

Newsletter N°11

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Progress and New Opportunities

Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Serbia-Bosnia and Herzegovina has successfully implemented 74 projects, with a total value exceeding 23 million euros. Currently, 12 projects focused on social and economic inclusion and tourism development are being carried out under the Third Call.



In the new financial perspective 2021-2027 (IPA III), support is directed towards promoting tourism, preserving cultural and natural heritage, and investing in youth, education, and skills. Fourteen million euros have been allocated for this programme period, with the first call for project proposals expected by the end of 2024.

To strengthen the capacities of potential applicants, the Ministry of European Integration of the Republic of Serbia and the Directorate for European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina organized a Workshop on Project Proposal Preparation on June 24, 2024, at the "Royal Spa" Hotel in Banja Koviljača. The workshop was attended by over 100 representatives of national and local institutions and the non-governmental sector, both in person and online. It included a presentation of the goals and priorities of the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme, as well as advice on project submission and preparation.

Eco-Tourism in the Cross-Border Area: New Horizons for Birdwatching

The project “Eco-Tourism in the Cross-Border Area between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina: Cross-Border Birdwatching” is being implemented by Caritas Šabac, the Bird Protection and Study Society of Serbia, and the Red Cross of the Tuzla Canton. This project aims to enhance the tourism offer and include socially vulnerable groups in creating a richer tourism experience.

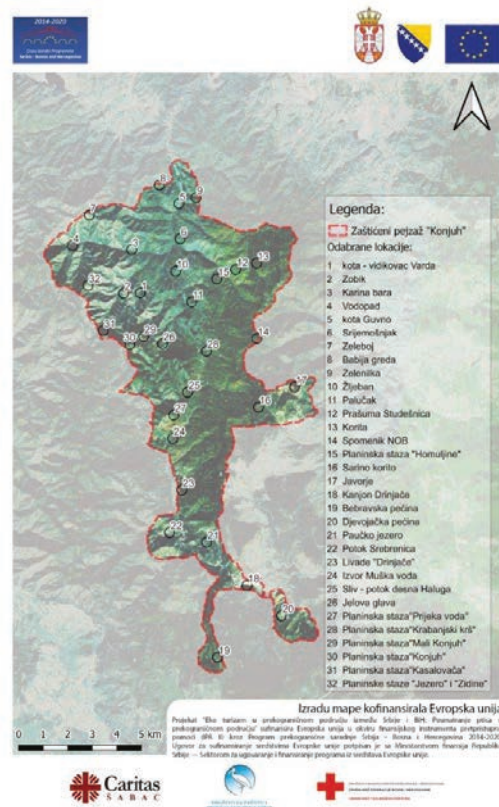


It all began with the signing of a partnership agreement, laying the foundation for cooperation and the achievement of common goals. The first activity, organizing a promotional event, brought together over 100 participants, presenting the project and enabling the connection of partners and stakeholders. This event was crucial for raising awareness and motivating the local community.

During the first year of implementation, the focus was on researching the areas in the Protected Landscape “Konjuh” and the International Bird Area (IBA) Lower Drina. One of the main tasks was creating birdwatching trail maps. These maps record the most attractive birdwatching locations in both areas, allowing tourists to enjoy the natural beauty.

Information boards have been designed for both areas, displaying characteristic bird species, basic information about the areas, and maps with birdwatching trails. A total of six info boards have been installed, three in each area. These boards serve as guides and educational resources for all visitors.

One of the most important project results is the publication “Birdwatcher’s Guide to the Cross-Border Area between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.” This guide details the basics of birdwatching as a hobby, its tourism potential, and the natural values of the region. It is primarily intended for tourist guides but is also available on the project partners’ websites.



More than 80 participants from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina took part in a one-day study visit to SRP “Zasavica” and the social tourism enterprise “Avlija održivog razvoja” in Bogatić. During this visit, examples of best practices in nature-based tourism and tourism supporting socially vulnerable groups were presented.

The “Eco-Tourism in the Cross-Border Area” project not only enriches the region’s tourism offer but also creates inclusive tourist content. Through all these activities, solid foundations for sustainable tourism development are being laid, promoting the conservation of natural resources and creating new opportunities for local communities. The project’s successes so far promise a bright future for eco-tourism in this cross-border area, bringing benefits to both Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Joint Tourism Product of Serbia and BiH: A Cultural Bridge Between Two Countries

The project “Together for Cultural Tourism” has connected women from the border regions of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, creating a joint tourism product that highlights cultural heritage and traditional crafts. This project is implemented by NALED in cooperation with the Ethno Network and Bosnian Handicrafts. Through a series of workshops, colonies, and study visits, women have acquired new skills and empowered themselves to market their handicrafts.

It all began with great enthusiasm when women from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina had the opportunity to exchange experiences and handcraft techniques during a study visit to Tuzla and Sarajevo. This visit, along with two joint colonies in Tuzla and Sremska Mitrovica, allowed them to strengthen their skills and create unique products through creative processes.



Workshops were organized in Sremska Mitrovica, Šid, Inđija, Sarajevo, Vlasenica, and Tuzla. Each of these workshops was an opportunity for women to enhance their knowledge and find inspiration for further work.

Lejla Radončić, Executive Director of BHCrafts, explained that the project supports at least 60 women from 18 municipalities in both countries, promoting their joint work and establishing bridges of cooperation. “The colony brought together women from different parts of BiH and Serbia to create handicrafts with motifs characteristic of our regions, using symbols that connect us. This project gives a strong impetus to empowering and improving the economic position of women, especially in rural areas,” concluded Radončić.

During the study visit to Tuzla and Sarajevo in March, it was announced that by the end of the year, joint tourism products of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina would be created and presented at a joint exhibition by March 2025. These products, featuring cross-border motifs, will best illustrate the results of the cooperation achieved through the project.



Violeta Jovanović, President of the Ethno Network and Executive Director of NALED, emphasizes the importance of organizing colonies to send a message of mutual support and unity among women for the benefit of the region. “Women are the bearers of the highest virtues of these areas, guardians of memory and heritage, symbols of hope and reconciliation. With adequate support, they can be the carriers of successful coexistence and development in all areas of life, from culture to economy,” Jovanović points out.

“Together for Cultural Tourism – Cross-Border Cooperation for Improved Socio-Economic Development and Preservation of Traditional Crafts” aims to rescue old crafts and domestic techniques from oblivion, restore their economic and cultural value, and engage younger generations in preserving cultural heritage through creative workshops.

Through the “Together for Cultural Tourism” project, women from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina have not only improved their skills but have also built bridges of cooperation and friendship. The joint tourism products, imbued with symbols that connect the two nations, will be a lasting reminder of the strength of unity and cultural heritage.

Development and Implementation of a Program Responding to the Needs of Children with Behavioral Disorders

The project “Development and Implementation of a Program Responding to the Needs of Children with Behavioral Disorders” started in April 2023.

From the very beginning, the project focused on increasing the competencies of professionals in the social protection sector through specialized training, establishing new social services, creating manuals for working with children, and conducting awareness-raising campaigns. Key activities were implemented in the territories of Stara Pazova in Serbia and Bijeljina in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Three training sessions were conducted under the title “Training for the Implementation of Treatment for Children and Youth with Behavioral Disorders in the Social Protection System.” The first training was held in Stari Banovci from November 20 to 24, 2023, with 20 participants from the Srem District Social Work Center and Centers from other parts of Vojvodina. The second training was also held in Stari Banovci from February 19 to 23, 2024, while the third training was organized in Bijeljina, at the Ethno Village Stanišić, from December 11 to 15, 2023, for 20 participants from the BiH border area.

The project provided equipment for the daycare center in Stara Pazova, including a laptop, garden furniture, and a greenhouse for the Day Center in Bijeljina. In Stara Pazova, a Day Center for children with behavioral disorders was opened, serving 22 boys and 14 girls. In Bijeljina, the Day Center serves 25 boys and 22 girls.

The treatment program for children with behavioral disorders was implemented through individual and group work with children in both centers. Results from the evaluation conducted at the end of March 2024 showed a high degree of applicability and effectiveness in working with children who have behavioral problems. The program is also being implemented in all other CSW in AP Vojvodina, expanding the project’s scope.

A 12-year-old girl, I.H., joined the Day Center after an incident involving a cold weapon at school. With the support of professional workers, I.H. began to come to the Day Center on her own initiative, expressing satisfaction and gratitude for the support provided: "My best day in life is when I come here," "I count the hours until I come here." A 14-year-old boy, Z.J., shared during the admission interview about the traumatic loss of his mother, stating that he felt better after the conversation and was grateful for the support. He actively participates in workshops with the older group.

During the "Accept Me If You Can" workshop, children showed empathy and understanding towards discriminated children, shared personal examples, and were encouraged to report violence. A girl, H.I., shared her experiences with peer violence and received group support.



Children expressed a desire to bring friends to the workshops, which was allowed with parental consent.

The project "Development and Implementation of a Program Responding to the Needs of Children with Behavioral Disorders" has shown remarkable results in improving services and support for children with behavioral disorders. Through training, establishing new services, and implementing treatments, the project can significantly impact local communities in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. These results highlight the importance of continuing to invest in such initiatives to achieve long-term improvements in the quality of life for children with behavioral disorders.

E-CrossPass: A New Hiking Adventure

The project “Strengthening the Pedestrian Corridor in the Cross-Border Area of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina - E-CrossPass” brings a new dimension to hiking tourism in the Balkans. In the first 16 months of implementation, the project partners - the Tourist Organization of Užice, the Mountaineering Association of Serbia, the Mountaineering Society Konjuh from Tuzla, and the Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environmental Protection of the Tuzla Canton - have achieved significant results. This project combines fieldwork, training, and promotion, laying the foundations for the long-term sustainability and attractiveness of hiking tourism in the region.



One of the key segments of the “E-CrossPass” project is the establishment of a European hiking trail with a total length of 580 km. Teams have marked 330 km of the hiking trail through Serbia according to the highest European standards, while the works on tracing and marking 250 km of the trail in Bosnia and Herzegovina are nearing completion. This monumental task involved not only physically marking the trails but also integrating them into local communities as tourist attractions.

The first step towards enhancing the capacities of mountaineering societies was the training for marking hiking and mountaineering trails on Tara. Twenty participants successfully completed the training for marking the trail, while ten mountaineering clubs received complete equipment for trail maintenance. Following the practical part in Sopotnica and the theoretical part of the training at the Faculty of Psychology and Sport of the University of Novi Sad, ten mountaineers were trained to lead groups in summer conditions on mountains up to 3000 meters and obtained the title of mountain guide 3.B category.

For fifteen local and regional representatives from the fields of tourism and environmental protection, a five-day study trip was organized to the high ERA standards certified trails. Participants visited part of the E4 European

hiking trail in Hungary, the E8 in Austria, as well as the “Lužnice Valley Trail” in the Czech Republic, certified as “Leading Quality Trails - Best of Europe.” This trip allowed participants to familiarize themselves with various landscapes, tourist attractions, local history, and folklore, promoting the sustainable use of natural resources.



Promoting the E-CrossPass project remains a continuous focus. At the 45th International Tourism Fair in Belgrade, the project team presented the tourism offer along the hiking trail through direct contact with visitors, media, and tourism professionals. A brochure titled “Tourist Guide for Adventurers” and thematic promotional materials were prepared, while VR glasses allowing a virtual visit to the most significant sites along the hiking trail through Western Serbia attracted special attention from visitors.



The E-CrossPass project has already achieved significant results in strengthening hiking tourism in the cross-border area of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. By establishing hiking trails, training mountaineering societies, and intensive promotion, the project not only connects the two countries but also promotes the sustainable use of natural resources and strengthens local communities. This new hiking adventure opens doors for further tourism development and quality of life improvement in the region.

Improving Competencies of Informal Caregivers and Professionals: A Bridge to Social Inclusion

In the Balkans, where borders often present challenges, cross-border cooperation projects hold special significance. One such project, “Improving the Competencies of Informal Caregivers and Professionals in the Republic of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina,” not only bridges geographical boundaries but also strengthens social ties. This project, led by the Center for Support and Inclusion Help Net from Belgrade, in collaboration with Caritas Šabac and the Center for Social Innovations Tuzla, aims to enhance the social and economic inclusion of informal caregivers in the social protection system.

Informal caregivers are often the invisible heroes of our communities. They provide constant, selfless care to their loved ones without any compensation. This project recognizes their key role and seeks to support them through education and empowerment. The education of informal caregivers and professionals from the social protection system has been carried out through three key training sessions, including permanently available online courses.



Three main training sessions have been organized, covering both informal caregivers and professionals. A significant portion of educational content and video materials providing direct guidelines for managing and preventing burnout syndrome has been prepared.

During the project’s duration, it is planned to train 120 informal caregivers and 120 social protection professionals. The training sessions are designed based on needs analysis, focusing on working with dementia patients and providing support to informal caregivers.

Permanent training sessions are also available on online platforms, including YouTube. These platforms ensure the project’s long-term sustainability, aiming for at least 500 people to access these resources during the project’s duration.

“The project was a turning point for me. I learned how to better care for my mother and how to cope with stress,” says Milena, an informal caregiver from the Mačva District.

“The training sessions provided us with the tools and knowledge necessary for working with people with dementia. I feel more prepared and confident in my job,” adds Ana, a social worker from the Tuzla Canton.



The project “Improving the Competencies of Informal Caregivers and Professionals” not only provides education and support but also strengthens social inclusion and improves the quality of life in the Mačva District and the Tuzla Canton. This project is an example of how cooperation and joint efforts can bring lasting changes and support to those who need it most.

This is just the beginning. Long-term sustainability and permanent support through online platforms ensure that knowledge and resources will be available to many in the future, laying the foundations for an even more inclusive society.

Services for Newly Established Start-Up Companies – NESESER

The NESESER project represents a significant step forward in cross-border cooperation between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. This project focuses on the employment of youth and women, as well as the improvement of the entrepreneurial environment. Recognized at both local and regional levels, its activities have attracted widespread public attention on both sides of the border.

One of the key activities was enhancing the capacities of government representatives and business associations through educational workshops and study trips. These events enabled project team members and the Advisory Board to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for establishing and managing business incubators.



Project activities began with visits to business incubators in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the surrounding areas. These visits were crucial for better identifying the needs of local communities. By conducting an analysis of the existing economic and entrepreneurial situation in Brčko and Loznica, the project more easily reached interested parties and end-users.

The Feasibility Study and Business Plan, presented at two events, guided the establishment of business incubators as a key activity. These events attracted significant media interest and included public representatives. Additionally, five-day workshops were organized to build the capacities of government representatives in developing start-up companies and the business environment. These workshops were held at the Educational and Cultural Center “Vuk Karadžić” in Tršić.

For effective management of entrepreneurial centers, a thirty-day “ToT – Training of Trainers” education was conducted under the guidance of BIT Center from Tuzla. This education provided advanced knowledge for managing business incubators, leading business incubators, and supporting start-up residents.

Alongside strengthening human resources, the project involved the procurement of computer equipment tailored to the needs of start-up residents. The establishment of business entrepreneurship centers in Brčko and Loznica is in its final stages, and the first “start-up tenants” are expected soon.



The NESESER project significantly contributes to improving the entrepreneurial environment and employing youth and women in Brčko and Loznica. Through educational workshops, study trips, and trainer programs, the project has laid the foundations for successfully establishing and managing business incubators. This project, as an example of cross-border cooperation, can serve as a model for similar initiatives in the future.

Via Dinarica - The Green Trail Above Borders

The Dinaric Alps region is a true challenge and paradise for all nature enthusiasts, being one of the least explored mountain ranges in Europe. The Via Dinarica, an international “mega” hiking trail 1200 km long, passes through this area, connecting six countries: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and Albania. The trail is divided into three lines: White, Blue, and Green.

The project “Via Dinarica - The Green Trail Above Borders” aims to create and enhance the tourist product of the Green Trail, connecting people and regions of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, contributing to their socio-economic development.



Since March 1, 2023, project activities have focused on maintaining existing and marking new hiking and walking trails. In Serbia, 350 km of new hiking trails have been traced and marked, while in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 320.6 km of existing trails have been serviced. Currently, the tracing and marking of a 160 km route is underway, which will connect existing trails in Bosnia and Herzegovina with new trails in Serbia, creating a unique Via Dinarica - Green Trail route of 510 km.

In addition to field activities, training for trail marking and maintenance, adventure guides, and Via Dinarica portal management were organized. These training sessions aimed to build the capacities of mountaineering societies, tourist organizations, protected area managers, NGOs, travel agencies, and guides. Over 35 different organizations actively participate in the project to continue the activities of maintaining the unique hiking trail and joint promotion after the project’s completion.

Moreover, mountaineering societies received equipment for trail maintenance, and two Via Dinarica Info Hubs in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were additionally equipped and made available to visitors and hikers.

In the upcoming period, signage will be installed along the unique Via Dinarica trail in both countries. Concurrently, significant natural and cultural sites and tourism service providers along the trail are being mapped, which will be promoted through specialized portals dedicated to nature lovers and outdoor activities.



The “Via Dinarica - The Green Trail Above Borders” project not only enhances the region’s tourism offer but also contributes to connecting people and communities, strengthening the socio-economic development of the region. Through trail maintenance, education, and promotion of natural and cultural riches, the project ensures the long-term sustainability and attractiveness of the Via Dinarica route, creating a unique destination for all nature lovers and adventurers.

Culture and Tourism on the Railroad: Rising Cross-Border Cooperation through the “Old Railways for New Cooperation and Experiences” Project

The “Old Railways for New Cooperation and Experiences” project is a commendable initiative that contributes to strengthening the tourist offer and preserving local heritage. The project’s general goal is to increase tourist interest in local heritage in the Tuzla and Zlatibor regions. Through an innovative approach, the project team integrated the tourist offers of these areas, connecting the narrow-gauge railway and providing new opportunities for cooperation.

One of the key activities of the project was training for cultural heritage professionals, which took place in March 2024 in Tuzla. This training brought together 14 participants and lasted four days, aiming to train five certified guides for each of the two locations—the Virtual Narrow-Gauge Railway Museums in Požega and Banovići.



The training was conducted by a licensed trainer, following the Interpret Europe methodology. This standardized certification process ensured a high level of knowledge and skills among the participants, with 12 undergoing testing and 11 successfully certified.

The existence of certified professionals is a crucial step towards ensuring the quality presentation of cultural heritage. The collected materials, systematized by museum experts, can now be adequately presented to visitors, making the museums at both locations an indispensable part of the tourist offer.

Through training and certification, opportunities for future cooperation and development have been created, opening doors to new experiences for tourists. This project exemplifies how joint initiatives can shape the future of the region’s tourism potential.

Contribution of the “On stop shop” Project: Supporting Youth Entrepreneurship and Cross-Border Partnership

Through a partnership between the Center for Youth Work from Serbia, the Center for Youth Education from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Sremska Mitrovica Youth Association, and the Tuzla Community Foundation, the project has successfully addressed the challenges faced by young people, especially those from vulnerable groups.

The project started on April 1, 2023, and has achieved significant results to date. Within the initiative, two mapping studies were conducted, providing a detailed analysis of the needs of employers, youth, and small and medium-sized enterprises in six target municipalities. These studies served as the basis for developing innovative educational programs, including four curricula focused on transferable skills, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and mentorship.



To ensure quality education, six professionals from various sectors, including youth work, business, and local authorities, were engaged. Two promotional campaigns were launched, informing more than 20,000 young people about (self)employment opportunities. After the selection process, 50 unemployed youth were chosen for training, which began in September 2023.

During the training sessions, participants acquired key competencies for retraining, supported by 12 experienced trainers. The training lasted six months, enabling participants to become qualified for the labor market or to start their own businesses.

The project also included organizing two study visits, with a total of 130 participants from the public, business, and non-governmental sectors. These visits facilitated the exchange of experiences and strengthened cross-border cooperation. During the mentorship process, eight professionals assisted young participants in developing 20 innovative business ideas, which were presented at a conference in Sremska Mitrovica in June 2023.

Thanks to the “On stop shop” project, young people from the cross-border area of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were empowered through education and mentoring support. The establishment of two new companies by the participants is just the beginning, with the goal of founding at least six new enterprises by the end of the project. This project not only enhances socio-economic development but also lays the foundation for long-term cooperation, providing young people with the necessary tools for success in the entrepreneurial world.

The Roman Emperors' Route: Paving the Way for Local Tourism Development

The project "Roman Emperors' Route" brings together partners including the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments in Sremska Mitrovica, the Archaeological Museum "Roman Municipium" in Skelani, the Srebrenica Tourist Organization, and the NGO Center for Sustainable Development and Democracy (CORD). The goal is clear: to establish a new tourism product that will enrich the cultural offerings of this cross-border area.

A key activity of the project was the protection of the Roman Municipium archaeological site in Skelani. Through systematic work, not only was protection achieved, but also the valorization of this significant cultural heritage. In this context, mosaics in Sremska Mitrovica have been reconstructed and are now part of the Imperial Palace offer. These reconstructions are not just an aesthetic contribution but a bridge between the past and the future, allowing tourists to experience the rich history of the region.



To integrate Roman Municipium into a certified tourist route, new tourist itineraries have been developed. These itineraries are carefully designed to connect archaeological sites with local attractions, creating a unique experience for visitors. This approach creates conditions for increasing visits to the border area, which, in turn, will contribute to the economic development of the communities.

Another segment of the project focuses on enhancing the tourism offer as a foundation for tourism development. Throughout the project, workshops have been held for project club members, providing local tourism stakeholders with the opportunity to exchange experiences and ideas. These workshops are not only educational but also serve as a platform for collaboration and networking, further strengthening local initiatives and encouraging joint efforts.

The "Roman Emperors' Route" project represents a significant step toward developing sustainable tourism in the cross-border region. Through all realized activities, from the protection of cultural heritage to the creation of new tourist itineraries and strengthening local offers, foundations have been laid for future growth and development. This project not only contributes to preserving history but also creates better conditions for local communities and visitors, opening new doors for exploring and enjoying the rich cultural heritage.

Contribution of the Project “Healthy Aging in the Cross-Border Area – HEAL”

In light of demographic changes predicted by the World Health Organization, which anticipates that the number of people over 60 will rise from 12% to 22% by 2050, it becomes crucial to improve health services for this population. The “Healthy Aging in the Cross-Border Area – HEAL” project is being successfully implemented to ensure that elderly citizens receive the necessary health support.

As part of the project, Information Days with free health check-ups for elderly citizens were organized in several municipalities. These events took place in Indija (February 28), Šid (March 5), Ruma (March 6), and Irig (March 7) 2024. The goal was to enable elderly individuals in rural areas to easily check their health.



Volunteers from the Red Cross of Srem, trained in preventive check-ups, provided support and professional care during these days. During the check-ups, elderly citizens were informed about common health issues, including cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and mental health, as well as the importance of physical activity and proper nutrition.

“This initiative is of exceptional importance for elderly individuals, not only due to the check-ups but also because of the information needed to maintain their health and well-being,” emphasized one of the volunteers.

The workshops were interactive, allowing participants to ask questions and exchange experiences. This approach not only contributed to education but also created a supportive environment that helped older individuals feel secure during the check-ups.



The “Healthy Aging in the Cross-Border Area – HEAL” project not only provides essential health services but also educates elderly citizens about healthy aging and disease prevention. With the support of the European Union, this project serves as an example of how cooperation and joint efforts can lead to positive changes in the lives of elderly people, strengthening their healthy and active role in society.

New Outdoor Locations for Improving the Quality of the Tourism Product - Open Air Everywhere

Outdoor tourism is gaining popularity, and the “Open Air Everywhere” project represents a significant step in enhancing the tourism product in the regions of Western Serbia and the Tuzla Canton. This project focuses on building the capacities of tourism actors and promoting the concept of outdoor tourism. This narrative explores the achieved results and activities undertaken to enrich the tourism offer and enable quality stays for tourists in nature.

The project began with the organization of two key training sessions for tourism service providers. The first three-day training was held in Tuzla, where 20 representatives from the Tuzla Canton and Western Serbia improved their communication and presentation skills and gained knowledge of basic marketing techniques. The second training took place as part of the 7th Tourism Conference of Western Serbia in Zlatibor. Lecturer Nemanja Milenković presented examples of good practice in destination management, branding of tourist destinations, and the promotion of outdoor tourism.



On the second day of the 45th International Tourism Fair in Belgrade, a presentation of the “Open Air Everywhere” project was held, involving partners from Tuzla and Western Serbia. Participants had the opportunity to learn about the project’s details and its achievements so far.

At the ITB Tourism Fair in Berlin, from March 5 to 7, 2024, sixteen representatives of key project stakeholders from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, including members of the “Open Air Everywhere” project team, participated. This international event provided broad promotion of the project and networking with tourism professionals from around the world.

In July 2024, camping equipment was procured and provided to local tourist organizations for use. A total of 45 sets of equipment, five sets for each of the nine locations, included tents, mattresses, sleeping bags, chairs, lamps, pillows, and foot pumps. The equipment is intended for two people, enabling quality outdoor stays. Nemanja Nešić, director of the Tourist Organization of the Western Serbia region, stated, “By constructing and establishing eco-camps at nine locations in the Zlatibor district, we have supplemented

our region's tourism offer. Tourists will be able to spend quality time through active recreation and enjoy the beautiful environment of Western Serbia."

Parallel to the procurement of equipment, work was done on establishing nine eco-camping rest areas. The last rest area was completed in Sjenica, marking the completion of all locations. The promotion of the first eco-camping site was held on July 19 in Mokra Gora, and similar events are planned for all locations.



The "Open Air Everywhere" project brings significant innovations to the tourism offer of Western Serbia and the Tuzla Canton. Through training, promotions, and infrastructure improvements, tourists now have the opportunity to enjoy the natural beauties of these regions in a completely new way.

The "Open Air Everywhere" project successfully contributes to improving the quality of the tourism product, creating new opportunities for the development and promotion of outdoor tourism.

Developing Rural Tourism for a Sustainable Future in the Cross-Border Region

The project “Development of rural tourism as a basis for future sustainable development in the cross-border region of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina” brings together enthusiasts and professionals from Han Pijesak and Loznica with the aim of enhancing tourism and strengthening cross-border cooperation.

A press conference was held in Han Pijesak, gathering media and the local public. At the conference, the main components of the project were presented, providing the public with an insight into the planned activities and expected results. Statements from project representatives emphasized the importance of developing rural tourism as a key factor for the economic and social advancement of the cross-border area.



The first of four planned resource mapping workshops was also held. With the support of trainer-facilitators, participants explored the resources and potentials of the cross-border area, focusing on Han Pijesak and Loznica. Discussions covered various aspects of tourism development, including opportunities for innovation and sustainability. “These workshops enable local communities to identify and utilize their resources in the best possible way,” stated one of the trainers.

A cross-sectoral Working Group was formed to develop the Tourism Development Strategy for the municipality of Han Pijesak. The group is currently analyzing the situation and laying the foundation for defining a long-term vision for tourism development. A key element of this process is participation, involving a higher degree of community engagement. “The strategy will integrate tourism with other sectors and introduce innovations in strategic planning,” highlighted a member of the Working Group.

Alongside the development of the strategy, work has begun on the Cross-Border Study on Rural Development and Environmental Protection. The study will provide new ideas and perspectives in various domains relevant to tourism and biodiversity. “This study will open new horizons and provide guidelines for the sustainable development of rural areas,” emphasized the project coordinator.



In Loznica, work is underway on the facilities of the Hunting Association “Gučevo” and the facility in Tršić, where the Center for the Promotion of Rural Tourism in the cross-border area will be established. Work on the reconstruction of the Hunting Association “Studena Gora” facility in Han Pijesak is also expected to begin. These activities significantly contribute to strengthening the capacities of local associations, which, through various project activities, will become key players in tourism development and important partners for local governments and tourism organizations. “These centers will be places for gathering, education, and promotion of rural tourism,” stated a representative of the Hunting Association.

The project “Development of rural tourism as a basis for future sustainable development in the cross-border region of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina” is already showing significant results through a series of implemented activities. From educational workshops to the development of strategies and infrastructure works, each step contributes to better connectivity and development of local communities. The completion of all activities is expected to bring even greater benefits to the cross-border area, fostering sustainable development and enhancing the tourism offer.



About Us

IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2021-2027 is implemented under the framework of the Instrument of Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III).

The Programme is implemented jointly by both countries. Ministry of European Integration of the Republic of Serbia and Directorate for European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina are in charge of the overall coordination of the Programme as the Operating Structures. Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Serbia, Department for Contracting and Financing of EU Funded Programmes (CFCU) is responsible for all contract as the Contracting Authority (CA). Programme is assisted by Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS).

The overall budget of the Programme for the period 2021-2027 is 14,000,000 EUR while Beneficiaries co-financing is expected to be 2,223,529.42 EUR.

So far, since its establishment in 2007 the Programme has funded 74 projects, providing a little over 23 millions EUR of EU funds across the Programme area.

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