



Newsletter N°7  
February 2022

## Let's Do Things Better Together



Republic of Serbia



Montenegro



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The seventh edition of the newsletter “Let's Do Things Better Together”, prepared by the Joint Technical Secretariat of IPA II Cross-border Cooperation Programme Serbia-Montenegro 2014-2020, brings news on activities and events implemented under the Programme.

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In the final phase of preparation of the IPA III Cross-border Cooperation Programme Serbia-Montenegro for the next seven-year financial perspective 2021-2027, the third, final draft of the Programme document was submitted to the European Commission during July, 2021.

Under the Second Call for Proposals of the IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Serbia-Montenegro 2014-2020, nine projects have been contracted, with a total value of €2,551,218.50, of which €2,106,333.25 are European Union funds. The projects aimed to strengthen social and cultural inclusion of vulnerable groups as well as improve capacities for exploiting tourism potentials of the Programme area.

The project “Protection observatory for regional area of medicinal plants as lively cross-border infrastructure of sustainable tourism – PORALIST”, implemented within the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Serbia-Montenegro 2014-2020, was presented at the European Week of Regions and Cities in Brussels during October 2021, as an example of good practice within the “Regional tourism spurs the healing process in the Western Balkans” workshop.

The overall objective of the project is contribution to good nature management by enhanced preservation streamlined monitoring, independent reporting and overall better management for sustainable development through responsible and accountable management and use of natural resources in the cross-border area of Serbia and Montenegro. The project was implemented by the Zlatibor Regional Development Agency in cooperation with the Institute for Medicinal Plants Research “Dr. Josif Pančić”, Belgrade and NGO Multimedijal, Bijelo Polje, Montenegro.





## Thematic journey through Heritage Corridor from Serbia to Montenegro

Previous activities within the project “Thematic journey through Heritage Corridor from Serbia to Montenegro – CREATIVE TWINNING” have contributed to strengthening cooperation between people and institutions in capacity building and promotion of cultural, historical and natural values of the cross-border area. The project is implemented in partnership by the Regional Agency for Spatial and Economic Development of Raški and Moravički Districts, Kraljevo and the Centre for Sustainable Tourism Initiatives, Podgorica.



The realization of project tasks contributes to the creative work atmosphere of all participants, so the interest in the project does not wane, but grows with each subsequent visit to potential project beneficiaries and their significant inputs on directions for possible improvements.

During the process of making studies of detailed assessment and analysis of the tourism assets, meetings with key factors of the development of the territory and constant consultations with all potential beneficiaries are held continuously. This has resulted in the efficient twinning of topics

that will be further processed as the basis of the tourist offer. In Montenegro, four thematic trails have been identified in the Durmitor and Prokletije National Parks and near the Biogradska Gora National Park. Trails connecting Mountain Golija and Golija Nature Park have been identified in Serbia. It was determined that the target groups of visitors match, and the Parks inherit the same values, which is especially important and should contribute to strengthening the effects of project results.



“Considering that during the implementation of the project, cultural and natural heritage will be systematically listed, and a new tourist offer will be created and promoted, all this will contribute to strengthening tourists’ awareness of the cross-border area and its recognizability as a tourist destination. Also, there will be an improvement of cross-border cooperation among the bearers of activities in this region and raising the awareness of the local population about the importance of comprehensive cross-border exchange. This will contribute to recognizing the potential of the cross-border region of Serbia and Montenegro as part of the economic development strategy”, Svetlana Vujičić - Project Manager on behalf of the Centre for Sustainable Tourism Initiatives of Montenegro.





## The HOO Project

“The Hoo Project: Creation of Owl and Other Wildlife Experiences” leads us to the still unexplored areas of Pljevlja, Bijelo Polje, Berane, Petnjica, Rozaje, Tutin, Sjenica and Prijepolje, to get to know almost untouched nature and create a cross-border brand “The Hoo Trails Experience”, which will promote the region and bring visitors genuinely interested in enjoying the wildlife tourism offer. The project is implementing by Center for Protection and Research of Birds from Podgorica in partnership with Regional Tourism Organization Sandzak from Novi Pazar, Citizens Association „Jadovnik – Oasis of untouched nature“ from Prijepolje and NGO North Land from Berane.

The trademark of the brand is the Owl, because this cross-border area is an ideal habitat for them, but also other birds can be seen here, such as eagle, griffon vulture, partridge, black grouse, and other rare species that need larger forest complexes for habitat.



This region definitely has something to offer, because there are a total of 15 protected areas of nature, and the diversity of charismatic plant and animal species is ideal for the development of various outdoor activities. Bird watching, recognizing and collecting medicinal plants and fungi, observing wild animals in their natural environment, as well as other activities that do not disturb nature, are ideal for nature lovers who want to enjoy a unique experience, away from mass gatherings.

When the local tourist offer of rural households, overnight stays in authentic accommodation, truly local food, with the warmth and cordiality of the hosts, and opportunities for hiking, mountaineering and enjoying the local culture and tradition are added to the untouched nature, then all preconditions are made a location for true nature lovers from all over the world.

It is true that tourist workers and rural households from this area, especially from Montenegro, where the tourist activity in the border region is poorly developed, are very interested in completing their offer and becoming part of a complete cross-border brand. In September 2021, project representatives visited more than 40 bidders, it was a great pleasure to find a warm welcome and readiness to get involved in the whole process that will be realized in this region.

Support for the realization of the project, and later for the promotion of the itinerary and cross-border “The Hoo Trails Experience” brand came from the Tourist Organization of Pljevlja, for the representative of the organization Emina Kriještorac the project itself is extremely important for Pljevlja and its tourist offer: “It is very important for us to develop a tourist offer based on wildlife, especially in this cross-border context. By connecting employees from both sides of the border, we will expand the experience of visitors which are visiting Pljevlja. We have Tara on the one hand and that part of our offer is developed, but we are interested in activating the part of the offer that gravitates to Serbia, because so far there have been no activities that would encourage rural households to become more active in Pljevlja’s tourist offer.”





The first training within the Training Program for wildlife guides, which is realized as one of the activities of the “Hoo Hoo Project – Creation of Owl and Other Wildlife Experiences”, was held in Rožaje on November 8–10 2021.

Twenty-five future guides from Pljevlja, Bijelo Polje, Berane, Petnjica, Rožaje, Prijepolje, Sjenica, Tutin and Novi Pazar, gathered to learn about the biodiversity of fungi, their importance and the specifics of the community in the cross-border zone of Montenegro and Serbia. The first day of the training was focused on the theoretical part, which included a presentation on fungi in the region, with a special emphasis on rare, endemic and endangered species. Also, other important characteristics of mushrooms were discussed at the presentation so that participants would have a better insight into what mushrooms are; how they live; where they grow; when and where to look for them; on the important role of fungi in nature; about their significance for man; about the richness of mushrooms in the world, Montenegro and Serbia; about the reasons for the richness of mushroom species in our country; on edible and poisonous species; about hallucinogenic species, about self-decomposing species, about other interesting and unusual properties of mushrooms that are important for them as future tourist guides for conducting tours about mushrooms. The second and third days of the training were organized in the field, at two locations in the vicinity of Rožaje, the training participants had the opportunity to see where mushrooms grow, how to look for them, for each species found its characteristics. This was one of four biodiversity trainings being implemented as part of the Wildlife Guide Training Programme.



A new workshop on mammals will be organised in next period, which will be held in Tutin. Although the weather is winter and harsh for the needs of field work, it will be interesting to follow the tracks of various mammals. In the spring and summer, the topic of birds and medicinal plants will follow, as well as a cross-checking tour so that educated guides can interpret the wildlife program themselves.

The continuation of the project, in addition to training, will bring the arrangement and marking of the path that will directly connect this cross-border region. Infrastructure for bird and wildlife observation will be set up at several locations, and all providers and other employees from the region involved so far will prepare itineraries for tourists who will come to enjoy the wild beauty.

The project “The Hoo Project: Creation of Owl and Other Wildlife Experiences” started with the realization on February 1, 2021 and the total duration of the project was 24 months. The total value of the project is €262.028,98, of which the European Union contribution is €222.724,64.







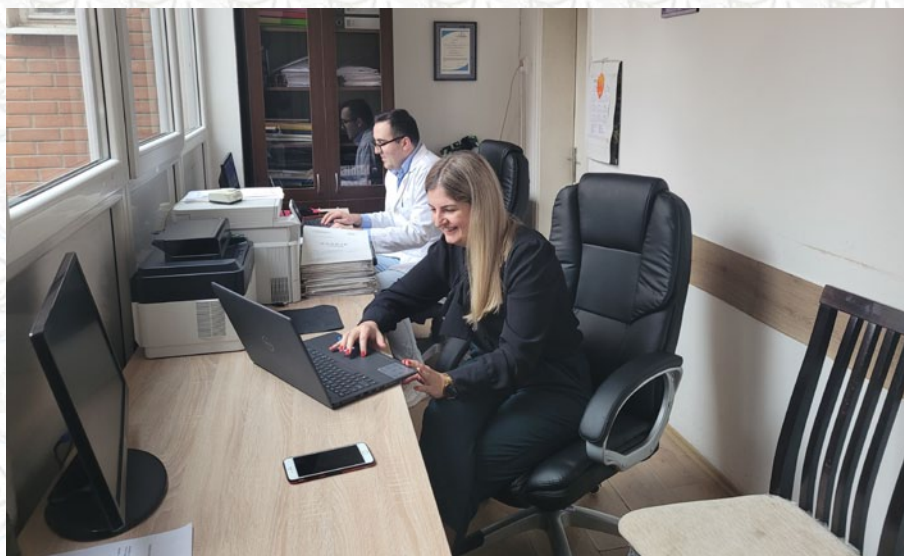
## The First Telecare Social Protection Service for elderly in Serbia and Montenegro

The project “1<sup>st</sup> Telecare Social Protection Service for elderly people in Serbia and Montenegro” started on November 1, 2021. The project is implemented by the Public Institution Day-Care Center for Elderly People Bijelo Polje and the Center for Social Work Novi Pazar in cooperation with relevant ministries.

The goal of the project is to improve the quality of social protection of the elderly through the integrated provision of health, psychological, social and educational services to the elderly. These include the end-user health examination service, site visits upon SOS call, visiting service users, health prevention, coordinated work with service users in order to solve existing problems, daily communication with service users, work on empowering users in solving personal problems.

Four professionals of the following educational profiles have been engaged in providing services to the final beneficiaries at the Center for Social Work in Novi Pazar - a doctor of medicine, a psychologist, a social worker and a caregiver. The services that are the subject of this project are provided to the target group in a timely and quality manner. The project includes 15 final beneficiaries of free health and psycho-social services.

Starting from November 22, 2021 five-day training of staff and users for the „First Telecare service of social protection for elderly people“ was realized in the premise of the Center for Social Work Novi Pazar. Through training for staff engaged in project implementation, service providers have expanded their professional knowledge and improved the skills necessary to provide services to the elderly. During the training, the users of the services, with a welcoming speech and a presentation by the director of the Center for Social Work Novi Pazar, Adnan Dizdarević, were introduced to the goal of the project, a new social protection service for the elderly at the local level. Service users were familiarised with the rights and obligations of service providers and users. The training was followed by an exchange of information and experiences among the participants.



Service providers are in permanent contact with customers. Through the web application, their health condition is continuously monitored and, if necessary, it reacts in a timely manner in order to prevent complications. Communication with users is established by phone or video call, in order to carry out counseling work on health issues and provide psychosocial support, and if necessary, announce a home visit.





Evaluating activities on the realization of the project, Haris Kovačević, M.D., presented his observations: “The whole team is focused on meeting the needs of users, each in the field of their profession. As a primary care physician, I have the task of doing a general medical examination and giving appropriate advice to each user related to his/her health”, emphasizing that during field visits, problems and unmet needs of users are recorded and resolved spontaneously, so they feel safer. Satisfaction and gratitude of users is reflected in respect for what they are advised regarding their health condition.



“I am satisfied with the staff who visits me, I am not very good at tracking my biometric data, but day after day I am learning the system, with the help of professional staff I overcome the difficulties I encounter. The idea is really good, everyone is given the opportunity to have this way of monitoring their health condition”, states the user, Rodoljub Marinković, a retired lawyer, who did not hide his enthusiasm during the home visit.





## Improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities

In order to improve cooperation between institutions and organizations working in the field of protection of children and youth with disabilities in the municipalities of Bijelo Polje and Novi Pazar, the Cross-Border Cooperation Network in the field of social protection Bijelo Polje-Novı Pazar was established within the project "Common Actions for Better Care". The network will contribute to the improvement of the position of persons with disabilities in Bijelo Polje and Novi Pazar through the exchange of knowledge, experiences and the creation of a platform for joint action in the future. The project envisages that representatives of NGOs dealing with issues of persons with disabilities will be participants in this Network in order to be able to exchange experiences, which is crucial for the implementation of the project. In addition, in PI Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities "Tisa", Bijelo Polje, the activity of introducing a new service for 27+ people, the introduction of neurofeedback and biofeedback treatment will be realized, two camps will be organized, one in Montenegro, the other in Serbia. Regarding the activities planned for the Association of Mentally Underdeveloped Persons Tahir Tasha Delic from Novi Pazar, which is a partner in this project, the procurement of van, introduction of neurofeedback and biofeedback treatment, introduction of two new occupational workshops are decoupage and candle making.



The project will empower a total of 144 children and young people and persons with disabilities who are users of the services of these two institutions. Employees from the institutions will acquire new knowledge and skills that will help them introduce new activities envisaged by the project.

The first press conference within the project "Common Actions for Better Care" was held in Novi Pazar, on November 25, 2021. The conference was attended by media representatives, representatives of project partners involved in the preparation and implementation of the project and representatives of institutions and organizations working in the field of protection of children and youth with disabilities in Novi Pazar and Bijelo Polje. The conference presented in detail the project, activities and expected results, target groups and beneficiaries of the project and the role of each of the partners in the project.

The estimated duration of the project implementation is 24 months and the value of the project is €271,941.89.

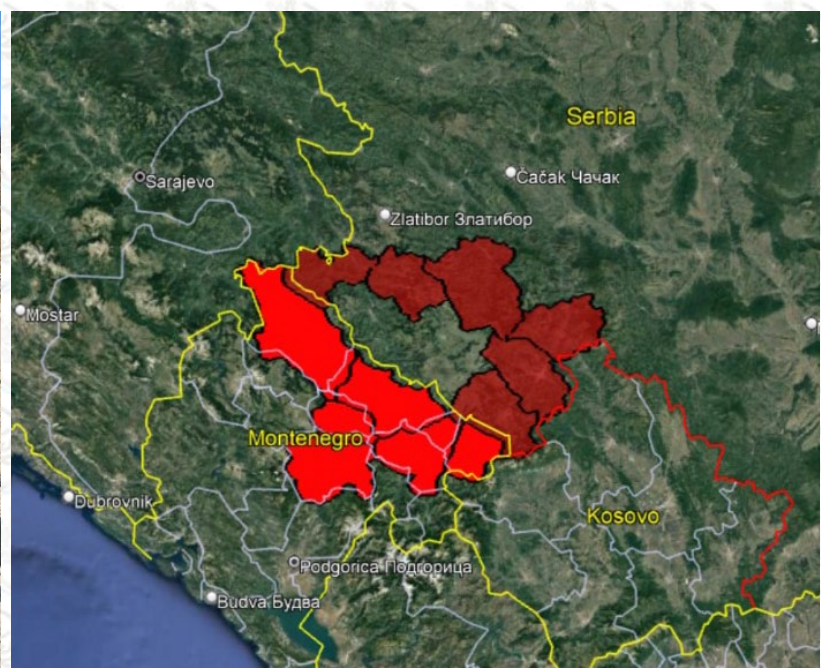




## CULT Bike Route

The project “CULT Bike Route” implemented by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Montenegro, NGO “Discover Serbia”, Priboj and Student Organization of the Faculty of Transport and Traffic Engineering, Belgrade, was presented at a virtual conference on October 26, 2021 to potential beneficiaries.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Goran Drobnjak, Acting Director of the General Directorate for European Integration, Programming and Implementation of EU Funds and International Cooperation at Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, emphasized the importance of the project, which aims to establish a bicycle route that will be hundreds of kilometers long and will pass through 12 municipalities in the cross-border region. The municipalities covered by the project from Serbia are: Ivanjica, Raska, Novi Pazar, Tutin, Nova Varos, Priboj, and from Montenegro: Rozaje, Berane, Kolasin, Pljevlja, Bijelo Polje and Mojkovac. Along the route, it is planned to establish ‘mountain bike sharing’ and a system of potential accommodation facilities for cyclists.



The goal of the “CULT Bike Route” project is to improve the capacity to explore tourist potentials by establishing a cycling route that will simultaneously promote and discover the underdeveloped cultural and natural heritage of the program area, attract local and international users of EuroVelo routes through the Balkans and influence the economic development bicycle routes. By implementing this project, we strive to work on strengthening the cultural and tourist potential of the municipalities and regions involved in the project.

The next activities that will be implemented in the next few months within the “CULT Bike Route” project are related to the analysis of cultural and historical heritage, potential tourism attractions and cycling routes, as well as intensive communication with all stakeholders and potential end users. Our team is convinced that the implementation of project activities will positively affect the development of tourism potential of the covered area and at the same time popularize cycling tourism as a means of promoting cultural and historical heritage” stated Danijel Vuckovic, project manager.

The estimated duration of the project implementation is 16 months and the value of the project is € 299,898.00.





## A series of activities promoted the project “Let’s be prepared”

On the occasion of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction in order to educate students about the activities to be undertaken in case of disasters that can help them and their families to stay safe, lectures were held on flood and fire risk reduction at 11 elementary and secondary schools in Nikšić, Bijelo Polje, Berane, Pljevlja, Žabljak, Petnjica and Šavnik.

Lectures within the project “Let’s be prepared” were organized by FORS Montenegro in cooperation with regional units of the Directorate for Protection and Rescue and representatives of local protection and rescue services. On that occasion, the students received specific instructions and guidelines from experts on preventive measures as well as those activities that should be taken during floods and fires in order to reduce their harmful consequences. Totally 29 events were organized in 11 elementary and secondary schools with presence of over 800 students.

Additionally, visits to local rescue services were organized in order for students to get acquainted with the protection and rescue system in Montenegro as well as lectures for the population, all as part of the information campaign on disaster risks, preventive measures and activities to be taken in case of floods and fires.



In cooperation with the teachers of the mother tongue language and art, a cross-border quiz, art and literary competition on the topics of reducing the risk of floods and fires was organized for the students who attended the lectures. The goal of the activity is to connect schools and students from different municipalities, encourage teamwork, volunteerism and strengthen cooperation between educational institutions.

As part of the project “Let’s be prepared” in Nikšić, December 10, 2021, was organised a cross-border demonstration

exercise on protection and rescue in cases of floods in which 29 rescuers from Montenegro and Serbia checked and showed readiness for rescue in cases of floods on fast waters according to the Rescue 3 system.

Before the exercise a four-day training for rescuers was organised, which included theoretical and practical part, during which participants had the opportunity to learn from licensed instructors from the Croatian Mountain Rescue Service about modern methods of protection and rescue during floods.







Participants who during the training mastered the requirements and skills required by this type of training, and which were assessed by the instructors, received internationally recognized certificates Rescue 3.



On December 29, 2021. NGO FORS Montenegro delivered equipment for the protection and rescue services of Berane, Bijelo Polje and Petnjica in Berane. During the handover, two rubber and two aluminum boats, four boat engines and two trailers for transporting boats, as well as personal protective firefighting equipment worth €30,000.00, were handed over to the rescue and protection services.

The project “Let’s be prepared” is implemented by the FORS Montenegro, funded by the European Union within the IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Serbia-Montenegro 2014-2020, and co-financed by the Ministry of Public Administration, Digital Society and Media in Montenegro. The partner in the Republic of Serbia is the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Serbia – Sector for Emergency Situations.







## One-stop-shop service for social inclusion and youth employability

Within the project “One-stop-shop service for social inclusion and youth employability” during December 2021, Info days were held in Berane and Tutin. The project is implemented by the Center for Youth Work Novi Sad, Forum mladih i neformalna edukacija, Podgorica, Youth Office Novi Pazar and Građanska inicijativa mladih, Rožaje.

The goal of the Info Day was to acquaint young people with the opportunities they have within the project, as well as how to apply for the trainings that will follow. During the Info Day, young people were additionally motivated and informed, in addition to the campaign conducted on social networks. The events were attended by 29 participants.



The target group of the project and thus the Info Day are NEET young people (not in employment, education or training), ie. young people who are not in the education system, employed or in training.

The project partners, through youth-tailored activities, will contribute fostering employability and social inclusion of vulnerable youth in cross-border Sandzak area by increasing their employment competencies and networking with SMEs through piloting innovative youth employability one-stop-shop service. The estimated duration of the project implementation is 20 months.





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CROSS-BORDER PROGRAMME  
**SERBIA-MONTENEGRO**  
2014-2020



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