

Output Factsheet

Output title:

Output 4.2. Transnational INSiGHTS workshops <2nd Critical Classroom, as a part of the 2nd multilateral workshop>

Summary of the output (max. 2500 characters)

The 4th Transnational knowledge and experience exchange event was the 2nd multilateral workshop, containing a Study Visit, a Master Class and a Critical Classroom. The event took place in Croatia, Central Istria, Motovun between 17-20 October 2017. The organizer and the host partner was LAG Central Istria, the participants were the representatives of INSiGHTS Partners and local and regional stakeholders from Croatia.

The workshop was connected to the 2nd thematic pillar – Coordinated Tourism Product Development Linked to Greenways. The last element of the workshop was the 2nd Critical Classroom organised on 19 October from 15:30 to 21:00.

The Critical Classroom started with a presentation of Eva Vovk from DCHS, who summarized the findings of the bilateral study visit on 05-06 of September. Partners were introduced to locations that were visited during the bilateral workshop. The presentation and photo documentation proved why the selected locations are good practice examples within the framework of the INSiGHTS project. Additionally, similarities and possibilities of further cooperation between two partners – LAG “Central Istria” and DCHS were detected. After that Mladen Vojković, an external expert from LAG “Central Istria” spoke about the activities conducted so far on developing the integrated sustainable tourism strategy of the Central Istria region. Mr Vojković also presented opinions and interests analysis based on half-structured interviews with the key stakeholders in tourism. These analyses were conducted with the aim of defining optimal direction in touristic development for the destination of central Istria as well as the initial steps on conducting the SWOT analyses. After that with a facilitation of Michael Meyer from CEEweb partners- based on their experience from the study visit in Central Istria identified some other SWOT elements for the LAG “Central Istria’s” region and tried to find possible solutions for the main problems. Some of the key strengths of the territory were identified as: good working family businesses, diversity in tradition and culture, high number of local products, strong regional identity, high hospitality, no over-development, good sub regional communication and cooperation between institutions related to tourism development. The weaknesses were discussed the most intensively.

One thing all partners noticed and experienced first-hand while staying in Central Istria was that the public transport within Central Istria is not regular and there are bad transport connections with the coast. One of the suggested examples to consider as a possible model of solution was the Šumava example, where free electric buses are used and the transportation is managed by privately owned transportation companies. The main opportunity could be the increasing demand for small scale tourism while the main threat is the complicated national legislative for small producers.

As the partners “run out of time” and it was already late evening it was agreed that LAG “Central Istria” will send the current version of the SWOT analysis and possible solutions to all partners by e-mail and they will give their opinion on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and possible solutions of the region. Additionally, they would include development ideas and actions that were not mentioned earlier.

After the meeting almost all partners sent their opinion to the “LAG Central Istria”, who summarized the suggestions and the results of the Critical Classroom and created their SWOT analysis and a document with the possible solutions to the problems.

Contribution to the project and Programme objectives (max. 1500 characters)

The overall objective of the project, fully in line with the Programme Specific Objective (Foster sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources) , is to foster sustainable utilisation of natural and cultural heritage of the involved areas in the Danube region in order to preserve and upgrade the intact local resources providing an outstanding potential to make these areas attractive destinations for healthy and slow tourism, thus serve as foundation for a flourishing responsible green tourism sector.

The three specific objectives of INSiGHTS are:

- Establishing integrated sustainable tourism management schemes;
- Promoting coordinated and smart tourism products linked to greenways;
- Stimulating eco-conscious and healthy lifestyle through green tourism.

The main purpose of the Critical Classroom for LAG “Central Istria” was to get help from the visiting partners for the creation of Integrated Sustainable Tourism Strategies and get advice on possible tourism product development in the host partner’s piloting region.

The sub-purposes were:

- to summarize the results and experiences of the 2nd Bilateral Walkshop in Slovenia in order to give further inspirations for piloting partners who did not participate in the 2nd bilateral walkshop on the sustainable tourism product development
- to create the SWOT analysis for the host partner’s piloting region (Motovun, Pazin) with an active participation of the visiting partners
- to identify the main problems of the region and find possible solutions for that

Based on the findings of the Critical Classroom especially the host partner, but also the visiting partners got on inspiration on how to solve the existing problem in a given region, and how to create and promote new products that are indirectly in line with the project’s objectives (mainly with the 2nd). The walkshop in Croatia helped them in creating the Visions and Strategies, and also their pilots that will have direct connections with the main objectives of INSiGHTS.

Transnational impact (max. 1500 characters)

The Critical Classroom was important for Lag “Central Istria”, because they and their stakeholders got direct feedback from experienced tourism actors from 9 other countries. Some of the problems identified for the host partner’s region are also relevant for other piloting partners, thus the possible solution of these problems can also be implemented by the visiting partners.

The summary of the Critical Classroom will be published on the INSiGHTS website, thus will be available for downloading and the information could be used by anyone even outside of the Danube region.

The knowledge gained in the Critical Classroom, will also be transferred to local level staff members of partners and to regional stakeholders, thus ensuring institutional and stakeholder learning in several countries of Europe.

Contribution to EUSDR actions and/or targets (max. 1500 characters)

For building synergies, capitalise on other similar projects and initiatives and disseminate the results beyond the partnership, PPs participate in at least 4 external thematic external events incl. conferences, workshops or seminars organised by the EUSDR bodies and by other relevant networks and projects. They will present this brand new method (Walkshop, including Critical Classroom) and the main project outputs (Integrated Sustainable Tourism Strategies, Model on slow, green & healthy tourism development) that are based on the knowledge gained through the workshops, including the Critical Classroom.

The final output, the Transnational Policy recommendations (Output 4.3.) will be elaborated based on the knowledge gained in workshops, including the Critical Classroom for national level decision-makers all across the Danube region for meeting the standards and targets set by the EU and particularly the EUSDR policy frameworks. It will also include a review of the EU and national level funding schemes and concrete suggestions for exploiting these sources, as well as an outlook on future capitalisation on the project results in the frame of the PA3 of EUSDR.

Performed testing, if applicable (max. 1000 characters)

Not relevant

Integration and use of the output by the target group (max. 2000 characters)

The representatives of Partners attending the Critical Classroom got new ideas on problem solving, what can be used also in their region.

Moreover, they had an opportunity to meet experts from other countries (e.g. Mladen Vojković). These newly built international relationships could be useful for their future work.

The knowledge gained during the Critical Classroom can also be shared with other staff members of the PPs and of the stakeholder organisations by reporting back to their departments and by briefing decision-makers. Regional stakeholders of Piloting Partners' regions will be also informed about the main findings of the Critical Classroom because of the media coverage of the event (press releases, information on institutional websites, media presence etc.) and via regional stakeholders workshops organised by the Piloting Partners.

The summary of the Critical Classroom will be available on project (and partners) website, so not only the regional stakeholders, but also the wider audience will be able to learn from this event. There will be also a summary about the workshop in the next INSiGHTS newsletter, what will be translated to the national languages of partners, so the stakeholders will be able to use the knowledge gained during this workshop even if they do not understand English.

Geographical coverage and transferability (max. 1500 characters)

The Critical Classroom took place in Croatia, Central Istria region. Participants were stakeholders from Croatia, regional/local institutions and from partner countries (Slovakia, Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia).

The discussion among participants will have a positive impact not only on their home countries, but also on other European countries, because of the transferability of the knowledge gained at this event.

The knowledge gained thanks to this Critical Classroom, and the upcoming strategies based on the knowledge (e.g. outputs like the Guidelines (Output and the Comprehensive Model) can also be implemented by other countries and regions in Europe.

Durability (max. 1500 characters)

All workshops, including the Critical Classroom in Central Istria are durable, because will be of direct benefit of partners. The knowledge gained will be shared with other staff members of the PP organisations by reporting back to the concerned departments and by briefing decision-makers. The regional stakeholders of the partner counties will also be informed about the main findings of the Critical Classroom. The information of this Critical Classroom will be available on the project website free of charge, the method and the context of this workshop can be used by other organisations and other projects not only now, but even after few years.

Synergies with other projects/ initiatives and / or alignment with current EU policies/ directives/ regulations, if applicable (max. 1500 characters)

Not relevant

Output integration in the current political/ economic/ social/ technological/ environmental/ legal/ regulatory framework (max. 2000 characters)

The LAG “Central Istria” will integrate the SWOT analysis and problem solving ideas created during the Critical Classroom to their Regional visions and Integrated Sustainable Tourism Strategies, those hopefully will be approved also by the relevant national authorities.

Some of the project partners of the INSiGHTS project and the stakeholders participating in this workshop are in contact with local decision-makers of their countries. They can implement the ideas and the knowledge gained during this workshop into their new strategies and frameworks.