

# Supporting the competitiveness of enterprises in the Danube Region

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- **EUSDR Priority Area 8: aims to support the COMPETITIVENESS OF ENTERPRISES**
- **Co-managed by: Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Croatia  
Ministry for Economic Affairs, Labor and Housing, Baden-Württemberg**
- **WG on Innovation and Technology Transfer**
- **WG Digital Danube**

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- **ACTION 1:** To foster cooperation and exchange of knowledge between SMEs, creative industry, academia, public sector and civil society, in the areas of competence in the Danube Region.
- **ACTION 2:** Establishment of an Innovative Digital Ecosystem in the Danube Region, in order to support SMEs when tackling the challenges of a digitalised world.

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- **Croatian presidency of EUSDR (2020): one of the thematic priorities was focused on improving cooperation between scientific institutions and the economy.**
- **Also, it was highlighted that the transfer of knowledge and new technologies have an undeniable role in economic growth and in strengthening competitiveness.**
- **The *embedding* process, which was set as political priority in this financial period, aims at creating synergy between macro-regional strategies and the Cohesion Policy. It was one of the main priorities of the Croatian Presidency.**

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- **Croatian OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME COMPETITIVENESS AND COHESION: supporting growth and development of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs)**
- **Focusing on areas of innovation and digitalisation**
- **OP: 35 calls for project proposals worth EUR 1,25 billion**
- **Priorities: 1) strengthening the economy through research and innovation; 2) improving business competitiveness; and 3) strengthening crisis recovery in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and preparing for a green, digital and resilient economic recovery.**

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- **25 calls are directly intended for entrepreneurs, with an allocation of EUR 1,07 billion**
- **8 calls are aimed at improving the entrepreneurial infrastructure and creating a favourable business environment, with an allocation of EUR 146 million.**
- **5076 contracts were signed with beneficiaries, of which 4908 contracts for entrepreneurs and 168 contracts for entrepreneurial infrastructure.**
- **The total value of projects eligible for support amounts to EUR 2,05 billion, with grants amounting to EUR 985 million.**
- **Create or preserve more than 13.700 jobs**

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- Numerous digital public services are available to HR citizens, with over 1,4 million users (approximately 40% of Croatian adult population) using the e-Citizens web portal.
- Goal is to reach 2,5 million e-Citizens users by 2024, as well as to fully implement *digital-by-default* principle in public administration by 2023.
- Among over 90 digital services, 18 are cross-border services available to EU citizens and businesses.
- Croatia has nostrified the eIDAS framework for electronic identity and cross-border identification.
- Digital platform for m-signature and m-stamp is currently in development.



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- **2021-2027: National Recovery and Resilience Programme (Resilient, Green and Digital Economy):** continue investing in stimulating innovation.
- **Strong emphasises on digitalisation (20,4% of the overall allocation), in particular of public service sector.**
- **Aim is to increase productivity, competitiveness and diversification of the economy.**
- **Facilitate digital industrial transition by supporting companies in the application of digital solutions and upgrading their digital capabilities.**
- **Support SME internationalisation and inclusion in international value chains.**
- **Investments to innovation and development and application of digital/advanced technologies: EUR 128 million.**

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- **Macro-regions: common solutions to common challenges.**
- **However, always room for improvement of our cooperation.**
- **Our projects contribute to the development of common European solutions for common challenges.**

The image features a dark blue background with white and yellow geometric shapes. In the top-left corner, there is a cluster of shapes including a yellow semi-circle, a blue triangle, a white circle, and a yellow diamond. In the bottom-right corner, there is a larger cluster of shapes including a yellow circle, a blue square, a white circle, and a yellow diamond. The text "Thank you for your attention" is centered in the middle of the image in a white, sans-serif font.

# Thank you for your attention

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