

**Citizens' Summary
of the Annual Implementation
Report 2022**



The Annual Implementation Report (AIR) of the Interreg-IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Hungary-Serbia for 2022 provides detailed insight into the programme’s operation between 1 January and 31 December 2022. The Citizens’ Summary is a brief overview of this report.

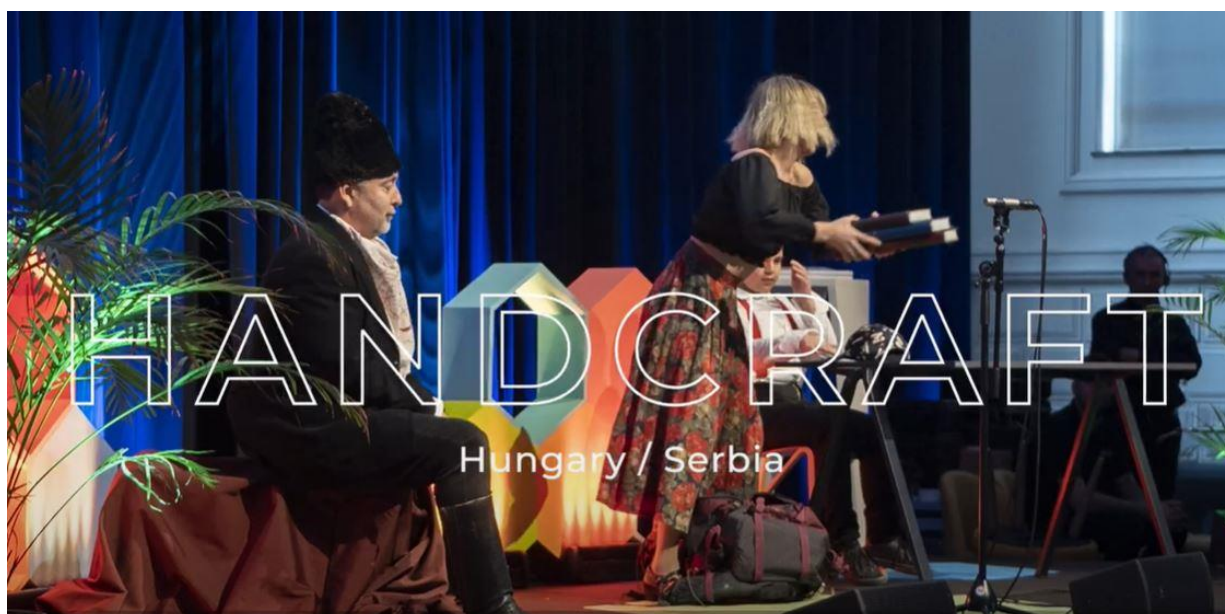
The programme bodies – the Managing Authority/MA (Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade), the Serbian National Authority/NA (Ministry of European Integration, Republic of Serbia), the Joint Secretariat of the programme/JS, the Joint Secretariat Antenna/JS Antenna, the First Level Control/FLC bodies in Hungary and in Serbia, the European Commission representative and the Desk Officer in charge of the programme – contributed to the significant progress of the programme implementation in 2022.

2022 was the first year where the effects of the pandemic began to wear off. Although it still influenced the implementation, the programme and the projects remained very active. Besides the project implementation and project closures, the main task was the conclusion of programming of the next financing period.

The JS approved 25 final project reports, leaving only 26 projects to conclude their reporting obligation in 2023. Year 2022 was also busy for JS regarding modification of projects, namely the JS coordinated the approval and elaboration of 21 addenda, and considered and approved numerous other project changes.

The most tangible part of the progress is the 115 approved project reports covering the reimbursement of EUR 6 179 544.03 IPA EU contribution. It can be stated that, after the peak of activity, reporting and spending in 2020, the gradual winding down continued in the next two years. In line with the nature of programme’s life cycle the amount approved in 2022 was a decrease compared to the previous period.

Concerning the operation of the Joint Monitoring Committee, due to the pandemic situation and because of the winding down of the activities, we did not have sessions in person. Written procedure was proven as an efficient tool for decision-making. In 2022 there were 24 written procedures concluded that altogether resulted in 24 decisions. The most essential decisions were made on the approval of the respective annual implementation report, approval of project modifications and approval of TA changes.



Our programme had prominent success and exposure on the Annual Interreg Event in Brussels during the EC Days in October, where one of our projects HandCraft, HUSRB/1903/31/0089 “Future from the Past - Development of Cross-border Heritage Tourism Based on Handicrafts” –achieved the overall 2nd place of the Interreg Project Slam 2022 with a great presentation (pictures above). At the same time, the project was the Interreg Slam’s Social media competition winner with over 1.300 Likes on Facebook.

On the programme’s operational side, sound and timely measures enabled that 2022 to be a successful year despite of difficulties. The following tasks of the reported year can be considered as the most important ones:

- Project monitoring, administrative and technical assistance to projects, coordination of project implementation and project closures;
- Coordination of implementation of remaining projects;
- Information and communication activities;
- Audit and FLC measures;
- Successful conclusion of the programming process for period 2021-2027;
- Further development and operation of the new electronic monitoring system which took over all functions from the previous system successfully

As mentioned, there were 25 final project reports approved in 2022. But out of the total of 118 projects 109 have concluded their implementation by end of 2022, leaving only 9 projects to implement their activities in 2023.

In terms of project results that mirror the success of the programme, we can already now summarise the impressive results regarding priority axes 1. Namely, all contracted projects of this priority have concluded their activities and reporting allowing us to present final results:

1. All programme-level output indicators have been reached by the programme! Most importantly the Performance framework indicators:
 - OI 1.2: Length of new or improved water management system, 191 570 meters surpassing the final target set for 2023 that was 180 000 meters.
 - KIS 1.2: Number of projects contracted related to the improvement of the water management system’s physical infrastructure in the cross-border region, the target of 6 pieces was reached already in 2020
2. The rate of total absorption in comparison to planned allocation for PA1 is **98.63%** - which is the 3rd Performance framework indicator called Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 1 (PA1) “Improving the cross-border water management and risk prevention systems” (target value EUR 20 942 012, reached EUR 20 654 117.57)

These impressive numbers for PA 1 are not the only ones we can be proud of. Namely, for all priorities, performance framework indicators, but the financial ones are achieved, while even the financial ones are more than likely to be reached in the final year of implementation. Namely, FI2 (financial indicator for PA2) is 89% reached, FI3 is 82.74% reached and PA4 is at 79.67%.



In fact, out of the total number of programme-level output indicators which is 19; already 16 of them have reached their ultimate target values (for 2023)!

But let's be more specific:

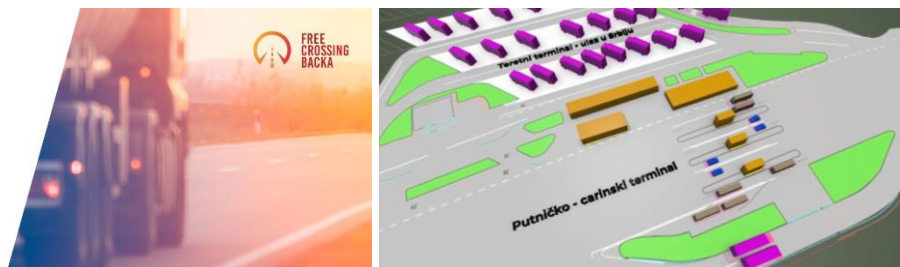
- 2 more border crossing points were improved by our projects!
- 18 658 meters of improved water management system!
- The number of visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions has risen by more than 45 000!
- Above 200 new events contributed to the projects' and the programme's visibility!
- 33 enterprises cooperated with research institutions, 38 further organisations participated in knowledge platforms, moreover, the number of months spent in the institutions and companies on the other side of the border through scholarships increased by 251!
- Population benefiting from flood protection measures and the surface area of habitats supported for attaining better conservation status have both significantly increased.

Having in mind the results, specified above let's take a closer look on several outstanding cooperation from different ends of the spectrum: construction focused projects and people-to-people partnerships dealing with culture, sports and youth.

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The **FREE CROSSING BAČKA** project has completed its activities, the design and documentation is ready for the upgrade of the Hercegszántó - Bački Breg border-crossing. Upon the construction is finalised, 13 tracks will operate and the border crossing point will be suitable for cargo transport as well! Implemented by the Hungarian National Infrastructure Development Private Company Ltd, Public Enterprise "Roads of Serbia" and the PE Urban and Spatial Planning Institute of Vojvodina, this project creates solid foundations for decreasing bottlenecks in the cross-border transport. The available EU contribution for this project was EUR 399 437.



While the above mentioned project was dealing with heavy-load transport, the **OPTI-BIKE** project was focusing on bicycle connection paths between Hungary and Serbia. Step-by-step and day-by-day, our projects are expanding the bicycle paths network. The OPTI-BIKE 1 & 2 projects have contributed significantly to sustainable transportation in the region: more than 20 km of bicycle path was built, and 3 border-crossing points were improved in terms of safe, sustainable and green transportation. The combined available value of EU contribution to part 1 and 2 of this project, was EUR 2.5 million.

Since culture and sport have a significant role in the circle of youth in the Programme area, these fields have a strong potential in connecting people. During 2022 all-together 23 projects from our 3rd CfP have completed their activities in the Action 3.1 (Tourist products, services and attractions based on cultural and natural heritage), Action 3.3 (Cooperation in the fields of cultural and community events) and Action 3.4 (Cooperation in the fields of sport, leisure and minor actions related to nature protection). EUR 5 626 340 of EU contribution was contracted for these actions. Thousands of people were involved, many new bounds created. Here is just a glimpse of what we experienced within our people-to-people projects:

The **WSC Route project** - Famous women in science and culture: experience design through joint cultural tourism route and product development in Serbia-Hungary cross-border region, proved to be a huge success! Coordinated by the City Museum of Novi Sad as a Lead beneficiary, this project tackled the problem of insufficient promotion and recognition of cultural heritage related to important women in our cross-border region. Many cultural events were organized and packed within a tourism route. Among others, two major multimedia permanent exhibitions were staged: Mileva Marić Ajnštajn in Novi Sad and exhibition dedicated to three important female figures (photographer Manczi Bäck, painter Nana Kukovetz and librarian Ágota Fischhof) in Szeged. The museum experiences were co-created through modern digital tools such as 3D projections and augmented reality. The total EU contribution available for this project was EUR 393 604.





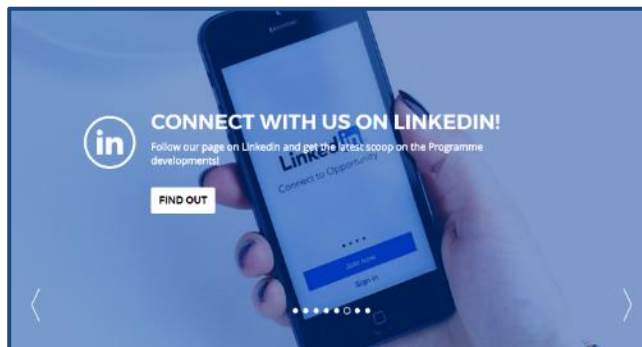
Staying within the contemporary culture and modern ways of approaching the target audiences in our Programme area, it's worth of mentioning the **R2C – Rivers-2-Communities** project. Led by the Cinema City association from Novi Sad, this project gathered five cultural operators from the Programme area, who all focused on strengthening the cooperation between Hungarian and Serbian contemporary cultural and creative scenes, by enhancing professional competencies, artistic production and transfer of knowledge between young cultural managers and artists through a series of educational, networking and cultural promo events. The project closing event, the so called CON (Confluence-Conference-Connection-Concerts), was staged in Novi Sad on 17 and 18 December 2022. The event gathered dozens of professionals in the music business within 13 conference sessions and 9 major concerts from regional artists were organized. Magnificent reach for a small-scale project indeed!





The programme's website www.interreg-ipa-husrb.com remained the main communication hub of the programme towards the general public, the beneficiaries and other programme's stakeholders. It features information related to the calls for proposals, results of the calls, selected projects, the [summaries of the contracted projects](#) and the programme-related and EU-level news.

Additionally, the website contains the photo and video content and [the infographics about the programme](#) and [the infographics about project implementation](#) that depict complex processes and information in a visual way that is easy to understand.



The [programme's Facebook page](#) and [programme's page on LinkedIn](#) featured all programme- and project-related news and announcements, tips for the applicants and beneficiaries, the regional and the European-level news relevant to the Programme. The programme's social media surfaces, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, were continuously updated throughout 2022 with various programme related information and advices.

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