

Annex:

**Citizen's Summary – AIR 2021
for Interreg V-A Romania-Hungary Programme**

CITIZENS' SUMMARY

of the Annual Implementation Report for 2021 regarding the
Interreg V-A Romania-Hungary Programme

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

The Interreg V-A Romania-Hungary Programme aims at financing joint Romanian - Hungarian projects, which address needs that lie on both sides of the border, and that require a common approach and innovative solutions, aiming at facilitating the integrated, sustainable development of the eligible area.

The Programme comes as a continuation of cross-border cooperation programmes implemented previously in the region and disposes of a total budget of approx. 232 million EUR, out of which 189 million EUR represent non-refundable support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The eligible programme area comprises the counties of Bihor, Satu Mare, Arad and Timiș, on the Romanian side of the border and the counties of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Hajdú-Bihar, Békés and Csongrád-Csanád on the Hungarian side.

Approved by the European Commission on December 9, 2015 the Programme supports activities within the following 6 thematic priority axes (PAs):

- PA 1: Joint protection and efficient use of common values and resources (Cooperating on common values and resources)
- PA 2: Improve sustainable cross-border mobility and remove bottlenecks (Cooperating on accessibility)
- PA 3: Improve employment and promote cross-border labour mobility (Cooperating on employment)
- PA 4: Improving health-care services (Cooperating on health-care and prevention)
- PA 5: Improve risk-prevention and disaster management (Cooperating on risk prevention and disaster management)
- PA 6: Promoting cross-border cooperation between institutions and citizens (Cooperation of institutions and communities)

In general, beneficiaries of the projects funded by the Programme can be public organisations (national, regional or local authorities), organisations that fall under the public law, non-profit organisations (e.g. associations), European Groupings for Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs) and others.

Funding was offered in the framework of Open and Restricted Calls for proposals. The minimum requirement for a project partnership was the participation of 2 financing partners, one from Romania and one from Hungary. All the other eligibility criteria were detailed in the Guide for Applicants, specific for each Call.

The Programme is managed and supported by a series of different bodies, responsible to ensure that funds are spent in the best possible way. The main responsibility for Programme implementation belongs to the Managing Authority (Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration in Romania), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade acting as National Authority from Hungary and the

Monitoring Committee, a joint body consisting of local and central stakeholders, as well as representatives of civil society from both Member States.

For more information about the Programme, please consult its official [website](#). You can also find us on [Facebook](#).

AIR 2021 | CITIZEN'S SUMMARY

The Annual Implementation Report (AIR) of the Interreg V-A Romania-Hungary Programme was prepared according to Article 50 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and was submitted to the European Commission for approval in May 2021. The current document provides a brief summary of the activities that were undertaken in relation to the Programme implementation in the previous year, 2021.

The AIR contains information on the following main topics: the implementation of the Programme with the most important highlight of the year, information and communication measures undertaken, as well as the progress made in shaping the future Interreg Programme between Romania and Hungary.

2021, the 6th year of the Programme implementation, was mainly about projects implementation. Despite of a difficult year, as a result of preventive or remedial measures taken, the decommitment target of the Programme for 2021 has been successfully achieved.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR 2021

- ✓ **8 requests for payment submitted** to the European Commission in 2021, **worth 32.72 million EUR, ERDF**;
- ✓ **A percentage of 17.26% has been added to the absorption rate, thus amounting to 42.52% of the ERDF allocation of the Programme achieved** by the end of 2021;
- ✓ **19 projects finalized** in 2021 (out of the 100 projects contracted), **48 projects** in the **implementation** stage;
- ✓ **100 people attended to the Annual conference of the Programme**, on the topic of capitalization of results, on November 2021;

- ✓ **51 trainings, consultations and meetings with beneficiaries** were held online throughout the year, on various topics;
- ✓ **7 Newsflash editions** sent to the mailing list (1590 contacts) and **2 Press releases**, prepared and published on the Programme website;
- ✓ **1 online contest on Facebook**, to celebrate the 10th European Cooperation Day as well as the 20th edition of European Mobility Week, the annual theme of which in 2021 was „Safe and Healthy with Sustainable Mobility”, inviting people to learn more about our Programme and to see how our projects are improving the quality of life of nearly 4 million residents of the border area;

- ✓ **The website (www.interreg-rohu.eu)** registered **54,453 visitors accessed it, with 310,092 hits**;
- ✓ **5 issues of ROHU Magazine** (paper based and electronic publication) published, inviting the readers to discover the achievements of Romanian-Hungarian cooperation;
- ✓ **40 online technical meetings** held to discuss the tasks at hand, such as preparatory meetings for events, programming 2020+ meetings, meetings on the topic of State Aid or monitoring and reaching decommitment, IP coordination meetings, technical preparatory meetings with different programme bodies, on various subjects and documents under preparation;
- ✓ **1 Monitoring Committee Meeting** held **online**, on the 2nd of August 2021;
- ✓ **39 Monitoring Committee Written procedures** launched and **40 Decisions** issued.

2021 – PROGRAMMING PROCESS FOR THE 2021-2027 PERIOD

During the 2021-2027 programming period, the future Interreg Programme between Romania and Hungary will continue to support cross border cooperation between the two neighbouring countries.

Important steps ahead have been made in the preparation of future Programme, despite the difficult pandemic context. Thus, in the first trimester of 2021, the *Territorial Analysis (TA)* was approved by the Programming Committee (PC). Also, online interviews with central level institutions and relevant stakeholders with regional development related competences and experience in managing ESIF/national programmes were organized in January-February.

The *Territorial Impact Assessment* and the *Programme Strategy and Intervention Logics* were revised following consultations with national, regional and local government actors (ministries, counties and cities administrations) in both countries, including the PC members. These documents were endorsed/approved within the 2nd PC meeting organized in June, when also the Policy Objectives 2 (A greener Europe) and 4 (A more social Europe) and Interreg Specific Objective 1 (A better Interreg Governance) have been selected for financing, and Sections 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 of the Interreg Programme have been approved.

As transparency and communication are highly important for ensuring the cooperation with and involvement of relevant stakeholders in the process of drafting the future Programme, an online survey, widely spread to former, actual, and potential beneficiaries/applicants was conducted in August-September. Besides aiming to identify project ideas and partnerships, the purpose of the

survey was to gather detailed information for defining the performance framework of the new Programme.

The *Draft-Programme-1-integrated-version*, including already agreed aspects (either as part of approved documents, or provided for in the new EU Regulations), was approved through Written Procedure No 5, in September.

The *Operations of Strategic Importance (OSIs) Concept and Methodology*, part of the programming exercise, elaborated by the TA programming team, in order to fill in Appendix 3 to the Interreg Programme (List of planned operations of strategic importance, with a timetable), was approved through in December.

In parallel, the SEA procedure was launched in both Member States.

To sum up, in 2021, 2 PC meetings have been organized, in June and September. Altogether, 7 Written Procedures of the PC were conducted, for the approval of programming documents, out of which 5 were finalized through 7 PC Decisions.