

## **LAERTES Project**

Co-funded by the European Union

### **Project Title:**

LAERTES - “Lower Adriatic Euro-Region for Transport Evolution and Sustainability”.

### **Program:**

INTERREG IPA

### **Project Overview:**

LAERTES aims to develop local, regional, national, and international intermodal transport, as well as to improve access to the TEN-T network. Focused on the Lower Adriatic Region in Southern Europe, this project seeks to promote sustainable development and economic growth through pilot projects in the areas where it will be implemented. Resilience to climate change and innovation are also priorities of this project.

LAERTES aims to develop a map of the innovative road network, which not only improves cross-border regional connectivity but also raises the standards of the existing network in line with European Union regulations. Enhancing the efficiency of air transport and coordinating maritime transport are intended to facilitate the movement of passengers and goods by introducing new routes between the Balkan countries and the Puglia Region. Moreover, LAERTES seeks to modernize transport by creating real-time information systems for itineraries and various modes of transportation. This information will provide a coordinated and more efficient mobility across the entire Lower Adriatic region and key Balkan countries.

The first action preceding the three LAERTES Pilot Projects, reflects the common goal of the partner countries to complete all necessary administrative steps towards establishing the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation “Lower Adriatic Euroregion.”. By creating the EGTC, a very ambitious initiative will benefit not only LAERTES but also other regional cooperation opportunities and will streamline procedures for other EU-funded projects in transport infrastructure, tourism, and other sectors, supporting economic, social, and cultural development across Apulia, Molise, Montenegro, and Albania.

### **Project Goals:**

The special status of the EGTC “LAE” will allow for streamlined cooperation procedures among partner countries and aims to mitigate inequalities by fostering more balanced economic growth.

By improving and offering alternative connectivity options between the two shores of the Lower Adriatic, tourism development opportunities are expected to increase, allowing tourism activities to be extended throughout the entire year rather than remaining seasonal.

Despite the political and cultural differences among the countries of this territory, LAERTES aims to foster cultural exchange and promote historical values and heritage among neighboring countries.

**Pilot Project 1, LARAS (Lower Adriatic Regional Air Shuttle)**, consists of the creation of a “hub-and-spoke” air network connecting the Lower Adriatic region with major Balkan cities, offering frequent, short-haul, cost-effective, and efficient flight services.

**Pilot Project 2, LATIS (Lower Adriatic Transport Information System)**, aims to design a real-time information system covering the various available modes of transport, including schedules, routes, and operational status across the Lower Adriatic region.

**Pilot Project 3, LAVITA (Lower Adriatic Vertiports Integrated Transport Architecture)**, represents the development of a network of vertiports in the Lower Adriatic region, with the objective of establishing fast and direct connections between urban centers, islands, and remote or isolated areas, significantly reducing travel time for residents, tourists, and businesses moving between secondary destinations.

**Project leader:**

Strategic Agency for Sustainable Territorial Development - Puglia Region (Italy).

**Partners:**

- Institute of Transport (Albania)
- Development Agency, Molise (Italy)
- ROOF – Private NGO (Albania)
- Ministry of Transport (Montenegro)
- Ministry of Maritime Affairs (Montenegro)

**Project Duration:**

July 2025 – December 2027

**Total Project Value:**

1,042,327.56 EUR