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How does the Cohesion Policy shape mountains?

REPORT FROM LOCAL WORKSHOPS How do mountain stakeholders perceive the Cohesion Policy?

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Authors: Montana174 partners

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IN A NUTSHELL

This deliverable summarizes the main outcomes of the **14 local workshops** of the Montana174's project that took place between April and September 2022 in the Aragon Region (Spain), Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Region (France), Croatia, Lombardy Region (Italy) and Slovenia. These local workshops aimed to present the impacts of the 2014-2020 Cohesion Policy in mountain areas, as well as the funding opportunities with the 2021-2027 Cohesion Policy in these territories. The workshops also gathered the perceptions and perspectives of mountain residents with respect to the Cohesion Policy.

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INTRODUCTION

The Cohesion Policy is the largest EU investment policy. Indeed, over the 2021-2027, its budget amounts to one third of the overall European budget. In addition, the Cohesion Policy is also the main European policy aimed at ensuring balanced territorial development and reducing regional inequalities.

In article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the European Member States stated that a “particular attention [shall be paid] to mountainous regions”. Mountain areas, because of their geographical, natural and cultural specificities, require dedicated measures that allows to encounter their specific needs and opportunities.

How does this policy do this? Few examples are the Interreg Alpine Space programme, the Cohesion Policy Objective 5 “Europe closer to citizens” or the planning of specific interregional Operational Programmes for mountain areas included by French regions in the 2021-2027 programming period.

These measures, and more broadly most of the funds of the Cohesion Policy, can be used to address the needs of mountain territories and to improve the life of mountain citizens on a wide range of topics, such as climate action, to rural mobility, youth and employment opportunities, innovation and tourism.

However, as stated by the 8th Cohesion Report, the “cohesion in the European Union has improved, but gaps remain” especially in rural regions. One of the reasons why is that mountain people and stakeholders are often not well informed of the existence of the Cohesion Policy funds. In other cases, they lack capacity or skills to access them.

For this reason, the Montana174 project decided to organise local capacity-building workshops in the five regions of the project (Aragon- Spain, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes- France, Croatia, Lombardy- Italy, Slovenia). The core aim of the workshops is to explain to different types of mountain stakeholders how the Cohesion Policy impact their lives and what are the funds available in the 2021-2027 period. The workshops built upon the outputs produced by the project in the first months such as collection of good practices, video testimonials and factsheets on how Cohesion Policy can be used in the mountains over the current programming period.

This report presents the main highlights and discussion outputs of each local workshop. It underlines the stakeholders’ perceptions of the Cohesion Policy, how they would like to use the Cohesion Policy funds in their mountain regions and their suggestions to improve communication on this policy for a better uptake of the funds.

DESCRIPTION OF LOCAL WORKSHOPS

1 Aragon Region (Spain)

1.1 Local workshop in Alcañiz

Place	El Liceo, Alcañiz
Duration	2.30 hours
Date	17 th May 2022
Number of participants	15
Target audience	Mostly citizens and general public. Few representatives from Public Administrations (City hall, County, Provincial Government) and representatives of social organizations.

FORMAT

This workshop has been organised as a face-to-face meeting, with frontal presentation from the organisers followed by a debate with the participants.

DESCRIPTION

Before the day of the event, the Provincial Government of Teruel (PGT) used traditional media – such as radio and press - and social media to communicate about the workshop. Moreover, phone calls have been made to invite relevant stakeholders to join the event.

The workshop took place on 17th May in Alcañiz, that is a small municipality of the Aragon Region with an approximate population of 13,000 people.

The workshop began with a general presentation on the Cohesion Policy and what it means for mountain areas, followed by an overview of the activities carried out by the Montana174 project. Montana174's video testimonials and good practices were presented to participants to make them familiar with the Cohesion Policy in their region and give them more practical examples.



Figure 1. Workshop in Alcañiz

Afterwards, PGT organised a quiz contest via the Kahoot App. Kahoot is an educational phone application used to reinforce people's learning. The quiz was prepared by PGT before the workshop to check if participants had learnt the most important information about the Cohesion Policy presented in the previous participants. Different formats were used for the questions, such as multiple choice, yes/no questions, true/false questions. The question appeared on the presentation screen and each attendee could answer through their mobile phone. The result was very satisfactory since most of the attendees answered positively to most of the questions.

Then, participants have been asked to share some ideas of projects to be implemented in the Aragonese territory via the Slido app. The Slido app allowed attendees to send their project ideas through their own mobile. This information has been then collected by PGT and have been used to facilitate a debate about the Province of Teruel and its needs. The outputs of the discussion are presented in the following section.

By the end of the workshop, printed copies of Montana174 brochures and factsheets were handed over to the participants. In addition, different merchandising products were produced specifically for the workshops (e.g. USB drive, recycled paper notebook and ecological cloth bag) and given to participants.



Figure 2. Brochures of good practices, factsheets and merchandising distributed during the workshop

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

Participants widely discussed about communication and dissemination of the Cohesion Policy in their regions. Participants said both aspects are often missing and, as results, mountain actors have incomplete knowledge on the opportunities provided by the Cohesion Policy in mountains. In other cases, they claim that the jargon used to speak about the Cohesion Policy is too complex and inadequate to inform mountain citizens and the general public.

Participants said that they lack more workshops like the one carried out by PGT and that they would be keen to listen more telling success stories and testimonials in their region.

Moreover, participants underlined that they would also appreciate an individual consulting service that is able to answer to their inquiries with respect to funds and opportunities channelled via the Cohesion Policy.

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

The attendees said that they perceived the Cohesion Policy as a subject is far from their daily lives. This perception is a bit nuanced according to type of stakeholder. In fact, whereas the



general public is generally unaware of Cohesion Policy, technicians and potential applicants know about it, but they think that it is very complicated to apply for Cohesion Policy funds.

For this reason, participants told to be grateful to have had the possibility to learn about it in easy and plain language via Montana174. In particular, they highlighted that it is very useful for them to get to know more on the Cohesion Policy, what initiatives it finances in mountain areas, and how it can further help these territories in the future.

What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

Several suggestions were collected during the workshop:

- Investments to boost mobile coverage in mountain areas
- Initiatives to attract trained or untrained workers to mountain areas
- Training of workers in mountain areas in order to better respond to seasonality's needs
- Developing a strategy for more attractive towns, with a focus on reattracting young people to the mountain areas after they ended their studies
- Innovation in the primary sector

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

Before leaving, PGT distributed a feedback form to all 15 attendees. All participants said they were satisfied by the content of the workshop, and they had learned new things thanks to it. In addition, all participants said they would like to learn more about the Cohesion Policy and its opportunities for mountain areas. Approximately 50% of participants said they would like to apply for the funds of the Cohesion Policy in the future.

With respect to the current communication about the Cohesion Policy, only 33% of participants said they perceive to have appropriate information and support on how to use these funds.

On a latter question on how to improve the communication of the Cohesion Policy, about 86% of the participants said they would like to hear more from success stories and testimonials in their region, 40% would like more or better in person advice and coaching, and 30% asks for more workshop as the one organised by the Montana174 project.

For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.

1.2 Local workshop in Teruel

Place	Museo de Teruel, Teruel
Duration	2.5 hours
Date	18 th May 2022
Number of participants	10
Target audience	Representatives of public entities, general public.

FORMAT

This workshop followed the same format as the one in [Alcañiz](#).

DESCRIPTION

This workshop followed the same schedule as the one in Alcañiz. Therefore, an overall presentation about the Cohesion Policy and the Montana174 was followed by the quiz via the Kahoot mobile app. Moreover, some of key outputs of the projects (good practices, video testimonials) were presented to the participants.



Figure 3. Workshop in Teruel

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

The discussion focused on the lack of communication and dissemination on the Cohesion Policy by the regional authorities. Interestingly, this point was the same discussed by the participants of local workshop in Alcañiz. Moreover, several ideas and suggestions on how to use the Cohesion Policy funds were also at the heart of the group discussion.

Participants decided to focus the discussion on housing, social rentals and incentives for house owners, which is an important issue in this territory. In addition, the discussion talked about community revitalisation as a lever to promote social change. To do this, participants said that more activities should be done in collaboration with the “educational community”,

such as schools or local associations that put learning and teaching at the core of their mission. These actors can promote socio-economic changes in the territory, with the secondary effect to promote territorial cohesion. For instance, more entrepreneurial programmes should be included in schools.

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

Participants said that the Cohesion Policy and other European, national and regional policies should embed a place-based and bottom-up approach. In fact, these areas are different from other territories. Therefore, participants said that citizens should be integrated in the policy-making process when it comes to design laws and measures in rural and mountainous areas. Participants underlined that this is not the case at the moment, as mostly policy-making is top-down. In particular, measures with an impact on mountain areas are usually decided in cities, by people who have little or no knowledge about other types of territories and their needs.

What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

The following ones were collected during the group discussion:

- Support measures for entrepreneurs, such as funds, training, coaching, online tutorials and F.A.Q on Cohesion Policy and funds
- Projects to support the local population, in particular:
 - To develop policies to increase the regulatory flexibility in rural areas
 - To strengthen services of proximity to people
 - To promote the role of associations and neighbours in supporting the social cohesion, for instance via specific training modules for building their capacity to this scope
 - To promote citizen participation in improving the quality of rural services, including housing, social rentals and incentives for rural owners

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The workshop was attended by 10 people. All participants filled the feedback form.

Almost all participants said they were satisfied with the content of the workshop (90%) and they had learnt new things. In addition, all participants told they would like to keep learning on the Cohesion Policy and its opportunities for mountain areas. Approximately 40% of participants would like to apply for the Cohesion Policy funds in the future, 40% said “maybe” and only 20% said they are not interested.

Overall, 90% of participants said they feel to receive adequate information and support from authorities with respect to the Cohesion Policy. This output is contradictory from what emerged from the discussion. One possible explanation is that the misunderstood the question, and replied according to the information that had been given by PGT during the workshop.

To the question “What do you think could be improved in the way Cohesion Policy funding is explained to citizens?”, 60% of participants said they would like to receive more/better in person advice and coaching, followed by “more publicity and information in mass media” (40%) and “ore success stories and testimonies from my region” (40%).

For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.

1.3 Local workshop in Montalbán

Place	Montalbán
Duration	3 hours
Date	25 th May 2022
Number of participants	47
Target audience	General public and citizens from Montabán and the surrounding towns, also some representative from public bodies (e.g. CITA, PGT, City hall)

FORMAT

The format used has been a face-to-face activity in Montalbán. For this event, PGT decided to opt for an informal gathering, in order to attract a higher number of participants, especially from the general public and citizenship. Therefore, a community walk to identify and collect aromatic herbs has been organised in the countryside. To this, it followed an oral presentation and a debate with participants on the Cohesion Policy.



Figure 4. Participants of the local workshop in Montalbán

DESCRIPTION

In the first part of the meeting, participants were learnt on how to identify aromatic herbs in the mountainous areas of Montalbán. To this, it followed a community walk to concretely recognise and collect these herbs. The community walk helped to make participants get to know each other and the organisers, hence it contributed to create a sense of trust and connection.

Afterwards, PGT presented the Montana174 project to participants. In particular, PGT focused on the concrete benefits of the Cohesion Policy in mountain areas, its funds and different tools to present a project idea.

To this, it followed a debate on how to promote job opportunities and make mountain areas attractive for residents, also through the opportunities given by the Cohesion Policy. At the

end of the debate, the organisers presented two recipes with the herbs collected by participants.

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

The discussion with participants went smoothly and it was extremely interactive. Most people already knew about the Montana174 project and had some ideas on the topic. In particular, the discussion focused on improving mobility in these mountainous areas. The topic was due to the fact that the municipality of Montalbán in Teruel is quite isolated, and therefore it suffers from remoteness.

In addition, people discussed about improving job opportunities, promoting entrepreneurship programs in the area. For instance, few project ideas to improve business and professional networks were discussed. To conclude, some people proposed projects on environmental protection.

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

Many participants were already aware of the Montana174 project thanks to the media or because they had already attended other meetings. Through the project, they had learnt a bit more about the Cohesion Policy in their region.

On the other hand, other people admitted that they did not know the project nor the Cohesion Policy. As such, they were totally unfamiliar with the subject. They said that information on European policies hardly reaches rural and mountainous areas. Therefore, they discussed on the urgent need to further raise awareness on the aid that is provided by the Cohesion Policy in mountain areas. In fact, they concluded, it is very unlikely for local people to request such aid without being familiar neither with the concept of the Cohesion Policy nor about the tools it provides.

What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

Participants suggested to create a network of “Cohesion ambassadors”. It’s to say, local people that are informed directly by the regional Managing Authority on the opportunities linked to the Cohesion Policy and that, consequently, are responsible to inform municipalities. Also, they discussed about the creation of a newsletter specialised in the Cohesion Policy, on a national level.

In addition, few other project ideas were proposed during the event in relation to mobility, entrepreneurship and professional networks.



Figure 5. Montana174 brochures disseminated during the event



FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The workshop was attended by 47 people. Due to the large number of people who attended the meeting and the meeting format (in the field), the feedback was collected orally.

The participants were widely satisfied with the activity and the information received, since they learned what the Cohesion Policy was, in addition to its funds and to whom it is directed.

Some of them were interested in knowing more about this Policy, although others kept seeing it far away. Interested persons would like to apply for some Cohesion Policy funding although they did not yet have any concrete projects.

As we have commented above, the participants would like a more direct contact with the Regional Authority to inquire about the funds and the viability of the projects, as well as in-person coaching activities.

For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.

2 Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Region (France)

2.1 Local workshop in Chambéry

Place	La Dynamo, Chambéry
Duration	Half-a-day (09:00 AM – 12:00 PM), 06 th July 2022
Date	6 th July 2022
Number of participants	20
Target audience	Representatives from local authorities (different departments) associations, businesses

FORMAT

Different techniques and methods were used to facilitate the discussion with the participants, such as testimonials, presentations, open debate and a session of questions and answers.

DESCRIPTION

The workshop was structured in five parts:

1. Introduction of the session: First of all, a context of the session was given, then a presentation of the workshop and the Montana174 project was presented by Aletvia Solorio Real, *European project assistant of the city of Grenoble*. CIED gave a panorama on the issues and needs in mountain areas. In addition, the Montana174's capacity-building video of Yannick Neuder, *Vice-President of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Region in charge of Higher Education, Research, Innovation, Digital and European Funds*, was shown to start the session and the educational factsheet of the region was also presented.

2. Presentation of examples financed by the Cohesion Policy: The video testimonials of Montana 174 were shown to illustrate practical examples of how the Cohesion Policy invests in mountain regions. Then, Marine Bianciotto, *Europe and International Project Manager of the city of Chambéry*, presented Dynamo. Dynamo is a project that received the funds of the Cohesion Policy and it is located in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Region. This project is in progress.

3. Exchange with the participants: This session was dedicated to interact and understand participants' perception on the Cohesion Policy. What do they expect? Would they like to present a project idea in the future? An open debate was organised to give an answer to these questions.



Figure 6. Presentation of the regional educational factsheet during the local workshop in Chambéry

4. Presentation of the Interreg ALCOTRA programme: Elsa Nicolosi, *Coordinator of the ALCOTRA cross-border cooperation programme*, presented this programme and showed examples of projects financed in the territory through it. She gave all the details so that project leaders can respond to the next call.

5. Questions and answers: This was a moment dedicated to solving all the questions and also the time for the participants to fill in the feedback.



Figure 7. Pictures from the local workshop in Chambéry

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

Most of the participants were really interested in the Cohesion Policy and all the topics that it funds. They said that more workshops -like the one in Chambéry- should be organised and they expressed their interest to know more on how the Cohesion Policy invests in the cultural field.

In addition, participants said that several projects are funded by the Interreg ALCOTRA programme in Chambéry. However, they would like to receive more support by their own regional Operational Programme. Indeed, they claimed that, to apply to the Interreg ALCOTRA programme, it is important to have a knowledge of Italian (in addition to French) and this is not the case for many of them.

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

Participants said they feel that it is not easy to access the funds of the Cohesion Policy. The application process – they said – it is sometimes very hard and not intuitive for those who are not experienced on it. In particular, they underlined the application process is for them as a “millefeuille system”, meaning that it is composed by several layers and actions interlinked with each other and almost never ending.

What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

- More priority to projects related to culture
- Initiatives that enable social inclusion
- More dedicated calls for the revitalisation of the territory



FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

There were 20 participants at the workshop. All of them filled in the feedback form given at the end of the event.

Based on the analysis of their feedback forms, it emerged that 100% of attendees were satisfied by the content of the workshop and all of them learnt things they did not know from it. The large majority (85%) would like to learn more on the Cohesion Policy and its opportunities for mountain territories.

On the question on “Generally, do you feel you are receiving appropriate information and support from local authorities about how to use Cohesion Policy funding?”, answers have been quite diverse. About 40% said they believe to have somehow appropriate information and support, 35% said the information and support they receive are from more than average to very adequate. The remaining 25% said they feel like not having appropriate information and support.

60% of participants said they would like to apply for the Cohesion Policy in the future, while the remaining 40% replied “maybe” that would do that.

On how to improve the communication on the Cohesion Policy, most participants (85%) agreed that they would like to have more workshops as the one they attended. The other most-voted options have been: “A simplification of the terminology used (too much jargon)” (65%) and “More/better in person advice and coaching” (60%).

For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.

2.2 Local workshop in Grenoble

Place	Maison de l'international de Grenoble
Duration	3 workshops of 3 hours
Date	07 th , 8 th and 12 th July 2022
Number of participants	118 organised across 3 workshops. Respectively, the participants for the three workshops were: 37, 35, 46.
Target audience	Young people from the Alpine region aged between 15 and 18 years old who are involved in the French Universal Service.

FORMAT

It was an interactive and progressive workshop, with playful activities and facilitation methods. The target audience was unfamiliar with the European Union and its programmes, therefore the workshop started slowly. It went from providing general information on the territory and the European Union, until more giving more detailed information on the Cohesion Policy in mountain areas.

DESCRIPTION

The three workshops were structured along the following sessions:

1. General presentation: about the city of Grenoble and the specificities of its territory, as well its European dimension (i.e. the links with other European regions, how European policies and funds impact people's daily life).

2. Playful activities: to progressively acquire knowledge on the European Union, its institutions and how it works. This part was delivered in partnership with the "[Young Europeans](#)" association, a non-profit organisation with 1,000 volunteers in France. This association works together with citizens on the ground and schools in order to bring people closer to the European Union.

3. Moving debate: on the specificities of the Alpine territory and the role of Cohesion Policy. A moving debate is when a proposal is put to a group and then participants are asked to physically take a stand for or against it, going to one side of the room or the other, corresponding to the affirmation or the negation.

4. Presentation of the Montana174 project and the 2021-2027 Cohesion Policy: by Tanguy Specq, *Europe Direct Isère Savoie Manager*. The Montana174's regional and thematic brochures were presented.

5. Sharing good practices of the 2014-2020 Cohesion Policy: the video testimonials of Grenoble, Chambéry and Annecy realised by CIED were screened in order to illustrate projects on the regional territory financed by this policy.



Figure 8. Pictures from the local workshop in Grenoble

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

The discussions of the three workshops converged towards two main outcomes. First, the lack of knowledge about the European Union and its funding opportunities by the people involved. Second, participants' interest on the possibilities that are made available by the Cohesion Policy.

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

Participants did not really know about the Cohesion Policy. They feel distanced from the European Union and Cohesion Policy as if these concepts did not really concern them. They said that they do not perceive the European Union as really present and close their lives.

However, alongside with the workshops' interventions, participants have partially changed their attitude towards the subject. Indeed, they been particularly interested in learning about how the Cohesion Policy can support youth employment and more generally youth.

What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

- A better maintenance of existing hiking paths in the area of Grenoble
- Increase the biking lanes
- Support youth to access and find their first job as done by the EU-funded project "Prvi izziv" in Slovenia and reported by the Montana174's good practice on youth and employment

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

To collect the feedback of the participants, CIED opted to use a dynamic methodology. Each answer was assigned to a colour and thus for each question the participants chose a coloured card. The votes were counted on the spot by CIED.

Approximately 96% of participants said to be more than satisfied about the content of the workshops and about the same share (97%) claimed that had learnt new things.



On the question “Would you like to learn more on the Cohesion Policy and its opportunities in mountains?”, the answers have been quite divided among “yes” (28%), “maybe” (53%) and “no” (19%).

Likewise, on the following question “Do you plan to apply for some Cohesion Policy funding in the future?”, the answers have been quite different. 38% said “yes”, 38% said “maybe” and the remaining 24% said “no”.

More than half of participants (53%) said they feel like not receiving appropriate information and support on how to use the Cohesion Policy funding. About 22% of participants believe they have adequate information and support and 25%.

In order to improve how the Cohesion Policy is communicated to citizens, the most voted recommendations by participants have been to simplify the language used (73%) and to organise more workshop (63%).

For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.

3 Croatia

3.1 Local workshop in Delnice

Place	High School Delnice, Lujzinska road 42, 51300 Delnice
Duration	Half-a-day (10:00 AM – 2:00 PM)
Date	26 th April 2022
Number of participants	32
Target audience	Young people in a local secondary school in the Croatian mountains

FORMAT

A mix of different formats has been used for the carrying out of this event. At the beginning **general presentations** on the core topics have been carried out followed by **group work** and **open discussions**. Outputs of the Montana174 project, such as videos and brochures, had been used to engage with attendees and raise their interest.

DESCRIPTION

The workshop has been structured across 5 main sessions.

1. Welcome speech and introduction about the Cohesion Policy

In the first part of the event, Dubravka Kolarić Zatezalo, the President of the Local Development Agency PINS opened the meeting. She made a brief presentation about PINS, to get attendees familiar with the scope of the organisation. Then, she presented Montana174 project and explained what is the Cohesion Policy, how it works and why it is important for Croatia and other members of the European Union.

2. Storytelling and sharing good practices

This section was intended to raise the interest of participants towards the Cohesion Policy, through the showcase of practical examples, using videos and distributing the visual materials prepared earlier by the project (e.g. [brochures of good practices](#)). To this end, Josipa Liker, Project Manager at PINS, presented some examples of good of projects and initiatives funded by the Cohesion Policy in the Croatian mountains over the period 2014-2020. Montana174 thematic brochures were distributed to participants and a project from each was presented. These included examples of projects funded by the Cohesion Policy in mountain areas across



Figure 9. Presentation from PINS' staff members



all Europe. Then, Josipa Liker also showcased the [3 video testimonials](#) shot in Croatia, and [two other Montana174 video testimonials](#) from other mountain regions.

3. Presenting the opportunities provided by the Cohesion Policy

Natalija Mamula, Project Manager at PINS, presented the opportunities linked to the Cohesion Policy over the 2021-2027 period. To this end, she showed the [Montana174 video](#) with guidelines for project applications in the Primorje - Gorski Kotar County as well as the [Croatian factsheet](#) for mountain stakeholder. In addition, Natlajja Mamula introduced the Montana174's thematic factsheets with examples of measures that will be financed by the Cohesion Policy in mountains over the 2021-2027 period, with respect to the 5 main themes identified by this project.

4. Group task

During this part, PINS asked participants to subdivide into groups. Each group had to then to reflect and discuss upon examples of projects that could be financed by Cohesion Policy funds at the local level. This session aimed to make participants to capitalizing on the information gathered during the previous part of the workshop.

5. Group discussion and gathering participants' ideas and opinions

Based on the group task, PINS asked participants to present their ideas on potential projects to be financed by the Cohesion Policy locally. Then, a general discussion has been opened around the different ideas for future projects. To conclude, PINS asked participants to reflect upon what they learnt from the workshop.

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

Most of participants were students of the High School of Economics (1st-4th grade), so most of them were interested in actively taking part in the discussion and they were asking lot of questions. The main outcomes of the discussion with the participants concerned their **desire to improve the functioning of the local community**, in particular by supporting the social and cultural life of Delnice.



Figure 10. Students participating to Montana174 workshop in Delnice

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

The 4th grade students were already familiar with the concept of Cohesion Policy, especially because they had heard about it through the media with respect to some large projects in Croatia (Peljesac Bridge, Rimac). Students perceived the Cohesion Policy as something positive and good for the local community as well as for the whole country and the European Union. They said to be aware that many projects are financed through the funds provided by Cohesion Policy. After having heard about the Montana174 examples of projects financed in Croatia, they came to the conclusion that many other projects are financed from Cohesion Policy funds at the local level.

What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

- Improving and better equipping of the sports centre in Delnice
- Opening the cinema
- Opening a space for socialising / reading / listening to music / playing games and board games at local levels
- Starting a multimedia centre
- Opening of a soup kitchen and social trade
- Expanding and improving the conditions in the dog shelter in Lič

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The workshop was attended by 32 people. All attendees filled out a feedback form. Overall, the results from this workshop show that the majority of participants were satisfied by this workshop (72%) and about 85% claimed that they had learnt from a little to a lot new things during the meeting.

About 25% of attendees claimed they would certainly like to hear something about the Cohesion Policy and 56% might want to keep learning about it. Moreover, more than 80% of participants state that they might want to apply and certainly apply for the Cohesion Policy funds in the future.



With respect to the current communication on the Cohesion Policy, about 72% of attendees said they feel like receiving appropriate information on this topic and how to make use of the funds. To further improve the communication on the Cohesion Policy in the future, attendees said that they would like to see in particular more workshops with local stakeholders, and a higher publicity and information in mass media.

For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.

3.2 Local workshop in MORAVICE

Place	Railway Technical School Moravice, Školska 2a, 51325, Moravice
Duration	Half-a-day (12:25 AM – 3:00 PM)
Date	28 th April 2022
Number of participants	25
Target audience	Young people in a local secondary school in the Croatian mountains

FORMAT

The same format of the workshop in Delnice was adopted.

DESCRIPTION

The workshop was structured along 5 main sessions. The structure and content of the interventions was the same of the workshop in Delnice.

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

Most of participants were students at the High School of Economics (1st-4th grade), so most of them were interested in actively taking part in the discussion and they were asking lot of questions. Participants reflected in particular on how to improve the wellbeing of local residents, from the youngest to the elderly, and supporting environmental consciousness and actions. The list of presented ideas is presented in the following paragraphs.

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

A part of the 4th grade students was already familiar with the concept of Cohesion Policy. They had heard about some large projects it had financed some large projects in Croatia (Peljesac Bridge, Rimac) in the media. Overall, students who knew about it, said they perceive the Cohesion Policy as something positive and good for the local community as well as for the whole country and the European Union.



Figure 11. Group discussion (left) and PINS presentation (right) in Delnice

What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

- Organising workshops for primary school children on the importance of preserving the local environment, in collaboration with youth associations active in the territory;
- Increasing the availability of e-bikes and e-scooters to improve mobility and support more environmentally-friendly options to commute;
- Creating a mobile trade and a mobile clinic (assistance to the elderly),
- Renovating the football field

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The workshop was attended by 25 people. All attendees filled out a feedback form. Overall, the feedback from this workshop shows that the majority of participants were satisfied by this workshop (84%) and about 64% claimed that they had learnt new things.

36% of attendees claimed they would like to learn more something on the Cohesion Policy and 24% wants to apply for the Cohesion Policy funds in the future.

However, approximately 50% of participants said they feel they do not receive the appropriate information on this topic nor support from the local authorities. In the future, attendees claimed that more workshops with local actors as well as publicity and information on mass media should be used to explain the Cohesion Policy to local citizens.

For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.

3.3 Local workshop in Plaški

Place	Municipality of Plaški, Ulica 143. dom. pukovnije 5, 47304, Plaški
Duration	10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Date	29 th April 2022
Number of participants	11
Target audience	Local mountain stakeholders, including associations, civil society organisations, professionals, representatives from authorities

FORMAT

A mix of different formats has been used for the carrying out of this event, ranging from **frontal presentations** to **group work** and **open discussions**. Outputs of the Montana174 project, such as videos and brochures, had been used to engage with attendees and raise their interest.

DESCRIPTION

The workshop was structured along 5 main sessions. The structure and content of the interventions was the same of the workshop in Delnice.

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

Participants' discussion mainly reflected upon initiatives and measures to answer to some of the challenges at local level, such as elderly care and ageing population, mobility of residents, alternative forms of tourism, and work opportunities. The full list of ideas is presented in the paragraphs below.

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

All participants in the event were familiar with the concept of Cohesion Policy, some through television, and some because they worked as civil servants at the Municipality of Plaški. They stated to have a positive perception of the Cohesion Policy, with positive impacts for their local community, as well as the country and Europe as a whole. Participants were already aware that many projects are financed through the funds provided by Cohesion Policy.



Figure 12. Workshop in Plaški

What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

- Opening a nursing home with full-time care to take care of the large share of elderly population in the town;
- Purchasing a van to transport people who need it (for any reason), in particular elderly people but also to overcome the mobility challenges due to the presence of many scattered villages away from central towns and cities;
- Supporting projects to encourage the development of tourist activities, for instance by setting regular buses that would transport tourists from Plaški to Plitvice Lakes National Park;
- Fostering job creation, in particular to counter the emigration of young people.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The workshop was attended by 11 people. All attendees filled out a feedback form. Overall, the outputs of the feedback have been highly positive. All attendees said they were satisfied with the workshop, and 73% said they learnt new things from it. More than 50% of attendees replied they would like to continue learning more on the Cohesion Policy.

Similarly, more than 50% said they would like to apply for the funds of the Cohesion Policy in the future, and the remaining 50% said they might do it.

With respect to the appropriateness of the information and support local stakeholders receive on the Cohesion Policy, answers have been quite different, with slightly more people saying that this information is inappropriate and very low support (30%) or average in terms of support and information received (37%).

All respondents claimed that more physical workshops should be foreseen to explain the funds of the Cohesion Policy to citizens. For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.

4 Lombardy Region (Italy)

4.1 Local workshop in Galliate Lombardo

Place	City Hall of Galliate Lombardo
Duration	1 hour
Date	12 th September 2002
Number of participants	13
Target audience	Mostly adults

FORMAT

Capacity building workshop: specific training dedicated to administrators, organised in-person and online simultaneously. It also aimed at outlining the first steps for creating a project based on needs analysis, partnership development, call identification and proposal development. First of all, an introduction of Montana174, followed by different presentations. Space was made for questions and open discussions and feedback sheets were distributed.

DESCRIPTION

On the evening of 12 September 2022, in Galliate Lombardo, a town of Lombardy Region, the responsible for Italy of the Montana 174 project, Daniela Masotti (ERSAF Lombardia) and the representative of Archidata, Emiliano Bona, illustrated the Montana 174 project and the meaning of the European cohesion funds through a presentation, showing the objectives of the Cohesion Policy and the planned programmes in Lombardy also bringing figures and examples of possible projects that can be activated with the support of the EU in Lombardy's mountains. A special focus was made on the cooperation programmes and Interreg programmes. Among the audience were various authorities from the Lombard municipality of Galliate Lombardo and some employees of ERSAF and a technical staff of region Lombardy. The basis of the event was to train a small administration that did not have experience in applying to such funds. Participants discussed their needs, and it was possible to both support them in understanding what kind of cohesion funding channels they could refer to, and in how they could build viable partnerships or where to find contacts for support. This was followed by a question and discussion phase with experts invited as speakers and participants. After the meeting, an aperitif with mountain products was offered.

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

The introduction started with the question: "what do you know about Cohesion Policy?". Only few people knew the topic, which was then explained through practical examples. The discussion focused on how to build a project addressing the needs of the area, looking at the most relevant fund and how to properly structure a project. Another issue discussed was the functioning of the budget in case of selection of a project.

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

At first, participants knew almost nothing about the Cohesion Policy. During the workshop, they got curious about it but believe that it is overall not enough promoted.

What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

- improving tourism structures in mountain areas;
- creating more spaces dedicated to young people;
- supporting vulnerable groups, such as children, vulnerable families and homeless people.



Figure 13. Workshop in Galliate Lombardo

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The feedback was collected in written form at the end of the presentation. 8 feedback forms were collected. Most participants were highly satisfied and learned something new. Almost everyone thought that Cohesion Policy should be better advertised and expect other workshops like this one.

For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.

4.2 Local workshop in Valfurva

Place	Rifugio Berni, passo Gavia, Mountain Hut in Valfurva
Duration	1h
Date	22 nd September 2022
Number of participants	16 + some tourist (we were in a hut)
Target audience	Mostly adults, but also some 20's aged people

FORMAT

The workshop was held during an educational tour of the Interreg Italy-Switzerland E-Bike Alpexperience Project. The workshop was both face-to-face and online. First of all, an introduction of Montana174, followed by different presentations. Space was made for questions and open discussions and feedback sheets were distributed.

DESCRIPTION

In Valfurva, Daniela Masotti (ERSAF Lombardia) and the representative of Archidata, Antonella Bertolotti, presented Monta 174 and the objectives of the Cohesion Policy, bringing figures and examples of possible projects that can be activated with the support of the EU in Lombardy's mountains. Ms Bertolotti was remotely presenting, thanks to a router installed in the mountain hut thanks to Cohesion Policy funds within the AS project VETTA. This helped giving a practical example of Cohesion Policy benefits.

Participants were individuals who are directly or indirectly familiar with European projects and to some extent the Cohesion Policy funds. This enabled an interesting debate on possible opportunities and critical issues when using the funds. A small number of journalists were also present.



Figure 14. Workshop in Valfurva

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

The introduction started with the question: “what do you know about Cohesion Policy?”. A few people knew the Cohesion Policy, although they often work in AS projects or Interreg projects. Looking at the results of feedback sheets, participants were very satisfied and interested.

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

Cohesion policy was not well known, nor were the main funding programmes. However, they found some of the projects presented very interesting, as they provided a concrete understanding of the possible impact of these funds on the territory. In general, they believe that Cohesion Policy should be better advertised and that more concrete examples and results achieved through the Cohesion Policy should be promoted.

What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

- investing in slow tourism in the mountains;
- Making mountain areas a strong axis of funding programmes.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The feedback was collected in written form at the end of the presentation. 8 feedback forms were collected. Most participants were highly satisfied and learned something new. Almost everyone thought that Cohesion Policy should be better advertised and expect other workshops like this one. Participants discovered how important and concrete are the development actions carried out in the mountains.

For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.

4.3 Local workshop in Chiesa Valmalenco

Place	Cinema of Chiesa Valmalenco
Duration	4 h
Date	28 th September 2022
Number of participants	Registered 20 + more than 30 in the room not registered
Target audience	Mostly adults with a scientific background, elderly mountain citizens

FORMAT

The workshop was a part of the conclusion of the Interreg project b-ICE& Heritage that aims to develop different techniques to valorise mountain heritage. First of all, an introduction was made on cooperation programmes, followed by a presentation of the b-ICE& Heritage project and the situation of mountain glacier in relation with climate change. Then, the Montana 174 project and the Cohesion Policy were presented. Space was made for questions and open discussions. Feedback sheets were distributed at the entrance of the workshop but unfortunately only few people saw them.

DESCRIPTION

On the afternoon of 28th September 2022, in Chiesa Valmalenco, at the foot of the highest peak in Lombardy and the Central Alps, Daniela Masotti (ERSAF Lombardia), presented the Montana174 project and the Cohesion Policy. Interreg programmes as well as ESF+ and ERDF funds were especially presented, as well as the Italian strategy for inner areas, most of which are mountainous.

As the workshop took place as part of an event linked to climate change, Daniela put particular emphasis on explaining to what extent the Cohesion Policy can contribute to climate action, bringing data, naming programmes, and giving some practical examples. In particular, examples collected through Montana174 on sustainable tourism and climate change were presented. During the workshop, a famous Italian researcher and journalist, Luca Mercalli, was present and contributed to the discussion.



Figure 15. Workshop in Chiesa Valmalenco

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

The introduction started with a short presentation of the European Week of Cooperation and with the question: “what do you know about Cohesion Policy?” and their impacts on mountain areas. The discussion focused on whether the Cohesion Policy funds provide concrete support and where. Participants were also interested in the synergies to be developed with other initiatives. Moreover, participants discussed whether these funds could be used to encourage young people moving in mountain areas.

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

At first, participants knew almost nothing about the Cohesion Policy. In general, they believe that Cohesion Policy is not enough promoted. At the same time, participants were quite sceptic about the concrete impact of Cohesion Policy.

What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

- developing strategies for more living and vibrant mountain areas;
- encouraging behaviour change in order to limit the increase of temperatures;
- finding solutions regarding the impact of ski stations and tourism on climate change (although the workshop took place in one of the most important ski areas in east Lombardy).

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The feedback was collected in written form at the end of the presentation. Only 3 feedback forms were collected, one of them by the famous Italian researcher and journalist Luca Mercalli.

For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.

5 Slovenia

5.1 Local workshop in Limbuš

Place	Izletniška Kmetija Tikva, Lackova 267, 2341 Limbuš
Duration	5:00 PM–8:00 PM, 16 th May 2022
Date	16 th May 2022
Number of participants	20
Target audience	Potential beneficiaries, in particular tourism providers

FORMAT

A mix of different formats was used to run the event. **Frontal presentations, storytelling and open discussions.** Montana174 videos, factsheets and brochures have been used to engage with attendees and raise their interest.

DESCRIPTION

The workshop has been structured across 4 main sessions.

1. Welcome speech and introduction about the Cohesion Policy

In the first part of the event Amna Potočnik opened the meeting. She made a short presentation of the Local Development Agency for Podravje – Maribor. Nives Roter presented the Montana 174 project, its aims and the benefits and explained why Cohesion Policy is important for the development of Podravje region and Slovenia and how it contributes to mountain development.

2. Storytelling and sharing good practices

This section was intended to raise the interest of participants towards the Cohesion Policy, through the showcase



Figure 16. Workshop in Limbuš

of practical examples, using videos and distributing the visual materials prepared during the Montana 174 project (e.g. [brochures of good practices](#)).

Amna Potočnik presented good practices collected within the Montana174 project as well as pointed out other initiatives that benefited the tourism sector, especially the SMEs. Within the Operational Programme for Cohesion Policy 2014–2020 the specific instrument was developed that simplified application and implementation of the small-scale projects (up to 9.999 EUR) for which the SMEs obtained the vouchers (for digitalisation, market research, export readiness, Intellectual Property Rights...). This example shows that the SMEs regardless their seats are able to apply for the European funds.



Figure 17. Montana174 brochures disseminated during the workshop

All [3 video testimonials](#) of good practices were presented to the participants and thematic brochures distributed and shortly explained.

Then, Mr Andrej Glažar, co-founder of Borgla d.o.o., presented the brandmark Kefirko (fermentation jar), which was in part funded by the Cohesion Policy to enlarge its production. This intervention served to illustrate a practical example on how the Cohesion Policy funds can be used as well as to encourage attendees to participate in public calls, linked to the implementation of the Cohesion Policy in Slovenia. He also highlighted the blind spots in Municipal calls that should be committed in the future.

3. Presenting the opportunities provided by Cohesion Policy

Amna Potočnik presented the opportunities linked to the Cohesion Policy over the 2021–2027 period and highlighted the five objectives and opportunities that can be observed in the draft Operational Programme for Cohesion Policy 2021–2027, prepared for the whole Slovenia (both NUTS 2 regions: East and West). The [video with State Secretary Monika Kirbiš Rojs](#) about Cohesion Policy was screened. Moreover, Nives Roter showcased the Montana174 thematic factsheets with concrete examples of measures that will be financed by the Cohesion Policy in mountains over the 2021–2027 period, with respect to the 5 main themes identified by project.

4. Discussion: for more information, refer to the section below.

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

In the discussion round the participants presented their experiences in public calls, financed through the European Cohesion Policy, especially for the tourism infrastructure. The participants also expressed the need for more green and digital infrastructure as well as services, as example: small wind power plant, renovation of mountain hut/lodge, networking between the producers etc.

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

All participants have already heard of Cohesion Policy, some of them also received funds. They had a positive opinion and perception of the Cohesion Policy, with positive impacts for their local community.

What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

There was a need pointed out to intensify networking not only within the providers but mostly with the public representatives such as regional development agencies, who can not only be the info source but can also structure the constructive dialogue with the ministerial staff.

Moreover, the tourism providers are aware that for the current guests the offer has to be valuable, healthy and green and these can be achieved only in cooperation among them and with the local producers. Therefore, further cooperation and capacity-building to green their offer could be the subject of a future project.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

20 participants attended the workshop. All attendees filled out a feedback form. Overall, the outputs of the feedback have been highly positive. Most of attendees said they were satisfied with the workshop, and 16 attendees (80 %) said they learnt new things from it. 80 % of attendees replied they would like to continue learning more on the Cohesion Policy.

More than a half (60 %) said they would like to apply for the funds of the Cohesion Policy in the future. Most of respondents agree that is important to improve more publicity and information in mass media and 50 % said more success stories and testimonies from their region should be presented.

Almost half of them claimed that more workshops should be foreseen to explain the funds of the Cohesion Policy to citizens.

For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.

5.2 Local workshop in Maribor

Place	University of Maribor, Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Maribor
Duration	10:30 AM–13:00 PM, 25 th May 2022
Date	25 th May 2022
Number of participants	15
Target audience	Students

FORMAT

The same format for the workshop as in [Limbuš](#) has been applied to this event.

DESCRIPTION

The workshop has been structured across 4 main sessions, as for the workshop in [Limbuš](#). The only exception has been that the Mr Andrej Glažar, co-founder of Borgla d.o.o., did not participate to this workshop. For more details, please refer to [Limbuš](#)' workshop.



Figure 18. Workshop in Maribor

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

Most of the participants were students of the Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences, so most of them were interested in the topic and were participating in the discussion with questions. The focus of the discussion went on mobility and environment.

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

Most of the students have heard of the Cohesion Policy and were familiar with it. The participants perceive the Cohesion Policy as the opportunity to jointly (within different organisations) implement the ideas shaped in projects that would not be possible to do it without the external support. Due to the extensive public relations of the Managing Authority during the whole Period 2014-2020 the students were aware of the possibilities that many organisations used to develop new and useful ideas.



What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

The students were perfectly in line with the objectives of the Cohesion policy and for the mountain region they suggest that e-mobility and environmentally friendly measures should be introduced on national, regional as well as on local level.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The workshop was attended by 15 people. All attendees filled out a feedback form.

Overall, the feedback was, that most of attendees said they were satisfied with the workshop, and 13 attendees (87 %) said they learnt new things from it. 60 % of attendees replied they would like to continue learning more on the Cohesion Policy. 80% said they could maybe apply for the funds of the Cohesion Policy in the future.

Most of attendees agree that is important to improve publicity and information in mass media and almost a half of participants said that more success stories and testimonies in their region should be presented.

For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.

5.3 Local workshop in Ruše

Place	Zavod Rast Ruše, Mariborska cesta 3, Ruše
Duration	12:00 AM–14:300 PM, 10 th June 2022
Date	10 th June 2022
Number of participants	13
Target audience	Representatives of municipalities, tourism organisations and tourism providers

FORMAT

The same format for the workshop as in Limbuš has been applied to this event.

Description

The workshop has been structured across 4 main sessions, as for the workshop in [Limbuš](#). The only exception has been that the Mr Andrej Glažar, co-founder of Borgla d.o.o., did not participate to this workshop. For more details, please refer to [Limbuš](#)' workshop



Figure 19. Workshop in Ruše

DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS

What are the main outcomes of the discussion with participants?

The representatives of Committee of the Regions dr. Ivan Žagar (former Minister for European Policy and Regional Development of Slovenia) and the alternate member Saša Aleksander Arsenovič (mayor of Municipality Maribor and president of East Slovenia Cohesion Region – NUTS II), Msc Boris Podvršnik, mayor of the Municipality Zreče and Msc Bojan Borovnik,

mayor of Municipality Mislinja as well as the representatives of other municipalities and tourism organisations and providers were lively discussing the Cohesion Policy in Slovenia, compared the regional development implementation in 2007–2014, 2014 –2020 and the current period.

What are their perceptions on the Cohesion Policy?

They agreed that the possibility, which was introduced in 2007–2014, of participation of the municipalities in all priorities and measures did greatly benefit also the mountain areas, which are on the border with Italy and Austria. In the period 2014 – 2020 a new instrument for the implementation of regional development policy was introduced but limited the possibility of local communities to apply for the subsidies and grants to few measures of the Operational Programme for the Cohesion Policy. In the 2021– 2027 the Operational Programme is still in the draft form but limited possibilities of the so called endogenous regional policy by dividing the measures for urban areas and the rest of local communities, which is not in line with the polycentric development model of Slovenia.

In addition, regional development is in last decade limited to the European Funds, the national budget is provided only for the remote area. Although Slovenia has the national strategy for 2030, the so-called Development Plan was not introduced. The representatives also agreed that there is a need to divide the Cohesion Policy for East and West and manifest it in two Operational Programmes but these was not the case neither in 2014–2020 nor it will be in 2021–2027. However, the participants were aware that the West Cohesion region is in transition due to the Ljubljana Urban Region, which is the capital centre of Slovenia but adjoining municipalities around the capital are also less developed (e.g. from the point of GDP p.c.). As the mountain area in Slovenia does cover a lot of the country, the possibility to introduce a specific operational programme could be discussed in the future – 2028 and beyond. This will enable remote mountain areas to stop the depopulation as well as to enhance the development in different industries such as wood, tourism etc.

What are their suggestions for the projects/initiatives/priorities that could be financed by the Cohesion Policy at local/regional level?

The representatives of three regions, joining their development possibilities in the Pohorje Partnership is a first and most advanced cooperation partnership between three regions, municipalities, tourism providers and tourism operators in Slovenia that prepared a joined strategy and action plan for 2020 –2030 that will benefit the mountain areas in Slovenia.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The workshop was attended by 13 people. All attendees filled out a feedback form. The feedback was, that most of attendees said they were satisfied with the workshop.

Almost all attendees have plan to apply for the funds of the Cohesion Policy in the future.

Most of them agree that is important to improve publicity and information in mass media, more success stories and testimonies in their region should be presented and more workshops about Cohesion Policy.

For the detailed feedback form, please see Annex 1.



CONCLUSION (Euromontana)

The 14 workshops organised by Montana174 partners in mountain areas gathered a total of 405 participants. On the total of participants, 40% were quite satisfied and 29% highly satisfied with the content of these workshops. In addition, 39% of participants declared they learned new things during the workshops. It seems that these sessions have raised the curiosity of these citizens, as 38% of all participants also say they want to learn more about Cohesion Policy in the future.

In terms of access to information, participants' responses were more varied. Some said they did not receive enough information on Cohesion Policy funds, while an equivalent number said they were moderately satisfied, and others were very satisfied with the level of information they are exposed to. Given the diversity of audiences at the workshops - ranging from administrative staff to hikers – such result is not unexpected.

Interestingly, in order to raise awareness of Cohesion Policy, 26% of participants said that other workshops such as those organised by the Montana partners174 should be held, thus demonstrating the importance of these grassroots actions. 20% also thought that the terminology should be simplified and 16% replied that more publicity should be given in the mass media.

The workshops organised within the framework of Montana174 have therefore helped to better inform mountain citizens about the Cohesion Policy. They are looking for clear information and examples from their region that can illustrate the interest of the Cohesion Policy.

The ideas developed by the participants, both regarding better communication and regarding projects to be financed in the mountains, can serve as a basis for all Montana partners174 but also for mountain regions in general to better target the needs of mountain people.



Annex 1. Feedback form (consolidated)

<u>Responsible partner</u>	<u>CIED</u>	<u>CIED</u>	<u>ERSAF</u>	<u>ERSAF</u>	<u>ERSAF</u>	<u>PINS</u>	<u>PINS</u>	<u>PINS</u>	<u>RDAPM</u>	<u>RDAPM</u>	<u>RDAPM</u>	<u>PGT</u>	<u>PGT</u>	<u>PGT</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>Location of the workshop</u>	Grenoble	Chambéry	Galliate Lombardo	Valfurva	Chiesa Valmalenco	Delnice	Moravice	Plaski	Limbus	Hoce-Maribor	Ruše	Alcañiz	Teruel	Montalbán		
<u>Participants</u>	118	20	13	16	50	32	25	11	20	15	13	15	10	47	405	
<u>Planned participants in the GA</u>	50	20	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	40	40	25	445	
<u>Feedback</u>																
<u>Question 1 - Question 1: How much were you satisfied with the content of this local workshop? (1 - not at all, 5 - absolutely)</u>																
<u>1</u>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	1	<u>0%</u>
<u>2</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	<u>0%</u>
<u>3</u>	0	5	0	0	0	8	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	N/A	19	<u>5%</u>
<u>4</u>	8	76	2	4	0	15	15	7	7	11	8	4	5	N/A	162	<u>40%</u>
<u>5</u>	12	37	6	4	3	8	6	4	12	3	5	11	5	N/A	116	<u>29%</u>
<u>Question 2: Did you learn new things from this workshop? (1- not at all, 5- absolutely)</u>																<u>74%</u>
<u>1</u>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	0	<u>0%</u>
<u>2</u>	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	6	<u>1%</u>
<u>3</u>	5	3	1	0	0	9	8	3	4	2	2	0	1	N/A	38	<u>9%</u>
<u>4</u>	8	32	5	2	2	9	8	4	7	6	6	5	5	N/A	99	<u>24%</u>
<u>5</u>	7	83	2	6	1	9	8	4	9	7	7	10	4	N/A	157	<u>39%</u>
<u>Question 3: Would you like to learn more on the Cohesion Policy and its opportunities in mountains?</u>																<u>74%</u>
<u>Yes</u>	17	33	8	8	3	8	9	6	16	9	10	15	10	N/A	152	<u>38%</u>
<u>Maybe</u>	3	63	0	0	0	18	15	5	3	6	3	0	0	N/A	116	<u>29%</u>
<u>No</u>	0	22	0	0	0	6	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	N/A	30	<u>7%</u>



Montana174

Question 4: Do you plan to apply for some Cohesion Policy funding in the future?																74%
Yes	12	45	5	4	1	4	6	5	6	1	11	8	4	N/A	112	28%
Maybe	8	45	3	3	0	18	15	6	12	12	2	5	4	N/A	133	33%
No	0	28	0	1	2	10	4	0	2	2	0	2	2	N/A	53	13%
Question 5: Generally, do you feel you are receiving appropriate information and support from local authorities about how to use Cohesion Policy funding? (1- not at all, 5-absolutely)																74%
1	2	35	1	1	1	3	2	0	0	3	3	0	0	N/A	51	13%
2	3	27	3	2	0	6	10	3	4	3	4	6	0	N/A	71	18%
3	8	26	0	3	2	12	9	4	6	2	3	4	1	N/A	80	20%
4	2	18	2	2	0	7	4	2	6	6	1	3	5	N/A	58	14%
5	5	12	2	0	0	4	0	2	4	1	2	2	4	N/A	38	9%
Question 6: What do you think could be improved in the way Cohesion Policy funding is explained to citizens? (You may select more than one)																74%
More publicity and information in mass media	1	32	4	3	1	11	11	5	12	10	7	3	4	N/A	104	16%
More success stories and testimonies from my region	5	27	5	7	0	7	4	3	10	7	4	13	4	N/A	96	14%
More workshops like this one	16	74	7	3	0	18	13	11	9	7	5	5	3	N/A	171	26%
More/better remote advice and coaching (phone, internet)	7	8	3	1	1	10	10	3	5	3	2	4	2	N/A	59	9%
More/better in person advice and coaching	12	35	4	2	1	10	9	2	5	1	3	6	6	N/A	96	14%
A simplification of the terminology used (too much jargon)	13	86	4	3	0	4	7	2	4	3	2	4	3	N/A	135	20%
Other (please explain)	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	5	1%
															666	100%
Number of ideas collected	3	3	3	2	3	6	4	4	2	1	1	5	2	2	41	



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