

# Output.1.1 - ADRIJOROUTES

## Cross border strategy

**Interreg**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

**Italy – Croatia**

---

 **ADRIJOROUTES**

**LP – ADSPMAC**

## Document Control Sheet

<b>Project number:</b>	ITHR0200108
<b>Project acronym</b>	ADRIJOROUTES
<b>Project Title</b>	Promoting sustainable solutions for maritime cultural tourism
<b>Start of the project</b>	February 2024
<b>Duration</b>	30 months

<b>Project activity</b>	///
<b>Output number &amp; name</b>	O.1.1 - ADRIJOROUTES Cross border strategy
<b>Type of output</b>	Strategy
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Work Package number &amp; Title</b>	WP1 - ADRIJOROUTES CROSS-BORDER STRATEGY FOR RESILIENT MARITIME CULTURAL DESTINATIONS
<b>Work Package Leader</b>	LP-ADSPMAC

<b>Status</b>	FINAL
<b>Author(s)</b>	ADSPMAC
<b>Contributing PPs</b>	NASPA, ADSPMACS, PNAEAS, KIP, DPA, ZPA, RERA SD
<b>Version</b>	1
<b>Due date of deliverable</b>	31/01/2025
<b>Delivery date</b>	22/01/2025

# Interreg



Co-funded by  
the European Union

## Italy – Croatia

---

 **ADRIJOROUTES**



**rerasd**

# INDEX

Introduction .....	5
ADRIJOROUTES project.....	5
Content of the document.....	7
1.    ADRIJO – The Adriatic Ports Cultural Network .....	9
1.1    The origin of ADRIJO: REMEMBER project.....	9
1.2    The ADRIJO Network.....	10
1.3    The ADRIJO Platform.....	11
2.    Horizontal principles: sustainability, accessibility, social inclusion .....	14
2.1    Sustainability of destination .....	14
2.2    Accessibility of destination.....	16
2.3    Social Inclusiveness of destination.....	17
3.    Challenges and Opportunities.....	19
3.1    Challenge 1: Traditional perception of ports as transitory destination .....	20
3.2    Challenge 2: Lack of recognition of ports as cultural sites.....	23
3.3    Challenge 3: Reduce the distance between the local community and the port.....	25
4.    The Vision toward 2030 .....	28
4.1    European Agenda for Tourism 2030 .....	28
4.2    Adriatic-Ionian framework on tourism .....	29
4.3    Italian and Croatian framework on tourism.....	30
4.3.1.    Italian national framework on tourism.....	30
4.3.2.    Croatian national framework on tourism.....	31
4.4    The ADRIJOROUTES VISION to 2030.....	33
4.5    The future for the network and the platform .....	34



5.	The objectives of the ADRIJOROUTES strategy .....	37
5.1	Specific Objective 1 - Promotion of Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports cultural assets as sustainable tourism alternatives .....	37
5.2	Specific Objective 2 - Integration of Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports cultural offer in the regional, national and European touristic offers .....	38
5.3	Specific Objective 3 - Build a shared maritime cultural identity between the port and the related communities .....	39
6.	Stakeholders mapping and involvement.....	41
6.1	International level.....	42
6.2	National Level.....	46
6.3	Local Level.....	49
7.	Monitoring of achievements .....	52
	CONCLUSIONS.....	54



# Introduction

## ADRIJOROUTES project

ADRIJOROUTES “Promoting sustainable solutions for maritime cultural tourism” (code ITAHR0200108) is a project financed under the priority “Culture and tourism for sustainable development” of the Italy-Croatia Programme 2021-2027.

Its overall objective is to boost the sustainability, social inclusiveness and digitalization of the touristic sector of the Adriatic area, by promoting sustainable touristic experiences based on ports cultural assets.

The partnership of ADRIJOROUTES is composed by Central Adriatic Ports Authority, Lead Partner, and by North Adriatic Port Authority – Ports of Venice and Chioggia, Port of Ravenna, and Port Network Authority of Eastern Adriatic Sea in Italy, and by KIP – Intermodal Transport Cluster, Port Authority of Dubrovnik, Port Authority of Zadar and RERA, Regional Development Agency of Split-Dalmatia in Croatia. The project partners, representing 8 Italian and Croatian Adriatic ports with a rich cultural heritage of tangible and intangible assets are intended to pursue the objective of valorizing ports cultural assets as gateways for green and digital cultural destinations able to improve the port-city relations. All this while respecting the principles of sustainability and social inclusiveness of the local communities. The project also addresses the challenge of achieving a more balanced and well-distributed presence of passengers and visitors during peak seasons.

ADRIJOROUTES develops its activities along 3 main specific objectives:



- 1) *Strengthening of cross-border cooperation on sustainable management of passengers' touristic flows.*

This objective is pursued in WP1 “ADRIJOROUTES CROSS-BORDER STRATEGY FOR RESILIENT MARITIME CULTURAL DESTINATION” through the releasing of the following outputs:

ADRIJOROUTES CROSS-BORDER STRATEGY

ADRIJOROUTES ACTION PLAN

- 2) *Fostering the creation of sustainable and innovative cultural offer and experiences on Adriatic ports heritage as drivers for innovative and inclusive touristic ecosystems, as well as social integration of ports with local communities.*

This is reached through WP2 “ADRIJOROUTES: PORT CULTURAL ROUTES” and foresees the realization of the following output:

7 ADRIJOROUTES, of which at least 2 cross-border

- 3) *Enhancing the accessibility and social inclusiveness of Adriatic cultural ecosystem and improving the visitors' experiences through the adoption of innovative technologies and phygital solutions to widen the accessibility to innovative cultural offer.*

This is the objective of WP3 “ACCESSIBLE AND SOCIAL INCLUSIVE ADRIJOROUTES CULTURAL OFFER” reached with the output:

CROSS-BORDER LIVING MUSEUM



## Content of the document

The present document is the Output 1.1 of ADRIJOROUTES project, “ADRIJOROUTES CROSS-BORDER STRATEGY” and contains the cross-border priorities and objectives for the sustainable and resilient valorization of the cultural maritime heritage of the ports involved in ADRIJOROUTES project.

The strategy stems from the experiences in the management of important touristic flows in the ports of Ancona, Ravenna, Venice, Trieste, Rijeka, Zadar, Split and Dubrovnik, and aims at identifying the key principles and a common vision to pursue a sustainable and inclusive tourism strategy in the Adriatic Sea.

At chapter 1, the cooperation for the valorization and joint promotion of cultural maritime heritage of the Italian and Croatian ports that started in the year 2019 in the framework of the REMEMBER project (Italy-Croatia programme 2014-2020) is described. The most valuable result of the cooperation was the setting up of the ADRIJO Adriatic Ports Cultural Network and the creation of the ADRIJO platform ([www.adrijo.eu](http://www.adrijo.eu)), a multilingual and interactive repository of digitalized cultural products that reflects the variety of traditions, arts, skills and historic connections that still links the 8 involved ports in a single cultural ecosystem.

In the path from the collection of common cultural roots to the need to jointly promote the richness of the maritime cultural heritage, the partners shared the definition of common horizontal values that form the backbone of any future promotional activity.

At chapter 2, sustainability, accessibility and social inclusiveness of destinations are declined on the specific concepts of cultural tourism, overtourism and maritime cultural heritage which characterize ADRIJOROUTES partners.



Chapter 3 presents an overview of the main challenges that the ports of Ancona, Ravenna, Venice, Trieste, Rijeka, Zadar, Split and Dubrovnik face in the management of important touristic flows usually concentrated in peak seasons and linked to a “sun, sea, sand” tourism modality. The partners propose alternative perspectives to invite tourists to enjoy the multi-faceted forms of tourism offered by any port destination, to improve the long-term sustainability not only in the environmental aspect but also in the social acceptance of mass tourism which still represents a good economic opportunity for the territories involved.

The core part of the document is represented by the envisioning, at chapters 4 and 5, of core values and priorities to be pursued by the Adrijo network partners, within ADRIJOROUTES project and beyond, for the joint valorization of the maritime cultural heritage in the wider context of the European Union Agenda for Tourism, the Adriatic-Ionian macro-Region priorities and the Italian and Croatian national framework. The strategic objectives will be implemented with an action plan that will be attached to this strategy.

The final parts of the document provide an overview of the main stakeholders, at international, national and local level, with whom the partners will closely work to establish partnerships for the structured achievements of project objectives, finalized to the integration of ADRIJOROUTES actions in the local and regional touristic priorities. Lastly, a set of KPIs are identified to measure the progress of the strategy implementation through the action plan.

# 1. ADRIJO – The Adriatic Ports Cultural Network

## 1.1 The origin of ADRIJO: REMEMBER project

The cooperation of the ADRIJOROUTES partners started with REMEMBER project “REstoring the MEemory of Adriatic ports sites. Maritime culture to foster Balanced tERritorial growth” (cod: 10042741). It was financed under the Italy-Croatia Programme 2014-2020, that aimed at restoring the centrality of the port-city relationship, enhancing the social and economic links that have developed over the centuries between the two shores of the Adriatic, and paving the way for the creation of new economic paths based on culture and on the diversification of tourism.

REMEMBER project focused on the pivotal role of Adriatic ports in leading and stimulating the social, cultural and economic development of the related cities and the surrounding territories, and on the common need to preserve the existing cultural richness from negative externalities due to human pressure and time. Its approach aimed at creating the conditions for new sustainable development opportunities from the exploitation of the Adriatic maritime cultural heritage. Beyond preservation, the focus was on the valorization of the cultural assets as drivers for new economic opportunities in the cultural and touristic field.

The main innovation brought by REMEMBER project was the choice to use the *digitalization* as a key tool to increase the attractiveness and improve the accessibility, fruition and knowledge sharing of tangible and intangible maritime cultural heritage.

The cooperation of the partners in REMEMBER project led to the realization of two important results: the establishment of the ADRIJO network – the Network of the Adriatic Cultural Ports, and the setting up of the ADRIJO platform, available at the link: [www.adrijo.eu](http://www.adrijo.eu)

## 1.2 The ADRIJO Network

ADRIJO, the Network of the Adriatic Cultural Ports, was set up in the framework of REMEMBER project with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on 31 May 2019.

The network takes its name “ADRIJO” from a combination of the Italian word “Adriatico” and the Croatian “Jadransko” and was established with a twofold approach: 1) giving evidence of the role of ports in the identity, know-how and traditions of local communities in port cities and 2) to set up a joint tool to promote the cultural heritage of ports, tangible and intangible, as an additional instrument to welcome port passengers and users.

The members of the ADRIJO network are the partners of REMEMBER project, Central Adriatic Ports Authority, Lead Partner, North Adriatic Port Authority – Ports of Venice and Chioggia, Port of Ravenna, Port Network Authority of Eastern Adriatic Sea and Polytechnic University of Marche in Italy, and by KIP – Intermodal Transport Cluster, Port Authority of Dubrovnik, Port Authority of Zadar, RERA – Regional Development County of Split and Dalmatia, the National Museum of Zadar in Croatia, and by the Port of Split.

The aim of the network is to jointly promote and valorize the important maritime cultural heritage of the 8 Italian and Croatian port sites involved within REMEMBER partnership - Ancona, Venice, Ravenna, Trieste, Rijeka, Dubrovnik, Zadar, Split and to enhance the attractiveness not only of the port sites but also of the local communities thanks to the mutual promotion of different, digital and innovative tourist services.

With ADRIJO, the partners aim at creating a sustainable and alternative form of tourism based on culture, able to generate new economic opportunities as an alternative to the “sea, sun and sand” tourism, thus addressing the impacts linked to the seasonality of touristic flows.

The cooperation of the ADRIJO network members allowed to present the richness of the Adriatic Italian and Croatian cultural heritage in several national and international tourism and cruise fairs, such as the SEATRADE Med, and to apply to the ESPO Award 2022. On that occasion ADRIJO and its main tool, the digital platform [www.adrijo.eu](http://www.adrijo.eu), were listed among the top 4 projects on the topic of city-port relations.

## 1.3 The ADRIJO Platform

The main tool of the ADRIJO network, and its main realization so far, is the international and multimedia platform [www.adrijo.eu](http://www.adrijo.eu).

The ADRIJO virtual platform hosts history, stories, expressions and experiences of the 8 involved Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports, represented as a single geographical ecosystem in the framework of the uniqueness of the Adriatic dimension. The initial plan to set up “8 virtual museums”, one for each port, where to present the multiple dimensions of the port heritage, from traditions and monuments to professional skills and contemporary daily work, was transformed by the involved ports. They intended to build up a single platform that could provide a comprehensive description of the social, economic and historical links that have permeated the relationships between the Italian and Croatian ports and between the ports and the related cities and communities over the centuries.



Each of the eight ports of the Adrijo network populated the platform with videos, audio clips, 3D models, drone panoramas, photos, texts, to tell the maritime and local culture, realizing a total of more than 150 digital cultural contents.

The ADRIJO platform, available in 3 languages, English, Italian and Croatian, is organized on three levels:

- 1) a common part for the eight ports, which introduces the visitor to the concept of the Adriatic as a place of common historical and cultural roots of the ports and cities that overlook it. The contribution of professor and geographer Franco Farinelli, identified by the partners as the testimonial of the ADRIJO network, allowed this to happen;
- 2) an intermediate level, where the 150 cultural contents are organized according to the taxonomy, composed of a matrix with 3 categories: tradition & cultures, stories and heritage, and further subcategories, aimed at exploring the cultural, social and maritime connections between the 8 Adriatic ports;
- 3) a local level hosting the virtual museum of the 8 ports.

Different perspectives are available for visiting Adrijo platform: through a geographical point of view, deepening what each port uploaded, or navigating through the three common categories, traditions and culture, stories and heritage.

Moreover, the platform allows 3 different levels of engagement for the visitor.

The first level is by browsing the ADRIJO platform to access the 150 cultural contents realized by the 8 ports, that populate the platform.

The second level is developed through itineraries and installations set up in the ports to raise awareness about the characteristics of each territory. The itineraries and installations allow

a mutual enrichment between the online visits and the on-site experiences, as the platform's contents are directly connected to the related places. In the same way, the on-site visit can be guided, educational, and amplified through virtual content that can be enjoyed online, as well as in augmented reality mode.

In the third level, available at the port of Ancona, the visitor is brought to a further level of musealization, represented by the implementation of an augmented reality application, tailor-made to narrate some features of the monument in a more engaging way.



## 2. Horizontal principles: sustainability, accessibility, social inclusion

### 2.1 Sustainability of destination

Tourism is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world, but the traditional business models based on “brand destinations” or “sea, sun and sand” standards have shown all their limits in environmental, economic and social acceptance terms.

The ADRIJOROUTES ports and related territories are experiencing the negative impacts of mass touristic flows, concentrated in peak summer months and in overcrowded sea or touristic destinations. A touristic model that does not take into due consideration the long-term consequences on the quality of life of the local citizens, on the impact on the environment and on the preservation of cultural heritage, destinations and landscapes in the ports and in the surrounding territories.

In such a very dynamic condition, cultural heritage is often threatened, with the consequence of vanishing of local languages, customs and traditions and the deterioration of tangible material cultural heritage.

As such, it is imperative for the ADRIJOROUTES partnership to foster the adoption of a sustainable approach in the development of cultural tourism, based on the strategic valorization of unique cultural resources, in order to create a more resilient and equitable maritime sector that benefits both present and future generations.

The establishment of common strategies with regional actors and stakeholders to shape new roles and possibilities in promoting the cultural heritage, becomes then of utmost



importance for the creation of a positive social, economic and environmental effect in a holistic approach.

Therefore, the sustainability principle should be considered under three perspectives: environmental sustainability, economic sustainability and cultural sustainability.

- a. Environmental sustainability: the ADRIJOROUTES partners are committed to prioritizing environmental protection and safeguard in the definition of new touristic offers. These are based on the valorization of cultural heritage and on the preservation of natural and maritime environments around the ports, including water quality management and protection of local flora and fauna. Cultural tourism represents itself a valid alternative to diversify the touristic offer thus contributing to reducing the negative impacts of seasonality on the quality of water, air and use of soil of the ports and of their surroundings. This can be achieved with the adoption of green practices in the maintenance of heritages sites, with the integration of slow tourism experiences into the local touristic offer and the implementation of energy-efficient technologies in infrastructure projects.
- b. Economic sustainability: sustainable tourism should match with a responsible economic growth, able to generate new job opportunities, attract new investors and improve the overall quality of life of the local population. The strategic valorization of the unique maritime cultural resources and their integration with the regional touristic offer can facilitate a balanced distribution of touristic flows across the year, increase tourists' length of stay and expenditure and customer loyalty. To this aim, the setting up of partnerships with the local stakeholders in the touristic and cultural sector is key for the implementation

of strategies based on the creation of long-term economic benefits respectful of the local values and resources.

- c. Cultural sustainability: raising a new consciousness on the importance of ports cultural heritage and of its link with the economic and social evolution of the cities, its deeper understanding by local communities, visitors, and tourists, and the preservation of the maritime cultural values are key elements for the strengthening of the local identity between the ports and their cities and territories.

The production of cultural-based touristic products, as in ADRIJOROUTES project, allows to support and revitalize less known or traditional knowledge, crafts and practices that are part of the port's cultural identity and that need to be spread through educational programmes and activities for both locals and tourists.

## 2.2 Accessibility of destination

A key priority addressed by ADRIJOROUTES project is the accessibility of the ports' cultural contents to all kind of visitors, regardless of physical ability, socio-economic status or any other discrimination against minorities, sensitive or marginalized populations, including youth, women, families or immigrants, amongst others. Wider accessibility also represents an opportunity to extend the target audience of own cultural destinations and to improve social responsibility towards local communities.

One of the main strengths of the ADRIJO platform in terms of accessibility is the focus on the digital representation of tangible and intangible heritage that allowed to make available the cultural contents to a wide range of target groups. Digitalization of cultural contents is a mainstream concept also in ADRIJOROUTES project where the digital reproduction of the cultural products ensures that many constraints, such as limited time or resources for travel or lack of physical exhibition spaces, are addressed.

The “immersive cultural experiences” allowed by the virtual museum are therefore available to wide categories of visitors, namely remote visitors, low-income, younger and elderly, physical or mental disabled visitors.

Moreover, the digitalization of the cultural offer can reduce the impact that serious instances like COVID-19 pandemic could have on the cultural and creative sector, and helps to support cultural life in the communities, even in these hard times.

In terms of physical accessibility, ADRIJOROUTES partners are committed to elaborate new cultural offers and itineraries that ensure the participation of people with disabilities through the presence of adapted infrastructures or ad hoc services.

## 2.3 Social Inclusiveness of destination

Tourism has a strong potential for promoting inclusion and equality, as it is the epitome of intercultural dialogue, it allows meeting the “other and different”, learning about different cultures, bonding and building tolerance. The social inclusiveness principle will be adopted by ADRIJOROTUES partners in the definition of the cross-border strategy and of any other product, in a way to ensure the inclusion of all individuals, regardless of background and

ability, in the understanding and knowledge of the cultural heritage of the Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports.

In particular, the mix between physical and digital allows to provide a more socially inclusive tourism environment that takes into consideration the trends of specific target groups (ageing population, disable visitors, kids and younger visitors). The ADRIJO platform enables all people, with or without disabilities and from different social-economic backgrounds, to equally participate in the ADRIJOROUTES cultural products, not only at local, but at cross-border level.

Moreover, ADRIJOROUTES partners are committed to provide equal opportunities to the new generations, to learn about the heritage and culture of the involved ports and related territories by developing educational programs, creating initiatives aimed at involving young people in heritage projects, fostering a connection to their cultural roots and encouraging future stewardship.

### 3. Challenges and Opportunities

The elaboration of a Cross-Border strategy for the valorization of ports cultural heritage as sustainable and alternative touristic experience, integrated with the regional and local cultural and touristic strategies, requires the identification of common challenges for the ports and territories of both countries, Italy and Croatia, to be jointly addressed through the enhancement of common opportunities detected.

The 8 ports involved in the project are the main passenger ports in the Adriatic Sea. While the Italian ports are focused on international ferry passengers and cruise passengers, the Croatian ports also have a significant number of local users as they link the island with the mainland.

According to each port's specificities, it is possible to identify several challenges affecting sensible sites, such as the involved ports, where ancient historical heritage, sensible natural environment or local communities' needs must find a balance coexistence with overcrowding phenomenon, lack of economic and social benefits distribution and difficult interaction between the city and port.

The identification of the challenges, as well as the enlisting of available opportunities to overcome them, represents the backbone for the enucleation of the objectives and targets that should be addressed by the Cross-Border strategy, towards the achievement of sustainable management of the touristic flows in the involved ports.



### 3.1 Challenge 1: Traditional perception of ports as transitory destination

The Challenge: overcome the usual perception of Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports as a transitory destination to reach “sun, sea and sand” locations or to access to the touristic attractions of the territories and cities behind.

Each year, the involved ports welcome millions of cruisers and ferry passengers heading towards traditional coastal destinations or to the prestigious city centers. The presence of heavy flows of passengers, concentrated only in the summer periods, is often the cause of serious social, economic and environmental concerns for the ports’ management activities as well as for the relationship with neighboring cities.

The burden of the unequal distribution of economic benefits, of the deterioration of natural and cultural resources, of the air, water and soil pollution and of the low quality of job opportunities heavily affects the local communities and their relationship with the port.

ADRIJOROUTES partners are committed to make efforts to re-orient the touristic flows into sustainable tourism alternatives, building a diversified cultural offer that can lead to the revamping of local crafts and traditional industries. This entails the implementation of a broad series of actions:

- the creation of alternative touristic routes based on cultural heritage of ports and linked with the cities’ and territories’ richness and traditions;

- the implementation of a joint promotional programme to enhance the knowledge about the rich cultural heritage of ADRIJO ports and the availability of a wide cultural offer, beside the traditional maritime destinations;
- the establishment of solid interregional collaborations to align policies and create tourism strategies at all levels (local, regional, national, international);
- the securing of funding to support joint promotional activities in national and international contexts.
- the fostering of the digitalization for the production of cultural contents and for marketing purposes, to broaden the sharing opportunities and raising awareness on the joint cultural offer.

The Opportunity: to overcome the challenges highlighted in terms of overcoming the perception of Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports as mere transition destination towards traditional forms of tourism, ADRIJOROUTES partners propose a wide range of opportunities.

The first of these, is to present Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports as a single cultural ecosystem, beside the traditional “sun, sea and sand” touristic model that can be exploited only during summer months or as a “brand destination” for cities like Venice or Dubrovnik. This will help to prolong the season duration also outside the peak season and extend the attractiveness of the touristic offer to wider target groups.

Directly linked with this, the ADRIJOROUTES partners highlighted the importance of developing thematic tours, promoting cultural and historical sites, local traditions in various topics (food&beverages, artcrafts, skills) and encouraging alternative forms of tourism such as slow tourism, ecotourism.

The creation of alternative and sustainable itineraries at a cross-border level, thus integrating under the same topic experiences in Italian and Croatian sites, can enrich the cultural offer of both Adriatic shores and improve the impact of the joint promotional activities.

Organizing and participating in national and international promotional activities in the field of tourism and cruise is of utmost importance to ensure a solid promotion of the new ports cultural offer. The presentation of ADRIJOROUTES joint destination during international events can not only extend the range of target groups interested in discovering the cultural richness of the Adriatic ports, but also attract new touristic and cultural stakeholders to integrate their offer with new cultural experiences linked to the ports' cultural heritage.

The transformation of cultural contents into digital products like videos, audio clips, 3D models, drone panoramas, photos, texts, virtual reality and augmented reality representations, has a strong role in contributing to widely disseminate the knowledge about the richness of ports' cultural offer and the alternatives to the traditional forms of tourism. The digitalization engages the audience through an "immersive cultural experience" allowing a combination of remote/online visits and on-site visits, where each one enriches the other proposing different perspectives and experiences of the same contents.

Finally, to implement promotional campaigns, either physical or digital, digitalize cultural contents and create alternative sustainable routes, ADRIJOROUTES partners stressed on the need to secure enough funding by applying for EU grants and leveraging EU or national resources for infrastructure and marketing activities.

## 3.2 Challenge 2: Lack of recognition of ports as cultural sites

Challenge 2: recognize ports as places of cultural heritage where different layers of culture, history, traditions and knowledge overlap each other and with the evolution of the surrounding territories.

According to ADRIJOROUTES partners, more efforts should be done to acknowledge the ports cultural heritage, soaked in artistic production, ancient skills, technical developments and economic opportunities, as part of the wider cultural heritage of a territory or a region. The preeminent function of the port as the departure and arrival site for passengers and freight and as an area devoted to operative and technical activities often make more difficult to acknowledge the social, economic and cultural role it plays in favor of the neighboring territories.

In this sense, a strong dialogue and long-term partnerships between the port authorities, key port stakeholders, and the institutions in charge of the shaping of regional strategies, such as regions, counties or municipalities, should be enhanced to reinforce the mutual understanding of each other's cultural contribution to the social development of the territory.

It is fundamental that ports cultural heritage has the appropriate visibility and promotion in the context of regional, national and international touristic offer, also through the use of integrated touristic communication channels, so as to increase the attractiveness of ports'

cultural destinations and contribute to the diversification of touristic offer as illustrated in challenge 1.

In a cross-border perspective, the challenge lies in the capacity to develop a strong, recognizable brand that encompasses Italian and Croatian ports and establishes a common cooperative framework for the promotion of a plurality of cultural heritages that may also differ in terms of values, priorities and infrastructures.

Opportunity 2: the solutions identified by ADRIJOROUTES partners to overcome the lack of recognition of ports as cultural heritage sites lie in a mixed approach based on different tools already available to the partners.

First of all, the strengthening of the dialogue and cooperation with local, regional, national and international institutions or stakeholders in the field of culture and tourism, already set up at local and European level by project partners, is key to ensure the embedding of the Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports' cultural strategies in the regional, national and international touristic offer.

This kind of synergies should be explored under a twofold perspective.

On the one hand, the uniqueness of Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports' cultural heritage can be highlighted, in the framework of a regional strategy, as part of a diverse regional experience where cultural values, traditions and knowledge are blended into a cohesive community.

Similarly, the integration at international and cross-border level would enhance the vicinity of cultural values and traditions coming from diverse local experiences, but closely linked by the sharing of the same sea.



A strong effort should be then put in establishing collaborative marketing strategies and in sharing cultural tourism packages. This form of cooperation can create win-win situations, where all the actors, the territory and the other involved ports, are able to attract more tourists rather than as individual ports.

Also, the technological developments play a key role in “reinventing” cultural offer and in bringing it closer to the new target groups. The ADRIJO platform and the new digital products that will be developed in ADRIJOROUTES should be further exploited to increase the attractiveness of the ports’ cultural heritage and help to catching the ever-changing trends in visitors’ demands and preferences. Recent technologies also better suit to convey messages and information to a wide range of target groups in a more dynamic and interactive way, inspiring new touristic experiences.

### 3.3 Challenge 3: Reduce the distance between the local community and the port

Challenge 3: The technical and operative character of the harbors and the presence of security areas with restricted access are some of the factors that contribute to keep the citizens and local community distant from the port areas, even when they are located in proximity of the city center being also a part of it.

Moreover, the environmental impact of the maritime transport and of intense passengers’ flows can create social conflicts with the city, further reinforcing the distance between the two communities.

As a consequence, the knowledge of citizens about the port is often limited to its operative and logistical functions, while the cultural background and its connections, both past and present, with the social, cultural and historical evolution of the city, are usually unknown.

The valorization of the Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports cultural heritage as an alternative touristic offer cannot avoid the full participation of the citizens and of the local communities: the population should share the priority of the preservation of traditional values, common history and ancient skills and should take a proactive role in enhancing the shared background.

According to ADRIJOROUTES partners, efforts should be put to reinforce the collaborations with the local community and civil society's representatives so as to establish a mutual understanding and awareness of the richness of the cultural aspects that link the port and the respective cities.

Opportunity 3: the activities implemented within REMEMBER project and ADRIJO network and platform to collect and retrieve past and present connections have already contributed to build a cultural basis for the restoration of the identity between the port and the respective community. They brought to light several multidisciplinary contents that were digitally reproduced and shared through the ADRIJO platform.

Similarly, the physical installations and itineraries already in place represent a point of contact between the two realities, the port and the city inhabitants, that contribute to strengthen the idea of a common maritime identity and common roots.

All these experiences should be further consolidated by continuing the networking with the respective communities and involving them in the definition of alternative cultural itineraries



able to better enhance the strict relationship between city and port in terms of cultural values, technical skills and maritime traditions.



## 4. The Vision toward 2030

### 4.1 European Agenda for Tourism 2030

The European Agenda for Tourism, adopted by the Council of the European Union in December 2022, stresses the need for Member States and tourism stakeholders to promote a sustainable tourism that takes in consideration all key dimensions of economic, environmental, cultural and social sustainability, with the commitment of creating sustainable jobs and promoting local culture and products.

The Council also emphasizes the opportunity of fostering the creation of a new tourism ecosystem thanks to the exploitation of the green and digital transformation and to the willingness of many Europeans to change their travel and tourism habits in favor of more sustainable tourism practices.

The European Agenda gives relevance to the adoption of an overarching approach for the tourism sustainability, that could include the perspectives of visitors as well as local residents, and provide for the protection of local culture, including tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

The Agenda invites the Members States to facilitate the digital transition in tourism and support the tourism industry by developing and implementing innovative products and services and as a tool to promote the accessibility of tourism services to all groups with specific needs.

The EU multi-annual Work Plan of the European Agenda for Tourism 2030 identifies the following 4 priority areas aimed at providing strategic guidance in the pursue of the scope and the timeline of the European Agenda for Tourism 2030: enabling policy framework and governance, green transition, digital transition, resilience and inclusion.

## 4.2 Adriatic-Ionian framework on tourism

The EUSAIR dedicates one of the 4 pillars of the Action Plan to “Sustainable Tourism”. In particular, the Action Plan focuses on the need to deploy the potential for sustainable and responsible tourism in the macro-regional area by addressing two specific objectives:

- Diversification of the macro-region’s tourism products and services along with tackling seasonality of inland, coastal and maritime tourism demand.
- Improving the quality and innovation of the tourism offer and enhancing the sustainable and responsible tourism capacities of the tourism actors across the macro-region.

The EUSAIR Action Plan invites stakeholders to make efforts to fully exploit the potential of the macro-region’s rich natural, cultural, historic and archaeological heritage in a sustainable and responsible way and to develop alternative and potentially sustainable forms of tourism. The plan also emphasizes the need to develop, diversify and/or integrate in wider regional strategies the alternatives produced to reinforce the strong socio-economic tourist advantage the Region has already built.

The actions envisaged by EUSAIR Action Plan, such as “Brand-building of the Adriatic Ionian tourist products/services”, “Diversification of the cruise and nautical sectors and enhancement of the yachting sector” and “Sustainable and thematic tourist routes”, as well as the priorities of the EUSAIR “CRUISAIR” flagship for a better management of cruise destinations, diversification of tourism product, promotion of special interest tourism connected with cruising will be a starting point in the shaping of ADRIJOROUTES cross-border objectives.

## 4.3 Italian and Croatian framework on tourism

### 4.3.1. Italian national framework on tourism

The promotion of a touristic offer based on environmental sustainability, innovation and digitalization of services, as well as the realization of public investments for a better fruition of the touristic heritage, are the core objectives of the Italian Recovery and Resiliency Facility Plan in the tourism sector.

In particular, the Italian Government will invest 2.4 Mil € of RFF funds to finance, among others, the digitalization of services, the development of touristic PMI, the improvement of accommodation facilities in the hospitality sector and the valorization of “minor destinations”.

The Italian Strategic Plan for Tourism 2023-2027, approved in April 2023, aims at enhancing the efficiency and the complementarity with the RFF resources allocated to the touristic sector.



The Italian Strategic Plan for Tourism 2023-2027 is articulated on 5 pillars: Governance, Innovation, Quality and Inclusion, Training and professional carriers, Sustainability. It aims to:

- Innovate, specialize and integrate the national offer;
- Increase the competitiveness of the touristic sector;
- Develop an effective and innovative marketing;
- Realize an efficient and participatory governance in the elaboration of and definition of touristic policies.

Among the 8 strategic fields detected for the deployment of actions, one focuses on the cultural tourism with the aim to reinforce the competitiveness of cultural-touristic offer, promoting a sustainable approach to cultural tourism in the big cultural destinations, through alternative itineraries or cultural experiences, promoting all year-round tourism and increasing the attractiveness of “minor” cultural realities through networks for the valorization of local excellences.

The plan encourages the collaboration between public and private sectors to promote minor destinations, valorize the local factors of attractiveness and foster the digitalization to enrich the cultural offer.

#### 4.3.2. Croatian national framework on tourism

The Croatian Ministry of Tourism and Sports approved the National Sustainable Tourism Development Plan until 2027 and the Action Plan until 2025, financed by the State Budget of

the Republic of Croatia and in other consolidated funding sources from the National Recovery Plan and Resilience 2021 - 2026 (NPOO), Competitiveness and Cohesion Program 2021 - 2027 (PKK), Effective Human Potential Program 2021-2027, Integrated Territorial Program 2021 - 2027 (ITP) and the program of EU funds.

The budget of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports in the period from 2023 to 2025 will be supported by the programs/budgets mentioned in the first paragraph and amount to a total of 43 Mil €. For the fulfillment of the Action Plan until 2025, the priority is also given to competitiveness of the tourism economy, to the support to the management of the EU strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region and to the development of tourist products and of special forms of tourism.

Moreover, in the year 2024, 16 projects have been financed under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) in the framework of the call Regional Diversification and Specialization of Croatian Tourism through Investments in the development of high added value tourism products.

These projects involve the construction or renovation of infrastructure for active tourism, visitor infrastructure, and infrastructure for the development of spa and wellness tourism, with a total value of 106 million euros. The importance of investing in public tourism infrastructure is addressed in the Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy until 2030, with the aim of improving the overall quality of the tourist offer and developing year-round tourism. Investments under this call are therefore directed towards the development, adaptation, as well as the green and digital transition of public tourism infrastructure.



## 4.4 The ADRIJOROUTES VISION to 2030

On the basis of the European, macro-regional and national tourism legal framework, and starting from the experience of the ADRIJO network and platform realized in the REMEMBER project, ADRIJOROUTES partnership shares a common vision on the valorization of the ports' cultural heritage for the promotion of a resilient, accessible and sustainable tourism model.

The vision formulated here expresses the long-term, comprehensive and inspiring picture of the expected achievement of the partners involved in ADRIJOROUTES project in the field of the valorization of the ports' cultural assets.

The vision guides the definition of ambitious yet realistic goals that will be pursued by project partners within the project duration and beyond, until 2030, in alignment to the European Agenda for Tourism 2030, and implemented in a framework of an Action Plan containing milestones and measurable indicators.

The vision, reflecting the positions of each of the ADRIJOROUTES partners, is aligned to the ADRIJOROUTES objectives and to the horizontal issues, as key values shared by the partners.

The ADRIJOROUTES VISION to 2030 is the following:

**Making the Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports represented in ADRIJOROUTES partnership and members of ADRIJO a network able to strongly contribute to territorial policies for the promotion of the maritime and port cultural heritage as tool for a more sustainable tourist experience.**

**ADRIJOROUTES partners believe that the valorization of the rich cultural heritage of the involved ports can inspire alternative touristic experiences and foster an environmentally, socially and economic sustainable tourism.**

**The partnership with cultural and touristic stakeholders and the digital transformation of cultural contents are the core pillars to widespread the knowledge on port cultural richness and to ensure a resilient management of tourist flows for the port and its community.**

## 4.5 The future for the network and the platform

The ADRIJO network and platform are the main tools for the pursuing of the ADRIJOROUTES vision that can be further exploited by project partners to ensure the promotion, the visibility and the wide accessibility of the common Adriatic cultural ecosystem.

The future of ADRIJO network and platform is strictly linked to the implementation of the ADRIJOROUTES vision and depends on the commitment of the project partners to continue the cooperation also beyond the project duration. Moreover, the durability of the ADRIJO platform developed under REMEMBER project (Italy-Croatia programme 2014-2020) and to be enhanced under ADRIJOROUTES project, currently ongoing, is also defined by the Programme commitment, which foresees that it must be available and owned by the one of the project partners until 5 years from the project closure.

When asked to express the willingness to commit for the prosecution of the ADRIJO network and platform also beyond the project activities, all involved organizations replied with positive feedback.

In particular, all the partners share the importance of ADRIJO network as a catalyst for the valorization of port culture and heritage within the context of port-city relationships, attracting visitors to lesser-known destinations, thereby alleviating pressure on overcrowded areas and fostering sustainable tourism practices.

Therefore, the prosecution of ADRIJO network, at least as a common brand to be used by the involved members for the valorization, individually or jointly depending on the circumstances of the cultural heritage and of the touristic alternative offer is positively welcomed by all project partners.

An enhanced concept of the ADRIJO network, as a tool to promote the Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports as a macro-destination to be presented in the framework of different initiatives related to passengers' traffic and sailing in Adriatic, is an option positively evaluated by some of the partners.

As per the ADRIJO platform, the continuation of its operativity is a precondition for the realization of ADRIJO network and ADRIJOROUTES project activities and it is ensured with the financial resources of the project itself. The new cultural products realized under ADRIJOROUTES and the local Living Museums, that will be linked to the ADRIJO platform, require that the platform will still be accessible by the partners for the uploading of new contents and for all the visitors, in three languages. Moreover, the ADRIJO platform must implement new functionalities to ensure a friendly and interactive experience in the



browsing of the 7 thematic ADRIJOROUTES (Output 2.1) that will be realized within the project.

To ensure the maintenance and the operativity of the ADRIJO platform after the end of ADRIJOROUTES project, it will be requested to the partners to agree on the criteria to assign the ownership of the platform and on a methodology to share the related costs. These aspects will be dealt in the Action Plan (Output 1.2) and in the Memorandum of Understanding that will be signed at the end of the project.

## 5. The objectives of the ADRIJOROUTES strategy

### 5.1 Specific Objective 1 – Promotion of Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports cultural assets as sustainable tourism alternatives

ADRIJOROUTES partners intend to focus their cooperation within ADRIJOROUTES project and ADRIJO network on the promotion of the richness and variety of the Italian and Croatian cultural ports at local, national, macro-regional, European level, and beyond.

The promotion must be finalized to increase the awareness of all stakeholders in the touristic and cultural sectors, either private or public, on the role that the cultural heritage of the Italian and Croatian ports can play in diversifying the touristic offer and in redirecting the mass touristic flows in a sustainable and resilient way.

The achievement of this Specific Objective is pursued through the organization of a variety of promotional activities targeted on the specific audience and stakeholders:

- Organization or participation in events, at local or national level, to inspire a discussion among stakeholders in the field of cruise, maritime tourism, and cultural providers on the contribution of the ports' cultural heritage to the shaping of alternative, resilient and sustainable touristic routes;
- Participation in national or international fairs or exhibitions in the field of tourism, cruise, maritime tourism and culture to show the variety of digital contents and the

richness of the immersive experiences that can be granted by the involved ports as well as the opportunities for “less known” and innovative destinations proposed by the ports;

- Creation of local immersive experiences, such as exhibitions, guided tours or visits enriched with innovative technologies or deployment of new applications to involve the visitors and the citizens in the discovery of ancient roots, traditional crafts or current development of the maritime and port history and its link with the social development of the city;
- Joining already existing networks or associations devoted to the promotion of sustainable maritime tourism, cruise tourism, nautical tourism.

## 5.2 Specific Objective 2 - Integration of Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports cultural offer in the regional, national and European touristic offers

ADRIJOROUTES partners consider of fundamental importance the cooperation with a wide range of stakeholders in tourism and cultural sectors, for the integration of the Italian and Croatian ports’ cultural destinations in the wider regional, national and European touristic offer.

In particular, the dialogue with the institutions responsible for the shaping of touristic and cultural strategies at all levels, ensures the embedding of sustainable, resilient and socially inclusive alternatives. It also facilitates the shift toward a sustainable touristic model that answers to the needs of both the ports and their surrounding communities.



To reach this objective, the full potential of the maritime cultural heritage should be known and made available to the interested parts, through the following activities:

- Establishing or maintaining collaborations and partnerships with institutions in charge of tourism and cultural policies (eg. Municipalities, Regions, Counties...) and associations, museums and private companies to jointly improve the touristic offer;
- Setting up of thematic routes, proposed as a mix of physical and traditional visiting experiences and immersive and interactive experiences, aimed at showing the Adriatic as a cluster of cultures and destinations with common origins, that could be integrated in the regional cultural offer;
- Strengthening of the role of digital tools, such as the ADRIJO platform and the Cross-border Living Museum, to enrich the visitors' experiences and provide accessible opportunities to discover the maritime cultural heritage of a network of ports, thus inspiring new touristic destinations

### 5.3 Specific Objective 3 - Build a shared maritime cultural identity between the port and the related communities

ADRIJROUTES partners intend to contribute to the engagement of the local communities and the citizens in the discovery of the cultural, tangible and intangible heritage, that shaped the social and economic development of the ports' surrounding territories, both in the past and in the present.

The access to digital and interactive content on the maritime cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, ensures that such cultural ecosystem is preserved for present and future generations, and also enhanced through the new widespread awareness.

In this sense, the ports' cultural offer, presented through the ADRIJO network and the Cross-Border living museum, contributes to highlight and reinforce the social links between the ports and the cities and restore the belonging to a maritime tradition.

To reach this objectives, ADRIJOROUTES partners engage in the following activities:

- Realization of innovative and digitally advanced cultural content. It has to show the multifaceted reality of today's ports activities and their connections with the freights and passengers' international routes, the worldwide economic and social situation, the delivery of highly technologic products and services as well as the continuation of traditional professions;
- organization of immersive and informative campaigns, targeted to a specific audience, such as students or elderly people, to show the contribution that ports and cities reciprocally provided for the economic and social evolution;
- involvement of social and cultural associations in initiatives aimed at rediscovering cultural links and shared values to be further valorized in the relationship between the port and the city.

## 6. Stakeholders mapping and involvement

The wide network of tourism and cultural stakeholders set up by ADRIJOROUTES project partners during the realization of the REMEMBER project and of the ADRIJO platform will be strengthened and further extended to ensure that the activities to be deployed for the achievement of the strategy's objectives are efficient and in line with the needs of the territories and of the tourism and cultural operators.

The network of stakeholders is composed by public and private organizations active in cross cutting topics such as environment, port-city relations, education, maritime culture and maritime tourism. ADRIJOROUTES project partners regularly cooperate with them to carry on institutional and operative activities.

The feedback from the tourism and culture domains is therefore embedded in the definition of the strategy's objectives and will ensure that the Action Plan is tailored to the opportunities of the wide economic and social environment.

The stakeholders participating to the ADRIJOROUTES cross-border strategy belong to three different levels: international, national and local. They will be involved according to their mission and their expected contribution.

## 6.1 International level

<b>Name of the Stakeholder</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Mission</b>	<b>Type of involvement</b>
Med cruise	International association	To promote the cruise industry and uniting the ports of 'Mediterranean' and its adjoining seas.	Participation during events and initiatives organized at project level for the collection and sharing of best practices on cultural tourism management and on the relationship between the ports and the cities, the collection of feedbacks on cross-border initiatives, and the promotion of the ADRIJO network and platform.
AIVP - International Association Cities & Ports	International association	To improve relations between cities and ports by promoting dialogue and cooperation.	Participation during events and initiatives organized at project level for the collection and sharing of best practices on cultural tourism management and on the relationship between the ports and the cities, the collection of feedbacks on cross-border initiatives, and the promotion of the ADRIJO network and platform.
ESPO – European Sea Port Organization	International organization	To ensure that seaports have a clear voice in the European Union; it represents the common interests and promotes the common views and values of its members to the European institutions and its policy makers.	Participation during events and initiatives organized at project level for the collection and sharing of best practices on sustainable tourism management and on the relationship between the ports and the cities, the collection of feedbacks on cross-border initiatives, and the promotion of the ADRIJO network and platform.
EUSAIR	Governance of the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-regional strategy	To connect people and institutions to build a common understanding of cooperation for a harmonized, integrated and sustainable region.	Participation during events and initiatives organized at project level for the collection and sharing of best practices on cultural tourism management and on the relationship between the ports and the cities, the collection of feedbacks on cross-border initiatives, and the promotion of the ADRIJO network and platform.
FORUM AICC – Forum of the	International association	To strengthen the synergies and	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level, for the collection and sharing of best practices on sustainable

Italy – Croatia

ADRIJOROUTES

Adriatic Ionian Chambers of Commerce		opportunities for socio-economic development of the Adriatic and Ionian area.	tourism management and on the involvement of representatives of tourism private sector, the collection of feedbacks on cross-border initiatives, and the promotion of the ADRIJO network and platform.
IAI – Adriatic-Ionian Initiative	Intergovernmental Forum for the regional cooperation in the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region	To promote the cooperation on SMEs, maritime transport, tourism culture and environment.	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level, for the collection and sharing of best practices on sustainable tourism management and on the involvement of representatives of tourism private sector, the collection of feedbacks on cross-border initiatives, and the promotion of the ADRIJO network and platform.
International Center for Underwater Archeology in Zadar	Public institution with the UNESCO category II centre status.	To preserve and promote underwater cultural heritage in Croatia, the Mediterranean and Europe.	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level, for the collection and sharing of best practices on preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, the collection of feedbacks on cross-border initiatives, and the promotion of the ADRIJO network and platform.
International University of Venice	Research and high education public institution	To provide advanced research and training on environmental, territorial and urban issues, a privileged observatory on Made in Italy excellence,	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level and local level, and set up cooperation frameworks to share knowledge and increase awareness on the advanced technologies, scientific results, artistic productions, on the preservation and promotion of the cultural maritime heritage, collection of inputs



Italy – Croatia



		the only special school in Italy completely dedicated to the arts.	for the preparation of project outputs, cooperation for the realization of project activities
CRUISE COMPANIES	International companies, operating in the Adriatic and in the Mediterranean sea	To develop and manage cruise transport.	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level or by single partners, for the collection and sharing of best practices on sustainable tourism management and on the involvement of representatives of tourism private sector, the collection of feedbacks on implemented initiatives, and the promotion of the ADRIJO network and platform.
FERRY COMPANIES	International companies, operating in the Adriatic and in the Mediterranean sea	To develop and manage ferry transport.	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level or by single partners, for the collection and sharing of best practices on sustainable tourism management and on the involvement of representatives of tourism private sector, the collection of feedbacks on implemented initiatives, and the promotion of the ADRIJO network and platform.
International Center for Underwater Archeology in Zadar	Public institution with the UNESCO category II centre status.	To preserve and promote underwater cultural heritage in Croatia, the Mediterranean and Europe.	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level, for the collection and sharing of best practices on preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, the collection of feedbacks on cross-border initiatives, and the promotion of the ADRIJO network and platform.



Interreg



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Italy – Croatia

---

 ADRIJOROUTES



rerasd

## 6.2 National Level

Name of the Stakeholder	Type	Mission	Type of involvement
Italian Government/ Ministries in the field of tourism, cultural, economic development	National public institution	To shape polices and regulations on sustainable tourism and maritime transport.	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level, for the sharing priorities on cultural tourism and maritime transport, collection of inputs for the preparation of project outputs, raising awareness on the cultural maritime heritage through ADRIJO network and platform.
Croatian Government/ Ministries in the field of tourism, cultural, economic development	National public institution	To shape polices and regulations on sustainable tourism and maritime transport.	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level, for the sharing priorities on cultural tourism and maritime transport, collection of inputs for the preparation of project outputs, raising awareness on the cultural maritime heritage through ADRIJO network and platform.
Università Politecnica delle Marche	Research and high education institution	To provide scientific research and training programs in technical-scientific subjects.	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level and local level, and set up cooperation frameworks to share knowledge and increase awareness on the advanced technologies, scientific results, artistic productions, on the preservation and



Italy – Croatia



			promotion of the cultural maritime heritage, collection of inputs for the preparation of project outputs, cooperation for the realization of project activities.
University of Zadar	Research and high education public institution	To provide scientific research and training programs in technical-scientific subjects.	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level and local level, and set up cooperation frameworks to share knowledge and increase awareness on the advanced technologies, scientific results, artistic productions, on the preservation and promotion of the cultural maritime heritage, collection of inputs for the preparation of project outputs, cooperation for the realization of project activities.
University of Rijeka	Research and high education public institution	To provide scientific research and training programs in technical-scientific subjects.	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level and local level, and set up cooperation frameworks to share knowledge and increase awareness on the advanced technologies, scientific results, artistic productions, on the preservation and promotion of the cultural maritime heritage, collection of inputs for the preparation of project outputs, cooperation for the realization of project activities.
University Ca' Foscari	Research and high education institution public	To provide scientific research and training programs in technical-scientific subjects.	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level and local level, and set up cooperation frameworks to share knowledge and increase awareness on the advanced technologies, scientific results, artistic productions, on the preservation and promotion of the cultural maritime heritage, collection of inputs





Italy – Croatia



			for the preparation of project outputs, cooperation for the realization of project activities.
Accademia Belle Arti of Venice	Research and high education public institution	To provide scientific research and training programs in technical-scientific subjects and in artistic domains.	Participation during events and initiatives, organized at project level and local level, and set up cooperation frameworks to share knowledge and increase awareness on the advanced technologies, scientific results, artistic productions, on the preservation and promotion of the cultural maritime heritage, collection of inputs for the preparation of project outputs, cooperation for the realization of project activities.
Maritime transport associations	Representatives of the maritime transport sector companies	To support the development of the maritime transport industry.	Set up cooperation frameworks for the promotion of alternative touristic offer, so as to increase the sustainability of traffic flows and extend them also beyond peak seasons.



### 6.3 Local Level

Name of the Stakeholder	Type	Mission	Type of involvement
Municipalities in the competences of involved partners	Local administration	Ensure local sustainable government.	Engagement during the shaping of project outputs (e.g. action plan), joint organization of activities and/or cultural touristic offers and products, promotion of maritime ports cultural contents and of ADRIJO platform.
Regional Institutions	Regional administration	To define regional priorities, also in the field of sustainable tourism and regional development.	Engagement during the shaping of project outputs (e.g. action plan), support in the organization of cultural activities and/or cultural touristic offers and products, promotion of maritime ports cultural contents and of ADRIJO platform.
City Touristic Boards	Local administration	To promote local cultural offer and provide guidance and information to visitors.	Engagement during the implementation of local activities for citizens and tourists, joint organization of activities and/or cultural touristic offers and products, promotion of maritime ports cultural contents and of ADRIJO platform to tourists.
Regional Touristic Boards	Local administration	To promote regional cultural and touristic offer and provide	Engagement during the implementation of local activities for citizens and tourists, joint organization of activities and/or cultural

Italy – Croatia

ADRIJOROUTES

		coordination at regional level to improve the visiting experiences of tourists.	touristic offers and products, promotion of maritime ports cultural contents and of ADRIJO platform to tourists.
Cultural and artistic associations	Local associations	To raise awareness and engage civil society on cultural and artistic initiatives.	Engagement during the implementation of local activities, joint organization of activities and/or cultural touristic offers and products, promotion of maritime ports cultural contents and of ADRIJO platform.
NGOs on culture, environment	Local associations	To raise awareness and engage civil society on cultural and artistic initiatives.	Engagement during the implementation of local activities, joint organization of activities and/or cultural touristic offers and products, promotion of maritime ports cultural contents and of ADRIJO platform.
City and or Regional Museums	Cultural institutions	To raise awareness and promote culture and traditions, also linked to the to all citizens.	Engagement during the implementation of local activities, joint organization of activities and/or cultural touristic offers and products, promotion of maritime ports cultural contents and of ADRIJO platform.
Innovation centers	Technological hub	To promote the development of innovation, research and cooperation between public and private	Engagement during the implementation of local activities, joint organization of activities and/or cultural touristic offers and products, promotion of maritime ports cultural contents and of ADRIJO platform.



Italy – Croatia



		sectors on various domains.	
Private companies in the field of cruise and maritime tourism	SME/ private companies	To develop and manage maritime tourism, either ferry, cruise, nautical tourism.	Engagement during the implementation of local activities, joint organization of activities and/or cultural touristic offers and products, promotion of maritime ports cultural contents and of ADRIJO platform.
Maritime agencies	SME/ private companies	To develop and manage ferry transport.	Engagement during the implementation of local activities, joint organization of activities and/or cultural touristic offers and products, promotion of maritime ports cultural contents and of ADRIJO platform.



## 7. Monitoring of achievements

To ensure the achievement of the vision of the specific objectives of the strategy, it is fundamental to monitor the progress of the activities throughout their implementation using a set of SMART indicators, that should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

A list of SMART indicators has been identified by the partners involved in ADRIJOROUTES in relation to the specific objectives:

### **Specific Objective 1 – Promotion of Italian and Croatian Adriatic ports cultural assets as sustainable tourism alternatives**

- N. of initiatives for the promotion of ports cultural heritage realized within ADRIJOROUTES and/or with other stakeholders;
- N. of digital ports cultural contents integrated in other cultural tourist platforms (in addition to Adrijo Platform);
- N. of accesses to the ADRIJO platform by international visitors.

### **Specific Objective 2 - Integration of Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports cultural offer in the regional, national and European touristic offers**

- N. of ports cultural contents introduced in the local and regional touristic offer;



- N. of thematic tours, itineraries set up;
- N. of Cross Border thematic tours/itineraries set up.

### **Specific Objective 3 - Build a shared maritime cultural identity between the port and the related communities**

- N. of accesses to the ADRIJO platform by local visitors;
- N. of local visitors during the Immersive Cultural Experiences or other local initiatives set up by the partners;
- N. of partnerships set up at local level.

The quantification of the SMART indicators will be tailored on the number and typology of activities that will be foreseen in the Action Plan, to be drafted and attached to this strategy.



## CONCLUSIONS

The ADRIJOROUTES Cross-Border Strategy represents a comprehensive framework for the sustainable and resilient valorization of the cultural maritime heritage of Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports. Rooted in the principles of sustainability, accessibility, and social inclusiveness, the strategy outlines a collaborative approach between the ports involved to redefine their role as cultural hubs, not only as gateways for passengers and freight traffic.

The strategy acknowledges the challenges of seasonality, lack of recognition of ports as cultural sites, and the disconnection between ports and local communities. In response, it proposes targeted actions to integrate maritime cultural heritage into regional and international tourism offers, foster digital and physical accessibility, and promote alternative tourism routes. By leveraging the strengths of cross-border cooperation, digital innovation, and stakeholder engagement, the project aims to establish a new tourism model that balances economic growth with cultural preservation and environmental responsibility.

The vision towards 2030 aims to reinforce the role of ports into vibrant cultural hubs, enriching the tourism experience while fostering sustainable development. This vision will be realized through key initiatives such as the ADRIJO network and platform, immersive digital experiences, and strong institutional partnerships at local, national, and international levels.

To measure partnership's achievements, a structured monitoring system based on SMART indicators has been established, ensuring that objectives related to promotion, integration, and community engagement are effectively met. The continued collaboration among project

partners and stakeholders will be instrumental in sustaining and expanding these efforts beyond the project's timeframe.

Ultimately, ADRIJOROUTES aspires to set a benchmark for sustainable maritime cultural tourism, demonstrating how ports can evolve into cultural destinations that serve both visitors and local communities while preserving their rich heritage for future generations.

