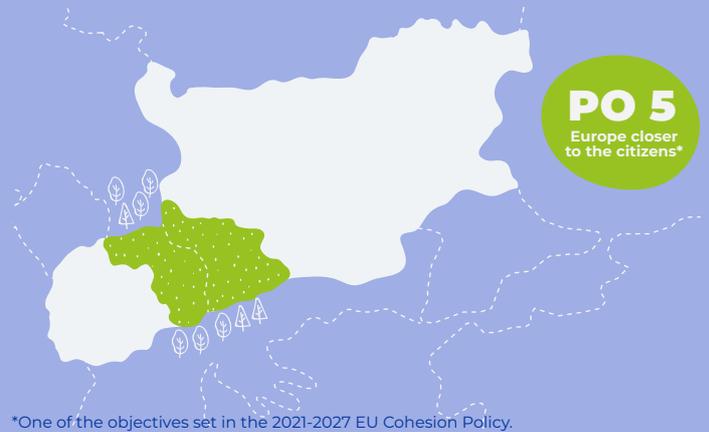


# INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL STRATEGY

that aims to stimulate the development of the territory through a set of joint operations implemented on both sides of the border.



## NEEDS AND POTENTIALS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERRITORY

The analysis is selective and focuses on the needs and potentials of the territory that are suitable to be addressed through cross-border investments. The needs and potentials are divided conditionally into two sections:

### Increasing the competitiveness of the local economy and improving the business environment:

- overcoming the differences between the settlements and managing depopulation;
- bringing out SMEs with focus on family business through support for improving the staff knowledge and skills;
- increasing the resource and energy efficiency of SMEs using the methods of circular economy;
- continuous renewal of SMEs by developing new knowledge and skills and implementing digital technologies;
- implementing measures to overcome shortage of qualified staff and to increase the executive and management staff qualification;
- improving the company culture of cooperation between SMEs;
- encouraging economically inactive people to look for work experience or education and supporting the business in opening new job positions;
- **relatively good educational infrastructure in terms of territorial coverage, universities within the territory;**
- **rich cultural-historical and natural heritage.**

### Developing an attractive all-season tourist product through joint intelligent solutions:

- developing a system for alternative modes of transport;
- implementing joint actions to reduce domestic and transboundary environmental pollution in order to adapt to climate change;
- organising coordinated joint actions in cases of natural disasters and accidents;
- improving the awareness of the local inhabitants about the impact of human activity on the environment and stimulating the motivation to preserve the cultural-historical and natural heritage;
- developing and maintaining the infrastructure of the cultural-historical sites and the natural landmarks;
- adapting the strong seasonal nature of the tourist services within the territory to an all-season tourist product that is available during the whole year;
- implementing target measures for development of ecological tourism;
- providing financial support for cultural activities and exchanges;
- **opportunity to increase competitiveness by encouraging the development of sustainable four-season tourism within the territory.**

### SpO

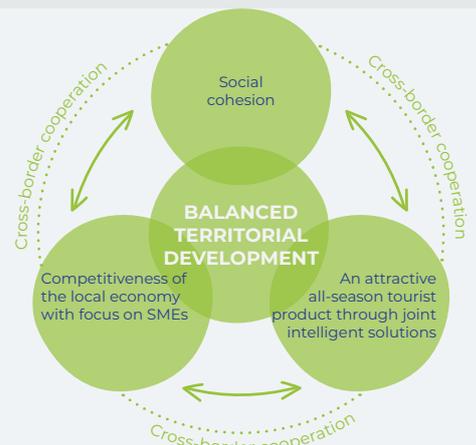
Social development and cohesion through sustainable economic growth based on "knowledge-based economy" that aims to overcome the existing significant gaps between the settlements at different hierarchical levels within the territory.

### SpO 1.1.

Increasing the competitiveness of the local economy and improving the business environment.

### SpO 1.2.

The cultural and historical heritage of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of North Macedonia: a prerequisite for the development of an attractive, all-season tourism product by means of smart solutions that ensure universal access and participation.



## LIST OF OPERATIONS TO BE CARRIED WITHIN THE CROSS-BORDER AREA:

- ✓ Potential for cross-border implementation of the idea for the project.
- ✓ Connection with the needs and potential for development of the territory.
- ✓ Adequacy to the financial resources of the programme.

Positive cumulative effect on the needs identified in the strategy and potential for development of the territory as a result of the implementation of the integrated package of projects with focus on territorial and thematical aspects.

MORE INFORMATION:

ANALYSIS

STRATEGY