

Inter-Connect PLUS

Newsletter I



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Inter-Connect PLUS project

Inter-Connect PLUS project (Intermodality Promotion and Rail Renaissance in Adriatic – Ionian Region PLUS) aims at encouraging intermodal passenger transportation and stimulating rail transport, addressing new challenges such as the COVID-19 breakout. Funded under the Interreg ADRION Programme and lasting six months (January – June 2022), it was specifically designed to build upon and elevate some of the key outputs of the successfully finalized Inter-Connect project (Interreg ADRION 2014-2020).

By incorporating the knowledge and experience gained from the COVID19 pandemic, the partnership will collect relevant policy documents, best practices, surveys in the project’s area (Igoumenitsa – Region of Epirus GR, Bologna – Region Emilia Romagna IT, Trieste – Friuli Venezia Region IT, Ljubljana – SI, Zagreb – HR, Durres - AL), in order to present the effect on intermodal passenger transport and upgrade Inter-Connect Roadmap and toolkit. Furthermore, two case studies (HR and SI) will be revised within the new project, addressing the pandemic’s impact on passengers’ transportation.

Inter-Connect PLUS will reactivate the cooperation network previously engaged in the Inter-Connect project and establish link with ADRION Thematic Clusters, guaranteeing the targeted communication of the results to key stakeholders and citizens.

The Consortium:



Lead Partner

Municipality of
Igoumenitsa - Greece



Centre for Research and
Technology Hellas - Greece



Institute for Transport and
Logistics Foundation - Italy



Central European Initiative –
Executive Secretariat - Italy



Ministry of Infrastructure
and Energy - Albania



HZ Passenger
Transport Ltd - Croatia



Regional Development Agency of the
Ljubljana Urban Region - Slovenia



Emilia-Romagna Region – General
Directorate for Territorial and
Environmental safeguard – Italy (AP)



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Inter-Connect PLUS



Inter-Connect PLUS Kick of Meeting

On 2 February 2022, the Kick-off meeting of the Inter-Connect PLUS project was held online. Municipality of Igoumenitsa, as Lead Partner, welcomed the participants and provided an overview of the implications of COVID-19 on the transport sector and new challenges, including the need to enhance the promotion of public transport at local and cross-border levels to mitigate the shift to private transport based on safety concerns.

The technical discussions focused on the three main lines of action in Inter-Connect PLUS:

- upgrading of the main tools developed by Inter-Connect, such as the Roadmap and the Toolkit;
- improving the recommendations on where and how to invest in supporting sustainable connectivity of ADRION cases – focusing on the smart integration of different public transport solutions; and
- revising the Slovenian and Croatian Inter-Connect case studies with new norms brought by COVID-19.

The others important technical topics tackled are related to understanding the existing best practices in terms of soft measures for a seamless connection of coastal areas to the city centres at regional and national levels and the TEN-T network main nodes in order to update the policy recommendations to promote intermodality for passengers’ mobility in the ADRION area developed by the previous project. Another technical session was dedicated to the pilot cases and the related updates related to the Covid-19 post emergency. All the key challenges and expectations on the Inter-Connect PLUS project were summarized in a dashboard (see above).

expectations and wishes!

- learn from COVID-19 experience... keep just the positive impacts on mobility (i.e. turn to active mobility, pop up walking and cycling paths) - Glykeria**
- rebuild trust to PuT Maria**
- Observe the impact of the pandemic on transport operators on Albania MIE**
- To enhance previous results and go one step ahead with promoting sustainable mobility in Igoumenitsa
- Renovate active collaboration with major stakeholders in the field of PT and intermodality with the view on the 'new reality' in Ljubljana region
- OBSERVE** if the **EXPECTATIONS** of public concerning PT in Ljubljana region had changed within past 2 years.
- Envisage current situation and make proposals for elevation of PT in the regional aspect for Ljubljana urban region.
- Prove the importance of the work done in Inter-Connect and elevate and improve the outputs in Inter-Connect PLUS. (CEI)
- Understand how the 8 Inter-Connect case studies are evolved after the project conclusion (ITL)
- Share experiences on how the Covid-19 affected the public transports in the ADRION area and the new opportunities/challenges arising (ITL)
- Find out about new solutions which could help to overcome obstacles and mobility gaps that arose during the pandemic. HŽPP
- build a new project**

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Inter-Connect PLUS at the 7th EUSAIR Forum

On 17 May 2022, Inter-Connect and Inter-Connect PLUS were presented at the the 7th Forum of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) that took place in Tirana (Albania).

The key outputs of the two projects were shared with attendees by Ms. Glykeria Myrovali (CERTH) within the Panel on Smart and sustainable mobility of Interreg ADRION's contribution to the EU Green Deal: Experiences of renewables & Energy efficiency and green mobility practices in the Adriatic-Ionian area. The panel gathered representatives of projects as Inter-Connect (PLUS), TRIBUTE, ENERMOB, and SUSTOURISMO, all co-funded within the Interreg ADRION Programme, with the main aim to discuss the contribution in supporting the solutions and the transition towards greener and smarter mobility.

Sustainability was highlighted as a crucial principle, important for guiding the ADRION Programme and the EUSAIR activities. While sharing their experiences, the participants discussed common challenges in promoting smart and sustainable mobility, as well as the probable solutions such as strong engagement (especially on governmental level), strategic and long-term impact and approach.

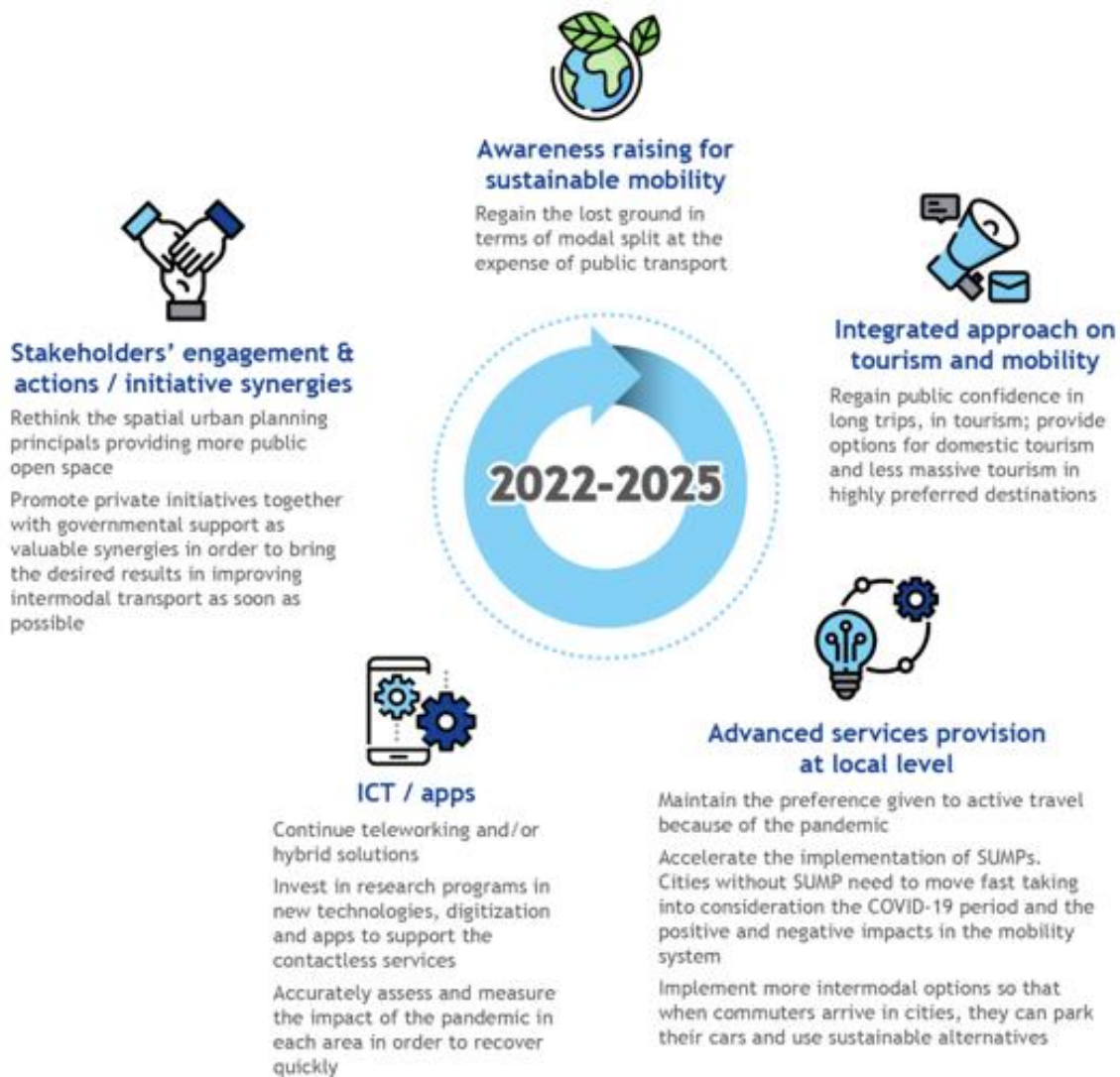
Ms. Myrovali placed particular focus on the Roadmap for ADRION's intermodal transport improvement, developed within the Inter-Connect project and to be upgraded within the Inter-Connect PLUS, reminding about the importance of stakeholder engagement and capacity building. Furthermore, the engagement of the future decision makers – youth – should be encouraged. Being aware how tourism is closely related and reliant on transport, it is of great significance to invest in sustainability, and endow with resilience.



Credit: ADRION Flickr account, 2022

Inter-Connect ROADMAP

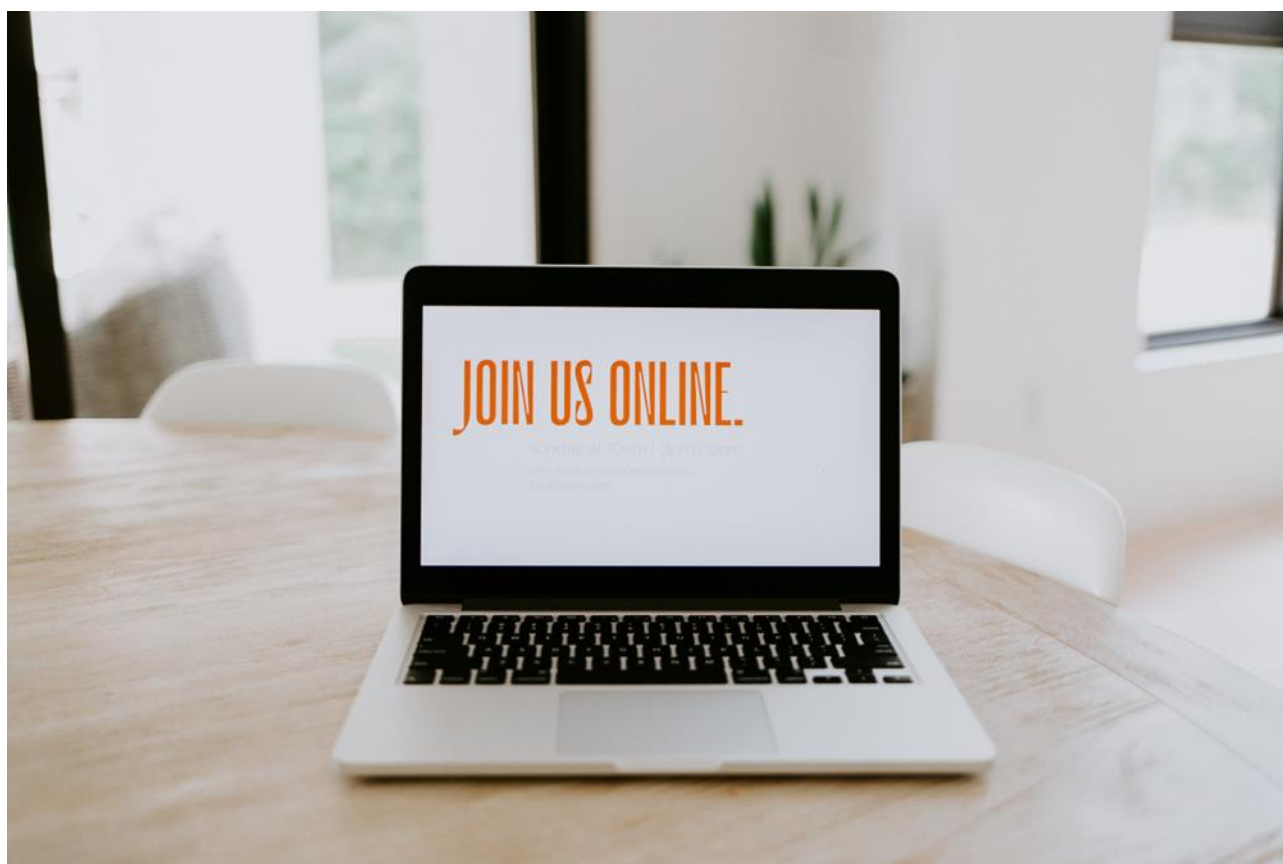
Inter-Connect ROADMAP developed during the initial project (Inter-Connect) presented the measures to be undertaken until 2050 as for promoting intermodal public transport-based solutions. In Inter-Connect PLUS project, adding the knowledge from the two years of pandemic and the effect of COVID-19 to mobility, we update the short term view of the initial ROADMAP. The figure below presents the updated short-term Inter-Connect ROADMAP - as an extra layer of the existing one - taking into consideration the pandemic and what additions to the sustainability policies, strategies and measures should occur for the next short term period (up to 2025) in the ADRION region. Re-establishing confidence to Public Transport & supporting the active modes (walking, cycling) that proved to be stable and resilient during the pandemic are the most urgent needs for the next years.



Join us at the online Final Conference

Inter-Connect PLUS Final conference will be held online on 22 June 2022. The event will gather project partners, key stakeholders and all participants interested in modalities of enhancing passenger transport in the ADRIAN region. Aside from sharing the project's results with wider audience, particular focus will be placed on the implications of COVID-19 on the transport sector and new challenges that came along, supporting the discussion and sharing experience on ways to enhance public transport promotion at local and cross-border levels. Recommendations on improving sustainable mobility with multimodal passenger transport, as well as revitalized rail transport will be further addressed.

Make sure to save the date and join us at the final event.



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