

The OSI Consultation was a success:

both cross-border event and surveys helped the Programme gather precious feedback

By Emma Magistri, IVY Volunteer

The involvement of stakeholders and citizens in shaping the next Call for Proposals dedicated to Operations of Strategic Importance (OSI) projects proved to be a huge hit: some **150 people participated** in the **cross-border consultation event** the Programme organized on the 4th of April.

The event was held online and was able to involve **different target groups from Italy and Croatia** - such as Programme stakeholders, general public, youth, EUSAIR actors and representatives of other Interreg Programmes of the Mediterranean and Adriatic area - with the aim of collecting their inputs. This **helped the Programme understand how well the objectives defined for each Specific Objective (SO) of the Call align with the real needs of the territories** and to investigate operational aspects for the Call for Proposals.

Before the event, extra information was gathered also from a **series of surveys**, addressed to the same target groups, that remained open for 2 weeks. In particular, the general public expressed **interest in environmental issues**, such as disaster risk, droughts and floods, **as well as in sustainable tourism**, especially asking for integrated transportation systems linked to tourism services. EUSAIR actors emphasized the **importance of the involvement of Thematic Coordination Groups in all the project phases**. Other Interreg Programmes **encouraged building on previous achievements and suggested collaboration** through workshops focused on sustainable tourism and mobility. Finally, young people focused their feedback on **enhancing the role of migrants in local communities**, especially in small towns and rural areas.

Regarding the event, the agenda was meticulously structured to address key issues and encourage meaningful dialogue among participants to clarify the identified strategic themes included in the Call for Proposals.

First Programme representatives presented the results achieved by strategic projects in the 2014-2020 programming period, then introduced the consultation themes. **Each session was organised in an interactive way** by using instant-polling and leaving time for questions and answers. Participants were given the possibility to choose specific discussion topics in 4 breakout rooms, coordinated by external experts. These were dedicated to climate change adaptation and environmental risk prevention; protection of biodiversity and reduction of pollution; national, regional, local and cross-border mobility



Italy – Croatia

between Italy and Croatia; culture and sustainable tourism. At the end of every presentation in each breakout room, there was time for discussion and exchange of ideas. After the session, the main results and inputs were reported to plenary to stimulate dialogue. Active engagement from the audience was thus ensured, fostering a dynamic and interactive environment.

The **main inputs** gathered from the breakout room sessions include the **importance of interconnecting activities, the compliance with both EU and national legal requirements** (including the new Restoration Law) and **the role of the private sector actors in providing added value to territories**. Further to that, suggestions were given to **avoid duplication** with activities already funded, to **support collaboration** between different projects, and to **foster the EUSAIR embedding process** to maximize the impact of joint efforts.

Finally, **a session was entirely dedicated to youth**, as involving this specific target group was a specific goal of this Consultation. There was a notable participation of people aged between 25 and 30 (almost 20% of the attendees): a promising result, showing their interest in getting involved in EU Programmes activities.

The cross-border consultation event was an important step in the preparation for the Programme's next Call for Proposals, which will be launched in the autumn.

More information about it will be available on the Programme websites in the coming weeks and months.

<https://www.italy-croatia.eu/2nd-call-for-proposals>

