



Hungary-Croatia
Cross-border Co-operation Programme

ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION
REPORT 2021
INTERREG V-A HUNGARY-CROATIA
COOPERATION PROGRAMME 2014-2020

CITIZENS' SUMMARY

Interreg 
European Regional Development Fund EUROPEAN UNION

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 km² 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

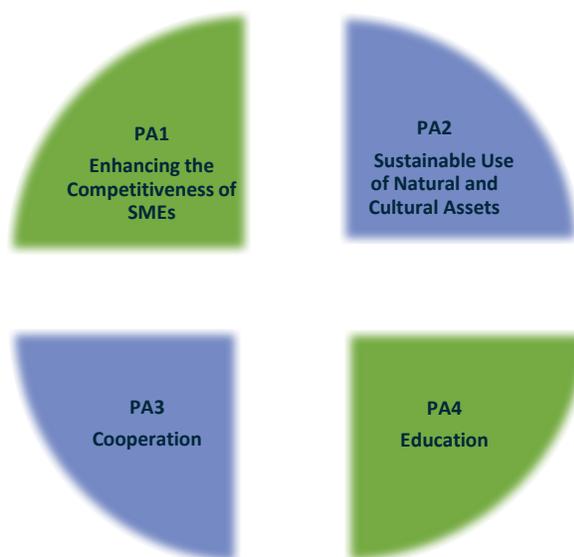
The Programme was created in co-operation between the two Member States, represented in the planning process by their regional level stakeholders (the counties of the programme area) and the national level institutions (ministries in charge of the thematic areas targeted by the Programme).

The Programme implementing structure

Managing Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Croatian National Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Croatian Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds
Certifying Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hungarian State Treasury
Audit Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hungarian Directorate General for Audit of European Funds
Monitoring Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
Joint Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in charge of the day-to-day management of the Programme • providing support to applicants and beneficiaries within three offices: in Budapest, Pécs and Čakovec (covering all Croatian counties)
Hungarian Control Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working in Zalaegerszeg and Pécs, responsible for the first level control and approval of costs incurred during project implementation in Hungarian project parts
Croatian Control Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

Priorities and allocations

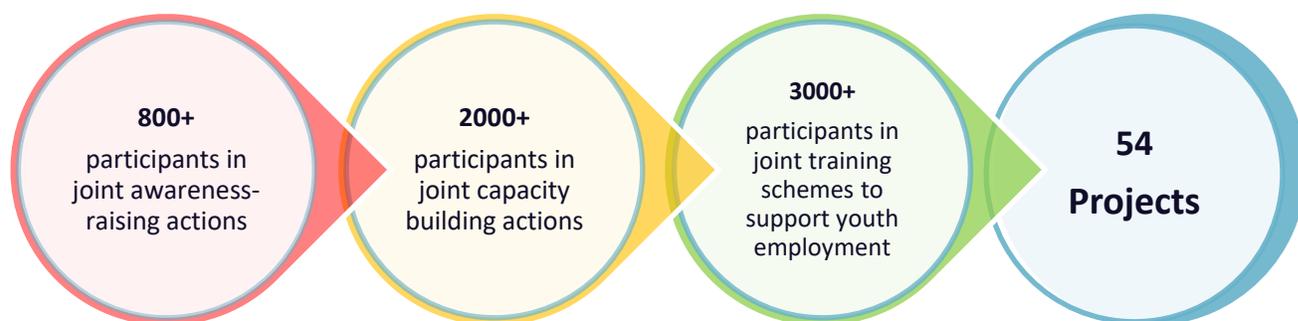
The Programme supports investments into **four Priority Axis** with a total allocation of 57,174,942 EUR of ERDF funding.



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 53 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 2020 and 2021 were dedicated to their financial closing and final payments. By the end of 2021 all the remaining ERDF funding was 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, out of which 54 projects were supported with over 21 million EUR ERDF funding. The projects were contracted in 2020 and were all under implementation through 2021. During the year 136 Project Reports were approved and paid out to the Lead Beneficiaries.



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 elaboration of a joint development strategy for the future programming period.

MuKoBridge

Supported within 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, opening the possibility for better cross-border mobility and a closer cooperating region.

CBJointStrategy

The project is supported within Priority Axis 3 and is 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, 2021-2027 programming period.

Overview of Projects

During 2021, the 53 closed projects were joined by the 54 new projects in addressing the needs of the region. With implementation well under way a whole range of activities have been realised including the development of new tourism attractions, elaboration of cross-border cultural events, the promotion of active and healthy lifestyle and building connections between regional educational institutions through research and innovation projects. There were numerous joint summer camps, study trips, and various thematic educational workshops and info days held with hundreds of participants throughout the border region.



Communication

Facing challenges, overcoming obstacles

The whole of 2021 was another year marked by the global 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. Accordingly, also the planned project- and programme events were being implemented in line with the epidemiological situation at any given moment. During 2021 (especially in the summer and early autumn months) at least 42 project events, promoting the projects and the planned activities either live or in a virtual setting, were held with the programme supporting them in the implementation, by participation and promotion of these events.

The somewhat better epidemiological situation during September and early October 2021 was reflected also in the number of events within the programme organised as part of the European Cooperation Day campaign, where this year as many as 12 events were included in the Europe-wide celebrations, with about a 1.000 total participants in the Hungarian-Croatian border region.



Further Information

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