

Citizen's Summary

Interreg



Co-funded by
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Slovenia – Croatia

INTERREG PROGRAMME SLOVENIA - CROATIA 2021-2027

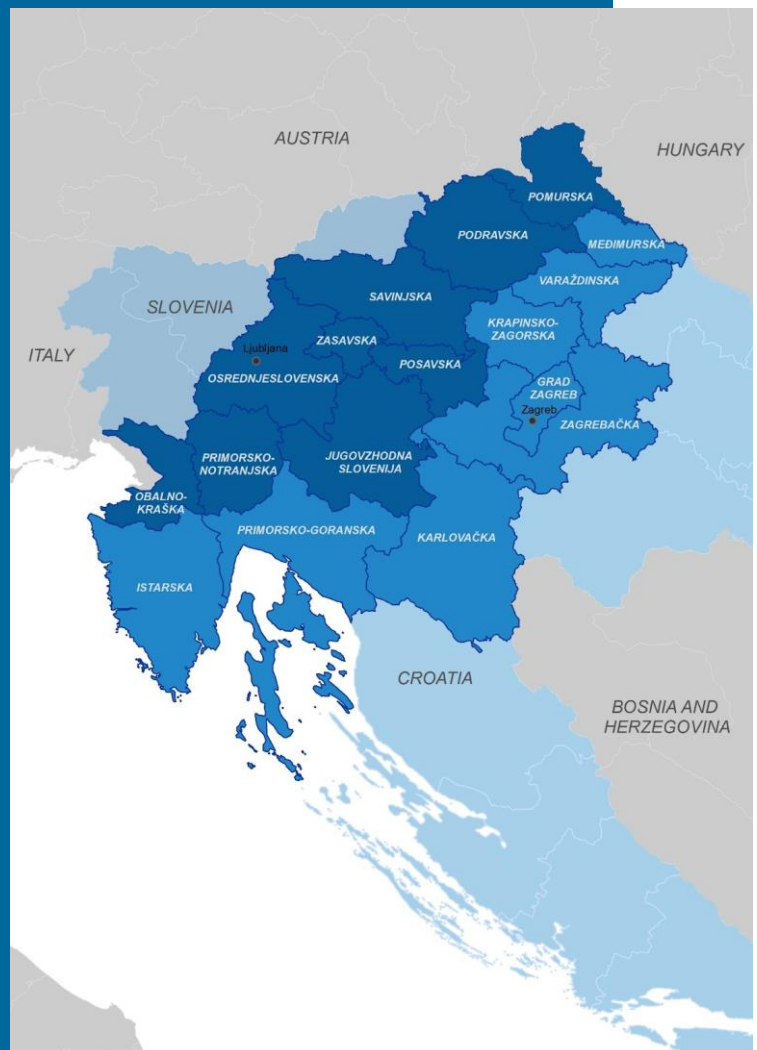


Programme area

In the Slovenia-Croatia border region, the Interreg Programme Slovenia - Croatia 2021-2027 (IP SI-HR) covers nine Slovenian and eight Croatian NUTS 3 regions.

The border between Slovenia and Croatia stretches over 650 km. The main economic impact and high attractiveness are undoubtedly linked to both capital cities (Ljubljana and Zagreb) with more than million inhabitants altogether.

This territory covers an area of 31,728 km² (SI: 46,6%, HR: 53,4%) and a population of 3,8 million inhabitants (SI: 1,7 million, HR: 2,1 million).



Programme vision and mission

The Programme envisages mutual learning and joint actions leading to a change in all its priorities, primarily to re-connect across the border, to understand the current joint needs and threats of a rapidly changing reality, and to work together to improve resilience and adaptability of people, organisations, and communities, assisting the programme area in becoming more green and digital, and thus fit for the future.

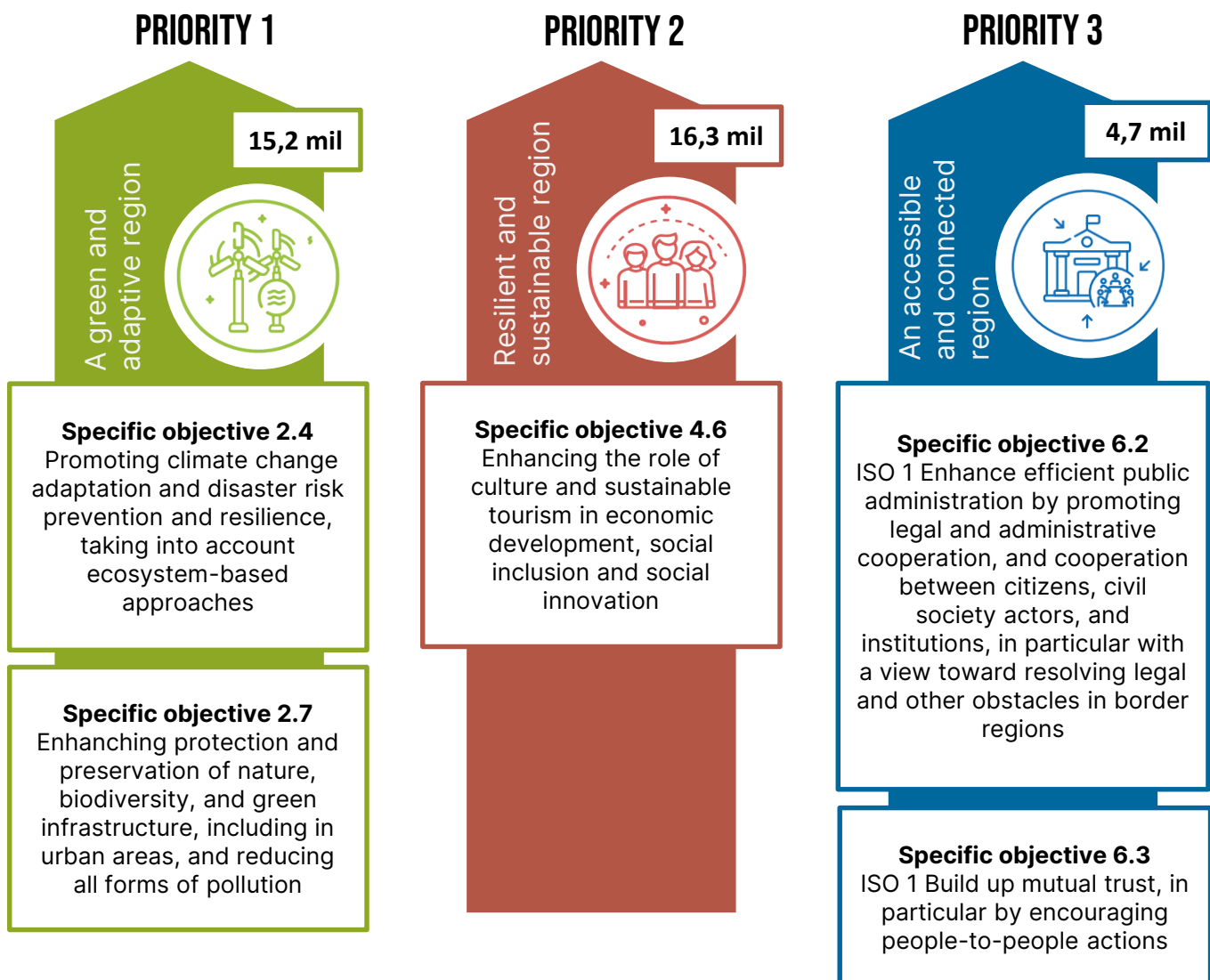
“ THE PROGRAMME AIMS AT ACHIEVING A PRESERVED, RESILIENT, AND CONNECTED CROSS-BORDER REGION WHERE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS RECOGNISED AND USED AS A MAIN TOOL IN REACHING ECONOMIC VIABILITY, SAFETY, BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION, AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF ALL INHABITANTS. ”



Programme preparation

In the preparation phase of the Interreg Programme (IP SI-HR) Slovenia - Croatia 2021-2027 a territorial and socio-economic analysis has been carried out to create a solid basis of information on the thematic fields where cross-border cooperation may contribute most to overcome border obstacles and regional disparities. The analysis identified the main joint challenges, needs and potentials of the area, as well as strategically relevant fields of actions for cross-border cooperation with the potential to overcome border obstacles and territorial disparities, taking into account economic, social, environmental and other relevant aspects. In addition to the territorial and socio-economic analysis, the main results of the evaluation of the 2014-2020 programme, directions of development provided by the relevant strategies and stakeholders (interviews and online survey) have been considered in the discussions of the Programming Task Force when preparing the strategic thematic orientations.

The following priority axes have been defined:



The Priority axes





Priority

The background of the entire page is a close-up photograph of a rosemary plant, showing its characteristic needle-like green leaves and woody stems. The image is slightly blurred in the background, creating a sense of depth.

**GREEN
AND
ADAPTIVE
REGION**

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 2.4

Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches

Expected results:

- ✓ Improved preparedness and responsiveness of local communities and civil protection units,
- ✓ Increased capacity and responsibility of stakeholders and ensured understanding of climate related threats, needs, and necessary measures for climate change adaptation,
- ✓ Developed pilot solution for community climate adaptation in the cross-border area,
- ✓ Enhanced cross-border cooperation of response units, coordination of warning and response systems,
- ✓ Enhanced capacities for climate resilient spatial planning and solution integration in the cross-border area,
- ✓ Enhanced cooperation and delivery of cross-border climate action plans for increased community adaptation and resilience,
- ✓ Increased knowledge and application of nature-based solutions for delivery of multipurpose effects,
- ✓ Increased knowledge and capacity of inhabitants and relevant stakeholders for behavioural change towards nature and resource preservation.

Guiding principles:

- Creating sustainable joint risk management partnerships for the cross-border territory,
- Stimulating the application of nature-based solutions wherever possible, above hard or grey infrastructure,
- Enhancing the resilience of people, property, and natural environment to climate change and disasters (actions for enhanced resilience of society should not have indirect negative impacts on nature in protected areas and Species and Habitats of Community interest),
- Supporting interdisciplinary approach and holistic planning in development of climate adaptation and disaster risk prevention action plans and solutions.



TYPES OF ACTION 1:

Strengthening of risk preparedness and response capacities in the cross-border area

Indicative list of activities (non-exhaustive list):

- **Cross-border exchange** and harmonisation of data, risk mapping, establishment of joint protocols, and information flows on the cross-border level;
- **Development and enhancement of cooperation of disaster response units and organisations**, including rescue plans, protocols, and co-ordination mechanisms of civil protection to prepare and respond to climate change-related hazards and other risks in the cross-border area;
- **Development and enhancement of early warning and response systems** with efficient data and information exchange between the national, regional, and the local levels; awareness-raising and educational activities for inhabitants on climate risk adaptation and on how to act during different climate change-related and other disasters where shared in the cross-border territory;
- **Joint cross-border upskilling and equipping of disaster response units and organisations for different types of hazard scenarios** define for the expected area covered (e.g., fires, frost, floods, droughts, storms, earthquakes, and other extreme events); sharing knowledge and good practices on climate adaptation for resilience of society and infrastructure;
- **Supporting cross-border capacity building**, establishment of cross border tools for the target groups in the cross-border area (particularly youth and children) for protection against shared threats (promoting community assistance, reaction in case of disasters, digital tools for natural hazard observations in schools, etc.).



TYPES OF ACTION 2:

Increasing the resilience to climate change effects in the programme area

Indicative list of activities (non-exhaustive list):

- Preparing and coordinating cross-sectoral, integrated, **cross-border climate adaptation action plans** for neighbouring municipalities/cities/regions/territorial units (aligned with the national climate plans) and their implementation on the regional level (e.g., SECAP - Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan) for anticipating the adverse effects of climate change on key sectors and taking appropriate activities to prevent/minimise damage they can cause, or taking advantage of opportunities that may arise;
- **Pilot activities focused on strengthening the resilience of the cross-border area** (e.g., digital solutions for selected sectors for different problem areas and users, accompanied by small scale investments etc);
- **Supporting the process of elaboration of inclusive (interdisciplinary) cross-border spatial planning** background documents (aligned with national strategies) and expert bases for local adaptation plans, responding to identified climate threats;
- Supporting **capacity building for sustainable implementation of defined action plans on regional/local level**. Pilot activities developed must benefit the target groups in the cross-border area;
- **Introduction and development of nature-based solutions for integrated water management** by considering ecosystem restoration, natural water retention measures and other green (or blue) infrastructure measures that reduce flood risk threats and have a direct benefit for climate change adaptation and risk prevention.



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 2.7

Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity, and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution

Expected results:

- ✓ Identified opportunities and demonstrations of green infrastructure for multipurpose benefits (including natural and semi-natural heritage),
- ✓ Enhanced preservation of habitats and species, mitigated biodiversity loss,
- ✓ Enhanced cooperation for management of protected areas in the cross-border area and cross-border natural landscapes,
- ✓ Developed solutions for improving conservation status of habitats and species in the cross-border area,
- ✓ Increased awareness, cooperation and exploration of green infrastructure in the cross-border area and enhanced ecosystem services,
- ✓ Enhanced sustainable nature management,
- ✓ Reduced negative impacts on habitats and species, particularly in protected areas,
- ✓ Enhanced awareness and innovative solutions for nature interpretation and protection.

Guiding principles:

- Enhancing participatory process for delivery of holistic and multi-beneficial solutions for habitats and species,
- Considering nature-based solutions underlying on multiple benefits.



TYPES OF ACTION 1:

Strategically planned green infrastructure for provision of environmental and socio-economic benefits

Indicative list of activities (non-exhaustive list):

- Enhancing cross-border **cooperation and knowledge exchange for inclusive and holistic spatial planning** by fostering participative process, for integration of **green infrastructure on a regional scale**, relying on (but not limiting to) Natura 2000 network as its backbone, aiming to support habitat connectivity, prevent degradation and support delivery of ecosystem services,
- Supporting cross-border pilot activities for introducing and managing **green infrastructure, and enhancing and raising awareness on provision of multiple ecosystem services** in the cross-border area (e.g., establishment of pilot green infrastructure, promotion of environmental education, sustainable resource management etc).

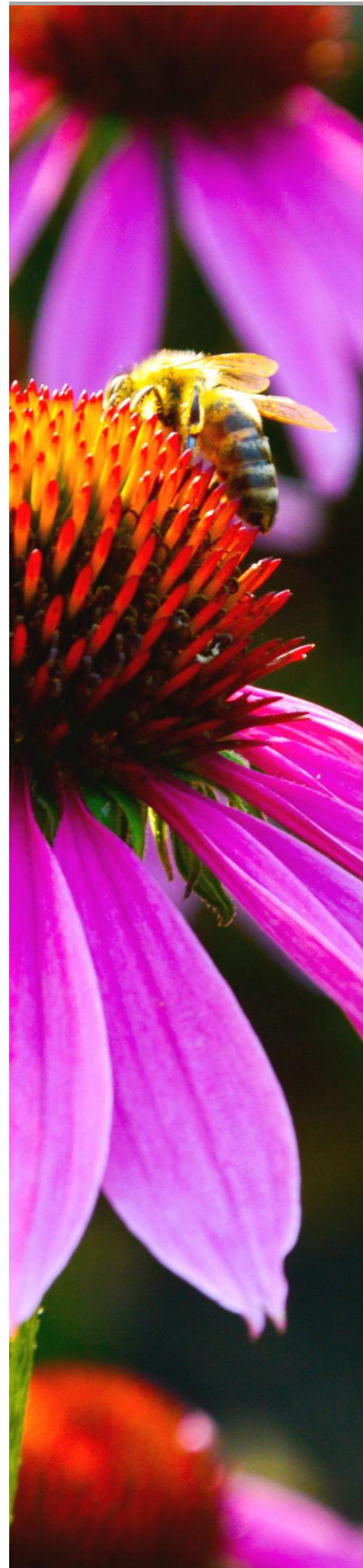


TYPES OF ACTION 2:

Improved protection and preservation of endangered habitats, species, and landscapes in the programme area

Indicative list of activities (non-exhaustive list):

- Sustainable joint **cross-border actions for better management of natural areas for improving the conservation status** of species and habitat types in poor or declining condition (e.g., wetlands, grasslands, etc. also considering the underground karstic habitats). Actions under this activity should consider knowledge exchange and co-ordination of relevant stakeholders for advancement of nature protection efforts; cross-border pilot actions to demonstrate possible solutions (e.g., cross-border management plans of visiting regimes, cross-border nature interpretation, cross-border innovative models for results-base,
- Joint **actions for planning and managing of natural landscapes across border** (e.g. border river corridors, forests, other integrated biodiversity areas) aiming to provide a cross-border collaboration and exchange platform for preservation and development of the habitats quality and landscape identity and achieve high awareness on natural and semi-natural heritage value of the cross-border territory addressed, particularly involving (but not limiting to) Natura 2000 and other protected areas,
- Cross-border actions to improve protection, management, and implementation of **joint measures against invasive species** (e.g., cross-border relevant small-scale clean-up), including data gathering and exchange, on best preventive practices, and further awareness-raising actions for sustainability of cross-border cooperation. Activities to be focused on Natura 2000 and other areas of ecological importance,
- Coordinated cross-border actions for **protection of the threatened communities within ecosystems that support ecosystem services** in the programme area (e.g., pollinators, large carnivores and other, having special role in the community of species). Activities should address all integrated aspects (cross-border data gathering and processing, pilot implementation of identified solutions, awareness-raising, enhancing sustainability of cross-border actions). Activities to be focused on Natura 2000 and other areas of ecological importance.





2

Priority

**RESILIENT
AND
SUSTAINABLE
REGION**

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 4.6

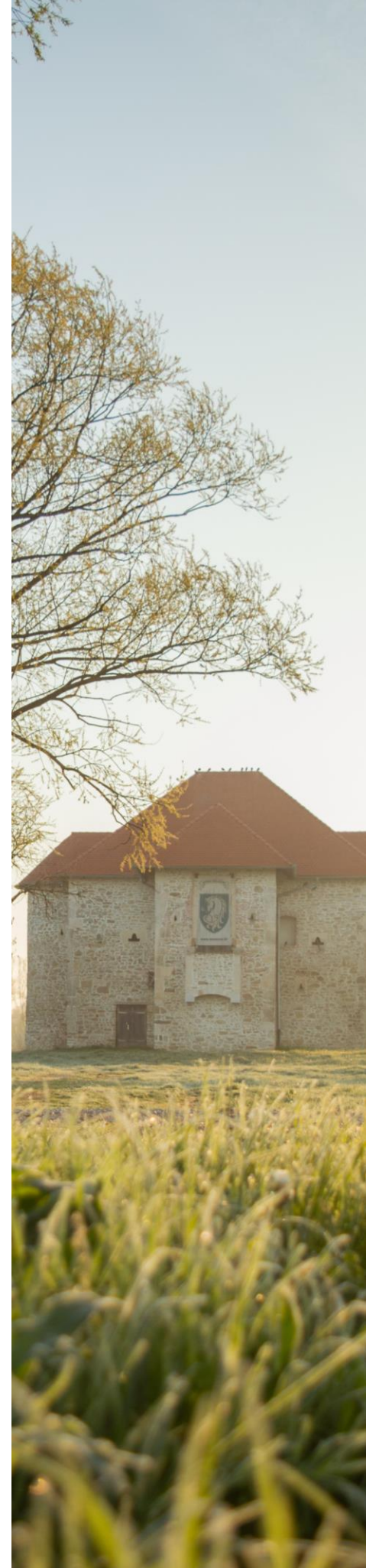
Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion, and social innovation

Expected results:

- ✓ Sustainable development promoted and accepted as the main principle of tourism growth and job creation,
- ✓ Increased resilience of tourism and tourism stakeholders to current and incoming disturbances,
- ✓ Increased quality of joint cross-border products and inclusive experience-based services in line with current and emerging desires of modern visitors,
- ✓ More preserved, digitally interpreted and promoted cultural heritage, and supported by cultural and creative industries,
- ✓ Increased social responsibility and inclusion of marginalized groups.

Guiding principles:

- Respecting and preserving **culture, nature, biodiversity, and the health** of inhabitants,
- Fostering economic, **environmental** and social sustainability of tourism,
- Facilitating **slow tourism** by increasing the quality of fewer and more **meaningful experiences** by fostering sustainable mobility solutions, outdoor activities, organic food, and eco-oenological experiences, using local products, learning through interactive experience-based activities and implementing similar actions,
- Adaptation of tourism system to climate change and greening of tourism products and services,
- Facilitating **cross-sectorial job creation** and economic recovery of tourism, culture and creative industries.



TYPES OF ACTION 1:

Supporting sustainable tourism and green transition of public and private organisations through pilot actions, collaborative learning, and awareness-raising of tourists and all stakeholders in tourism and culture

Indicative list of activities (non-exhaustive list):

- Development of **joint pilot actions** to support a **green transition** of public and private stakeholders in tourism and culture (e.g., enhancing CB tourism products and services for entering green certification schemes, actions that promote and implement circular economy),
- **Development of new or “greening” of existing CB products, services, or solutions** that contribute to the sustainability and accessibility of tourism and cultural products and service,
- **CB awareness-raising actions to increase environmental and social responsibility** of stakeholders in tourism and culture, tourists, and visitors,
- Joint **CB collaboration platforms and joint learning actions** (e.g., CB study visits, CB mentoring, cross-border exchange programmes, CB job shadowing programmes for supporting environmentally and socially responsible tourism, culture, and creative industries),
- Upskilling of public and private organisations **for integrated sustainable destinations management by enhancing knowledge and skills supporting transition to resilient tourism destinations and enhancing digital skills and supporting transition to circular business models** in tourism, culture, and creative industries (incl. heritage interpretation).



TYPES OF ACTION 2:

Enhancing resilience and recovery of tourism and culture by developing and upgrade of joint CB tourism products and services

Indicative list of activities (non-exhaustive list):


- **Increasing diversity and accessibility of CB tourism** by development of special types of tourism corresponding to the local or historical identity in rural communities, also respecting needs of vulnerable groups (e.g., cultural tourism, outdoor and active tourism that are in line with environmental and spatial requirements, **developing joint tourism products by using existing infrastructure**),
- Modernising tourism and cultural organisations and institutions to meet the demands of modern visitors including vulnerable population and the newly-arisen COVID-19 scenario by preventing mass tourism and supporting CB demand driven **digitalisation** (e.g., joint artificial intelligence systems and digital online solutions for identification, interpretation and presentation of cultural and natural heritage (e.g. cultural routes), joint smart technologies supporting information sharing in PA, CB reservation systems),
- Increasing quality of tourism offer in **CB tourism regions/destinations** (e.g. by entering the certification schemes),
- **Upgrading of joint CB tourism products** by supporting valorisation, preservation and inclusive and interactive interpretation of cultural and natural heritage,
- CB pilot actions to mobilize local communities and improve local economy by enhancing and promoting **health tourism, oenology, and gastronomy** as part of agrotourism and farm to fork initiatives,
- **Joint CB actions** for supporting **social innovations and cultural and creative industries, and creativity in tourism and culture** (e.g., cross-border cultural networking, including clusters and cultural routes, increasing value of tourist cross-border products and services by development of participative creative experiences).





3

Priority



ACCESSIBLE
AND
CONNECTED
REGION

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 6.2

Enhance efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation, and cooperation between citizens, civil society actors, and institutions, in particular with a view toward resolving legal and other obstacles in border regions

Expected results:

- ✓ Efficient and active public administration at improving services and finding new solutions in the areas of healthcare, social inclusion and welfare, accessibility, and energy efficiency.

Guiding principles:

- Place-based approach,
- Participatory approach,
- Sustainability,
- Digitalisation.

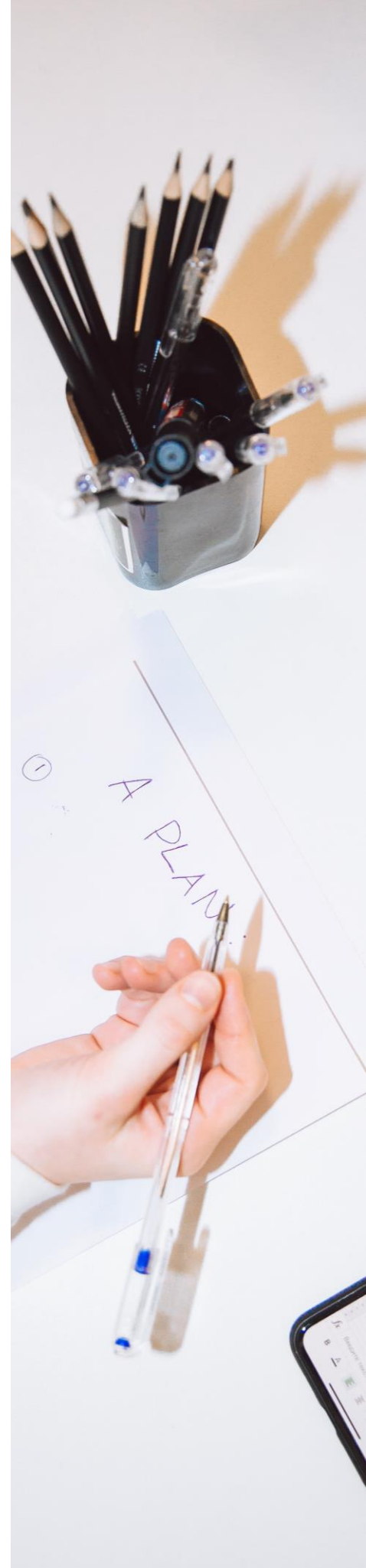


TYPES OF ACTION:

Improvement of the quality and diversity of the services and development of innovative solutions in the areas of health care, social inclusion and welfare, accessibility, and energy efficiency in the border regions by overcoming legal and administrative obstacles

Indicative list of activities (non-exhaustive list):

- Development and implementation of **cross-border cooperation models**; tools and learning networks for more efficient and accessible public administration in the areas of healthcare, social inclusion, accessibility and energy efficiency (e.g., knowledge sharing and capacity building, awareness-raising actions, cross-border data sharing and monitoring systems, introduction of digital tools for identifying cross-border legal and administrative obstacles, joint workshops, upskilling, meetings, and seminars for strengthening the cross-border cooperation between municipalities, cities and regions, study visits in order to transfer best practices, cross-border staff exchange programmes and cross-border mentoring),
- Establishment and co-ordination of **joint multi-level and multisectoral knowledge exchange, governance models and development of territorial strategies** of cross-border areas involving public administration at different levels (local, regional, national), civil society and other stakeholders,
- Setting up new or/and upgrading existing **cross-border organisational structures** providing the services in the area of healthcare, social inclusion, accessibility and energy efficiency (e.g., cross-border network for demand responsive transport, joint development of models in the area of deinstitutionalisation of elderly care),
- Development of innovative cross-border **solutions and pilot actions in the field of energy efficiency** (jointly developed tools and solution for improving energy efficiency at different levels, models of self-sufficient energy communities, monitoring systems, proposals for reducing legal, administrative and other obstacles hampering implementation of such tools and solutions),



- Development of joint **solutions and pilot actions for improving the quality and diversity of health, social, and complementary services** (e.g., solutions to challenges connected to aging population, health, energy and mobility poverty to improve attractiveness of remote areas and to stop depopulation, pilot actions for integration of health, social and complementary services, diversification of health prevention activities etc.),
- Development of **solutions and pilot actions for improvement of accessibility** (e.g., action plan and pilot actions of joint cross-border sustainable mobility services, introducing digital solutions for easier access to health and social services, participatory decision-making actions to reduce the administrative barriers and harmonise timetables),
- **Mainstreaming and uptake of developed solutions** in the area of healthcare, social inclusion, accessibility and energy efficiency in the cross-border area towards civil society and public administration at different levels (e.g., promotion of suggestions on improving legislation, presentation of proposals for mainstreaming and adapting of developed solutions digital platforms, collaboration platforms, cross-border newsletter, cross-border newspaper).



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 6.3

Build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions

Expected results:

- ✓ Intergenerational coexistence, reliability, security, confidence, credibility and transparency among people living in cross-border areas.

Guiding principles:

- Inclusion,
- Active involvement,
- Environmental and climate responsibility.

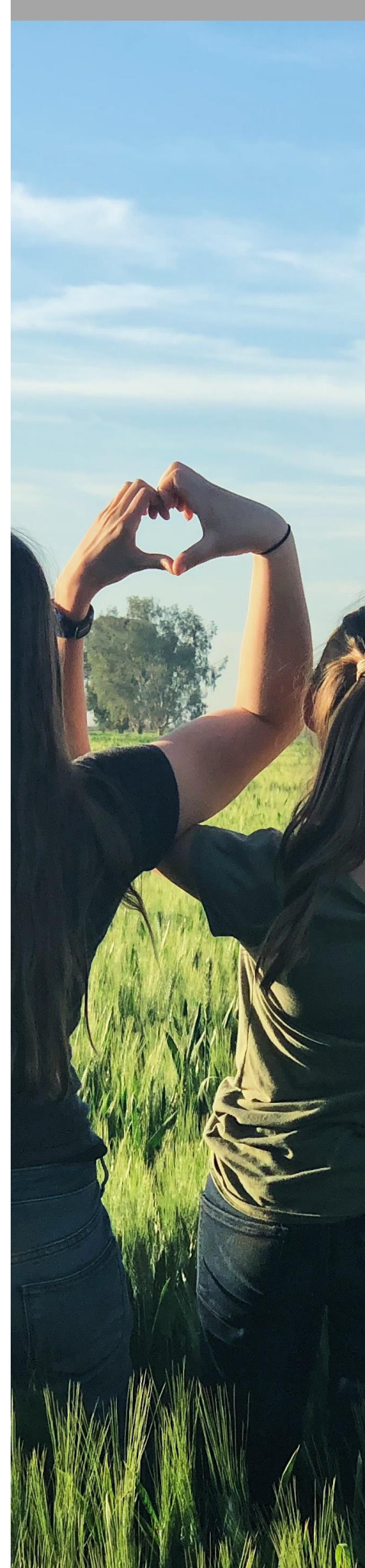



TYPES OF ACTION :

People-to-people projects to improve cultural and social relations, and to get actively engaged in the community

Indicative list of activities (non-exhaustive list):

- **Cross-border awareness-raising actions** (e.g., on solidarity, community support, climate and environmental responsible lifestyle, and healthy living),
- **Cross-border people-to-people learning actions** (e.g., educational programmes for children, youth and students for active citizenship, educational programmes for the elderly (e.g., digital skills), cross-border intergenerational learning actions, platform for sharing climate-friendly households solutions, cross-border healthy living actions, cross-border learning about cultural and national heritage (e.g. traditional food and music),
- **Cross-border joint events** to increase connectivity, networking, and intergenerational support (e.g., cultural events, sports events; summer camps, recreational activities in nature, experience-based learning events, joint nature clean-up actions, greening of public spaces).





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www.si-hr.eu

CONTACTS: E-mail: si-hr.svrk@gov.si
Phone: 00 386 1 400 3435