

## AI-NURECC PLUS Side-Event

# “SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR THE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH OF THE ADRIATIC-IONIAN REGION”

## REPORT



**SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR THE  
SUSTAINABLE GROWTH  
OF THE ADRIATIC-IONIAN REGION**

 Con il Patrocinio di  
SEGRETERIA DI STATO TURISMO  
POSTE COOPERAZIONE ED EXPO

 **FORUM**  
of Adriatic  
and Ionian  
CITIES

 **AI-NURECC PLUS**  
ADRIATIC IONIAN NETWORK OF UNIVERSITIES, REGIONS,  
CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND CITIES INITIATIVE

 Co-funded by the  
European Union

 **EUROPEAN  
YEAR OF  
SKILLS**

**10.11.2023** Kursaal Congress Center, San Marino

On November 10th, the AI-NURECC Plus side-event on **“Skills Development for the Sustainable Growth of the Adriatic-Ionian Region”** took place. The event, in hybrid form, discussed **opportunities and actions** for sustainable growth of the “Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion” with the aim of **enriching the skills** of each person in the field of sustainability.

The aim of the event was to raise public awareness on crucial issues and, **through non-formal education**, promote concrete actions to preserve the environment and ensure a better quality of life for everyone.

**Education and Training** can help all-ages people **to reskill and/or upskill in order to contribute to Europe's effort to respond to current and future social and environmental challenges.**

The event has been recognized by the EU as part of the calendar of events held in the framework of the [European Year of Skills](#).

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The conference opened with the greetings of **Mr. Federico PEDINI AMATI - San Marino Secretary of State for Tourism and Cooperation.**

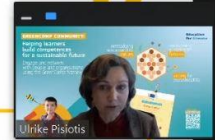
The Secretary of State recalled how any discussion should be based on the field of sustainability. The theme of sustainable growth is transversal with respect to the themes of AI-NURECC Plus (circular economy, sustainable tourism, creative and cultural industries). Tourism in particular is crucial for the sustainability of the economy of San Marino and the entire EUSAIR area but to keep it sustainable it is necessary to act with innovative approaches, protecting natural resources and promoting tourism as responsible as possible, as well as enhancing cultural heritage. To this end, the Secretariat of State for Tourism of San Marino has promoted the project The Lovely Places, which connects Marche, Emilia-Romagna and San Marino.

Skills are needed to create synergies. Skills are also needed to promote accessible tourism. The aim of the AI-NURECC Plus project is in line with the initiatives of the Secretariat of State: it is essential to create skills. We must work to provide the generations of tomorrow with the tools to be able to train and to ensure a solid and sustainable future.

The conference followed with the intervention of 13 excellent speakers from different fields, divided with a geographical criterion of “competence”.

### *The European framework*

**Ms. Ulrike PISIOTIS - European Commission, DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture Representative:** Ms. Pisiotis presented [the Green Comp](#), the European Sustainability Competence framework, which is a guidance-model that the European Commission has developed for education and training purposes on environmental sustainability in the European Union. To tackle the challenge of ensuring a fair and decent livelihood for all people we also have the tool of the Green Deal, that uses strategies to become climate neutral by 2050 and deals with the work of many policy areas and the contribution of education. Ms. Pisiotis underlines that there is a big appetite for change: 93% of EU Citizens consider climate change a serious problem and 75% of young people globally think that the future is frightening but education fails to prepare learners, lacking systemic integration in education and training policy. The Green Comp describes a set of sustainability competences. Ms, Pisiotis also underlines how it is important to distinguish “Competences” (a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes) from “Skills”: these last refer more to technical and professional capabilities. The Green Comp is a living document that offers common ground to users on what sustainability competencies comprise. There is also a GreenComp Community to help learners to build competences for a sustainable future.



***Systemic change cannot be achieved only through political agreements, financial incentives or technological innovations [...] Long-lasting change requires **lifelong learning.*****

**GreenComp**



[Click here to see her presentation](#)

**Mr. Romain BOITARD** - Country work coordination and adviser on greening at **European Training Foundation (ETF)**: The European Training Foundation is an executive EU agency located in Torino. “We research education, training and employment systems in the EU Neighbouring to help them inform their policy choices with hard evidence. This naturally includes how the green transition affects labour markets and education systems”, Mr. Boitard explained.

He firstly defines the green transition: the green transition is a process not an objective, the goal is to improve human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities for current and future generations.

In terms of what happens to labour markets and education systems when embarking on the green transition, we already know a lot:

- the enactment of environmental policies (both at EU and national level) regulate polluters: few jobs do disappear, particularly in brown and fossil intensive industries,
- accelerating technological advances and the increased emphasis on the sustainable economic models continuously change the way any job is done,
- new jobs arise in volume, particularly as waste and water management, electrification as well as construction sectors are increasingly invested into, also due to regulation,
- new occupations (e.g. urban farmers and sustainability officers).



Green skills deployment is preparing citizens for the green economy. Green skills refer to the values, knowledge, and abilities that enable individuals to contribute effectively to a sustainable economy that is decarbonized, circular and decoupled from resources uses.

In essence, green skills are about technical abilities and the knowledge, values and attitudes, contrary to current thinking which is economy first.

Green skills are not only about occupational skills, but also the mindset to fully appreciate the needs and complexity of sustainability and climate action, even for people who do not directly operate green technology. This is sometimes called eco-consciousness. There is also a “digital dimension” of green skills: most new jobs or existing jobs that are conducted in a more sustainable way, almost all require a solid knowledge of digital tools and scientific reasoning.


Skills like critical thinking and problem solving are needed so you identify opportunities to improve the sustainability of business processes and come up with appropriate solutions. Teamwork and collaboration skills are also key since

environmental challenges are always multi-dimensional, and tackling them requires many different types of profiles from different walks of life.


We need for learners and workers to be fully aware of what climate action means. The monumental task is to adapt all current profiles to the needs of a green economy and this means changing how we prepare all professionals.


### The Macroregional level

**Ms. Lidija PANSEGRAU HADROVIC** - Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, EUSAIR National Coordinator of Croatia: she reminds as all the EUSAIR Pillars speak about sustainability. There are measures that promote sustainability in all the 4 Pillars of EUSAIR (Blue Growth, Connecting the Region, Environmental Quality, Sustainable Tourism). The EUSAIR Presidency initiated the introduction of a new 5th pillar, the Social one, with which the Strategy more strongly corresponds to a more social and inclusive Europe.



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
 Ministry of Foreign  
 and European Affairs





Lidija Pansegrau Hadrović - Cro

## The 5th Pillar – The topics (II)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Youth engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tools and mechanisms for youth for capacity building, innovation and entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Inclusive of youth in rural areas</li> <li>• Equip the youth to deal with future challenges</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Promoting skills acquisition for future labour markets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harmonization of skills policies in the macro region</li> <li>• Boost in upskilling and reskilling</li> <li>• Targeting skills policies for disadvantaged groups – people with disabilities, women, Roma etc...</li> </ul>
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The Pillar 5 consists of four topic:

- youth engagement and employment (in particular: tools and mechanism for youth for capacity building, innovation and entrepreneurship, inclusion of youth in rural areas, to equip the youth to deal with future challenges),
- promoting skills acquisition for future labour markets (harmonisation of skills policies, boost in upskilling and reskilling, targeting in skills policies for disadvantaged groups),
- decent work and gender equality (promoting an equal and inclusive labour environment through a better cooperation and of best practices between stakeholders),
- social innovations (better collaboration between stakeholders).

**Ms. Elisabetta BUCCI** - Department of Foreign Affairs, EUSAIR National Coordinator of San Marino: she recalled that it is the first time that San Marino hosts an event sponsored by the European Union, dedicated to a theme such as the development of skills as an essential element for sustainable growth of the entire Adriatic-Ionian area.

In recent years, San Marino has undertaken, in parallel with the strong commitment that the country is putting towards the conclusion of a negotiation to reach an association agreement with the European Union, a path dedicated to the country's integration into the mechanisms of transnational cooperation, witnessed by the Republic's active participation in the EUSAIR macro regional strategy, since its accession in February 2022.

It is important to note that San Marino has always had excellent bilateral relations with the individual countries of the Adriatic-Ionian area and, with its accession to EUSAIR, has taken the opportunity to consolidate collaboration with these countries. San Marino has taken up this challenge starting from the possibility of participating in working tables, meetings and thematic events with experts from the sectors that characterise the essence of EUSAIR, thus starting from the need to develop an

internal professionalism capable of contributing to the cooperation modalities of the mechanisms of the EUSAIR strategy.

In particular, as is known, the transport, energy, tourism and environmental protection sectors are among the priority sectors identified as strategic to the development of the entire Adriatic-Ionian area and fundamental to the generation of projects that bring effective well-being to the citizens of this geographical area.

The first collaborations were therefore created precisely to create the development of expertise and an increase in skills in the parties involved, creating the maximum possible synergies at the administrative and technical level.

Important San Marino companies have been able to seize the potential of the EUSAIR cooperation reality, building growth opportunities not only linked to active participation in individual events - such as the latest EUSAIR Forum in Sarajevo - but also through the construction of relationships and collaborations with lasting potential through participation in European programs, one in particular, the IPA ADRION program.

Another important result achieved is the start of work for the establishment of a European Group of territorial cooperation, the result of the work and collaborations born through the working table with the Emilia Romagna Region and the Province and Municipality of Rimini, entities with which San Marino has begun a reflection on the issues of strategic planning of the territory, cross-border cooperation and the management of projects with shared purposes and mutual benefit.

The current Croatian presidency of EUSAIR has defined among its priorities, initiatives dedicated to the field of social policies and youth policies, issues that are also very dear to the Republic of San Marino.

The Presidency is actively working on the definition of cooperation mechanisms regarding the so-called Social Pillar, introducing a new sector on which to pay attention and to be able to develop new projects. Particular attention will be given



to young people, as the strategy is working on how to create an institutionalised mechanism for dialogue with young generations across the Region.

All this assumes an important dimension with regard to the historical moment we are going through and the common challenges that the Region is facing, such as, for example, the consequences on economic activities and social networks linked to the recovery from the past pandemic, the unpredictability due to climate change and the recent environmental disasters that have affected more than one country in the Adriatic-Ionian area. The effects of these challenges therefore transcend national, regional and local borders and affect the future of the Region, this must lead us to pursue more and more ways to pursue the best possible cooperation and bring territories and citizens closer together.

### *The local-based strategies*

**Mr. Massimo SERI - Mayor of Fano, FAIC President:** Mr. Seri, after recalling the importance of having brought such an appointment to San Marino, after the recent entry into EUSAIR, recalls the fundamental role played by the Cities among the stakeholders of the Strategy. If all the Cities, which are tiles of the mosaic of planet earth, act on a common denominator at the level of environmental protection, the actions become concrete, bringing the Strategies to the territories. Those who do culture and training have the role of bringing responsibility: the City of Fano is promoting events to raise awareness and make citizens and businesses aware of the objectives of the UN agenda. Mr. Seri brings examples of other actions that go in this direction: participation in a Strategic Plan with the involvement of citizens for a participatory path, the Fano project as a "city of boys and girls", to design the city to their measure, also at the level of mobility and green. Another strategy was the mapping of the energy-intensive capacity of the city's buildings and studies on industrial areas, for the protection of freshwater and the sea. Alliances and contaminations between public and private lead to processes that in turn lead to

concrete results. Local authorities are important for the grounding of projects and in 21/27 programming they are important poles for policy convergence.

**Ms. Karen VENTURINI** - Professor in Management, University of San Marino  
**Representative - Member of Uniadriion:** she recalls that the theme of sustainability has been addressed for years, but the definition has changed over time. In 1992 we started talking about the environment and climate change. Today there are many currents and many variations but there are also studies that question the definition. In fact, sustainability becomes an oxymoron, if you think that resources are not infinite. The University of San Marino in the field of sustainability has embraced a participatory, integrated, supportive concept, dealing above all with fragile territories and communities. Territories are studied in their vulnerabilities to promote the reactivation of forgotten processes, including people, animals and nature. The professor then presents the projects of some students who have experimented with new processes and new materials, substitutes for plastic. The university has also promoted courses for the reuse of plastic or for its replacement. The degree program in civil engineering also talks about sustainability of materials, and the degree program in management engineering promotes green start-ups and organizational forms for sustainability. The degree program in digital media talks among other things about sustainability in the media, to raise awareness and combat fake news.

**Ms. Laura FABBRI** - Trade Division Director, San Marino Chamber of Commerce  
**Representative:** the Economic Development Agency - Chamber of Commerce was set up in San Marino with the aim of relaunching the country's economic development through the establishment of new companies and the development of existing ones, with the involvement of the main players in society. In implementing its policies and activities, the Agency naturally also takes into account the commitments in the field of environmental, social and economic sustainability, and that policies aimed at attracting investments linked to sustainable development objectives require more

proactive and targeted services than traditional investments, as well as a more synergy, where different government bodies collaborate in the investment process. Fully convinced that sustainable economic growth is functional to sustainable social growth, the Agency has set itself the objective of stimulating, favouring and supporting entrepreneurial activities and investments that are more aligned with the commitments made in this direction and more responsive to the characteristics of the territory. Increasing the number of high value-added businesses would also limit the very serious problem of the 'skills drain', which is a crucial issue also for San Marino. Starting from the assumption that knowledge and skills are essential for sustainable business development, the Agency has outlined a structured path and specific tools to facilitate:

- **access to information:** through a dedicated section (The Academy),
- **skills development:** the webinars and courses (organised to increase the knowledge needed to start up and run business activities, with a view to business sustainability) and a survey (to outline in advance of the current situation the professional skills that will be needed in the near future to enable business growth),
- **access to finance.**

The Agency is also an accreditation body, thus responsible for accrediting certification entities, which in turn issue certifications that enhance the performance of companies, implement policies that favour quality, environment, and safety. She mentioned, among others, the business plan competition called 'New Ideas New Enterprises'. The aim is to help young people turn their creative ideas into innovative businesses. The sustainability of the projects submitted is a particularly significant indicator for the examining committee.

**Mr. Fabrizio CIARAPICA - Mayor of Civitanova Marche:** Civitanova Marche is characterized as a city with a human dimension, easily accessible in its peculiar traits also in specially made cycle-pedestrian paths along strategic axes, as well as naturalistic and landscape. Important project in terms of cycling tourism is "NoiMarcheBikeLife", founded in 2020 as a branch within the NoiMarche network of

which Civitanova has been a leader since 2012. With the "NoiMarcheBikeLife" project, many reception facilities have been accredited as Bike Hotel and the title of "Bike-Friendly" has been recognized to many facilities and service organizations such as guides, cyclists, workshops, shops, bike rental, transfer services, etc. Another highlight is the "Civitanova Bike Festival", an event normally included in the European Week for Sustainable Mobility that the municipal administration, since 2019, has taken annually with the "bike" world with the aim of promoting, through a narrative path, sustainable and inclusive mobility, territorial tourism, sport, well-being, urban cycling, cycling as culture and the new economy. Since 2022, the Administration has also established a specific Department of Sustainable Mobility, which has immediately proposed and consolidated numerous initiatives, including for example group cycling events, as well as the adoption of programmatic and design acts for intermodal sustainable mobility. In fact, one of the city's objectives is to improve the infrastructure network and services for cycling and soft mobility in general and from a large area perspective, making it available to citizens and tourists to tell the story of a territory by discovering it from the inside and travelling it in a slow, convivial and sustainable way.

**Mr. Konstantinos TZAMALOUKAS** - Representative of the Region of Western Greece, Directorate of Development: he presented some initiatives undertaken by the Region of Western Greece, related to education, training and skills development for sustainable growth. Of particular interest:

- the establishment of a Regional mechanism for the diagnosis of needs of the labour market,
- the establishment of a permanent mechanism for enhancement of the local / regional tourism product in terms of skills of local tourism force and population (InnoXenia PLUS Project).

[Click here to see his presentation](#)

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## SHOWCASE SESSION: “ACTIONS FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE ADRIATIC-IONIAN REGION”

**Mr. Eldar Bičo - Expert Associate at REIC - Regional Education and Information Centre for Sustainable Development in South-East Europe Representative (Bosnia and Herzegovina):**

REIC is non-profit, non-governmental organization founded in 2005. Located in Sarajevo, launched as an integral part of the regional training project scheme (EESD – Environmental Education for sustainable development) for the Adriatic-Ionian basin. Main objective is to identify environmental problems and needs, along with enhancement of educational initiatives. REIC is situated in Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) but its operational span covers the region of Southeast Europe – SEE (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia) in cooperation with international networks. Their vision is to be a focal point for capacity building processes for environmental education and sustainable development in South-East Europe.

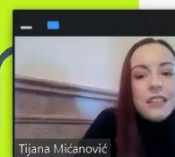
Mr. Bico presented the main projects of REIC in the field of sustainability and in particular:

- **REIC Summer School:** is 10-day program that encompasses the environmental, socioeconomic, legal and technological issues needed to be considered toward the sustainable transition of society, with the aim, between the others, to improve the Capacity building in the topic of renewable energy promotion on the regional level as an element of sustainable development in the region.
- **SPATIAL JUSTICE - Engaging, Empowering, and Enabling Youth to Lead Sustainable Action for upgrading peripheral areas:** a project between Austria, Slovenia, Montenegro, Albania and BiH, with the aim of empowering young professionals from participating organizations with appropriate tools and methods to influence the transformation of peripheral areas into livable areas, engaging and enabling rural youth to

effectively contribute to scaling up peripheral areas upgrading, disseminating the results and the methodology of the project with the purpose of making a wider impact to the society through online events and virtual communication.

**Ms. Tijana Mićanović - Green Art Incubator (Serbia)**: their activities are constructed and designed for the training of the various operators of the Creative and Cultural Industries. They started mapping the potential of the CCIS actors, with a Digital Platform that collects institutions and stakeholders, identifying existing practices, weak spots and strengths. Another layer of their work is “trainings and workshops” for skills development of representative of institutions and organisations, led by experts from different disciplines who specialise in green transition. Finally, they have developed a toolkit to develop a green e-handbook for culture and art, that focuses on creative, innovative and place-based methods to contribute to the green transition, and they are preparing a Green book of Recommendations to be distributed to decision makers in the context of public bodies.

# Digital platform and Climate late night



Establishing a digital platform whose role is aimed at strengthening institutions and organizations that carry out activities in this area with a view to increasing the visibility of existing and future practices.

**Mr. Giovanni Righi - Representative from San Marino Innovation:** the Institute for Innovation of the Republic of San Marino is the reference body for initiatives related to technological innovation in the territory. In December 2022, the Institute took on the role of contact person for the Republic of San Marino for the POPRI youth project initiative, related to the EUSAIR circuit, that connects the youth world with entrepreneurial opportunities. In particular, the Institute had the task of selecting the most innovative San Marino business idea: to be presented at the EUSAIR Forum in Sarajevo was the CIG-BUSTER project, a business idea focused on an eco-sustainable system for the recycling of cigarette butts. In particular, CIG-BUSTER offers a collection of dedicated cigarette butts to convey this waste to a specific recycling system and to transform the same into new materials and products to be used within a circular economy.

San Marino Innovation promotes and manages an innovation regime for more than one hundred High Technological Content Enterprises, among which there are several companies that deal with circular economy, green economy and eco-sustainable materials.

The Institute's objective is to be able to allocate more and more economic resources to support public policy initiatives on innovation and new technologies for sustainable growth. The Institute invests in training, organising workshops (for example, also the design of sustainable packaging) and events aimed at entrepreneurs, students and local professionals.

**Mr. Enzo Suma - Archeoplastica project:** Archeoplastica is a project to raise awareness of the problem of plastic pollution and promote a more conscious and responsible use of this material. Since 2018, numerous plastic waste items, dated from 30 to 60 years ago and some from other countries, such as the Balkans, have been selected to create a virtual museum and several exhibitions in schools and other public places. A wide network has also been created on social media, attracting people who lend a hand, as well as in the collection, also to reconstruct the history of the "finds". The display of beached plastic finds from over fifty years ago is the pretext to tell a never-ending story, that of plastic, immortal, which accumulates more and more in our seas and contains a paradox: it was born as a

material destined to last over time, but is used for very short duration or single-use purposes. Only knowledge and awareness of the problem can lead to the change of each of us in the daily use of plastic.

[Click here to explore Archeoplastica project](#)