



**Interreg**

**SLOVENIA – HUNGARY**

European Union | European Regional Development Fund



COOPERATION PROGRAMME INTERREG V-A SLOVENIA-HUNGARY

# CITIZENS' SUMMARY

[www.si-hu.eu](http://www.si-hu.eu)



### THE PROGRAMME

The Cooperation Programme INTERREG V-A Slovenia-Hungary is the continuation of a cooperation process which started in the middle of the 90s under trilateral and bilateral compositions (Austria-Slovenia-Hungary, Slovenia-Hungary-Croatia, and Cross-Border Cooperation Programmes Slovenia-Hungary). This long tradition in CBC programmes resulted in an accumulation of valuable experiences regarding the EU territorial cooperation between the management bodies but also among relevant stakeholders from the two countries, which is taken into consideration by the current programme. In developing the strategy, the Task Force – joint body responsible for the elaboration of the Cooperation Programme – considered the policy framework provided by the European, national and regional development strategies, the characteristics of the programme area, the experiences of the previous programme periods and the opinion of the stakeholders collected through dedicated events and activities.

### THE PROGRAMME AREA

The eligible area of the Cooperation Programme INTERREG V-A Slovenia-Hungary covers altogether 4 regions and counties: Podravje and Pomurje regions in Slovenia, as well as Vas and Zala counties in Hungary.

The programme area is 10,658 km<sup>2</sup> in total: 2/3rd of the area belongs to the Hungarian, 1/3rd to the Slovenian border region, divided by a border of 102 km in length. The Region occupies the north-eastern part of Slovenia and south-western extremity of Hungary.

The population of the programme area is slightly less than 1 million inhabitants, 55% of them living in Hungary and 45% in Slovenia.



### THE MISSION

The mission of the Programme is to *transform the Region into a socially and environmentally sustainable joint “green tourism” region providing a high quality living perspective for its inhabitants* not only in the key destinations/magnets and their agglomerations, but also in remote, rural areas, which are less developed in terms of tourism. The envisaged sustainable utilization of the natural and cultural values offers wider and spatially more balanced opportunities for tourism development, providing workplaces available locally, fostering entrepreneurship and resulting in higher and more balanced economic performance and standard of living. High-quality natural and built environment and a wide range of locally available services contribute to the wellbeing of the inhabitants and to a good quality of life. Widespread social, economic and institutional connections ensure the rational and sustainable utilization of the resources, skills and capacities and create a strong sense of common regional identity based on tolerance and mutual understanding.

## THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE PROGRAMME

Based on the mission reflecting the long-term vision for the Region, an **overall objective** has been defined for the 2014-2020 period, which is *to become an attractive area for living, working, investing, undertaking through better capitalizing on existing natural and cultural assets in tourism, catalysing the development of the whole region on one hand and on the other jointly addressing those common problems which call for common solutions at cross-border cooperation level*.

The Programme's **specific aims** are the following:

- ▶ Better usage of under-exploited natural and cultural values through cooperation in tourism, as the Region's key competitive, labour-intensive sector.
- ▶ Create/strengthen local economy (workplaces available locally, new enterprises, entrepreneurship) in rural areas through sustainable tourism development by interlinking remote cultural and natural heritage spots and connect them to larger tourism destinations, magnets.
- ▶ Further develop the "green and liveable" region brand of the CBC area through preserving, revitalizing and valorising natural and cultural resources and improving stakeholder cooperation and social, economic and institutional connections.
- ▶ Extending the cross-border cooperation by strengthening the institutional capacities of public and civil stakeholders in mutually important fields of public policies and services.

## PRIORITY AXES OF THE PROGRAMME

Taking into consideration, that from CBC perspective both the development needs and potentials to be addressed are quite similar on the two sides of the border, while acknowledging that there are development needs in many sectors, the Task Force strategic decision was to concentrate the limited financial resources on critically important areas, which may catalyse further positive changes.

### Priority Axis 1

ATTRACTIVE REGION

**Thematic Objective 6, Investment Priority 6c:** "Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage"

to protect the natural and cultural heritage of the area and to valorise it through development of sustainable tourism, with a strong focus on the less developed areas in terms of tourism (rural, remote areas)

### Priority Axis 2

COOPERATIVE REGION

**Thematic Objective 11, Investment Priority 11b:** "Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions"

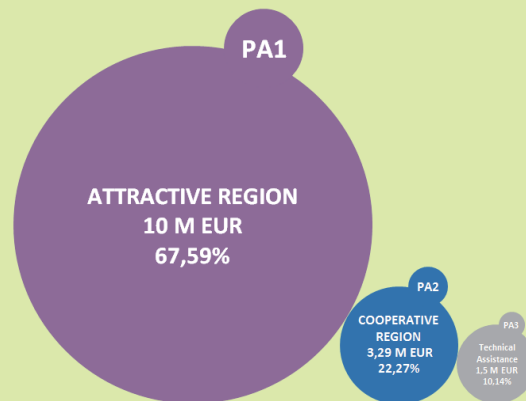
to increase the availability and effectiveness of public services necessary for a better governance on cross-border level, and to support the cooperation between organizations and institutions responsible for mutually important areas in order to enhance the cross-border convergence

## BUDGET & FINANCIAL ALLOCATION

The total ERDF support of the Cooperation Programme INTERREG V-A Slovenia-Hungary is 14,795,015 Euro. When defining the financial allocation of the Cooperation Programme, the possible types of activities within the priorities have been taken into consideration. Also, 10.14% of the total available ERDF funds is allocated to the Technical Assistance of the Programme, in line with Article 17 of the ETC Regulation.

The breakdown of the budget by priority axis is the following:

Priority Axis		Thematic Objective / Investment Priority	Union support	Proportion (%) of the total Union support
PA 1	ATTRACTIVE REGION	TO 6 – IP6c Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage	10 000 000 EUR	67,59%
PA 2	COOPERATIVE REGION	TO11 – IP11b Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration by promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions	3 295 015 EUR	22,27%
PA 3	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	Technical Assistance	1 500 000 EUR	10,14%
TOTAL			14 795 015 EUR	100%



## PRIORITY AXIS 1: ATTRACTIVE REGION

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

To increase attractiveness through the diversification and cross-border integration of the sustainable touristic offer in the programme area, based on the protection of the elements of cultural and natural heritage and development of products and services in the less developed rural areas linking them to touristic magnets.

**Budget:**  
**10 M EUR**

### SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES/ACTIONS

The applicants are encouraged to tackle two or more of the listed types of actions, in an integrated manner.

- Jointly developed plans and strategies for the sustainable utilization of cultural and natural heritage for better use of the touristic potential of the rural parts of the programme area through improved know-how and for an enhanced exploration / exploitation of the cross-border opportunities in the field by using the expertise and/or the potential of the touristic magnets located in the area
- Small scale investments regarding sustainable utilization of cultural and natural heritage by promoting environmental friendly technologies and/or by implementation of small scale renovation / revitalization and conservation of cultural and natural heritage especially in the rural parts of the programme area, as part of jointly developed touristic products in order to ensure their preservation, as a pre-requisite for their touristic utilization (e.g. façade renovation, exterior and interior restoration, refurbishing, presentation tools and facilities, etc.)
- Improving accessibility to cultural and natural heritage sites as part of joint tourism measures in justified cases (road investments may only be complementary elements of the developments aiming at providing proper physical linkage and visitor-friendly accessibility among the cultural and nature heritage sites to be promoted, renewed, developed)
- Awareness raising actions and/or campaigns related to improve the level of knowledge and education about the elements of cultural and natural heritage existing in the programme area. This includes raising local awareness about the importance of the protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage on both sides of the border, in order to diversify the sustainable touristic supply (especially existing in the touristic magnets) of the Region and to increase its touristic potential
- Regional cross-border cooperation in tourism destination management, development of regional trademark and quality management systems, common branding and promotion, joint organization and participation in fairs and exhibitions, transfer of know-how, etc., for increasing the visibility, marketability and competitiveness of the touristic offer in the programme area and for improving the management of the touristic services
- Supporting diversification of quality cross-border tourism services offered in the area – bike tourism and related services (e.g. development and posting of cross-border thematic biking routes, biking tourism related services – as bike rentals etc.), hiking, equestrian and water tourism (e.g. designation and promotion of cross-border thematic routes, service development), and complementary services to wine, gastronomy, cultural and health tourism
- Joint development of new, innovative tourism products and services for the rural, less developed areas in terms of tourism based on joint quality standards
- Trainings and capacity building for the local entrepreneurs and/or employees in developing relevant skills related to tourism (language courses, specialized professional trainings, conferences, etc.) in order to increase the quality and competitiveness of the tourism services and to indirectly contribute to local job creation
- Improvement of the usage of modern (communication) tools and promotion activities in order to increase the visibility and attractiveness of the tourism offer in the programme area
- Establishment of organizations and/or partnership networks with cross-border relevance (e.g. tourism management organizations, associations, clusters with legal entities or other non-profit organizations) facilitating the creation and development of sustainable tourism products and services, boosting joint activities and creating enabling environment for local SMEs active in tourism

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE SELECTION OF OPERATIONS

During the selection procedure, besides the criteria applied for project assessment, the following principles will be taken into consideration:

- The projects shall develop the touristic supply in the programme area, by diversifying the existing offer with additional elements, based on the values of natural and cultural heritage, priority being given to the operations targeting areas less developed in terms of tourism
- Small infrastructure developments will be supported only in case they are connected to the sustainable touristic valorization of an element of the natural or cultural heritage
- Projects shall have a positive effect on the number of overnight stays in the programme area
- Wherever they are already existing and in place, visitors' management plans for the tourist attraction sites targeted by the projects shall be revised, in order to mitigate the negative effects of increase in the tourist inflow.
- All projects shall respect the principles of environmental sustainability and be in line with the relevant environmental legislation of the two countries and on the EU level. More specifically, the projects will be asked, whenever appropriate, to elaborate Environmental Impact Assessments related to the planned interventions. Moreover, they will be requested to apply whenever possible, solutions which include measures for climate protection, climate adaptation, and for improving energy efficiency. In this sense, investments negatively affecting nature, fauna and flora, and biodiversity must be accompanied by compensatory measures and damage mitigation.
- For the projects which include improvement of accessibility to the natural and cultural heritage sites, silent road surfaces in populated areas should be considered.
- For projects involving building construction and renovation, cost-optimal levels of energy performance according to Directive 2010/31/EU are required, and projects going beyond cost-optimal levels are favored. For projects involving purchasing products, compliance with the requirements set out in Annex III of the Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU) is requested.
- Priority will be given to projects including elements of fostering the inclusion of disadvantaged groups (including long-term unemployed, older workers, drop-outs and under qualified, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, Roma, people with a migration background and people living in deep poverty) and gender mainstreaming as set out in the EQUAL Guide on Gender Mainstreaming.

### POTENTIAL BENEFICIARIES

- Local, regional public and state public administrations/institutions, and their organizations, such as national/natural park administrations, forest authorities, cultural institutions, museums, local action groups, organizations competent in the field of transport, etc.
- State owned companies
- NGOs, non-profit organizations (including legal entities established by private law with non-profit status and purpose of operation), tourism associations, tourism destination management organizations
- In Hungary, church institutions/organizations
- Chambers and professional associations
- EGTCs

### MAIN TARGET GROUPS

- SMEs and individual service providers active in the sector of tourism or related services
- Local communities
- Tourists and visitors from the main touristic centres/magnets and from outside the programme area

**Magnets** are localities attracting the largest number of tourists, whose list will be published by the Programme Authority regularly based on the number of overnight stays. Less developed areas in terms of tourism are localities not listed as magnets.

A special attention will be given to the projects which are focused on the areas less developed in terms of tourism and their linkage to magnets. In order to encourage such initiatives, the projects will be awarded bonus points during the selection procedure.

## PRIORITY AXIS 2: COOPERATIVE REGION

**Budget:**  
**3,29 M EUR**

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

To increase the capacity for cooperation in order to reach a higher level of maturity in cross-border relations.

### SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES/ACTIONS

Institutional cooperation - exchange of experience, know-how, best practices, empowerment, advocacy and capacity building for relevant public authorities and stakeholders – should be oriented towards better organized processes resulting in increased potential to capitalize on achieved results. The projects shall seek to create sustainable, strategic partnerships in the sectors tackled. Cooperation may address different fields such as:

- environmental protection, energy efficiency, renewable energy
- social services (social innovation), healthcare by addressing the increasing problems the area is facing in the field of societal challenges, as ageing, depopulation, etc.
- employment through developing organizational processes, joint measures and initiatives meant to increase the quality of the public services in the sector
- spatial planning, regional development, through better coordinating and developing more efficient and effective policies in the field
- accessibility, especially harmonization of cross-border public transport
- civil protection and common risk prevention and management, by increasing the capacity to prevent and to intervene in case of manmade or natural emergency situations
- cultural cooperation, through increasing the institutional capacity of the stakeholders for the preservation of the multi-ethnic cultural environment of the programme area

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE SELECTION OF OPERATIONS

During the selection procedure, besides the criteria applied for project assessment, the following principles will be taken into consideration:

- Projects shall clearly aim at developing the institutional capacity of the partners involved.
- In case they are planned, small scale investments shall be strongly justified, bring a clear added value, and may not constitute the main objective of the projects. For projects involving building construction and renovation, cost-optimal levels of energy performance according to Directive 2010/31/EU are required, and projects going beyond cost-optimal levels are favored. For projects involving purchasing products, compliance with the requirements set out in Annex III of the Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU) is requested.
- Considering the existing experience in cross-border cooperation in the area, the projects shall be intended to capitalize on the results of the projects implemented in the past.
- All projects shall respect the principles of environmental sustainability and be in line with the relevant environmental legislation of the two countries.
- Priority will be given to projects including elements of fostering the inclusion of disadvantaged groups (including long-term unemployed, older workers, drop-outs and under qualified, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, Roma, people with a migration background and people living in deep poverty) and gender mainstreaming as set out in the EQUAL Guide on Gender Mainstreaming.

POTENTIAL BENEFICIARIES	MAIN TARGET GROUPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local, regional and state level public administrations/institutions and their organizations</li> <li>• NGOs</li> <li>• Educational institutions, including rehabilitation centers</li> <li>• Healthcare institutions, providers of social services</li> <li>• Labor force offices, different forms of professional chambers</li> <li>• Cultural institutions and organizations</li> <li>• Stakeholders in the field of risk prevention and emergency management</li> <li>• EGTCs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local, regional and state level public administrations/institutions active in the sectors targeted by the indicative types of actions</li> <li>• local communities of the programme area</li> <li>• general public benefiting from the improve capacities of the organizations/institutions involved in cooperation</li> </ul>



## MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

The Cooperation Programme INTERREG V-A Slovenia-Hungary will be implemented under the responsibility and through the participation of the following authorities/institutions:

Authority/body	Name of authority/body and department or unit
<b>Managing Authority (MA)</b>	Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy (GODC), European Territorial Cooperation and Financial Mechanisms Office, Cross-border Programmes Management Division
<b>Certifying Authority (CA)</b>	Public Fund for Regional Development of the Republic of Slovenia
<b>Audit Authority (AA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Slovenia, Budget Supervision Office of the Republic of Slovenia</li> <li>- Directorate General for Audit of European Funds, Hungary (as GoA member)</li> </ul>
<b>Joint Secretariat (JS)</b>	Joint Secretariat hosted by the Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy (GODC), European Territorial Cooperation and Financial Mechanisms Office, Cross-border Programmes Management Division
Bodies designated to carry out <b>control tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Development and European Cohesion Policy (GODC), European Territorial Cooperation and Financial Mechanisms Office, European Territorial Cooperation Division</li> <li>- Széchenyi Programme Office Non-profit Ltd. (SZPO)</li> </ul>
Bodies designated to be responsible for carrying out <b>audit tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Slovenia, Budget Supervision Office of the Republic of Slovenia</li> <li>- Directorate General for Audit of European Funds, Hungary</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring Committee (MC)</b>	Composed of representatives of MA, National Authorities and the Commission, as well as other relevant public authorities and stakeholders. The composition of the MC will respect the principles of partnership and multi-level governance.

**[www.si-hu.eu](http://www.si-hu.eu)**

