



PHOTO CREDIT: CZIP/YOUTUBE – ECO AND OUTDOOR TOURISM ACTIONS OF THE BALKAN ALPS

Enhancing Cooperation - Newsletter

of the IPA CBC Programmes
Montenegro-Albania and Montenegro-Kosovo 2014-2020

May
2021

CONTENT

The tenth issue of the newsletter brings you information on activities and events implemented within both IPA Cross-border Cooperation (CBC) Programmes Montenegro - Albania and Montenegro - Kosovo* 2014-2020.

Please find below more information on the programmes.

IPA CBC Programme Montenegro - Albania 2014-2020

The global objective of the programme is to promote/strengthen good neighbourly relations and socioeconomic development of the border regions, through valorising its touristic potentials, an environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive economic development, with respect for its common cultural and natural heritage.

Click [here](#) for more information.

IPA CBC Programme Montenegro - Kosovo 2014-2020

The global objective of the programme is to improve the standard and quality of living of the people in the programme area through the environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive economic development of the region, with respect for its common cultural and natural heritage.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.



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MNE-ALB
IPA CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME
MONTENEGRO-ALBANIA 2014-2020



MNE-KOS
IPA CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME
MONTENEGRO-KOSOVO 2014-2020



The 3rd Call for Proposals within the IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Montenegro-Kosovo 2014-2020 has been published

The Government of Montenegro – European Integration Office and the Directorate for Finance and Contracting of EU Assistance in the Ministry of Finance and Social Welfare, in cooperation with the Ministry of Local Government Administration of the Republic of Kosovo invite you to use EU funds and apply for joint projects under the Third Call for Proposals within the IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Montenegro-Kosovo 2014-2020.



The overall objective of this call is to improve the standard and quality of living of the people in the programme area through the environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive economic development of the region, with respect for its common cultural and natural heritage.

Funds in the amount of 3.48 million EUR are available under this call and are committed to the following thematic priorities (TP):

- **TP 1: Promoting employment, labour mobility and social and cultural inclusion across the border;**
- **TP 2: Protecting the environment, promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk prevention and management; and**
- **TP 3: Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage.**

The call is open to legal persons and non-profit organizations established in Montenegro and Kosovo and belonging to the following categories: local governments and their institutions, associations of municipalities, development agencies, local business support organizations, tourism and cultural organizations, NGOs, public and private bodies supporting the workforce, vocational and technical training institutions, bodies and organization for nature protection, public bodies responsible for water management, fire/emergency services, schools, colleges, universities and research centres including vocations and technical training institutions.



The deadline for submitting project proposals is **June 25, 2021**.

More information on the Call for Proposals can be found [here](#).

The publication of the Call for Proposals was promoted extensively through social and traditional media.

Online Information session for the 3rd Cfp

After the publication of the 3rd Call for Proposals within the IPA Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Montenegro-Kosovo 2014-2020 an online Information session, aiming at presentation of the rules of 3rd Call for Proposals was organized on 25 May 2021.

More than 100 representatives of different stakeholders from the cross-border area had the opportunity to inform themselves on the objectives of the programme and priority issues, financial allocation provided, eligibility of applicants, eligible actions, eligibility of costs: costs that can be included and how to apply and the procedures to follow.



The Q&A from the online information session as well as from queries received through the official mail will be published [here](#).

Use our Partner Search Tool to find your future project partner

Are you looking for a partner for a new project within the IPA CBC Programme Montenegro-Albania 2014-2020 or IPA CBC Programme Montenegro-Kosovo 2014-2020? Our partner search tool is available to assist you in finding potential partners. Please fill in the partner search form and publish the information in the database so that you become visible to others.

Click [here](#) for access to the tool for IPA CBC Programme Montenegro-Albania 2014 - 2020.

Click [here](#) for access to the tool for IPA CBC Programme Montenegro-Kosovo 2014-2020.

News on projects financed under the 1st CfP IPA CBC Programme Montenegro - Albania

Project Disasters do not know borders finished

The project *Disasters do not know borders* has completed its project activities. One of the final activities implemented was also the support to the Meteorological Service. As part of the implementation of the project Prefecture of Shkodra has supported the Military Meteorological Service with meteorological equipment and early warning systems. Today the meteorological service of Shkodra counts two synoptic stations, installed in the regional station Grudë in Shkodra and that of Gjadri in Lezha, and two hydro stations installed in the river Buna and Drin, thus covering the northern region of Albania.

Thanks to the equipment technology, the stations manage to transmit in real time the data collected by the respective software, enabling short-term, medium-term and long-term forecasts by meteorologists.



Final conference of the project Child Friendly Tourism held in Podgorica

The final conference of the project *Child Friendly Tourism in the cross-border region* was held on April 22nd and 23rd in Podgorica. The conference saw the participation of hundred participants from Montenegro and Albania. The participants that attended the conference were from the public and private sectors, mostly from the tourism industry and government institutions that support the tourism industry and works on strategic development tourism.

The Conference was opened by **Ivana Đurović**, State Secretary for Tourism at the Ministry of Economic Development. She emphasized the importance of the project and the availability of the Ministry of Economic Development on such topic. The manager of the Capital of Podgorica, **Marjan Junčaj**, spoke about the role of the Capital as a partner and about the projects that the Capital is working on, such as the construction of playgrounds, landscaping and other activities.

The director of ADP-Zid, **Sanda Rakočević**, assessed that the project met the set goals, which were to contribute to the attractiveness of cross-border regions for tourists who go on holidays with families and children. Through the project, a completely new brand was developed - *Child-friendly*. The brand is protected as authentically Montenegrin. In Montenegro, 50 tourist and service facilities are branded with the Child-Friendly brand. The brand is also represented on the Albanian coast, with 10 hotels in the Shkodra and Lezhe region which have been branded as Child-friendly.

During the conference CFT (child friendly tourism) standards were presented and are applied in 60 hotels/restaurants/coffee places in Montenegro and Albania. Through the project basic and premium standards have been developed, and it will depend on the hotelier's which standard they will use.



Apart from live audience there were also numerous online participants, mainly tourism experts. **Mr Eržen** from Slovenia presented the concept of *Tourism 4.0* on behalf of *Arctur.si*, which aims to direct tourists to less visited destinations in Slovenia using tokenization. They also analyse the research of tourist offers in Slovenia, where they consider where tourists go and how they can diversify them. **Josipa Benček** on behalf of the Kutin organization presented the AR application, which is intended primarily for children and is educational in nature. The application is designed for children to receive tablets during their stay in nature, and when coming across different animals, they can scan and get more information about them. The Kutin organization also offers training packages in hotels, instead of playrooms where children usually spend time. **Mr Abderrahim Kassou** from Morocco took the opportunity to present current activities in regards to using innovations and creativity in promoting and maintaining the value of cultural and traditional heritage of his country. He shared with the audience examples of recent modifications and adjustments in regards to communicating touristic potential to different target groups (young people, experts, tourists looking for active holiday etc.) and valorisation of concrete locations.

In the last session of the first day there was also talk about COVID and the post-COVID period. **Maurizio Davlio** from Italy spoke about tourism and Italy, trends in tourism in that country as well as how the pandemic affected a country that has a large number of tourists throughout the whole year. **Hjortur Smarason** on behalf of TO Visit Greenland said that

they are facing difficulties and that the lock down that has been going on for months prevents them from carrying out any activities. **Mirjana Ivanuša**, MA, presented the concept of vouchers in Slovenia which were distributed to all citizens and used proportionately. The condition was that the vouchers must be either used by the end of 2021 or they can be redeemed. Vouchers could only be used for B&B offers, so there was a huge number of packages offered to citizens.



Cookbook Gorska trpeza has entered the finals for the selection of the best culinary publication in the world

The cookbook *Gorska trpeza* produced within the project *Local cuisine as tourism offer of cross-border region* has entered the finals for the selection of the best culinary publication in the world, in two categories - the most important category *Best among the best* and the category *Gastro tourism*! In light of the pandemic there was a huge competition but nonetheless the cookbook was shortlisted and obtained the right to use the Best in the World certificate. From the Regional Development Agency for Bjelasica, Komovi and Prokletije they stated the *Not only is this important to us who have done our best to make this publication a realistic presentation of our culture and tradition*

reflected in our gastronomy, but this is the first time that a culinary publication from Montenegro enters the finals of this prestigious competition, so we are doubly proud and happy.

They thanked the beneficiaries *Dear project our women from the north, thank you for helping us collect recipes and stories, of course thank you to the entire team that worked on the cookbook, and especially to the donors who made it possible for us to do this.*



Make sure to find out more about the project and visit the websites <http://www.gastro-puka.com/en> and <http://montegastro.me/>.

Conservation activities continued in 1500 years old church in Hoti in Malesia (Albania)

The project *Augmenting Cooperation – From Christian Antiquities Towards Enhanced Tourism* continued with quality results in the CBC area. Namely, excavation and conservation activities have been slowed down during the COVID-19 pandemic but continued in the first quarter of 2021.



The peculiarities of this church are the symbolic stones that were used 15 centuries ago and the fact that this church is one of the earliest in the Albanian but also in the Balkan territory.



News on projects financed under the 1st CfP IPA CBC Programme Montenegro - Kosovo

Eco and Outdoor Tourism Actions of the Balkan Alps

The project *Eco and Outdoor Tourism Actions of the Balkan Alps* is implemented by the Centre for Protection and Research of Birds, Kosovo Advocacy and Development Centre – KADC, Mountain Rescue Service of Montenegro and Mountaineering and Alpine Society „PASHTRIKU“. Within the project, a new extended promotional video was produced promoting the CBC region.



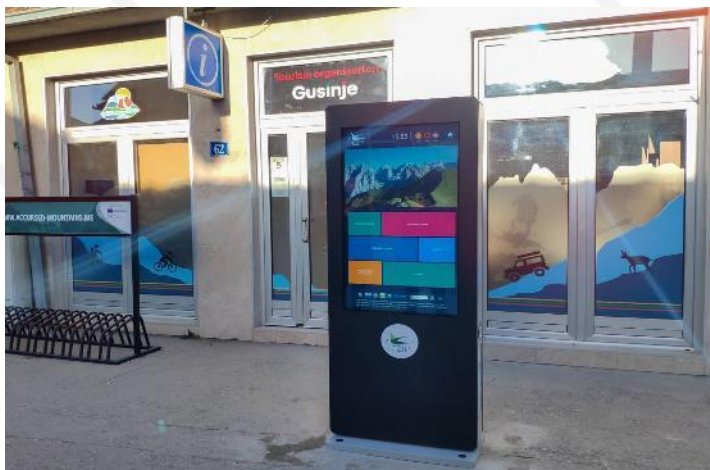
Check out the promotional video [here](#).

Moreover, a seven-day itinerary, for all those who want to discover in a unique way some of the best-kept secrets of the cross-border area between Montenegro and Kosovo was also created. For more information click [here](#).



Grebaje valley. Photo credit: Igor Stojovic

Within the same project an interactive display was set up in front of the premises of the Tourist Organization of Gusinje as well as in front of the Tourist Organisation of Decani. The display will facilitate the access to key information on this area for tourists.



In addition, as a result of the project, the Decan tourism website <http://decanitourism.org> was launched.



i2 Spaces continued with results in Peja and Podgorica

Within the project *Self-employment and social entrepreneurship for youth* implemented by Association for Democratic Prosperity – Zid, NGO Lens, Liberal Democrat Centre and Creative Skills' Centre two i2 Spaces were opened. Namely, in the spaces a series of capacity building activities have been performed.

Check out the video stories from both spaces:

Click here for [i2 Space Peja](#)

Click here for [i2 Space Podgorica](#)



Green jobs for better future of cross-border region of Montenegro and Kosovo

As part of the project activities of *Green jobs for better future of cross-border region of Montenegro and Kosovo* implemented by the Municipality Andrijevisa, NGO Local Action Group Gjeravica and Union of Farmers of Northern Montenegro, a Training Centre was set-up and equipped in Decan. The training centre will be used for further



strengthening of technical capacities of farmers and other stakeholder in agriculture.

As per sustainability of the project, the Union of Farmers was established in Decan gathering 26 farmers that were part of the project activities. The training Centre is transferred under the auspices of Municipality of Decan - Department for Agriculture, that is also responsible for maintaining of the equipment procured through the project. In addition, the local municipality of Decan dedicated funds from the budget for supporting the trained farmers in the future.



United Against Pollution

The Municipality of Gjakova in cooperation with Let's Do It Peja in Kosovo and Municipality of Petnjica and Centre for Regional Development – Rožaje in Montenegro completed the implementation of the project *United Against Pollution - UAP* that involves residents living near illegal landfills, municipal authorities, waste management employees and students from municipalities of Gjakova and Petnjica. One of the last activities of the project was the opening of recycling yard in Gjakova.



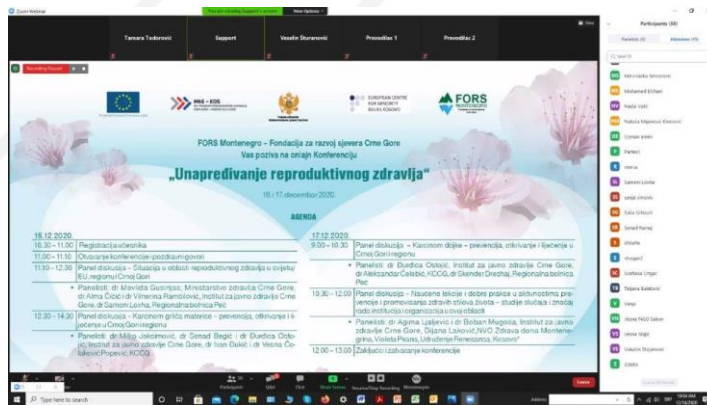
The inauguration ceremony was attended by the Minister of Local Government Administration **Elbert Krasniqi** and Mayor of Gjakova **Ardian Gjini** who praised the project, stating that both local and central institutions are committed to continue to support this centre and to improve the waste situation in the municipality of Gjakova.

The video from the opening ceremony can be viewed [here](#).

Project CARES finished

The project *CARES – Cross-border Actions in the REproductive Health Sector* has been finalized in February 2021 after delivery of the additional

medicine equipment to health centres. The cross-border conference on *Improvement of Reproductive Health* was organised gathering 115 participants representing health institutions, CSOs, local authorities, educational institutions, media and citizens. During the two days of the Conference they presented the information and situation related to reproductive health in Montenegro, Kosovo and the region, prevention, diagnosis and treatment for the cervical cancer and breast cancer, good practice examples in this area, importance of involvement of all segments of the society, etc. Moreover, within the project 713 preventive examinations for women were organised (361 from Montenegro and 352 from Kosovo). More precisely, 264 women were examined in Montenegro (as some of them did both examinations, i.e. breast cancer and Cervical Cancer preventive examinations), out of which 16% were diagnosed and required follow-up of their health conditions, additional examinations, therapies or underwent under some surgeries. In Kosovo, out of 352 examined women 46% of them required follow-up of their health conditions and/or additional examinations.



News on projects financed under the 2nd CfP IPA CBC Programme Montenegro - Albania

Within the 2nd CfP under the IPA CBC Programme Montenegro – Albania 2014-2020 seven projects in the amount of 2.6 million euros have been contracted. A large number of partner organizations/institutions applied for project financing and submitted a total of 53 project proposals for two thematic priorities. Moreover, a total of 92% of the available funds were contracted within the call. A total of 24 partner organizations/institutions will participate in the implementation of projects on both sides of the border.

Promoting Sustainable Use of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants for Livelihood Improvement and Biodiversity Conservation

The project *Promoting Sustainable Use of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants for Livelihood Improvement and Biodiversity Conservation* is implemented by the Municipality of Plav, Municipality of Tropoja, NGO Democratic Integration and Development Center and NGO Albanian Alps. The project aims to deepen the knowledge of medical and aromatic plants (MAPs) habitats in the project area and define the management needs. Moreover, the project will raise awareness of inhabitants in the cross-border region regarding MAPs, their sustainable utilization for the protection of biodiversity and endangered MAPs. In addition, capacities of public institutions for enabling MAPs proper monitoring in Municipalities of Tropoja and Plav will be strengthened. The target groups of the project will be harvesters of the target area, local public institutions and NGO sector involved in the environmental protection,

students of high schools, while the final beneficiaries will be the population of targeted municipalities, business operators and the academia. The project activities will be organised in the municipalities of Plav and Tropolja.



Photo credit: angelakatharina/shutterstock.com

More information on the project available [here](#).

Disasters do not know borders 2

The project *Disasters do not know borders 2* represents the continuation of efforts of FORS Montenegro and Prefecture of Shkodra in activities to improve the protection of the cross-border area between Montenegro and Albania from the risks of disasters. The project aims to strengthened capacities of institutions and services from the target area for disaster risk reduction – DRR, improve capacities for forecasting and early warning systems in the target area, provide guidelines for improvement of the protection and rescue systems in Montenegro and Albania in line with good EU practice models and improve cooperation between units and institutions dealing with DRR from Albania and Montenegro. The target groups of the project are representatives of the local protection and rescue units, national and regional institutions dealing with emergency management, hydro-meteorological institutions, Directorate for Emergency Management and Albanian General Directorate of Civil Emergencies, Institute of Hydrometeorology and Seismology, primary and secondary school students and Citizens of target municipalities in Montenegro and Albania.



More information on the project available [here](#).

Skadar Lake withOut chemical pollution - SOLUTION

The project *Skadar Lake withOut chemical pollution – SOLUTION* is implemented by the Centre for Eco toxicological Research Montenegro, University of Tirana and Association Green Centre from Albania. The project aims to agree common long-term cooperative activities, to perform environmental risk assessment of chemical pollution in the trans-boundary Skadar Lake and determine pollution hot spots. It also aims to raise capacities of partners' institutions straightened and awareness of inhabitants on chemical pollution. The target groups of the

project are institutions dealing with research, public authorities at central and local level and other institutions/organisations involved in the environmental protection, while the final beneficiaries of the project will be inhabitants living in the Skadar Lake area.

The kick-off meeting of the project was held in Podgorica on 25th February 2021. Namely, the meeting was organised in order to present the Water Framework Directive transposition and implementation in Montenegro and Albania, its challenges and opportunities ahead. In addition, the participants of the meeting had the opportunity to hear about the goal and background, scope, timeline, responsibilities, teamwork and project budget review of the project SOLUTION.



More information on the project available [here](#).

Montenegro and Albania towards Zero Waste

The project *Montenegro and Albania towards Zero Waste* is implemented by the Regional Development Agency for Bjelasica, Komovi and Prokletije, Zero Waste Montenegro, Albanian Local Capacity Development Foundation and Green Line Albania. The project aims to create a platform for guiding local communities towards *Zero Waste* towns and to encourage and support reducing, recycling and reusing of waste in local communities and to ensure the sustainability of *Zero Waste* practices. The project will be implemented in the municipality of Gusinje in Montenegro and in the municipality of Tropoje (Margegaj administrative unit) in Albania. the target groups of the project are the local population of Margegaj and Gusinje, local businesses, local schools and communal companies.

The first meeting of the *Zero Waste Advisory Board* was held in Gusinje on 30th April 2021. The board was formed with the aim of involving local representatives in the process of making key decisions during the implementation of the project.

More information on the project available [here](#).



Work4Youth

The project *Work4Youth* is implemented by the Partners Albania for Change and Development, Association for Democratic Prosperity – Zid (Montenegro) and NGO Youth Intellectuals – Hope. The project aims to improve youth abilities for developing their own business ideas based on innovative skills, new competences and knowledge, to increase opportunities for support to start-up businesses of young people involved in the project and to increase support to young entrepreneurs and self-employment through local policies and incentives. The target groups of the project are youth of 18-30 years old in the region of Shkodra in Albania and Podgorica, Tuzi, Bar

municipalities in Montenegro as well as local organizations, education institutions, and

private businesses.

The factsheet of the project can be downloaded [here](#).

More information on the project available [here](#).

A.C.C.E.N.T.- Accessibility, Civic Conscience, Employment for Persons with Disabilities, as a New TREND

The project *A.C.C.E.N.T.- Accessibility, Civic Conscience, Employment for Persons with Disabilities, as a New TREND* is implemented by the Caritas of Bar's Archdiocese (Montenegro), Caritas Albania, NGO Project Hope (Albania) and Association of Paraplegics Bar (Montenegro). The project aims to increase employability of PWDs and train 30 PWDs through 2000 hours of mentorship, as well as to offer new employment opportunities for PWDs and develop a better system for work inclusion of PWDs, both at institutional and business level. The target group of the project are PWDs as well as other stakeholders in PWDs sector in 4 municipalities of the cross-border area, business sector in the region. While the final beneficiaries are members of the families of the PWDs.

Within the project on the 31st March 2021 an info session was held as part of the informative campaign of the project ACCENT. At the info session the project ACCENT was presented to local organizations and institutions in Bar.

Marko Đelović, the coordinator from the Caritas of Bar's Archdiocese stated that *"The project plans to do research on educational needs, as well as employment opportunities for persons with disabilities; then we will have a set of activities that will contribute to the improvement of knowledge and competencies of PWD, which will be realized through the development of 9 curricula and the implementation of training for 120 people with disabilities."* Moreover, he added that *"20 persons with disabilities will have the opportunity to work at a specific workplace with employers and that 2 fairs for employment of PWD will be organized and that 4 initiatives for self-employment of persons with disabilities will be supported."*



Veselin Šćepanović from the European Integration Office participated in the event through a video link and greeted the participants. He stated that *"projects that promote employment make concrete contribution to the overall development of the cross-border area, especially those dealing with vulnerable groups in underdeveloped communities. This is an additional value of the project, i.e. the fact that through activities, most work will be done on the development of competencies and professional skills of persons with disabilities and cooperation with other actors in society"*.

Check out the video from the event [here](#).



Pathways to Career Development (PCD): Preparing Albanian and Montenegrin Youth for Career Opportunities in the Tourism Sector

The project *Pathways to Career Development (PCD): Preparing Albanian and Montenegrin Youth for Career Opportunities in the Tourism Sector* is implemented by World Vision Albania, NGO New Horizon (Montenegro), High School "Bratstvo Jedinstvo" (Montenegro) and Professional school "Hamdi Bushati" (Albania). The project will equip youth from Shkoder and Ulcinj with the right skills in order for them to become "job ready".

As a result of the project, 100 youth will be trained on soft skills, VET courses, learn how to do market research and align this knowledge with practical experience such as internship opportunities in local businesses.

Moreover, through the project youth will learn how to design a business/project idea according to the market requirements and as a

result 10 best project ideas will be supported financially. The target groups of the project are youth from Shkoder and Ulcinj area, staff from professional schools in the same areas.

A series of activities were implemented during the first quarter of 2021. The project inauguration and kick-off was held in Ulcinj on 3rd March 2021.



In addition, a meeting was held with representatives of the local business sector and business associations in Ulcinj on 7th April 2021. During the meeting local stakeholders expressed readiness for their involvement in youth capacity building activities in the cross-border region.



Within the same project a training for 30 young people from Ulcinj and Shkodra was held in Shkodra on April 2021. Namely, the training was held on research methods and techniques. *"I liked the training very much, I think I now have the right skills to continue the research work together with the group"* - says **Denisa** (17) from Shkodra.



More information on the project available [here](#).

News on projects financed under the 2nd CFP IPA CBC Programme Montenegro - Kosovo

Creating employment in agriculture

The project *Creating employment in agriculture* is implemented by the Capital City Podgorica – Department for Entrepreneurship and the



Initiative for Agriculture Development of Kosovo- IADK. The project aims to encourage and involve unemployed people to work in agriculture and to strengthen their capacities. The target group of the project are 5000



unemployed people in Istog, Peja, Podgorica and Tuzi as well as 50 representatives of businesses in target area and 20 local governments' officials. The project partners promoted their joint efforts in promoting employment in agriculture.



Moreover, IADK during May, in order to increase the production capacity of farmers in the agricultural sector supported 20 farmers with grants for the cultivation of aromatic medicinal plants.

Within this activity, the planting material was distributed to the beneficiaries of the municipalities of Peja and Istog, who will plant 20-25 acres with different types of annual and multi-year plants, such as: nettle, calendula, cyan, black mallow and sunflower.

More information on the project available [here](#).

PRAXIS

PRAXIS project is implemented by Caritas Kosovo, Caritas Montenegro, QAKP Gjon Nikolle Kazazi – Gjakove and Municipality of Berane. The project aims to support pupils and students and unemployed youth through career guidance and counselling sessions. Through the project the students and unemployed youth will receive certified soft skills trainings and will be motivated to actively search for a job and have access to the labour market. In addition, students and unemployed youth will gain their first professional experience through a quality internship and volunteering programme. During March 2021 a total of 200 participants from Gjakove, Kline, Berane, Petnjica and Gusinje were trained in soft and creative skills. In addition, during April, 2021, the cross-border “PRAXIS” project team, together with stakeholders, organized the 1st Regional Job Discovery visit in Montenegro and visited the targeted Municipalities of Berane, Gusinje and Petnjica. Members of youth (4 of them) discovered new working environments, got concrete information about the working conditions and the skills required for the new employee. Moreover, four representatives of the organizations from Municipalities of Kline and Gjakove also joined the visit, and in this way formed partnership with youth and other stakeholders in cross-border area.



The Center for Vocational Education and Counselling “Gjon Nikolle Kazazi” from Gjakove signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the High School from Petnjica. The Memorandum of Understanding was also signed between the Technical High School “Fehmi Agani” from Kline and Vocational High School in Berane. The joint development and possibilities for collaboration was planned and confirmed between the Private Enterprise “TETBIT” from Gjakove and Regional Business Center in Berane as well as the Local Youth Action Council “KVRL” from Gjakove with the Youth Club from Berane. At the same time the Coordination meetings were held with Mrs. Anela Cekic - Mayor of Gusinje Municipality, Mr. Samir Agovic - Mayor of Petnjica Municipality and Project Manager of Berane Municipality with Municipal representatives of Economic development, Unemployed and Youth sectors. During the meeting the implemented activities, transparency, visibility, coordination and engagement of relevant actors in the field of intervention were discussed, as well as the strategy for the future joint actions in the cross-border area.

More information on the project available [here](#).

CARES 2 - Cross-border Actions in the Reproductive Health Sector 2

FORS Montenegro – Foundation for the Development of Northern Montenegro and ECMI Kosovo – European Center for Minority Issues continued with their efforts in the health sector in the cross-border area and as of 1st May 2021 are implementing the project *CARES 2 – Cross-border Actions in the Reproductive Health Sector 2*. The project will improve the capacity of public health institutions and the quality of reproductive health services in the cross-border region. In addition, the population in the target area with the emphasis on socially vulnerable groups will be provided with the information on the importance of protecting reproductive health and conducting preventive examinations. The target groups of the project are women living in the target area, and doctors and nurses from public health institutions in the target region.

More information on the project available [here](#).

Tourism hubs for better tourism offer in less advantaged mountainous areas

The project *Tourism hubs for better tourism offer in less advantaged mountainous areas* is implemented by the Municipality of Andrijevica, Municipality of Decan and the Mountaineers Association “Shkelzen Haradinaj”. Namely, through the project tourism hubs will be created in both Montenegro and Kosovo, summer and winter tourism products and services will be developed and new zones jointly promoted and marketed. The target group of the project are rural women in municipalities of Andrijevica and Decan, local, rural communities in vicinity of new infrastructure and tourism agencies offering active tourism.



As part of the project activities, a joint meeting of the project partners was held in Decan on 25th February 2021. During the meeting, project partners talked on the continuation of cooperation between the municipalities, and specified the need for better valorisation of their natural potentials. Representatives of project partners emphasized the need to protect natural resources and to promote tourism, which should ultimately lead to a better life for the citizens living in the area.

Representatives of the municipality visited the premises of the Mountaineers Association “Shkelzen Haradinaj” and talked about the activities implemented so far in relation to the improvement of the tourist potentials of Andrijevica and Decan, as well as discussed the location where their mountain lodge with accommodation capacities will be built.

More information on the project available [here](#).

Transhumance - new tourism offer of Kosovo and Montenegro

Transhumance – new tourism offer of Kosovo and Montenegro will be implemented by the Initiative for Agriculture Development of Kosovo - IADK, Regional Development Agency Bjelasica, Komovi and Prokletije and Istog municipality.

The project aims to mobilise katuns for provision of services in tourism, to develop tourism products and services and to promote the cultural, natural and agricultural values of katuns. The target groups of the project are households in 90 katuns in cross border area, rural women in katuns and communities and rural population in cross-border area and domestic and foreign tourists.

As one of the first activities of the project a contract was signed on 11th May 2021 for the supply of solar panels dedicated for the support of 50 families who have katuns in the mountains of municipalities of Istog and Peja.



More information on the project available [here](#).

Culture heritage - Treasure of Cross Border Region

The Municipality of Peja and Municipality of Gusinje are implementing the project *Culture heritage – Treasure of Cross Border Region* that aims at supporting economic development of project area that will be based on valorisation of rich cultural heritage in targeted region. Namely, the project aims to contribute to valorisation of cultural heritage Prokletije region by establishing new cultural routes and trails as new touristic product and offer in the targeted area. The project will also engage and increase the capacities of the people from rural areas to provide tourism services. The target of the project are owners of old houses, tower houses (kulas), mills and other heritage assets, rural families along the cultural routes, tourism organizations and local governments and tour operators in targeted area.

FAST FACTS - KATUN

Katuns are temporary, farmer's settlements in the mountains, at high altitudes, where herders move their livestock to graze in the summer. The tradition of herders moving high into the mountains is a long one, and the nomadic way of life has throughout history developed a special culture and customs unique only to the katuns. At the present time this moving of livestock to katuns is practiced less and less each year, but this tradition is still maintained.

During the first quarter of 2021 numerous research activities were performed in order to document the cultural heritage of this area. Namely, locations, monuments, buildings, artisans producing wooden products, traditional clothing, hats, jewellery, carpets etc. have been evidenced and in certain cases the artisans interviewed. Follow the project activities in the dedicated [Facebook page](#).

In addition, as part of the project activities and in order to facilitate the work of the Municipality of Gusinje during April 2021 a contract was signed for the delivery of a new vehicle.



More information on the project available [here](#).

The Grant Award Ceremony for the 2nd CFP organised

The Grant Award Ceremony for projects contacted under 2nd CFP within IPA CBCP MNE-KOS was organized on 26th January 2021 in Podgorica.



Opening the conference, the National IPA coordinator **Zorka Kordić** pointed out that the importance of the cross-border cooperation model is confirmed by the visible results of projects that have been implemented so far in cooperation between Montenegro and Kosovo. She underlined that these projects set the basis for long-lasting cooperation in the field of cultural exchange, tourism and health care, economic development, environmental protection, sustainable use of natural resources, social cohesion and improving access to employment. She reminded that with their interest expressed within the 2nd CFP, partner organizations and institutions from Montenegro and Kosovo

have shown readiness to contribute to the improvement of living conditions in the border area with their projects worth 2.4 million euros.

The Director General of the Directorate for Financing and Contracting of EU Assistance in the Ministry of Finance and Social Welfare of Montenegro **Marija Vukčević** expressed the full readiness of the Contracting Authority for cooperation with grant beneficiaries and, in



order to provide all interested parties with the opportunity to become beneficiaries of IPA funds in a timely manner, she emphasized that in cooperation with partners from Kosovo they are already working on the 3rd CfP that is planned to be published in March 2021.



The Head of the Cooperation Section in the Delegation of the European Union to Montenegro, **Herman Spitz**, emphasized that through this EU programme, Montenegro and Kosovo strive to overcome common challenges in a sustainable way. He stated that the process of resolving socio-economic issues at the local level is demanding, but it brings long-term progress. He added that it is a pleasure for the European Union to contribute to this progress through the 2 million euro we have committed to this CfP. Moreover, he underlined that the EU expects to be able to feel the real impact that these projects have on local communities in the future.

The Secretary General and Head of the Operating Structure in the Ministry of Local Government of the Republic of Kosovo, **Trim Berisha**, announced the continuation of cooperation projects within the 3rd CfP, as well as within the new generation of programmes foreseen under the next IPA III financial perspective.

Through the 2nd Call for Proposals, published in January 2019, the European Union funds in the amount of 2.017 million euro were allocated for cross-border cooperation with co-financing of the project beneficiaries the total worth of the projects is 2.4 million euro. Through their initiatives, the project beneficiaries will contribute to the improvement of the quality of life, by encouraging employment and social inclusion, as well as by enhancing of tourism, cultural and natural heritage.



Bilateral meeting for both programmes held

On 27th January 2021 in Podgorica at the European Integration Office premises a bilateral meeting was held between Operating Structures related to the implementation of the IPA CBC Programme Montenegro-Kosovo.



During the meeting the implementation status of the TAGC and contracted projects within 1st and 2nd CfP, plans for upcoming activities and changes within the TAGC were discussed.

Related to the IPA CBC Programme Montenegro-Albania one bilateral meeting was held in Podgorica on 29th January 2021 between Operating Structures of the programme. During the meeting the progress on implementation of the projects financed within the 1st CfP, monitoring of projects and support of beneficiaries as well as planned activities for the upcoming period were discussed.



1st meeting of the Project Steering Committee for the new technical assistance project held

The first meeting of the Project Steering Committee was organised on 28th January 2021 and was held in Podgorica. During the meeting the Rules of Procedures of the Project Steering Committee were discussed and approved.

Moreover, the First Interim narrative report of the Technical Assistance Grant Contract (TAGC) "Technical Assistance for the management of bilateral Cross-Border Programmes Montenegro - Albania and Montenegro - Kosovo" was discussed, revised and approved. Finally, all other matters related to the implementation of both programmes as well as forthcoming activities envisaged in the TAGC were discussed.

Capacity building activities for Potential Applicants and Grant Beneficiaries

During the first months of 2021 a set of activities were implemented in order to strengthen the capacities of Potential Applicants and Grant Beneficiaries.

Namely, info days, as promotional and preparatory of activities for the launching of the third Calls for Proposals (CfPs) were held in the framework of the IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programmes Montenegro – Albania and Montenegro – Kosovo 2014-2020 during January 2021 through MS Teams on-line platform. The Info days were organised by the Joint Technical Secretariat, in cooperation with the Operating Structures of both Programmes (European Integration Office of Montenegro, Ministry of Finance of Montenegro – Directorate for Finance and Contracting of the EU Assistance Funds (CFCU), Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania and Ministry of Local Government of the Republic of Kosovo).



Within both Programmes, in total six Info days were organised from 11th to 14th January 2021 and on 19th and 22nd January 2021. The info days



On 15th and 16th February 2021 the Implementation Seminar and training on Secondary procurement for the beneficiaries of the 2nd CfP within IPA CBC Programme Montenegro-Albania were organized. Grant beneficiaries had the opportunity to increase their capacities in relation to project management, roles and responsibilities, content of contract dossier and its annexes, financial management and record keeping, reporting, monitoring, control and visibility, contract modification, secondary procurement – basic principles, preparation of procurement documentation. The events were conducted by the Contracting Authority with technical support provided by JTS. In addition, on 27th April 2021 the Training on Reporting and on Publicity and Visibility for the Grant Beneficiaries of the 2nd Call for Proposals of the IPA CBC Programme Montenegro – Albania was also organised. The Grant Beneficiaries had the opportunity to raise their capacities in narrative and financial reporting and to hear basic principles in ensuring EU visibility of projects.

The IPA CBC Programme Montenegro - Albania participated in the EUSAIR Forum

During the EUSAIR 6th Forum that was held on 11th and 12th May 2021, representatives of the IPA CBC Programme Montenegro -Albania 2014-2020 participated in the Virtual Market and networking fair. The event was organised in order to enable participants to visit virtual stands and discover projects and programmes on green connectivity, circular economy, and sustainable tourism in the Adriatic-Ionian Euroregion.

FAST FACTS – EUSAIR

The EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR) brings together four EU member states (Croatia, Greece, Italy and Slovenia) and aspirant countries aspiring to join the EU (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia and Serbia). It was at this year's forum that the Izola Declaration adopted a new, tenth member, the Republic of San Marino.



were followed by 135 participants in total, who had the opportunity to raise question and receive answers in relation to various aspects of these IPA Programmes.

Moreover, project clinics for unsuccessful applicants of the 2nd CfP under the IPA CBC Montenegro –Albania and Montenegro-Kosovo were organised in Podgorica, Shkoder and Prishtina. The project clinics were held during February and March 2021 and a total of 18 unsuccessful applicants took the opportunity to discuss in detail their project proposals with the JTS staff and receive advice on their improvement.

In addition, during February and March 4 PCM trainings were organised for both programmes. The aim of the trainings was the strengthening of capacities of potential applicants in preparation of the project proposals. A total of 49 CBC stakeholders participated in these events.



6th Forum

of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region
Along the coasts of the shared sea
Izola, 11-12 May 2021



House for Cross-Border Cooperation opened in Prishtina

The ceremony of opening of the House for Cross-Border cooperation was held in Prishtina on 19 May 2021. The "House for Cross-Border Cooperation" will be at the service of municipalities, civil society organizations, students, as well as various stakeholders, and will serve as an information point, where they can be informed about the concept and the idea of the operation and implementation of cross-border cooperation programs.

Mr. Elbert Krasniqi, the Minister of the Ministry of Local Government Administration, said *"I feel happy that our countries are increasingly strengthening interstate coordination and cooperation for good neighbourliness, in the context of improving many common areas, starting from the aspect of promoting relations for economic and social development, reducing inequality in deep cross-border areas, development and promotion of tourism, environmental protection, cultural and natural heritage to ensure and facilitate the access of citizens to these areas in order to receive services, which promote and strengthen social cohesion between countries"*. Additionally, Minister Krasniqi said that *"Such a concept of the CBC house will serve as a successful model to be applied in the countries of the region. We are confident that with the help of the European Union further interstate cooperation will bring new results, with a development perspective and guaranteed success."*



Mr. Tomáš Szunyog, Head of EU Office/EU Special Representative, highlighted the importance and the role of the Cross-Border Cooperation House in Prishtina serving as a joint coordination point between all IPA CBC Programmes that Kosovo participates, but also providing easier access to information for all potential applicants. *"Between these programmes numerous projects were realised and many are ongoing. Beyond the results, the cooperation projects bring the financial resources to local authorities, and in addition, they allow for the transfer of knowledge and experience across borders"*.



The Ambassador Szunyog described the impact of the Cross-Border Cooperation grant scheme on encouraging communication, increasing trust and people-to-people initiatives in cross border region, supporting joint actions that build sustainable development and good neighbourly relations, *"simply said these cross-border cooperation projects are making the everyday life of communities on each side of the borders better and easier. The EU in Kosovo will continue to support Kosovo institutions on their endeavours in reform implementation, sustainable development and prosper towards European Union integration"*.

Mr. Goran Milevski - Minister of Local Self-government North Macedonia said *"This House will be a one stop service for all in Kosovo and subsequently North Macedonia as a partner country will benefit by supporting the potential applicants from North Macedonia in creating partnerships across the border. Regional cooperation and development are among the main responsibilities of the Ministry for Local Self-government and the Cross border and INTERREG programmes are a very important part of our strategy for regional development"*.



the CBC operation in Kosovo and subsequently North Macedonia as a partner country will benefit by supporting the potential applicants from North Macedonia in creating partnerships across the border. Regional cooperation and development are among the main responsibilities of the Ministry for Local Self-government and the Cross border and INTERREG programmes are a very important part of our strategy for regional development".

Ms. Zorka Kordic, Chief negotiator and NIPAC Montenegro said *"Even though CBC actions are not intended to solve great systemic and economic challenges, with their support for innovative pilot actions and by ensuring an open platform for sharing knowledge they nevertheless come as drivers of necessary changes, which prompt reforms and strengthen our institutions. In my view, intensifying contacts among institutions, officials and staff of the Western Balkans, and in consequence their successful cooperation with the EU Member States and EU institutions, is one of the most remarkable achievements of cross-border cooperation. This is exactly why I am pleased that this valuable initiative of the CBC House has been brought to its realization, as an effort made towards the efficient preparation and implementation of the CBC programmes."*



Mr. Armand Skapi, General Secretary of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs said *"The Programme IPA CBC Albania - Kosovo represents one of the most important programmes in which Albania participates. The specific nature of this programme where joint efforts to implement common activities aiming at fulfilling the programme objectives, priorities and measures, requires an efficient and timely coordination and communication from both Operating Structures of Albania and Kosovo, supported by the European Union Delegation in Tirana"*.

»» Operating structures of the programmes (click on the icon to visit the website)



European Integration Office



Ministry of finance
Directorate for Finance and Contracting
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REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
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Ministry of Local Government



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