

NARRATIVE REPORT

Leadership Academy for Cross-Border Cooperation in Serbia

Introduction

In May 2014 six municipalities from Hungary, Serbia and Croatia signed an Agreement that enables a trilateral cooperation with a final aim to setup a cross-border structure such as ECG or EGTC bringing the most advanced form and instrument of the joint strategic planning and management of the sustainable micro-regional development, opening a new gateway between (Central) Europe and the Balkans. The DUPAR initiative (Danube-Pannonian micro-region) involves the cities of Baja and Mohács from Hungary, Osijek and Beli Manastir from Croatia as well as Sombor and Apatin from Serbia.

With the support of the Council of Europe the first Leadership Academy for cross-border cooperation for the municipalities along the borders of Serbia, Hungary, and Croatia in 2018 was organized.

Preparation phase

In close cooperation with the experts of the CoE the *final list of the modules* to be delivered was made. The selected modules were distributed to us in English and Croatian so that these could be translated to Serbian, in some cases corrected, modified.

The *involved local trainers* were also selected and discussed with the CoE experts. Two local trainers have joined the team of trainers from Trebinje (for both stages) Mr Slobodan Vulešević and Mr Ranko Biberdžić and another new trainer from Serbia, Mr Milisav Milinkovic was present during the first stage who could become a Serbian local trainer in the future.

All the *logistical details* needed to be planned and organized, such as the accommodation, venue of the event, simultaneous translation, transport of the participants, food, coffee breaks, workshop materials, equipment needed for the trainings, etc.

The *list of invitees* was made that involved the six municipalities from the targeted border region, but also other cities that are very active and very interested in CBC were invited, such as Kanjiža (municipality with the largest number of CBC projects in Serbia), Sremska Mitrovica, Valpovo (Croatia) or Pirot from south Serbia (a very active municipality in the field of CBC, starting with the Nišava Euroregion initiative to the newly planned Eurobalkans cross-border structure). In total 19 participants from 8 municipalities / 10 entities from the 3 targeted countries have structured the final list of participants of the Academy.

Stage One

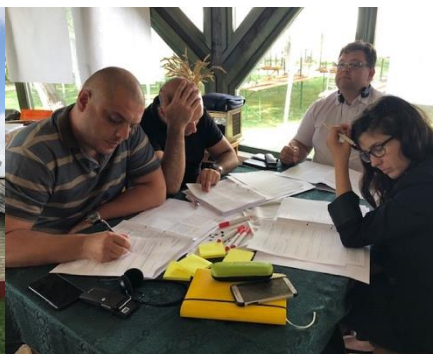
The first stage was held in Sombor (Serbia) from 11-13 September 2018, in the city that is still the main “driving force” of the above-mentioned trilateral cooperation.

The opening ceremony, panel was held in the beautiful City Assembly Hall of Sombor, with a presence of a larger number of participants and media (Television and Radio of Vojvodina, Pannon Television). The first Leadership Academy for CBC in Serbia started with the opening speeches of the Mayor of Sombor, Ms Dušanka Golubović, Head of the Centre of Expertise, CoE, Ms Alina Tatarenko, Expert of the CoE, Mr Daniele Del Bianco and the director of Cesci Balkans, Mr Ervin Eros.



The academy was organized on a traditional Vojvodina style Salas - [Dida Hornjakov Salaš](#). The following modules were presented and elaborated by the team of trainers (Ms Ramona Velea, Mr Daniele Del Bianco, Mr Slobodan Vulešević, Mr Ranko Biberdžić) and the participants:

- Module 1 – Good Local Governance
- Module 2 – Understanding Leadership
- Module 22 – Cross Border Cooperation (CBC)
- Module 4 – Leadership Values
- Module 7 - Identifying Personal Leadership Styles
- Module 6 – Leadership Mind-Sets for Team Working
- Module 8 – Group Communication Skills



Stage Two

The second stage was organized in Valpovo (Croatia) from 12-14 November 2018. The venue of the Academy was the newly built Centre of Culture Valpovo. Wide media presence was ensured for the start of the event; the Croatian national television made a report for the national news section and local tv stations were present.

The following modules were elaborated during the training:

- Module 10 – Organisation Culture
- Module 11 – Scenario Planning
- Module 14 – Complexity of Organisational Change
- Module 17 – Expectation Management
- Module 18 – Performance Management
- Module 20 – Civil participation and partnership Working



Overall

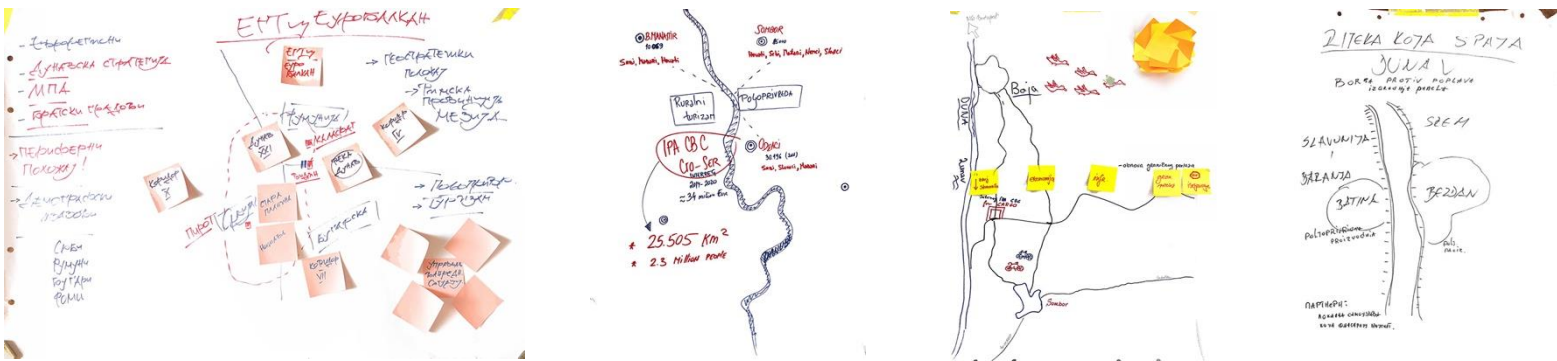
During both stages, regarding the *technicalities*, simultaneous translation was ensured English/Serbian, Croatian. All the modules and exercises were printed out and distributed to the participants. All the necessary materials, equipment was purchased or rented in order to ensure a flawless working process.

Both in Sombor and Valpovo *excursions* were organized every day aiming to learn more about cultural heritage of each other and to strengthen the professional and personal relations among the participants. During these field trips the participants had the opportunity to visit some of the best restaurants of the micro-region, experiencing the unique gastronomical offers of the area, but also to see the Prandau-Normann Castle and Museum in Valpovo, the Ethnological Heritage Center Baranja in Beli Manastir or the Movie Festival in Sombor.

Both stages were organized as *two and a half day long* events with *preliminary meeting sessions* of the trainers.

A good level of *interaction* was reached during both stages, the participants involvement never seemed to cease throughout all the five days of the training.

The group sessions resulted with *four different cross-border projects*, initiatives that were elaborated and discussed in detail during the trainings.



19 certificates were printed and distributed to participants of the first Leadership Academy for Cross-Border cooperation in Serbia:

1	Ms.	Duška Golubović	Mayor of Sombor
2	Mr.	Branislav Svorcan	Assistant Mayor Sombor
3	Mr.	Antonio Ratković	Deputy Mayor Sombor
4	Mr.	Attila Pribilla	Assistant Mayor Sombor
5	Mr.	Fejsztámer Róbert	Mayor of Kanjiza
6	Mr.	Vladimir Sanader	Mayor of Sremska Mitrovica
7	Mr.	Branko Jakovljević	Deputy Secretary of the City Assembly, Sremska Mitrovica
8	Mr.	Miloš Mišković	Assistant Mayor, Sremska Mitrovica
9	Mr.	Appel Péter	Delegated head for the trilateral cooperation, city of Baja
10	Ms.	Ivana Bandov Paulić	Deputy Mayor, Beli Manastir
11	Mr.	Predrag Stojanović	Deputy Mayor, Beli Manastir
12	Mr.	Vladica Tošić	Deputy President of the Assembly of the City of Pirot, Co-president of the Euroregion Nisava
13	Mr.	Zvonko Barišić	Secretary of the City, Valpovo
14	Mr.	Matko Šutalo	Mayor of Valpovo
15	Ms.	Ana Brajnović	Director of the Valpovo Business Center
16	Ms.	Danijela Došen	Deutscher Verein "St. Gerhard", Sombor
17	Ms.	Tamara Vuković	Deutscher Verein "St. Gerhard", Sombor
18	Mr.	Erős Dávid	Project assistant, Cesci Balkans
19	Mr.	Milislav Milinković	Candidate for future local trainer from Serbia

Follow-up and general observations, remarks

The first LAP for CBC in Serbia was successful in reaching the following objectives of the initiative:

- to increase participants' leadership skills in a CBC process perspective
- to support participants in choosing, designing and establishing a "formal" CBC structure across borders
- to increase organisations/institutions leadership skills

As part of the closure of the Academy the participants were asked what kind of support and within which topic they would need in future from the CoE or in general:



Most of the feedback is related to support in establishment of a CBC governance structure, micro-regional cooperation, knowledge in organizational change and EU funded, CBC projects. These results are highly aligned with the foreseen main output of the LAP which was the development of the Plan of Action for the establishment of a CBC governance structure.

The general remarks and findings regarding the follow-up of the action are clearly indicating the need in a continuous support first in drafting the action plan and afterwards in the establishment and management of the CBC governance structure, both in this targeted trilateral border region but also in area of the Nišava Euroregion (Southern SRB/BG). We are kindly proposing as follow-up of this action to:

- Continue to support the Danubian-Pannonian (DUPAR) trilateral cooperation in drawing up the action plan, support in the legal background of the CBC governance structure,
- Organize the second LAP for CBC in the border region of Bulgaria and Serbia (Nišava Euroregion),
- Establish and maintain a continuous mentorship mechanism, process to the participating municipalities, entities. This way sustainable results of the initiative could be supported and ensured.