

EUSAIR Action Plan Revision: 2022 Public Consultation Report

September 2022



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1 Introduction

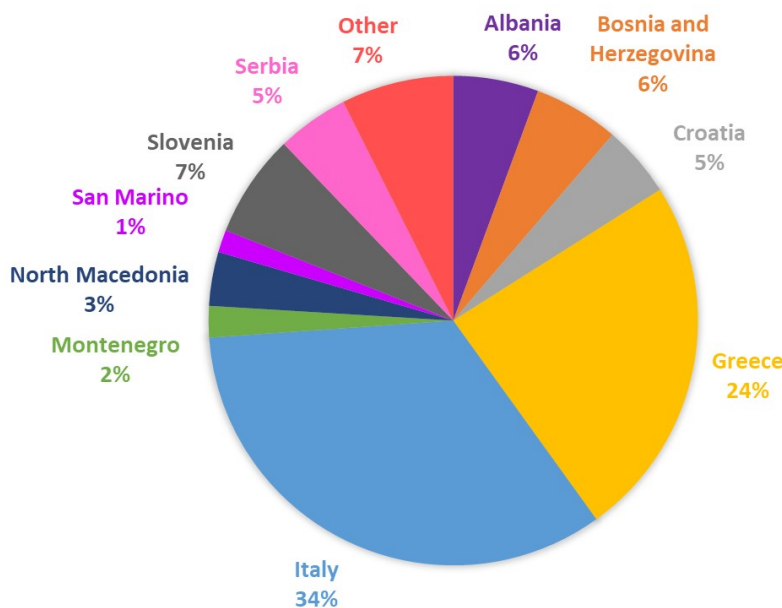
Public consultation on EUSAIR Action Plan revision in 2022 was organized as part of a larger consultation process to gather inputs for the Action Plan revision internally from EUSAIR key implementing bodies and externally from the interested general public with a special focus on youth and EUSAIR key stakeholders. This report summarises results of the public consultation launched at the 2022 EUSAIR Forum in Tirana. The public consultation was opened to all interested members of the public and lasted from 16th May till 30th June 2022. The aim of this public consultation was to gather preliminary inputs that would be considered by the EUSAIR key implementing bodies during the revision process. No draft version of the Action Plan existed at that point, therefore the questions were very open and general. If possible, there will be further opportunity for stakeholders to provide their feedback, once the draft Action Plan will be available (presumably at 2023 Forum).

2 Response statistics

The survey was entered 2175 times during 26.5.2022 and 30.6.2022. **A total number of 342 contributions was received.** The survey was fully completed 208 times and partially completed 134.

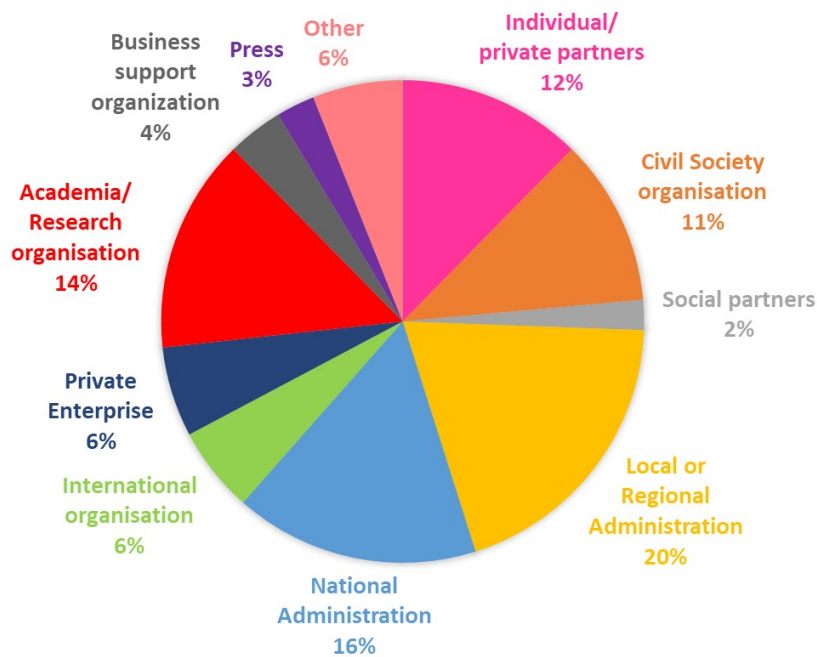
2.1 Country of origin

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2.2 Type of organization

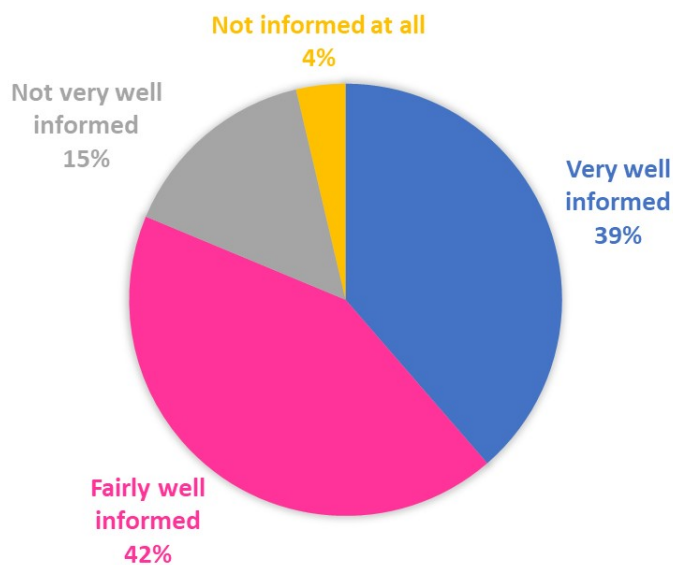
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3 Familiarity with Macro-regional strategies and with EUSAIR

3.1 How well do you know EUSAIR?

Valid:326



4.4 Summary of answers to question: What do you suggest should be improved in the 10 countries of the Adriatic-Ionian region?

The potential improvements cover a wide range of suggestions, sometimes short and many times elaborated in long descriptions. There was a significant number of quite detailed answers, in total 195 answers. The summary strives to give the main points, grouping the information from so many answers. The suggested improvements are summarized under four titles, the opportunities are subdivided under general and concrete topic suggestions, other titles group the suggestions on governance and cooperation. All suggestions, even if not included in this summary, will be carefully examined and considered.

OPPORTUNITIES/TOPICS - GENERAL FRAMEWORK	OPPORTUNITIES/TOPICS - CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace and security in the entire area is a key priority • The implementation of the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development is necessary • Ownership and commitment to the MRS, including the implementation of flagship projects (other than via Interreg programmes) • Streamlining of topics, going even narrower than Flagship projects (selecting two common issues, focusing on enlargement) • Not focus only on urban areas but rather involve equally the rural/peripheral areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More innovation, research and development (quadruple-helix approach) • Awareness rising on sustainability (e.g. of fisheries), green and digital transition • Joint work on Smart specialization topics • Work on Skills (e.g. blue skills for youth), student and labor mobility • Maritime topics (blue economy and blue innovation) • Adding a Pillar or topic on agriculture and/or agro-ecology (!present under Pillar 3) and sustainable rural development based on “farm-to-fork” strategy should become more important • Adding a focus on eco-sustainable tourism (eco-friendly, woofing), diversified offer, responsible management, DMO • Valorization of cultural heritage needs to be promoted (synergies, collaborations) • Sustainable mobility (walking, cycling, train connections and use) and e-mobility to be added • Investments in infrastructure (for the benefit of all the countries, removing bottlenecks) • Zero-waste approach across Pillars, reducing plastic, waste treatment • Protecting biodiversity and land-based habitats (wildlife corridors) and, continue work on maritime spatial planning
GOVERNANCE	COOPERATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Straighten multi-level governance and coordination between national and regional levels • Robust coordination on cross-cutting issues is necessary • Dialogue with and among IPA countries and enlargement process • Improve cooperation with EUSALP and EUSDR • Pillar coordinators shall be more active • Improve cooperation within and between TSGs, Pillar Coordinators, FP, GB, other relevant stakeholders (in parallel ensure continuity of staff, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support capacity building and voluntarism, creating ties, involving more (and new) organizations • Capacity building and early access to cohesion policy are needed • Give voice and role to the civil society (participatory processes and cooperation among different governance levels) • Involvement of policy makers from regions and municipalities, inter-regional cooperation could be improved as well • Cooperation between schools and hospitals

<p>grant training, administrative support)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve the functioning and use of the stakeholder platform • To carry out any MRS consultations on the stakeholder platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People-to-people links, joint ventures are needed • Capitalization of results of the Interreg Adrion projects (or at least interaction with those) • More actions for youth are needed (rights, environment) and potentially creating youth exchange programmes • Involvement of schools (high-school), universities, NGOs • Awareness rising for the private sector (e.g. to avoid pollution of air and water, generally and esp. in protected areas), involvement of SMEs • Tackling gender equality and social topics • More involvement of social and economic partners • Dialogue between governing and academic structures is necessary
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4.5 Summary of answers to questions: Which projects and processes would you personally like to be promoted in the Adriatic-Ionian region? Do you have any other ideas you personally are ready to launch?

The projects and processes to be promoted cover a wide range of suggestions, in total 185 answers. The projects/ideas/suggestions are summarized under the following titles: sustainable tourism, youth involvement, culture related topics, governance, environment, innovation, digitalization, economy, energy, connectivity and infrastructure. There were many more valuable suggestions, which will be carefully considered. The answers to question on any other ideas are mainly repeating what was already suggested, therefore they are only added in case they bring a new aspect. There were 95 answers to this question.

<p>SUSTAINABLE TOURISM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the skills, useful for the tourism sector (strongly hit by the Covid crisis) • To include topics of religious tourism, agritourism, sport-fishing • Creating a common market-place for summer jobs and tourism workers • Supporting the interaction with culture, heritage and digital innovation • Tourism sustainability, slow tourism, sustainable mobility (walking, cycling) • Support for existing flagships 	<p>YOUTH INVOLVEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting cooperation of youth of the Western Balkans with those from EU countries • Active inclusion/stronger involvement in the processes, projects • Exchange programmes, competitions • Internship in EUSAIR • Joint university courses (e.g. on themes related to blue economy), supporting scientific cooperation • Promotion of cultural dialogue
<p>CULTURE, DIALOGUE, CREATIVE INDUSTRIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening cultural and creative industries importance to economic growth 	<p>GOVERNANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-pillar projects facilitating cooperation, monitoring and evaluation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative hubs, CCI, spreading innovation in culture • Intercultural dialogue (multicultural and multireligious projects) • Approximation of EU energy Balkan • Balkan peace initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territorial observatory and strategy • Governance/policy/capacity building projects existing outcomes review and capitalization processes • An experimental forum for EUSAIR key implementers tasked with exploring different options for formal and informal horizontal coordination mechanisms ensuring consistent and mutually supportive policies and actions across pillars • More involvement of local and regional governments in EUSAIR (co-creation and co-planning)
<p>ENVIRONMENT</p>	<p>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INNOVATION, DIGITALISATION</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero waste campaigns, marine litter management • Climate change prevention and adaptation measures • Clean water/air projects • AI forum of protected areas • Biodiversity protection (PA networks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation, digitalization, ICT • Circular economy • Digital economy, as additional Pillar to existing ones • Ensuring rural development, promotion of smart villages • Supporting thematic clusters • Creating networks between SMEs, micro-enterprises • Building of value chains • SMEs and entrepreneurship support, business • Social innovation • Innovation, technology transfer
<p>INFRASTRUCTURE, CONNECTIVITY, ENERGY</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI infrastructure projects: highways, railways, digital infrastructure, ports and airports • Energy: just transition, energy interconnections, development of hydrogen projects, decarbonization, energy efficiency and energy saving promotion of renewable energy sources, development of storage projects with added value for the region, security of energy supply - diversification of sources and routes, energy market reform- energy market organisation and integration projects for affordable prices • Creating networks on smart mobility and renewable energy 	

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REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR DEVELOPMENT
AND EUROPEAN COHESION POLICY

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