

PILLAR 4: Sustainable Tourism



Sustainable Tourism
EUSAIR

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT FOR YEAR 2022

Prepared by Pillar Coordinators, supported by the relevant EUSAIR Facility Point Project Partner, and approved by TSG 4 members on **1.2.2023** through written procedure

Background:

As provided in the TSG Rules of Procedure (Point 8), every year, by end-February, Pillar Coordinators shall submit to the Governing Board an Annual Progress Report for the pillar concerned covering the preceding year (1st January-31st December).

The Annual Progress Report, jointly prepared by Pillar Coordinators, with the support of the relevant EUSAIR Facility Point Project Partner, is approved by the respective TSG prior to transmission to the Governing Board.

The Governing Board will be called to take note of the aforementioned reports, and, on that basis, to establish an Annual Progress Report for the EUSAIR as a whole, to be presented to the EU-28 High Level Group on macro-regional strategies and to the EUSAIR political/ministerial level.

General remarks:

The following table of content and the template itself show the sections that should be completed (none of them should be left blank or deleted from the report). If necessary and justified, additional (sub) sections could be added.

The report shall not exceed a maximum number of **5 pages** (*Arial 12 or equivalent*).

Additionally, please note the following:

- The information should be well-structured within each of the sections and should be synthetic and to the point, addressing the content and not aiming for quantity.
- Do not include information which could be found elsewhere, e.g. minutes of the meetings or list of TSG members.
- The language should be direct and clear. Using acronyms, jargon or internal technicalities is not recommended.
- Refer to factual information, and be as concrete as possible. Vague and general comments (e.g. "the situation is progressing favourably and quite rapidly") without justification should be avoided.
- Any other important information (monitoring reports etc.) should be added as annexes.

TSG PROCESS (GOVERNANCE)

TSG governance process is defined by the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) and its Action Plan as key documents to implement sustainable development in the macro-region. Four Pillars that address the core challenges and opportunities for the macro-region are defined by the Action

Plan. All pillars are co-chaired by EU and non-EU countries. According to this, Republic of Croatia and Republic of Albania are co-chairs of the Pillar 4 – Sustainable Tourism.

Since December 2022 a new co-chair for TSG4 for Albania, Mrs. Herida Duro, has been appointed. At the 17th TSG4 meeting representatives of the new EUSAIR member country- San Marino were welcomed.

Following the setting-up process of TSG4, all countries nominated their representatives in TSG4, and the Rules of Procedures of TSG4 were adopted in 2015. Most countries have also appointed their deputy representatives, and representatives of the national ministries of culture in line with their chosen priorities.

TSG4 organized three meetings in 2022: 17th meeting online (4th May 2022, 18th meeting hybrid (18th October 2022) and 19th meeting online (25th November 2022). At the 17th and 18th meetings, all of the countries were present and at the 19th meeting, eight of the nine countries of the EUSAIR TSG4 were present, while North Macedonia was absent.

17th TSG4 online meeting was also attended by the European Commission (DG REGIO), Facility Point Lead Partner, FP Croatia Communication and Innovation experts; contracted experts for Strategic Project development and experts for Monitoring and Evaluation, ESP technical support, and representatives of EUSDR, ESPON and CoE.

18th TSG4 hybrid meeting was also attended by the European Commission (DG REGIO), Facility Point Lead Partner, ADRION, FP Croatia Communication expert; contracted experts for Strategic Project development and Monitoring and Evaluation, representatives of CoE – EICR and AI-NURECC.

19th TSG4 online meeting was also attended by the European Commission (DG REGIO), Facility Point Lead Partner and contracted expert working on the AP revision process.

1) TSG4 - meetings:

In the TSG4 meetings, the following key issues were discussed, in order to ensure an efficient implementation of EUSAIR and its Action Plan.

- **17th TSG4 meeting:** The new TSG4 MS San Marino representative was introduced and warmly welcomed. The report on the 16th TSG4 meeting's conclusions and implementation were approved. A short report on the GB meeting, held in March, was given, as well as the information on the development of ADRION programme, report on the process of embedding and outcomes of the EUSAIR evaluation process. Draft background paper on the EUSAIR Action Plan revision was presented.
- TSG4 members were invited to give proposals for the TSG4 session at the 7th EUSAIR Annual Forum in Tirana from 16th to 18th May 2022.
- TSG4 members were informed about the various activities within the EUSDR and invited to participate in conferences and workshops to strengthen the cooperation within MRS.

- The 11th Annual Advisory Forum on the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe was announced to be held in Greece from 5 to 7 October 2022 with the special session on Adriatic Ionian Region and MS were invited to take part.
- **18th TSG4 meeting:**
 The new Albanian coordinator was introduced. The report on the 17th TSG4 meeting's conclusions and implementation were approved. Report was also given on TSG4 Panel prepared within the 7th EUSAIR Forum held in Albania, in May. EC presented several open calls and initiatives, such as New European Bauhaus (NEB) or European Urban Initiative. Developments regarding the Tourism Transition Pathway and conclusions on the European Agenda for Tourism 2030 were presented. ADRION JS presented the new IPA ADRION programme. TSG4 members were informed on European Transnational Cooperation funding opportunities for the period 2021-2027, as well as on AI-NURECC initiatives and activities.
 The cooperation with CoE EICR was highlighted. The 11th Annual Advisory Forum on the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe was successfully held in Greece 05th-7th October 2022, for the first time with the EUSAIR TSG4 special session on 7th October 2022, on cultural tourism products on cultural routes with 9 speakers presenting best practice examples in EUSAIR.
 TSG4 members were informed that documentation development is completed for 4 mono-pillar projects': AIR Cultural Routes, CruiseAIR, ProDestAIR MIQS and Living the Sea 4.0 with tentative partner structures and budgets. TSG4 flagship project ideas were presented in some 20 occasions on meetings and workshops. TSG4 members were informed on progress in issue papers development on Wellbeing and Gastro tourism in EUSAIR MS. TSG4 members confirmed the proposed content of the new issue paper/ mini study to be developed on "Attitudes of EUSAIR visitors towards tourism". TSG4 members approved the report on the activities of the TSG4 monitoring and evaluation experts with a conclusion that in all MRS, EUSAIR is the only strategy that has a specific pillar covering sustainable tourism as an important value for the future. TSG4 members were informed on the activities of the communication external experts. MS were also informed on the EUSAIR FP future plans and the revision process and an additional ad hoc meeting with TSG4 was scheduled.
- **19th TSG4 ad hoc meeting:**
 The 19th ad hoc meeting was thematically fully dedicated to the AP revision process. The external expert explained the revision procedure to TSG4 members. All comments on Initial policy paper and questionnaire given by TSG4 members are taken into consideration by the experts and adopted in the documents. TSG4 members were informed that the questionnaires could be adapted/shortened for relevant stakeholders in order to fill them in well. Country inputs questionnaires were expected to be sent by TSG members to Pillar 4 Coordinators, Pillar thematic experts, EC representative and FP Lead Partner.

- **Capacity Building Event** on Monitoring and Evaluation on national level was held in Croatia, Plitvice Lakes National Park, 10th -11th November 2022. with EC and WP leaders.

2) TSG4 – round tables /seminars/ thematic events:

- **At 7th EUSAIR Forum** realized in cooperation with EC and Albania in Tirana, **TSG4 Thematic Session was organized** on May 17th 2022 under the title “*Navigating Tourism through Policies and Trends*” with a subtitle “*The Role of Tourism and Culture in the Revision of the EUSAIR Action Plan*”. Practices were presented by 8 speakers from Greece, Montenegro, Slovenia, Croatia and the minister from Albania. It was attended by approximately 200 people.
- **EUSAIR thematic round table, organized** at the **11th Cultural Routes Annual Advisory Forum 2022** on October 5th-7th in the island of Crete, Chania, Greece. The Forum organized by the CoE and Greece, raised huge interest among stakeholders with estimated 430 participants (including 60 online¹). For the first time, as part of the Forum, a Special EUSAIR Session was organized by TSG4, on important topic of cultural tourism product on cultural routes, coordinated by Croatia and Greece and CoE, with 9 speakers presenting best practice examples including keynote speeches from Greece in front of some 100 participants. The session/ round table provided knowledge exchange in expertise in the field of sustainable cultural tourism, and cultural tourism product development on the routes bringing together representatives of routes operators, networks, international heritage and tourism organizations, local and regional authorities, and other professional organizations in the field of tourism, heritage and culture. EUSAIR thus stimulates cultural routes, promoting dialogue between urban and rural cultures, between developed and disadvantaged regions through: mobility, diversification, sustainable management and sustainable growth.

3) TSG4 also contributed to the:

- **INTERACT System Thinking Workshop** – Module 3, with a presentation of TSG4 flagships and activities, online, February 2nd/3rd;
- **ISTER Project Workshop: Connecting Historical EUSDR Roman Routes - 2. Transnational Capitalisation Workshop** – with a presentation of TSG4 flagships within the regular cooperation with EUSDR, online, February 23rd;
- **Cultural Routes Coordination meeting**, Ministry of Culture and Media of Croatia, Zagreb - TSG4 flagship presentation of priorities connected to cultural routes, March 3rd;
- **INTERRACT Ancona Conference** “*The Future of EUSAIR*” with TSG4 flagships presented, online April 7th;
- **CROSSINNO Transnational Event** “*Cultural Heritage and Business Development*”, with TSG4 flagships presented, Trieste, online June 1st;

¹ CoE received data

- **Cultural Routes Training Academy**, Fontainebleau, online presentation of TSG4 flagships (Cultural routes in EUSAIR) June 2nd;
- **3rd EUSAIR Innovation Community** meeting, titled “How can we embed innovation potentials around EUSAIR Flagships?” with TSG4 flagships presented, online, July 5th ;
- **MRS Cooperation with EUSDR PA3, Culture & Tourism & People to people contacts**, EUSAIR TSG4 actions presented at the:
 - workshop on Territorial evidence on Culture and Tourism activities „EUSAIR culture and creativity in sustainable tourism development – Living the Sea 4.0 flagship“ presentation, online, February 28th;
 - workshop on “The contribution of innovative and creative tourism to support sustainable local development”, online, July 26th;
 - workshop on EUSDR/EUSAIR similarities and differences as a source for possible improvement of transnational cooperation, online, December 22nd.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

Main priorities actions

- **4 final strategic project ideas development completed** (AIR Cultural Routes, CRUISE AIR, and ProDestAIR, Living the Sea);
- **Procurement procedure completed and flyers designed for 3** strategic mono-pillar project concepts (DES_AIR, CulTourAir and Green Mapping) ;
- **Financial Dialogue** – with presentation of all 7 mono-pillar strategic project ideas, Zagreb, April 1st ;
- **Monitoring and evaluation WP T.3** - TSG4 Pillar specific **M&E external expert** prepared final 2 reports relevant for Pillar 4 „Sustainable Tourism“ presented and delivered to the WP3 LP; EUSAIR M&E **National Capacity Building** organized an held on Plitvice Lakes, November 10th /11th ;
- **Two issue papers on Wellbeing and Gastro tourism** - procurement procedure prepared, experts selected and handbooks completed;
- **Issue paper/mini study on tourism statistics** - procurement procedure prepared;
- **Cultural Routes**: cooperation continued with the Council of Europe, with the participation of EICR representative at TSG4 meetings, and EUSAIR Round table held at the 11th Annual Advisory CoE Forum, October 5th ;
- **External innovation expert** completed the final report with good practice examples and recommendations;
- **Cooperation with ESP**- 2x Infographic topics for TSG4 ;cooperation within Action Labs;
- **EUSAIR-EUSDR cooperation** TSG4 actions and flagships presented at 4 workshops and one conference;

Actions undertaken with regard to communication. Both internally between the TSGs members, and externally- and to visibility, participation at:

1. **ESPON TEVI 2050**, EUSAIR Steering Committee, online presentation, February 2nd;

2. **PANORAMED** dialogues, online meeting and presentation March 23rd;
3. **INTERACT action labs** – online presentation, March 16th /17th;
4. **18th Governing Board and Pillar Coordinators** meetings, Sarajevo 5th/6th October –presenting TSG4 activities and plan;
5. **15th Steering Group** hybrid meeting, contribution, preparations and active participation at the meeting, Ljubljana , December 14th;
6. **M&E Final event**, contribution with TSG4 presentation, (Ljubljana (SI), hybrid, December 15th;
7. **EUSDR SG Meeting PA3**, flagship project ideas presented, February 2nd/3rd, July 26th and December 22nd.
8. **EUSAIR Communication Academy** attended by the TSG 4 members from Montenegro and Croatia (I and II module online in April and June 2022) and III module on site (October 2022, Bled, Slovenia).

Visibility at events:

1. **TSG4 Communication:** 4 Newsletters prepared and **31** thematic articles prepared and published in different public media and social networks;
2. **TSG4 Thematic Session**, at the 7th EUSAIR Forum, with cca 200 participants, Tirana, May 17th;
3. **Interview of PC** and information on TSG4 activities and events, for ESP thematic Newsletter;
4. **EUSAIR TSG4 Round table** at the **11th Annual Advisory Forum** on Cultural Routes of the CoE, with cca 100 participants, Chania (GR), October 5th;
5. **XV Euro-Mediterranean Dialogue on the Phoenicians 'Route, patronage** to the international thematic event, Poreč (HR), October 21st;
6. **Youth related communication activities**, 2 workshops on TSG4 priorities at
 - RIT (Rochester Institute of Technology) in Dubrovnik (HR), November 29th
 - the Libertas International University in Zagreb (HR), December 8th;
7. **Raising awareness event** in the framework of the **Week of Macro-Regional Strategies of the EU**, TSG 4 representative presented activities of the TSG 4 to the high school students, March, 16th and 17th , Montenegro (Podgorica and Cetinje).

MAIN ISSUES/CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

- Match-making process between funds and project ideas;
- Fluctuating MS human resources supporting EUSAIR - lack of continuity in appointed representatives (Albania often changes coordinator) ;
- Need for reinforcement of fluctuating human resources on all levels, administrative capacity and practical experience has to be enhanced;
- Administrative commitment to the strategy needs to be strengthened;
- Need for the awareness raising of high level administration, especially regarding the value and operational achievements of EUSAIR.

THE WORK AHEAD

In the year, 2023 TSG4 will mainly focus on:

- Implementation of recommendations and conclusions of TSG4, Governing Board and EUSAIR Forum;

- Organisation of two TSG4 meetings (20th in Bosnia and Herzegovina, on March 28th/29th), one accompanied by thematic round table;
- Kick off meeting for Presidency including panel on activities completed in former period;
- Thematic ad hoc events - organisation of thematic and/or project oriented events/workshops;
- Further implementation of activities for development of Sustainable tourism in the Adriatic-Ionian region as continuation of the activities (one issue paper/mini study);
- Further discussing actions/priorities that have macro-regional value in sustainable tourism at the next TSG4 meeting and presentation of the Issue Papers within the meeting;
- Contribution to the 8th EUSAIR Forum organized by B&H in accordance to the Agenda of the Forum;
- Financial dialogue;
- Further cooperation with international initiatives: CoE; UNWTO; etc. ;
- Maintaining and improving cooperation among TSG4 members and between pillars to achieve the best output for all of them;
- EUSAIR Capacity Building Event on Monitoring and Evaluation on national level - in Greece, Athens 28th February 2023.

ANNEX 1

ATTENDANCE AT TSG 4 MEETINGS IN REPORTING YEAR 2021

Pillar 4. Sustainable Tourism	17th TSG4 AD HOC meeting		18th TSG4 meeting		19th TSG4 meeting	
	Virtual (GoToMeeting)		Hybrid (GoToMeeting)		Virtual (GoToMeeting)	
	Date: 4th May		Date: 18th October		Date: 25th November	
EU Country	Tourism	Culture	Tourism	Culture	Tourism	Culture
CROATIA	9	1	7	1	3	
GREECE	1	1	8	1	2	1
ITALY	5	1	5		5	1
SLOVENIA	5	2	2	1	4	1
Non-EU Countries	Tourism	Culture	Tourism	Culture	Tourism	Culture
ALBANIA	1		3		2	
BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA	1	1	3		1	1
MONTENEGRO	1		1		1	
SERBIA	1	1	1	1	1	1
NORTH MACEDONIA	1			1		
SAN MARINO	1		2		1	1
TOTAL	26	7	32	5	20	6

ANNEX 2

MACRO-REGIONAL PROJECT/MEASURES

Project/measure title	Main activities <i>Short description of the project/measure, what are the objectives, added value for the EUSAIR, envisioned period...</i>	Mono / Cross Pillar project -Indicate, if The strategic project has a mono or cross pillar approach, indicate the relevant pillar(s)	Status <i>Describe the status of the project/measure (e.g. project idea/concept, mature project ready for implementation, project under implementation or completed, etc.)</i>	Involvement of EUSAIR countries	(Targeted) funding sources
Green mapping	<i>Strategic project concept aiming at mapping sustainable tourism businesses in EUSAIR region.</i>	<i>Pillar 4</i>	<i>Audit Trail approved by TSG4 members, ToR prepared, experts selected, project idea development completed</i>	<i>All EUSAIR Countries invited to participate</i>	<i>1,598,470.00€</i>
CulTourAir	<i>Strategic project concept prepared with the aim of establishing the common methodology for the research and development of cultural tourism in EUSAIR countries</i>	<i>Pillar 4</i>	<i>Audit Trail approved by TSG4 members, ToR prepared, experts selected, project idea development completed.</i>	<i>All EUSAIR Countries invited to participate</i>	<i>1,078.614,50€</i>
Des_Air	<i>Strategic project aims to develop new training and skills to strengthened EUSAIR countries competitiveness - increasing the quality of integrated sustainable destination management through development of LLL training programs and Masters' programmes.</i>	<i>Pillar 4</i>	<i>The strategic project concept prepared. Audit Trail approved, ToR prepared, procurement procedure completed, external expert selected, project idea development completed.</i>	<i>All EUSAIR countries invited to participate</i>	<i>1,580,570.00€</i>
CruiseAIR	<i>Strategic project aims to provide sustainability of EUSAIR ports through the better management of cruise destinations, both seaside and continental ones (rivers, lakes),</i>	<i>Pillar 4</i>	<i>The strategic project concept prepared. Audit Trail approved at 12th TSG4 meeting. ToR prepared, procurement procedure</i>	<i>All EUSAIR countries invited to participate</i>	<i>1.561.104€</i>

		<i>diversification of tourism product, activating creation of strategic and action plans for sustainable tourism in AIR cruise destinations.</i>		<i>completed, external expert selected, project idea development completed.</i>		
AIR Cultural Routes		<i>Strategic project aims to provide harmonized distribution of tourism flows through macro-regional territories using Cultural Routes as tool for the creation of innovative diversified tourism products. The challenge is to address regional connectivity of locally micro-managed routes.</i>	<i>Pillar 4</i>	<i>The strategic project concept prepared. Audit Trail approved at 12th TSG4 meeting. ToR prepared, procurement procedure completed, external expert selected. Project idea development completed.</i>	<i>All EUSAIR countries invited to participate</i>	<i>1.527.218€</i>
AIR ProDest Strategy (MIQS)		<i>Strategic project aims to provide strategic approach to destination management planning, supporting smart, participative and agile destination management able to respond to dynamic challenges fast & cost-effectively</i>	<i>Pillar 4</i>	<i>The strategic project concept prepared. Audit Trail approved. ToR prepared, procurement procedure completed, external expert selected. Project idea development completed.</i>	<i>All EUSAIR countries invited to participate</i>	<i>2.579.400€</i>
Living The Sea 4.0		<i>Strategic project idea aims to use digitalization for preservation of natural and cultural heritage as an important tool that will establish the foundation of new approach for managing the burden of coastal areas caused by touristic flows, climate changes, traffic pollution, and similar.</i>	<i>Pillar 4</i>	<i>The strategic project concept prepared. Audit Trail approved. ToR prepared, procurement procedure completed, external expert selected. Project idea development completed.</i>	<i>All EUSAIR countries invited to participate</i>	<i>2.818.520€</i>

ANNEX3

PILLAR / TSG EVENTS AT NATIONAL OR MACRO-REGIONAL LEVEL IN THE REPORTING PERIOD

Event / County / National or Macro-regional	Short description	Participants (what kind of participants)	Main outputs
EUSAIR thematic round table, organized at the 11th Cultural Routes Annual Advisory Forum 2022 in Chania (GR), October 5 th	<i>The session presented relevant topics on cultural tourism product on cultural routes. 9 speakers presented best practice examples from EUSAIR. Session provided knowledge exchange in expertise in the field of sustainable cultural tourism, and cultural tourism product development on the routes. EUSAIR stimulates cultural routes, promoting dialogue between urban and rural cultures, between developed and disadvantaged regions through: mobility, diversification, sustainable management and sustainable growth.</i>	<i>Organized by TSG4, in cooperation of Croatia and Greece with CoE, session had some 100 participants including cultural routes operators, TSG and MRS representatives, national and international, representatives of international institutions:, networks, international heritage and tourism organizations, local and regional authorities, and other professional organizations in the field of tourism, heritage and culture.</i>	<i>Awareness raising, exchange of knowledge and visibility achieved</i>
Meetings on the national level Capacity building, National Park Plitvice Lakes, Croatia, November 11 th	<i>The aim of the workshop was strengthening institutional capacities in the field of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of strategic documents on the example of the European Strategy of the Adriatic-Ionian Region.</i>	<i>National TSG members, NCs, etc. representatives of all Managing Authorities operating in Croatia, EC representatives, M&E WP3 LP</i>	<i>Awareness raising, exchange of knowledge, and visibility achieved.</i>

<p>Meetings on the national level EUSAIR Financial Dialogue Zagreb (HR), April 1st</p>	<p><i>Presentation of EUSAIR priorities and flagships -presented sustainable tourism Specific Objectives and Topics under EUSAIR, but also Flagship project ideas defined within pillar 4 – Sustainable tourism</i></p>	<p><i>EUSAIR National Coordinators, EUSAIR Pillar Coordinators, EUSAIR Facility Point Project Partner, NIPAC Office, CBC office, EUSAIR Thematic Steering Group (TSG) members, representatives of the EUSAIR</i></p>	<p><i>Aim of the event was to bring together national EUSAIR key implementers, authorities - further actions discussed on incorporation of defined and approved macro-regional priorities.</i></p>
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