

PRESS RELEASE

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Opatija, 14th June 2023

Subject: Boosting cross-border passenger mobility through more sustainable and connected services and solutions: MIMOSA final conference in Opatija

“The sea unites countries that separates” cit. Alexander Pope

On June 14th, the Faculty of Maritime studies of Rijeka, MIMOSA project partner, hosted the final Conference of the project on the topic of cross-border (CB) passenger mobility and sustainability. The Dean of the Faculty of Maritime studies of the University of Rijeka, Ms. Ana Perić welcomed the participants noting how *“MIMOSA brought new knowledge to the scientific portfolio of the University”* and the Rector of the University, Ms. Snježana Prijić congratulated all the partners calling for renewed collaboration in the future.

Ms. Nina Kodolja, Deputy Secretary General of the CEI-ES, opened the conference as keynote speaker, stressing that *“sustainable mobility has been at the top of the agenda of the CEI-ES in the last years”* and reiterating that *“the CEI is willing to capitalize on the practices of the MIMOSA project while promoting integration in our territories.”* The Joint Secretariat of the Italy Croatia Interreg Programme was also present and praised the results obtained by the partners in the last three and half years, *“led very efficiently despite the covid pandemic circumstances”*.

As project coordinator, Mr. Paolo Dileno, CEI-ES, presented the project achievements and perspectives, showing how the project has contributed to the improvement of cross-border connections between Italy and Croatia through increased knowledge on CB passenger mobility, the development and implementation of tangible solutions and strengthened institutional dialogue and cooperation. In the last 3,5 years, the MIMOSA project has created opportunities that can be capitalized also after the project end.

During the first panel discussion, partners from the University of Ca' Foscari of Venice, the Abruzzo Region (CITRAM), Lika Senj County (LIRA) and HZ Passenger Transport (HZPP), presented the main achievements and lessons learned from the analysis, market research and studies elaborated during the MIMOSA project. All the studies have been made for the people and passengers and are available for governments to scale up. Mr. Andrea Stocchetti from the University Ca' Foscari stressed the importance of the availability of open data for research at local level to be able to make reliable predictions in the future.

The second panel discussion was dedicated to the good practices tested and promoted by MIMOSA to favor sustainability of passenger mobility in the cross-border area. Some flagship pilots presented were the maritime lines and bus lines activated in the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region since 2021 offering the possibility to carry a bike on board of a boat and bus as a real mobility option. The services received a very high level of satisfaction among the users and could become a stable service in the future. Another highlight is the mobile app created in the Emilia Romagna Region to allow having more precise, easily accessible, and tailor-made information for passengers, encouraging behavioral change also through gaming. On the other hand, the Port of Ancona, and the Port Authority of Šibenik made some small scale but fundamental investments that improved accessibility of passengers, such as waiting stations, info kiosks with multimedia screens, buoys with sensors to improve the access to meteorological data and increase safety.

The last part of the event consisted in a panel discussion on the future vision and cooperation through the newly launched SUSMOB Network which hopes to provide *“some tangible tools and contributions to implement the macro-regional strategies”* as stressed by Mr. Veljko Radić from the Croatian Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds. Cross border cooperation is clearly an opportunity but requires constant commitment as reminded Mr. Massimiliano Angelotti, from the Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia. Following the words of Denis Grasso, from the Institute for Transport and Logistics Foundation, MIMOSA has *“set the basis for travelling without a car”*, it offers solutions in terms of cycle tourism, smart tourism and all the pilot actions developed can be upscaled in other areas. The network is thus a *“big occasion to continue to work on these cross-border solutions”*.

Looking ahead, Mr. Andrea Ballarin from Networkwins concluded reminding the importance of *“human capital to boost cooperation.”* Within the SUSMOB Network one can find knowledge, solutions and opportunities for dialogue and cooperation.

Mr. Hrvoje Grancarić, from the Italy Croatia Interreg Joint Secretariat, congratulated the partners for the work performed and highlighted that MIMOSA helped to achieve the targets set by the European Programme, which has encouraged them to continue to finance projects on transport policy for the new programming period 2021-2027.

The MIMOSA project comes to an end after three and a half years, it is a partnership of more than 50 people committed to sustainability and improving passenger transport mobility, creating over the years not only strong connections but also friendships across borders.

MIMOSA project is funded under Interreg cross border Italy-Croatia Programme and aims at improving cross border connections between Italy and Croatia through sustainable and intermodal solutions, based on analysis and studies performed by the scientific partners. The CEI-ES coordinates the project activities and guides the consortium of 17 partners towards the common objective of a more sustainable and coordinated cross-border mobility.