

Seenet Program brief description

Seenet: a trans local network for cooperation between Italy and South East Europe.

Premise

In 2007, the Region of Tuscany has promoted an initiative named Seenet Bridge - *A network of cooperation among local governments for development and dialogue in South Eastern Europe* with the aim to follow the important results obtained with the first phase of the Seenet program, finished in the summer of 2006. The successful conclusion of Seenet, in fact, has highlighted the contribution that the decentralized cooperation can give to post-conflict reconstruction and peace processes. The project has been able to create moments of dialogue and aggregation, in a network among communities separated by war, through the involvement of local authorities in concrete actions for the development. These results and developments that may arise are now more than ever, an important starting point for achieving an effective integration of the Balkan countries in the European Union.

Through the initiative Seenet Bridge it was possible to identify a project that we could name Seenet 2, which was submitted to the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in early 2008 and approved by the same on 31st July 2008 with Document No. 100. This proposal, whose synthesis is illustrated in the following pages, has seen the involvement of many Italian institutions (Regions Emilia Romagna, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Piedmont, Marche, Veneto, the Autonomous Province of Trento, ANCI, ERVET, INFORMEST, CeSPI, Observatory on the Balkans, ALDA, OXFAM ITALIA) and local authorities from South-Eastern Europe (46 authorities from 7 different countries). The core strategy of this new *Program* is to give continuity to the territorial partnerships built by one part of the the Italian system of decentralized cooperation with the aim to support the Western Balkans countries' integration into European Union.

Objectives

The Program aims to foster dialogue among states, institutions and local communities in the South East Europe for the effective development of the territories involved in the Programme and in a long-term partnership at regional level and with the Italian system of decentralized cooperation. Within the new partnership, actors in the network will be asked to try on the evolution of administrative decentralization to support local development, offering concrete opportunities to work on specific areas of intervention in line with European standards.

The support to Balkan partners will decline in a double-headed:

1. Favour the South East European Programme partners' territories access to European Union pre-accession funds and to national and international funds for local development;
2. Encourage the adoption and development of innovative programs and services on territorial valorisation and management, economic development and social and territorial and social planning by the institutional and territorial subjects from South East Europe as Programme partners.

Partner

Italian partners	Local partners
<u>Institutional actors</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region Emilia Romagna and ERVET • Region Friuli Venezia 	<u>Albania</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skadar district, municipalities of Skadar, Elbasan and Valona <u>Bosnia and Herzegovina</u>

Italian partners	Local partners
Giulia and INFORMEST <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region Marche • Region Piedmont • Region Veneto • Autonomous Province of Trento • ANCI <p><u>Non-institutional actors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CeSPI • ALDA • Balkans Observatory • OXFAM ITALIA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cantons of Sarajevo, Tuzla, Herzegovina Neretva, Zenica-Doboj;; municipalities of Livno, Nevesinje, Prijedor, Sanski Most, Trebinje, Tuzla, Zavidovići, Hadžići, Pale, Travnik, Trnovo, Rep. Srpska Trnovo, Zenica, Stari Grad (Sarajevo); cities of Sarajevo and Mostar <p><u>Serbia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cities of Kragujevac, Nis and Novi Sad; Municipality of Lazarevac (Belgrade), Pancevo, Smederevo; Autonomous Province of Vojvodina <p><u>Croatia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regions Istria, Vukovarsko-srijemska, Osiječko-baranjska, Dubrovačko-neretvanska; cities of Pazin, Rovinj, Varaždin, town of Brtonigla/Verteneglio <p><u>Kosovo</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipalities of Pec/Peja and Pristina <p><u>Macedonia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Skopje <p><u>Montenegro</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipalities of Niksic, Budva, Kotor

Overview of activities

Programme working strategy is based on the network work among Italian and Balkan institutions in the complex process of South Eastern Europe countries integration into European Union. In particular, the network will focus on supporting the government capacities of partner public administrations, offering concrete opportunities to work on specific topics following the EU standards. At the same time, initiative aims to create a permanent system of cooperation between Italian regional cooperation subjects trying to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of interventions, increase their ability to impact the local priorities and make sustainable the territorial partnerships.

This process will be developed through two different types of actions, which are complementary and synergic:

- **Horizontal actions**, that are a set of activities, closely integrated with the other actions of the Program, that will benefit all local partners who are going to work on components such as:
 - **Action A - Institutional Building** to promote the use of EU funds through technical assistance in the project designing and development of multilevel *governance* processes, active citizenship and public-private partnership.
 - **Action B - Information and dissemination** for carrying out and deepening information on thematic areas in which the Program works.
 - **Action C - Research** to implement *policy oriented* action-research activities, to disseminate knowledge and to valorise experiences of *governance* for local development.
 - **Action D - Partnerships between South East Europe Local Authorities** to strengthen the role of municipalities' associations in the Balkans looking at the ongoing decentralization process and the European integration.
- **Vertical actions**, organized in main thematic sectors to develop networking between many partners / territories with direct effect in the areas of Southeast Europe. The vertical actions constitute a tool available to partners in order to affect the dynamics of the territory, focusing on the work in the network with other subjects on a priority topic. Within these actions, Balkan partners, together with other actors of their own territory, will be asked to work on the formulation and implementation of local policies about specific issues.

Interventions in territories will have a high integration with Programme horizontal actions. Nine territorial initiatives have been identified that will focus on the following topics:

- Action 1 - Valorisation of cultural tourism;
- Action 2 - Valorisation of rural areas and natural environment;
- Action 3 – SME support and cross-border entrepreneurial cooperation;
- Action 4 – Territorial planning and social services.

The choice of intervention topics and of local partners to develop vertical actions is closely related to the relationship between Italian and Balkan territories, and linked to the general *framework* of the intervention: an **integrated programme** in which the joint effort is focused on the work in network among partners and on the continuity of relations between the Italian and Balkan territories.

The following table presents actions that shall be implemented in collaboration among the Italian and Southeast Europe partners.

Action	Action leader	Involved SEE territories	Italian partners	Implementing technical subject
General coordination and animation of the network	Tuscany Region	All	All	OXFAM ITALIA
Horizontal				
A.Institutional building	Emilia-Romagna Region	All	All	ERVET and ALDA
B.Information and dissemination	Autonomous Province of Trento	All	All	Observatory on Balcans
C.Research	Tuscany Region	All (focusing on 7 territorial areas)	All	CeSPI
D.Associationism among local and SEE institutions	Tuscany Region	All	All	ANCI
Vertical				
1.Valorisation of cultural tourism				
1.A – Joint promotion and valorisation of cultural, environmental and historical goods between Istria and Varaždin	Veneto Region Thematic leader	Region of Istria, Cities of Rovinj, Pisino, Varazdin and Verteneglio	Region Friuli Venezia Giulia, Region Tuscany	INFORMEST
1.B – Cultural tourism development in municipalities of Mostar, Sarajevo and Skopje	Tuscany Region	Sarajevo canton; Cities of Sarajevo, Mostar and Skopje; Municipality of Stari Grad (Sarajevo)	Region Piedmont	General directorate for economic development
2.Valorisation of rural areas and natural environment				
2.A – Valorisation of local resources for rural tourism development in the regions of Herzegovina and Dubrovnik	Tuscany Region	Municipalities of Trebinje, Nevesinje and Livno; Dubrovnik Region	Autonomous Province of Trento	Province of Arezzo
2.B – Agro-tourism development in mountain areas of B&H	Piedmont Region Thematic leader	Municipalities of Zenica, Trnovo RS, Trnovo FBiH, Sanski Most, Zavidovići, Hadžići, Pale and Travnik	Province of Turin, Municipality of Alba	Mountain community Valli Chisone e Germanesca
2.C – Valorisation of environmental tourism in the territories of Skadar, Nis, Kraljevo, Niksic and Pejë/Peć	Autonomous Province of Trento	Municipalities of Scutari, Kraljevo, Niksic, Pejë/Peć, City of Nis	Region Friuli Venezia	Tavolo Trentino con il Kosovo, Progetto Prijedor, Tavolo Trentino con Kraljevo

Action	Action leader	Involved SEE territories	Italian partners	Implementing technical subject
3.Support to SMEs and cross-border entrepreneurial cooperation				
3.A - "Transgrowth" – Entrepreneurial animation in favour of transnational increase of integrated local production systems	Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region Thematic leader	Osijek–Baranja and Vukovar–Srijem Counties Autonomous Province of Vojvodina Tuzla canton	Emilia-Romagna Region, Veneto Region Marche Region	INFORMEST
3.B – Reinforcement of SME system in the areas of Zenica-Doboj, Herzegovina-Neretva, Sumadija-Pomoravlje, metropolitan areas of Belgrade and Prijedor	Tuscany Region	Municipalities of Prijedor and Tuzla, Zenica-Doboj and Herzegovina-Neretva cantons City of Kragujevac, Municipalities of Lazarevac	Regions Piedmont, Emilia Romagna, Marche, Autonomous Province of Trento	Toscana Promozione
4.Territorial planning and social services				
4.A – Support to strategic planning: start of pilot initiatives in territorial and environmental planning	Emilia-Romagna Region Thematic leader	Municipalities of Pancevo, Kotor, Smederevo and Budva	Tuscany Region	ERVET
4.B – Support to planning in social sector	Emilia-Romagna Region	Skadar region, Municipalities of Elbasan, Valona and city of Novi Sad	Marche Region, Tuscany Region	Municipality of Forli'

Duration

For the implementation of horizontal and vertical actions, as foreseen by the intervention strategy, **36 months** of activities shall be needed.

Management system

Programme foresees a Management System enabled to ensure continuous and constant involvement of different network subjects, at political as well as at technical level. In particular, following organisational structure is foreseen:

- **Direction Committee** is an organ that ensures direction and political policy of the *Programme*.
- **Pilotage Committee** is a technical organ that ensures *Programme* implementation according to the indications given by Direction Committee.
- **Trilateral Nucleus** is an organ that ensures accordance between political and administrative level of the *Programme*.
- **Operational Secretariat** is an operative organ that unifies implementing subjects who are responsible for operational management of horizontal and vertical actions. It shall work under the supervision of *Programme* Director.

Tuscany Region shall be in charge of the **general coordination of the *Programme***, while the Operational Secretariat task will be assigned to OXFAM ITALIA. Each involved Italian institution will be appointed for operational and financial management of the activities of its competence