Sustainable transport solutions for the Adriatic

A new cross-border collaboration on the Adriatic coast is set to tackle the environmental pressures placed on this world-renowned tourist region

A low level of integration among different modes of transport, and insufficient investment in sustainable, low-carbon transport technology is an area of real concern across many Adriatic regions. The Adriatic coast is renowned as one of Europe's most popular tourist destinations, with travellers widely relying on ferries and planes. Yet there is a lack of streamlined connections to other modes of transport, which causes serious traffic congestion during the summer months, not to mention neglecting the environmental concerns of the Adriatic region.

In order to tackle these problems, ADRIGREEN (an Italian/Croatian cross-border project) was started on 1 January 2019. With a remit to enhance the processing of passengers and to improve the environmental performances of the regional maritime and aviation system, the project is part of Interreg V-A Italy-Croatia CBC Programme, and was allocated an overall budget of €2.1m.

The project has brought together some of the main Croatian and Italian ports and airports, to cooperate in ensuring greener facilities, delivering innovative framework to adopt new sustainable models for travel.

SUSTAINABLY DRIVEN
Electric cars, scooters and bicycles at Dubrovnik port; solar power in Pescara; electric tugs and tractors at Rimini

Project activities and main outcomes

- The publication of an international research on solutions both to reduce airports/ports environmental impact and to improve intermodal and multimodal connections.

● Detailed environmental assessment of participating ports/airports.
● The creation of two Joint Action Plans for intermodal passenger transportation to/from ports and airports with a view to sustainability solutions.
● Testing of eight smart solutions in Pula, Dubrovnik, Rimini, Ancona, Pescara and Bari.
● Delivering a cross-border technical manual with all identified/tested solutions, with guides how to successfully replicate such actions.
● Establishment of the first Cross-border Forum of Green and Intermodal Ports and Airports to exchange knowledge with local authorities and institutions operating the transport.
● Four international training sessions for technicians and operators on how to adopt the solutions.

The consortium of nine partners is well-balanced in terms of involvement of ports and airports. It is led by Pula Airport (Croatia) and also includes: Dubrovnik Airport, Dubrovnik Port Authority and Pula Port Authority from Croatia and Rimini Airport, Abruzzo Airport, Airports of Apulia, Central Adriatic Ports Authority from Italy; scientific guidance is provided by the University Polytechnic of Marche.

"Following recommendations on what the ADRIGREEN project should deliver, all partners have identified the major goals for the ensuing, long-term period. All partners have a clear understanding of our sustainability objectives, and have provided recommendations for the improvement of environmental management across all different environment aspects," says Nina Vojnić Žagar, CEO/Project Team Leader at Pula Airport.

'All partners have a clear understanding of our sustainability objectives'

Nina Vojnic Žagar, CEO/Project Team Leader, Pula Airport

The projects are mainly geared towards improving the fleets of vehicles. Improvements need to be made in terms of maintenance costs, energy consumption and the reduction of air pollution within the airport and port areas.

The measures included the purchase of:
● Electric airport tractor/tug (Airports of Apulia).
● Electric cars and bikes (Dubrovnik Port Authority).
● Technology to encourage passengers to public transport to reach the port of Ancona (Central Adriatic Ports Authority).
● Electric vehicles, electric scooters and bicycles to be used by airport staff (Dubrovnik Airport).

Other environmental evaluation reports and assessments, feasibility and carbon footprint studies have been made in order to adopt new, sustainable models, and reduce the environmental impact of Adriatic transport hubs. Developing a culture that adheres to CSR and ESG principles is also being developed.

The project will also generate one of the first studies on the optimisation of multimodal transportation approaches and related changes in airborne pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions. And also, new scenarios deriving from SARS-Covid2 pandemic, and possible effects on Adriatic ports and airports. The study is conducted by the University Polytechnic of Marche, whose primary role in the ADRIGREEN project is to process the highest possible volumes of data and perform a complete benchmarking of all environmental indicators.

Further information
www.italy-croatia.eu/web/adrigreen