



VIA DINARICA: A PLATFORM FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL ECONOMIC GROWTH PROJECT

Brief description

The heart of this Project is the Via Dinarica Trail which stretches along the southern mountain range of the Dinarica Alps in Southeast Europe through Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Slovenia and Serbia. Bosnia and Herzegovina is at the core of the Via Dinarica Trail and offers extraordinary beauty and value in terms of natural and cultural heritage. Via Dinarica Project will contribute to economic development opportunities in Bosnia and Herzegovina by supporting sustainable nature-based tourism development.



Background

The first phase of the Project, funded by USAID and UNDP (2014 – 2017), focused on the portion of the mountain range in BiH, and was implemented in cooperation with the BiH Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, the FBiH Ministry of Environment and Tourism, and the RS Ministry of Trade and Tourism. Positive experiences and services introduced through the previous phase (hiking, mountain biking, fly-fishing, rafting, etc.) need to be further expanded and integrated into the tourism offer throughout the Via Dinarica, thus increasing length and reducing seasonality of tourists' visits. Phase 1 of the Project resulted in listing Via Dinarica among Best Trips 2017 by [National Geographic Traveler](#). Local communities are yet to fully capitalize on the economic opportunities offered by the Via Dinarica tourism product, and further support is needed to translate the existing potentials into income opportunities and jobs.

The Project

The Project will advance the Via Dinarica concept as a mechanism connecting cultural, historical, and natural resources, working in partnership with relevant institutions and other stakeholders and unlocking opportunities for livelihoods and job creation to the benefit of rural communities. It will further affirm Via Dinarica as an internationally recognized tourism brand and a development platform for local communities.

Expected Results

- ✓ 700 km of Via Dinarica trails regularly maintained in cooperation with local mountaineering associations,
- ✓ Safety measures implemented along the trails and Leading Quality Trail certification process continued with European Rambling Association,
- ✓ Via Dinarica specific value chains identified and supported via grant scheme,
- ✓ Tourism service providers supported via grant scheme to enhance diversification of tourism offer,
- ✓ 25 part-time and seasonal jobs created,
- ✓ A stocktaking of Via Dinarica stakeholders and resources conducted in Albania and Kosovo*,
- ✓ Technical support secured to partner ministries to design and deliver public financial schemes,
- ✓ Engagement of local authorities in improving Via Dinarica infrastructure ensured via their financial contributions,
- ✓ The establishment of 3 Via Dinarica information, promotion and service hubs supported,
- ✓ Via Dinarica Support Centre in BiH introduced and capacitated.

Duration: 2018 – 2020 (30 months)

Total Funding: EUR 1,287,149**

Implementing Organization: UNDP

**** AICS EUR 1 million; UNDP and national partners EUR 287,149 (FBiH Ministry of Environment and Tourism and RS Ministry of Trade and Tourism)**

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.