



Good Practice Story Title: THE SOUNDS OF PEACE

Destination: Miren Kras

Country: Slovenia

Submitting Organization: Miren Kras Public Institution - destination

Category:

- Destination Management
- Nature & Scenery
- Environment & Climate
- Culture & Tradition
- Thriving Communities
- Business & Marketing

Destination description:

Miren Kras is one of the greenest, most varied and dynamic destinations in Slovenia. The dreamy landscape, characterized by peace and magnificent views of the Adriatic Sea and the Alps, stretched across the Vipava Valley and the Karst, offers the visitor the experiences and tastes of both regions: the green Vipava Valley, shaped by the calm flow of the Vipava river, and the raw and stony Karst, which with its karst phenomena and the diversity of the underground world, stirs the imagination of visitors. The proximity to the sea ensures a 365-day beneficial mild climate and year-round tourism with an exceptional experience of limitless cultural and gastronomic content at the junction of two countries and three wine regions. The SLOVENIA GREEN GOLD DESTINATION sign demonstrates our sustainable approach, to which the entire local community is committed. The destination offers 5 museums and an art gallery, 5 tourist caves open to the public and a rich culinary offer, 5 traditional inns that are connected in a sustainable brand Krasna kuhinja (Exquisite cuisine), and 4 traditional "Osmice". In addition to numerous annual events, we are an excellent starting point for outdoor experiences - hiking, cycling and horseback riding, as well as water sports on the Vipava river (swimming, kayaking and fishing).



The destination is distinguished by the range of boutique accommodation; we pay great attention to reducing the carbon footprint by promoting biking and e-biking, we also offer e-charging stations for cars.

Among the biggest tourist attractions of the wider region is the Monument of Peace on Cerje, a rich treasure of history and art, and also an important tourist and informational point on the Walk of Peace trail from the Alps to the Adriatic, which in its length of 230 km, connects the heritage of the First World War. In the region, spanning between two countries, Slovenia and Italy, one of the greatest attractions of the Karst area are the Karst dry stone walls, which became part of the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2019. Many of these walls were destroyed during World War I, and their remnants today, along with military caverns, trenches, firing points, artillery lines, and remains of strongholds, form an important part of the historical and cultural heritage of this cross-border territory.

The most important asset of the entire area, however, are its inhabitants.

In the area of both countries, connected by the Walk of Peace Trail from the Alps to the Adriatic sea, there are several public institutions engaged in tourism and culture. Additionally, numerous cultural, tourist, and sports associations represent a significant potential for building a unified cross-border cultural and tourist space.

The Miren Kras destination is located on the westernmost edge of Slovenia, directly on the border with Italy. All of us who live and work on both sides of the border recognize the great opportunity for development and promotion of a BORDERLESS space, brought by the European Capital of Culture 2025, a title jointly held by the region's main centers, Nova Gorica in Slovenia and Gorizia in Italy.

Summary of the Good Practice Story:

In 2020, the main centers of the region, Nova Gorica on the Slovenian side and Gorizia on the Italian side, achieved a major milestone by being awarded the title of European Capital of Culture 2025.

This has become a wonderful opportunity for institutions and residents on both sides of the border to seek out cultural and culturally related content that connects us, and to create cross-border partnership projects that will pave the way for sustainable cultural and tourist stories.

With this promising start, an international project, SOUNDS OF PEACE - I SUONI DELLA PACE – ZVOKI MIRU, was created through a partnership between two public tourism institutions, Miren Kras (SLO) and Prolocco Fogliano-Redipuglia (ITA), the cultural institution Kulturni dom Nova Gorica (SLO), the Walk of Peace Foundation (SLO), Turismo Friuli Venezia Giulia (ITA), Progetto Musica Udine (ITA), in collaboration with numerous associations on both sides of the border (Tourist Associations, Guides Associations, Caving Associations), and tourism service providers (catering, accommodation, transport, translators), with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia.

The event, which uniquely combines the historical, natural, and cultural heritage of the cross-border area and is conducted bilingually, includes a two-day hike along the Walk of Peace through the Slovenian and Italian Karst (Cerje and the Valley of Bersaglieri near Sei Busi - Ronchi hill). Every year, the project is enriched with two concerts by world-renowned musicians who come from both sides of the border.



The area, where the two-day event takes place, represents the center of the Isonzo Front, where Slovenians and Italians fought each other more than 100 years ago. On both sides of today's border, the front left a lasting mark on the landscape, which is still interspersed with the remains of the 1st World War. Numerous trenches, bunkers, caverns, and caves are silent witnesses of the horrors of the war that soldiers at the front experienced on a daily basis.

On the 100th anniversary of 1st World War and the Isonzo Front, this once unified territory, which was divided by a painful past, was reunited by the Walk of Peace, which connects the cross-border area of Slovenia and Italy from the Alps to the Adriatic with an important message of PEACE and in the hope that the horrors of war would not be repeated.

The two-day cross-border event combines all-day events in which the landscape is embedded with nature and cultural heritage in an interactive way.

The daily event takes place in the form of two bilingual guided hikes along the Walk of Peace in the Slovenian and Italian parts of the Karst. The latter includes a historical interpretation of the heritage of the 1st World War through music (instrumental music in the area of former battlefields), literature (reading sections of historical works and books related to the area) and an animated presentation of the life of soldiers. The hike includes the visit of different caves that were used as a home for soldiers, where visitors are welcomed by soldiers in their uniforms, who tell them their stories. The path goes past dry-stoned walls that are part of the UNESCO world heritage.

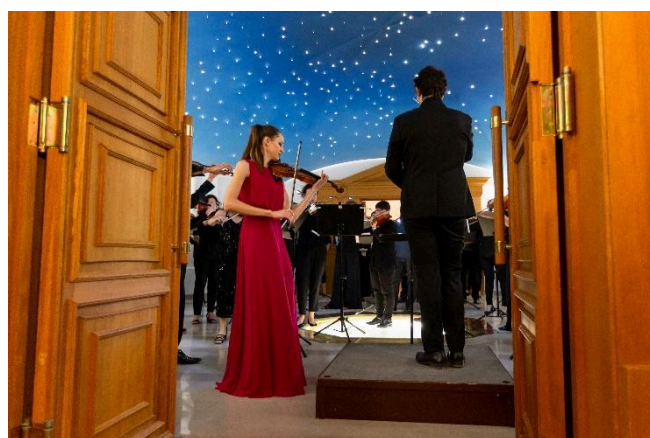
The evening part, with two musical concerts, takes place on the 1st evening in the Monument of Peace on Cerje and on the 2nd evening in the Bersalieri Valley near the Sei Busi hill on the Italian side.

With the aim of true cultural exchange, renowned Slovenian musicians perform on the Italian side and vice versa.

The SOUNDS OF PEACE event has been held every 1st weekend in September since 2022 and has become an important event that attracts visitors from near and far, as it offers, in addition to sports and recreational content, historical exploration of the landscape, connecting and enriching the cross-border space, and enriching events with musical and a cultural note that raises the event to a higher level, thus attracting visitors of different generations and interest groups. The essence of the event is cross-border cooperation, cultural enrichment of the space, interactive transfer of knowledge and remembrance of important historical events and, ultimately, awareness of the wider community about the fundamental value - PEACE and spreading the message of peace, which is lacking in the world at this very moment in view of current events.



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Issues faced:

1. In the cross-border area between Slovenia and Italy, which was divided already in the 1st World War and later, the people did not cooperate in terms of organizing events, socializing, etc. Even though the border is not there anymore, the people still remained each on their side of the border.
2. The Walk of Peace from the Alps to the Adriatic covers two linguistic areas.
3. Find the right partners on both sides of the border who will ensure the long-term sustainability of the new project (financiers, coordinators, performers, tourism service providers).
4. Provide content that will connect natural, cultural, and historical heritage into a compelling story, interesting for all generations.
5. Ensure top-notch cultural performers for greater attendance at concerts.
6. Secure funding for the new project.
7. Create new content on the selected part of the existing trail that would be appropriate for all hikers – here we collaborated with bilingual local guides who were also guiding and presenting the stories of the past at the time of the event.
8. Select educational historical literature related to World War I and the immediate area of the two-day hike.
9. Choose an appropriate trail length that includes enough elements of historical heritage while being suitable in terms of difficulty for a wide age range of hikers, including culture enthusiasts (music, literature).



Solution:

The European Capital of Culture 2025 project has offered the opportunity to establish a new cross-border product with a sustainable note, based on shared cultural and historical heritage.

With the initiative of Kulturni dom Nova Gorica, which had previously collaborated with the Italian partner Progetto Musica from Udine, we at the Public Institution Miren Kras convened the first working meeting. At this meeting, the initial like-minded participants brainstormed, assessed the potential, identified potential partners, created a preliminary scenario, and estimated costs. We found that by expanding the partnership, we could collectively create a unique story with multidimensional effects:

1. A permanent cross-border, borderless space.
2. Connecting hiking with history and various forms of culture (music, visual arts, literature).
3. A new tourist product with long-term impact and great market potential (accommodations, cuisine, guides, book sales, concert admissions).
4. Promotion of classical music.
5. Supplementing the European Capital of Culture 2025 program.
6. Generating new hikers from around the world in 2025.
7. Combined knowledge and resources for development and promotion would enable better positioning and thus increased visitation to the cross-border region in the future.
8. With the organization of events having their organizers from Slovenia and Italy, and with advertising on both sides, the public would start to socialize more and get to know one another.
9. Expanding the offer to new target groups: We offered sports and recreational content as well as historical exploration of the landscape and musical events, so everyone could find something that would interest them.
10. Promotion of local gastronomy: Each day is enriched with local foods from local providers.

Methods, Steps, and Tools applied:

The idea was an event that would connect the cross-border area into a shared narrative, enriching the European Capital of Culture 2025 program on one hand and lay the foundation for a new tourist product with a strong note of sustainability and tradition on the other.

In search of suitable partners who would understand the purpose and be able to organize the event, we found six institutions from Slovenia and Italy that welcomed the proposal and expressed interest in participating. After various meetings in person and online, we were able to come to an agreement and organize the first event in 2022.



STEPS:

- In 2021, the IDEA of 3 partners' first meeting - brainstorming - valorization of potential, content design, and proposal for expanding the partnership
- The second working meeting invited 4 additional main partners who confirmed their participation
- Composition of the list of performers/stakeholders
- Follow-up meetings of each partner with their stakeholders on both sides of the border (guides, associations, restaurateurs, cavers, transporters)
- The Walk of Peace Foundation obtained support from the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia
- Selection and reservation of locations for concerts
- Site visits and determination of hiking trails on both sides of the border (16 km on the Slovenian side and 14 km on the Italian side)
- Selection and invitation of musicians, contract signing
- Selection of literature and translations
- Selection and invitation of concert subcontractors (stages, sound systems, lights)
- Obtaining quotations, cost estimation, cost distribution among partners, and commencement of implementation
- Development of the corporate identity - comprehensive graphic design, selection of photographs, texts, translations, design graphics (invitations, banners, advertisements, posters)
- Media buying preparation of invitations, organization of press conferences, public statements
- Accelerated promotion through social networks, ad purchases
- Organization of the first event: specification of tasks and responsibilities, determination of carriers
- Collection of applications
- Organization of hiker transportation from the finish location
- Event execution
- Photography and recording of selected moments
- Public statements
- Collection of participant and public feedback
- Conclusion meeting with valorization and recommendations for the next implementation

Achievements and Results:

A well-structured project and excellent content with historical significance and an important message, appropriate cross-border partnerships, and great responsiveness from all stakeholders involved, co-financing of costs by all 6 partners and additional support from the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia, along with excellent promotion through numerous channels (website, radio, newsletters, Facebook, Instagram, posters, press releases, contributions in printed media, leaflets), implemented by all connected partners, have contributed to excellent results in the first edition:

1. Establishment of a new original international tourist product that valorizes the natural, cultural, and historical heritage of the cross-border territory and connects the bilingual region into a unified sustainable narrative with an emphasis on cultural heritage.



2. Large participation of hikers from Slovenia, Italy, and Croatia.
3. Connecting different generations (participants of all ages, from elementary school students to retirees).
4. Creation of long-term cross-border partnership among 6 institutions: 2 public tourism organizations, 2 cultural institutes, the Path of Peace Foundation, Promoturismo Friuli Venezia Giulia.
5. Support from the Ministry of Culture.
6. Involvement of bilingual guides (4 in the first edition).
7. Participation of Slovenian and Italian associations (over 100 members).
8. Involvement of 4 caterers (2 Slovenian, 2 Italian) and promotion of seasonal local cuisine.
9. Participation of over 50 top musicians (orchestras and internationally renowned soloists from Slovenia and Italy).
10. Significant media coverage (over 100 announcements and over 200 posts about the event in Slovenia and Italy).
11. Praise from satisfied participants who will return + recommendations.
12. Good promotion of the value of PEACE and conveying the message of the senselessness of war to younger generations.
13. And finally, most importantly: The area is starting to collaborate, people are starting to appreciate the "opposite" culture.

The results suggest that the 2-day project SOUNDS OF PEACE - I SUONI DELLA PACE-ZVOKI MIRU will be one of the most attended events of the European Capital of Culture 2025 in the coming year.

Lessons Learned and Advice:

For the successful implementation of projects, in addition to a good idea based on concrete facts and understanding of potential, as well as high-quality execution, it is necessary to have knowledge and expertise of responsible stakeholders, solid partnerships, alignment on common goals, trust and respect for agreements, reliable sources of funding, support from state institutions, good (timely and clear) communication, prompt response in resolving issues, thorough planning of both content and costs, active involvement of all stakeholders, especially local communities, which must embrace the projects, and last but not least, good cooperation with the media, which plays a crucial role in disseminating information to targeted audiences.

Upon completion of the project, it is essential to analyze the results, take measures to address shortcomings, and propose new improvements for the next implementation.

Recognitions and Additional References

Last year, the project received state commendation in the national competition "Jakob's Award" for originality and creative interpretation of cultural-historical heritage.





EVENTS:

[ZVOKI MIRU 2022](#)

[ZVOKI MIRU 2023](#)

MEDIA ARTICLES (RADIO, NEWSPAPER, MAGAZINES):

<https://www.mojaobcina.si/miren-kostanjevica/novice/zvoki-miru-ponovno-povezali-teritorij-in-utr dili-ce-zmejno-prijateljstvo.html>

<https://www.si21.com/Glasba/zvoki-miru--i-suoni-della-pace--the-sounds-of-peace/>

<https://www.mojaobcina.si/miren-kostanjevica/dogodki/zvoki-miru-suoni-della-pace--sounds-of-peace-2.html>

<https://www.robin.si/lokalne-novice/vrednota-miru-se-bo-sirila-med-sprehodi-po-kraskih-poteh/>

<https://www.rtv slo.si/kultura/oder/novogoriski-kulturni-dom- napoveduje-nov-zacetek-pristnih-in-svezih-u-metniskih-doizvetij/638212>

<https://pressnews.si/novice/zvoki-miru-i-suoni-della-pace-sounds-of-peace>

<https://neisuonideiluoghi.it/archivio-edizioni/nei-suoni-dei-luoghi-2022/i-suoni-della-pace-zvoki-miru-the-sounds-of-peace---ronchi/>

<https://www.vacanzeinslovenia.it/eventi/i-suoni-della-pace-zvoki-miru-sounds-of-peace-2023/>

<https://www.ilgoriziano.it/articolo/musica-cammino-luoghi-grande-guerra-tappe-cerje-ronchi-26-agosto-2023>

VIDEO:

<https://we.tl/t-hSC0wMpnER>

FOTO:

<https://we.tl/t-ICghuRkmDC>

PROMO MATERIAL:

<https://we.tl/t-FiugF97Qn1>



