



“NEWS” project – 2nd NEWS-letter

Strategic Actors for New Scenarios in the Governance of Cross-border business cooperation

Since we are at the final stage of the NEWS project, we wanted to share with you a second Newsletter that highlights the significant milestones achieved by the consortium so far. Building on the foundations laid through the activities carried out in 2023, the project has continued to foster innovation, collaboration, and the development of new services between Italy and Croatia.

We have already published a Newsletter at the beginning of 2024: you can read it by [clicking here!](#)

NEWS project aims to support SMEs in the development of new growth opportunities by creating a new innovative Adriatic cross-border governance model that promotes professional internationalisation services to micro and small enterprises between Italy and Croatia; the project also aims to analyse legal and administrative barriers to cross-border business services, such as access to credit, business partnerships, energy efficiency practices and export strategies in the blue and circular economy.

WHO ARE THE PARTNERS?



CNA, National Confederation of Craftsmen and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, is an association system that represents craft, small and medium-sized enterprises and their associations; CNA Abruzzo aims to provide services that help entrepreneurs and businesswomen to improve their competitiveness, sustainability and innovative capacity to grow not only in the Italian region but also in Europe.



IRI Centar is a business support organisation registered in Croatia. IRI Centar facilitates collaboration between R&D organisations and industry. The organisation is involved in national, regional and local politics and maintains close contacts with BSOs in other regions and countries.



Eupolis has been involved in ecosystems and entrepreneurship support since its inception in 2000. It has gained valuable experience in stakeholder engagement, capacity building, networking, cooperation, clustering and partnership development in Croatia, the Western Balkans and Europe, including a number of training programmes implemented in cooperation with UNDP outside Europe.

THE SECOND PART OF THE PROJECT

We are about to show you what the second part of the NEWS project consisted of and all activities of WP1 and WP2 that partners have finalized in these months. But, first of all, let's take a look at the activities of the second project period:

Activity 2.1.

This activity built upon the work done in the first period, identifying common needs and topics for establishing new cross-border cooperation models among economic actors. Led by CNA Abruzzo, the consortium focused on the **development of the new governance model draft** that incorporates stakeholders' perspectives. The governance framework defines how the new cross-border organization operates and makes decisions.

Activity 2.2.

In the second activity partners developed a **joint's governance model roadmap for a new business networks and associations** that outlines timelines, structure, responsibilities, budget, and necessary resources, engaging key stakeholders like local and regional public authorities, SMEs, business organizations, and universities. Additionally, the partnership will evaluate the governance model, addressing any administrative and legal challenges while defining the impact scenario for scaling up cross-border business collaboration in the blue and circular economy.

Activity 2.3.

To validate the governance model, partnership implemented a **simulation and testing of governance model on a small-scale and finalization of implementation strategy**, by using Artificial Intelligence in services destined to SMEs.

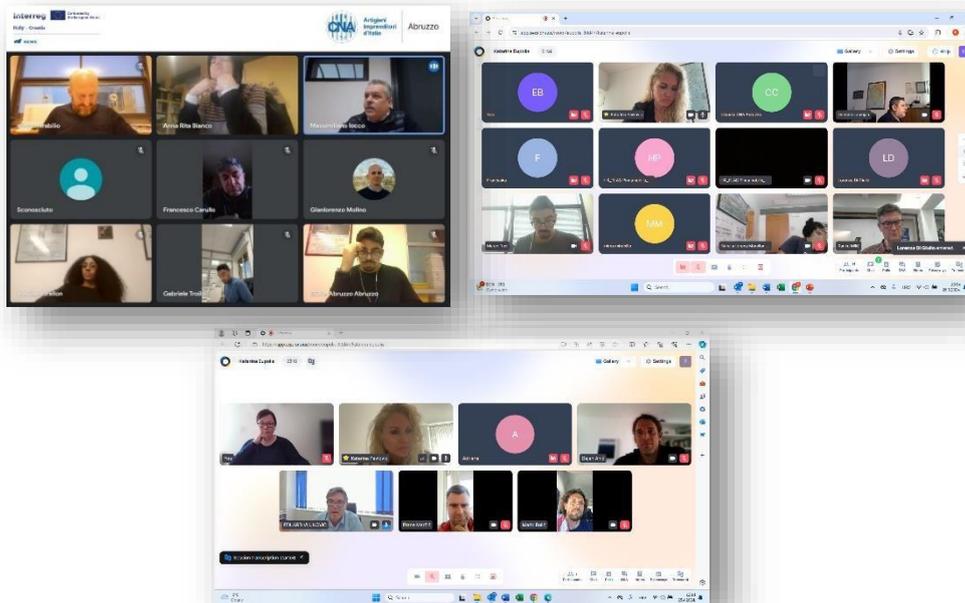
A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT'S MISSION: "NEWS" ROLL-UP

First thing we want to share is the new **roll-up graphic** for the NEWS project! This graphic encapsulates the project's mission to build a "bridge" between Italy and Croatia through key initiatives that promote cross-border growth. The graphic highlights the main pillars of the project and serves as a visual representation of our efforts to foster innovation, collaboration, and sustainable development in the Adriatic-Ionian region.

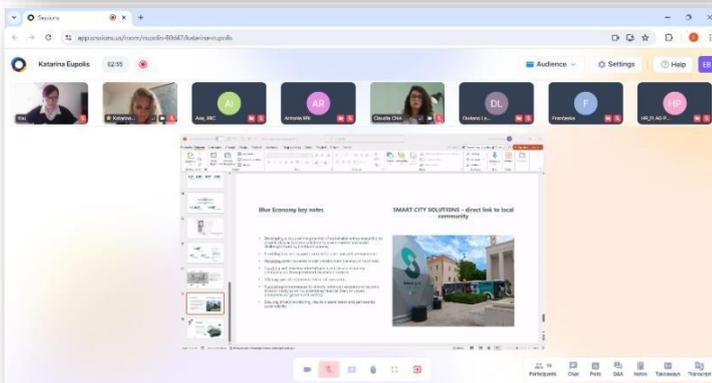


STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY: FOCUS GROUPS AND ROUNDTABLES

Numerous reflections and interesting perspectives emerged from the **Focus Groups** organized by partners, and featuring active participation from regional entrepreneurs on the topic of Italian-Croatian cross-border cooperation and their interest in a "supercluster" that may help them reaching mutual interests in both countries. The discussions highlighted the opportunities available in the Blue Economy sector and beyond, allowing our businesses to explore potential entry into the Adriatic-Ionian market.



This is precisely what the NEWS project aims to achieve under the Italy-Croatia program, in an effort to establish a bilateral body that provides services to Italian and Croatian businesses looking to deepen their commercial development opportunities along the Adriatic coast. The collective exchange created a foundation for a deeper analysis of the topic in preparation for future project activities.



EXCHANGE MODULES

Earlier in the year, the Exchange Module Workshops on “*Cluster Management in the new economic domains*” and on “*Business opportunities in the blue economy and fishery sector*”, led by CNA Abruzzo and Eupolis Grupa Ltd, provided a dynamic moment for exchanging ideas on the subjects in the blue economy.

Participants engaged in interactive discussions and received valuable insights from both institutional and professional experts (consultants, Chamber of Commerce, etc.) sparking new ideas for business development and cross-border innovation.

The workshops were a great success, thanks to the active participation of all attendees.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW GOVERNANCE MODEL DRAFT

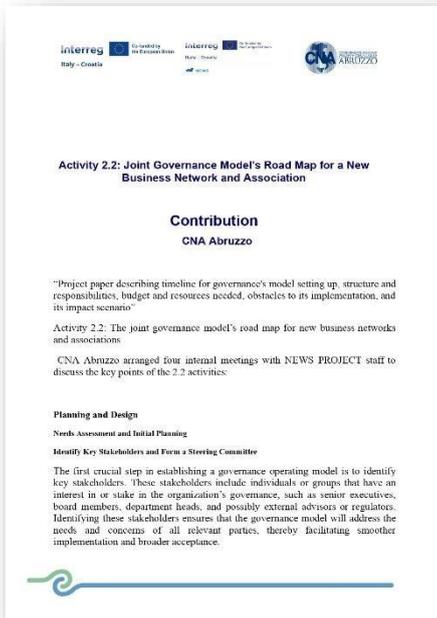


CNA Abruzzo, as the Lead Partner of the project, has longly worked on the **drafting of a new governance model for cross-border cooperation between Italy and Croatia.**

To prepare this draft, the partnership conducted a detailed comparison of various entities – including EDIHs, Clusters, Hubs, Chambers of Commerce, Business Associations, and Accelerators of startups – ensuring that the governance model will be tailored to the project’s specific needs and goals.

This model has outlined the structure, organizational processes, and objectives of a future Italian-Croatian association.

JOINT'S GOVERNANCE MODEL ROADMAP FOR A NEW BUSINESS NETWORKS AND ASSOCIATIONS



The **Joint Governance Model's Roadmap** for the new business network and association outlines the timeline, structure, responsibilities, and required resources for establishing effective governance.

It begins with identifying key stakeholders and forming a steering committee to provide leadership and oversight. A comprehensive needs assessment is conducted to understand current governance frameworks, identifying gaps and areas for improvement.

Based on this assessment, a detailed project plan is created, defining clear objectives, tasks, milestones, and deliverables, along with required resources and a budget. Additionally, a robust risk management plan is integral to the model, addressing regulatory compliance, operational, financial, strategic, and reputational risks.

This roadmap ensures that the governance model aligns with organizational goals and facilitates successful implementation of the NEWS initiative.

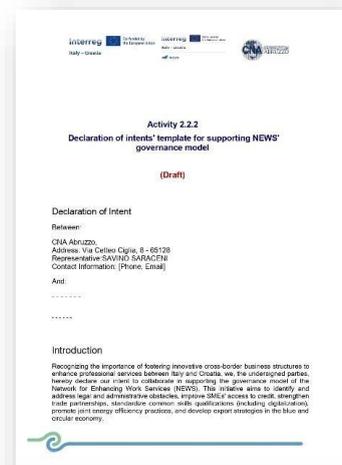
DECLARATION OF INTENTS' TEMPLATE FOR SUPPORTING NEWS GOVERNANCE MODEL

Partnership also created a **Declaration of Intent** template to support the governance model and outlines NEWS project's commitment to:

- ***Facilitate Cross-Border Services***: Address legal and administrative barriers between Italy and Croatia.
- ***Enhance SMEs' Credit Access***: Improve mechanisms for accessing credit for cross-border trade.
- ***Strengthen Trade Partnerships***: Foster mutual growth through collaborative partnerships.
- ***Standardize Skills Qualifications***: Establish common qualifications, focusing on digital competencies.
- ***Promote Energy Efficiency***: Encourage joint initiatives for sustainable business practices.
- ***Develop Export Strategies***: Create strategies to enhance competitiveness in the blue and circular economy.

This initiative underscores our dedication to fostering innovative cross-border business structures and enhancing professional services.

On October 25, Mr. Marco Blasioli, President of ECIPA Abruzzo, accredited training body of the Abruzzo Region, signed the Declaration of Intent.



SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES OF THE NEW CROSS-BORDER ASSOCIATION

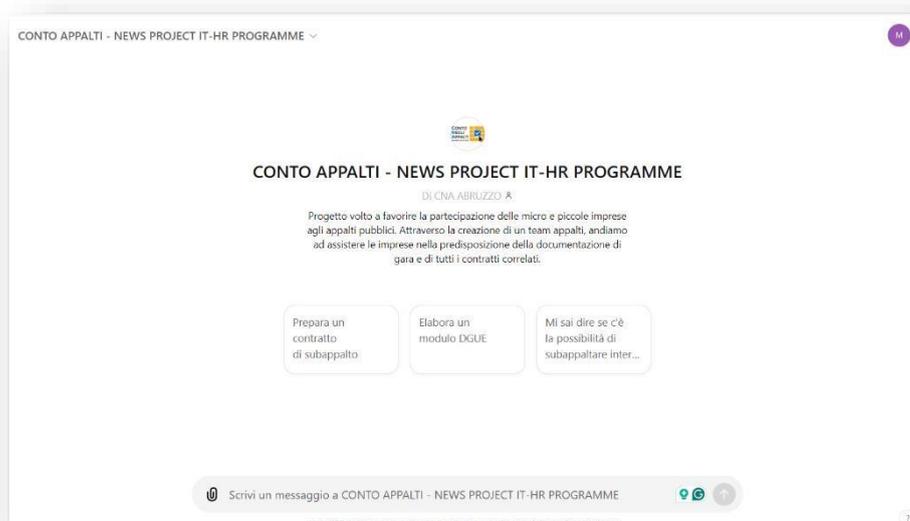
The new cross-border association between Italy and Croatia is committed to **sustainability through key principles** that project partners highlighted as follows:

1. **Economic Sustainability**: Support long-term growth for SMEs via innovation and trade partnerships.
2. **Environmental Sustainability**: Minimize impact through energy efficiency and responsible resource use.
3. **Social Sustainability**: Promote fair labour practices and inclusive growth for all.
4. **Governance and Transparency**: Ensure accountability and stakeholder engagement in decision-making.
5. **Collaboration and Partnership**: Strengthen ties between businesses through collaboration and knowledge sharing.



CHATGPT FOR TESTING INNOVATIVE SERVICE FOR CLUSTER

One of the key developments of this second project period has been the integration of **Artificial Intelligence** into the cross-border services. CNA Abruzzo showcased the testing of **ChatGPT** in the **field of public procurement services**. This experiment demonstrated how AI can streamline processes, making them more efficient and effective, and opening new doors for technological advancements in the public sector.



NEWS' WORKSHOP ON THE NEW GOVERNANCE MODEL AND FINAL EVENT SPLIT, CROATIA – OCTOBER 10

The consortium met in a **final event** of the NEWS project, held in Split, Croatia. It was the moment in which the **workshop on the new governance** took place: a key moment for consolidating project's achievements and looking towards the future.

During the event, the introduction of the new "supercluster" model that emerged from the draft was presented as a means to strengthen innovation by bringing together diverse stakeholders. This collaborative framework aimed to enhance synergies across sectors, fostering sustainable growth and joint projects between Italy and Croatia.



<small> IDENTITY: </small> ITALY-CROATIA PROGRAMME NEWS Project NEW Strategic actors for new scenarios in the governance of cross-border business cooperation (THEODORE)							
Date of the activity	Type of the activity (e.g. website article, focus on the social network, brochure, leaflet, poster, face to face meeting, staff meeting, conference, workshop, seminar, press release)	Link (if applicable) + printscreen/photo/cam (create a new link and name it accordingly)	Level of influence local/regional (LR), national (NR), European (ER), international (IR)	Target group	Impact (how many people were reached?)	What was the purpose of the activity (e.g. introduce the project, create awareness, get feedback, etc.)?	Were there any results from the activity (e.g. feedback of the participants, new followers on social networks, etc.)?
11/9/2021	Italy-Croatia website	https://www.italy-croatia.eu/	ER, NR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations		Project poster	
20/9/2021	Facebook post	https://www.facebook.com/italycroatiaofficial/	IR, NR, LR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations	Impressions 112 users, 9 interactions	Project poster	4 likes, 1 share
25/9/2021	Italy-Croatia website	https://www.italy-croatia.eu/	ER, NR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations		Project presentation	
25/9/2021	LinkedIn Post	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6654444444444444444	IR, NR, LR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations	111 views, 32 clic	Call to action event	3 likes, 1 share
2/10/2021	Italy-Croatia website	https://www.italy-croatia.eu/	ER, NR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations		Kick-off Meeting Announcement	
25/9/2021	LinkedIn Post	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6654444444444444444	IR, NR, LR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations	60 views, 4 clic	Meeting in Progress	
25/9/2021	Facebook post	https://www.facebook.com/italycroatiaofficial/	IR, NR, LR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations	Impressions 124 users, 34 interactions	Meeting in Progress	60 likes
26/9/2021	Facebook post	https://www.facebook.com/italycroatiaofficial/	IR, NR, LR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations	Impressions 613 users, 82 interactions	Meeting in Progress	18 likes
26/9/2021	LinkedIn Post	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6654444444444444444	NR, LR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations		Meeting in Progress	
08/10/2021	LinkedIn Post	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6654444444444444444	IR, NR, LR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations	279 views, 24 clic	Meeting in Progress	3 likes, 1 share
09/10/2021	Italy-Croatia website	https://www.italy-croatia.eu/	ER, NR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations		Kick-off Meeting	
27/10/2021	Italy-Croatia website	https://www.italy-croatia.eu/	ER, NR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations		Workshop A.1.1: IRI Center on AI	
11/12/2021	LinkedIn Post	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6654444444444444444	IR, NR, LR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations	111 views, 7 clic	Workshop A.1.1: IRI Center on AI	3 likes
11/12/2021	LinkedIn Post	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6654444444444444444	IR, NR, LR	Citizens, Entrepreneurs, SMEs, Managers, Experts, Associations	111 views, 2 clic	Newsletter launch	3 likes

SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

We have carried out so many activities along the project period, and what we have produced had certainly been communicated through partners' social media channels.

All our communicative efforts have been stored in a **Dissemination Diary** that gathered the dissemination-related activities in order to be better monitored.