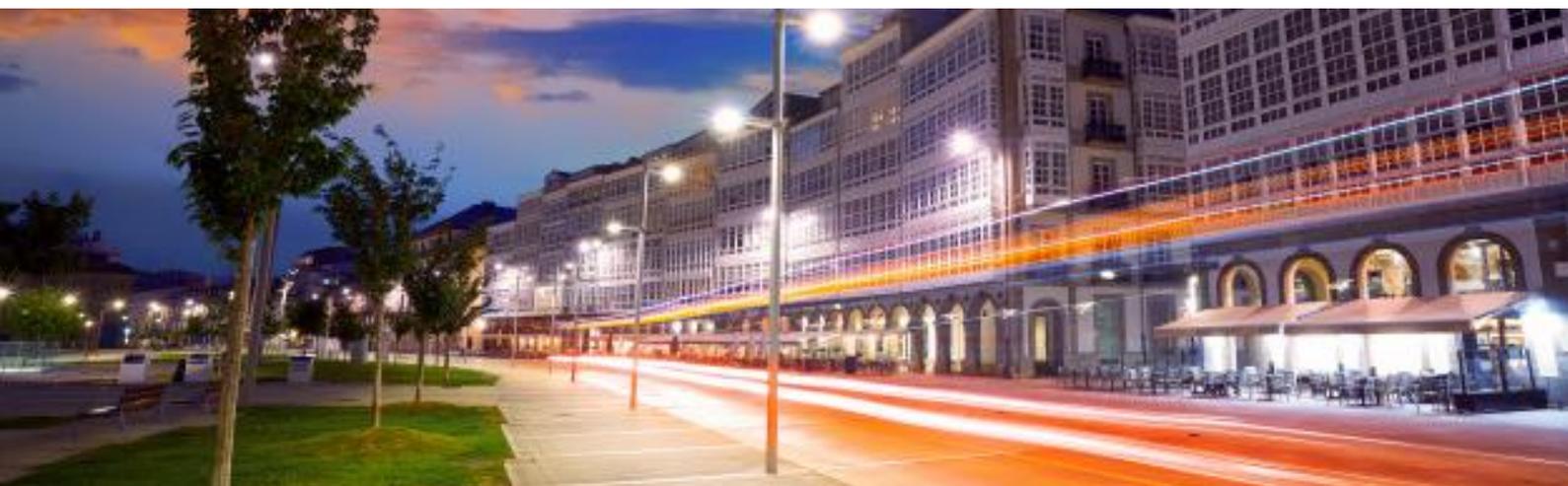


*Development of sustainable energy and climate action plans and climate adaptation measures in 6 municipalities*

## Life and Horizon 2020 programmes



### Background

Risks coming from climate change have a special incidence over urban areas, such as rising temperature, sea-level rising, water scarcity, droughts, flooding and food supply risk. These impacts become more intense when public services, infrastructures and housing are affected.

Population growth, together with climate change effects, form a lethal combination which is already increasing the risks for human health.

### Objective

The LIFE programme is the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action created in 1992. LIFE's general objective is to help implement and develop EU environmental and climate policy and legislation by co-financing projects with European added value.

Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme. The goal is to ensure Europe produces world-class science and technology, removes barriers to innovation and makes it easier for the public and private sectors to work together in delivering solutions to big challenges facing our society.

### Description of the funding opportunity

The LIFE programme is divided in two sub-programmes, one for environment (representing 75% of the overall financial envelope) and one for climate change (representing 25% of the envelope).

Life programme finances projects for both climate change mitigation and for climate change adaptation. In terms of climate change mitigation, Life programme supports projects in the areas of renewable energies, energy efficiency, farming, land use, and peatland management. In terms of climate change adaptation programme finances projects in the areas of resilience to water scarcity,

droughts, forest fires or floods, adaptive technologies for economic sectors, and safeguarding natural resources.

It provides action grants for best practice, pilot and demonstration projects that contribute to increased resilience to climate change and contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the implementation and development of EU policy and law, best practices and solutions. The European Commission is particularly looking for technologies and solutions that are ready to be implemented in close-to-market conditions, at industrial or commercial scale, during the project duration. The budget for the current LIFE programme is EUR 3.4 billion. Given its size, the LIFE programme is not meant to solve environmental and climate problems but act as a catalyst for accelerating changes.

Horizon 2020 is the financial instrument implementing the Innovation Union, a Europe 2020 flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe's global competitiveness. Horizon 2020 is open to everyone. Under Horizon 2020 there is only one set of simplified rules and procedures to follow. This means that participants can focus on what is really important: research, innovation and results. This focused approach makes sure new projects get off the ground quickly – and achieve results faster. The rules are designed to guarantee fairness, protect participants and ensure public money is spent appropriately.

### Pros and cons of the Life and Horizont 2020

The main advantages of the EU programmes are:

- A single set of rules – adapted for the whole research and innovation cycle and coherent with other new EU programmes.
- In Horizon 2020 EU funding covers up to 100% of all eligible costs for all research and innovation actions. For innovation actions, funding generally covers 70% of

eligible costs, but may increase to 100% for non-profit organisations.

- It makes possible to test new approaches and technologies in different countries simultaneously.
- Targeted funding does help to ensure that the best ideas are brought to the market faster – and are used in our cities, hospitals, factories, shops and homes as quickly as possible.

However, EU programmes has also some cons, like:

- There is high competition between project proposals, and less experienced, or small medium organisations can face difficulties to develop project proposal that would be granted.
- For small, medium municipalities and organizations it can be a challenge to ensure enough capacity and human resources to implement the projects.
- For small countries it can be a challenge to prove an impact of the project, as the market and industries are small comparing to leading EU countries.

**Pilot actions implemented by municipalities within Life Adaptate project**

- Águilas - Creation of wooded area with drip irrigation using treated water.

It is expected to increase the volume of water that is currently used for irrigation, using treated water for this purpose. In addition, the increase of the wooded area of the city will cause a temperature decrease during the hottest months of the year, besides favouring the retention of water in case of heavy rains. In addition, this action will increase the production and consumption of renewable energy in the municipality, as the irrigation system will be supplied by photovoltaic solar energy.

- Cartagena - Connecting green areas of the LIFE program

It is expected to increase the green areas in the periphery of Cartagena with trees, green grass and recreation areas. This action will connect in the future the bike lanes of the entire city and enable areas for leisure and sports to encourage healthy living habits.

- Lorca - Awnings in major streets in Lorca  
Creation of shaded areas in crowded passage areas of the centre of Lorca.

- Smiltene - Recovery of an artificial lake “Vidusezers”  
To clean the lake and renovate the dam on the lake to increase the capacity to collect and regulate rainwater, thus reducing the risk of flooding, as well as preventing environmental pollution and absorbing the heat waves during summers that affect the municipality more often every year.

- Mértola - Climate change adaptation measures

Creation of shadow areas for recreational purposes in urban areas with integration of several types of renewable energy. Promotion of projects for the creation of multipurpose forests based on indigenous species for the promotion of natural regeneration. Development of sustainable tourism plan, adapting policies, resources and infrastructure to climate change.

- Alfândega da Fé - Shade areas with solar panels.  
Creation of shading areas with the integration of renewable energies. Projects promotion regarding the creation of a multi-purpose forest based on indigenous species and promotion of the natural regeneration of these species. Construction of a natural lake in order to promote environment cooling, irrigation of agricultural areas and to support forest fires fight.

| Summary Table       |  |
|---------------------|--|
| City & country      | Águilas, Lorca and Cartagena in Spain, Smiltene in Latvia, Mértola and Alfândega da Fé in Portugal |
| Funding opportunity | Life Programme   |
| Investment project  | Adaptation projects  |
| Sector of SECAP     | Public lighting  |
| Year                | 2017 - 2021  |
| Funding opportunity | EU co-finance (from 55%)   |
| Results             | Significantly improved resilience against climate change consequences.                             |

**Measures eligible for Life programme**

- Innovative adaptation measures
- Innovative mitigation measures



Municipality of Mértola

This fact sheet is part of a series on funding opportunities, which can be found here: [html-link](#)