



**Hungary-Croatia**  
Cross-border Co-operation Programme

ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION  
REPORT 2020  
INTERREG V-A HUNGARY-CROATIA  
COOPERATION PROGRAMME 2014-2020

**CITIZENS' SUMMARY**

**Interreg**   
European Regional Development Fund

# Programme Overview

## ‘Where Rivers Connect’

The Interreg V-A Hungary-Croatia Cooperation Programme 2014-2020 is a continuation of the earlier successful cooperation between the two Member States within the 2007-2013 period and focuses on deepening the cooperation within four thematic fields: Enhancing the Competitiveness of SMEs, Sustainable Use of Natural and Cultural Assets, Cooperation and Education.



The Programme area encompasses three border counties on the Hungarian side and eight counties on the Croatian side of the border. The total size of the Programme area is 31 085 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of approximately 2.1 million people, 46% of whom live in Hungary and 54% in Croatia (Source: Eurostat, 2011).

*“A cross-border region where rivers connect, not divide”*

## Management Structures

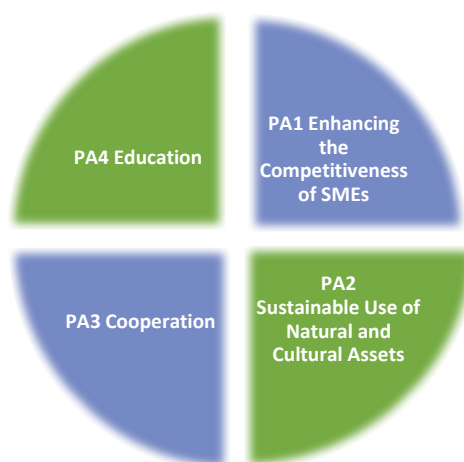
The Programme was created in co-operation between the two Member States, represented in the planning process by their regional level stakeholders (the counties of the programme area) and the national level institutions (ministries in charge of the thematic areas targeted by the Programme).

### The Programme implementing structure

<b>Managing Authority</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade</li> </ul>
<b>Croatian National Authority</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Croatian Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds</li> </ul>
<b>Certifying Authority</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hungarian State Treasury</li> </ul>
<b>Audit Authority</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hungarian Directorate General for Audit of European Funds</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a bilateral body composed of representatives of the regional level (of the counties), of the line ministries and of organisations of civil society, acting as the main decision-maker of the Programme</li> </ul>
<b>Joint Secretariat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in charge of the day-to-day management of the Programme</li> <li>• providing support to applicants and beneficiaries within three offices: in Budapest, Pécs and Čakovec (covering all Croatian counties)</li> </ul>
<b>Hungarian Control Body</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• working in Zalaegerszeg and Pécs, responsible for the first level control and approval of costs incurred during project implementation in Hungarian project parts</li> </ul>
<b>Croatian Control Body</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a unit of the Croatian Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds in Zagreb, performing the first level control activities related to the Croatian project parts</li> </ul>

### Priorities and allocations

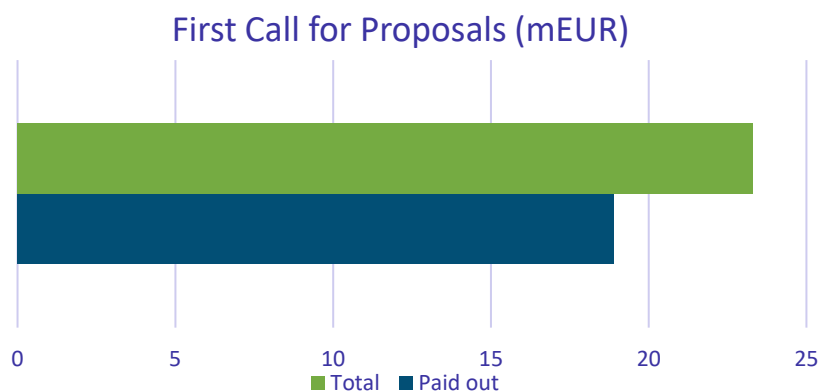
The Programme supports investments into four Priority Axis with a total allocation of 57,174,942 EUR of ERDF funding.



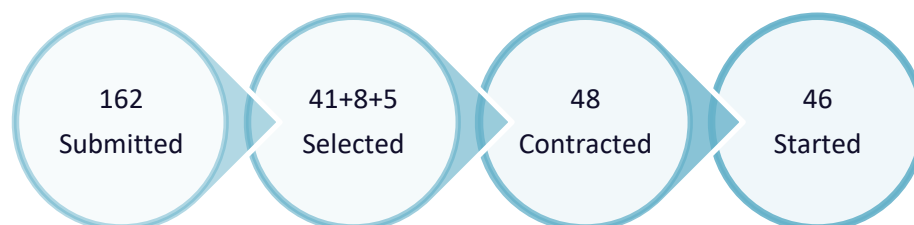
# Achievements

## Calls and Projects

**The First Call for Proposals** of the Programme was launched on 28 February 2016 with more than 200 applications received. After the evaluation 54 projects were awarded a total of more than 23.3 million EUR within three Priority Axes. All of the First Call projects have finalized their activities by end of 2019, so during 2020 the focus shifted to their financial closing. By the end of the year most of the ERDF funding was already paid out to the projects ranging from investments in ecotourism infrastructure to gastronomy festivals; from joint educational programmes to cross-border renewable energy schemes.



**The Second Call for Proposals** of the Programme was open from 31 January to 3 May 2019 with 162 applications received. On three selection meetings in 2020 a total of 54 projects were supported, most of which were fully contracted and started their implementation by the end of the year, with several more starting at the very beginning of 2021.



## Strategic Projects

The Programme features two strategic projects that were included in the programming document at the planning stage and aim at rehabilitation of mine-contaminated area and SME development respectively.

### Demine HU HR II

- June 2016 – May 2018
- Budget: 3 529 399.70 EUR
- 36 minefields removed
- 1.5 km<sup>2</sup> cleared of mine threat
- Mine awareness raised



### Beneficiary Light Grant Scheme

The project supported within the Priority Axis 1 has been allocated a total of 12.5 million EUR in a two-tiered grant scheme to support the cross-border projects devised by SMEs from the region. By the end of 2020 the B Light Scheme has completed three rounds of Project selection with a total of 21 projects contracted and being implemented in 2020. The final, fourth call for SME projects was closed in January 2021.



## Pilot Projects

The Monitoring Committee of the Programme supported two pilot projects imagined as paving way to better future cooperation possibilities. While one of them aims at better physical connection of the cross-border region, the other focuses on the development of a joint development strategy for the future programming period.

### MuKoBridge

Supported within the Priority Axis 2, the project focuses on ensuring better connectivity of the region by managing the planning of a new bridge over the River Drava between Murakeresztúr (HU) and Kotoriba (HR). The project started in March 2020 and will end in 2022, bringing the two countries closer together.

### CBJointStrategy

The project is supported within the Priority Axis 3 and entrusted with developing the basis of the future cooperation programme of the two Member States. Lead by the Pannon EGTC, which includes members of all the involved regions, during its 2 years of implementation it will ensure that all stakeholders are closely involved in the entire strategy-drafting process.

Using surveys, personal consultations, thematic workshops and interviews and involving the relevant experts from both sides of the border, the project will result in a situation analysis of the border area, as well as a proposed strategy for the new programming period.



## Overview of Projects

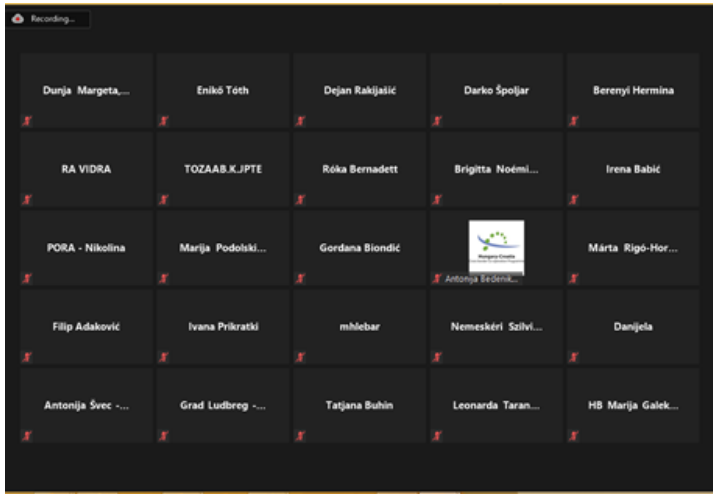
While preparing for the newly contracted projects to get fully under way, in 2020 the focus was on sharing the results of the First Call projects that left us with many new tourism attractions developed, cross-border cultural events elaborated, active and healthy lifestyle promoted in various ways and the regional educational institutions connected in research and innovation projects. A number of energy efficiency measures, waste-management options and smart living initiatives have been introduced, too. Many new projects held their opening events and started with the implementation of their activities during 2020, many of them in a virtual setting, adapting to the challenges of the circumstances of a global pandemic.



# Communication

## Facing challenges, overcoming obstacles

The whole year was marked by the global COVID-19 pandemic, which affected both the programme implementing bodies and the beneficiaries. Communication proved a crucial element in keeping the programme implementation on course and finding ways to continue



with project and programme activities without jeopardizing the planned goals and results. Adapting to the circumstances, most of the communication activities were in a virtual setting, including the personal consultations during the contracting and the implementation workshops for Beneficiaries and Lead Beneficiaries and internal trainings for JS and FLC staff. To support the implementation of project

activities, the main documents were adapted with a more flexible approach to minor project modifications and a guidance document was drafted with suggestions of alternative solutions for organisation of events, the most affected part of most projects. Additionally, video materials were produced to guide the beneficiaries in reporting both on beneficiary and project level.

## Further Information

[www.huhr-cbc.com](http://www.huhr-cbc.com)



[www.facebook.com/huhr.cbc](https://www.facebook.com/huhr.cbc)



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