

Carpathian Convention COP7

Progress Report - CSTP

WG Tourism Co-Chair – Mr. Dawid Lasek

Carpathian Convention COP7
11-13 October 2023, Belgrade, Serbia



CARPATHIAN EUROREGION 2023 – 30 years of cooperation in Central Europe



- The largest in Europe
- 156 000 km²
- approximately 15 million inhabitants
- 5 countries: PL/UA/RO/SK/HU
- It was established on 14th of February 1993

Polish side:

- Legal status - association, transformed into a cross-border legal entity
- Members – local government units (72),
- About 1000 partner institutions
- Institution implementing the INTERREG Programme
- Organisation funding over 500 CBC projects
- Owner of the Carpathian Brand CARPATHIA
- Member of AEBR
- Carpathian Horizon 2030 Strategy
- Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform of the Carpathian Convention



DECISION COP6/15 Proposed priorities until the end of 2023

1. Institution building

- Revitalization of the cooperation system within the CSTP.
- Professional, complete CSTP Cooperation System is needed, able to act autonomously and coordinate in real time rather than in project cycles.
- The task of reactivation of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Sustainable Tourism, also falls under this thematic category.

2. Carpathian Tourism Observatory

- Creation of the Carpathian Center and Information System for the tourism sector – professional institution managing information necessary for the coordination of sustainable tourism development in the Carpathians.
- It conducts services, analyses and manages information in terms of a sustainable tourism client (tourist), as well as an institutional customer.

3. Carpathian Nature and Culture

- Creation of a product offer based on the natural and cultural resources within the Carpathian Brand aimed at "premium" customers.
- On foreign markets and internal market (CC area) there are offers, packages of inbound tourism to the Carpathian Region based on cultural and natural resources together with functioning professional business structures responsible for their development with due consideration of principles of sustainable tourism development.

Report by CSTP Poland (ACEP)

Cooperation with Slovakia (Priority area I)

- Numerous meetings with Slovak partners – LAUs and NGOs conducted despite COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, during which the plan of work within the CSTP was discussed and the assumptions of the cooperation system were presented.
- Memorandum of cooperation with the Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia - an organization which unites 90% of territorial self-governments of the Slovak Republic was signed. One of the agreement points is the promotion of the Carpathian Convention and cooperation with the CSTP.
- A meeting in the Ministry of Construction and Transport of the Slovak Republic focused on the prospect for establishing the CSTP Slovakia Center.

Cross-border Functional Areas (Priority area I)

- From November 2021 teams responsible for the preparation of the Strategy will be established, on the basis of which cross-border Integrated Territorial Investments will be designed.
- In October 2021 during the meeting with the heads of local authorities another CBFA with cross-border character - Spiš - was initiated. It is expected that due to the specificity of cross-border areas in the Carpathian Region, sustainable tourism will be the main development profile in the CBFA.

Report by CSTP Poland (ACEP)

XXX Economic Forum in Karpacz (Priority area I)

- CSTP topics were presented during the XXX Economic Forum in Karpacz, where, on 9 September 2021 the ACEP was a moderator of the Panel entitled: "*New climate policy in the Carpathian Mountains - how to effectively protect the natural heritage in the Carpathian Mountains. The potential of national parks*".

Cooperation with the World Tourism Organization (Priority area I)

- 15-16.10.2021 - Meeting with Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary General of the UN World Tourism Organization in Povazska Bystrica, concerned cooperation with the WTO in the field of promotion of the Carpathian Brand and activities to support sustainable tourism in mountain areas.
- In this context, the idea to build cooperative solutions between the Carpathian Mountains and the Caucasus regions was born.

Small Project Fund INTERREG PL-SK 2021-2028 (Priority area I)

- 23.10. 2021 the Polish-Slovak Working Group of on the INTERREG PL-SK 2021-2027 Programme made a decision related to the implementation of small project funds on the Polish-Slovak border. On the basis of this decision, the ACEP will be responsible for managing the fund in the priority 4.6 "*Increasing the role of culture and tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation*".
- The first call for proposals is planned by the ACEP in the second half of 2022.



Report by CSTP Poland (ACEP)

Cooperation with higher education institutions in the Carpathian region (Priority area I)

- Creation of an integrated cooperation system within the CSTP with the involvement of higher education institutions in the Carpathian region is a key element of ACEP. The intellectual potential, as well as scientific and research facilities of these entities will constitute the success of the CSTP mission.
- Carpathian Euroregion established contact with several academic centers in the Carpathian region like Technical University of Košice and Košice University.

Carpathian Tourism Observatory (Priority area II)

- The establishment of the Carpathian Tourism Observatory has a strategic importance. In this respect the ACEP cooperates with the Institute of Tourism/ HES-SO Valais -Wallis in Sierre, Switzerland, which developed and implemented the Territorial Model of Tourism Observatory (<https://www.tourobs.ch>).
- In Poland, the main partners are the Statistical Office in Rzeszow and the Cracow University of Technology.

Report by CSTP Poland (ACEP)

Opening the contact point of the Carpathian Euroregion and the Slovak office of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform of the Carpathian Convention

- CSTP and Carpathian Euroregion contact point was open on 17.05.2023 at the headquarters of the Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia. The event took place with the participation of the CC and Slovak Ministries of Environment, Transport and Construction as well as Investment, Regional Development and Informatization.

New Trends for Carpathians

- Organization of the first flagship event of the Euroregion „*New Trends for Carpathians*” during the 32nd Economic Forum planned for September 5-7, 2023 in Karpacz.
- The Economic Forum is the largest series of political and economic conferences in Central and Eastern Europe. The motto of this year's edition of the Forum is "*New values of the Old Continent - Europe on the verge of change*".

Caucasus Mountain Forum in Georgia

- Representing the WG Tourism/CC at a meeting in Georgia as part of the Caucasus Mountain Forum. Forum will be organised on July 4-6, 2023 in Kutaisi, Georgia .



Report by CSTP Poland (ACEP) - projects

Central Mountains

In progress

**"Between Fjords and the Carpathians" –
the platform for the exchange of
experiences in tourism education**

In progress

**Small Project Fund INTERREG PL-SK
2021-2027**

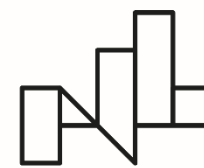
In progress
First call planned in summer

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Central Mountains

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Report by CSTP Poland (ACEP) - projects

Other projects



Ministry of
Sport and Tourism



AgroCarpathia

In progress

Carpathian tourist communes - analysis of resources and potential

In progress



Central Mountains

"From the Alps to the Carpathians - strengthening governance models for sustainable development of mountain areas in Central Europe"

Implementation: 01.04.2023 to 31.03.2026

11 Partners from Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, Austria, Czech Republic, Italy

Source of funding: ERDF, Interreg Central Europe 2021-2027 Programme (ACEP own contribution from: National Institute of Liberty - Civil Society Development Center from the funds of the Civic Organization Development Programme for the years 2018-2030)

- Rzeszów County (Poland) - Lead Partner
- Association of The Carpathian Euroregion Poland
- Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia (Slovakia)
- Carpathian Foundation (Hungary)
- Association of Regional Brands (Czech Republic)
- Foundation of Landscape Protection (Poland)
- Eurac research (Italy)
- Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia (Italy)
- EGTC Alpine Pearls (Austria)
- CIPRA International Lab (Austria)
- Brasov County (Romania).

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Central Mountains

<https://www.interreg-central.eu/projects/central-mountains/>



Central Mountains

WHY:

Strengthening and improving governance models in the Alpine-Carpathian mountain areas of Central Europe, with particular emphasis on cross-border and transnational cooperation structures for solving common challenges for the sustainable development of mountain regions. As a result, cross-border areas and communities in the Alps and Carpathians will benefit from strengthened structures for long-term cooperation using a modern approach (participatory - involving young people, multi-level, multi-sector).

HOW:

- Capitalization of results and initiatives from previous projects by preparing reports.
- Creation of a joint Alpine-Carpathian strategy for sustainable, community-led development of mountain areas in Central Europe and solutions for use in mountain areas in Central Europe and beyond.
- Preparation of 4 action plans for selected areas: for the development of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians, the future EGTC Alpine Pearls, the involvement of citizens in decision-making processes in the Carpathians and in the area of public-private cooperation in the Sudetes for regional products and tourist services.
- Testing renewed transnational governance structures in Alpine and Carpathian mountain areas: Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform, new Alpine EGTC structure and Carpathian Civil Society Platform.
- Creation and testing of new Cross-Border Functional Areas (CBFA) in the mountain areas of the Carpathians and Sudetes (3 pilot actions), including the creation of a mobile application.
- Study visits to the Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary and Slovakia.
- Road Show with public events in the Alps, Carpathians and Sudetes.



Between Fjords and the Carpathians - the platform for the exchange of experiences in tourism education

Implementation : 01.02.2022 to 31.01.2024

3 Partners: ACEP, Bronislaw Markiewicz State Higher School of Technology and Economics in Jaroslaw (Poland), Nord University (Norway)

Source of funding: "Education" programme under the EEA- Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway funds in Poland

- The project aims to increase the quality of higher and secondary vocational education in tourism in the border area of the Polish part of the Carpathian Euroregion, using Norwegian models.
- The activities of the project will ensure raising the level of knowledge both of students (thanks to new curricula at the professional level) and people working in the tourism sector (participation in quality circles).
- The project will also influence the strengthening of professional competences of the region's tourism sector staff and managers, as well as will ensure the exchange of good practices. Innovative elements of the project will include professional education programs in tourism on the basis of Norwegian models and ensuring the implementation of "Carpathia" brand strategy.



Small Project Fund within INTERREG Poland-Slovakia 2021-2027 Programme

Project has started in March - first call for small projects is planned in July/August

Programme priority axis: Creative and touristically attractive borderland

→ **Specific objective:** Strengthening the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovations.

AIM:

- supporting sustainable tourism through an integrated and comprehensive approach - taking into account the well-being of residents and tourists, respecting the natural and cultural environment, ensuring socio-economic development,
- exploiting the full potential of culture and sustainable tourism for economic recovery, social inclusion and social innovation,
- supporting cooperation between public institutions and enterprises aimed at more effective provision of high-quality services in areas with high tourist potential.



AgroCarpathia

Implementation: 01.05.2023 to 31.12.2023

Source of funding: Ministry of Sport and Tourism of Poland

AIM: implementation of activities that will contribute to the development of rural tourism in the Polish part of the Carpathians (the Carpathian areas of the following voivodships: Podkarpackie, Małopolskie and Śląskie).

ACTIVITIES:

- conducting an audit of rural accommodation facilities in the Carpathians in Poland and classification in 2 categories:
 - ✓ facilities based on the cultural resources of the former inhabitants of the Carpathians (cultural heritage),
 - ✓ facilities promoting the region's tourist products in a sustainable way;
- development of a certification system for agritourism facilities (identified during the audit), which operate in line with the Carpathia Brand;
- developing a system of cooperation between rural accommodation facilities and entities offering traditional, local or regional products or services;
- study visit of people representing entities related to the tourism of the Carpathians to another region of Poland popular with tourists, with a well-developed system of functioning of rural tourism/agritourism, in order to exchange knowledge, experience and good practices in rural tourism and agritourism;
- raising the staff competences by developing a handbook for educating rural tourism staff based on the Carpathia brand, as well as on experiences, mechanisms and good practices from other European countries.



Carpathian tourist communes – analysis of resources and potential

Carpathian Tourism Observatory

Implementation: 01.05.2023 to 31.12.2023

Source of funding: Ministry of Sport and Tourism of Poland

AIM: Conducting research of the tourism market together with a qualitative and quantitative analysis of tourist traffic in the area of the Komańcza Commune in Podkarpackie Voivodship. As a result of the research, a quantitative and qualitative database will be developed to support the decision-making process at the local and regional level.

ACTIVITIES:

- thorough analysis by experienced experts and development of recommendations for use by local, regional or national authorities and entities involved in the development and promotion of tourism in the region;
- conducting research on the tourism market and developing a comprehensive database - a tool for interpreting research results - for the selected area, i.e. the Komańcza commune.

The developed document may also become the basis for other local governments in Poland, indicating the direction of tourism development in their region, as well as for national authorities, e.g. in the context of large investment projects or planning development policies/strategies for the coming years.