

MEMBER STATES' ANNUAL TOURISM REPORTING TEMPLATE

Article 3 of Council Decision 86/664/EEC¹ of 22 December 1986 establishing a consultation and cooperation procedure in the field of tourism stipulates that:

"...each Member State shall send the Commission, once a year, a report on the most significant measures it has taken and, as far as possible, on measures it is considering taking in the provision of services for tourists which could have consequences for travellers from the other Member States. The Commission shall inform the other Member States thereof".

The following reporting form aims at facilitating compliance with this Council Decision.

SECTION 1 TOURISM ORGANISATION AND GOVERNANCE

This section is aimed at reporting on the following:

- **Administrative organisation**
- **Territorial organisation**
- **Organisation and links between the national tourism authority and the provinces / regions**
- **Organisation and links between the national tourism authority and industry associations, stakeholders and customers**

1.1. Please provide a short description of the administrative and territorial organisation of public bodies responsible for tourism, indicating the relationship and cooperation between national, regional and local bodies of the core responsibilities and competences of each department (Max. 3000 characters)

The Ministry of Tourism (NTA) is responsible for drafting strategies, policies and other measures at national level and drawing up proposals for legislation that regulates the tourism and hospitality industry, the tourist board's role and activities and tourism tax issues.

The Ministry is headed by the Minister and he has two State Secretaries. There are also four Assistant Ministers who are heads of Directorates (Strategic Planning, European Union Programs and International Cooperation; Investment in Tourism, Special Interest Tourism; Tourism Competitiveness and Legal Affairs and Standards), each Directorate being composed of a number of Sectors, Departments and Units. There is also one Independent Sector of Tourism Inspection and Independent Department for Internal Revision.

Tourism promotion lies within the responsibility of the Croatian National Tourist Board (CNTB). The Minister of Tourism presides over the CNTB in an ex officio capacity, but it

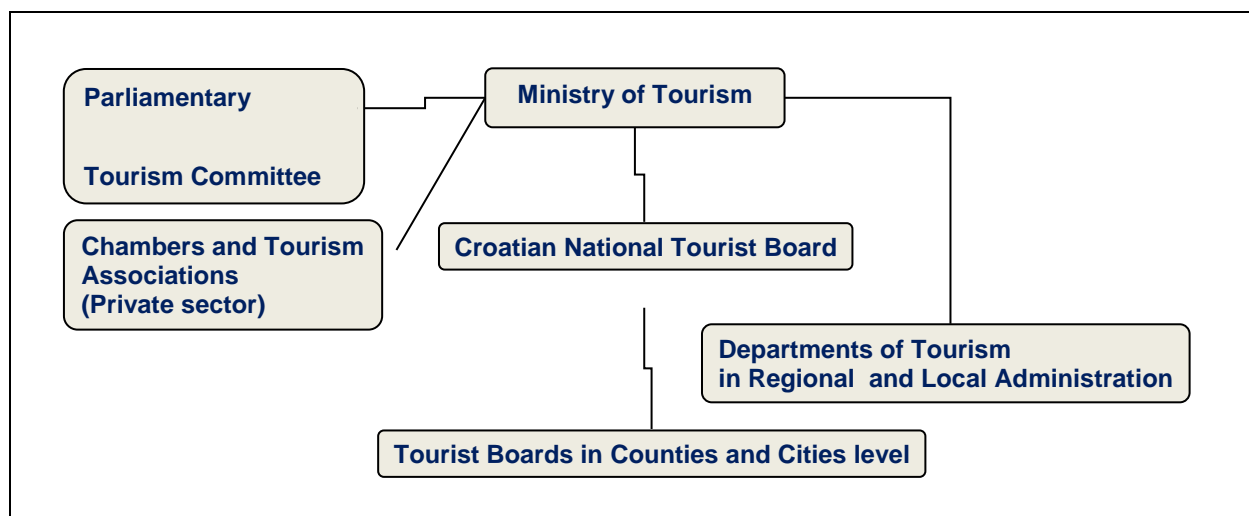
¹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/Notice.do?val=123070%3Acs&lang=en&list=123070%3Acs%2C&pos=1&page=1&nbl=1&pgs=10&hwords=>

also has an Executive Director, who is in charge of daily operations and activities. The CNTB work is monitored by its Supervisory Committee (one member is always from the Ministry), and its Council (representatives of Regional Boards, professional associations, tourism industry and the Ministry) that regularly meets to discuss current issues and prepare decisions.

At the regional level, within the county administrative office, there is usually a unit/department responsible for tourism and hospitality. County administrative offices handle the classification and permits for private accommodation operators, but the classification of hotels, campsites and marinas is the responsibility of the Ministry.

The Tourism Committee of the Croatian Parliament shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to: the concept and strategy of the development of Croatian tourism, the establishment and monitoring of the implementation of tourism development policies of the Republic of Croatia, hospitality industry and tourism activities and directly related activities, monitoring of concessions in tourism, developmental programs in tourism of particular importance to the economic development of the Republic of Croatia, the establishment and monitoring of the implementation of protection and maintenance of the quality of tourism sites, co-operation with the corresponding bodies in the European Parliament and the parliaments of other countries.

1.2. Please provide an **organisation chart reflecting the above described administrative and territorial organisation.**



1.3. Please list and describe briefly the **relationship and main areas of cooperation between national/regional public tourism bodies and the most significant / active private organisations / stakeholders / industry associations /unions / consumer organisations. (Max. 1500 characters)**

The Ministry regularly co-operates with professional associations (e.g. associations of travel agents, hoteliers, camping sites etc.), as well as with NGOs and trade unions.

The main areas of cooperation are:

- Coordination of measures and activities for preparation of tourism season;
- Coordination and implementation of marketing and promotional activities;

- Cooperation with professional associations with the aim to improve their quality and business conditions;
- Preparation of regulations related to tourism;
- Ministry of Tourism conducts various programmes through which it finances for tourism professional associations in their work (e.g. improving the quality of human resources and strengthening the competitiveness of tourism offer, vocational trainings, green businesses, competitiveness of tourism products and services, innovations in tourism, development of public tourism infrastructure, strengthening the tourism market and human resources, promotion of professions in tourism and strengthening the competencies of tourism jobs, etc.)

1.4. What is the existing national/regional specific legislation on tourism? (Max. 500 characters)

- The Tourism Inspection Act (NN 19/14)
- The Act on the Provision of Tourism Services (NN 130/17)
- The Hospitality and Catering Industry Act (NN 85/15, 121/16, 99/18)
- Act on Tourist Boards and the Promotion of Tourism (NN 152/08)
- Act on Tourist Board Membership Fees (NN 152/08, 88/10, 110/15, 121/16)
- The Sojourn Tax Act (NN 152/08, NN 59/09, NN 97/13, NN 158/13, NN 30/14)
- The Act on Tourism and Other Construction Land (NN 92/10)

There are also more than 50 subordinate legislations on tourism in the competence of the Ministry of Tourism.

The other laws which influence tourism (e.g. Value Added Tax Act, Consumer Protection Act, Foreigners Act, Trade Act, Act on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications) are the responsibility of other line Ministries.

The Act on Strategic Investments Projects of the Republic of Croatia, drafted by the Ministry of Economy and passed in October 2013, is of great importance as it made reference to tourism for the first time. The adoption of the new Act on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications was of great importance as it was a prerequisite for the adoption of the Ordinance on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications in the Field of Tourism, which enables tourist guides and other regulated professions in the field of tourism to provide their services on a temporary and occasional basis.

SECTION 2 - MEMBER STATE ECONOMIC DATA AND TOURISM BUDGETS

This section is intended to provide an overview of the key statistical information about the general tourism economic environment of the Member States.

The statistical data provided in the tables below shall cover the year 2017 and, **if available**, 2018.

The data collected through these sections could also feed into the Virtual Tourism Observatory.

Please use the Excel templates provided below in order to facilitate coherence and comparability of the data.

Please note that you are only requested to fill in data that is available in your country. Please insert "N/A" for those that you are not able to provide.



Worksheet in C
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SECTION 3 NATIONAL TOURISM POLICY AND STRATEGIES

This section aims at collecting information on the Member States general strategic vision as well as the specific objectives of their tourism policies.

3.1. Please provide information in bullet points on the key mission, main medium and long-term objectives and the main targets of your national tourism policy. (Max. 1500 characters)

The three main goals of the National Strategic Reference framework, aligned with the Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2020, are:

- encouraging faster economic growth that is based on the integration of the market and the institutional reforms,
- higher employment rate and
- promotion of sustainable development.

Similarly, and taking into account the existing limiting factors for the future tourist development in the Republic of Croatia, as well as global tourism demand trends, the main goal for the development of Croatian tourism until 2020 is to increase its attractiveness and competitiveness. At the same time, other main goals of Croatian tourism policy are:

- Improve infrastructure and quality of accommodation
- New employment
- Investments
- Increase in tourism expenditure

According to the three-year Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Tourism 2017-2019 ,the key

challenges are:

- Improving tourism quality and content of the tourism product, through development of new and improvement of existing products and services by implementing innovation, smart specialization and sustainability.

Making a name for Croatia on the international tourism markets through effective promotion, with goals of strengthening the Croatian tourist brand, raising the turnover outside the peak season, raising the average consumption of tourists and stronger support for the tourism industry.

3.2. Do you have a multi-annual national tourism strategy specific / relevant for tourism in place? If yes, please describe in bullet points the main medium and long-term objectives of the strategy as well as **who is responsible for its implementation. How is the implementation monitored and how often?** (Max. 2000 characters)

In 2013, The Strategy of Tourism Development in Croatia by 2020 was adopted by the Government and the Croatian Parliament. The main goals of the Strategy are to: ensure a top 20 world ranking for Croatia in terms of competitiveness; achieve EUR 7 billion of investment; increase foreign tourism expenditure by EUR 6 billion; grow the tourism sector workforce by 30,000 (20,000 jobs directly with the industry and 10,000 indirect jobs); increase bed capacity by 100 000; spread tourism more equitably through the year; and encourage a more balanced tourism development across the country.

The following are seen as the main challenges to reaching these goals: adapting the Ministry's activities to the needs of the Strategy; aligning the CNTB's Operational Marketing Plan 2014-2020 with the Strategy; increasing competitiveness; establishing an Inter-ministerial Council; ensuring EU funding for tourism sector development; implementing the necessary legal changes; developing the concept of Destination Marketing Organisations (DMO); privatising the remaining tourism properties in state hands; developing new products for new tourism segments; ensuring favourable conditions for tourism investment; offering incentives for "Greenfield" investments; and increasing off-season tourism activities.

The main body responsible for implementation of the Strategy is the Ministry of Tourism in cooperation with a number of governmental and public institutions such as the Croatian National Tourist Board, and a number of line ministries, professional associations in the tourism industry as well as regional and local governments and all potential stakeholders.

The Strategy will be continuously monitored by the Ministry of Tourism and by the Government of the Republic of Croatia.

According the Strategy the following documents were developed:

- Action plan on Congress Tourism Development
- Action plan on Green Tourism Development
- Action Plan on Culture Tourism Development

- Action Plan on Cycling Tourism Development
- Action Plan on Nautical Tourism Development
- Action Plan on Health Tourism Development
- National Programme on Sea Beaches Management and Planning
- National Programme on Tourism SMEs Development
- National Programme on Small Family Hotel Businesses Development
- National Programme on Social Tourism Development – Tourism for All
- National Programme on Family Accommodation Improvement
- Programme on Strengthening the Competitiveness of Human Resources in Tourism
- Action Plan on Golf Tourism

Based on the Strategy, the new Strategic Marketing Plan for Croatian Tourism for the period 2014-2020 was adopted in 2014, as one of the basic documents defining national tourism. The Plan determines marketing tools and tactics, with 3 main goals: combatting seasonality, higher tourism expenditure and raising awareness of brand “Croatia” on every key market.

Aside from that, Ministry of Tourism in cooperation with the Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure, have prepared the Nautical Tourism Development Strategy for the period 2009-2019.

The Ministry of Tourism, in cooperation with the Institute for Development and International Relations from Zagreb, evaluated the Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2020. The evaluation was primarily focused on analysis of the relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of measures proposed under the Strategy.

The monitoring of the implementation of the Croatian Tourism Development Strategy by 2020, is ongoing at the level of control of activities and the analysis of the monitoring of the achievement of the objectives and the expected effects of the Strategy.

4. TOURISM CHALLENGES, MEASURES AND INITIATIVES

This section aims at collecting information on the challenges the Member states and the tourism industry has to deal with as well as the measures put in place to tackle them.

4.1. Please identify the key challenges for the tourism sector in your country and indicate their importance /priority in the table below.

CHALLENGES	IMPORTANCE / PRIORITY		
	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Diversification of the tourism offer	x		
Protection of the cultural heritage		x	

Protection of the natural heritage		x	
ICT and innovation	x		
Connectivity and transport		x	
Employment in tourism	x		
Improving education and skills in tourism	x		
Combatting seasonality	x		
Demographic changes		x	
Improving accessibility of tourism		x	
Improving socio-economic data in tourism		x	
Economic crisis and recovery		x	
Improving the sustainability of tourism offer		x	
Combatting climate change		x	
Improving the quality of tourism offer	x		
Developing responsible tourism practices		x	
Competition against other destinations			x
Administrative / regulatory burden, bureaucracy	x		
Other, please specify			

4.2. Please describe briefly the main measures in your country aimed at tackling the key high-priority challenges indicated above. (Max. 2000 characters)

The Croatian National Tourist Board granted financial support, through a public call, to tourist agencies for development programmes and introducing combined tourism products for special interest tourism market. The aim is to support programmes that contribute to the activation of unutilized tourism resources and creating new motives of tourist arrival to the entire territory of Croatia, enrichment of the tourism offer, especially in the pre and post season period, development of innovative products that are contributing to reducing seasonality. Hopefully this will help to establish the image of Croatia as a destination for special interest tourism and the market valorisation of combined tourism products as a motif of tourism arrivals to a particular destination in Croatia.

In 2018 the Croatian National Tourist Board (hereinafter referred to as CNTB) support was given for:

I. De minimis program of support for the development of the tourism sector in 2018.

De minimis program of support for the development of the tourism sector in 2018 sets out the conditions, criteria and the method of granting the support of small value / de minimis support, which is allocated by the Croatian Tourist Board to the co-financing of the costs envisaged by this Program.

The supports under this Program will be awarded by the CNTB in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) 1407/13 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis support.

Under this program, the Croatian National Tourist Board announced Public Calls in 2018 for the following measures:

- Projects of tourism initiatives and products on tourism undeveloped areas
- Support for events
- Supports the programs of destination management companies

II. Support to events

PUBLIC CALL to support the events that took place in 2018

The subject of the Public Invitation is the granting of non-refundable funds from the CNTB for events on the territory of the Republic of Croatia of international, national or regional significance as the main motif of the tourist arrivals to the destination and contributing to the following objectives:

- promotion / enrichment of tourism product / offer of selected smaller or larger destinations and Croatia as a whole,
- development of content that enables the extension of the tourist season,
- increase in hospitality and other tourist traffic, especially in the PPS period
- strengthening the brand of Croatian tourism,
- creating a recognizable image of Croatian tourism

Grants were approved for the organization and implementation of events in accordance with the following programs:

1. Supports for events in pre and post season
2. Support for national and regional events
3. TOP events

III. Support to projects of tourism initiatives and products on tourism underdeveloped areas

The subject of the public call were non-refundable CNTB grants to entrepreneurial and public projects in tourism underdeveloped areas that contribute to the following objectives:

- the activation of unused tourism resources and the creation of new motives of tourist arrivals on tourism undeveloped areas, especially in the pre and post season
- building, restoring and increasing the quality of accommodation facilities and additional tourist facilities in the tourism underdeveloped areas
- construction and renovation of public tourist infrastructure in the tourism underdeveloped areas,
- the development of tourist offer with a higher added value that will enable higher average consumption of tourists,
- the development of economic activity and the increase of employment in the underdeveloped areas of tourism, especially in the pre and post season.

IV. Support programs for the destination management companies

The subject of the public call were non-refundable CNTB grants for development programs and the introduction of complex tourism products for the market of special interests that contribute to the following objectives:

- The activation of unused tourism resources and the creation of new motives for tourist arrivals to Croatia,
- enrichment of tourist offer,
- the development of innovative products that allow for the extension of the tourist season and the reduction of seasonality and the increase of tourist traffic, especially in the period before and afterwards and on the continent,
- creating a recognizable image of Croatia as a destination of special interest tourism
- market evaluation of complex tourist products as a reason for the arrival of tourists to particular destinations in Croatia.

V. Support for tourism boards in underdeveloped tourist areas

The subject of the public call were non-refundable CNTB grants to tourist programs / projects of tourist boards in the underdeveloped areas of the Republic of Croatia.

The support was granted for the following:

1. Development and improvement of the tourist offer of the destination and the tourist friendly services
2. Education
3. Development, renovation and improvement of public tourist infrastructure

Education - vocational training for providers of tourist service (for example: training for raising food and beverage quality - sommeliers, cooking shows, education for trainers / guides special interest tourism types, tourism interpreters, education for private renters, educational

workshops for providers of tourism services, etc.)

Development, Renovation and Promotion of Public Tourism Infrastructure - co-financing of development, renewal and improvement of public tourist infrastructure managed by the tourism undeveloped areas.

Provision of office terminals to the eVisitor system - co-financing of computer equipment in tourist communities for purposes of electronic registration in the eVisitor system in accordance with the Regulations on the manner of keeping a list of tourists and on the form and content of the application form of tourist check-in and check-out for the tourist boards, in case the existing equipment does not meet the eligibility requirements for check-in and check-out of tourists via eVisitor system equipment or it is over 5 years old (non-existent computer equipment or equipment older than 5 years)

Combatting seasonality – The Croatian National Tourist Board continuously conduct marketing activities aimed at increasing tourist traffic in the off season period. This market communication contributes to better visibility and perception of Croatia as a destination with attractive offer in the off season period.

With the aim to prolong the tourist season MT financially supported development and improvement of additional facilities such as are swimming pools as well as development of tourism of special interest (rural and mountain tourism, cycle tourism, sport and adventure tourism, thematic parks etc.).

Improving accessibility of tourism – The *National Programme on Social Tourism/Tourism for All* was developed with the aims to: construct the social tourism data base; launch the web site with relevant social tourism offer; develop the national programme of leisure vouchers; organize a public awareness raising campaign on the importance of social tourism.

Improving the quality of tourism offer - Croatian National Tourist Board continuously co-finances products and initiatives as well as the programmes of tourist boards in areas where tourism is still underdeveloped and especially out of the peak season.

The Ministry of Tourism, allocates through the Programme “Competitiveness of Tourism Economy”, financial incentives for the development of innovative tourist products, increasing the standards, quality and additional supply, sustainable development, diversification of the offer in order to increase the competitiveness of the tourism economy.

The main goal of the Programme “Competitiveness of Tourism Economy”, which Ministry of Tourism has been conducting over the last five years, is increasing attractiveness and competitiveness of Croatian tourism. The Programme is contributing to the development of strategic goals, such as:

- Improvement of the structure and the quality of accommodation
- New employment
- Realization of new investments
- Growth of tourist consumption
- Development of tourism in the tourism undeveloped areas

- Extension of the tourism season (all year round tourism)

Small and medium entrepreneurs (SME) providing tourism services on the islands, in the hinterland or continental destinations, entrepreneurs that invest in the development and the promotion of additional content such as sport, recreation, amusement/entertainment and theme parks, cycling tourism and the like, would have had an advantage when applying for this Programme. The same applies for the entrepreneurs that invest in the development of standards and implementation of mandatory conditions for people with disabilities, investment in green entrepreneurship (achievement of standards/mandatory conditions for awarding the national environmental protection sign – “Environmental friendly” or the EU Ecolabel. Priority would have been given to investments that provide additional content with which the hotels can achieve some of the voluntary standards such as: Business Hotel, Meeting Hotel, Congress Hotel, Family Hotel, Small & Friendly Hotel, Health & Fitness Hotel, Wellness Hotel etc. as well as to the hotels that invest in raising the overall quality – aiming to get the national “Quality” certificate/label.

As already mentioned, major efforts have been invested in the finalization and publication of the Action Plan on Golf Offer. Multiple meetings were held with the ministries relevant for the development of the golf offer. Given that it is a form of tourism that has tremendous potential for the development in the Republic of Croatia, yet on the other hand it is an extremely delicate topic and has for years had an extremely negative perception among the general public, it was necessary to include and meet with all the relevant ministries and institutions for the purpose of simplifying the procedures related to obtaining permits, administration, solving problems of project prolongation etc.

Meetings regarding the Action plan on Health Tourism Development were also held. The Ministry supports the development of new clusters and cooperates with the Ministry of Health in relation to the development of regulations necessary for health tourism.

4.3. Please identify if any of the above mentioned challenges relate to any legislative measures at EU level, and how. (Max. 1000 characters)

4.4. Please identify and describe any measures implemented in your country to increase tourism flows from other EU Member States and from third countries. (Max. 1000 characters)

In accordance with the Strategic Marketing Plan of Croatian Tourism 2014-2020, Croatian National Tourist Board (CNTB) conducted activities aimed at reinforcement of the national brand in tourism (articulated under the slogan “Croatia Full of Life”), increasing the number of tourist arrivals/overnights during offseason period, increasing the average per capita tourist expenditure, as well as providing further support to the tourism industry key stakeholders.

A) Brand reinforcement activities:

- PR activities in the generating markets & social media campaigns
- Study trips for journalists – during 2018, 232 trips for journalists were organized (510 journalists in total)

- Promotional Campaigns (17 generating markets – print, TV, online, radio, DOOH, OOH, etc.) conducted in three major waves, as well as several special promotional programmes (TripAdvisor, Lonely Planet, etc.)
 - Google campaigns (SEM; SEO, etc.)
 - Marketing campaigns/sponsorships related to sports events/Croatian sport celebrities, as well as entertainment events (ULTRA Europe...)
 - Joint advertising campaigns
- B) Offseason tourist traffic increase
- Product development programmes
 - Offseason events support/promotion programme
 - Support to the creation of products of initiatives in the areas of Croatia undeveloped in the field of tourism
 - Pre and post season advertising campaign (dedicated campaigns aimed at promotion of the medical tourism, nautical tourism, MICE, etc.) and special marketing actions
- C) Tourist expenditure increase
- Added value & premium tourism products development
 - Product categories development
 - Medical, nautical, MICE tourism development programmes & promotional campaigns
 - Cooperation with specialised international organizations and institutions
- D) Industry support
- Market research and knowledge sharing programmes
 - eVisitor – national information system for tourist check in and check out, central place for tourist registration and data management (tourism statistics)
 - Tourism fairs – 24 international fairs organised by CNTB Head office, as well as 33 fairs organised by CNTB representative offices abroad
 - 102 special presentations in the key generating markets
 - FAM trips for TO/TA agents – 51 FAM trip, 631 agents in total
 - 7 “Buy Croatia” B2B workshops, 11 “Sell Croatia” B2B workshops *on the European markets, another 6 on the markets outside of Europe (USA, Korea, Japan, UAE).*
 - Support to strategic projects, events
 - DMC development support, educational programmes
 - Joint advertising marketing campaigns were realized in cooperation with major domestic and foreign stakeholders (airlines, TO/TA, hotels, system of tourist boards, etc.).

4.5. Please describe how promotional measures implemented in your country make use of / capitalise on the promotional campaigns carried out by the Commission (i.e. Ready for Europe, Europe. Wonder is all around, European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN), low-season tourism campaigns, etc.). (Max. 1000 characters)

EDEN

In general, Croatia has so far successfully participated in all EDEN thematic calls. Croatian destinations achieved multiple benefits that concern local community, stakeholders and the visitors. Some of the destinations at the moment of receiving the EDEN award were little known on the national level and almost unknown on the international level, but after receiving the EDEN award and through the stronger marketing, their visibility and better positioning were increased. All marketing activities after the award got much larger media attention.

EDEN award encouraged the destinations to improve their offer according to the sustainable tourism principles and based on the cultural and natural values of their destinations.

All Croatian EDEN destinations had positive impact and became a model for tourism development in their areas (in neighbouring destinations). They also exchange visits and good practices among themselves, usually based on similarities of their offer, some even internationally.

In July 2018 the Croatian National Tourist Board submitted the application to the Call for proposals for the *European Destinations of Excellence – Selection 2018 - GRO/SME/18/C/065 – TOURISM*. The theme for 2019 is “Health and well-being tourism”. The application successfully passed the evaluation and the project is to be implemented throughout the 2019.

Due to the administrative delays of Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME), the project EDEN CROATIA 2017 in the scope of the Call for proposals for European destinations of Excellence (EDEN) – Promotion 2017, officially started on 1st October 2018 on grounds of the signed Grant Agreement. The duration of the action is set to be 15 months, from 1 October 2018 to 31 December 2019. The project activity timeline had to be modified accordingly therefore majority of the planned activities will be implemented during the 2019. From mid-November to mid-December 2018 the advertising Facebook campaign was implemented in order to promote all national EDEN winners from awarded in the period 2006 to 2017 on Croatian, German, Slovenian and Austrian market. Additionally, in 2018 EDEN winners were also promoted via print advertorials in 2 Croatian magazines. All other project activities are to be implemented through 2019.

MEDCYCLETour

During 2018 the Croatian National Tourist Board continued with the implementation of the EU project MedCycleTour (MEDiteranean CYcle route for sustainable coastal TOURism) that is co-financed by ERDF within the scope of The Interreg MED Programme 2014 – 2020. The project has started in 2017 and should be finished in February 2020. The aim of the project is the development and promotion of cycle tourism in the Mediterranean region through the introduction of the EuroVelo 8 - Mediterranean route (EV8). The EV8 route aims to connect the entire Mediterranean area, from Cádiz in the west to Cyprus in the east. The list of partners includes 10 public/ governmental bodies or NGOs from seven Mediterranean countries and the European Cyclists' Federation, with partners in Croatia being the Croatian Tourist Board and the Cluster for Eco-Social Innovation and Development (CEDRA HR).

In 2018 the Croatian National Tourist Board has started with the implementation of the following project activities: the pilot signposting of the selected route section and the

development of the web page dedicated to the Croatian part of EV8 route. Furthermore, the Action Plan for the Development of the Croatian Route EV8 has been created and workshops with relevant stakeholders and decision makers in all tourist regions covered by the route were organized.

4.6. Please identify and describe any measures /actions in your country which contribute to maximising the potential of national policies for developing tourism (e.g. ensuring that tourism interests are taken into account in the development of other policies which may have impact on tourism). (Max.1000 characters)

1. According the Croatian Tourism Development Strategy by 2020 the **tourism investments** are one of important goals. Namely, the plan is to reach 7BN EUR new investments in tourism by 2020 and the key driving force of investment cycles should be hotels.

Hotels represent the basis of more developed and more diversified offer that can attract tourist outside the summer months. At the same time their restructuring will bring more and longer employment, more activities in the destination and more income to the local economy with enhanced quality of life.

2. The Ministry of Tourism financially supported SMEs development through following three measures: 1) increasing the standard, quality and additional tourism offer, business diversification, and sustainable growth, by using new technologies and social inclusiveness improvement, 2) development of special interest tourism, 3) international recognisability. Grants were aimed at small businesses, rural family homes and other private family homes (private renters). The grant allocation for construction and equipment of new pools in household objects has induced competitiveness of tourism sector.
3. Through the Tourism Development Fund (funds collected from charges from concessions and sale of land) Ministry supported public infrastructure development and conservation of the tourist attractions. Goals of this funding are: improvement of tourism quality and content of tourism product, development of tourism infrastructure and preservation of tourism resources, more appropriate valorisation of resources, creation of new attraction, generation of new motives for arrivals, more balanced spacious distribution of demand, encouraging growth of tourism expenditure, boosting guest satisfaction, innovative interpretation of natural and cultural tangible and intangible heritage, visitor management. In 2018 the Ministry of Tourism issued a public call based on the Programme for development of public tourism infrastructure and financed beaches, visitors centres and interpretation centres, public tourist infrastructure in the function of active tourism, public toilets and project documentation for golf courses and cable cars. Grants were allocated to legal entities (local and regional self-government units).
4. In 2018, The Ministry of Tourism continued the implementation of the Cycling Tourism Development Programme in the continental parts of Croatia. The funds for this public call are provided by the State Budget of the Republic of Croatia. The overall objective of the programme is to increase the competitiveness of Croatian tourism with the affirmation of

Croatia as one of the leading international destinations, and the specific objectives are to improve the tourism quality and content of the tourism product and develop tourism infrastructure in the continental part of the country, generate the key motive for arrival to inland destinations, have a more appropriate resource valorisation in the continental destinations, stimulate growth of tourist consumption and increase of customer satisfaction with the offer in the destination. Possible applicants were only units of regional self-government in the continental part of the Republic of Croatia (14 counties). Through the program, Ministry of Tourism has co-financed, establishment of cycling tourism routes, arranging and marking cycling tourism routes, creation of maps, leasing a common web domain at the county level, creating of web pages at the county level and development of mobile applications, production of standards for "bed & bike" accommodation, setting cycling traffic counters and organization of education and training for the bike guides.

4.7. Please identify and describe any measures/actions in your country which contribute to maximising the potential of EU Funds, including Financial Instruments for developing tourism (e.g. information on main objectives, financing opportunities, training courses, etc.). (Max. 1000 characters)

In line with the Act on the Establishment of Institutional Framework for the Use of European Structural and Investment Funds in Republic of Croatia in the financial perspective 2014-2020 (NN 92/2014.) and the Act on Bodies of Management and Control Systems for the Use of European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund, in accordance with the goal of „Investment for Growth and Jobs“ (NN 107/2014), the Ministry of Tourism is appointed as the First Level Intermediate Body for the Operational Programme „Efficient Human Resources“ of the priority axes „Social Inclusion“ and „Education and lifelong learning“ The first Call within this Operational Programme, priority axes „Social Inclusion“ was published in 2017 and contracted projects started implementation in 2018. In March 2018, Ministry of Tourism has made a decision on financing 20 projects within the call for proposals "Improving access of vulnerable groups to the labour market in the sector of tourism and hospitality" in the total amount of HRK 30.647.806,89. Applicants are adult educational institutions and NGOs operating in the tourism and hospitality sector and this call for proposals directly responds to the social needs of vulnerable groups with the aim of greater employability in the tourism and hospitality sector. Managing Authority gave permission for financing additional projects from the reserve list, so 22 projects will be additionally contracted in 2019.

In addition, the Ministry of Tourism is indirectly included and has assumed obligations in the Operational Programme „Competitiveness and Cohesion“.

During 2018. The Ministry of Tourism continued to prepare the call for proposals "Establishment of Regional Competence Centres in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector" (priority axes „Education and lifelong learning“) which will be financed by European Social Fund in the amount of 300 million HRK. Applicants will be six vocational education and training schools in the tourism and hospitality sector determined by a decision made by the Ministry of Science and Education in July 2018. It is planned to announce the Call during the

2nd quarter 2019.

RCC is the place of excellence in vocational education and training in which, in addition to the basic vocational education activities, including the implementation of work-based learning, it also carries out training and specialization and other activities that contribute to improving the quality of vocational education and training and its adaptation to the needs of the economy and labour market.

Regional centres of competences are being established by following the principles of applying innovative teaching methods (including the organization of practical lessons in controlled conditions), through collaboration with employers and social partners, while respecting the needs of the regional labour market and insisting on the excellence of teachers / trainers / mentors. Their task will be, along with the regular work within formal vocational education, the organization of targeted / specialized vocational trainings for vocational education (vocational teachers and mentors), organization of flexible and continuous education of local / regional SME employees (raising the level of professional competencies of employees - acquiring partial qualifications) and raising the level of competences of the unemployed by providing short training programs (targeted adult education programs). The added value of these Centres will be their ability to carry out specific, specifically tailor-made programs for people with disabilities / learners with disabilities (acquiring practical skills in appropriate conditions that match their functional abilities). So, the expected result to be achieved is to improve the skills of VET students, which will enable them to become more employable.

MT is a core partner in the project INHERIT (INTERREG V-B MEDITERRANEAN 2014-2020) which officially started in February 2018 and will last until the end of January, 2022 (48 months).

INHERIT is an integrated project with 15 partners from all 10 MED countries aiming to preserve and valorise natural heritage in MED coastal and maritime tourist destinations. The project will test and deploy a new approach adapted to MED specificities protecting natural heritage from the adverse effects of intensive tourism. INHERIT will promote sustainable tourism alleviating seasonality and tackling the surpassing of the hosting capacity, by designing and implementing a “bottom-up” protection approach relying on self-regulation and monitoring by local society and tourism stakeholders. The total value of the project is around 5.6 million EUR, whilst the allotment of the MT amounts up to 369.580,00 EUR.

During the upcoming period (May 2019) – MT will play an even more important role within the project – as the coordinator of WP4, coordinating the mentioned WP and working on the development of an INHERITURA approach on MED remote islands.

MT is national project partner in the EUSAIR Facility Point Strategic Project that has been conceived as an instrument to promote and facilitate the implementation of the EUSAIR. The main responsibilities are related to providing operational support to the governance structures of the EUSAIR and development of strategic projects.

The project is implemented and financed under the priority axis 4 of the INTERREG V B ADRION – Adriatic-Ionian Transnational Cooperation Programme 2014-2020. For its operation, a total amount of 11.5 million EUR has been dedicated for the period from May 2016 to December 2022.

Furthermore, MT coordinates also the 4th Pillar on Sustainable Tourism of the EU Strategy for Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) and it enables better cooperation and communication with stakeholders in terms of good practices exchange, possible common actions and using funds from transnational and cross border programmes.

4.8 Please describe shortly which EU programmes are used the most frequently and for what purposes of tourism development in your country. (Max. 1000 characters)

At the beginning of programming period, during 2015, the Ministry of Tourism was involved in the process of programming of the Operational Programme Efficient Human Resources (OPEHR), the Operative Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion (OPCC), OP for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries and in the Rural Development Programme, especially in priorities, measures and activities which envisaged possible support for increasing the competitiveness of tourism, balanced development and sustainable tourism. The most relevant investment priorities for improving competitiveness of tourism in the OP Competitiveness and Cohesion are PO3 - IP3d, PO 4 - IP4b and PA6 - IP6c.

In the final quarter of 2015, OPCC Call for proposals has been published to support the development of SMEs in the tourism industry by increasing the quality and offer of hotels, with a total allocation of 40 million Euros. The implementing body was the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Crafts of Croatia in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, as a sectoral authority. The activities implementation was finished in 2018.

In 2016 Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds announced Public Call for proposals for Preparation and implementation of Integrated Development Programs based on the Reconstruction of Cultural Heritage worth HRK 380 million and it resulted in 65 projects contracted worth HRK 880.370.054,42. The Call was prepared in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Culture, and it is in the implementation phase in 2018.

During 2018 Ministry of Environmental Protection and Energy announced Public Call for proposals for Increasing Energy Efficiency and Using Renewable Energy Sources in the Service Sector (Tourism, Trade). Although HRK 76 million was initially insured, due to a large number of high quality project proposals, this number increased to HRK 174.5 million.

Interreg programmes are very significant for implementation of projects important for tourism development and are following:

Interreg V-A Italy-Croatia Co-operation Programme 2014-2020 - within the Priority Axis 3 "Environment and Cultural Heritage", Croatian beneficiaries participate in 9 projects, contracted for the total of EUR 3.073.300,85 of EU funding.

Interreg V-A Hungary-Croatia Co-operation Programme 2014-2020 - within the Priority Axis 2 "Sustainable Use of Natural and Cultural Assets", Croatian beneficiaries participate in 18 projects, contracted for the total of EUR 9,596,046.88 of EU funding.

Interreg V-A Slovenia-Croatia Co-operation Programme 2014-2020 – within the Priority Axis 2 "Preservation and sustainable use of natural and cultural resources" specific objectives "Active heritage preservation through sustainable tourism" and "Protecting and restoring biodiversity and promoting ecosystem services" Croatian beneficiaries participate in 23 projects, contracted for the total of EUR 11.080.569,63 of EU funding.

Interreg IPA CBC Programme Croatia – Serbia 2014-2020 – within the Priority Axis 3 'Contributing to the development of tourism and preserving cultural and natural heritage'

2.234.151,32 EUR was allocated to Croatian beneficiaries in 6 projects. 2nd Call for Proposals within the Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Serbia 2014-2020 was closed 5 July 2018 and the projects will be contracted in 2019.

Interreg IPA CBC Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro 2014-2020- within the Priority Axis 3 “Contributing to the development of tourism and preserving cultural and natural heritage” 3.533.208,87 EUR was allocated to Croatian partners in 5 tourism and heritage projects.

Interreg ADRION - within the Priority Axis 2 “Sustainable region”, Specific objective 2.1. “Promote the sustainable valorisation and preservation of natural and cultural heritage as growth assets in the ADRION area” 628.212,26 EUR was allocated to Croatian beneficiaries in 5 projects.

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE 2014. – 2020. - within the Priority Axis 3 „Cooperating on natural and cultural resources for sustainable growth in CENTRAL EUROPE“, Specific objective 3.1 „To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources,, and Specific objective 3.2 „To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources“ 4.373.448,01 EUR was allocated to Croatian beneficiaries in 19 projects.

Interreg Danube Transnational Programme 2014- 2020 – within the Priority Axis 2 “Environment and Culture Responsible Danube Region”, specific objective “Foster sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources” 2.231.536,99 EUR was allocated to Croatian beneficiaries for 11 tourism projects.

Interreg MED Transnational Programme 2014- 2020 – within the Priority Axis 2 “Protecting and promoting Mediterranean natural and cultural resources” 3.828.083,59 EUR was allocated to Croatian beneficiaries in 15 tourism projects.

INTERREG EUROPE - within the Priority Axis 4 “Environmental and resource efficiency”, Specific objective 4.1. “Protection and development of natural and cultural heritage” 249.752,95 EUR was allocated to Croatian beneficiaries in 2 tourism projects.

The Ministry of Tourism is implementing the project “**Croatian digital tourism- e-Tourism**”, which is financed from the OPCC 2014 – 2020. in the amount HRK 33.612.451,09 (ERDF). Additional amount of almost 14 million HRK (ESF) will be contracted from OPEHR for the same project which will by 2020 result in: improved communication between citizens and public administration in tourism through shortening the time needed to process citizens' requests; reduced cost of providing public e-services and reduced errors in providing them and in increased transparency of public administration in tourism through provision of up-to-date tourist information to citizens in the tourism sector.

Sustainable and responsible tourism, whether talking about economic, social or environmental sustainability, is a broad concept and may be interpreted in various ways depending on the attributes of a Member State or region.

The following questions focus on sustainability and responsibility in tourism as described in the 2007 Commission Communication² on an agenda for sustainable and competitive European tourism.

4.9. Sustainable destination: What support is given to strengthen destination management at the national /regional/local level (e.g. supportive policy environment, knowledge networks, training programmes, technological support tools, financial support, promotional activities, etc.)? (Max. 1000 characters)

The Ministry of Tourism maintain a web portal on sustainable tourism <http://www.odrzivi.turizam.hr/>. It provides both national and international news and has direct connection with the Knowledge Networking Portal for Sustainable & Responsible Tourism <http://destinet.eu/>.

With the aim to improve the overall supply of destinations CTNB developed the new system of the annual Croatian tourist award that is consist of 28 awards in six (6) categories: destination of the year, award for sustainable tourism, innovation of the year, attraction of the year, award to the business sector (The Tourist Flower- Quality for Croatia) and the special prize *People in the tourism industry*. Categories were shaped in accordance with the current Tourism Development Strategy and Strategic Marketing Plan.

This new concept of tourism awards will serve as a tool for future monitoring, controlling and improving of the quality and efficiency of all important components in tourism sector.

As part of the traditional tourism event, the Days of Croatian Tourism, tourism awards were presented to the top operators in tourism sector, in the following categories: Cultural, tourist attraction of the year, Tourist event of the year, Innovation in tourism of the year, Marina of the year, Restaurant of the year, Campsite of the year, Travel agency of the year, Hotel of the year, Tourist destination of the year, and “Anton Štifanić” life achievement award.

The **Tourism Flower – Quality for Croatia** is the award of the Croatian Chamber of Economy which was awarded for twenty years in a row to the best hotels, marinas, camps and tourist destinations that provide high quality services and improve quality of life through responsible use of energy, environmental protection and landscaping.

The Support Program of the Ministry of Tourism and the Croatian National Tourist Board for the development of the DMC, encourages the creation and placement of innovative programmes for Destination Management Companies for narrow market niches. Further identification of activities to stimulate and support the implementation of initiatives in the direction of improving the sustainability of tourism at the destination level and within the individual segments of tourism is underway.

Cross-sectoral working group CROSTO (CROatian Sustainable Tourism Observatory) MRS is established for measuring the sustainability of tourism in the Adriatic region, with a basic set of fourteen indicators, and through the further development of the CROSTO Observatory additional sustainability indicators are planned to be set.

² http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/documents/communications/commission-communication-2007/index_en.htm

4.10. Sustainable businesses: What support is given to strengthen the sustainability and competitiveness of tourism businesses (e.g. supportive policy environment, knowledge networks, orientation of business support services to sustainability, training, financial incentives, promotional activities, etc.)? (Max. 1000 characters)

Dalmatia Green represents a certificate for private tourist accommodation facilities that are determined to increase their business and guests to provide a unique stay in harmony with nature and the local community. It is designed to house ecological accommodation facilities from the classical renter, bringing credibility and recognisability.

It is recognized by the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Croatia and Splitsko-dalmatinska County, and in order to respect nature, it has created a new vision of "green" tourist offer in Dalmatia.

In November 2018, the 1st Annual Conference on Sustainability of Tourism (CROSTO) was organized by the Ministry of Tourism. At the conference, Minister of Tourism Gari Cappelli noted that it is important to strengthen continental tourism with special forms of tourism, and in 2019 the ministry will co-finance projects related to sustainable development. More than a hundred participants from twenty countries and a large number of domestic and foreign experts attended the conference

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Energy announced the call for proposals for "Increasing Energy Efficiency and Use of OIE in the Service Sector (Tourism, Trade)". The call is to support a reduction in the consumption of energy delivered in companies registered for tourism and / or trade.

The aim is to raise the competitiveness of Croatian tourism with the affirmation of Croatia as one of the leading international tourist destinations.

The Istrian County Tourism Administration Department has published the call for the Eco Domus project. The Eco Domus program focuses on small tourism accommodation facilities, with the aim of encouraging private property owners to diversify and enhance the quality of accommodation through harmonization with the principles of sustainable development and sustainable tourism.

Due to the importance and specificity of the private accommodation of the Šibenik Knin County and the fact that by increasing the quality of accommodation in existing capacities can create the prerequisites for strengthening and extension of the main season, the Tourist Board of Šibenik Knin County has launched a project quality labelling LIKE HOME.

Croatia 365 Gourmet (<https://www.crogourmet365.hr/>) is a national digital platform that promotes local foods and wines. The platform has been active since July 2016, with a current total of 134 sub-pages: 71 restaurant subpages, 22 sub-pages of winemakers, 9 sub-pages of oil producer and 31 sub-pages of food. Restaurants are selected in cooperation with the county tourist boards.

With the intention to "green" the small renters, the Eco Partner was developed for household renters.

4.11. Responsible tourism: What support is given to tourists and the tourism industry to promote their responsible practices and choices (e.g. awareness raising,

sustainability in education, national marketing and media campaigns, promotion of certification schemes, etc.)? (Max. 1000 characters)

- The Ministry of Tourism issued the **Ordinance on Quality label for hotels**, with some standards based on a number of “green” criteria. To be assigned a label, a hotel has to meet a minimum of standards in nine different categories including areas referring to the sustainable and responsible use of energy and resources, staff and guest satisfaction, etc.

So far, the Quality label (Q) was assigned to following hotels: MONTE MULINI in Rovinj, LE MERIDIEN LAV in Split, VALAMAR LACROMA DUBROVNIK HOTEL, Dubrovnik, VALAMAR RIVIERA HOTEL & RESIDENCE, Poreč.

- The Ministry of Tourism organized the workshop “The Olive Tree Route” which was held on 14 - 16 November 2018 in hotel Aurora, Mali Lošinj, Croatia. The event was organized on the occasion of the presidency of the Republic of Croatia over the Council of Europe and the Central European Initiative. The event was a unique opportunity for cooperation between the members of the Council of Europe and CEI as well as for strengthening of public and private partnerships along the Route of the Olive Tree.

Routes4U project was presented providing support to the Cultural Routes programme through strategic macro-regional approach. Two others certified Cultural Routes presented their activities and potential cooperation with the Routes of the Olive Tree: the “Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route” and the “European Route of Historic Thermal Towns”.

All interested EUSAIR and CEI countries were invited to join Olive Tree Route. Further development is expected through the Routes4U project.

- With the aim of preserving traditional architectural heritage as well as creating innovative tourism products, the Rulebook on the Classification, Categorization and Special Standards for the Hotel Accommodation Facilities defined these (new) types:
 - Heritage hotel (building consisting of predominantly old, traditional, historic, rural urban structures, traditionally fitted out)
 - Scattered/dispersed hotel (building consisting of three and more constructions in old and traditional structures)

4.12. Please describe maximum three of the most significant planned / future tourism measures (legislative or non-legislative) which envisage to impact travellers visiting your country from other Member States or from outside Europe. (Max. 1000 characters)

In the period till 2020 Croatia will turn towards developing products that will enable not only better usage of existing capacities outside the summer months’ period, but also **activate tourism potential of the continental region of Croatia.**

Starting with global market trends in the tourism market and the quality of the natural and cultural resource, the following product groups are important for the development of Croatia's tourism: nautical tourism (yachting and cruising), health tourism, culture tourism, business tourism, golf tourism, cycling tourism, wine and food tourism, rural and mountain tourism and adventure and sports tourism. With these products, Croatia will also further develop several specific product groups, such as eco-tourism and young and social tourism.

Some of priority product development activities according to the Strategy of Tourism Development by 2020 will be:

- Improving the quality of accommodation in hotels and campsites, including their positioning and branding (improving facilities, raising existing category standards and introducing new standards in the quality of service) and diversification of the accommodation offer through themes (e.g. family sports, business, etc.);
- Development of new attractions (e.g. theme or fun parks, aquariums, interactive museums, etc.) with a potential to attract regional and international demand;
- Branding of the national and regional food offer;
- Creation of modern visitor centres at key attractions;
- Incentivising the development of cultural themed roads and paths (e.g. historical roads, UNESCO heritage roads, religious roads), which include clear development criteria and management systems.

In accordance with the prescribed time limits from Directive (EU) 2015/2302 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25th November 2015 on package travel and linked travel arrangements, amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 and Directive 2011/83 / EU of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Council Directive 90/314 / EEC, the Law on the Provision of Tourism Services, which already contains many provisions prescribed in the aforementioned Directive, was implemented in addition to new provisions in the aforementioned Directive, which will ensure an adequate protection of service users.

MT secured financial support for the Croatian Mountain Rescue Service due to their activities and significant contribution to the perception of Croatia as a safe destination as an important part of Croatian tourism.

MT co-financed the costs of additional medical teams in the tourist infirmaries at destinations that recorded a significant increase of tourists and the costs of foreign police officers during the tourist season through the project of the Ministry of the Interior.

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

5.1. Please describe maximum 3 best practices of tourism measures implemented at national, regional or local level (any type of activity). (Max. 2000 characters)

1. Promotion of professions and strengthening the competencies of pupils in vocational schools - The "Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia by 2020" takes into account the existing limiting factors affecting tourism development in the Croatian tourism marketplace, as well as the global trends in tourism demand. It directly identifies increasing

tourism attractiveness and competitiveness as the main priority of Croatian tourism development by 2020. It clearly states that one of the most important limiting factors within the tourism and hospitality sector is the educational system, which has not been adjusted to the needs and demands of a dynamic international tourism market. Its main disadvantages prove to be the insufficient and inadequate competences of the personnel engaged in tourism. Within the scope of improving human resources and developing vocational education and training, and customizing it to enhance the tourism and hospitality sector, the Ministry of Tourism has continuously supported the promotion of professions and strengthening of competencies of pupils in vocational schools by funding activities within the Call for Proposals “Promoting Professions and Strengthening the Competencies of Pupils in Vocational Schools“ since 2008. The overall aim of the Call has been to develop new tourism products and types of promotion for the tourism sector. The Proposals set objectives, such as raising awareness that tourism is a multi-sectoral and horizontal activity; introducing the requirement for cooperation between the educational system and the private sector; developing an entrepreneurial spirit, and building teamwork skills and a project-way of thinking among pupils. Additionally, the national and international competition of pupils in the tourism and hospitality sector entitled GASTRO is organized each year and held by the Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education. Representatives from the Ministry of Tourism take part in the competition as judges. The competition is not only a place where skills and competencies acquired through formal education can be assessed, but also a place for gaining new skills.

2. VET centres of competence

Considering the specific problems of education in the sector of tourism and hospitality, such as outdated education programmes and a fragmented network of schools, the VET centres of competence are introduced as places of excellence for training HR in tourism.

The centres adhere to relevant national and EU policies (Croatian Education, Science and Technology Strategy, Croatian Tourism Development Strategy by 2020, the VET System Development Programme, the Programme for Strengthening Competitiveness of Human Resources in Tourism and Vocational Education and Training Act, Law on Amendments to the Law on Vocational Education which defines the term “Centres of competences”). By the Decision on Appointment of Regional Centres of Competence in Vocational Education from 20th of July 2018. six regional centres of competences have been appointed in the Sector of tourism and hospitality, out of totally 25 appointed centres in 5 priority sectors (Tourism and hospitality, Engineering, Electrical engineering and computing, Agriculture and Health).

This was the step towards publishing Calls for proposals within the OPEHR 2014-2020 and the OPCC 2014-2020. The Call within OPCC 2014-2020 is opened by the Ministry of Regional Development and EU funds on 27th of November 2018., and remains open till 30th of September 2019. Through activities of this call the infrastructure and equipment will be funded. The Call by the Ministry of Tourism within OPEHR 2014-2020 that will fund "soft activities" (functioning and further development of competence centers in the sector of tourism and hospitality) is expected to be open in the first half of 2019.

The establishment of VET centres focuses on the vocational education for pupils with the emphasis on practical work, but it will also provide continuous education targeting SME employees, education professionals and unemployed persons. The centres will promote partnerships and networking among different stakeholders in the public, private and civil sectors, as well as support a high-quality infrastructure, modern equipment and innovative

learning models adapted to regional labour market needs.

3. Digital Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism is the holder of the Croatian Digital Tourism - e-Tourism project. Project partners are the CNTB, the Split-Dalmatia County Tourist Board and the State Administration Office in the Split-Dalmatia County, and the project is co-financed by the European and Structural Funds. The project is under implementation and will last until November 2020.

The aim of the project is to improve communication between citizens and public administration in tourism and to increase the efficiency and transparency of public administration in providing public services in tourism towards citizens through the establishment of five high quality, fast and user-oriented electronic services at higher levels of IT - 5 public e-services: tourist registry, administrative procedures for categorization of catering and tourist facilities and issuing of solutions to tourism service providers, non-awarding procedures for granting tourism development aid, guest registration and departure, provision of tourist information and promotion of Croatian tourism.

The project relies on the social inclusion of people with disabilities with two aspects as users: applications tailored to the needs of certain disabilities, on the one hand, and accessibility information on destinations, facilities, tourist services and products on the other. This section will work with representatives of associations of persons with disabilities (some contacts and meetings with preliminary agreements have already been held and cooperation on this part of the project is expected in 2019).

The business needs, the project tasks and technical specifications are in the process of defining, and will start with the development at a later stage (2019). The Central Tourist Registry will also enable automatic exchange of data with other public administration systems or other relevant stakeholders after its establishment. In addition, it is important to point out that the Croatian Tourist Board is responsible for the establishment of a Tourist Information Portal through which it will provide tourist information and promote Croatian tourism. All of the above-mentioned e-services will exchange information between themselves and with other public administration systems and will jointly establish a successful tourism platform. "

4. Emergency medical help

One of the key comparative advantages is safety as an element of a tourist product of destination. Security is a criteria that modern tourists look at with equal care as well as quality of accommodation, variety of offers and more.

In order to create the preconditions for a safe stay in our country, the Ministry of Tourism co-finances the costs of additional medical teams in destinations with a significantly increased number of tourists. In other words, it provides enhanced teams of primary medical care for tourists. Counties have been selected to record a significant increase in the number of tourists, so the potential needs for medical assistance are considerably strengthened. The measure has proved more effective than the fact that the Ministry has been carrying out for more than 20 years. Funds are intended for medical and medical staff costs and primary material costs (medicines, medical supplies, etc.).

Furthermore, following the continuous development of Croatia's tourism product based on the trend of tourism demand and the previously recognized attractiveness of Croatian tourists who

prefer active tourism experience, the Ministry supports and co-finances educational programs for tourist content organizers, immediate preventive actions and other activities of HGSS for the purpose ensuring the quality and safe implementation of special forms of tourism.

5.2. Please describe, in a concise manner, in your view, what policy developments / actions / activities would you expect from the Commission's tourism team that would serve better (than the current ones) the EU Member States and the industry. (Max. 2000 characters)

Regular info about all EU funding opportunities for tourism sector i.e. open calls for proposals (not only for COSME programme)

Macro-regional strategies –active participation of DG GROW in macro-regional strategies (in tourism areas) and reports about main activities related to the work of steering groups responsible for tourism

Regular informing on matters that are under the authority of other DG's but influence tourism sector

There is a need to facilitate better cooperation and some kind of exchange of ideas that will result with development of some concrete projects. There were a number of good initiatives in the previous years and we do not have any information what happened with following: ETIS – European Tourism indicator system, European Charter for a Sustainable and Responsible Tourism, revision of the Communication “Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe”, Senior Initiative etc.

Revision or a new Communication/Strategic framework on tourism is needed because it will enable easier use of EU funds. Without a separate EU tourism strategic framework the importance of tourism and its contribution to the overall EU economy is marginalized, which should not be the case (10% of EU GDP, around 24 MIL work in EU tourism). Integration of tourism into new EU Industrial Strategy (where tourism is mentioned only once and only in the footnote) is not acceptable. Joint marketing research and new marketing strategy for Europe would be welcome, dealing with specific non-European markets and their expectations.

We suggest more exchange of good practices especially by inviting the private sector representatives who can present their work at the best possible way as was already planned at TAC meeting during previous years.

The most important areas for good practices exchange are: digital/platform economy (not only the technical part of digitalization of tourism but the human resources part-adapting), mega data use, dealing with “overtourism”, regional cooperation (especially in the macro-regional framework), smart tourism, seasonality, increasing attractiveness of destinations (to live in, invest in and attract new tourists), developing tourism in tourism-wise less developed destinations (especially rural, mountain, “off the beaten track”), general human resources issues (shortage of professional staff), clusters and DMOs in tourism, especially in responsible management.

THANK YOU