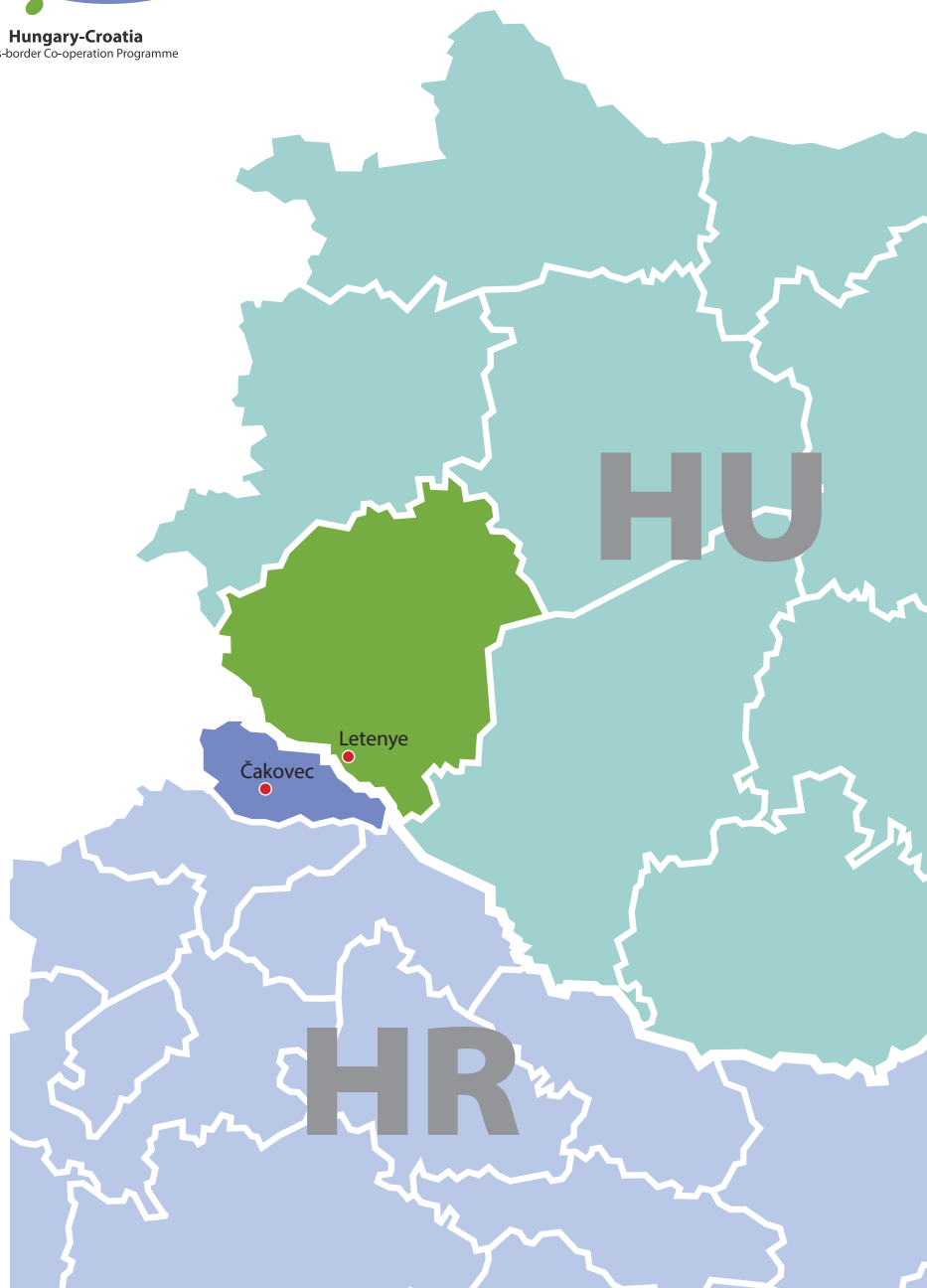




Hungary-Croatia
Cross-border Co-operation Programme

A cross-border region where rivers connect, not divide





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Project introduction

The key aim of the Project is to turn the Međimurje region (Croatia) and the town of Letenye (Hungary) (with the adjacent areas) into an attractive tourist destination, to preserve the local cultural heritage sights, and to create various innovative tourism product packages for the visitors, as a joint effort. The investment project to be carried out in the city of Čakovec (Croatia) aims to reconstruct the former army building (having served as a guardhouse in more ancient times), and the Szapary-Andrássy Castle in the city of Letenye (Hungary) is also to be reconstructed.

The Project also aims to support environmental protection goals, as one of the objectives set for the Project is to preserve the natural environment offered by river Mura, and to promote tourism along the river banks.

The Project area is well integrated into some major cross-country natural environment and recreational networks (such as the rivers Mura and Drava, and the international Eurovelo bicycle route network), and presents various attractive sports, recreational, wellness, food & wine events in a spectacular and diverse natural environment. Within that, the area serves as a busy tourist destination, due to the various tourist attractions and tourism products offered, such as the bicycle road network, the educational pathways, the Mur region, as a natural environment, as well as wine tours and village tourism.

The "Attractour" Project was launched on 1 September 2017, and will be implemented till 30 April 2019, under the INTERREG V-A Hungarian-Croatian Cross-border Cooperation Program announced for the period of 2014 to 2020.

The total Project value is EUR 1,499,277.92, with 85% EU financing (amounting to EUR 1,274,386.23). The key Project beneficiary is the Međimurje Regional Development Agency, with the involvement of several project partners, namely the Međimurje County Tourism Association, the City Council of Letenye, and the Nagykanizsa Campus of the Pannon University.



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Letenye

Letenye is a small town, located in the “green heart” of Zala county, with a total population of 4,500 inhabitants. It is an approximately 2.5 hours drive to Letenye from Budapest, and it is the most beautiful small regional center within Zala county. It is located on highway M7, at the Hungary-Croatia border, serving as the main gateway to the South-West, towards the Adriatic region, and being 15 km away from the Slovenian border. Bridge “Zrínyi” built across river Mura is the main link between the regions “Muramente” and “Muraköz”, and towards Croatia, Slovenia, and the entire South-European region.

As supported by archaeological findings, the settlement and its environs have been inhabited for thousands of years, along the banks of the high speed river Mura. The oldest archaeological findings date from 3000 B.C., i.e. the New Stone Age era. The settlement is first mentioned in written documents in 1347 A.D.

The regular event series held in the region since 1960, with a 50-year history by now, is the Mura Banks Festival Days, providing cultural and entertainment programs, which has turned Letenye into a real festival town during the Summer months, over the past decade. The event features a selection of traditional local gastronomy and wine shows from the Mura region, and visitors can enjoy refined artistic presenters, handcraft shows, local folk artists, and the region’s rich cultural heritage.

The Szapáry-Andrássy Castle located in the city center, with its ancient park providing a real relaxation experience, and housing a 250-year old plane tree, and the adjacent splendid building of the Bibliotheque designed by Imre Makovecz, together with the Thermal Spa, and a vehicle camping site, are all awaiting visitors. Travelers have a number of restaurants and B&B facilities to choose from.

Letenye is the center of the Mura Banks Regional Protection District, and is a quiet town, decorated with plenty of flowers, and offering plenty of tourist attractions. River Mura, serving as a border between countries, with its romantic bends and plenty of nearby forested areas, coupled with the beautiful Zala hills and vineyards, all offer a real relaxation experience for urban travelers, should they enjoy bicycle tours or hiking, camping in the forest or by the river, fishing or hunting. Letenye is part of the South-Zala Regional Forest Bicycle Road Network, and the national Blue Hiking Tour runs nearby, and the city is also a member of the Zala Wine Tours Association.

Its neighbourhood also offers a large number of natural attractions: the Arboretum in Budafa offers a special experience, the ancient Beech Forest of Vétym is famous all over Europe, and the lake at Kistolmács, as well as the Forest Rail Line running in the dense forested areas, all assure a wonderful visitor experience.

Medimurje

In the northernmost part of Croatia, between the Drava and Mura, with green hills and rich plains, there is a place called Medjmurje. Its uniqueness has always amazed people and it proudly bears the name of „Cvjetnjak Hrvatske” (Croatia’s flower garden).

Many archeological findings dating from the Neolithic and Eneolithic up to the Bronze Age testify to the ancient life in Medjmurje. Throughout history Medjmurje was ruled by the counts of the Čak family, dukes of the Lacković family, counts of the Celjski family, Croatian bans (viceroys) - counts of the Zrinski family, the Royal Chamber, counts of the Czech family Althan and finally counts of the Feštetić family. The Zrinski family period represents the golden age of the feudal history in Medjmurje. Medjmurje’s identity is formed on the basis of cultural legacy, rich tradition (customs, folklore, music, etc.) as well as historical sights.

Regional park between the rivers Mura and Drava and landscape of the river Mura represent an interesting destination due to their exceptional biodiversity. Protected natural monument - wet meadow at the site of Bedekovićeve grabe (in the Sveti Juraj na Bregu municipality) is home to one of the most endangered European species, the admirable Scarce Large Blue butterfly. The Zrinski Park, park architecture monument in the centre of Čakovec, represents an architectural and cultural-historical value.

At the northernmost point of the Republic of Croatia, near a little place called Žabnik, the river Mura turns the impressive wheel of a wooden river mill. It is a unique example of traditional architectural heritage both in Croatia and in the broader region. Around the mill, in an idyllic natural surrounding, a „Miller’s instructive path” has been built.

The Wine Road is undoubtedly one of the most famous tourism product in Medjmurje. It consists of a 30 km itinerary with round thirty wine tasting establishments. Winegrowing, production and cultivation of grapes in Medjmurje dates back to the Antiquity, but winemaking expanded notably beginning of the last century.



The Szapáry-Andrássy Castle in Letenye

The Castle is a standalone building situated in a park, in the centre of town, and is a rectangle shaped, two-storied building, with a hipped, pitched roof. It features a mid-bay, ending with a tympanum, in front of its Southern facade, with an open terrace, decorated with cast iron railings, and supported by twin pillars, in front. There are additions made to the building's South-East and South-West corners, in the form of smaller square shape, single storey buildings with a flat top, with a terrace on top, with adjacent walls, and vase shape decorative items featured in the corners. The ground floor of the building is dual-tract, arranged along a mid-corridor, and the rooms have a Bohemian spherical vault. The first floor of the building has a partly different room layout, and the rooms have flat ceilings. A vaulted, three-armed staircase leads to the first floor. The painting on the wall is the remnant of a decorative art painting, from the late 19th century. The building was constructed by Péter Szapáry, in the 1760s. Around 1830, the Andrassy family has acquired it, as part of a marriage arrangement. Thereafter the building was converted by Earl Károly Andrassy, in a classicist style. In the second part of the 19th century, the building was again rebuilt in a historical style. The building currently houses the town's community center. The park surrounding the Castle includes the following landmarks: a Kossuth memorial column from 1894; a support building located North-West, by the road, with a rectangular shape, being a single storey building with a hipped roof; and a library building, built in 1986, with a dodecagon shape, located to the North-East.

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The Szapáry Mansion in Szécsisziget

The Mansion was built by the Szapáry family in the 18th century. Some ancient stones from the former Szécsisziget fortress were also used to build it. The building was traditionally used by the land owners (nobility) for entertainment purposes, but it also served as the center of management for the estate, and functioned as a residential building.

The Mansion was built in a baroque style. The original building was U-shaped (as shown on old maps), and stood on an artificial hill. The current building is L-shaped, single storey, and it has a barn attached to its North-East side. The former stalls were demolished after WW2. The Mansion originally had a garden attached to it, primary used for cultivation, therefore it did not have a distinct style. The Mansion had a wine cellar, with massive wine barrels (145 akó), assembled on spot.

Preserved orchid flowers in Maróc

During the months of May and early June, visitors can enjoy the spectacular sight of plenty of wild orchids freely growing on the Szentadorján and Maróci hillsides. Visitors arrive from faraway places in the country to enjoy these majestic and spectacular flowers at this time.

There are several types of flowers within the orchid range, which can be seen here, such as the local "agár sisakosbor" flowering in May, and featuring a strong purple colour, with some multicolored "pettyeskosbor" breaking the sea of flowers. The most valuable type of orchid in Maróc with high botanical value is the "poszméhbangó", which is highly protected. Only a few plants of this type of orchid can now be found in Hungary, majority of them being seen here, in Maróc.



Bázakerettye

The Thermal Spa was opened in 1996, and being constantly developed, and is situated in a spectacular natural environment, with an amazing view to the neighbouring forested areas, covering the nearby hills and valleys. The Thermal Spa of Bázakerettye has opening hours according to the season, and has the following pools: a 58 m³ and a 104 m³ hot water pool with fun elements, a jacuzzi, a kids' pool, and a cold swimming pool.



Kistolmács and its lake

The village of Kistolmács is part of the small villages of Zala county, and has a long history, going back to at least year 1200, based on written records. The village is located on the road linking Bázakerettye and Letenye, 7 km to the North from Letenye.

The village of Kistolmács awaits all visitors, looking for recreation and relaxation, and all hikers, in a real magical and unhindered natural environment. The hot spring (with its rich water supply) was discovered as a result of oil drillings in the past, after a seismic explosion, based on which the former Forest Management Company has built a Wellness Water Reservoir, in cooperation with the villages of Letenye and Kistolmács, and with the involvement of water experts, which has later on become the major attraction of the village of Kistolmács and its environs.

The lake provides an excellent opportunity for both swimming and fishing. During the Winter months, skateboarding is possible, at the skaters' own risk. The lake of Kistolmács has proven to be a major factor driving tourism in the village and its proximity.



The Forest Rail Line in Csömödér

The state owned Forest Railway in Csömödér has the longest forest railway route in Hungary. The entire length of the system within Zala county is 109 km. The specialty of this track is that only one third of the route is utilised to carry passengers, while majority of the traffic is dedicated to traditional wood transport. The forest rail line crosses beautiful small villages, and connects several tourist destinations.

Bicycle tours

The South-Zala Forest Region Bicycle Road crosses major forests, hills and valleys across the region. The tours come with a varying degree of strength required, to match the needs of children and parents alike, and it is for both experienced and inexperienced bikers. Visitors can rent bicycles, or get them repaired in the "Rejtek Bicycle Center" in Lipeszentadorján, where accommodation, food and tour planning is also available.

Rafting on river Mura

The curvy and bendy River Mura, with lot's of gravel pads built, and a strength enough to ruin the banks occasionally, features a magnificent natural environment.

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