



JUDEȚUL SATU MARE
CONSILIUL JUDEȚEAN

SZATMÁR MEGYE
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**VIRTUAL SEMINAR:
COVID19 – CHALLENGES FACED
AND EMMERGING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE
BORDER TERRITORIES**

Satu Mare County Council, Vasil Marinescu Liliana

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Organisation

Satu Mare County - the Satu Mare County Council
Institutional coordination and cooperation service

Policy instrument

Annual Programme for granting nonreimbursable financing from the local budget of Satu Mare County

- The impact of the pandemic on tourism in the border regions
- The impact of the pandemic on the Program for financing from public funds the cultural programs / projects / actions in the fields of culture, sports and youth activities regulated by law 350/2005.



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The impact of the pandemic on tourism in the border regions How strongly did the pandemic crisis affected our Policy Instrumen

The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on society as a whole. The pandemic puts the tourism ecosystem under unprecedented pressure. As a result of travel and other restrictions, tourism has gradually reduced its activity in the EU and worldwide.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, virtually all states have implemented restrictions on non-essential travel, which are often accompanied by the obligation for cross-border travelers to remain in quarantine.

The EU's external borders have been closed to non-essential travel and many Member States have temporarily reintroduced internal border controls. This meant that suddenly, millions of European citizens could no longer travel for business, study or leisure, many being separated from family and friends for months.

For the gradual elimination of restrictions on free movement and the elimination of internal borders, proportionality and non-discrimination between citizens must be ensured.



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Lessons learned with the pandemic included in the new programmes

The pandemic offers citizens the opportunity to enjoy the rich diversity of culture and nature in their own country and to discover new experiences throughout the year. Many regions and cities rely heavily on cultural tourism.

Thus, technology has contributed to the reinvention of cultural tourism during this pandemic by opening up new opportunities in terms of creating innovative and local recreational and business tourism offerings.

So, there are new opportunities to discover hidden or forgotten treasures naturally and culturally, closer to home and to taste locally made products.

Tourism can benefit from the digital transition, offering new ways to manage travel and tourist flows, opportunities and more options, as well as more efficient use of limited resources.



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How can we re-establish the Cross Border relationships and trust on neighbouring countries?

It is well known that tourism is the backbone of the economy for many states.

Cross-border cultural cooperation covers all areas of cooperation and provides a strong basis for human contacts and interactions.

Now is the time to rebuild strong ties and cooperation between neighboring areas to strengthen cross-border cultural cooperation in all areas: tourism, cultural activities and cultural heritage.

The new experience and knowledge gained during this period can help to eliminate the accumulated barriers, thus creating a more competitive, credible and successful environment for neighboring countries.

We have to promote:

- new cultural activities in the cross-border area (festivals, concerts, cultural activities)
- tourist, cultural and gastronomic routes which bring out common cultural characteristics across frontier areas
- to promote and protect the cross-border architectural heritage



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The impact of the pandemic on the Program for financing from public funds the cultural programs / projects / actions in the fields of culture, sports and youth activities regulated by law 350/2005.

The crisis generated by the COVID - 19 pandemic, has had and still has a number of significant implications regarding the situation of non-reimbursable financing under law 350/2005.

The imposed state of emergency / alert as well as the exceptional measures applied on the entire territory of the country, in some administrative-territorial units, led to the limitation of the freedom of movement, assembly, of the development of social activities in general.

In the context of the pandemic, locally, the county grant program was carried out in the same stages as in previous years regarding the preparation of specific rules for awarding grant contracts from the budget of Satu Mare county, selection of applications, verification of eligibility, evaluation of project proposals as well as the entire funding procedure.

The particular situations determined by the risk of infection with the SARS COV-2 virus determined the submission of a smaller number of applications for the three fields of financing: culture, sports, youth.

How strongly did the pandemic crisis affected our Policy Instrument and the beneficiaries



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The consequence of the state of emergency / alert imposed in the territory, determined the abandonment of the financed projects due to the impossibility of their realization (sports competitions, cultural events that were to take place in arranged spaces and outdoors), respectively some of them could be carried out only with compliance with the regulations providing for health protection measures established by joint order of the Minister of Culture and the Minister of Health and Sports.

From the perspective of the beneficiaries of the non-reimbursable financing, the imposed restrictions generated a series of inconveniences which are manifested by the following aspects:

- Uncertainty about the date or even the possibility of organizing the events,
- Additional costs relating to health safety procedures,
- Low number of addressability (of the public, of the participants) of the projects / actions.

The main challenges to be faced was to reorganize their activities or decrease the budget because some activities had to be limited in terms of participants or even reprogrammed or cancelled.



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A successful experience in the management of heritage and cross-border tourism, carried out during the pandemic was the event entitled Street Music Festival.

Satu Mare County Council is a supporter of this event through co-financing.

This kind of event is unique in Romania, it takes place annually and involves the participation in the competition of musicians and street artists from all over Europe who come to our city to present their talent.

Respecting the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, the street performances could be watched by a large number of locals and tourists.

In conclusion, the main lesson learned in this pandemic is the one regarding the flexibility of the beneficiaries regarding the reprogramming and reinvention in the organization of events.



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Lessons learned with the pandemic included in the new programmes

- The importance of ensuring the openness and transparency of the funding process,
- The importance of digitizing procedures (in as many stages as possible) in the grant process,
- Finding new ways of interaction between citizens and public institutions,
- Strengthen the responsibility of public authorities in this area,
- Specialization and professionalization of public services in this field,
- Adequate and prompt information of applicants on any changes in the conduct of the funding procedure,
- The reasons for the decisions taken by the administration should be clear, evidence-based where necessary and explained in documents by reference to the particular context and circumstances of the decision.



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Thank you!