

EUROPEAN UNION

EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND





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INTERREG VI-A
 Romania-Bulgaria
 Programme
 2021-2027



AGENDA

- 1. Overview of the INTERREG VI-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme for 2021-2027 (Interreg VI-A RO-BG)
- 2. New terms and concepts used in Interreg VI-A RO-BG
- Open discussion and brainstorming on specific topics (breakout sessions)
 - Expected projects under Policy Objective 2 (Environment)
 - Expected projects under Policy Objective 4 (Education)
 - Approach for implementing the Integrated Territorial Strategy
- 4. Plenary reporting of the breakout sessions results
- 5. Q&A from participants
- 6. Closing remarks by CIVITTA

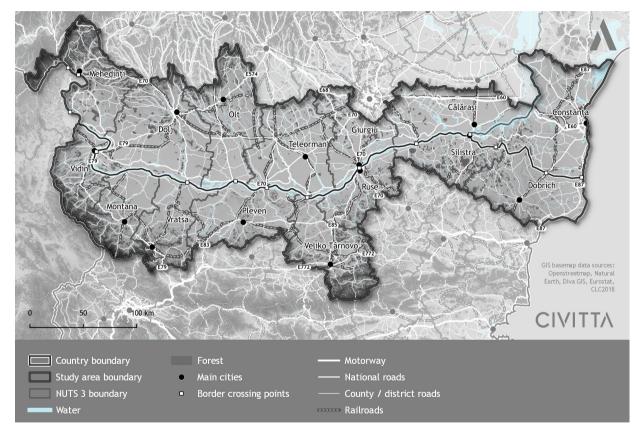


 Presentation of the INTERREG VI-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme for 2021-2027



\ GENERAL OVERVIEW

PROGRAMME AREA



MAIN FACTS

- **Surface:** 69,285 km2, 19.8% of the total area of the two countries
- Population: > 4 million inhabitants (1.35 million in Bulgaria and 2.85 million in Romania).
- **Border:** > 630 km length of which 470 km unfolds along the Danube river
- Territorial coverage: 7 counties in the Southern part of RO and 8 districts in the Norther part of BG

Romania: Mehedinți, Dolj, Olt, Teleorman, Giurgiu, Călărași and Constanța.

Bulgaria: Vidin, Vratsa, Montana, Veliko Tarnovo, Pleven, Ruse, Dobrich and Silistra.

No changes compared to the 2014-2020 period.



**** JOINT CHALLENGES AND INVESTMENT NEEDS

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE	BIODIVERSITY AND NATURAL HERITAGE	MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY	SOCIAL	
 Main joint challenges: environmental risks such as floods and landslides (in some areas) more frequent occurrence of extreme weather events climate change manifestations: average annual temperature increase of over 3.6 C major contribution of human activities to global greenhouse gas emissions in both countries Investment needs: increasing the capacity to adapt to climate change supporting prevention and awareness raising initiatives deploying innovative technologies and equipment to address the above challenges increasing rapid response capacity in case of natural disasters 	 Main joint challenges: habitat degradation, land-use conflicts, fragmentation and deforestation industrialization, urbanization and overexploitation water, air and soil pollution lack of consistent data across the territory (e.g. air pollution) Investment needs supporting the improvement and protection of biodiversity reducing all forms of pollution and supporting local potential for a greener economy finding solutions to stop the destruction of natural areas raising awareness and promoting successful solutions supporting green infrastructure to increase natural capital 	 Main joint challenges: low physical connectivity between the North and South regions across the Danube low density of border crossings reduces the mobility, hinders commercial flows and makes commuting difficult inland navigability suffers from bottlenecks (because of the shallow river depth, the capacity of ports, and lack of hinterland connections) Investment needs enhancing connectivity and mobility across the Danube improving the navigation conditions and safety on the Danube 	 Main joint challenges: high levels of illiteracy and poverty low participation to education, training and life-long learning language barriers limited collaboration across the border between authorities in the education sector Investment needs supporting joint educational activities (for curbing down illiteracy in the cross-border area) enhancing basic digital and languages skills (RO and BG) supporting joint training actions for employees improving the educational infrastructure and facilities 	 Main joint challenges: the area ranks among the least developed territories in the EU economic activity is affected by longstanding challenges related to productivity and specialisation insufficient cross-border cooperation tourism and heritage assets are not exploited to their potential SMEs face challenges regarding lower accessibility, high dependence on a limited number of sectors, and a immature innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem Investment needs an integrated approach to the region (back-boned by EuroVelo Route 6) Incresed support for the local SMEs
CIVITTA				Valdani Vicari & Associati ECONOMICS & POLICY

**** POLICY OBJECTIVES AND THE INTERREG SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

PRIORITY 1

A well connected region

SO 3.2. Developing and enhancing sustainable, climate resilient, intelligent and intermodal national, regional and local mobility, including improved access to TEN-T and cross-border mobility

PRIORITY 2 A greener region

SO 2.4. Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and , resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches

 SO 2.7. Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution

PRIORITY 3 An educated region

SO 3.2. Improving equal access to inclusive and quality services in education, training, and lifelong learning through developing accessible infrastructure, including by fostering resilience for distance and on-line education and training

PRIORITY 4 An integrated region

 SO 4.2. Fostering the integrated and inclusive social, economic and environmental local development, culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and security, in areas other than urban areas.



\ PRIORITY 1: A WELL CONNECTED REGION

SO 3.2 Developing and enhancing sustainable, climate resilient, intelligent and intermodal national, regional and local mobility, including improved access to TEN-T and cross-border mobility

Actions enhancing connectivity and mobility across the Danube

Actions improving the navigation conditions and safety on the Danube and Black Sea

- Reducing administrative burden and other types of bottlenecks: studies, analyses, solutions, tools.
- Developing and implementing joint co-ordinated strategies, tools and pilot applications to improve the navigation conditions on Danube and Black Sea (e.g, joint feasibility studies, engineering planning documents, morphological and hydrodynamic studies in establishing the sediment accumulation conditions etc.).
- Developing and implementing integrated measures to improve the navigation conditions for the common sector of the Danube and the Black Sea in the cross-border area (e.g. integrating the marking systems on Danube, equipment, signalling etc.).

STRATEGIC APPROACH In order to facilitate the programme implementation, this PO will be implemented through operations of strategic importance.

OUTPUT INDICATORS

- (RCO 84) Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects
- (RCO 87) Organisations cooperating across borders

RESULT INDICATORS

- (RCR 84) Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion
- (RCR 104) Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations



\ PRIORITY 2: A GREENER REGION

SO 2.4. Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention and , resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches

Actions in the field of risk prevention and resilience (non- exhaustive list)	 Improving risk prevention and intervention capacity in the cross-border region, by developing joint operational centres and joint intervention plans. Increasing the capacity of intervention and reaction through investments in equipment and vehicles, IT systems etc. Developing common training curricula and deployment of joint exercises, including the voluntary response services. Improving cross-border coordination and capacity for adaptation to climate change and its associated risks (floods, fires, hydrological droughts, pollution). Developing joint methodologies for risk assessment and risk monitoring in the cross-border area (risk of floods, including torrential floods, risk of drought). 	Actions related to climate change adaptation (non- exhaustive list)	 Supporting behavioural change, by raising awareness, building networks of communities and stakeholders and implementing educational activities on the negative effect of the climate change, especially among the local communities, tourists and forest owners. Developing joint methods and tools to improve the planning, decision-making and intervention capacity of relevant stakeholders, including public engagement, in the adaptation to climate change. Developing methods and tools to support adaptation planning and decision-making on climate change adaptation measures. Identifying, assessing and reducing the negative implications of climate change on socio-economic activities in the area. Implementing joint ecosystem-based measures for climate change adaptation, for example: Reforestation, conservation and forest protection measures, including implementing community-based forest monitoring systems related to climate change; Preventing and reversing desertification through integrated management of land and water; Supporting water and land management through green solutions.
		REGULAR CALLS These type of actions will be implemented through targeted/ regular calls for proposals and will be complementary to national	

implementation, these type of actions will be implemented throug strategic projects.

OUTPUT INDICATORS

- (RCO 84) Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects
- (RCO 87) Organisations cooperating across borders
- (PS01) Investments in new or upgraded disaster monitoring, preparedness, warning and response systems against risks

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RESULT INDICATORS

strategies and mainstream OPs in the two countries.

- (RCR 84) Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion
- (RCR 104) Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations
- (PSR01) Population benefiting from protection measures against risks



\ PRIORITY 2: A GREENER REGION

SO 2.7 Enhancing protection and preservation of nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure, including in urban areas, and reducing all forms of pollution

REGULAR CALLS | This SO will be implemented through targeted/ regular calls for proposals and is complementary to national strategies and mainstream OPs in the two countries.

OUTPUT INDICATORS

- (RCO 84) Pilot actions developed jointly and implemented in projects
- (RCO 87) Organisations cooperating across borders



RESULT INDICATORS

- (RCR 84) Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion
- (RCR 104) Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations



\ PRIORITY 3: AN EDUCATED REGION

SO 4.2. Improving equal access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and lifelong learning through developing accessible infrastructure, including by fostering resilience for distance and on-line education and training

Actions related	• Development of extensive and structured language-learning schemes, as a vector for building trust across the border, for creating the basis for future
to the systemic	exchanges and also as an employment-boosting factor.
challenges	• Development of joint cross-border education and training schemes - on-site in areas where accessibility is not a hindrance or online, using digitised learning
present on both	tools and methods, if physical presence is not an option.
sides of the	• Development of cross-border internship or placements and student exchange programmes for young graduates/students.
border, related	• Development of joint initiatives supporting adult education and learning (LLL), including facilitating learning mobility.
to education,	• Development of partnerships between secondary and higher education establishments and businesses, in order to improve the market orientation and the
training and learning.	quality aspect of education and offer young students the possibility to train and/or study on the other side of the border. Long-term exchanges are particularly envisaged.
	• Development of partnerships between education and training institutions and stakeholders, at all education levels (early to tertiary), to support mutual learning and exchange of practices between teachers and trainers on both sides of the border.
	• Development of joint initiatives and actions to support access to quality inclusive education and training, including LLL, to vulnerable or marginalized groups, including disabled persons, SEN ('Special educational needs' is a legal definition and refers to children with learning problems or disabilities that make it
	harder for them to learn than most children the same age), Roma ethnic group etc.
	 Joint measures for improving the link between the labour market and the education and training system.
	• Investments in the infrastructure of educational facilities for all education levels and educational activities (including remedial and after-school), technical and vocational training and LLL etc.; special attention will be given to promoting accessible and inclusive learning for all persons.
	 Investments in ensuring proper endowment for joint learning facilities with focus on digitalization: equipment, tools, etc., especially those that support the development of practical and/or digital skills and remote learning, such as computers, videoconferencing/distance education equipment VR learning etc.

REGULAR CALLS | This SO will be implemented through targeted/ regular calls for proposals and is complementary to national strategies and mainstream OPs in the two countries.

OUTPUT INDICATORS

- (RCO 85) Participations in joint training schemes
- (RCO 87) Organisations cooperating across borders

RESULT INDICATORS

- (RCR 81) Completion of joint training schemes
- (RCR 84) Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion



PRIORITY 4: AN INTEGRATED REGION

SO 5.2. Fostering the integrated and inclusive social, economic and environmental local development, culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and security. in areas other than urban areas.

Actions

tourism

activities,

connected

sectors and

industries

related to

Actions related to the developm ent of the **Eurovelo** 6 cycling

route

- Developing the necessary cycling infrastructure, including safety measures, first aid and service points, signalling etc. Priority will be given to projects ensuring connection to tourist attractions - cultural, natural heritage sites and to other means of transport. Connecting infrastructure is also considered, on a limited length, in duly justified cases.
- Ensuring road safety for the sections overlapping the Eurovelo Route, in view of complying with standards related to traffic signalling systems and/or additional development of infrastructure dedicated to cyclists and pedestrians, such as tunnels, bypasses, bridges, overpasses and walkways and protected cycling paths.
 - Ensuring effective connections with and access to and from other means of transport. including ports and rail stations – adapting infrastructure
 - Ensuring availability of public transportation in connection to the cycling route
 - Ensuring appropriate services along the Eurovelo Route, such as: accommodation, food, drink and rest and recreation areas, services including Bike Pit-Stops, information, bookable offers, other assistance
 - Ensuring communication and information, online and along the route, including mobile/e-applications for cyclists, etc.
 - · Soft measures, such as promotion campaigns for green and non-motorized transport and/or advertising for the EuroVelo 6 route

- Investments in economic competitiveness of local businesses including, but not limited to: construction/ modernisation of productive facilities; supply of relevant equipment; adoption of digital technologies etc. supporting
 - Set-up of natural sites for economic use: trails / paths, waste disposal, security, signalling, camp sites, other open-air attractions etc.
 - Supporting sites with tourist potential: construction, modernization/restauration of castles, fortresses, churches, monasteries, palaces, archaeological sites, private/public museums, libraries, art collections/galleries, exhibitions places, wineries, agro-farms, adventure parks, open air attractions etc.
 - Creating common historical, natural and cultural heritage products and services, expanding and improving services, targeting new markets and creating jobs in the crossborder area, including by setting up on-site and on-line shops, especially for traditional / local products.
 - Support for local and regional actors to valorise potentially valuable touristic objectives /sites / experiences, including by creating sustainable tourism trails, or developing quality labels for excellence in services, promoting and marketing the touristic offer etc. taking advantage of social media trends - such as "insta-tourism", is also encouraged.
 - Training of staff, particularly digital skills.

- Actions for supporting the implementation of the integrated territorial strategy
- Developing the stakeholders' capacity to implement the integrated territorial strategy:
- Support for implementing and monitoring the integrated territorial strategy.

INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (ITS) The activities will be implemented through an ITS. Projects must demonstrate the contribution to the ITS, as well as to the development of the Eurovelo 6 route and the economic sectors present in the cross-border area. They also need to have a clear cross-border dimension.

OUTPUT INDICATORS

- (RCO 58) Dedicated cycling infrastructure supported
- (RCO 77) Number of cultural and tourism sites supported
- (RCO 87) Organisations cooperating across borders

RESULT INDICATORS

- (RCR 77) Visitors of cultural and tourism sites supported
- (RCR 64) Annual users of dedicated cycling infrastructure
- (RCR 84) Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion (related to SMEs)





New terms and concepts used in Interreg VI-A Romania-Bulgaria

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\ TERMINOLOGY AND CONCEPTS: INTERREG RO – BG PROGRAMME 2021-2027

Concept	Clarification
ecosystem- based approach	The ecosystem-based approach is central to implementing actions under PO2. Ecosystem-based approaches focus on ecosystem restoration and enhancement of ecosystem services to protect society against negative impacts of climate change. This means that nature-based solutions will be preferred, wherever possible, above hard or grey infrastructure and traditional technical solutions. This includes flood plains, ecosystem restoration, afforestation, natural water retention measures and other green (or blue) infrastructure measures that have a direct benefit for climate change adaptation and risk prevention. These are typically stakeholder-driven and tailored to regional conditions. More about this topic: <u>Ecosystem-based approaches — Climate-ADAPT (europa.eu)</u>
	Project examples – Reducing the vulnerability of rural settlements to the impacts of climate change. Can include actions such as: conservation agriculture, soil moisture conservation, diversification of crops etc.
green infrastructure	Strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services such as water purification, air quality, space for recreation and climate mitigation and adaptation. This network of green (land) and blue (water) spaces can improve environmental conditions and therefore citizens' health and quality of life. Green infrastructure can also be developed to improve the wellbeing of urban residents (recreation and leisure amenities), conserve wildlife habitat, carbon storage
	More about this topic: <u>EUR-Lex - 52013DC0249 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)</u>
	Project example – The improvement of the urban environment by increasing and enhancing greenspace in towns and cities, especially close to areas of multiple deprivation.
climate change adaptation	Adapting to climate change means taking action to prepare for and adjust to both the current effects of climate change and the predicted impacts in the future. Interventions are expected to increase the ability to adapt to climate change and to support preventive actions while raising awareness towards climate change objectives as comprised within the European Green Deal. Projects aiming to evaluate the vulnerability of settlements to different categories of hazards are to be envisaged, along with interventions introducing new innovative technologies and equipment designed to address the aforementioned hazards.
	More about this topic: Adaptation to climate change (europa.eu)
	Project example – The enhancement of cities resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change (such as intense rainfall and heat) through tree planting, green roofs and rainwater retention facilities.



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\ TERMINOLOGY AND CONCEPTS: INTERREG RO – BG PROGRAMME 2021-2027

Concept	Clarification
pilot actions	The scope of a jointly developed pilot action could be to test procedures , new instruments , tools , experimentation , or the transfer of practices . The pilot action needs not only to be developed , but also completely implemented within the project before the end of the project. Jointly developed pilot action implies the involvement of organizations from both participating countries in its implementation. They can refer to transferring of a good practice found in another region. A pilot action should:
	 Test, evaluate or demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of new approaches, procedures, instruments or tools. If a project foresees several pilot actions, these should differ from each other in order to maximize mutual learning. Be limited in its scope, i.e. in its location, duration, scale, etc. Be jointly evaluated in terms of results as well as jointly exploited and transferred, for example, to other entities or territories.
	Project example – Implementing different solutions to support climate change/biodiversity; Implementing an innovative online learning platform for supporting bi-lingualism
joint training scheme	A joint training scheme requires building knowledge in a certain topic and involves the training of participants over several sessions. A one-off meeting/event/internal session where information is disseminated will not be considered as a training scheme. The actions are considered joint if they are prepared and implemented by partners on both sides of the border and are available for target groups from both Romania and Bulgaria.
	Project example – The implementation of a cross-border knowledge building programme consisting in trainings in in the field of tourism/culture.



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CIVITTA International info@civitta.com +372 735 2802 www.civitta.com CIVITTA Estonia info.ee@civitta.com +372 646 448 8 www.civitta.ee

CIVITTA Lithuania info.lt@civitta.com

+370 685 266 80 www.civitta.lt CIVITTA Latvia

Info.lv@civitta.com +371 277 055 85 www.civitta.lv

CIVITTA Finland Info.fi@civitta.com +358 505 261 694 www.civitta.fi

CIVITTA Denmark Info.dk@civitta.com +452 762 80 83 www.civitta.com

CIVITTA Slovakia info.sk@civitta.com +421 901 700 574 www.civitta.sk

CIVITTA Poland Info.pl@civitta.com +48 690 001 286 www.civitta.pl

CIVITTA Ukraine Info.ua@civitta.com +380 442 270 140 www.civitta.com.ua

CIVITTA Belarus Info.by@civitta.com +375 296 018 517 www.civitta.by CIVITTA Romania Info.ro@civitta.com +403 180 535 88 www.civitta.ro

CIVITTA Moldova Info.md@civitta.com +373 797 550 99 www.civitta.md

CIVITTA Russia

Info.ru@civitta.com +7401 253 074 8 www.civitta.ru

CIVITTA Armenia Info.am@civitta.com +374 10 546 434 www.civitta.com

CIVITTA Serbia Info.rs@civitta.com +381 11 2435 489 www.civitta.rs

CIVITTA Bulgaria Info.bg@civitta.com +359 884 076 576 www.civitta.bg

CIVITTA North Macedonia info.mk@civitta.com +389 75 230 439 www.civitta.com

CIVITTA Kosovo info.ks@civitta.com +383 493 380 55 www.civitta.com

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU!