

Citizen's Summary

Interreg



Co-funded by
the European Union

Slovenia – Hungary

INTERREG PROGRAMME SLOVENIA - HUNGARY 2021-2027

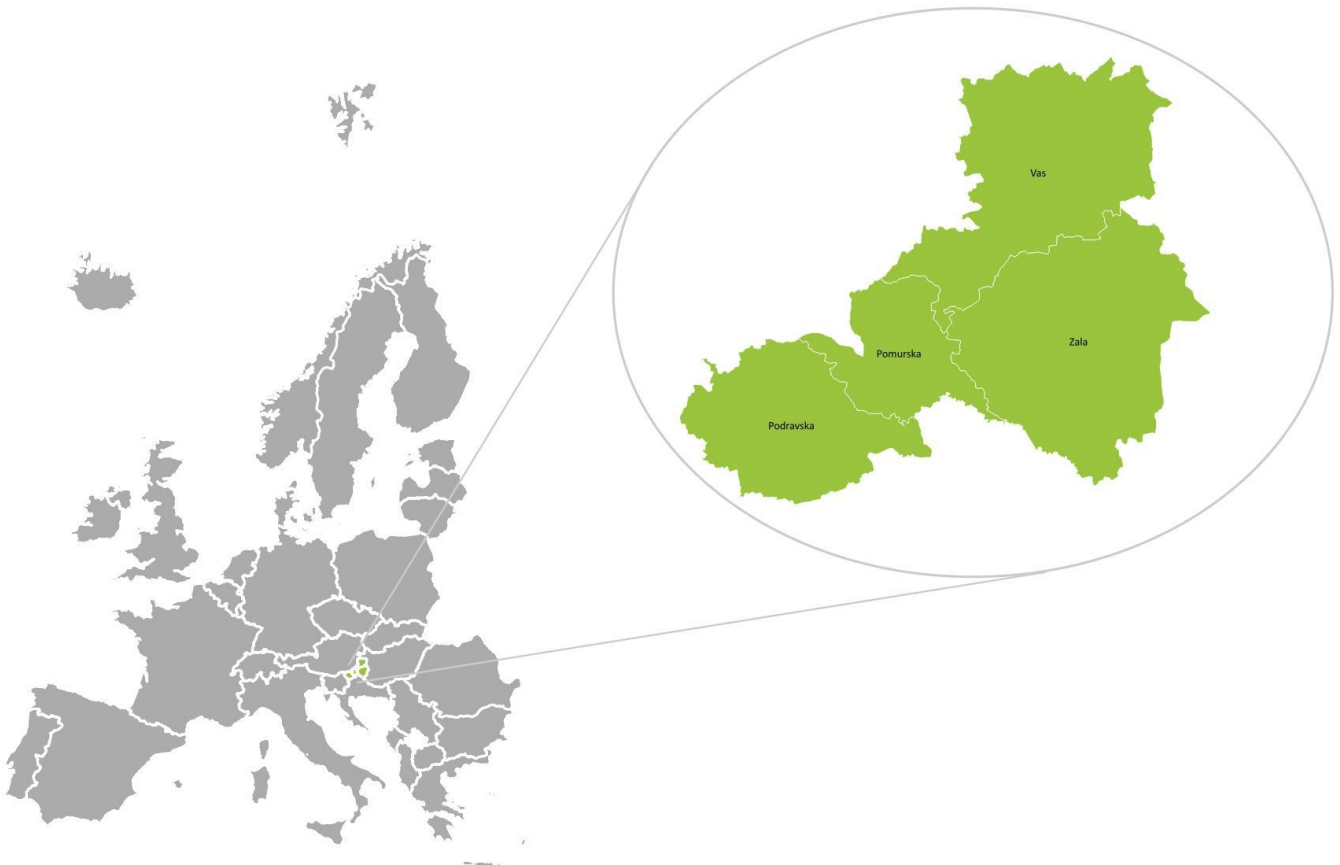
PROGRAMME AREA

The Slovenia-Hungary Interreg programme area for the period 2021-2027 includes the following eligible NUTS 3 regions:

- Pomurje and Podravje regions from Slovenia and
- the counties of Vas and Zala from Hungary.

The territory of the Slovenia-Hungary border region covers 10.627 km² in total, two-thirds of the area belong to the Hungarian, and one-third to the Slovenian border region, divided by a border of 102 km in length. Population density is 90,6 persons/km² which is way under EU-27 average. Podravje region is the most densely populated due to Maribor (the second biggest city in Slovenia), while the other regions are more sparsely populated, showing rural characteristics. The settlement structure of the programme area shows duality features: besides some important larger cities, the majority of the area's extent is a typically rural, rarely populated region with lots of small villages.

The programme area is characterised by various types of landscape: flat Pannonian areas (Pomurje, Podravje, Vas) are varying with hilly (Podravje, Zala) and subalpine territories (Pomurje, Vas).



PROGRAMME VISION AND MISSION

The programme area between Slovenia and Hungary has identified several potentials, needs and challenges expressed by the actors in the programme area that clearly show that the territory is ahead of important transitions that can be jointly addressed. The programme is focusing on a limited number of thematic areas and will pool resources to drive the change and take opportunity for increased level of cooperation capacity, new development and common solutions to challenges identified.

The **vision** of the cross-border programme is to contribute to an active and cooperating border/programme region aware of its environmental, natural and cultural values, through promoting sustainable utilisation, preservation and exploitation for tourism purposes, setting up a well identifiable and attractive green tourism destination.

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IMPROVING COORDINATION
AND COOPERATION IN THE
SI-HU BORDER AREA TO
REDUCE BORDER
OBSTACLES AND SETTING UP
ATTRACTIVE GREEN
TOURISM DESTINATION.”



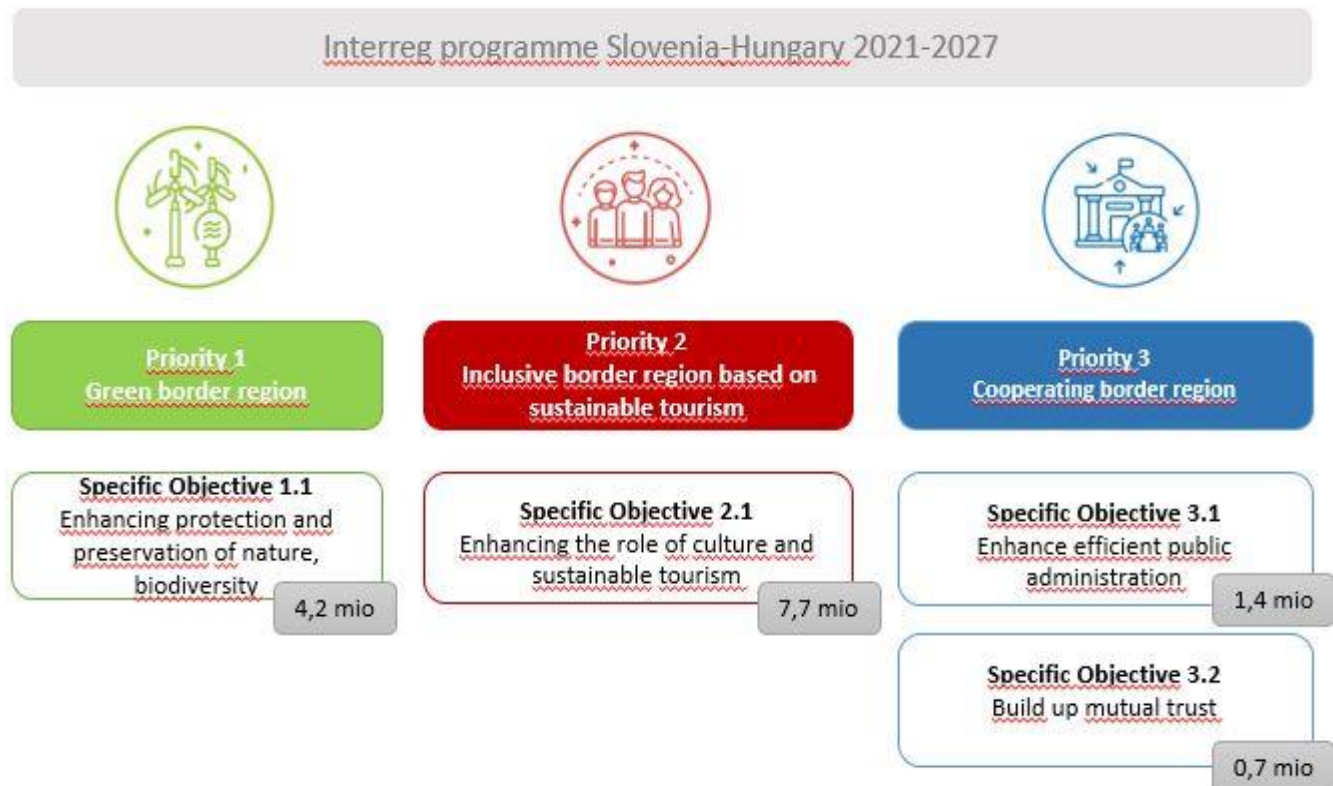
*Together we are
safeguarding and
developing our common
region for the future.*

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND STRATEGY

In the preparation phase of the Interreg Programme (IP) Slovenia-Hungary 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 programme priorities and specific objectives below form the backbone of the IP SI-HU funding strategy in 2021-2027. In line with chosen thematic fields, cross-border cooperation actions are expected to address the development and implementation of strategies, action plans, tools, training, pilot actions and related solutions. All actions have to respect the horizontal principles of sustainable development including environmental protection as well as equal opportunities, non-discrimination and gender equality.

The following intervention logic has been defined:



PROGRAMME PRIORITIES



Green border
region



Inclusive border
region based on
sustainable
tourism



Cooperating
border region

Green border region

Priority 1



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



The aim of the specific objective is to promote preservation of the existing flora and fauna and reduction of pollution.

Types of action, and their expected contribution to the specific objective

Types of action:

1. Elaboration of cross-border/common analytical studies, strategies, action plans and models for more effective preservation of natural assets, biodiversity and improvement or maintenance of natural assets



Type of activities under this action (indicative):

- Analysis of water resources in terms of quantity and quality, development of monitoring system;
- Research projects in the field of biodiversity, elaboration of cadastres of different species of flora and fauna and their presentation;
- Common strategies on nature conservation and biodiversity;
- Strategies and action plans for definition of joint measures of protection;
- Strategies and action plans for introduction of sustainable ecosystem-based water management approaches, including, natural water retention measures and prioritizing nature-based solutions natural water retention measures in the border area, particularly on cross-border waterflows;
- Improved spatial planning of urban areas and rural landscapes with focus on natural protection;
- Modelling biodiversity impacts of climate change for the future and elaboration of pilots for testing possible solutions, including innovative digital solutions;
- Elaboration of joint actions for management of nature-related disasters, strengthening the coordination role of municipalities therein;
- Action plans for reduction of various forms of pollution (water, air, soil etc.).

Expected results

Supported projects are expected to result in joint solutions and actions contributing to improvement and maintenance of biodiversity in the border area, improvement in the status of green and blue infrastructure, better quality of the water bodies, reduction of various forms of pollution in the programme area.

Types of action, and their expected contribution to the specific objective

Types of action:

2. Implementing joint pilot actions contributing to protecting biodiversity, fostering joint water and disaster management and reduction of pollution



Type of activities under this action (indicative):

- Joint actions improving biodiversity, cross-border ecological connectivity and green infrastructure;
- Joint protocols, monitoring, intervention schemes for management of nature-related disasters;
- Revitalisation, improvement of water quality of and sustainable management of cross-border waterflows, including testing and application of sustainable ecosystem-based water management approaches, natural water-retention measures including support of digital solutions in the border area;
- Awareness raising and prevention activities on biodiversity, nature and environment protection, climate protection and adaptation, disasters (e.g. forest fires), fight against various forms of pollution.

“ PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED MUST BE A RESULT OF JOINT COOPERATION AND INTERACTION BETWEEN RELEVANT INSTITUTIONS, PROVIDE TANGIBLE AND APPLICABLE SOLUTIONS AND ENHANCE CAPACITIES OF STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED.

Expected results

Supported projects are expected to result in joint solutions and actions contributing to improvement and maintenance of biodiversity in the border area, improvement in the status of green and blue infrastructure, better quality of the water bodies, reduction of various forms of pollution in the programme area.

Inclusive border region based on sustainable tourism



Priority 2

The aim of this specific objective is to develop sustainable tourism models in the border

***The aim of this specific objective** is to develop sustainable tourism models in the border region*

Types of action, and their expected contribution to the specific objective

Types of action:

1. Establishment of joint tourism quality standards and joint tourism destination management models on the basis of significant cultural (and natural) potentials and cooperation of tourism organisations, including, inter alia, the following activities:

Type of activities under this action:

- Mapping and collection of existing quality standards;
- Fostering establishment of joint quality cross-border green tourism standards and brands;
- Connection of micro tourism destinations to formulate cross-border sustainable tourism destination management systems;
- Application of creative tools for attracting tourists and promotion, including innovative use of digital solutions and ICT tools;
- Improvement the human capacity of local tourism sector (awareness raising actions, trainings).



Expected results

Supported natural and cultural tourism-related projects are expected to result in sustainable and harmonized cross-border tourism offer of the region and destination management with higher integration in local economy contributing to increased local tourism income and employment in the programme area.

Types of action, and their expected contribution to the specific objective

Types of action:

2. Implementing pilot actions and joint solutions for better inclusion of culture and cultural heritage in development of quality touristic attractions and connected tourism services



Type of activities under this action:

Quality improvement of cross-border tourism destinations with special focus on attractions of lesser-known areas (e.g. promotion and adoption of green standards and brands, promotion of sustainable mobility solutions in cross-border tourism product development (biking, hiking, use of public transport), increasing awareness on the climate change effects, promotion of eco-innovation in tourism, capacity building and support for adopting green and circular concepts, promotion of local supply chains, use of renewable energy sources);

Creation of joint cross-border eco-friendly tourism products and services focusing on integration of various tourism supply with cross-border relevance;

Improvement of cross-border accessibility of tourism attractions

Expected results

Supported natural and cultural tourism-related projects are expected to result in sustainable and harmonized cross-border tourism offer of the region and destination management with higher integration in local economy contributing to increased local tourism income and employment in the programme area.

“THE PROJECTS SUPPORTED SHOULD FOCUS ON CREATION, FURTHER DEVELOPMENT, MULTIPLICATION OF JOINT TOURISM PRODUCTS AND SERVICES BY DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MODELS, WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON LESSER-KNOWN AREAS

Guiding principles to be followed:

Focus on lesser-known rural areas with natural values and cultural assets;

Tourism can only be developed in an environmentally sustainable way. Tourism development should always consider the protection of ecological networks (core areas, ecological corridors, buffer zones) and Natura 2000 sites. Pressures on protected areas should be avoided through appropriate siting of facilities and careful design of tourism products and services;

Tourism shall have a positive impact on local cultural heritage, being in accordance with best practices in conservation, maintenance and modernisation of heritage.

Capitalisation and upgrading of existing tourism products and packages (especially those ones that were developed within cross-border cooperation projects in the 2014-2020 period) and integration of these into cross-border tourism products;

Laying high emphasis on effective cross-border tourism promotion and fostering regional tourism destination management visible at international level;

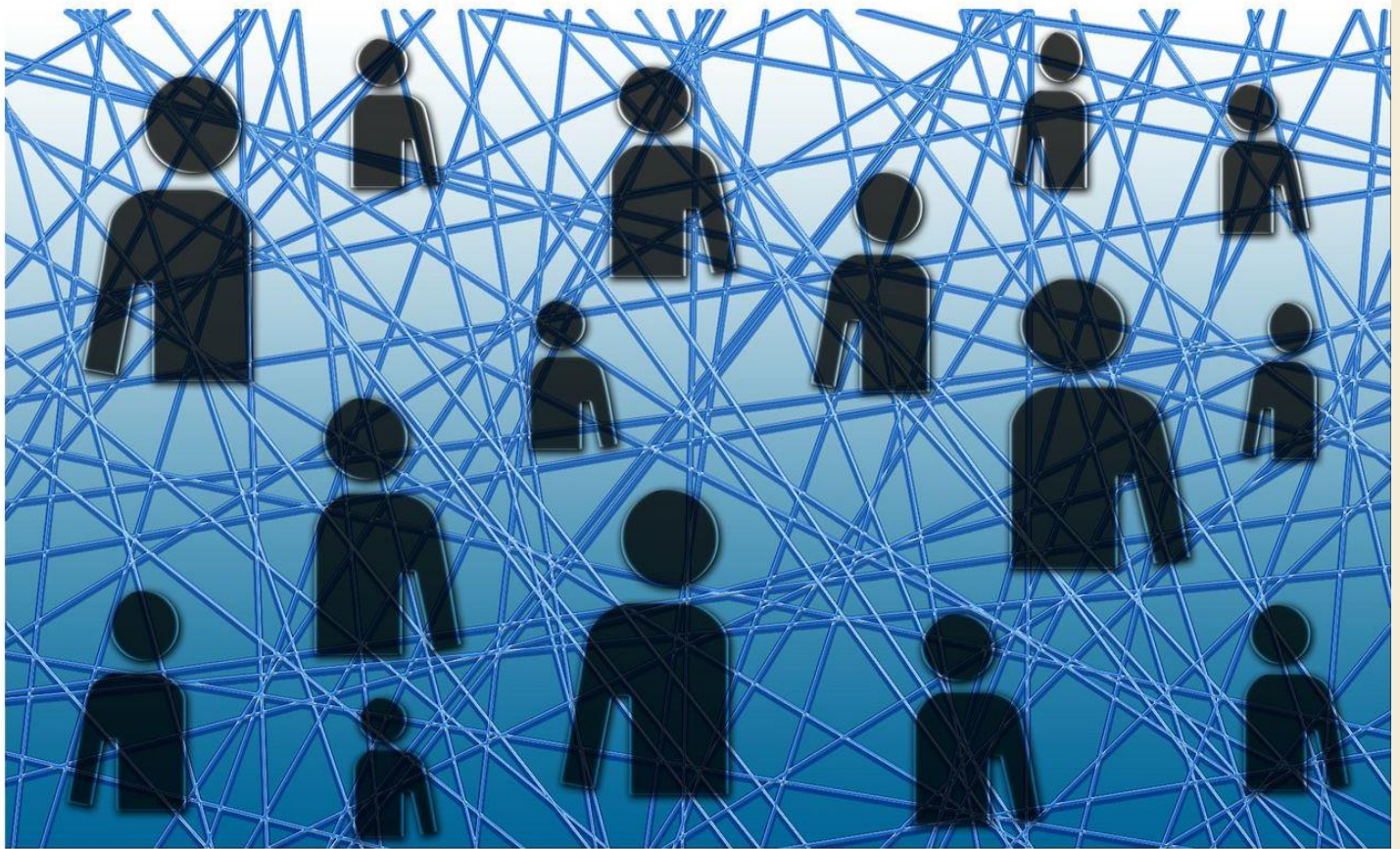
Integration of tourism into local economy, finding innovative ways of involvement of local players (local municipalities, companies, citizens) and facilitating inclusion of vulnerable population into tourism supply.



Cooperating border region



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



The aim of these cooperation and coordination activities is to enhance efficient public administration

Types of action, and their expected contribution to the specific objective

Types of activities:

- Joint and coordinated spatial planning for easier development activities;
- Elaboration of joint strategies to reduce legal and administrative obstacles of cooperation across the border;
- Joint cooperation activities in the field of low-carbon initiatives (energy efficiency, renewable energy, circular economy);
- Conceiving joint educational, vocational training programmes complementing/supporting official curricula with special emphasis on language education;
- Joint skills development of the target groups and beyond;
- Revealing and defining possibilities and fields of cross-border social and health care service cooperation;
- Elaboration of joint strategies and action plans addressing social matters and a better integration of horizontal issues (e.g. gender equality and social inclusion, including youth, women and disabled);
- Creating and coordinating joint programs by the media in the border area to better inform the local population.



Expected results

This priority seeks to improve knowledge of local decision makers in various thematic areas, create new bottom-up initiatives for cross-border cooperation and result in better harmonised planning systems and processes, data collection and assessment methods, commonly identified regional interests and investigation of new development directions.



THE INTERVENTIONS OF THIS SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE SHOULD SEEK TO SUPPORT AND DEVELOP STRATEGIC AND MORE FORMALISED CROSS-BORDER STRUCTURES, COOPERATION, COORDINATION AND POLICIES OF COMPETENT STAKEHOLDERS IN THE PROGRAMME AREA.

Thematic fields to be addressed:

- a) Joint cooperation activities in the field of low-carbon initiatives, inter alia, fostering renovation wave in public buildings and affordable utilisation of renewables, combating energy poverty for households, supporting usage of smart technologies for reduction of greenhouse gas emission, awareness raising of citizens to energy consciousness and sustainable behaviour, exchange of experience for optimal energy efficiency measures, elaboration of curricula on different fields of reduction of greenhouse gas emission;
- b) circular economy, with attention to circular economy business models, government policies and consumer habits with the aim to increase the share of recyclability of waste and utilization and use of material as secondary raw materials including water (recognizing and capture the full value of water);
- c) education and labour market cooperation, with particular attention to enhanced knowledge about the education system, requirements of admission, possible joint activities, fulfilment of cross-border traineeship programmes, employment, use of available public services, development of skills and communication, social integration of the youth;
- d) social and health care, with particular attention to prevention and ageing population including collection of information on demand and supply, system of care provision, physical and human resource conditions, possible niches of cross-border service provision.



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



The aim of these cooperation activities is to build up mutual trust, in particular by encouraging people-to-people actions

Types of action, and their expected contribution to the specific objective

Types of activities (indicative):

- Trust building activities in the field of arts and culture, sport, minorities, intercultural dialogue, inter-generational solidarity;
- Organisation of various events with involvement of the target groups and the general public.

Thematic fields to be addressed:

- a) Cross-border sport events (tournaments, festivities, camps);
- b) Ultilvation of traditions of minorities;
- c) Promotion of trust and intercultural dialogue;
- d) Promotion of cross-border inter-generational solidarity.

Support for infrastructure investments is not envisaged under this specific objective.



Expected results

Mutual trust building projects are expected to generate new links in civil society cooperation in the border region, as well as enhanced individual relationships, new range of actors involved in a wide variety of events, increased level of mutual understanding resulted by positive experience of cooperation. Trust building projects are considered of strategic importance and highly contribute to the visibility of the Programme..

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