

FOST INNO



Action plan for fostering innovation in sustainable tourism – Kvarner County, Croatia

Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	2
<i>1. Tourism in Kvarner County, Croatia</i>	3
<i>2. Activities in the function of fostering innovation in tourism</i>	9
<i>Concluding remarks</i>	18
<i>List of tables</i>	19
<i>List of figures</i>	19
<i>Literature</i>	19

Introduction

Action plan for fostering innovation in sustainable tourism – Kvarner County, Croatia is a strategic document and one of the six action plans developed within the project FOST INNO with the aim of implementation of the *Strategy for fostering innovations in sustainable tourism for Adriatic-Ionian area* in all A-I countries. The main purpose of this action plan is to give directions and suggest activities that could increase tourism innovations in Croatia. This action plan was prepared on a regional level – Kvarner County, as one of the most developed tourist regions in Croatia and one of the most perspective regions for tourism innovation development.

Action plan for fostering innovation in sustainable tourism – Kvarner County, Croatia consists out of two main chapters. The first chapter *Tourism in Kvarner County, Croatia* gives an overview of the current situation in tourism in that area, including the number of arrivals and overnight stays and structure of accommodation facilities, etc. Activities in the function of fostering innovation in tourism are presented in the second chapter. Each one of eight objectives that have been previously defined in the Strategy as those that can contribute to the growth of innovations and sustainable tourism in A-I region, is composed of several activities that should be carried out on a regional level. The description of every activity includes the responsible stakeholders, indicator for measuring the realisation of the activity, as well as the timeframe for activity implementation. Finally, this action plan ends with concluding remarks.

1. Tourism in Kvarner County, Croatia

Tourism of the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County (hereinafter referred to as PGC) has a great economic, social and cultural significance. For tourism branding, i.e. marketing purposes, the PGC is promoted under the name “Kvarner” (after Kvarner bay). It is being represented and promoted on the international tourism market by the Kvarner County Tourism Office. This document uses the name “Kvarner County” as a synonym for PGC. Kvarner County has a long tourism tradition, rich cultural and historical heritage, favourable geographical and climatic features, an excellent geopolitical position as well as the great potential, but as a tourism destination, it is still not sufficiently recognizable. Aware of the importance of preserving its resources, Kvarner is considering the development of tourism solely on the basis of ecological, social, cultural and economic sustainability.

1.1. General information about Primorje-Gorski Kotar County

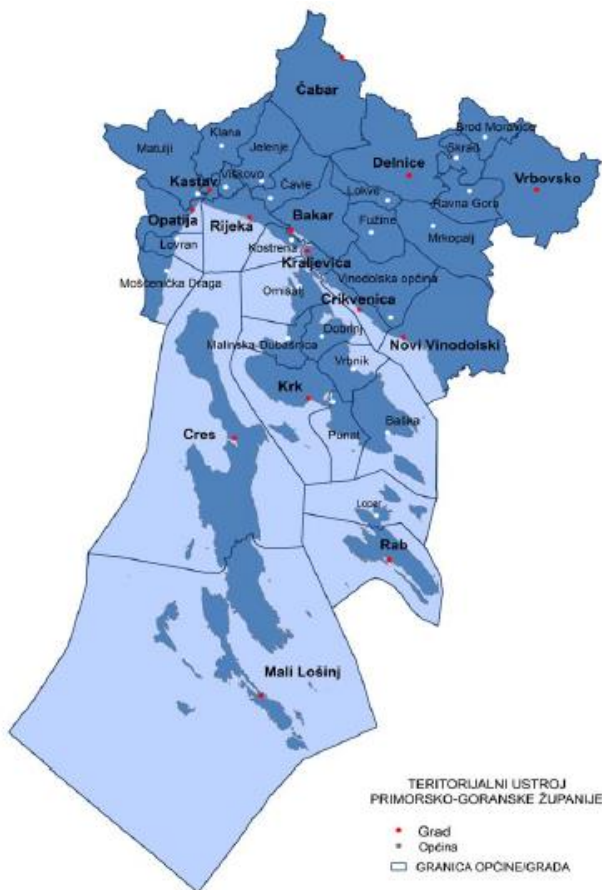
The PGC land area of 3,587 km² covers 6.3% of the area of the Republic of Croatia and belongs to the larger counties in the state (the average area size of the county is 2,795 km²). The sea area covers 4,344 km². PGC borders on the north with the Republic of Slovenia, in the west with Istria, in the east with Karlovac, and in the southeast with Lika-Senj and Zadar County. The center of the county is the city of Rijeka and it represents the administrative, university and logistics center.

Figure 1: Position of PGC in the Republic of Croatia



In the coastal part of the PGC and on the island of Krk the climate is conditioned by the influence of the continental hinterland and the Adriatic Sea, characterized by mild rainy winters, warm and dry summers. A part of the coastal belt and the islands of Krk, Rab, Cres and other smaller islands have a moderately warm, humid climate with a hot summer. The rest of the PGC, the largest part of Gorski Kotar and the smaller, inner part have a moderately warm, humid climate with a warm summer. PGC consists of three functional entities, i.e. systems determined by a number of criteria and parameters in the area of natural, social and economic systems. These systems are at a relatively short distance, which makes the PGC so much different and offers opportunities for differentiated tourist facilities. Based on these criteria, it is divided into three micro-regions: Gorski Kotar, Islands and The Coastal Area.

Figure 2: Territorial-political structure of PGC



Source: PGC Development Strategy 2016 - 2020 - Addendum, PGC, 2015, p. 10

PGC belongs to the Adriatic Croatia within the NUTS2 statistical classification of Croatia. It is established as a unit of regional self-government. 36 units of local self-government are located on this territory – 14 cities (Bakar, Crikvenica, Kastav, Kraljevica, Novi Vinodolski, Opatija, Rijeka, Čabar, Delnice, Vrbovsko, Cres, Krk, Mali Lošinj, Rab) and 22 municipalities (Čavle, Jelenje, Klana, Kostrena, Lovran, Matulji, Moscenicka Draga, Viškovo, Vinodolska Općina, Omišalj, Brod Moravice, Fužine, Lokve, Mrkopalj, Ravna Gora, Skrad, Baška, Dobrinj, Malinska - Dubašnica, Punat , Vrbnik and Lopar).

Population density is 82.57 inhabitants / km², which is above the average population density of the Republic of Croatia (75.7 inhabitants / km²). According to the 2011 census, 74.3% of the population lives in 275 communities in 14 cities of PGC and 25.7% of the population lives in 236 communities in 22 municipalities.

1.2. Tourism indicators

Primorje-Gorski Kotar County is a highly tourist-oriented coastal county of the Republic of Croatia. According to the data of the Croatian Bureau of Statistics, in 2017, 86.2 million overnight stays were realized in Croatia, out of which Primorje-Gorski Kotar County realized 18.5 million overnight stays, accounting for 21.46% of the total number of overnight stays in Croatia. The number of tourist arrivals and overnight stays per subregions is shown in the table below.

Table 1: Tourist arrivals and overnight stays according to subregion in Kvarner County

Area	Tourist arrivals	Overnight stays	Share of overnight stays (%)
Island Krk	855,265	6,624,302	36.31%
Crikvenica – Novi Vinodolski Riviera	487,677	3,214,695	17.62%
Island of Lošinj	302,207	2,313,118	12.67%
Island of Rab	281,103	2,190,274	12.0%
Opatija Riviera	569,140	2,044,850	11.20%
Island of Cres	130,285	1,115,286	6.11%
Rijeka area	190,480	649,326	3.55%
Gorski Kotar	33,445	90,953	0.54
TOTAL	2,849,602	18,242,845	100%

Source: Official Statistics available at www.kvarner.hr (10.10.2018.)

According to the number of overnight stays per subregion, the island of Krk is predominant with almost 6.7 million overnight stays (36% of the total number of overnight stays). Crikvenica-Vinodol Riviera is on the 2nd place, followed by the island of Lošinj, island of Rab, Opatija Riviera, island of Cres, Rijeka area and Gorski Kotar.

Among the destinations, Mali Lošinj (2.3 million overnight stays) realizes the largest number of tourist overnights, while Crikvenica has 60.000 overnights less. The town of Krk, the town of Rab, Opatija, Malinska-Dubašnica, Cres, Baška and the already mentioned Lošinj and Crikvenica together account for two-thirds of the total number of overnight stays.

Table 2: Number of tourist arrivals and overnight stays in 2017 (domestic vs. foreign tourists)

	2017		
	Tourist arrivals	Overnight stays	Share of overnight stays (%)
Domestic	328,712	2,786,108	15.2%
Foreign	2,520,890	15,456,737	84.8%
TOTAL	2,849,602	18,242,845	100.00%

Source: Official Statistics available at www.kvarner.hr (10.10.2018.)

Domestic guests accounted for 328,712 arrivals and 2,786,108 overnight stays, while foreign guests recorded 2,520,890 arrivals and 15,456,737 nights. Expressed in percentages, domestic guests have the share of 15% in the overnight stays, while the share of foreign guests is 85%. Regarding the total number of overnight stays in every subregion, domestic guests have the biggest share in Gorski Kotar, and are least represented among the guests on the island of Rab and the Opatija Riviera.

Guests from Germany, Slovenia, Austria, Italy, Hungary and the Czech Republic realize the largest number of foreign nights in Kvarner.

Among the other markets, it is worth mentioning the guests from the United States who, along with the continuous growth of the number of overnight stays, have positioned themselves with the markets with more than 100,000 overnight stays. In the last 5 years, the number of US citizens coming to Kvarner doubled.

In 2017, the average length of stay in the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County was 6.4 days. On the island of Cres, Krk, Rab and Lošinj guests stayed 8 days on average, while the average for Gorski Kotar was 3 days.

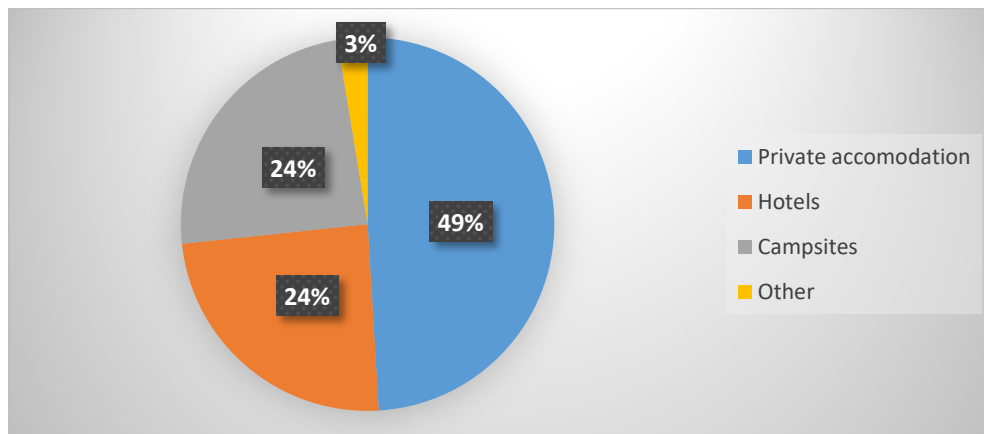
Table 3: Number and structure of accommodation capacities (in constant beds) in Kvarner County (on 31st August 2016, and 31st August 2017)

Type of accommodation	2016	2017	Index (2017/2016)	Share in % (for 2017)
Private accommodation	94,462	102,063	106.9	57.3
Campsites	43,464	44,094	101.4	24.8
Hotels	24,250	23,938	98.7	13.4
Resorts	6,781	7,305	107.2	4.1
Other	1,255	622	49.6	0.3
TOTAL	171,212	178,022	104	100%

Source: <http://www.kvarner.hr/docs/kvarner2011HR/documents/1766/1.0/Original.pdf>

Looking at the structure of accommodation, the largest share belongs to the private accommodation – 57.3%, which is an increase of 6.9% in comparison to 2016. The share of hotels is 13.4% and the accommodation capacities in hotels decreased by 1.3% compared to 2016.

Figure 3: Share of overnight stays in 2017 in Kvarner County according to type of accommodation



Source: www.kvarner.hr (11.10.2018.)

In 2017, 49% of total overnights were realized in private accommodation. Hotels and camps hold a share of 24% while other types of accommodation have a share of 3%.

Starting from the importance of tourism for the Kvarner economy and its future sustainability-based-development, Operational Marketing Plan of Kvarner Tourism by 2020 defines following important goals:

- Innovation of the Kvarner brand and new creative content to be implemented in the communication of Kvarner on the tourism market.
- Stronger orientation towards selected target segments, creation and communication of customized content through online, off-line, and push to specialized distribution channels.
- Stronger orientation towards online communication, including increasing of the share of on-line promotion, updating TZ Kvarner web pages as the 'central' tourist portal of the region and creating several new themed micro-sites supporting the expanded production portfolio of Kvarner.
- Development of additional sales, recommendation and loyalty destination systems.
- Improving the function of visitor's centers and TIC centers
- Educational programs aimed for the tourism sector and aimed at raising marketing and sales knowledge and skills and networking of stakeholders.
- The system of continuous market information collection and dissemination.
- Establishment of the Central Tourist Information Database of Kvarner as a modern, open, online tool.

2. Activities in the function of fostering innovation in tourism

The Strategy for fostering innovation in sustainable tourism for Adriatic – Ionian region set following specific objectives that should be achieved across the region:

1. Development of innovation taxonomy, its popularization and advocacy
2. Lobbying (nationally) for the simplification and improvement of legislative acts dealing with innovations
3. Education of stakeholders about innovations, sustainable tourism and the importance of monitoring of innovations (innovations indicators)
4. Lobbying nationally (promoting) for the necessity of introducing obligatory reporting on innovations
5. Creating an Open Innovation Platform
6. Promoting changes of HEI curricula – introducing courses dealing with innovations and innovations in tourism
7. Development and support of cooperation and networking between crucial stakeholders, especially:
 - Enabling the transfer of knowledge and innovations from other sectors into tourism
 - Cooperation between SMEs and large enterprises (win-win)
 - Cooperation between HEIs and enterprises
8. Development of research activities related to innovations and tourism.

1. Development of innovation taxonomy, its popularization and advocacy. The realization of this goal is possible through the following activities:

- **Creating an informative brochure.** This informative brochure will, in a simple and clear way, present topics such as innovations and sustainable tourism development. The brochure is of informative and educational character, and will be distributed at the Faculty as well as on various conferences, workshops and events organized (or participated) by the Faculty. The institution responsible for this activity is the Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center, and the deadline for creating and printing the informative brochure is September 2019. The indicator of this activity is the number of distributed brochures (200 copies).

- **Cooperation with the regional centers of competence.** There is a need for building new and improved innovation capacities and it is necessary to encourage the cooperation with regional centers of competence. One of those centres is located in the Hospitality school Opatija, and the cooperation with this centre is a logical sequence. The institution responsible for this activity is the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, and the deadline for completing this activity is December 2018. The indicator of this activity is the signed „Agreement on Cooperation” with the Regional Center of Competence.
- **Organization of one promotional activity.** In order to popularize this topic and the project FOST INNO, at the ToSEE conference in May 2019, a promotional activity will be organized. The institution responsible for this activity is the Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center, and the indicator is one promotional activity organized.

2. Lobbying for the simplification and improvement of legislative acts dealing with innovations. The realization of this goal is possible through the following activities:

- **Lobbying to establish a simpler legal framework for innovative activities.** Despite the established legislative framework as well as the created and accepted strategic documents, no positive innovative developments have been recorded. One of the problems is, surely, a complicated and expensive procedure related to innovations and their protection. In order to increase the number of innovations and improve their quality, it is necessary to simplify the legislative procedures and modalities of dealing with these activities. For this reason, it is necessary to lobby in all the relevant institutions in order to simplify the procedure. The Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center, in cooperation with the local and regional innovation associations of the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County, will send two letters of recommendation to relevant ministries (ministries in charge of economy and justice) regarding the possibilities of simplifying the legal framework. This activity will start in January 2019.
- **Lobbying to establish a fiscal framework to foster innovation.** An additional problem in the area of innovations is the lack and insufficiency of financial incentives for innovation, which does not create a positive atmosphere in terms of enhancing innovative and sustainable solutions in tourism and society. Lobbying activities should have following goals: improving of the existing system of tax incentives for research, technological development and innovation, introduction of favourable tax arrangements for the recruitment of highly qualified professionals and securing tax incentives for newly established innovative companies and other companies that are innovating their businesses. This would create a positive atmosphere that would certainly stimulate innovative business activities. The Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center, in cooperation with the Institute for Public Finance Zagreb and other important stakeholders for this activity, will send two letters containing recommending goals and activities to the relevant ministries (ministries in charge of finance and economy. This activity

will start in March 2019. Two sent letters will be displayed as an indicator of this activity.

3. Education of stakeholders about innovations and sustainable tourism and the importance of monitoring of innovations. The realization of this goal is possible through the following activities:

- **Organizing webinars on innovation and sustainable tourism.** Organizing quality webinars would solve the problem regarding the lack of time for acquiring new knowledge, since, by engaging in webinars, interested stakeholders could easily gain knowledge of the topic. The institution responsible for organizing the webinar is the Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center, and the deadline for this activity is January 2019. The indicator for this activity is one webinar held with 50 participants.
- **Organizing a workshop for students on innovation and sustainable tourism.** Topics such as innovative start-ups, entrepreneurship, sustainable development, monitoring, trends in the entrepreneurship and tourism are very interesting and important for further development of young people. The workshop for the students of the University of Rijeka will be held in order to encourage the development of entrepreneurial skills aimed at innovation and the implementation of sustainable development principles. The institution responsible for this activity is the Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center, and the indicator of this activity is one workshop held with 20 students. The deadline for this activity is April 2019.

4. Lobbying nationally (promoting) for the necessity of introducing obligatory reporting on innovations. The realization of this goal is possible through the following activity:

- **Lobbying to mandatory inclusion of the detailed information on planned or realized innovations into the companies' financial statements that are submitted to relevant institutions.** At the end of each calendar year, companies have a statutory obligation to submit their financial statements. These reports should include more detailed data on innovations (separate, specific report) in order to obtain input data for creating the quality analysis and suggestions for improving of the conditions for innovative activities. The institution responsible for this activity is the Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center, and the deadline for this activity is March 2019. Indicator of this activity is a sent letter of recommendation to the ministry responsible for finance and the economy.

5. **Creating an Open Innovation Platform.** The realization of this goal is possible through the following activity:

- **Creating a database on innovation.** This database should provide, in a simple and organized way, all necessary information about:
 - *examples of good practices on innovation and sustainable tourism development (database)*
 - *all necessary contacts (at local, regional, national and at the level of the Adriatic-Ionian region).*

The institution responsible for this activity is the Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic Ionian Tourism Innovation Center, and the deadline for this activity is June 2019. The database should be accessible via the web, and the link to this site will be posted, for promotional purposes, on the website of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, as well as on the websites of the City of Opatija and the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County. The indicator of this activity is the number of site views (min 50) and number of queries (min 5) sent to the Croatian Contact Point of the Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center.

6. **Promoting changes of HEI curricula.** The realization of this goal is possible through the following activities:

- **Initiating the programs innovations at higher education institution.** The programs of higher education institutions educate, inform and raise the students' awareness of entrepreneurship and the necessity of introducing elements of innovation and sustainable development in tourism. In order to successfully carry out this activity, it is necessary to organize a meeting with the management of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management and introduce them to the need for more intensive involvement of these topics in the study programs. The institution responsible for this activity is the Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center. Indicators for this activity are two held meetings (first one in December 2018, and another one in April 2019) with the management of the Faculty.
- **"Innovation Management" Syllabus proposal.** The purpose of this activity is to design a new course related to innovations and their implementation in entrepreneurship. After designing the Syllabus, the proposal will be directed to the management of the Faculty and the Teaching Committee in order to accept/upgrade and implement it in the curriculum. The institution responsible for this activity is the Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center. The indicator of this activity is designed proposal for the "Innovation Management" Syllabus. The deadline for the implementation of this goal is April 2019, so that the new course could be included in the innovated curriculum.

7. Development and support of cooperation and networking between crucial stakeholders. The realization of this goal is possible through the following activities:

- **Taking up for the transfer of knowledge from science to practice to encourage innovation.** One of the major weaknesses of the existing innovation system is the extremely weak interaction and cooperation between industry and scientific research institutions. The purpose of this measure is to stimulate, accelerate and effectively improve communication and cooperation between the stakeholders of the innovation chain coming from the private sector and the academic community, through an organized event where all the above entities will be gathered. This activity will be the responsibility of the Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center, in cooperation with the Council of the University of Rijeka and the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management. Indicator of this activity is an organized event in June 2019.
- **Gathering key stakeholders within the Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic Ionian Tourism Innovation Center.** In order to develop cooperation and participation in the Centre's activities, the main stakeholders from practice and science should be included. The Croatian Contact Point of the Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center and the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management are responsible for this activity. The beginning of this activity is foreseen for December 2018, and the indicator for this activity are eight signed Cooperation Agreements.

8. Development of research activities related to innovations and tourism. The realization of this goal is possible through following activities:

- **Encouraging scientific projects dealing with innovation and sustainable tourism.** The University of Rijeka in cooperation with the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management annually announces a call for applications for scientific projects. In order to popularize this topic, one of the criteria for additional scoring could refer to those projects that deal with innovative solutions in tourism. The deadline for this activity is the announcement of the next call for scientific projects, i.e. June 2019. The institution responsible for this activity is the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management. Indicators are two reported scientific projects per year and one published scientific paper on the mentioned topic.
- **Popularization of innovation and sustainable tourism themes in the preparation of seminar/final/thesis papers.** Students should be encouraged to focus their research activities on the innovations in tourism. The institution responsible for this activity is the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, and the start of its realization is foreseen for November 2018. This activity implies creating a list of topics for seminar / final / thesis papers in the field of innovation and sustainable tourism. The indicator for this activity are five themes for seminar / final/ thesis papers, which deal with this topic.

- **Encouraging university teachers to include into their courses topics on innovation and sustainable tourism.** - It is necessary to encourage teaching staff to enhance the research on innovation and sustainable tourism. The holder of this activity is the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, and the start of the activity is foreseen for February 2019. Indicator of this activity is one letter to the university teachers, referring to how innovations are important when sustainable tourism is concerned as well as how important is to increase the representation of this topic in their classes.

- **Encouraging international mobility of researchers.** Through the international mobility of researchers (Erasmus, CEEPUS), several benefits can be achieved, i.e. it is possible to work on networking and synergy between research institutions on innovation and sustainable development as well as spreading knowledge from more developed countries to those others. The institution responsible for this activity is the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management. The activity will start in April 2019, and is going to be carried out continuously. Indicator of this activity is one mobility annually.

Table 4: Summarized action plan for fostering innovation in sustainable tourism in Kvarner County, Croatia

Objectives	Activities	Responsible actor/s	Indicator/s	Timeframe
Development of innovation taxonomy, its popularization and advocacy	Creating an informative brochure	Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center	200 distributed brochures	September 2019
	Cooperation with the regional centers of competence	Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center	Signed "Agreement on Cooperation"	December 2018
	Organization of one promotional activity	Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center	1 promotional activity organized	May 2019
Lobbying for the simplification and improvement of legislative acts dealing with innovations	Lobbying to establish a simpler legal framework for innovative activities	Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center, local and regional innovation associations of the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County	Letters of recommendation sent to the relevant ministries	January 2019
	Lobbying to establish a fiscal framework to foster innovation	Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center, Institute for Public Finance Zagreb	2 letters of recommendation sent to the relevant ministries	March 2019
Education of stakeholders about innovations and sustainable tourism and the importance of monitoring of innovations	Organizing webinars on innovation and sustainable tourism	Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center	1 webinar held with 50 participants	January 2019
	Organizing a workshop for students on innovation and sustainable tourism	Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center	1 workshop held with 20 students	April 2019
Lobbying nationally (promoting) for the necessity of	Lobbying to mandatory inclusion of the detailed information on planned or realized innovations	Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center	Letter of recommendation sent to the Ministry responsible for finance and	March 2019

introducing obligatory reporting on innovations	into the companies' financial statements that are submitted to relevant institutions		economy	
Creating an Open Innovation Platform	Creating a database on innovation	Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center	Min 50 website views and min 5 queries	June 2019
Promoting changes of HEI curricula	Initiating the programs innovations at higher education institutions	Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center	2 held meetings with the Management of the Faculty	December 2018 and April 2019
	"Innovation Management" Syllabus proposal	Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center	"Innovation Management" syllabus	April 2019
Development and support of cooperation and networking between crucial stakeholders	Taking up for the transfer of knowledge from science to practice to encourage innovation	Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center, Council of the University of Rijeka, Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management	One organized event	June 2019
	Gathering key stakeholders within the Croatian Contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center	Croatian contact Point of Adriatic-Ionian Tourism Innovation Center, Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management	8 signed Cooperation Agreements	December 2018 - <u>March 2019</u>
Development of research activities related to innovations and tourism	Encouraging scientific projects dealing with innovation and sustainable tourism	Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management	2 reported scientific projects per year, 1 published scientific paper	June 2019 – end of the project
	Popularization of innovation and sustainable tourism themes in the preparation of seminar / final / thesis papers	Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management	5 themes for seminar / final / thesis papers	November 2018 – end of the project
	Encouraging university teachers to develop topics on innovation	Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality	Increase of the	February

	and sustainable tourism Encouraging international mobility of researchers	Management Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management	representation of the topic on innovation and sustainable development in the classes 1 mobility annually	2019 April 2019 – end of the project
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Concluding remarks

Action Plan for Promoting Innovation in Sustainable Tourism - Kvarner, Croatia is a strategic document with activities for the implementation of the *Strategy for fostering innovations in sustainable tourism for Adriatic-Ionian area*. During the design of the action plan, it was taken into account that these activities are concrete, realistic and feasible. Indicators and deadlines for implementation are set for each of them.

Activities to stimulate innovations in the Kvarner region are of a variety of nature – from scientific research and teaching activities (scientific projects, teaching staff mobility, popularization of the topics through student papers, introduction of a new course, innovation program), lobbying at the national level, creation of innovation databases, to their dissemination (webinar, workshop for students, brochure production). What is common to all of them is 1) connecting key stakeholders on the market – educational institutions, students, local, regional and national authorities, industry and private sector; and 2) transferring knowledge from science to practice.

Although Kvarner is one of the most developed tourist destinations in the Republic of Croatia, its potential is not fully recognized and exploited. Implementation of the activities listed in this action plan would certainly contribute to the development goals of Kvarner, which, among other things, are based on sustainability.

Finally, it is expected that the implementation of activities from this action plan will contribute to the development of Kvarner tourism, and consequently to the development of the entire economy of the Republic of Croatia.

List of tables

Table 1:	Tourist arrivals and overnight stays according to subregion in Kvarner County	5
Table 2:	Number of tourist arrivals and overnight stays in 2017 (domestic vs. foreign tourists)	6
Table 3:	Number and structure of accommodation capacities (in constant beds) in Kvarner County (on 31 st August 2016, and 31 st August 2017)	7
Table 4:	Summarized action plan for fostering innovation in sustainable tourism in Kvarner County, Croatia	15

List of figures

Figure 1:	Position of PGC in the Republic of Croatia	3
Figure 2:	Territorial-political structure of PGC	4
Figure 3:	Share of overnight stays in 2017 in Kvarner County according to type of accommodation	7

Literature

1. PGC Development Strategy 2016 - 2020 - Addendum, PGC, 2015
2. The Kvarner County Tourism Office. Available on: www.kvarner.hr