressurized irrigation systems have replaced traditional low efficiency surface irrigation schemes in many countries in an attempt to minimize water losses and improve efficiency. However, the implications on energy use and carbon emissions have until now been largely overlooked. The process of extracting, transporting, and distributing water requires significant amounts of energy, which is often derived from non-renewable sources such as coal and oil. It is also worth considering that fuel subsidies to support irrigated agriculture can lead to over-extraction of water. Then, this overuse of energy contributes both to the depletion of scarce water and fossil fuels and to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.

Moreover, while innovative irrigation technologies are more water efficient and allowing higher yields and incomes, several constraints and negative impacts have also been observed. Higher efficiencies at the plot level have not translated into water savings at the basin level and have even compounded water

¹¹ FAO (2016) Area equipped for irrigation and percentage of cultivated land. Retrieved from http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/tables/WorldData-Irrigation_eng.pdf. Accessed 6 Dec 2017; Plan Bleu (2008) The Blue Plan's sustainable development outlook for the Mediterranean. Retrieved from http://planbleu.org/sites/default/files/publications/upm_en_0.pdf. Accessed 6 Dec 2017

depletion by intensification and expansion of cultivation ('rebound effect')¹². The expansion of intensive irrigated agriculture has also been accompanied with an increase in the use of pesticides and fertilizers, and the pollution of soil and water resources/ecosystems, which calls for the deployment of nature-based and microbiome-based solutions or agroecology for pollution mitigation. The adaption by small farmers is conditional upon several factors such as their know-how and access to markets or financial resources (e.g., subsidies). As barriers to entry are minimized through fuel or other subsidies, small farmers are led to adopt more capital-intensive farming systems and to link to more profitable but also more risky markets. Economic, social, and environmental sustainability aspects appear to be linked.

Opportunities for a comprehensive assessment of irrigation systems lie in integrated approaches such as the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus, which highlights and enhances the understanding of linkages between these four components. The challenge will be to explore the potential of WEFE Nexus approaches to transform the design and implementation of irrigated agriculture towards greater sustainability.

Scope

This call is designed to promote the creation of innovative solutions rooted in the Nexus approach, with a cross-sectoral perspective that enhances the sustainability of irrigated regions within the Mediterranean area. Moreover, projects should focus on mitigating current challenges that obstruct the effective implementation of the WEFE Nexus approach when adopting novel irrigation technologies. These challenges may include gaps in data availability, systemic disconnect between institutions, and uneven power distributions across sectors. Through a multi-actor approach, the proposals should be demonstrated at large sites¹³ in irrigated areas that are experiencing recurrent or permanent water scarcity conditions and anticipate solutions for current and future challenges. Proposals will support strategies for advancing the WEFE Nexus approach in practice, linking food systems with farming, ecosystem services and healthy diets.

Proposals should assemble innovative technologies and or strategies developed at sectoral level and test them in a combined way at the demonstration sites to improve the efficiency and sustainability of water, energy, and food use in irrigated agriculture, taking also into consideration water and groundwater quality (i.e., the ecosystem component of the nexus). Specific areas worthy of consideration include wastewater reuse systems, optimizing combinations of technological innovations in irrigated agriculture with alternate water resources and their energy requirements, ICT (e.g., smart agriculture) for smallholders, nature-based solutions or sustainable practices, such as agro-ecological, as well as modelling and decision-making tools and institutional/policy frameworks. The reuse of wastewater and the use of alternate water resources might need the development and the review of policy frameworks in certain countries. Proposals should address stakeholders driven needs with their participation towards improvement of WEFE sustainable practices.

Proposals should provide a detailed analysis of the expected impact of these solutions through appropriate indicators. The impact assessment should consider various aspects, such as improved crop yields, reduced water use, energy savings, and enhanced ecosystem service benefits, including water quality. In addition, the impact assessment should consider the potential benefits of these innovative solutions on soil health, including soil structure, fertility, and overall sustainability. It is also important to assess the potential trade-offs and synergies associated with the implementation of these innovative solutions.

Particular attention should be devoted to assessing the enabling or necessary conditions for upscaling solutions and benefits thereof. Whenever possible, proposals should assess the environmental impacts of

¹² Perry, C., Steduto, P., & Karajeh, F. (2017). Does improved irrigation technology save water? A review of the evidence. FAO, Cairo. Grafton, R. Q., Williams, J., Perry, C. J., Molle, F., Ringler, C., Steduto, P. & Allen, R. G. (2018). The paradox of irrigation efficiency. *Science*, 361(6404), 748-750

¹³ "Large sites" typically refers to demonstration sites that are larger in scale and extend beyond research facilities. These sites are often chosen to showcase and validate the effectiveness, feasibility, and practicality of certain practices or technologies in real-world conditions. Large demonstration sites provide an opportunity to observe and assess the performance, impacts, and scalability of interventions or innovations at a larger scale. They aim to replicate the conditions and challenges faced by stakeholders in a particular sector or industry. These sites may involve multiple stakeholders, including farmers, industry representatives, policymakers, and researchers, who collaborate to implement and evaluate the demonstrated practices or technologies.

the entire value chain of irrigated agriculture using appropriate methods (e.g., Life Cycle Assessment, ecological footprint analysis or similar) to demonstrate reductions in the environmental footprint and improvements in the sustainability of irrigated agriculture. An understanding of the trade-offs and synergies between farming systems optimization and efficient and sustainable use of water and energy for food production in irrigated agriculture would be needed to inform policy and investment decisions to enhance productivity, viability, and sustainability, and address broader socio-economic development objectives.

Proposals should consider the development of business models and/or policy mixes that support the adoption and scaling up of innovative solutions. They could include recommendations for improved and targeted incentives and policies at regional and national level to reduce financial risks for early adopters of practices developed in the project. Proposals should systematically consider and integrate the gender dimension in all aspects of the project, including research, stakeholder engagement, policy development, and technology adoption. This includes assessing the specific challenges and opportunities faced by women and men in irrigated agriculture, ensuring equitable participation of both genders in decision-making processes, and addressing gender-specific needs and concerns. The project should promote gender equality and empowerment within the context of sustainable irrigated agriculture in the Mediterranean region.

Proposals should implement a ‘multi-actor approach’, ensuring adequate participation of the main stakeholders (i.e., research institutions and agricultural extension services, communities of irrigators, environmental policymakers, water management agencies, farmers, and agricultural producers) involved in irrigated agriculture, and making explicit their respective roles and the distribution of costs and benefits. Proposals should include a dedicated task, appropriate resources, and a plan on how to capitalize on past achievements and collaborate with past and current PRIMA funded projects or other HE funded projects including EU Missions¹⁴.

The successful consortia are strongly encouraged to participate in the [Mediterranean WEF E Nexus Community of Practice](#) established as an outcome of the WEF E Science Advances Conference to stimulate cross-organization collaboration and knowledge sharing in the Mediterranean region. The objective is to enlarge the portfolio of WEF E Nexus projects and case studies in PRIMA. The project proponents should use lessons learned from the Nexus projects funded by PRIMA by developing a close partnership during the implementation of respective projects. Projects selected within this call shall produce a joint policy brief that aligns with the call's scope and objectives with the aim to translate the main lessons learnt, knowledge and evidence generated through project work into key messages for policy makers. Other forms of collaboration, including data sharing, communication and dissemination, joint deliverables, events, etc., between funded projects are strongly encouraged.

¹⁴ Apart from PRIMA projects, there are also projects from HE-Cluster 6 calls or the Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change calls that could be of interest for this topic (e.g. HORIZON-MISS-2022-CLIMA-01-05; HORIZON-MISS-2023-CLIMA-OCEAN-SOIL-01-01; HORIZON-CL6-2023-ZEROPOLLUTION-01-1: Knowledge and innovative solutions in agriculture for water availability and quality; HORIZON-CL6-2024-CLIMATE-01-1: Improving irrigation practices and technologies in agriculture)

Expected Impacts

Implementing the proposed objectives of WEFE Nexus approaches in irrigated agriculture has the potential to bring about significant positive impacts in terms of sustainable use of resources, improved agricultural productivity, increased resilience, policy reforms, and inclusive and equitable development.

Some expected impacts of implementing these objectives are:

- More efficient and sustainable use of resources and contribution to achieving the objectives of sustainable development.
- Increased resilience of irrigated agriculture to different stressors, including water scarcity, salinity, energy constraints, and climate change.
- More effective policies and governance structures that support sustainable agricultural development.
- Improved awareness and uptake by end-users (citizens, farmers) through integration of methods and tools.

Key Performance Indicators

• Water Usage Reduction KPI

Baseline: Total water consumption for the entire project area at the start of the project.

Target: Achieve a minimum 10% reduction in total water consumption compared to the baseline.

• Stakeholder Engagement KPI

Baseline: Number of stakeholders engaged at the start of the project.

Target: Engage a minimum of 50 additional stakeholders during the project duration.

• Marketing and Promotion Effectiveness KPI

Baseline: Lack of an effective marketing model or promotion strategy.

Target: Develop and implement at least one effective marketing model or promotion strategy, targeting either farmers or consumers, to increase awareness and adoption of the WEFE Nexus approach. Evaluate the success of the strategy based on defined metrics, such as increased awareness, adoption rates, or stakeholder feedback.

Contribution to EU Policies, HE Mission and partnerships

The proposals should indicate linkages to relevant EU policies and objectives in the context of the European Green Deal, [Water Framework Directive \(WFD\)](#) and relevant Horizon Europe calls, EU [Missions](#) and European [Partnerships](#).

Contribution to SDGs

In the context of irrigated agriculture, the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are particularly relevant SDG2, SDG6, SDG7, SDG12, SDG13 and SDG15.

Table 1. Supporting information for Section 1 call for Proposals, Topic 1.1.1

Type of action	Innovation Action (IA)
The total indicative amount allocated to this call	EUR 9.2 million
Funding level	According to Horizon 2020 Rules. 70% (except for non-profit legal entities, where a rate of 100% applies).

Technology Readiness levels (TRL)	TRL 6-8 Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project.
Budget and duration of grants	PRIMA considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU in the range of EUR 4.6 million and with a duration of 36 months would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals requesting other amounts or duration.
Eligibility conditions for participation	Please refer to section 5.1.1 for the List of countries eligible for funding. Due to the specific challenge of this topic, in addition to the minimum number of participants set out in the standard eligibility conditions (section 5.1.3), consortia must include at least an additional legal entity established in a Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC) ¹⁵ as defined in section 5.1.1.
Submission and evaluation procedure	The call will be organised according to a two-stage submission process. A first-stage proposal (maximum ten pages) must be submitted within the first-stage submission deadline. Successful applicants in the first step will be invited to the second step to submit a full proposal (maximum 50 pages). A timeline for submitting and evaluating applications can be found in Table 6.
	The award criteria, scoring, thresholds and weightings for IAs listed in part 5.1.7 will be used.
Grant agreement	PRIMA MGA (multi-beneficiary), based on Horizon 2020 MGA.
Consortium agreement	Participants in projects resulting from this call for Proposals, according to Art 24 of the H2020 RfP must conclude a consortium agreement before the PRIMA grant agreement's signature.

¹⁵ Mediterranean Partner Countries, as defined in section 5.1.1, include the following Third Countries associated to Horizon 2020 (AC): Israel, Tunisia, and Turkey. And the following Third Countries not associated with Horizon 2020 (TC), having concluded international agreements for scientific and technological cooperation setting out the terms and conditions of their participation in PRIMA: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco.

Thematic Area 2-Farming systems in the Nexus

Topic 1.2.1-2024 (IA) Transformative adaptation of Mediterranean dry farming systems using water harvesting technique to address extreme drought in arid and semi-arid environments.

 Thematic Area 2-Farming systems in the Nexus	
Alignment with SRIA	Thematic Area 2 - Operational Objective 4 - Research Priority 2 - Cross-Cutting: Digital Technologies
Alignment with EU policies	Farm to Fork Circular economy Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 Bioeconomy Strategy EU Adaptation Strategy for climate change

Challenge

As pointed out by the last IPCC report (2022) in the context of climate change, particularly in water-stressed regions like the Mediterranean basin, water availability poses a significant challenge to agriculture. The prolonged and severe droughts experienced across the Mediterranean in recent years, coupled with record-high temperatures and dwindling water resources (including underground, surface water, and dams), demand an urgent transformation of agricultural systems. Developing novel dry farming systems capable of withstanding extreme droughts while ensuring food security for a growing population is a pressing imperative.

The conventional approach of incremental adaptation, relying solely on new varieties resistant/tolerant to heat stress, is no longer sufficient in the face of prolonged droughts. Rainfed agriculture has been the dominant model in the Mediterranean region for centuries, but its low yields and susceptibility to extreme temperatures and prolonged droughts directly impact the incomes of vulnerable populations. This, in turn, leads to land abandonment and migration to cities or other countries. A substantial portion of rural communities still relies on rainfed farming systems, which are increasingly threatened by water scarcity and the impacts of climate change.

Nonetheless, many ancestral hydro technologies¹⁶ have been developed worldwide to collect and store water in arid regions, fostering food production and generating income for local populations. Regrettably, many of these technologies have been abandoned or neglected in recent decades. In this context, re-evaluating ancestral hydro technologies for water harvesting, combining them with new farming practices (such as drought-resistant varieties and underutilized species), and integrating nature-based solutions holds significant potential for creating efficient and innovative systems. These systems can provide practical

¹⁶ According to the conclusions by UNESCO-IHP (Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme) and collaborators during the International Conference on ancestral hydro technologies: <https://www.unescosost.org/post/launch-of-the-international-conference-on-ancestral-hydratechnologies>. Ancestral hydro technologies are based and inspired by nature, coupling traditional knowledge and management of ecosystems, therefore ancestral hydro technologies can be fully considered as nature-based solutions. Ancestral hydro technologies should be considered not only as historical infrastructures and cultural heritage, but as models for sustainable water management for the present and the future and can be further enhanced by using the latest innovation and technologies from social, ecological and engineering disciplines. Ancestral hydro technologies serve for the further integration of WEFE NEXUS at local and regional scale for their trans functionality, and contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)".

solutions for smallholders to maintain their livelihoods while ensuring food production in challenging conditions. The development of such innovative systems, with a low carbon footprint and minimal energy requirements, can contribute to addressing pressing issues such as water availability, drought, and biodiversity conservation. According to climatic projections and hydrological models, extreme drought and temperature records are expected to become increasingly common, necessitating rapid action to prepare for new farming systems capable of adapting to climate change and water scarcity. These systems must ensure food security in the region and provide a satisfactory standard of living for smallholders through their agricultural activities.

Scope

This call for proposals aims to address the challenges of dry-farming in arid Mediterranean areas by integrating traditional and modern hydro-technologies to create sustainable and resilient agricultural systems. The focus is on systems that prioritize the use of saline-resistant and drought-resistant species or underutilized species with minimal water requirements, adapted to seasonal rainfall variations, and tolerant to solar radiation and elevated temperatures, including halophytes, cacti, and similar plants.

A circular economy approach is encouraged, promoting the recycling and re-use of various waste types as soil amendments, bio-fertilizers, or replacements for chemical inputs. Proposals should prioritize evaluating the impact on soil health and the circular economy of water resources, alongside broader environmental assessments. This approach enhances soil organic matter, carbon sequestration, water storage, nutrient use efficiency, and efficient water usage while considering the specific needs and contributions of women and men in the community.

The proposed dry-farming system incorporates modern water harvesting techniques inspired by traditional practices, such as rainwater harvesting, atmospheric moisture capture, and rehabilitating ancestral structures like canals. This optimized water conveyance and distribution increase water availability, conserve resources, and enhance soil moisture levels, contributing to soil health and resilience, with a particular focus on the roles and responsibilities of women and youth in these practices. Low carbon footprint technologies with minimal energy requirements are encouraged to ensure long-term sustainability and affordability, particularly for smallholders, and to address gender-specific barriers that may exist in accessing and utilizing such technologies. Economic considerations for small farmers in the Mediterranean arid areas should be addressed, ensuring proposed solutions lead to sustainable value chains or organizational models post-funding, with a special emphasis on promoting gender equality in economic opportunities and decision-making. Effective communication strategies should also be developed to ensure that the gender-transformative results and impacts of the project are recognized and shared at local and global scales.

A multi-actor approach involving farmers, researchers, policymakers, local communities, agronomic institutions, and living labs should be emphasized throughout the project's design, implementation, and evaluation. This ensures solutions are locally relevant, socially acceptable, and technically viable, considering the diverse needs and perspectives of different gender. Exploitation of results should be a priority, with a focus on practical application and dissemination of project findings and solutions within the Mediterranean region. The goal is to translate the outcomes into tangible benefits for stakeholders and promote wider adoption of the proposed dry-farming system. Proposals should also consider existing data and completed, or ongoing projects funded under PRIMA, H2020, Horizon Europe. This will prevent any redundancy and maximize the proposed solutions' impact.

Projects are expected to build links with the [Mission "A Soil deal for Europe"](#). Proposals should include dedicated tasks and appropriate resources for coordination measures and joint activities with relevant projects funded by the Mission.¹⁷

¹⁷ Here some indicative examples of specific activities that a project could undertake to build links with the Mission "A Soil Deal for Europe" and collaborate effectively with relevant projects funded by the Mission: Joint Workshops and Seminars: with the Mission to discuss soil health, sustainable agriculture, and policy development. Invite Mission-funded projects to participate and share insights. /Data Sharing and Integration: Collaborate on sharing soil data, research findings, and analysis tools with the Mission. /Policy Advocacy: Form a task force to align project goals

Projects selected within this call shall produce a joint policy brief that aligns with the call's scope and objectives with the aim to translate the main lessons learnt, knowledge and evidence generated through project work into key messages for policy makers. Other forms of collaboration, including data sharing, communication and dissemination, joint deliverables, events, etc., between funded projects are strongly encouraged.

Expected Impacts

- Establish “large demonstration” sites¹⁸ in arid and semi-arid zones, offering a practical showcase of the project's effectiveness.
- Innovate new water harvesting systems, drawing inspiration from time-tested ancestral hydro-technologies.
- Create new products for both human consumption and animal feed that value and incorporate underutilized species/varieties.
- Develop new value chains and organizational-business models that can adapt to changing environments and market conditions.
- Improve the water use efficiency.
- Prioritize effects on soil health. Anticipated outcomes should improve indicators such as soil organic content, carbon sequestration, and water retention capabilities. This impact area should be thoroughly evaluated, considering the broader environmental consequences.
- Develop practical and affordable solutions specifically designed to benefit smallholders, addressing their unique challenges and limitations.

Key Performance indicators

- **Demonstration Sites KPI**

Target: Establish at least 1 large demonstration site to showcase sustainable agricultural practices and technologies.

- **Water Harvesting Systems KPI**

Target: Develop and implement 1 innovative water harvesting systems to improve water availability for agriculture.

- **Crop Diversity KPI**

Target: (Re-)introduce a minimum of 1 new crop for human and animal consumption to diversify agricultural production.

with the Mission's objectives and jointly advocate for supportive soil health policies. /Research Collaboration: Identify shared research interests and collaborate on research projects, leveraging shared resources and expertise. /Resource Sharing: Share research facilities, equipment, and tools to reduce costs through joint procurement. /Cross-Project Task Forces: Create joint task forces to address specific challenges like soil restoration or biodiversity conservation, drawing on members from various projects. /Policy Workshops: Organize policy-focused workshops with policymakers and experts from both the project and the Mission to develop collaborative policy recommendations. /Public Awareness Campaigns: Collaborate on awareness campaigns to educate stakeholders and the public about soil conservation and sustainable agriculture. /Monitoring and Evaluation: Establish a joint system for monitoring and evaluating the impact of collaborative activities. /Capacity Building: Offer training programs to enhance the skills and knowledge of project members and partners. /Networking Events: Participate in relevant conferences and networking events to connect with stakeholders and projects in the field.

¹⁸ "Large demonstration" sites are designed as tangible, large-scale installations located in arid and semi-arid zones to showcase and validate the effectiveness of the proposed solutions beyond the confines of laboratory and experimental research facilities. These sites are meticulously designed to simulate real-world conditions, making the demonstrations applicable and relatable to actual scenarios. They serve as interactive platforms for stakeholders to visualize and comprehend the strategies, tools, and methodologies being proposed. This hands-on approach facilitates the learning process and encourages buy-in from various participants, ultimately aiding in the smoother adoption of these new strategies.

- **Value Chain and Organizational Models KPI**

Target: Develop and implement 1 new value chain or organizational model to enhance agricultural sustainability and market access.

- **Smallholder Adoption Rate KPI**

Target: Achieve a minimum of 20% adoption rate among smallholders for the proposed sustainable agricultural solutions compared to the baseline at the beginning of the project

Contributions to EU policies, HE Mission and Partnerships

The proposals should indicate linkages to relevant EU policies and objectives in the context of the European Green Deal and relevant Horizon Europe [Missions](#) and European [Partnerships](#) in particular with the EU Mission [A soil Deal for Europe](#), Specific Objective 1 “Reduce land degradation relating to desertification” and Specific Objective 2 “Conserve soil organic carbon stocks”.

Links with [the European partnership on accelerating farming systems transition – agroecology living labs and research infrastructures](#) and with the [EU Partnership Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking](#) are welcome.

Contribution to SDGs

The use of water harvesting techniques can contribute to several SDGs, including SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

Table 2. Supporting information for the Section 1 call for Proposals, Topic 1.2.1

Type of action	Innovation Action (IA)
The total indicative amount allocated to this call	EUR 9.6 million
Funding level	According to Horizon 2020 Rules. 70% (except for non-profit legal entities, where a rate of 100% applies).
Technology Readiness levels (TRL)	TRL 6-8 Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project.
Budget and duration of the grants	PRIMA considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU in the range of EUR 4.8 million and with a duration of 36 months would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals requesting other amounts and/or duration.
Eligibility conditions for participation	Please refer to section 5.1.1 for the List of countries eligible for funding. Due to the specific challenge of this topic, in addition to the minimum number of participants set out in the standard eligibility conditions (section 5.1.3), consortia must include at least an additional legal entity established in a Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC) ¹⁹ as defined in section 5.1.1.

¹⁹ Mediterranean Partner Countries as defined in section 5.1.1 include the following Third Countries associated to Horizon 2020 (AC): Israel, Tunisia, and Turkey. And the following Third Countries not associated with Horizon 2020 (TC), having concluded international agreements for scientific and technological cooperation setting out the terms and conditions of their participation in PRIMA: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco.

Submission and evaluation procedure	The call will be organised according to a two-stage submission process. For the first step, a first-stage proposal (maximum ten pages) must be submitted within the first-stage submission deadline. Successful applicants in the first step will be invited to the second step to submit a full proposal (maximum 50 pages). A timeline for submitting and evaluating applications can be found in Table 6.
Evaluation rules	The award criteria, scoring, thresholds and weightings for IAs, listed in part 5.1.7, will be used.
Grant agreement	PRIMA MGA (multi-beneficiary), based on Horizon 2020 MGA.
Consortium agreement	Participants in projects resulting from this call for Proposals must conclude a consortium agreement, according to Art 24 of the H2020 RfP before the conclusion of the PRIMA grant agreement.

Thematic Area 3-Food value chain in the Nexus

Topic 1.3.1 (IA) – Developing cost-effective and sustainable technologies adapted to Mediterranean Food Systems to decrease food loss and waste.

 Thematic Area 3-Food value chain in the Nexus	
Alignment with SRIA	Thematic area 3, Operational Objective 7 (reduce losses and waste), Research priorities 2
Alignment with EU Policies	Farm to Fork Strategy Waste Framework Directive EU Food 2030 R&I policy and pathways for action (Circularity and resource efficiency) Circular Economy Action Plan Plastics strategy EU policy Food security and affordability EU Zero Pollution Action Plan REPowerEU

Challenge

The Mediterranean region is facing a significant challenge in meeting the growing demand for food due to demographic growth, climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the consequences of the war in Ukraine. To address this challenge, reducing Food Loss and Waste (FLW) is critical for greater food security and environmental sustainability in the region. The FAO estimates that FLW in the Near East and North Africa amounts to 250kg/capita per year, valued at over USD 60 billion annually²⁰.

Cold storage and refrigeration are essential at every stage of the agri-food chain to increase shelf life, cut losses, and maintain product quality. Losses occur in the “first mile” between harvesting and processing, which accounts for more than 40% of the food products lost in the Mediterranean region²¹. By improving access to refrigeration, up to a quarter of perishable foods currently produced in the Mediterranean could be saved from spoilage. Renewable energy-based solutions offer significant advantages, including decentralized cold storage that can benefit smallholder farmers. However, scaling up renewable energy applications in food systems in the region presents common challenges, such as designing cost-effective solutions for smallholders and adopting a more holistic approach to renewable energy deployment efforts to reduce food loss and waste, integrating digital and emerging technologies can play a crucial role in achieving sustainability throughout the agri-food chain. Green technologies²², known for being eco-friendly, rapid, and efficient in controlling microbes with minimal impact on food quality during processing, are in high demand. However, their adoption for food preservation may face obstacles related to cost, expertise, food safety, regulation, and business models. Addressing these challenges is essential to ensure the safe and effective use of green technologies in post-harvest activities.

Moreover, other types of green technologies, such as innovative packaging solutions, could also contribute to reducing FLW and enhancing food preservation during the agri-food chain. By addressing these

²⁰ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2017). Regional Overview of Food Insecurity: Near East and North Africa. Rome. <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/b715647e-a958-4b88-87fc-9d1c3364b161/>

²¹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2019). The State of Food and Agriculture 2019: Moving Forward on Food Loss and Waste Reduction. <https://www.fao.org/3/ca6030en/ca6030en.pdf>

²² Such as for example ozone, pulsed electric field, ohmic heating, photosensitization, ultraviolet radiations, high-pressure processing, ultrasonic, and nanotechnology)

challenges and implementing sustainable practices, the Mediterranean region can better meet the growing demand for food while mitigating the impacts of climate change and other pressing challenges.

Scope

This Call aims to support the deployment and demonstration of sustainable solutions to reduce food losses and waste, save energy, and enhance food safety during postharvest activities, including transportation, storage, and processing. The specific focus is on plant-based food and waste. These solutions should be scalable, sustainable, cost-effective, and tailored to smallholders in rural areas with limited access to electricity.

Proposals should implement processes and technologies adapted to Mediterranean food systems and climate conditions, ensuring a decrease in food losses and waste, prolonging food shelf-life, and enhancing food safety in different regions of the Mediterranean. The emphasis should be on the exploitation and dissemination of results, meaning that projects should not only focus on research and development but also on effectively utilizing and commercializing the outcomes and findings.

The use of renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind, can provide a reliable energy source, especially in remote areas with limited access to electricity. Biomass by-products from agri-food activities can also serve as a sustainable energy source for processing and storage. Proposals could explore innovative environmentally friendly green technologies, including active and intelligent packaging, as desirable alternatives to conventional preservation techniques to reduce their negative impact on the environment. It is crucial to ensure that green technologies used for food preservation are adapted to the specific conditions of the Mediterranean region and are cost-effective enough to be adopted by smallholders. This can be achieved by conducting research and development to identify innovative solutions tailored to the region's unique challenges. Recognizing the role of genetic factors in food losses, proposals should consider genetic-based selection of plant varieties with enhanced shelf-life and suitability for long-term storage, tailored to the unique conditions of different Mediterranean region. The proposals should include training and mobility initiatives to enhance the capacity of smallholders, with particular attention to women, to effectively adopt and implement sustainable solutions. To facilitate the adoption of green technologies for food preservation, it is essential to implement policy recommendations that can help reduce barriers and promote accessibility, especially for smallholders. Proposals should also analyse the economic, social, and environmental impact of renewable-based solutions and green technologies on reducing food losses and waste and improving food quality, including at the nutraceutical and sensorial levels. Additionally, the development of business models supporting the adoption and scaling of renewable-based solutions to reduce food losses and waste should be considered.

To emphasize the exploitation of results, actions should focus on effectively utilizing and leveraging the outcomes of the project. This includes optimizing the practical application and dissemination of the project's findings and solutions, ensuring that the results are translated into tangible benefits for stakeholders and wider adoption within the Mediterranean region.

Projects should also produce a joint policy brief that aligns with the call's scope and objectives with the aim to translate the main lessons learnt, knowledge and evidence generated through project work into key messages for policy makers. Other forms of collaboration, including data sharing, communication and dissemination, joint deliverables, events, etc., between funded projects are strongly encouraged.

Finally the proposals should align with the [Food 2030 R&I policy and pathways for action](#), in particular with the actions on: [Food waste and resource efficiency](#), Food systems Africa and [the microbiome world](#), and should integrate a robust approach for food systems transformation.

Expected impacts

- The proposed solutions are expected to significantly reduce food losses and waste along the entire food value chain, contributing to environmental and climate sustainability.

- Efficient methods to repurpose waste and by-products from the food value chain are anticipated to create value-added products, thereby promoting resource efficiency and sustainability.
- Innovative solutions in food processing, packaging, and distribution should lead to improved efficiency and cost reduction post-harvest, benefiting both producers and consumers.
- Use of alternative energy sources and implementation of ICT solutions, improving resource management and interactions within the value chain.
- Promotion of resource-efficient preservation and storage technologies for food safety, leveraging innovative solutions, including microbiome-based solutions²³.
- Enhanced interaction between different stakeholders in the food supply chain, notably farmers, smallholders, and large retailers, facilitating better management and potential price reductions.
- Improvement in the quality of food at the nutraceutical and sensorial levels.

Key Performance Indicators

- **Percentage reduction in food losses and waste KPI** within the project.

Baseline: Baseline levels of food losses and waste within the project.

Target: Achieve a minimum 25% reduction in food losses and waste compared to the baseline within the project, contributing to environmental and climate sustainability.

- **Efficiency and Cost Reduction KPI** (within the project): Percentage increase in the utilization of alternative energy sources and ICT solutions within the project.

Baseline: Current usage of alternative energy sources and ICT solutions within the food value chain within the project.

Target: Increase the utilization of alternative energy sources and ICT solutions by 20% within the project to improve resource management and interactions within the value chain.

- **Stakeholder Collaboration and Food Price Reduction KPI** (within the project): Percentage increase in interaction between different stakeholders in the food supply chain within the project.

Baseline: Existing levels of interaction between stakeholders within the project.

Target: Enhance interaction among stakeholders, such as farmers, smallholders, and large retailers, to improve management and potentially lead to a 5% reduction in food prices within the project.

- **Food Quality Improvement KPI** (within the project): Percentage improvement in food quality at the nutraceutical and sensorial levels within the project.

Baseline: Baseline quality levels of food at the nutraceutical and sensorial levels within the project.

Target: Improve the quality of food within the project, achieving a 10% enhancement in nutraceutical and sensorial attributes.

Contributions to EU Policies, Mission, and Partnerships

²³ Collaborations are welcomed especially with HORIZON-CL6-2023-FARM2FORK-01-16 selected projects.

The proposals should indicate linkages and synergies with relevant EU policies and objectives in the context of the European Green Deal and relevant Horizon Europe Cluster 6 work programmes,²⁴ EU Missions²⁵ and European Partnerships, in particular with European Partnership for Safe and Sustainable Food Systems.

Contributions to SDGs

The proposals should indicate their contribution to relevant SDGs and methodology to contribute to reporting SDG indicators specifically to SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

²⁴ [Horizon Europe Work Programme 2021-2022 - Part 9. Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment](#)
[Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2024 - Part 9. Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment](#)

²⁵ [Horizon Europe Work Programme 2021-2022 - Part 12. Missions](#)
[Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2024 - Part 12. Missions](#)

Table 3. Supporting information for Section 1 call for Proposals, Topic 1.3.1

Type of action	Innovation Action (IA)
Total indicative amount allocated to this call	EUR 9.1 million
Funding level	According to Horizon 2020 Rules. 70% (except for non-profit legal entities, where a rate of 100% applies).
Technology Readiness levels (TRL)	TRL 5-8 Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project.
Budget and duration of grants	PRIMA considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU in the range of EUR 4.55 million and 36 months would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and the selection of proposals requesting other amounts or duration.
Eligibility conditions for participation	Please refer to section 5.1.1 for the List of countries eligible for funding. Due to the specific challenge of this topic, in addition to the minimum number of participants set out in the standard eligibility conditions (section 5.1.3), consortia must include at least an additional legal entity established in a Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC) ²⁶ as defined in section 5.1.1.
Submission and evaluation procedure	The call will be organised according to a two-stage submission process. A first-stage proposal (maximum ten pages) must be submitted within the first-stage submission deadline for the first step. Successful applicants in the first step will be invited to the second step to submit a full proposal (maximum 50 pages). A timeline for submitting and evaluating applications can be found in Table 6.
Evaluation rules	The award criteria, scoring, thresholds and weightings for IAs, listed in part 5.1.7, will be used.
Grant agreement	PRIMA MGA (multi-beneficiary), based on Horizon 2020 MGA.
Consortium agreement	Participants in projects resulting from this call for According to Art 24 of the H2020 RfP proposals must conclude a consortium agreement before the conclusion of the PRIMA grant agreement.

²⁶ Mediterranean Partner Countries as defined in section 5.1.1 include the following Third Countries associated to Horizon 2020 (AC): Israel, Tunisia, and Turkey. And the following Third Countries not associated with Horizon 2020 (TC), having concluded international agreements for scientific and technological cooperation setting out the terms and conditions of their participation in PRIMA: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco.

The PRIMA-IS will conduct the eligibility check after each submission deadline and before the evaluation.

The Executive Director may decide to publish and open the call up to two weeks prior or one month after the envisaged date(s). The Executive Director may delay other deadlines by up to two months.

All deadlines are at 17:00 CET (Central European Time).

Table 4. Timetable for Section 1 Calls for Proposals in 2024

THEMATIC AREA	CALL TOPICS	Call publication and opening	Submission deadline Stage 1	Evaluation results Stage 1	Submission deadline Stage 2	Evaluation results Stage 2
Water management	Topic 1.1.1 (IA)	25/1/2024	2/4/2024	27/6/2024	24/9/2024	2/12/2024
Farming systems	Topic 1.2.1 (IA)	25/1/2024	2/4/2024	27/6/2024	24/9/2024	2/12/2024
Agri-food chain	Topic 1.3.1 (IA)	25/1/2024	2/4/2024	27/6/2024	24/9/2024	2/12/2024

1.2 Activities supporting programme operations funded (EU contribution) and implemented by the PRIMA-IS

PRIMA-IS implements activities to evaluate the submitted proposals in response to Section 1 Calls and monitoring of the funded projects.

Detailed supporting information about the evaluation, selection and granting process, suitable types of grant agreements and funding levels are summarised under each call topic, described in more detail in the General Annexes ([5.1: Section 1](#)).

1.2.1 Evaluation and monitoring of project proposals submitted to Section 1 and Section 2 calls.

Objective

This activity consists of implementing the evaluation of all the eligible projects submitted to the 2024 PRIMA calls (Section 1 and Section 2) and preparing the Board of Trustees' decision.

The evaluation process is described in detail in section [5.1.7](#). In AWP 2024, [Section 1 and Section 2 calls will be organised as a **two-stage submission process**](#). PRIMA-IS will assign independent experts to evaluate first-stage and full proposals.

PRIMA-IS will provide guidance to experts on the operational procedures for the remote evaluation and the preparation of their assessment reports. At the end of this period of individual assessment, the experts will meet in a panel to prepare the consensus report for each proposal. When a consensus is reached for each proposal, the panel will agree on the final assessment and proceed with its ranking. After the remote evaluation of proposals, a two-day meeting will be organised to draft the consensus report and establish the ranking list.

PRIMA-IS will cover the independent expert fees, travel and accommodation and the other meetings-related expenses following the [EU Model Contract for Experts](#). The consensus meeting can also be held remotely. PRIMA-IS will also cover the board of Trustees' meeting at the end of the evaluation process to decide on projects to be funded based on the ranking list, as set in Article 6-point 2 (q) PRIMA Statutes²⁷. Moreover, PRIMA-IS will also cover the costs related to monitoring the PRIMA projects, particularly the technical and financial reporting.

A meeting will be organised with Project Coordinators to provide guidelines about the commencement, management, finance and monitoring of Section 1 and Section 2 funded projects. Monitoring and network meetings will be organised either physically or remote.

Type of activity: Expert's contracts.

Indicative budget: EUR 400 000

1.2.2 PRIMA Woman Greening Food Systems Award in the Mediterranean Region

Objective

“PRIMA Woman Greening Food Systems Award in the Mediterranean Region” recognizes and celebrates the outstanding contributions of women in promoting sustainable and resilient food systems. The award aims to highlight the achievements of women who have made significant strides in driving positive change within the food and agriculture sector in the Mediterranean Region.

PRIMA will award two winners with a recognition prize of 10 000 EUR each.

The “PRIMA Woman Greening Food Systems Award in the Mediterranean Region” will provide the winner of each of the two Prizes with high visibility in the public interest and increased media

²⁷ [PRIMA Statutes Article 6 point 2 \(q\), page 4](#).

coverage. The contest's specific rules²⁸ will be published on the PRIMA website as soon as the PRIMA 2024 calls are public and actively disseminated elsewhere to maximise participation.

Contestants will have to provide proof of eligibility²⁹ and a written description of their achievements in the “PRIMA Woman Greening Food Systems Award in the Mediterranean Region” field, which will be presented to an independent panel of experts for evaluation.

Eligibility criteria

The contestants for the PRIMA prizes should be at least one legal entity established in a PRIMA PS³⁰. The demonstrated practices must be implemented in the Mediterranean region.

Prizes will not be awarded to teams including employees of PRIMA or serving on one of the PRIMA Advisory (Scientific Advisory Committee) or governing (Board of Trustees and Steering Committee) boards. Please also note that participants who have already received an EU or Euratom prize cannot receive a prize under this WP for the same activities.

²⁸ The PRIMA Green Food Security Innovation Award rules of contest will be adopted by the Director of PRIMA.IS

²⁹ The contestants for the PRIMA prizes should be at least one legal entity established in a PRIMA PS. The demonstrated practices must be implemented in the Mediterranean Region

³⁰ The latest information on the PRIMA PS can be found on PRIMA webpage: <http://prima-med.org>

Award criteria

An independent panel of experts will evaluate all eligible applications. The prizes will be awarded, after the closure of the contest, to the contestant(s) who, in the opinion of the panel, best address the following criteria:

In addition to their scientific excellence, the proposed solutions should,

- demonstrate how their proposed solutions can contribute to broader socio-economic development goals in the Mediterranean region. This could include demonstrating the potential for job creation, economic growth, and improved social well-being,
- demonstrate that they have directly utilized or played an active role in the uptake of their proposed solutions by third parties, such as policy makers or businesses. They should provide evidence of their contribution to policy change or the implementation of their solutions by third parties.
- demonstrate the potential for replication and upscaling of their proposed solutions. They should provide a clear plan for how their solutions can be replicated and scaled up in other regions or countries, and how they can be integrated into existing food systems.

Type of action: Recognition prizes

Indicative timetable: Prize contests will be launched in the first quarter of 2024 and remain open until the second quarter of 2024. (see Section [5.1.5](#) for Model Rules of Contest (RoC) PRIMA Prizes).

Amount of prize:

Prize Amount(s): two awards of EUR 10 000 each

Budget of the prizes: EUR 20 000

1.2.3 Organisation of the PRIMA Strategic Workshop

The workshop will provide a platform for the exchange of experiences, ideas, and best practices related to the successful implementation of the EU Green Deal deliverables such as the Farm to Fork Strategy, Circular Economy Action Plan, and ground-level WEFE Nexus practices. Experts and stakeholders will have the opportunity to present and discuss the results and impacts of PRIMA projects, including their success stories, challenges, and opportunities for replication and scaling up. Participants will also discuss how to effectively integrate research and innovation into policy-making and decision-making processes to address the region's most pressing challenges related to water, energy, food, and ecosystems. The workshop will include interactive sessions and discussions that will explore potential solutions, strategies, and actions to accelerate the adoption and implementation of sustainable and resilient practices in the Mediterranean region. Overall, the workshop will provide a unique opportunity for experts and stakeholders to collaborate and learn from each other, share their experiences and insights, and contribute to the development of practical solutions for the sustainable development of the Mediterranean region.

Type of action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: 1st Quarter 2024

Indicative budget: EUR 30 000

2 Section 2: Activities organised by PRIMA-IS and funded by the national funding bodies of PS

2.1 Activities following transnational calls organised by PRIMA-IS and funded by the PRIMA Participant States

Activities managed by PRIMA-IS and funded by PS are evaluated and selected based on the Rules for Participation of Horizon 2020 following open calls for proposals centrally managed by the PRIMA-IS according to a two-stage submission process. Such activities are funded in line with common principles (see Section 5.2.10).

Each applicant must comply with the national funding agency's regulations supporting the programme³¹. (See Section 5.2, Section 2). Before submitting a proposal, the applicant should check the funding rates and eligible costs in the national regulations and contact the relevant National Contact Points (NCPs) for any doubts regarding Section 2 calls for proposals. Grant agreements will be signed between participants and relevant national funding bodies following national rules (See 5.2.11, Section 2 of this document).

PRIMA Section 2 call, funded by the PS, will be a single multi-topic call that includes R&I activities encompassing all TRL (3-7); however, funding activities with TRL (6-8) will depend on national funding regulations. If not explicitly indicated in the national regulations, the applicant should contact the relevant NCP.

PRIMA AWP2024 provides information about calls for proposals to be managed by the PRIMA-IS, including the challenge, scope and expected impacts, eligibility requirements and other conditions for applying.

Detailed supporting information about the evaluation, selection and granting process, suitable types of grant agreements and funding levels are summarised under each call topic, described in more detail in the General Annexes (5.2: Section 2) and the national funding rules.

This call will be implemented in compliance with common principles to be agreed by the Participating States and the European Commission, taking into account the principles set out in Decision (EU) 2017/1324], Part One of Title VIII of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and the Council (the 'Financial Regulation') and Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council, in particular the principles of equal treatment, transparency, independent peer-review evaluation and selection.

The Section 2 call will be launched in a two-stage submission process. PRIMA-IS will be responsible for evaluating proposals conducted with rules based on H2020 rules in a peer review process with a panel that will rank the proposals.

Admissibility and eligibility of proposals will be first checked by the PRIMA-IS according to the conditions indicated respectively in Section 5.2.2 and Section 5.2.3 of this document, and then by the national funding body according to their National Regulations. In this context, proposals that are considered eligible for participation and funding by PRIMA-IS and the national funding bodies will enter the evaluation process. However, in the event of a negative outcome of verifying eligibility for funding of any participant in the applicant consortium, PRIMA-IS may require additional information from a consortium, or the participant concerned, such as an attestation that the funds to cover their participation in the project will be available.

At the end of the evaluation, the panel will produce a single ranking list to guarantee that the highest quality projects will be funded. If one or more projects cannot be funded (if a funding body runs out of

³¹ Algeria, General Directorate for scientific research and technological development (DGRSDT), Croatia, Ministry of Science and Education, Cyprus, Research Promotion Foundation, Research and Innovation Projects Unit, Egypt, Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT) and Science and Technological Development Fund (SDTF), France, French National Research Agency (ANR), Germany, Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and Project Management Agency Karlsruhe (PTKA), Greece, General Secretariat for Research and Technology (GSRT), Israel, Israel Innovation Authority (IIA) and Ministry of Science & Technology, Italy Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca (MUR), Jordan, Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST), Lebanon, Conseil National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS-L), Luxembourg, Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR), Malta, Malta Council for Science And Technology (MCST), Morocco, State Secretariat for Higher Education and Scientific Research, Portugal, Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), Slovenia, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Spain, Centro para el Desarrollo Tecnológico Industriales, (CDTI) and Agencia Estatal de Investigación (AEI), Tunisia, Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique (MESRS), Turkey, The Scientific And Technological Research Council Of Turkey (TUBITAK).

budget), the projects following directly in the ranking may be selected. For details on the evaluation and selection process, please see sub-sections [5.2.6](#) and [5.2.7](#).

In Section 2, the beneficiaries must sign a grant agreement directly with their national funding bodies to receive the funds. PRIMA Section 2 call will address the topics described in sub-Section 2.2 below (according to national priorities) and the cross-cutting issues among them. Research projects can address cross-cutting issues between two topics as long as they are both eligible for funding by the partner countries.

When training and mobility activities are considered eligible by the funding bodies, these actions will be encouraged, and projects should integrate into their work plan schemes for the mobility of young researchers/postgraduates/post-doctorates, following the modalities set out in national regulation funding bodies.

Depending on the research question addressed, projects should deliver tangible outputs and enhance technological and social innovation. The projects could include innovative technologies like artificial intelligence, smart digital technologies, space data, and big data analysis. When explicitly allowed by the funding bodies' national regulations, Innovation Actions should involve the private sector in the project consortium and particularly relevant SMEs.

All participants to activities funded by the PRIMA-IS or by Participating States of the PRIMA programme are required to label or co-label any communication or publication related to their activities with the following acknowledgement "[name of the activity/grant code] is part of the PRIMA programme supported by the European Union", as well as with the PRIMA logo.

2.1.1 Section 2 calls topics

1 **Thematic Area 1-Water management in the Nexus**

Topic 2.1.1-2024 (RIA*³²) Effective water accounting approaches under crisis conditions: climate change and external shocks

2 **Thematic Area 2-Farming systems in the Nexus**

Topic 2.2.1 (RIA*³³) Revitalizing agroforestry practices for sustainable land use and climate resilience in the Mediterranean region

3 **Thematic Area 3-Food value chain in the Nexus**

Topic 2.3.1-2024 (RIA*³⁴) Leveraging urban and local food systems for sustainable food systems transformation

^{32, 31, 32} Please note that the acronym RIA is used both for Section 1 and Section 2. In Section 1 the rules applying to these actions are the standard Horizon 2020 rules for participation (RfP). While the rules used in Section 2 are to some extent based on the Horizon 2020 RfP, specific rules, concerning participation and funding rates, apply. As the projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by the national funding bodies, they will be subject to the respective national regulations. For more details regarding the rules for Section 2 please refer to the guidelines for applicants on the [PRIMA website](#).

Thematic Area 1-Water management in the Nexus

Topic 2.1.1-2024 (RIA*) Effective water accounting approaches under crisis conditions: climate change and external shocks ³⁵

 Thematic Area Water management in the Nexus	
Alignment with SRIA	Thematic area 1 Water management 1.2 Sustainable, integrated water management
Alignment with EU policies	European Green Deal , Water Framework Directive (WFD)

Challenge

In Mediterranean countries, sustainable, equitable and reliable delivery of water to households, agriculture, and other water-using sectors, ensuring at the same time adequate environmental flows, has become increasingly complex because of water scarcity and shortages. This is further exacerbated by the impact of climate change and, more recently, the worsening of the food and energy crises caused by external shocks like the Covid-19 pandemic and then the war in Ukraine. These crises, in fact, can disrupt water supply systems, create new demands for water, and worsen existing water-related issues such as water scarcity and contamination.

Water accounting³⁶ is an essential aspect of water management, particularly in times of crisis, where demand for water often outstrips available supply, since it can provide a better understanding of changes in the hydrological cycle, variations in water availability caused by climate (e.g., floods and droughts) and/or other types of shocks, demand of the different users and access to the resource, investments needed in water infrastructure, etc., allowing for more accurate analyses, more informed decision-making and better governance.

Such frameworks are highly needed in many areas of the Mediterranean, where water policies, planning, investment, and allocation are weak but water scarcity and depletion, as well as competition/conflict among users are high, to help develop a common understanding of the state of water resources among stakeholders and identify water related problems and solutions, including at the transboundary/international level.

However, there are often various constraints to implementing effective water accounting practices, one of which is acceptance by users, that can lead to the illicit use of other resources, such as groundwater or surface water, to avoid paying for water. To address this issue, it is important to build trust and transparency with water users, and to communicate the benefits of proper water accounting practices.

Scope

This call aims to promote innovative water accounting approaches that can enhance the gathering, analysis and communication of information related to water flows, fluxes, stocks, and consumption in selected watersheds/basins, with a view to improving the management of water resources, even in the

³⁵ Please note that the acronym RIA is used for Section 2. While the rules used in Section 2 are to some extent based on the Horizon 2020 RfP, specific rules, concerning participation and funding rates, apply. As the projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by the national funding bodies, they will be subject to the respective national regulations. For more details regarding the rules for Section 2 please refer to the guidelines for applicants on the [PRIMA website](#).

³⁶ The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations defines water accounting as "the systematic acquisition, analysis and communication of information relating to stocks, flows, and fluxes of water (from source to sinks) in natural, disturbed or heavily engineered environments, within a geographical domain such as an irrigation system, river basin or country" (FAO, 2016).

face of changing climate as well as geopolitical and socio-economic shocks. To this end, projects should consider the following activities:

- Make use of real-time monitoring and leverage new technologies and data sources, including remote sensing, big data analytics, machine learning, block chain, artificial intelligence, and cloud computing, to provide more accurate information on water availability and use,
- Define target levels of sustainable water withdrawal and consumption for water using sectors and/or users (including ecosystems), that match the available resources and natural recharge patterns,
- Multi-scale (from local to regional) biophysical analyses, climate studies and modelling delivering robust quantitative estimates of water balance components (water accounts) for the selected demonstration sites.
- Create networks of researchers, water users (incl. farmers and water users' associations) and managers, policymakers and other stakeholders, adopting a multi/actor approach which considers their needs and perspectives, to share knowledge and improve water decision making and governance, based on the analysis of water related information.
- Implement awareness-raising and knowledge-sharing initiatives that promote the use of water accounting to facilitate a shared understanding of the state of water resources and related issues among stakeholders, incentivise proper water use and discourage illicit practices.
- Incorporate economic valuation and the analysis of use-cost-price scenarios into water accounting with a view to improving pricing mechanisms and regulatory frameworks and increasing willingness to pay for the different uses and property rights.
- Develop insurance programs and models to be employed under water scarcity conditions.

Projects selected within this call shall produce a joint policy brief that aligns with the call's scope and objectives with the aim to translate the main lessons learnt, knowledge and evidence generated through project work into key messages for policy makers. Other forms of collaboration, including data sharing, communication and dissemination, joint deliverables, events, etc., between funded projects are strongly encouraged.

Expected impacts

- Improvement of water security and preservation of environmental flows in the Mediterranean region through increased knowledge of patterns of water availability, demand, and distribution.
- Adoption of sustainable, effective strategies to address water scarcity in different biophysical and societal contexts based on a thorough understanding of the water balance.
- Better and more transparent decision-making, equitable and balanced water allocations based on the real trade-offs and costs of water supply to different users and sectors in different sectors (urban, agricultural, etc.), while preserving efficiency and productivity.
- Increased resilience by identifying and addressing water-related risks, such as water scarcity and variability through innovative water accounting approaches.
- Revision of insurance programs, as well as reallocation of subsidies to vulnerable population and/or strategic sectors based on new subsidy mechanisms to avoid fraud and illicit uses of water.
- Innovation in pricing and cost recovery mechanisms and instruments for the sustainability of water supply services (e.g., climate price in case of drought and or external shocks) considering the water accounts and footprints.

Key Performance Indicators

- **Sustainable Water Scarcity Strategies Adoption KPI** (within the project):

Baseline: Number of existing sustainable strategies within the project.

Target: Adopt sustainable strategies within the project based on a thorough understanding of the water balance in various biophysical and societal contexts.

- **Transparency and Equity in Water Allocation KPI** (within the project): Percentage improvement in transparency and equity in water allocation decision-making within the project.

Baseline: Baseline levels of transparency and equity in water allocation decisions within the project.

Target: Achieve improvement in transparency and equity in water allocations within the project, considering trade-offs and costs to different users and sectors while preserving efficiency and productivity.

- **Water-Related Risk Reduction and Resilience KPI** (within the project): Percentage reduction in water-related risks identified and addressed within the project.

Baseline: Baseline levels of identified water-related risks within the project.

Target: Identify and address water-related risks within the project, such as water scarcity and variability, through innovative water accounting approaches to increase resilience.

- **Water Productivity and Awareness KPI** (within the project): Increase in water productivity in selected water-using domains, watersheds, or basins and water footprint in relation to the initial/reference situation (SMART approach).

Baseline: Initial water productivity and water footprint levels within the project.

Target: Achieve increase in water productivity and conduct awareness-raising and knowledge-sharing campaigns within the project with quantified targets for stakeholder involvement.

Contributions to EU Policies, HE Mission and Partnerships

The proposals should indicate linkages to **relevant** EU policies and objectives in the context of the European Green Deal and relevant Horizon Europe [Missions](#) and European [Partnerships](#).

Contributions to SDGs

The proposals should contribute to the achievement of several SDGs related to water management and sustainable development. These include:

- SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
- SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
- SDG 13: Climate Action
- SDG 14: Life Below Water
- SDG 15: Life on Land

Thematic Area 2-Farming systems in the Nexus:

Topic 2.2.1 (RIA*) Revitalizing agroforestry practices for sustainable land use and climate resilience in the Mediterranean Region.

 Thematic Area 2-Farming systems in the Nexus	
Alignment with SRIA	Thematic Area 2 - Operational Objective 4 - Research Priority 2 - Cross-Cutting: Digital Technologies
Alignment with EU policies	European Green Deal Biodiversity Strategy Farm to Fork Strategy Circular Economy Action Plan Water Reuse Regulation New post-2020 (2022) CAP New EU Forest Strategy for 2030

Challenge

Agroforestry³⁷ is a dynamic management system that combines trees with crops and/or livestock on the same land, based on ecological principles. It offers a dual benefit by promoting sustainable food production while contributing to carbon sequestration, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and enhancing agricultural system resilience. By integrating agroforestry into agricultural practices, it becomes an essential component of the agroecological transition towards sustainable farming and food systems.

Despite its numerous advantages, agroforestry faces considerable challenges in the Mediterranean region, which hinder its widespread adoption and long-term sustainability. One critical issue within agroforestry is the abandonment of forest maintenance practices due to the perception of their lack of economic rewards. This trend has led to unchecked forest growth, significantly increasing the risk of devastating forest fires, particularly in the Mediterranean region's arid and fire-prone climate.

Smallholder farmers, especially, grapple with the need to identify economically viable alternatives to boost income and farm productivity within agroforestry systems. Moreover, the limited availability of knowledge and technical expertise poses substantial obstacles to the successful adoption and effective management of these intricate systems. By addressing these challenges and providing targeted support, the adoption and success of agroforestry systems can be enhanced. This includes providing technical assistance, knowledge transfer, and financial support to small farmers. Creating favourable policies and institutional frameworks that facilitate access to credit and support services is crucial. Moreover, establishing market linkages and improving market access for agroforestry products can contribute to the economic viability and sustainability of agroforestry systems.

Scope

³⁷ According to the FAO, 'Agroforestry is a collective name for land-use systems and technologies where woody perennials (trees, shrubs, palms, bamboos, etc.) are deliberately used on the same land-management units as agricultural crops and/or animals, in some form of spatial arrangement or temporal sequence.'

This call for proposals aims to support the revitalization of agroforestry systems, including silvo-arable and silvo-pastoral agroforestry, in the Mediterranean region. The objective is to identify innovative strategies and overcome barriers to the adoption and scaling up of agroforestry practices.

Proposals should focus on identifying and potentially testing innovative agroforestry systems in different demonstration sites, which may include a combination of crops, trees, and animals. The aim is to identify more efficient, productive, and sustainable models, practices and strategies tailored to specific factors such as climate, soil type, market demand, and environmental benefits. This includes considering the benefits of agroforestry systems and landscape management in promoting ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, soil health protection and restoration, water regulation, and biodiversity conservation. Proposals should also assess the impacts on soil health and conduct thorough assessments of the environmental, social, and economic impacts of different agroforestry practices, using indicators aligned with the Mission Soil and the [Proposal for a Directive on Soil Monitoring and Resilience](#)³⁸.

Proposals should connect with farming practices supported by the [Common Agricultural Policy CAP](#), such as eco-schemes, and quantify the impacts of such farming practices over time. Additionally, the proposals should identify the technical, policy, and socioeconomic barriers preventing the adoption of sustainable agroforestry practices in the Mediterranean region. This should include an analysis of the regulatory and institutional frameworks governing land use and forestry, as well as the financial and technical support mechanisms available to farmers.

Proposals should identify the appropriate ways to identify and improve traditional agroforestry practices, which may include the adaptation of existing machinery and equipment to match the needs of the farmers with the real field conditions. This could involve the use of precision agriculture techniques, such as remote sensing and GPS mapping, to optimize resource use and reduce waste. Proposals could consider water reuse and waste management within a circular bioeconomy context, which could include the use of composting and other sustainable waste management practices to reduce the environmental impact of agricultural activities.

To promote the adoption of sustainable agroforestry practices, proposals should aim to raise awareness and enhance understanding among various stakeholders, including farmers, policymakers, and the general public. This can be achieved through the development of comprehensive training programs, outreach initiatives, and educational materials that are gender-sensitive and tailored to the needs and preferences of women farmers. Special emphasis should be placed on empowering women in agroforestry through training and capacity-building programs that enable them to take on leadership roles within their communities and the agroforestry sector as a whole. Proposals are recommended to use a “multi-actor approach” to include a wide range of actors to ensure that knowledge and needs from various sectors, such as research, farmers, advisory services, are brought together.

Proposals should also investigate ways to improve market access and value chain development for agroforestry products, such as certification schemes, branding, and new business models.

Projects are expected to build links with the Mission “A Soil Deal for Europe”. Proposals should include dedicated tasks and appropriate resources for coordination measures and joint activities with relevant projects funded by the Mission. Proposals should set a clear plan on how they will collaborate with other PRIMA and EU funded projects in agroforestry by participating in joint and common communication and dissemination activities.

This topic presents a comprehensive framework for advancing sustainable agroforestry practices in the Mediterranean region, encompassing diverse elements including innovation, impact assessment, policy formulation, and the cultivation of awareness. Projects selected within this call shall produce a joint policy brief that aligns with the call's scope and objectives with the aim to translate the main lessons learnt, knowledge and evidence generated through project work into key messages for policy makers. Other forms of collaboration, including data sharing, communication and dissemination, joint deliverables, events, etc., between funded projects are strongly encouraged.

³⁸ A Soil Deal for Europe 100 living labs and lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030 Implementation Plan_ Proposed indicators for soil health in support of the mission page 69-70 (https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-09/soil_mission_implementation_plan_final_for_publication.pdf)

Expected impacts

The project results are expected to contribute to:

- Increased adoption of sustainable agroforestry practices: among farmers in the Mediterranean region, which can lead to increased tree cover on farmland and improved landscape resilience.
- Improved agricultural productivity.
- Improved soil health, biodiversity and ecosystem services: such as fertility, carbon sequestration or water use efficiency.
- Increased resilience to climate change by providing a buffer against extreme weather events, enhancing soil fertility and moisture retention, and providing a diverse range of crops and livestock.
- Improved livelihoods for farmers.
- Grouping of needs and challenges (technical, political, socio-economic).

Key Performance Indicators

- **Develop and document new agroforestry practices to enhance system efficiency, productivity, or sustainability KPI.**

Baseline: Existing agroforestry practices in the region.

Target: Develop and document at least two new agroforestry practices during the project.

- **Create and distribute at least 5 unique learning materials each year, including training programs, outreach initiatives, and educational materials KPI.**

Baseline: The number of learning materials and engagement initiatives prior to the project.

Target: Engage a minimum of 100 individuals annually through these resources.

- **Ensure that women have equal access to project resources KPI**, as evidenced by an increase in the percentage of women beneficiaries over the project duration.

Baseline: At the project's inception, identify the percentage of women beneficiaries

Target: Increase the percentage of women beneficiaries by the end of the project.

Contributions to EU Policies, HE Missions and European Partnerships

The proposals should indicate linkages to **relevant** EU policies and objectives in the context of the European Green Deal and relevant Horizon Europe [Missions](#) and European [Partnerships](#), in particular with the mission [A soil Deal for Europe](#), Specific Objective 2 “Conserve soil organic carbon stocks” and Specific Objective 6 “Improve soil structure to enhance soil biodiversity”. Links with the HE candidate partnerships on [Forests and forestry for a sustainable Future](#) and with EU Partnership under [Horizon Europe One Health AMR](#) should be also made.

Contributions to SDGs

The proposals should indicate their contribution to relevant SDGs and methodology to contribute to reporting SDG indicators in particular:

- SDG 2 - Zero Hunger.
- SDG 13 - Climate Action
- SDG 15 - Life on Land
- SDG 1 - No Poverty
- SDG 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production
- SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth

Thematic Area 3-Food value chain in the Nexus

Topic 2.3.1 (RIA)³⁹ – Leveraging urban and local food systems for sustainable food systems transformation.

 Thematic Area 3-Food value chain in the Nexus	
Alignment with SRIA	-Thematic area 2, Operational Objective 4 (Smart and Sustainable Farming), -Thematic area 3, Operational Objective 8 (New Agri-Food Business Models) -Research priorities 3, To integrate small producers into formal supply channels and improve supply chain management to better link agricultural producers to urban markets and reduce post-harvest losses while increasing the adoption of technological, organisational and cultural innovations, as well as new strategies and business models, with the final goal of enhancing their competitiveness and their contribution to Mediterranean food security
Alignment with EU policies	Farm to Fork Strategy Biodiversity Strategy

Challenge

The Mediterranean region is one of the areas in the world most exposed to the combined effects of urban growth and climate change. The total population of the Mediterranean is predicted to reach 580 million by 2050 and remain concentrated in cities and on coastlines. As the Mediterranean region continues to face the challenges of urbanization and climate change, farmers markets have the potential to contribute significantly to the sustainability of food systems in the region. By providing direct access to fresh, locally grown food, farmers markets can enhance food security and safety, promote sustainable production and consumption practices, and reduce the environmental impact of food production and transportation. In addition, farmers markets can contribute to the economic development of local communities by supporting smallholder farmers and promoting local food systems. This can help to create new job opportunities and income streams, while also preserving traditional food cultures and practices that are an important part of the region's cultural heritage. To fully leverage the potential of farmers markets for sustainable food systems transformation in the Mediterranean region, it is important to develop supportive policy frameworks and infrastructure that support the development and operation of these systems. This includes policies that promote the establishment of new markets, ensure fair competition with other retailers, and provide financial and technical support for market operators. Infrastructure such as market facilities, storage and transportation systems, and information and communication technologies are also critical for the success of farmers markets.

Scope

Proposals should aim to strengthen regulatory frameworks for urban and peri-urban agriculture, paying particular attention to the unique challenges faced in the Southern Mediterranean countries. This includes addressing issues related to land use planning, zoning regulations, and the socio-economic aspects of

³⁹ Please note that the acronym RIA is used both for Section 1 and Section 2. In Section 1 the rules applying to these actions are the standard Horizon 2020 rules for participation (RfP). While the rules used in Section 2 are to some extent based on the Horizon 2020 RfP, specific rules, concerning participation and funding rates, apply. As the projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by the national funding bodies, they will be subject to the respective national regulations. For more details regarding the rules for Section 2, please refer to the guidelines for applicants on the PRIMA website.

land access. Policies should not only consider but actively incorporate gender-sensitive approaches to issues such as food safety, product labelling, and certification requirements.

Furthermore, proposals should emphasize the role of incentives in encouraging sustainable practices among farmers and food producers. They should also outline comprehensive strategies for integrating agriculture into urban landscapes through effective spatial management and multi-activity planning, ensuring that these approaches foster inclusivity.

Recognizing the significance of informal markets, proposals should pay special attention to these crucial components of the food system. Improving and formalizing informal markets should be a part of the broader strategy for strengthening food systems.

Infrastructure and efficient distribution networks are essential for robust food systems. Therefore, proposals should explore innovative strategies for developing new distribution channels, including those that cater to informal markets. Leveraging information and communication technologies (ICT) to optimize food supply chains is encouraged, as is the inclusion of comprehensive plans to reduce food loss and waste, with particular attention to informal market practices.

Proposals should also delve into circular bioeconomy principles, such as composting organic waste and reusing water for irrigation. These principles may require the introduction of new technologies and training initiatives. It is essential to ensure that these initiatives are accessible and beneficial for all members of society, including those involved in informal markets. Applicants should adopt the Multi-actor Approach (MAA)⁴⁰ approaches in their proposal. The multi-actor approach described here aims to make the R&I process and its outcomes more reliable, demand driven, shared and relevant to society. It also aims to have these outcomes shared more extensively. This entails more than just widely disseminating a project's results or listening to the views of a board of stakeholders. A multi-actor project ensures the genuine and sufficient involvement of a targeted array of actors, which serves the objectives of the topic.

Finally, in alignment with the [Food 2030 Pathways for action](#) (in particular the [Governance and systems change](#) as well as [Urban food system transformation](#) pathways), proposals should integrate a robust 'food and nutrition governance' component. This involves policies promoting food safety, addressing nutritional needs, and considering public health impacts.

Projects selected within this call shall produce a joint policy brief that aligns with the call's scope and objectives with the aim to translate the main lessons learnt, knowledge and evidence generated through project work into key messages for policy makers. Other forms of collaboration, including data sharing, communication and dissemination, joint deliverables, events, etc., between funded projects are strongly encouraged.

Expected impact

- **Enhanced Regulatory Frameworks:** Improved regulatory frameworks for urban and peri-urban agriculture, addressing the specific challenges in Southern Mediterranean countries. These frameworks will facilitate sustainable land use planning, zoning regulations, and socio-economic aspects, fostering a more resilient and productive food system.
- **Integration of Agriculture into Urban Landscapes:** Effective integration of agriculture into urban areas through spatial management and multi-activity planning, promoting inclusivity and ensuring that urban environments support sustainable food production.

⁴⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-9-food-bioeconomy-natural-resources-agriculture-and-environment_horizon-2023-2024_en.pdf
agri_agricultural_knowledge_and_innovation_systems_akis_2021_en_web.pdf

- **Formalization of Informal Markets:** Improved informal markets through formalization efforts, enhancing their role in strengthening local food systems. This will contribute to increased access to fresh, locally sourced produce.
- **Innovative Distribution Channels:** The development of innovative distribution channels, including leveraging information and communication technologies (ICT), to optimize food supply chains. This will result in more efficient and sustainable food distribution.
- **Reduced Food Loss and Waste:** Effective plans for reducing food loss and waste, with a specific focus on practices within informal markets. This will contribute to improved food system sustainability and resource efficiency.
- **Circular Bioeconomy Practices:** Adoption of circular bioeconomy principles, such as composting organic waste and reusing water for irrigation. The introduction of new technologies and training initiatives will make these practices accessible and beneficial to all.
- **Increased collaboration and engagement with diverse stakeholders:** leading to increased collaboration, engagement, and citizen support.
- **Comprehensive Food Policies**> As part of the [Food 2030 Governance and systems change Pathway](#), comprehensive policies that encompass food safety, nutrition requirements, and impacts on public health should be formulated.

Key Performance Indicators

- **Policy Recommendations for Urban Agriculture KPI:** Number of policy recommendations made to improve regulatory frameworks for urban and peri-urban agriculture addressing the specific challenges in Southern Mediterranean countries.

Baseline: Existing policy recommendations.

Target: Elaborate policy recommendations that support the development of urban and peri-urban agriculture with a focus on gender equality and women's empowerment.

- **Infrastructure and Food Supply Chain Enhancement KPI:** Percentage improvement in infrastructure and distribution networks for short and efficient food supply chains within urban and peri-urban areas.

Baseline: Baseline levels of infrastructure and distribution network efficiency.

Target: Achieve a specified percentage improvement in infrastructure and distribution network efficiency to reduce food loss and waste and enhance sustainability and resilience in urban and peri-urban food systems.

- **Number of new distribution channels KPI:**

Baseline: Existing distribution channels

Target: The proposals should establish new distribution channels increasing their market access, consumer acceptance and commercialization that can help to assess how well these channels are meeting the needs and preferences of consumers.

- **Stakeholder Collaboration and Inclusivity KPI:** Percentage increase in collaboration and engagement with diverse stakeholders, including women and marginalized groups, in food systems transformation.

Baseline: Baseline levels of collaboration and engagement with diverse stakeholders.

Target: Achieve a minimum 15% increase in collaboration and engagement with diverse stakeholders, leading to enhanced inclusivity and gender equality in food systems transformation.

Contributions to EU Policies and HE Missions and European Partnerships

The proposals should indicate linkages to relevant EU policies and objectives in the context of the European Green Deal, [Farm to Fork strategy](#) in alignment with the [Food 2030 Governance and systems change Pathway](#), and relevant Horizon Europe Cluster 6 Work Programmes⁴¹, and [Horizon Europe Missions](#)⁴² and Partnerships in particular the [EU partnership for Safe and Sustainable Food Systems](#).

Contribution to SDGs

The proposals should indicate their contribution to relevant SDGs and methodology to contribute to reporting SDG indicators, including:

- SDG 2: Zero Hunger
- SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being
- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
- SDG 13: Climate Action
- SDG 15: Life on Land

⁴¹ [Horizon Europe Work Programme 2021-2022 - Part 9. Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment](#)
[Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2024 - Part 9. Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment](#)

⁴² [Horizon Europe Work Programme 2021-2022 - Part 12. Missions](#)
[Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2024 - Part 12. Missions](#)

Table 5. Supporting information for Section 2 call for Proposals

Type of action	Research & Innovation Activities (RIA*43)
The total indicative amount allocated to this call	EUR 34 780 000
Funding level	Depending on National Regulations
Budget and duration of grants	PRIMA considers that proposals requesting a contribution of at least EUR 1.5 million and with a duration of 36 months would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submitting and selecting proposals requesting other amounts or duration, following national regulations.
TRL	Proposals should clearly state the starting and end TRLs of the key technology or technologies targeted in the project.
Eligibility conditions for participation	Please refer to section 5.2.1 for the List of countries eligible for funding. Due to the specific challenge of this topic, in addition to the minimum number of participants set out in the standard eligibility conditions (section 5.2.3), consortia must include at least an additional legal entity established in a Mediterranean Partner Country (MPC) as defined in section 5.2.1. In addition to the standard admissibility and eligibility conditions (please refer to section 5.2.2 and section 5.2.3 in this document), the following additional eligibility condition applies: each applicant must check its own eligibility for participation/funding in accordance with their national funding agencies.
Submission and evaluation procedure	The call will be organised according to a two-stage submission process. For the first step, a first-stage proposal (maximum ten pages) must be submitted within the first-stage submission deadline. Successful applicants in the first step will be invited to the second step to submit a full proposal (maximum 50 pages). A timeline for submitting and evaluating applications can be found in Table 9.
Grant agreement	Each national funding body will fund the beneficiaries established in its own country; thus, the national funding rules apply. Each national funding body will sign a grant agreement (or any official documents acting as a contract) with their national beneficiaries taking part in the selected project (section 5.2.11). The coordinator of the project has to decide with his/her partners of a common starting date and send this information to all the funding bodies involved in funding this project in order to ensure that the national grant agreements are synchronized in time to cover all the period of the project.
Consortium agreement	A consortium agreement mentioning the distribution of the tasks among partners (as listed in the proposal) must be concluded. Some national funding bodies may require this document before signing the grant agreements, so it is necessary to refer to the national regulations and draft the consortium agreement , accordingly (section 5.2.11)

Table 6. Indicative PRIMA PS planned financial contributions for Section 2 in Annual Work Plan2024 in EUR*

PRIMA Participating State	Funding Agency	Financial annual commitment per National Funding Agency	Financial annual commitment per PS
	Acronym	(EUR)	(EUR)
Algeria	DGRST	2 000 000	2 000 000

⁴³ Please note that the acronym RIA is used both for Section 1 and Section 2. In Section 1 the rules applying to these actions are the standard Horizon 2020 rules for participation (RfP). While the rules used in Section 2 are to some extent based on the H2020 RfP, specific rules concerning participation and funding rates apply. As the projects selected in Section 2 are funded directly by the national funding bodies, they will be subject to the respective national regulations. For more details regarding the rules for Section 2 please refer to the guidelines for applicants on the [PRIMA website](#).

Croatia	MSE	500 000	500 000
Cyprus	RIF	400 000	400 000
Egypt	ASRT	1 500 000	3 650 000
	SDTF	2 150 000	
France	ANR	6 000 000	6 000 000
Germany	BMBF	2 500 000	2 500 000
Greece	GSRI	800 000	800 000
Israel	MOST	500 000	500 000
Italy	MUR	7 000 000	7 000 000
Jordan	HCST	424 000	424 000
Lebanon	CNRS-L	61 000	61 000
Luxembourg	FNR	400 000	400 000
Malta	MCST	500 000	500 000
Morocco	MESRSFC	2 000 000	2 000 000
Portugal	FCT	1 125 000	1 125 000
Slovenia	ARSS	170 000	170 000
Spain	AEI	3 000 000	4 250 000
	CDTI	1 250 000	
Tunisia	MESRS	1 500 000	1 500 000
Turkey	TUBITAK	1 000 000	1 000 000
TOTAL		34 780 000	34 780 000

* Wherever relevant, local currencies have been converted into EURO using official exchange rates.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The financial contributions from PRIMA PS for AWP 2024 are provided based on a formal commitment letter signed yearly by the competent authorities of the PRIMA Funding Agencies involved.

The PRIMA-IS will do the admissibility and eligibility check after each deadline for submission and before the evaluation takes place, followed by an eligibility check by the national funding agencies according to their [national regulations](#).

The Executive Director may decide to publish and open the call up to two weeks prior or one month after the envisaged date(s). The Executive Director may delay other deadlines by up to two months.

All deadlines are at 17:00 CET.

Table 7. Timetable for Section 2 call for proposals in 2024

THEMATIC AREA	CALL TOPICS	Call publication and opening	Submission deadline Stage 1	Evaluation results Stage 1	Submission deadline Stage 2	Evaluation results Stage 2
Water management	Topic 2.1.1	25/1/2024	4/4/2024	1/7/2024	26/9/2024	13/12/2024
Farming systems	Topic 2.2.1	25/1/2024	4/4/2024	1/7/2024	26/9/2024	13/12/2024
Agri-food value chain	Topic 2.3.1	25/1/2024	4/4/2024	1/7/2024	26/9/2024	13/12/2024

2.2 Activities supporting programme operations funded and implemented by the PRIMA-IS

This section refers to the PS's costs for managing projects resulting from the calls managed by the PRIMA and funded by the PS.

These costs must not exceed 6% of the individual financial contribution by each Participating State in Section 2. For 2024, the total amount of these contributions must not exceed EUR 2 086 800.

3 Section 3 – Activities and actions organised, managed and funded by the PS

PRIMA PS implement and fund an array of national activities that contribute to the objectives of the PRIMA programme. The participation of the PS foresees two types of activities:

- Participant States Initiated Activities (PSIAs); PSIAs are funded following national calls with evaluation, selection and granting processes implemented by one or several PS in line with common principles (see [5.2.10](#)) and must be included in the Annual Work Plan by PRIMA-IS after obtaining approval from the Commission.
- “Other Activities” supporting programme operations funded and implemented by PS. They support programme operations and constitute an integral part of the PRIMA programme.

3.1 Participating States Initiated Activities (PSIAs)

Decision (EU) 2017/1324 provides that PRIMA activities may include activities under the Participating States' national programmes, including transnational projects. These activities, included as so-called Participating States Initiated Activities PSIAs in the PRIMA AWP, will be implemented in compliance with common principles to be agreed upon by the Participating States and the European Commission, taking into account the principles set out in the Decision (EU) 2017/1324, in Part One of Title VIII of the Financial Regulation No (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 and Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013, in particular the principles of equal treatment, transparency, independent peer-review evaluation and selection (See [Section 5.2.10](#) of this document).

The Participating States Initiated Activities (PSIAs) listed below gather activities under the national programmes of PS. These activities are national calls for research and innovation, training actions and/or support for a joint research project or collaborative research units managed and funded directly by the PS.

They are in-kind contributions of the PS to the PRIMA programme and constitute an integral part of the PRIMA programme contributing to the alignment of national programmes to PRIMA. The PSIAs listed in this section of the AWP 2024 are aligned with PRIMA objectives according to the assessment of external international experts.

All participants in activities funded by the PRIMA-IS or by Participating States of the PRIMA programme are required to label or co-label any communication or publication related to their activities with the following acknowledgement "[name of the activity/grant code] is part of the PRIMA programme supported by the European Union", as well as with the PRIMA logo.

Table 8. Participating States Initiated Activities in 2024 (details of the calls are given in [Section 6](#)).

#	Code	Activity title	Keyword	Type of action	PS involved	Type of budget allocation	PS indicative commitment (in EUR)
1	FR.2024.1	RESEARCH PROJECTS FUNDED BY ANR UNDER THE ANNUAL NATIONAL CALL FOR PROPOSALS	Innovation, Farming Systems, Water Management	RIA	FRANCE	ANNUAL CALLS	1 000 000
2	ES.2024.1	National R/D continuous open Call	Agro-food value chain, farming and management of water	RIA	SPAIN	Annual Call	30 000 000

3	ES.2024.2	AEI Annual Action Plan	Knowledge, Water management, Agrofood value chain, Farming Systems	RIA, Training & Mobility action, Joint Research Project	SPAIN	Annual Call	10 000 000
4	TR.2024.1	PRIMA Participating States Calls for proposals supporting PRIMA	Water management, Agrofood value chain, Farming Systems	RIA, IA, Scholarship, Mobility, Joint Research Project	TURKIYE , all PS	Thematic Call	83 663
5	MT.2024.1	PRIMA Participating States Calls for proposals supporting PRIMA	Water management, Agrofood value chain, Farming Systems	RIA, IA, Mobility, Joint Research Project	MALTA, all PS	Thematic Call	100 000
6	MT.2024.2	PRIMA Participating States Calls for Proposals supporting PRIMA	Water management, Agrofood value chain, Farming Systems	Mobility, Joint Research Project	MALTA	Thematic Call	20 000
TOTAL							41 203 663

3.2 Activities supporting programme operation funded and implemented by PS: “Other Activities.”

ACTIVITY 1: PRIMA INFO SESSION AND BROKERAGE EVENT TO ASSIST APPLICANTS IN PARTICIPATING IN PRIMA CALLS

Objectives

A hybrid day event will be organised to provide potential PRIMA applicants from all Participating States with the opportunity to efficiently learn about PRIMA and how to participate successfully. NCPs from PRIMA PS States will be invited to organise a 1-hour info session to present their respective national rules in hybrid format during one of the agenda items. This info session will be followed by an in-person brokerage event that will allow prospective partners to meet, network and potentially establish collaborations. A “marketplace” platform to showcase the interest/project idea of the participants could be published ahead of the day.

Type of activity: The PRIMA info session and brokerage event will be an interactive, one-day event that will provide an opportunity for Malta-based as well as foreign stakeholders, ranging from coordinators, partners, and service providers, who wish to obtain further insight on the PRIMA Calls and effectively meet potential partners to brainstorm ideas and build project consortia.

Organised by: Malta

Timetable: 1st quarter of 2024 ahead of PRIMA 2024 Calls

Indicative budget: EUR 15 000

4 Administrative budget of the PRIMA-IS for the implementation of the PRIMA programme

In 2024, the administrative costs of the PRIMA-IS will include the following items:

4.1. Personnel

Personnel costs will include the salaries and social costs of the following personnel: Director, Deputy Director, Project Coordinator, Project Officers (5), Legal Officer, Accounting and Finance Manager, Accounting and Finance Officer, Grant Administrative Assistants (2), Communication Officer.

4.2. Meetings and missions

- Meetings of the Board of Trustees, the Steering Committee, and the Scientific Advisory Committee
- Administrative Staff travel and accommodation costs

4.3. Consumables and supplies

- Postage and courier
- Office consumables & stationery
- Printing and photocopying
- Bank charges
- Office furniture and equipment (depreciation)
- Office utilities: electricity, water, and gas
- Repairs and maintenance
- Computers and other IT equipment (depreciation)

4.4. Service contracts

- Foundation audit fees (reporting to the EC and annual statutory accounts)
- Telecommunications (voice and data)
- IT support services
- Office cleaning
- Communication and graphic layout.

4.5. Dissemination activities and materials

- Creation of materials for external communication (leaflets, posters, newsletters, etc.). (Costs will be under the Service contracts section).
- Organization of an info-day in Barcelona to provide information to applicants concerning 2024 calls for proposals, approximately in the First Quarter of 2024, depending on the approval date of AWP 2024. (Costs will be under Mission and travels section).

4.6 Budget overview tables

Table 9. Indicative budget for the administrative costs (in EUR)

Description	Amount
Personnel	1 370 000
Meetings and missions	105 000
Consumables and supplies	81 000
Service contracts	94 000
Total administrative costs	1 650 000

Table 10. Overview of Planned Commitments to Activities of the PRIMA Programme 2024 by the Union (EU) and the Participating States (PS) in EUR.

Activities	Contributions (in €)		
	EU	PS	Grand Total
EU funded Transnational Calls for Proposals IA (Section 1)	27 900 000		27 900 000
Participating States Transnational co-funded Call for Proposals, managed by PRIMA-IS (Section 2)		34 780 000	
Subtotal transnational calls	27 900 000	34 780 000	62 680 000
Evaluation of Projects & Monitoring	400 000		400 000
PRIMA Prizes	20 000		20 000
PRIMA event	30 000		30 000
Subtotal activities supporting programme operations	450 000		450 000
Participating States funded activities managed by PS to support programme implementation		15 000	15 000
PS contributions dedicated to the implementation of proposals resulting from PS funded calls		2 086 800	2 086 800
Participating States Initiated Activities		41 203 663	41 203 663
Sub-Total Implementation	28 350 000	78 085 463	106 435 463
EU-funded administrative costs of PRIMA-IS	1 650 000		1 650 000
Sub-Total Administration	1 650 000		1 650 000
Total Budget	30 000 000	78 085 463	108 085 463

Table 11. Detailed overview of planned commitments to activities of the PRIMA programme in 2024 by the European Union (EU) and the Participating States (PS) in EUR

	Programme CALLS	PRIMA-IS administrative costs	PS management costs	Activities supporting programme operations	PSIAs	Total in 2024
	Financial contributions	Financial contributions	In-kind contributions	Financial Contributions	Financial contributions	
European Union (EU)						
European Commission	27 900 000	1 650 000		450 000		30 000 000
Sub-Total EU	27 900 000	1 650 000		450 000		30 000 000
Participating States (PS)						
Algeria	2 000 000		120 000			2 120 000
Croatia	500 000		30 000			530 000
Cyprus	400 000		24 000			424 000
Egypt	3 650 000		219 000			3 869 000
France	6 000 000		360 000		1 000 000	7 360 000
Germany	2 500 000		150 000			2 650 000
Greece	800 000		48 000			848 000
Israel	500 000		30 000			530 000
Italy	7 000 000		420 000			7 420 000
Jordan	424 000		25 440			449 440
Lebanon	61 000		3 660			64 660
Luxembourg	400 000		24 000			424 000
Malta	500 000		30 000	15 000	120 000	665 000
Morocco	2 000 000		120 000			2 120 000
Portugal	1 125 000		67 500			1 192 500
Slovenia	170 000		10 200			180 200
Spain	4 250 000		255 000		40 000 000	44 505 000
Tunisia	1 500 000		90 000			1 590 000
Turkey	1 000 000		60 000		83 663	1 143 663
Sub-Total PSs	34 780 000		2 086 800	15 000	41 203 663	78 085 463
Sub-Total EU and PSs	62 680 000	1 650 000	2 086 800	465 000	41 203 663	108 085 463
Grand Total	62 680 000	1 650 000	2 086 800	465 000	41 203 663	108 085 463

Table 12. Overview of planned EU contributions towards PRIMA calls for Proposals in 2024 and activities supporting the implementation of the programme (in EUR)

	EU-funded PRIMA activities	Indicative EU contribution (in EUR)
Innovation Actions	Section 1 Call 1	9 200 000
	Section 1 Call 2	9 600 000
	Section 1 Call 3	9 100 000
Other Activities	Activities for supporting the implementation of the programme	450 000
Administrative costs of the PRIMA-IS	Personnel, Missions, Consumables and supplies,	1 650 000
	Service contracts	
	Total planned contributions in 2024	30 000 000

5 General Annexes

5.1 Section 1 – Transnational calls and prizes organised and funded by the PRIMA-IS (European Union contribution)

5.1.1 List of countries eligible for funding

Legal entities established in the following countries and territories are eligible to receive funding through PRIMA grants:

a) The PRIMA Participating States⁴⁴ :

The following Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU): Croatia, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia. It includes the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) linked to these Member States⁴⁵:

The following Third Countries associated to Horizon 2020 (AC): Israel, Tunisia, and Turkey.

The following Third Countries not associated with Horizon 2020 (TC), having concluded international agreements for scientific and technological cooperation setting out the terms and conditions of their participation in PRIMA: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco.

These Associated Countries (AC) and Third Countries (TC) mentioned above are the Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC). In addition, the following entities are eligible to receive funding through PRIMA grants:

b) Any legal entity created under the European Union law.⁴⁶

c) Any international European interest organisation⁴⁷, as defined in point (12) of Article 2(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013

For these two types of entities (b, c), their place of establishment is not relevant for eligibility for funding.

d) Any international organisation (IO)⁴⁸ **OR** any legal entity established in countries not listed above as PS may be eligible for funding provided that at least one of the following conditions is fulfilled:

- i. participation is deemed to be essential for carrying out the action⁴⁹;
- ii. Such funding is provided under a bilateral scientific and technological agreement or any other arrangement between the Union and the international organisation or, for entities established in a country that is not a Participating State, the country in which the legal entity is established.

⁴⁴ New PS may join PRIMA and the regularly updated list of PS will be provided by PRIMA-IS (at the following link to be inserted to PRIMA webpage).

⁴⁵ Entities from Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) are eligible for funding under the same conditions as entities from the Member States to which the OCT in question is linked.

⁴⁶ As set out in Art 7 (1) of H2020 Regulation and reflected in Art 7. (4) of the PRIMA Decision.

⁴⁷ 'International European interest organisation' means an international organisation, (IO) the majority of whose members are Member States or associated countries, and whose principal objective is to promote scientific and technological cooperation in Europe".

⁴⁸ The place of establishment of the IOs is not relevant for eligibility for funding.

⁴⁹ The applicant may be eligible for funding if its participation has clear benefits for the consortium, such as: access to unique know-how, access to research infrastructures, access to geographical environments, involving key partners in emerging markets, access to data, etc.

Participants from countries not listed in point 5.1.1.a) and not falling under b), c) or d) above can participate, but they must fund their participation.

All participants with their funding must attach to their proposal a letter from their organisation (signed by a legal representative of the structure) attesting that the funds cover their participation in the projects (task(s), attendance at meetings, etc.) will be available.

5.1.2 Standard admissibility conditions, page limits and supporting documents

For all actions under AWP 2024, proposals must comply with the admissibility requirements set out in this sub-section unless supplemented or modified in the call conditions.

To be considered **admissible**, a proposal must be:

- a) Submitted in the electronic submission system before the deadline given in the call conditions.
- b) Readable, accessible, and printable.
- c) Complete⁵⁰ and inclusive the requested administrative data, the proposal description, and any other obligatory supporting documents specified in the call conditions.
- d) Include a draft plan for exploiting and disseminating the results unless otherwise specified in the call conditions. The draft plan is not required for proposals at the first step of the two-stage submission process.

In addition to the above admissibility requirements, page limits will apply to parts of proposals/applications. Unless stated otherwise in the call conditions, the limit for a first-stage proposal is ten pages, while the limit for a full proposal is 50 pages. The Electronic Submission System will automatically reject the proposal if it exceeds the page limits.

Proposals must be written in a legible font. The proposal templates will include guidance on acceptable fonts, margins, and other page formatting. The structure of proposals must correspond to the requirements specified under each section of the proposal template. Applicants are requested to use PRIMA's template, which can be downloaded from the PRIMA website under the relevant call section.

The following supporting documents will be required to determine the **operational capacity** of each applicant in grant proposals unless otherwise specified in the call:

- a) A curriculum vitae or description of the profile of the persons who will be primarily responsible for carrying out the proposed research and/or innovation activities.
- b) A list of up to five relevant publications and/or products, services (including widely used datasets or software), or other achievements relevant to the call content.
- c) A list of up to five relevant previous projects or activities connected to the subject of this proposal.
- d) A description of any significant infrastructure and/or any major items of technical equipment relevant to the proposed work.
- e) A description of any third parties that are not represented as project partners but who will contribute to the work (e.g., providing facilities, computing resources).

The evaluators will carry out this scrutiny during the evaluation process under the selection criteria, particularly the award criterion 'Quality and efficiency of the implementation'. Please refer to Section [5.1.7](#), "Evaluation rules".

⁵⁰ In case the administrative data are missing for justified reasons, they can be submitted **within 24 hours from the notification from PRIMA-IS**

5.1.3 Standard eligibility conditions

All proposals must comply with the eligibility conditions set out in the Rules for Participation of Horizon 2020 Regulation (EU) No. 1290/2013 and any derogations to these as specified in Article 7 of Decision (EU) 2017/1324.

Furthermore, proposals must comply with the eligibility conditions set out in this sub-section unless supplemented or modified in the call conditions.

A proposal will only be considered eligible if:

- a) the coordinator of the proposal is a legal entity established in a PRIMA PS⁵¹
- b) its content corresponds, wholly or in part, to the scope and objectives of the topic to which it is submitted
- c) It complies with the eligibility conditions for participation set out in the Table below, depending on the type of action:

Table 13. General Eligibility conditions for participation for PRIMA Actions Section 1

Type of Action	Eligibility conditions for participation ^{52,53,5455}
Innovation Action (IA)	At least three legal entities established in three different countries considered as Participating States, as defined in point 5.1.1. Each of the three must be established in a different country considered to be PRIMA PS by submission deadline under the relevant call, out of which: - at least one must be established in an EU Member State, or a third country associated to Horizon 2020 and not being an MPC and

⁵¹ This measure is aimed to protect the Union's financial interests and is in line with Art. Article 7(7) of Decision (EU) 2017/1324.

⁵² Natural or legal persons, groups or non-State entities covered by the Council sanctions in force are not eligible to participate in Union programmes. Please see the consolidated list of persons, groups and entities subject to Union financial sanctions, available at http://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/sanctions/consol-list_en.html.

⁵³ Given that the EU does not recognise the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, legal persons established in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea or the city of Sevastopol are not eligible to participate in any capacity. This criterion also applies in cases where the action involves financial support given by grant beneficiaries to third parties established in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea or the city of Sevastopol (in accordance with Articles 204 and 205 of the Financial Regulation No (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046). Should the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol end, this Work Plan will be revised.

⁵⁴ Legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government-controlled territories of Ukraine are not eligible to participate in any capacity. This includes participation as beneficiaries, linked third parties, international partners, third parties providing in-kind contributions, subcontractors, or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). Legal entities established in Hungary: Following the [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/2506](#), as of 16 December 2022, no legal commitments can be entered into with Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain. Affected entities may continue to apply to calls for proposals. However, as long as the Council measures are not lifted, such entities are not eligible (for funding as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, recipients of financial support to third parties, etc). In case of multi-beneficiary grant calls, applicants will be invited to remove or replace that entity and/or to change its status into associated partner. Tasks and budget may be redistributed accordingly if need be. For UK applicants: Please be aware that following the entry into force of the [EU- UK Withdrawal Agreement](#) on 1 February 2020, the references to natural or legal persons residing or established in a Member State of the European Union are to be understood as including natural or legal persons residing or established in the United Kingdom. Therefore, UK residents and entities are eligible to participate in calls in this Annual Work Plan. EU restrictive measures - Entities subject to EU restrictive measures under Article 29 the [Treaty on the European Union \(TEU\)](#) and Article 215 of the [Treaty on the Functioning of the EU \(TFEU\)](#), Article 75 TFEU are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, linked third parties, international partners, third parties providing in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).

⁵⁵ The eligibility criteria formulated in Commission notice Nr. 2013/C 205/05 ([OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp.9-11](#)) apply for all actions under this Work Plan, including for third parties that receive financial support under the action (in accordance with Articles 204 and 205 of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046), notably programme co-fund actions.

	- at least one must be established in a third country bordering the Mediterranean Sea (MPC) All three legal entities must be independent of each other.
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5.1.4 Types of action: specific provisions and funding rates ^{56,57}

Innovation Actions (IA)

Description: Action primarily consisting of activities directly aiming at producing plans and arrangements or designs for new, altered, or improved products, processes, or services. For this purpose, they may include prototyping, testing, demonstrating, piloting, large-scale product validation and market replication.

A ‘demonstration or pilot’ aims to validate the technical and economic viability of new or improved technology, product, process, service, or solution in an operational (or near to operational) environment, whether industrial or otherwise, involving where appropriate a more extensive scale prototype or demonstrator.

A ‘market replication’ aims to support the first application/deployment in the market of an innovation that has already been demonstrated but not yet applied/deployed in the market due to market failures/barriers to uptake. ‘Market replication’ does not cover multiple applications in the market of an innovation⁵⁸ that has already been applied successfully once in the market. ‘First’ means new at least to PRIMA countries or new at least to the application sector in question. Often such projects involve validation of technical and economic performance at the system level in real-life operating conditions provided by the market.

Projects may include limited research and development activities.

Funding rate: 70% (except for non-profit legal entities, where a rate of 100 % applies).

⁵⁶ Eligible costs for all types of action are in accordance with the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046 and the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013. In addition, as training researchers on gender issues serves the policy objectives of Horizon 2020 and is necessary for the implementation of R&I actions, applicants may include in their proposal such activity and the following corresponding estimated costs that may be eligible for EU funding:

(a) Costs of delivering the training (personnel costs if the trainers are employees of the beneficiary or subcontracting if the training is outsourced).

(b) Accessory direct costs such as travel and subsistence costs if the training is delivered outside the beneficiary's premises.

(c) Remuneration costs for the researchers attending the training, in proportion to the actual hours spent on the training (as personnel costs).

⁵⁷ Participants may ask for a lower rate.

⁵⁸ A new or improved technology, product, design, process, service or solution.

Prizes

Description: Prizes are financial contributions given as rewards following the publication of a contest. A ‘recognition prize’ is used to recognise past achievements and outstanding work after it has been performed, whereas an ‘inducement prize’ is used to spur investment in a given direction, by specifying a target before the performance of the work. The Rules of the Contest lay down the conditions for participation, the award criteria, the amount of the prize and the arrangements for the payment of the prize to the winners after their award.

PRIMA Rules of Contest for prizes are published on PRIMA website.

Prize amounts: The amount of the prize is specified in the contest. It is not linked to the costs incurred by the winner.

5.1.5 PRIMA Model Rules of Contest (RoC) for prizes

Model Rules of Contest for prizes are published on the PRIMA website: <https://prima-med.org/>

5.1.6 Technology Readiness Levels (TRL)

Where a topic description refers to a TRL, the following definitions apply, unless otherwise specified:

- TRL 1 – basic principles observed
- TRL 2 – technology concept formulated
- TRL 3 – experimental proof of concept
- TRL 4 – technology validated in lab
- TRL 5 – technology validated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
- TRL 6 – technology demonstrated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
- TRL 7 – system prototype demonstration in operational environment
- TRL 8 – system complete and qualified
- TRL 9 – actual system proven in an operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies; or in space).

5.1.7 Evaluation rules

1. Selection Criteria

- a) *Financial capacity*: In line with the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 and the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013. For grants, coordinators will be invited – at the proposal stage – to complete a self-assessment using an on-line tool.⁵⁹

The financial capacity of a project coordinator is checked by PRIMA-IS when the requested funding to PRIMA-IS for the action is equal or superior to EUR 500 000 unless the coordinator is:

- i. a public body
 - ii. a higher or secondary education establishment
 - iii. an international organisation or body whose participation is guaranteed by the government of an EU country or associated country, following the PRIMA MGA
- b) *Operational capacity*: As a distinct operation, carried out during the evaluation of the award criterion ‘Quality and efficiency of the implementation’, experts will indicate whether each participant has, or will have in due time, sufficient operational capacity to carry out its tasks in the proposed work plan successfully. This assessment will be based on the competence and experience of the applicant, including its operational resources (human, technical and other) and, if applicable, exceptionally the concrete measures proposed to obtain it by the time of the implementation of the tasks.

Neither financial capacity nor operational capacity is subject to evaluation for prizes and first-stage proposals in a two-stage submission procedure. Financial and Operational Capacity will be performed by PRIMA-IS at the evaluation phase of proposals in Second Stage calls and have the same timeline.

2. Award criteria, scores, and weighting

Grant proposals will be evaluated by experts based on the **award criteria** ‘excellence’, ‘impact’ and ‘quality and efficiency of the implementation’ see Article 15 (1) of the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013).

The aspects to be considered in each case depend on the types of action as set out in the Table below, unless stated otherwise in the call conditions:

Table 14. Aspects to be considered during the proposal evaluation for each criterion (excellence, impact, quality, and efficiency of the implementation) for Innovation Actions in Section 1.

Type of Action	Excellence*	Impact*	Quality and efficiency of the implementation
	The following aspects will be considered to the extent that the proposed work corresponds to the topic description in the work plan.	The following aspects will be considered:	The following aspects will be considered:

⁵⁹ <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/organisations/lfv.html>

Innovation Actions (IA)	Clarity and pertinence of the objectives; Soundness of the concept, and credibility of the proposed methodology; Fit with the scope and objectives of the PRIMA programme and the call topic description; Extent that the proposed work is beyond the state of the art, and demonstrates innovation potential (e.g., ground-breaking objectives, novel concepts and approaches, new products, services or business and organisational models) Appropriate consideration of interdisciplinary approaches and, where relevant, use of stakeholder knowledge and gender dimension in research and innovation content.	The extent to which the outputs of the project would contribute to one or several of the expected impacts mentioned in the work plan under the relevant topic. -Scores of the proposals will not depend on the number of expected impacts covered. -Any substantial impacts not mentioned in the work plan, that would enhance innovation capacity, create new market opportunities, strengthen competitiveness and growth of companies, address issues related to climate change or the environment, or bring other important benefits for society; -Quality of the proposed measures to: -Exploit and disseminate the project results (including management of IPR), and to manage research data where relevant. -Communicate the project activities to different target audiences.	Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, including extent to which the resources assigned to work packages are in line with their objectives and deliverables; Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management; Complementarity of the participants and extent to which the consortium as whole brings together the necessary expertise; Appropriateness of the allocation of tasks, ensuring that all participants have a valid role and adequate resources in the project to fulfil that role.
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** In the evaluation of the first stage proposals, only aspects in bold will be considered.*

3. Scoring and weighting

Unless otherwise specified in the call conditions:

Evaluation scores will be awarded for the criteria, not for the different aspects listed in the above Table. For full proposals, each criterion will be scored out of 5. The threshold for individual criteria will be 3. The overall threshold, applying to the sum of the three individual scores, will be 10.

For Innovation Actions to determine the ranking, the criterion ‘impact’ score will be given a weight of 1.5.

Only the criteria ‘excellence’ and ‘impact’ will be evaluated for the evaluation of first-stage proposals under a two-stage submission procedure. With regard to the impact criterion, only the aspects in bold will be considered for first-stage proposals. The threshold for both individual criteria will be 4. For each

indicative budget split in the call conditions, the overall threshold, applying to the sum of the two individual scores, will be set at the level such that the total requested budget of proposals admitted to the second stage is as close as possible to three times the available budget, and in any case, not less than two and a half times the available budget.

Therefore, the actual level will depend on the volume of proposals received. The threshold is expected to be set at 8 or 8.5.

4. Priority order for proposals with the same score

Unless the call conditions indicate otherwise, the following method will be applied (except for the first step of the two-stage submission process, where proposals with the same score are kept together and no prioritisation is made). If necessary, the panel will determine a priority order for proposals with the same score within a ranked list. Whether or not such a prioritisation is carried out will depend on the available budget or other conditions set out in the call fiche.

The following approach will be applied successively for every group of *ex-aequo* proposals requiring prioritisation, starting with the highest scored group, and continuing in descending order:

- a) Proposals that address topics, or sub-topics not otherwise covered by more highly ranked proposals, will be considered to have the highest priority.
- b) The proposals identified under (a), if any, will themselves be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the criterion excellence. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on scores for the criterion impact.
- c) If necessary, any further prioritisation will be based on the following factor: first, the number of MPCs partners, the gender balance among the personnel named in the proposal who will be primarily responsible for carrying out the research and/or innovation activities and how the gender dimension has been addressed in the proposal, finally the number of SMEs involved.
- d) The panel may decide to further prioritise by considering how to enhance the quality of the project portfolio through synergies between projects or other factors related to the objectives of the call or to PRIMA in general. These factors will be documented in the report of the Panel.
- e) The method described in (a), (b), (c) and (d) will then be applied to the remaining *ex-aequo* in the group.

At the end of the panel meeting, the panel will recommend one or more ranked lists for the proposals under evaluation, following the scoring systems indicated above. A ranked list will be drawn up for every indicative budget shown in the call conditions.

For prizes, the award criteria, scoring and weighting will be set out in the Rules of contest.

5. Evaluation procedure

Calls are subject to a two-stage submission and evaluation process.

Independent experts evaluate proposals (see Article 15(8) Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation of Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013 for exceptional cases). As part of the evaluation by independent experts, a panel review will recommend one or more ranked lists for the proposals under the assessment, following the scoring systems indicated above and the panel's discussion. A ranked list will be drawn up for every indicative budget shown in the call conditions.

Individual Evaluation: Each eligible proposal is evaluated remotely by at least three independent expert evaluators (on evaluation see Article 15 of the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013), who carry out a technical evaluation based on the criteria mentioned above. An Individual Evaluation Report, which includes comments and scores for all evaluation criteria, is prepared by each evaluator.

Panel review: after the remote individual evaluation, evaluators meet in a panel to discuss and find agreement on the initial comments and scores attributed to each proposal. They will prepare an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) for each proposal, which shows the outcome of the evaluation of the project proposal. The panel is also responsible for preparing a ranking list of the proposals by consensus. Project funding decisions will be taken based on this ranking list. The panel configuration allows evaluators to overview all eligible proposals, checking the consistency of comments and marks, not just the ones they have evaluated, which enables them to decide fairly when ranking the proposals.

In case of disagreement or project proposals with the same score (only for full proposals), the panel will determine the priority order for proposals described in the section below.

If special procedures apply, they will be set out in the call conditions.

5.1.8 Funding decision and communication

The final decision on funding will be taken according to the project's rank as established in the panel's ranking list (starting with the project rank number 1 in the list in descending order) until funds are available.

The proposal's coordinator receives an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR), showing the evaluation results for a given proposal. In the ESR, the overall scores will be provided. Common feedback is provided to all coordinators for proposals that successfully pass the first stage of the two-stage submission process. Still, the first stage ESR is only sent after the second step evaluation.

Applicants whose proposal is selected for funding will receive a formal communication informing them that the grant preparation phase can start.

If special procedures apply, they will be set in the call conditions.

5.1.9 Budget flexibility

The budgets set out in AWP 2024 are indicative. Unless otherwise stated, final budgets may vary following evaluation. The final figures may vary by up to 20% compared to those indicated in AWP2024 for the following budgeted activities:

- Total expenditure for calls (up to 20% of the total spending for each call);
- Repartition of call budgets within a call (up to 20% of the total expenditure of the call);
- Evaluation and monitoring (up to 20% of the total expenditure for all these activities);

The cumulated changes above may not exceed 20% of the maximum contribution provided for this Work Plan.

5.1.10 Conditions related to open access to research data

According to Article 29.3 of the [PRIMA Model Grant Agreement](#)(s), participants will engage in research data sharing. This means that beneficiaries must deposit and take measures to make it possible for third parties to access, mine, exploit, reproduce and disseminate, free of charge for any user:

- 1) data needed to validate the results presented in scientific publications ('underlying data');
- 2) other data as specified by the beneficiaries in their Data Management Plan (DMP, see below).

Consortia may "opt-out" of these provisions before or after the signature of the grant agreement (thereby freeing themselves from the associated obligations) on the following grounds⁶⁰:

⁶⁰ [PRIMA Model Grant Agreement](#)

- a) Incompatibility with the Horizon 2020 obligation to protect results that are expected to be commercially or industrially exploited
- b) Incompatibility with the need for confidentiality in connection with security issues
- c) Incompatibility with rules on protecting personal data
- d) Incompatibility with the project's main aim
- e) If the project will not generate/collect any research data, or
- f) If there are other legitimate reasons not to provide open access to research data.

Please note that it is also possible to opt-out before signature and opt-in during project implementation initially. Any costs related to implementing these provisions are eligible for reimbursement during the duration of the grant.

A proposal will not be evaluated more favourably if the consortium agrees to share its research data, nor will it be penalised if it opts out. Further information on open access to research data is available on the PRIMA electronic submission system.

A Data Management Plan (DMP) details what data the project will generate, how it will be exploited and made accessible for verification and re-use, and how it will be curated and preserved. The use of a Data Management Plan is obligatory for all projects that do not opt-out. Projects that opt out is also strongly encouraged to submit a Data Management Plan if relevant to their planned research. Further information on Data Management Plans is available on the [PRIMA website](#).

5.2 Section 2 – Transnational calls organised by PRIMA-IS and funded by the Participating States

5.2.1 List of countries eligible for funding

Legal entities established in the following PRIMA Participating States⁶¹ will, in general, be eligible to receive funding through PRIMA grants:

- a) The following Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU): Croatia, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia. It includes the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) linked to these Member States⁶²:
- b) The following Third Countries associated to Horizon 2020 (AC) are Israel, Tunisia, and Turkey.
- c) The following Third Countries not associated to Horizon 2020 (TC), having concluded international agreements for scientific and technological cooperation setting out the terms and conditions of their participation in PRIMA: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco.
- d) These Associated (AC) and Third Countries (TC) mentioned above are the Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC).

Participants from countries not listed above have to fund their own participation.

All participants with their funding have to attach to their proposal a letter from their organization (signed by a legal representative of the structure) attesting that the funds to cover their participation in the projects (task(s), participation in meetings...) will be available.

The information provided in this section is without prejudice to the national funding rules of PS, which may also envisage eligibility for funding for specific entities not established in these PS.

The national funding rules of a PS will determine whether a particular entity would be eligible for funding. After the eligibility check is done by PRIMA-IS, a second eligibility check will be performed by the national funding bodies to verify eligibility for funding.⁶³

In this context, proposals that are considered eligible for participation by PRIMA-IS (at the consortium level) will enter the evaluation process. However, should the National Funding Bodies deem one consortium partner not eligible for funding, PRIMA-IS may require additional information from the consortium, or the partner concerned, such as an attestation that the funds to cover the participation in the project will be available.

Applicants should refer to the national regulations for eligibility for funding and contact their national funding bodies (NCP) ⁶⁴.

5.2.2 Standard admissibility conditions, page limits and supporting documents.

⁶¹ New PS may join PRIMA and the regularly updated list of PS will be provided by PRIMA-IS (at the following link: <http://prima-med.org/about-us/participating-states/>).

⁶² Entities from Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) are eligible for funding under the same conditions as entities from the Member States to which the OCT in question is linked.

⁶³ The national regulations mention the eligible structures for funding (for example, some funding bodies can fund private entities and other cannot) and a list of criteria to check for their eligibility. National regulations also provide a comprehensive list of eligible costs (for example some funding bodies can support mobility or sub-contracting and other cannot). Therefore, before applying to the call of the Section 2, applicants must verify their own national eligibility for funding by reading carefully the national regulations and by contacting the national contact point appointed for this task.

⁶⁴ Find the NCP contacts at the following [link](#)

For all actions under AWP2024, proposals must comply with the admissibility requirements set out in this sub-section unless supplemented or modified in the call conditions.

To be considered **admissible**, a proposal must be:

- a) Submitted in the electronic submission system before the deadline given in the call conditions;
- b) Readable, accessible and printable;
- c) Complete and inclusive of the requested administrative data, the proposal description, and any other obligatory supporting documents specified in the call conditions;
- d) Include a draft plan to exploit and disseminate the results unless otherwise specified in the call conditions. The draft plan is not required for proposals at the first step of the two-stage submission process.

In addition to the above admissibility requirements, page limits will apply to parts of proposals/applications. Unless stated otherwise in the call conditions, the limit for a first-stage proposal is 10 pages, while the limit for a full proposal is 50 pages. The Electronic Submission System will automatically reject the proposal if it exceeds the page limits.

Proposals must be written in a legible font. The proposal templates will include further guidance on acceptable fonts, margins, and other page formatting.

The structure of proposals must correspond to the requirements specified under each section of the proposal template. Applicants are requested to use PRIMA's template, which can be downloaded from [the PRIMA website](#) under the relevant call section.

The following supporting documents will be required to determine the operational capacity for grant proposals unless otherwise specified in the call:

- a) A curriculum vitae or description of the profile of the persons who will be primarily responsible for carrying out the proposed research and/or innovation activities;
- b) A list of up to five relevant publications and/or products, services (including widely used datasets or software), or other achievements relevant to the call content;
- c) A list of up to five relevant previous projects or activities connected to the subject of this proposal;
- d) A description of any significant infrastructure and/or any major items of technical equipment relevant to the proposed work;
- e) A description of any third parties that are not represented as project partners but who will nonetheless be contributing towards the work (e.g., providing facilities, computing resources).

The evaluators will carry out this scrutiny during the evaluation process under the selection criteria, in particular the award criterion 'Quality and efficiency of the implementation'. Please refer to Section [5.2.6](#) "Evaluation rules".

5.2.3 Standard eligibility conditions.

All proposals must comply with the eligibility conditions based on the ones set out in the Rules for Participation of Horizon 2020 Regulation (EU) No.1290/2013 and any derogations to these as specified in Decision (EU) 2017/1324. Furthermore, proposals must comply with the eligibility conditions set out in this sub-section unless they are supplemented or modified in the call conditions. A proposal will only be considered eligible if:

- a) the coordinator of the proposal is a legal entity established in a PRIMA PS⁶⁵
- b) its content corresponds, wholly or in part, to the topic for which it is submitted
- c) it complies with the eligibility conditions for participation set out in the Table below, depending on the type of action
- d) it complies with national regulations⁶⁶

Table 15. General Eligibility conditions for participation for PRIMA Actions Section 2.

Type of Action	Eligibility conditions for participation ^{67,68,69,70}
Research & Innovation Action (RIA)	At least three legal entities established in three different countries are considered as the Participating States⁷¹ as defined in point 5.2.1. Each of the three must be established in a different country considered to be PRIMA PS by submission deadline under the relevant call, out of which: - at least one must be established in an EU Member State or a third country associated to Horizon 2020 and not being an MPC and - at least one must be established in a third country bordering the Mediterranean Sea (MPC) All three legal entities must be independent of each other.

⁶⁵ This measure is aimed to protect the Union's financial interests and is in line with Article 7(7) of Decision (EU) 2017/1324.the PRIMA Decision

⁶⁶ Please refer to the National Regulations in the PRIMA website at the following link: <https://prima-med.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/National-Regulations-2020-v2.pdf>

⁶⁷ Natural or legal persons, groups or non-State entities covered by the Council sanctions in force are not eligible to participate in Union programmes. Please see the consolidated list of persons, groups and entities subject to Union financial sanctions, available at http://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/sanctions/consol-list_en.html.

⁶⁸ Given that the EU does not recognise the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol, legal persons established in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, or the city of Sevastopol are not eligible to participate in any capacity. This criterion also applies in cases where the action involves financial support given by grant beneficiaries to third parties established in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea or the city of Sevastopol (in accordance with Articles 204 and 205 of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046). Should the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol end, this Work Plan will be revised.

⁶⁹ Legal entities established in Russia, Belarus, or in non-government-controlled territories of Ukraine are not eligible to participate in any capacity. This includes participation as beneficiaries, linked third parties, international partners, third parties providing in-kind contributions, subcontractors, or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any). Legal entities established in Hungary: Following the [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/2506](#), as of 16 December 2022, no legal commitments can be entered into with Hungarian public interest trusts established under the Hungarian Act IX of 2021 or any entity they maintain. Affected entities may continue to apply to calls for proposals. However, as long as the Council measures are not lifted, such entities are not eligible (for funding as beneficiaries, affiliated entities, subcontractors, recipients of financial support to third parties, etc). In case of multi-beneficiary grant calls, applicants will be invited to remove or replace that entity and/or to change its status into associated partner. Tasks and budget may be redistributed accordingly if need be. For UK applicants: Please be aware that following the entry into force of the [EU- UK Withdrawal Agreement](#) on 1 February 2020, the references to natural or legal persons residing or established in a Member State of the European Union are to be understood as including natural or legal persons residing or established in the United Kingdom. Therefore, UK residents and entities are eligible to participate in calls in this Annual Work Plan. EU restrictive measures - Entities subject to EU restrictive measures under Article 29 the [Treaty on the European Union \(TEU\)](#) and Article 215 of the [Treaty on the Functioning of the EU \(TFEU\)](#), Article 75 TFEU are not eligible to participate in any capacity, including as beneficiaries, linked third parties, international partners, third parties providing in-kind contributions, subcontractors or recipients of financial support to third parties (if any).

⁷⁰ The eligibility criteria formulated in Commission notice Nr. 2013/C 205/05 ([OJEU C 205 of 19.07.2013, pp.9-11](#)) apply for all actions under this Work Plan, including for third parties that receive financial support under the action (in accordance with Articles 204 and 205 of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046), notably programme co-fund actions.

⁷¹ The latest information on the PRIMA PS can be found on PRIMA webpage: <http://prima-med.org/>.

5.2.4 Types of activities: specific provisions and funding rates⁷²

Description of the activities: Research and Innovation activities (RIA)

These activities primarily aim to establish new knowledge and/or to explore the feasibility of new or improved technology, product, process, service, or solution. For this purpose, they may include basic and applied research, technology development and integration, testing and validation on a small-scale prototype in a laboratory or simulated environment. Projects may be closely connected, but little demonstration or pilot activities aim to show technical feasibility in a near to operational environment.

All the projects will have to include collaborative research. Collaborative research is compulsory and undertaken by a partnership of institutions (consortium) designed to produce new knowledge through scientific research, whereby each team within the partnership actively pursues specific tasks and objectives to pool the results to contribute to the achievement of a set of common, well-defined project objectives.

Funding level

The level of funding and the list of eligible costs are set out in the national regulations. Each applicant has to comply with the requirements stated in their national regulations. A contact point established in each country and contacted directly by the applicant belonging to the same country will inform the applicants about the rules.

5.2.5 Technology Readiness Levels (TRL)

Where a topic description refers to a TRL, the following definitions apply, unless otherwise specified:

- TRL 1 – basic principles observed
- TRL 2 – technology concept formulated
- TRL 3 – experimental proof of concept
- TRL 4 – technology validated in lab
- TRL 5 – technology validated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
- TRL 6 – technology demonstrated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
- TRL 7 – system prototype demonstration in operational environment
- TRL 8 – system complete and qualified
- TRL 9 – actual system proven in operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies; or in space)

5.2.6 Evaluation rules

1. Selection Criteria

- a) *Financial capacity*: Financial capacity will be checked in accordance with the rules based on those included in the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 and the Horizon 2020 Rules for

⁷² Participants may ask for a lower rate.

Participation Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013. For grants, coordinators will be invited – at the proposal stage – to complete a self-assessment using an online tool⁷³.

- b) *Operational capacity*: As a distinct operation carried out during the evaluation of the award criterion ‘Quality and efficiency of the implementation’, experts will indicate whether the participants have sufficient operational capacity to carry out the proposed work, based on the competence and experience of the individual participant(s).

2. Award criteria, scores, and weighting

Experts will evaluate grant proposals based on the award criteria ‘excellence’, ‘impact’ and ‘quality and efficiency of the implementation’ (see Article 15 (1) of the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013).

The aspects to be considered are set out in the Table next page unless stated otherwise in the call conditions:

⁷³ <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/organisations/lfv.html>

Table 16. Aspects to be considered during the proposal evaluation for each criterion (excellence, impact, quality and efficiency of the implementation in Section 2 calls.

Type of Action	Excellence*	Impact*	Quality and efficiency of the implementation
	The following aspects will be considered, to the extent that the proposed work corresponds to the topic description in the work plan.	The following aspects will be considered:	The following aspects will be considered:
Research & Innovation Activities* (RIAs)	Clarity and pertinence of the objectives; Soundness of the concept, and credibility of the proposed methodology; Fit with the scope and objectives of the PRIMA programme and the call topic description; Extent that the proposed work is beyond the state of the art, and demonstrates innovation potential (e.g. ground-breaking objectives, novel concepts and approaches, new products, services or business and organisational models) Appropriate consideration of interdisciplinary approaches and, where relevant, use of stakeholder knowledge and gender dimension in research and innovation content.	The extent to which the outputs of the project would contribute to one or several of the expected impacts mentioned in the work plan under the relevant topic. -Scores of the proposals will not depend on the number of expected impacts covered. -Any substantial impacts not mentioned in the work plan, that would enhance innovation capacity, create new market opportunities, strengthen competitiveness and growth of companies, address issues related to climate change or the environment, or bring other important benefits for society; -Quality of the proposed measures to: -Exploit and disseminate the project results (including management of IPR), and to manage research data where relevant. -Communicate the project activities to different target audiences.	Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, including extent to which the resources assigned to work packages are in line with their objectives and deliverables; Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management; Complementarity of the participants and extent to which the consortium as whole brings together the necessary expertise; Appropriateness of the allocation of tasks, ensuring that all participants have a valid role and adequate resources in the project to fulfil that role.

* In evaluating the first stage proposals, only aspects in bold will be considered.

3. Scoring and weighting

Unless otherwise specified in the call conditions:

Evaluation scores will be awarded for the overall criteria and not for the different aspects listed in the above Table. For full proposals, each criterion will be scored out of 5. The threshold for individual criteria will be 3. The overall threshold, applying to the sum of the three individual scores, will be 10.

Only the criteria ‘excellence’ and ‘impact’ will be evaluated for the evaluation of first-stage proposals under a two-stage submission procedure. Concerning the impact criterion, only the aspects in bold will be considered for first-stage proposals. The threshold for both individual criteria will be 4.

For each indicative budget split in the call conditions, the overall threshold, applying to the sum of the two individual scores, will be set at the level such that the total requested budget of proposals admitted to stage 2 is as close as possible to three times the available budget, and in any case, not less than two and a half times the available funding.

The actual level will therefore depend on the volume of proposals received. The threshold is expected to be set at 8 or 8.5 usually.

4. Evaluation procedure

Calls are subject to a two-stage submission and evaluation process.

Individual Evaluation: Each eligible proposal is evaluated remotely by at least three independent expert evaluators (see Article 15 of the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation Regulation (EU) No1290/2013), who carry out a technical evaluation based on the criteria mentioned above. An Individual Evaluation Report, which includes comments and scores for all evaluation criteria, is prepared by each evaluator.

Panel review: after the remote individual evaluation, evaluators meet in a panel to discuss and find agreement on the initial comments and scores attributed to each proposal. They will prepare an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR) for each proposal, which shows the outcome of the evaluation of the project proposal. The panel is also responsible for preparing a ranking list of the proposals by consensus. Project funding decisions will be taken based on this ranking list. The panel configuration allows evaluators to overview all eligible proposals, checking the consistency of comments and marks, not just the ones they have evaluated, which enables them to decide fairly when ranking the proposals. ⁱ

In case of disagreement or project proposals with the same score (only for full proposals), the panel will determine the priority order for proposals described in the section below.

5. Priority order for proposals with the same score

Unless the call conditions indicate otherwise, the following method will be applied (except for the first step of the two-stage submission process, where proposals having the same score are kept together and no prioritisation is made.)

If necessary, the panel will determine a priority order for proposals with the same score within a ranked list. Whether or not such a prioritisation is carried out will depend on the available budget or other conditions set out in the call fiche.

The following approach will be applied successively for every group of *ex-aequo* proposals requiring prioritisation, starting with the highest scored group, and continuing in descending order:

- a) Proposals that address topics, or sub-topics not otherwise covered by more highly ranked proposals, will be considered the highest priority.
- b) The proposals identified under (1), if any, will be prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the criterion excellence. When these scores are equal, priority will be based on scores for the criterion impact.
- c) If necessary, any further prioritisation will be based on the following factor: number of MPCs partners, presence of SMEs, and gender balance among the personnel named in the proposal who will be primarily responsible for carrying out the research and/or innovation activities.

- d) The panel may decide to further prioritise by considering how to enhance the quality of the project portfolio through synergies between projects or other factors related to the call or PRIMA's objectives in general. These factors will be documented in the report of the Panel.
- e) The method described in (a), (b), (c) and (d) will then be applied to the remaining *ex-aequo* in the group.

At the end of the panel meeting, the panel will recommend one or more ranked lists for the proposals under evaluation, following the scoring systems indicated above. A ranked list for every indicative budget shown in the call conditions will be drawn up.

5.2.7 Funding decision and communication

In line with Article 6(10), point (c), of Decision (EU) 2017/1324, the proposals will be ranked according to evaluation results. PRIMA-IS will select proposals to be funded based on this ranking. Since the funding of participants in the activities will be the responsibility of PS and not PRIMA-IS, the respective PS will need to provide adequate funding in line with the national rules. If the PS cannot fund one or more projects, PRIMA-IS may select to fund the projects directly following them in the ranking list(s).

The proposal's coordinator receives an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR), showing the evaluation results for a given proposal. In the ESR, the overall scores will be provided for proposals that successfully pass the first stage of the two-stage submission process. Common feedback is provided to all coordinators, but the first stage ESR is only sent after the second step evaluation.

Applicants whose proposal is awarded funding will receive a formal communication informing them that the grant preparation phase can start.

If special procedures apply, they will be set in the call conditions.

5.2.8 Budget flexibility

The budgets set out in AWP2024 are indicative. Unless otherwise stated, final budgets may vary following evaluation.

The final figures may vary by up to 20% compared to those indicated in AWP2024 for the following budgeted activities:

- Total expenditure for calls (up to 20% of the total spending for each call);
- Repartition of call budgets within a call (up to 20% of the total expenditure of the call);
- Evaluation and monitoring (up to 20% of the total spending on all these activities);
- Other individual actions are not implemented through calls for proposals (up to 20% for each).

5.2.9 Conditions related to open access to research data

Participants are encouraged to engage in research data sharing. This means that beneficiaries are encouraged to deposit and take measures to make it possible for third parties to access, mine, exploit, reproduce and disseminate, free of charge for any user:

- 1) Data needed to validate the results presented in scientific publications ('underlying data'); and
- 2) Other data as specified by the beneficiaries in their Data Management Plan (DMP, see below).

Consortia may "opt-out" of these provisions on the following grounds:

- a) Incompatibility with the need to protect results that are expected to be commercially or industrially exploited
- b) Incompatibility with the need for confidentiality in connection with security issues
- c) Incompatibility with rules on protecting personal data
- d) Incompatibility with the project's main aim
- e) If the project will not generate/collect any research data, or
- f) If there are other legitimate reasons not to provide open access to research data

Please note that it is also possible to opt-out before signature and opt-in during project implementation initially.

A proposal will not be evaluated more favourably if the consortium agrees to share its research data, nor will it be penalized if it opts out. Further information on open access to research data is available on the PRIMA electronic submission system.

A Data Management Plan (DMP) details what data the project will generate, how it will be exploited and made accessible for verification and re-use, and how it will be curated and preserved. The use of a Data Management Plan is encouraged for all projects that do not opt-out.

Projects that opt out are also strongly encouraged to submit a Data Management Plan if relevant for their planned research. Further information on Data Management Plans is available on [PRIMA website](#).

5.2.10 Applicable common principles to all the actions and activities

Under Article 6(9) of Decision (EU) 2017/1324, activities included in AWP2024 that the PS funds without the Union financial contribution must be implemented in compliance with common principles adopted by PRIMA-IS after obtaining approval from the Commission.

Equal treatment

Participation in PSIAs, including the right to receive funding, should generally be open to any type of legal entity, private or public. However, it is understood and accepted that national legislation or specific objectives of action may dictate that only certain legal entities, e.g., public institutions, can participate and receive funding in particular activities.

Funding to PSIA actions should be allocated to the broadest possible extent through open calls for proposals, and the PRIMA programme should be mentioned in the call text. However, it is understood and accepted that existing national research infrastructures and organisations, e.g., publicly funded research institutes, can be used to implement parts or the entire PSIA.

The principle of equality and non-discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, and sexual orientation should be observed and promoted.

Transparency

The review process's evaluation, selection criteria, and details should be published before applicants submit proposals.

Funding awarding through calls for proposals or institutional funding is made public.

Any communication or publication related to PSIAs, whether undertaken by the PRIMA Foundation, a Participating State, or participants in an activity, must be labelled or co-labelled as '[name of the PSIA] is part of the PRIMA programme supported by the European Union.

Independent peer-review evaluation

Applications submitted through open calls for proposals should be evaluated by panels of leading independent domestic and/or non-domestic experts (peer review).

In case of direct funding to a national research infrastructure or organisation, the quality of the research output by the national research infrastructures or organisation should be assessed regularly and in a structured manner, preferably through independent peer review.

Ethics and scientific integrity

As defined in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, the principles of scientific integrity should be observed and promoted.

Fundamental ethical principles, particularly those related to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the European Convention on Human Rights and its Supplementary Protocols, should be adhered to and enforced, both during the selection of funding and during the subsequent implementation of the actions.

Exploitation and dissemination of results

The findings of research activities included as PSIAs in the PRIMA Annual Work Plan should be promptly made available to the research community and the public.

5.2.11 Specific additional information and relations between the beneficiaries and their national funding bodies

Grant agreement

Each beneficiary will be funded directly by its own national funding body. Therefore, a grant agreement is concluded between each beneficiary and its national funding body. The rules for this agreement are the national rules set in the national regulations.

The grant agreement will cover the entire duration of the project and must be synchronized in time (starting date of the activities and end of the project) between the different funding bodies involved in the project's funding.

Consortium agreement

A consortium agreement is required and must be sent to all the funding bodies involved in the project. This consortium agreement must address at least:

- a) The repartition of the tasks between partners;
- b) The sharing of the intellectual property rights of the project results;
- c) The conditions of publication and dissemination of the results;
- d) The technology transfer and the exploitation of the results
- e) Any specific requirements from a funding body

The funding agencies provide no template for the consortium agreement.

The Project Coordinator

Each Consortium needs to appoint a Coordinator, who will have the following role:

For the preparation and the submission of the proposal:

- Be the single point of contact between the PRIMA-IS secretariat and the consortium partners from proposal preparation to submission;
- Ensure that all the partners involved in the consortium are eligible for participation. Submit the Application Form on behalf of the Consortium.

During the implementation of the project:

- Be the single point of contact between the PRIMA-IS secretariat and the consortium partners from the proposal preparation to submission;
- Be a point of contact between the Funding bodies and the consortium partners in case of requiring a grant extension or scientific/managerial modifications. The funding agencies should also be in direct contact with their beneficiaries to discuss changes that affect the grant agreement;
- Ensure the role of supervision of the project workflow with the help of WP leaders;
- Joint consortium reports (e.g., progress reports for PRIMA-IS) should be sent directly by the coordinator to the PRIMA-IS, with the national funding agencies in the copy.

The coordinator will not be responsible for the financial management of PRIMA research funding, which will be handled directly between national beneficiaries and their national funding bodies in each participating country.

A detailed description of the Participating States Initiated Activities (PSIAs)

The PRIMA Participating States implement and fund a broad array of national programme activities that contribute to the objectives of the PRIMA programme. These Participating and Partner States' Initiated Activities (PSIAs) are implemented and funded independently from the PRIMA-IS by one PS alone or by several PS without the Union's financial contribution.

PSIAs are an important contribution from PS to the PRIMA programme as they promote research collaboration in the region and enable PSs to have an overview of activities that their country (research and development agencies, different Ministries, etc.) funds on water management, farming systems and food-value chains and they support the PRIMA programme achieving its objective of promoting cooperation, networking, and integration of national research programmes. For these reasons, PSIAs are included in the PRIMA Annual Work Plans.

In line with Article 6 (8) of the [Decision \(EU\) 2017/1324](#), those activities may be included in the Annual Work Plan only following the positive outcome of their external independent evaluation by international peer review concerning the objectives of PRIMA and may be launched only in the reference year and only after the adoption of the Annual Work Plan for that year.

Please note that following Article 6(9) of Decision (EU) 2017/1324, activities included in AWP2024 that the PS funds without the Union financial contribution must be implemented in compliance with common principles adopted by PRIMA-IS after obtaining approval from the EU Commission. In particular the principles of equal treatment, transparency, independent peer-review evaluation and selection (provided in sub-section [5.2.10](#))

Any communication related to PSIAs, whether undertaken by the PRIMA-IS, a Participating State or any of the participants in a PSIA, must indicate that they are part of the PRIMA programme supported by the EU (see section [3.1](#)).

The total cost for new PSIAs in 2024 comprises EUR 41 203 663.

All PSIAs are listed in Table 8 and the sections below, with a brief overview of the PS, the subject matter of the activity, the countries in the Mediterranean region where the activity is conducted, and the total indicative commitment for the activity. Wherever relevant, local currencies have been converted into Euros using official exchange rates.

The European Commission's acceptance of the PSIAs as in-kind contributions of the PRIMA Participating States to the PRIMA programme will be based on assessing the information provided through the PRIMA-IS annual reporting to the European Commission.

This reporting should include reporting by the Participating States according to the requirements agreed with the European Commission in line with Article 19 of the Delegation Agreement concluded between PRIMA-IS and the European Commission.

This assessment will verify the costs incurred by the Participating States for the implementation of those PSIAs, the relevance of those PSIAs in contributing to the specific objectives of the programme, their correct labelling in any communication, and their compliance with the common principles agreed by the PRIMA-IS, on behalf of the Participating States, and the European Commission.

6.1 FR.2024.1

Code	FR-2024-1
Theme:	Water management, Agri-food value chain, Farming Systems
Activity title	Research Projects funded by ANR under the Annual National Call for proposals (AAPG) on PRIMA-related issues
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	The Generic Call for Proposals (AAPG) is the French National Research Agency's (ANR) main call. It is directed toward all scientific communities and all public and private players involved in French research. It is designed to give researchers in various scientific fields access to co-funding in many research themes, basic or applied, in addition to their allocated recurrent funding.
Rationale/Impact	The French National Research Agency (ANR) is a public administrative institution under the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation. The agency funds project-based research by public operators cooperating or with private companies. The ANR was founded 2005 to promote French project-based research and to stimulate innovation by promoting the emergence of collaborative multidisciplinary projects and encouraging collaboration between the public and private sectors. It also aims to strengthen the position of French research at the EU level and worldwide. The Agency's missions, defined in the decree of 1 August 2006 amended on 24 March 2014, are: • To fund and promote the development of basic and targeted research, technological innovation, technology transfer and public-private partnerships • To implement the Work Programme approved by the French Minister of Research, following consultation with the supervisory ministers of France's research bodies and public higher education institutions • To manage major government investment programmes in the fields of higher education and research and oversee their implementation • To strengthen scientific cooperation across the EU and worldwide by aligning its Work Programme with EU and international initiatives • To analyse trends in research offering and assess the impact of the funding it allocates on scientific output in France The ANR's activities are thus designed to support the excellence of French research at various TRL, support basic research, encourage academic and public-private scientific partnerships and promote EU and international cooperation. To achieve these goals, it organises competitive calls for proposals. It conducts rigorous selection processes based on peer review in compliance with international standards: impartiality, equal treatment, confidentiality, ethics, scientific integrity and transparency. As part of its quality policy, the ANR is strengthening the reliability of its procedures and continuously adapting them to guarantee selection quality, optimising the quality of the service delivered to its community of users, and ensuring its activities efficiency. The Agency has ISO 9001 certification for its selection processes.
Objectives	AAPG 2024 is divided into 50 research themes, each with its own Scientific Evaluation Panel (CES): • There are 37 research themes across seven main scientific fields: environmental sciences, energy and materials sciences, digital sciences, life sciences, social sciences and humanities, mathematics and its interactions, and physics of matter, high-energy, Earth and universe sciences.

	- There are 13 research themes covering cross-disciplinary challenges and integrating issues from various scientific fields. ANR aims at: - Funding and promoting the development of basic and targeted research, technological innovation, technology transfer and public-private partnerships - Implementing the Work Programme approved by the French Minister of Research, following consultation with the supervisory ministers of France's research bodies and public higher education institutions - Managing major government investment programmes in the fields of higher education and research and overseeing their implementation - Strengthening scientific cooperation across the EU and worldwide by aligning its Work Programme with EU and international initiatives - Analysing trends in research offering and assessing the impact of the funding it allocates on scientific output in France
Deliverables	
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the call for Proposals	Generic Call for Proposals 2024
Publication date (call 2024)	Publication of the work programme and call for proposals in July 2024. Publication of the results of the call for proposals in July 2024
Deadline for applications	Deadline April 2024
Expected date of award	July 2024
Scope of the call for Proposals	
Implementation	
Type of Activity	Research Innovation Action (RIA) ✓
Start date of the activity	July 2024
Duration	One year (programme duration)
Funding institution	ANR
Funding beneficiaries	All scientific communities and all public and private players involved in French research
Countries where research is conducted	Fieldwork and collaborations may be performed in any country
Collaborating partner(s)	All the countries participating in PRIMA calls are included as potential collaborating partners
Commitments	
Total national public commitment for the entire duration of the activity (in EUR)	FR – EUR 1 000 000
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	The funded projects align with most of the main PRIMA Calls thematic areas or crosscutting water management and farming systems. Research projects on food security and the agri-food value chain are also increasingly funded.
Website	https://anr.fr/en/

6.2 ES.2024.1

Code	ES-2024-1
Theme:	Water management, Agri-food value chain, Farming Systems
Activity title	Funding allocated to National projects in the Agro-food value chain, Farming and Management of water R&D fields
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	CDTI funds R&D projects carried out by Spanish companies in a continuous open call. This R&D Call is aimed to Industry-driven and market-oriented R&D projects in Spain, consisting in the development or substantial improvement of new products, processes or services. Only enterprises are eligible to get the funding support; participation of research institutes/universities and other organizations is welcome as self-funded participants or subcontractors. These R&D projects must have a minimum eligible budget of 175,000 € and its length may be from 12 to 36 months. The funding modality for the project will be a Partially Reimbursable Aid, covering up to 85% of the total approved budget. This CDTI funding may be distributed in the following way: • A reimbursable tranche (RT) within a time period of 10 or 15 years, to be counted from the centre of gravity of the project, which is calculated in accordance with the project duration and the amount of the budget targets. The first reimbursement is made 3 years after the centre of gravity of the project and at least 2 years since its completion date. The interest rate of the aforementioned RT shall be fixed and equal to the one-year Euribor, which shall be determined when the project is approved. • A non-reimbursable tranche (NRT), adjusted in accordance with the characteristics of the project, the beneficiary and the source of the funds used for the funding. This tranche shall be contingent upon fund availability. • An ex-ante document to allow the beneficiary to benefit from a tax exemption related to R&D activities.
Rationale/Impact	It's expected to foster the business competitiveness of beneficiaries, improving their portfolio of products and services as well as increasing the efficiency of their processes and activities. The outcomes of these projects will lead to the improvement of farming and agro-food activities, to develop eco-friendly activities and production processes as well as a more sustainable use of water. A better quality of products will be promoted as well as the traceability in the food chain. A considerable reduction of environmental impact and a more efficient use of available resources are expected.
Objectives	The main objective of this instrument is to support R&D activities of Spanish companies to foster their competitiveness through the development of new/ improved products, processes and services, focused to fulfil economic, environmental and social challenges. This Call hasn't a sectorial approach so is open to all sectors, including the fields of water, environment, farming, ecosystem, agro-food, etc. With a bottom-up approach, R&D open call projects aims to advance in the State of the Art of technologies, products and processes tackled by Spanish companies which operates in the so related fields, encouraging cooperation schemes with research entities and other companies from Spain or from other country all around the world.
Deliverables	
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	

Title of the call for Proposals	National R&D continuous CDTI Call
Publication date (call 2024)	This call is continuously open since the 80's so it will be open the whole year 2024. There won't be a publication date.
Deadline for applications	31-12-2024
Expected date of award	Approval of these projects could be done throughout 2024 and 2025 (depending on the submission date)
Scope of the call for Proposals	R&D and innovation activities with a TRL 3-6 carried out by private companies
Implementation	
Type of Activity	Research Innovation Action (RIA) ✓
Start date of the activity	Projects can be submitted since the 1st of January 2024
Duration	The whole year 2024
Funding institution	CDTI-Spanish Agency of Innovation
Funding beneficiaries	Spanish private companies and Economic Interest Groups (EIG)
Countries where research is conducted	Spain
Collaborating partner(s)	Companies, Research bodies (Universities, Public Research Bodies and Innovation and Technological Centres)
Commitments	
Total national public commitment for the entire duration of the activity (in EUR)	According to the figures previously committed by CDTI to the PRIMA PSIAAs, this amount could reach up to 30 M€.
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	The CDTI R&D National Call funds the development of technologies, processes and products in the fields of water, natural resources, agro-food, environment, farming, etc., with a bottom-up approach focused to market and social needs. The supported projects will contribute to a business competitiveness tackling technology, social and environmental challenges in so related fields, which are included in Thematic Areas of PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda. Activities funded by the CDTI R&D instrument support interdisciplinary and cross-cutting actions that are aligned with the PRIMA AWP.
Website	https://www.cdti.es/index.asp?MP=100&MS=802&MN=2

6.3 ES.2024.2

Code	ES-2024-2
Theme:	Water management, Agri-food value chain, Farming Systems
Activity title	AEI Annual Action Plan 2024
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	The Annual Action Plan is configured as the planning instrument of the State Research Agency within the framework of the management contract, which includes, on the basis of available resources, the activities to be carried out in the corresponding year to achieve its objectives. In accordance with the provisions of article 23 of the Agency's Statute, the Annual Action Plan includes, among others, the following activities: a) Those of a formative, methodological nature, and determination of management indicators of the activities that correspond to the Agency. b) Those of management, monitoring and control of the actions that, in terms of scientific, technical and innovation research, correspond to the Agency in accordance with its purpose and functions. c) The organization and management of the scientific-technical evaluation of the proposals that require financing from the programs and instruments assigned to the Agency or the results of the agreement and collaboration agreements.
Rationale/Impact	Generation of knowledge, improvement of social, economic and technology conditions of the Spanish society.
Objectives	Plan the actions to implement financing, evaluation, management and monitoring of scientific and technical research activity aimed at the generation, exchange and exploitation of knowledge promoted by the General Administration of the State by its sole initiative or in concurrence with other Spanish Administrations or entities or of other countries or international organizations.
Deliverables	Projects, Researchers trained, researchers under mobility
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the call for Proposals	Proyectos I+D Retos Investigación y Generación de Conocimiento. Acciones Dinamización Redes Investigación: -FPI subprogramme. -JdC Juan de la Cierva subprogramme. -RyC Ramón y Cajal subprogramme.
Publication date (call 2024)	2024
Deadline for applications	2024
Expected date of award	2024
Scope of the call for Proposals	Proyectos I+D Retos Investigación y Generación de Conocimiento: the objectives are to finance the execution of «R+D+I Projects tackling Social Challenges and the advancement of knowledge, regardless of the time horizon and regardless of the scope of application. Acciones Dinamización Redes Investigación: "Research Networks" aim relation and development of networks of research: Thematic networks made up of researchers in similar thematic area of knowledge that require a multidisciplinary approach. Strategic networks made up of Spanish managers or researchers who participate in European research initiatives or who advise, expand or disseminate scientific and technological knowledge among representatives of bodies of the State. All calls under the State Programme for the Promotion of Talent and Its Employability, aim to promote formation and incorporation of national and foreign researchers with an outstanding trajectory in R&D centers and private companies. On the one hand, young

	researchers are granted contracts, and, on the other hand, the program promotes the creation of permanent jobs for their subsequent incorporation in the agents of the Spanish science system, technology and innovation beneficiaries. There are three different modalities open to researchers from all over the world: -FPI subprogramme that aims to train doctors by financing employment contracts. -JdC Juan de la Cierva subprogramme that aims to promote the recruitment, by Spanish research organizations or R&D centers, of young people in possession of a doctor's degree. -RyC Ramón y Cajal subprogramme aims to promote the incorporation researchers with a distinguished career in R&D centers.
Implementation	
Type of Activity	Research Innovation Action (RIA) ✓ Training and Mobility Action (TMA)✓ (FPI: train doctors by financing employment contracts.) Training action ✓ Joint research project ✓
Start date of the activity	Not defined
Duration	Not defined
Funding institution	Agencia Estatal de Investigación (AEI)
Funding beneficiaries	Spanish Research Institutions, universities, research centres, technological centers Spanish and foreign Individuals for the Talent programme.
Countries where research is conducted	Not defined
Collaborating partner(s)	Not defined
Commitments	
Total national public commitment for the entire duration of the activity (in EUR)	According to the figures previously committed by AEI to the PRIMA PSIAs, this amount could reach up to 10 M€.
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	The scientific lines "water management, farming and food" of the AEI are aligned both with those of the Ministry of Science and Innovation and of the AEI. The financing procedures of the AEI have also been adapted with the aim of expediting the financing of international collaboration projects, among which are those of PRIMA.
Website	AEI Annual Action Plan 2024 (will be published in 2024). As similar one published in 2023: https://www.aei.gob.es/sites/default/files/page/field_file/2023-02/Plan%20de%20Acci%C3%B3n%20Anual%202023%20a%20CC%20y%20CR_final.pdf PROYECTOS I+D Retos Investigación y Generación de Conocimiento: https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/proyectos-generacion-conocimiento-2022 Acciones Dinamización Redes Investigación: https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/redes-investigacion-2022 -FPI subprogramme: https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/ayudas-contratos-predoctorales-formacion-doctoresas-2022 -JdC Juan de la Cierva subprogramme https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/ayudas-contratos-juan-cierva-2022 -RyC Ramón y Cajal subprogramme

	https://www.aei.gob.es/convocatorias/buscador-convocatorias/ayudas-contratos-ramon-cajal-ryc-2022
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6.4 TR.2021.1

Code	TR-2024-1
Theme:	Water management, Agri-food value chain, Farming Systems
Activity title	PRIMA Participating States Calls for Proposals supporting PRIMA
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	Through this action, bilateral/multilateral joint calls for proposals in PRIMA-related thematic areas may be set up between Türkiye's funding agency TÜBİTAK and other PS funding agencies. Such an initiative aims to build the Research and Innovation capacities of the PS involved, in the areas of Water, Food and Agriculture.
Rationale/Impact	The focus for these calls is to build research and innovation capacities and to develop knowledge and common innovative solutions for integrated water provision and management in the Mediterranean area, to make them more climate resilient, efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally and socially sustainable. This will be achieved through a competitive and transparent process of selection. The main impacts will be to (but not limited to these): 1) Successful projects will act as a springboard for consortia to apply for Section 1 and Section 2 PRIMA Calls 2) Increase awareness on the PRIMA Initiative 3) Further support local researchers who have been unsuccessful in previous PRIMA Calls 4) Encourage partnerships with other PRIMA PS to launch bi-lateral and multi-lateral calls to further support the collaborative nature of PRIMA.
Objectives	The general objective of the call is to promote national and regional research and innovation in the strategic thematic areas of PRIMA and to encourage more participation in PRIMA activities. This call will: • generate new knowledge relevant to the PRIMA thematic areas • foster capacity-building through learning by doing and hands-on training • strengthen the link between evidence generation and policy-making in the PRIMA thematic areas • enhance experience-exchange with researchers in the other PRIMA PS.
Deliverables	- Bilateral R&I projects on Water Management, Agriculture and Agro Food Value Chains - Mobility of researchers between the PRIMA PS - Research outcomes – scientific papers, attendance at conferences, participation in joint events between the PS as well as other dissemination efforts. - Project reporting during the interim and end of projects. - Increase the possibility of establishing consortia for future proposal submissions under Section 1 and Section 2 PRIMA Calls
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the call for Proposals	Calls for Proposals for the Implementation of Projects under the thematic areas of PRIMA
Publication date (call 2024)	1 st quarter of 2024
Deadline for applications	2 nd quarter of 2024
Expected date of award	3 rd - 4 th quarters of 2024
Scope of the call for Proposals	Participating States will launch a bi-/multilateral call for research proposals under the PRIMA Initiative calls Section 3 for 2024. The aim of such calls is to promote research in PRIMA-related topics which could address the identified national gaps in funding in these topics, and to increase the use of evidence-based actions which may not have been addressed through the PRIMA calls under PRIMA Sections 1 and 2.
Implementation	

Type of Activity	Research Innovation Action (RIA) ✓ Innovation Action (IA) ✓ Scholarship ✓ Mobility ✓ Joint research project ✓
Start date of the activity	March/April 2024
Duration	Project duration will be 1-2 years
Funding institution	PRIMA Funding Agencies
Funding beneficiaries	PRIMA Participating Countries
Countries where research is conducted	PRIMA Participating Countries
Collaborating partner(s)	PRIMA Funding Agencies
Commitments	
Total national public commitment for the entire duration of the activity (in EUR)	TR – Up to EUR 58 048 + Project Incentive Premium (max. EUR 9 362) + Overhead (max. EUR 16 253) per partner. Total amounts to EUR 83 663. Other PS can have a specific allocated budget.
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	The thematic focus on Agricultural Research, Water Management, and Agro Food Value Chain, will be in alignment with the three thematic pillars of PRIMA
Website	www.tubitak.gov.tr

6.5 MT.2024.1

Code	MT-2024-1
Theme:	Water management, Agri-food value chain, Farming Systems
Activity title	PRIMA Participating States Calls for Proposals supporting PRIMA
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	Through this action, bilateral/multilateral joint calls for proposals in PRIMA-related thematic areas may be set up between Malta's funding agency MCST and other PS funding agencies. Such an initiative aims to build the Research and Innovation capacities of the PS involved, in the areas of Water, Food and Agriculture.
Rationale/Impact	The focus for these calls is to build research and innovation capacities and to develop knowledge and common innovative solutions for integrated water provision and management in the Mediterranean area, to make them more climate resilient, efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally and socially sustainable. This will be achieved through a competitive and transparent process of selection. The main impacts will be to (but not limited to these): 1) Successful projects will act as a springboard for consortia to apply for Section 1 and Section 2 PRIMA Calls 2) Increase awareness on the PRIMA Initiative 3) Further support local researchers who have been unsuccessful in previous PRIMA Calls 4) Encourage partnerships with other PRIMA PS to launch bi-lateral and multi-lateral calls to further support the collaborative nature of PRIMA.
Objectives	The general objective of the call is to promote national and regional research and innovation in the strategic thematic areas of PRIMA and to encourage more participation in PRIMA activities. This call will: • generate new knowledge relevant to the PRIMA thematic areas • foster capacity-building through learning by doing and hands-on training • strengthen the link between evidence generation and policy-making in the PRIMA thematic areas • enhance experience-exchange with researchers in the other PRIMA PS.
Deliverables	- Bilateral R&I projects on Water Management, Agriculture and Agro Food Value Chains - Mobility of researchers between the PRIMA PS - Research outcomes – scientific papers, attendance at conferences, participation in joint events between the PS as well as other dissemination efforts. - Project reporting during the interim and end of projects. - Increase the possibility of establishing consortia for future proposal submissions under Section 1 and Section 2 PRIMA Calls
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the call for Proposals	Calls for Proposals for the Implementation of Projects under the thematic areas of PRIMA
Publication date (call 2024)	1 st quarter of 2024
Deadline for applications	2 nd quarter of 2024
Expected date of award	3 rd - 4 th quarters of 2024
Scope of the call for Proposals	Participating States will launch a bi-/multilateral call for research proposals under the PRIMA Initiative calls Section 3 for 2024. The aim of such calls is to promote research in PRIMA-related topics which could address the identified national gaps in funding in these topics, and to increase the use of evidence-based actions which may not have been addressed through the PRIMA calls under PRIMA Sections 1 and 2.
Implementation	

Type of Activity	Research Innovation Action (RIA) ✓ Innovation Action (IA) ✓ Mobility ✓ Joint research project ✓
Start date of the activity	March/April 2024
Duration	Project duration will be between 1-2 years
Funding institution	PRIMA Funding Agencies
Funding beneficiaries	PRIMA Participating Countries
Countries where research is conducted	PRIMA Participating Countries
Collaborating partner(s)	PRIMA Participating Agencies
Commitments	
Total national public commitment for the entire duration of the activity (in EUR)	MT – EUR 100 000. Other PS can have a specific allocated budget.
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	The thematic focus on Agricultural Research, Water Management, and Agro Food Value Chain, will be in alignment with the three thematic pillars of PRIMA
Website	www.mcst.gov.mt

6.6 MT.2024.2

Code	MT-2024-2
Theme:	Water management, Agri-food value chain, Farming Systems
Activity title	PRIMA Participating States Calls for Proposals supporting PRIMA
Activity description	
Abstract (publishable)	Through this action, entities that are based in Malta, can establish collaborative links with fellow peers in Universities, Research Organisations and/or Industry that are based in another PRIMA PS. The PRIMA Training and Mobility Call will support strategic visits, placements or other joint activities that may facilitate different partners to come together and potentially submit joint applications for PRIMA.
Rationale/Impact	The focus for this action is to build research and innovation capacities through training and mobility activities. Such activities would empower researchers and R&I stakeholders through training, sharing of best practices, knowledge transfer and networking, as well as establish successful partner matches for future collaborations, to propose and undertake joint R&I PRIMA projects. This will be achieved through a competitive and transparent process of selection. The foreseen main impacts will be to (but not limited to): 1) Increase awareness on the PRIMA Initiative. 2) Train researchers who are gaining expertise in the relevant thematic areas. 3) Facilitate meetings between researchers with common research interests in order to successfully applied for the PRIMA-Calls. 4) Share best practices through research visits and workshops.

	5) Transfer knowledge and encourage dissemination amongst entities from different PS through the organisation of seminars and workshops. 6) Further support local researchers who have been unsuccessful in previous PRIMA Calls to find new partners and to widen their network further.
Objectives	The objective of the Call is to promote national and regional research and innovation in the thematic areas of PRIMA, and to encourage more participation in PRIMA, through the fostering of international collaborations. This Call is foreseen to: • widen the research network for Mediterranean researchers and practitioners operating in the fields of PRIMA. • foster capacity-building of researchers/practitioners by learning through hands-on training and sharing of best practices on water sustainability, land and food management. • foster a culture for transnational research and high-quality research excellence outputs. • provide access to research facilities.
Deliverables	- Mobility of researchers between Malta and other PRIMA PSs for training, workshops and research seminars. - Joint Research Actions in the PRIMA thematic areas between stakeholders in different PRIMA PS - Research outcomes – scientific papers, attendance at conferences as well as other dissemination efforts. - Technical/final Report at the end of the activity - Increase the possibility of establishing consortia for future proposal submissions under Section 1 and Section 2 PRIMA Calls
Information on the eventual Call(s) for Proposals	
Title of the call for Proposals	PRIMA Training and Mobility Award (IPAS+ Option C)
Publication date (call 2024)	2 nd quarter of 2024
Deadline for applications	TBC
Expected date of award	TBC
Scope of the call for Proposals	Malta will launch a call for training and mobility under the PRIMA Section 3 initiatives for 2024. The aim of the call is to promote training and mobility activities, associated with PRIMA-related topics that could address shortcomings associated with effective partner searching, unsuccessful partner collaborations due to the lack of in-person and on-site meetings, as well as limitations in the transfer and application of existing knowledge across PSs. Addressing such limitations can help increase the propensity for stronger project consortia composition.
Implementation	
Type of Activity	Mobility ✓ Training action ✓ Joint research project ✓
Start date of the activity	2 nd quarter 2024
Duration	Applicants would have the possibility to use the award within 1 year from date of award.

Funding institution	Malta Council for Science & Technology
Funding beneficiaries	Stakeholders in Malta
Countries where research is conducted	PRIMA Participating Countries
Collaborating partner(s)	Stakeholders in PRIMA Participating Countries
Commitments	
Total national public commitment for the entire duration of the activity (in EUR)	MT – EUR 20 000
Alignment with PRIMA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda	This initiative aligns well with the Capacity Building cross-cutting activity, described in Chapter 5 of the PRIMA SRIA, whereby PRIMA strives to enhance research capacity in Euro-Mediterranean countries, through training programmes for researchers and entrepreneurs.
Website	www.mcst.gov.mt



PRIMA

PARTNERSHIP FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA

ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2024



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