EDIH Adria annual conferences

D6.2



EDIHADRIA

EDIH Adria – EUROPEAN DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB ADRIA – Digital Transformation of Adriatic Croatia
Grant agreement: 101083838
Project Duration: 01/01/2023 to 31/12/2025

DELIVERABLE FACTSHEET

Deliverable No	D6.2
Deliverable name	Organized EDIH Adria annual conference
Lead Beneficiary	UNIRI
Type	R — Document, report
Dissemination Level	PU - public
Work package No	6
Work Package Leader	Smart RI
Task	T.6.2.
Due date	31.08.2025.
Actual date of submission	23.12.2025.
Version	V3
Authors	Tanja Pavlović Flegar, Tamara Grubiša
Contributors	Emira Brkić Karninčić
Reviewers	Damir Medved

Document Revision History

Version	Date	Description of change	List of contributor(s)
1	**31/12/2023**	**Annual report 2023**	**UNIRI/SMART RI**
2	**15/12/2024**	**Annual report 2024**	**UNIRI/SMART RI**
3	**15/12/2025**	**Annual report 2025**	**UNIRI/PORIN**

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

DISCLAIMER

Funded by the European Union (Digital Europe Programme – Grant Agreement No. 101083838, as well as the State Budget of the Republic of Croatia.

Views and opinions expressed in this document are, however, those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Contents

DELIVERABLE FACTSHEET 2
DISCLAIMER 3
Introduction and objectives 6
Reports on EDIH Adria annual conferences 6
EDIH Adria Annual Conference 2023 6
Programme 7
Keynote Highlights 8
Panel discussion: “On the limits of Digital Transformation: finance and knowledge in focus” 10
EDIH Adria annual awards 11
Outcomes and visibility 11
Additional Information 12
EDIH Adria Annual Conference 2024 13
Programme 13
Presentation of the AI Assistant developed for Adria PA 14
Application of IoT Technologies in Solar Energy Projects – 3t.cable Case Study 15
Panel Discussion: User Experiences and Interactive Exchange 16
EDIH Adria Annual Awards 17
Outcomes and visibility 18
EDIH Adria Annual Conference 2025 19
Programme 19
Panel Discussion: “AI in Practice: Experiences from EDIH Ecosystems” 21
EDIH Adria Annual Awards 22
Outcomes and visibility 24
Networking and Matchmaking Activities at EDIH Adria Conferences 25
Conference 2023: World Café Format as Stakeholder Meetup 25
Networking Structure: 25
Matchmaking Outcomes: 25

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Conference 2024: Enhanced Business-to-Business Connections....26
Networking Mechanisms:....26
Matchmaking Focus Areas:....26
Conference 2025: Comprehensive Ecosystem Integration....27
Advanced Networking Infrastructure:....27
Strategic Matchmaking Outcomes:....27
RIMAP Platform: Digital Matchmaking Infrastructure....28
RIMAP Networking Capabilities Presented at Conferences:....28
Conference-to-Platform Conversion:....29
Quantified Networking and Matchmaking Impact....29
Aggregate Conference Networking Metrics:....29
Networking-to-Service Conversion:....30
Beyond-Conference Networking Initiatives....30
Digital Communication Channels:....30
Sector-Specific Networking Events:....31
Success Stories Emerging from Conference Networking....31
Documented Collaboration Examples:....31
Strategic Value of Conference Networking for EDIH Ecosystem....32
Ecosystem Strengthening:....32
Service Pipeline Development:....32
Best Practices for Conference-Based Networking and Matchmaking....33
Format Design Principles:....33
Technology Integration:....33
Stakeholder Engagement Tactics:....33
Concluding remarks....35

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Introduction and objectives

EDIH Adria Annual conference (T.6.2) is envisioned as a central annual networking and dissemination event as well as an important tool to increase visibility and impact of EDIH Adria activities.

Within WP6, three EDIH Adria conferences were planned and organized during the project implementation, one per each project year. The organizational efforts and funds were provided by Riječka razvojna agencija PORIN with the support of all consortium members.

Specific expected outcomes of EDIH Adria conferences were:

- showcasing the project's contributions to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and public institution's (PIs) digitalization projects
- reaching out to new users
- establishing and improving collaboration with relevant stakeholders
- attracting media attention

The following report involves summarizing key information about the programme, speakers, participants, highlights and outcomes from each EDIH Adria annual conference in the period from 2023 to 2025.

Reports on EDIH Adria annual conferences

EDIH Adria Annual Conference 2023.

On **November 30th 2023**, EDIH Adria Annual Conference was held at the Infobip Ltd.'s conference space - **Quantum in Vodnjan, Croatia**. The overarching theme revolved around the digital transformation of the Adriatic Croatia, highlighting the transformative potential of collaborative approaches and advanced technologies.

Speakers were selected to ensure comprehensive coverage of expertise across the public, private, and scientific domains.

The program served as a perfect opportunity for decision-makers from both private and public sector to explore and evaluate new technologies and strategic

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

approaches that drive innovation in their businesses, improve operational efficiency and customer engagement as well as drive their organisation's digital culture.

Programme

Participants` introduction to EDIH Adria commenced with a guided visit to Campus Pangea, Infobip`s state of the art office building, setting the tone for an immersive experience.

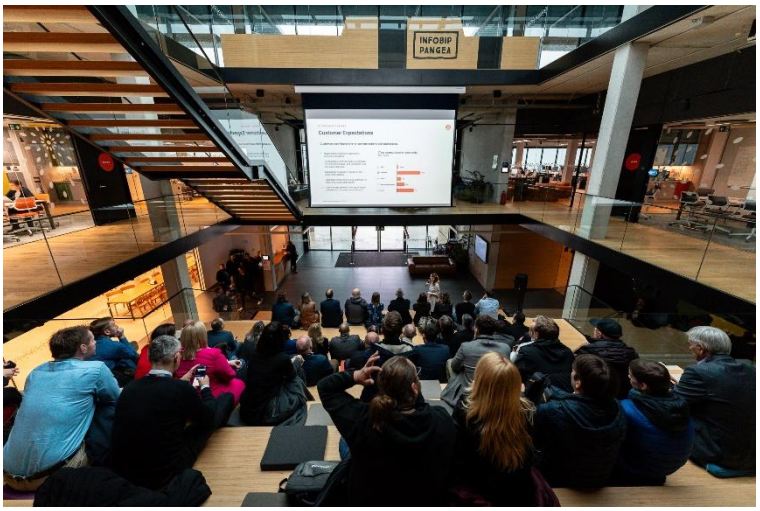


Photo 1: Infobip`s Pangea campus visit

The opening session, featuring Roberto Kutić (COO, Infobip), Sandro D'Elia and Alvaro Hernando Hernando (European Commission), shed light on the Adriatic Croatia digital transformation potential, Digital Europe Programme and European Digital Innovation Hubs network, complemented by insights from Valter Flego, a distinguished member of the European Parliament, delivered by a pre-recorded video clip.

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

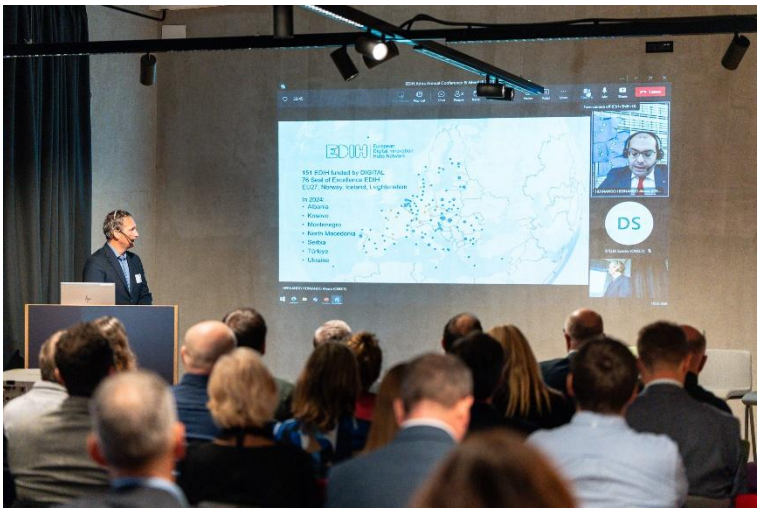


Photo 2. Opening session by PO`s

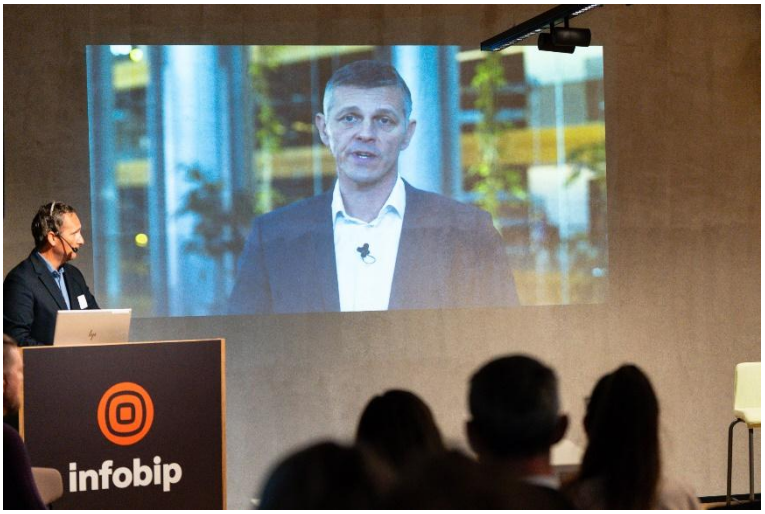


Photo 3. Opening session by Valter Flego

Central program featured a dynamic composition of keynotes and a panel discussion.

Keynote Highlights

Damir Medved, EDIH Adria Director, provided an overview of the EDIH Adria project, services and competencies that the consortium offers to businesses and public sector entities.

European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

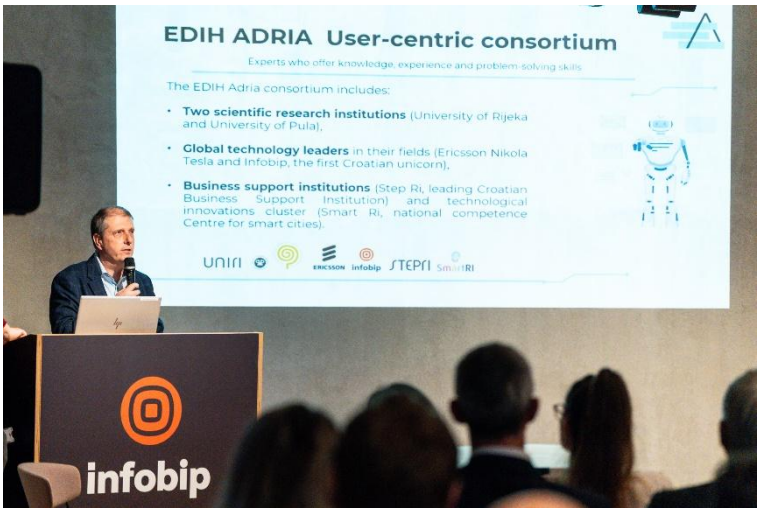


Photo 4. Overview of the EDIH Adria project presented by Damir Medved

Vedran Kružić, CEO of the Regional Development Agency of the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County PRIGODA, discussed Regional Value Chains and industrial transition, an opportunity to operationalize the EDIH Adria *test-before-invest* results.

Damir Medved, EDIH Adria director & Benedikt Perak, head of the Laboratory for Cultural Complexity at FFRI and an expert on LLM, unveiled RIMAP 2.0, a redesigned matchmaking platform, outlining its functionalities and user impact, while Aleksandar Raić, VP AI Transformation, Infobip, delved into the Artificial intelligence as an indispensable tool in the process of digital transformation.

European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske



Photo 5. Presentation by Aleksandar Raić

Panel discussion: "On the limits of Digital Transformation: finance and knowledge in focus"

A panel, moderated by Damir Medved, addressed challenges in digital transformation, featuring Darko Etinger, Dean of Pula Faculty of Informatics, Aleksandar Raić, Vedran Kružić, and Dean Verbanac, Intersoft Technologies ltd. The discussion covered finance and knowledge constraints and opportunities in the context of digital transformation.



Photo 6. Panel discussion

European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

EDIH Adria annual awards

EDIH Adria annual award was envisioned to be given to the users/institutions which have most contributed to the EDIH Adria innovation ecosystem in general, in the past year.

EDIH Adria annual award 2023. was given to the Regional Development Agency of the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County - PRIGODA, as an institution that greatly participated in the promotion of EDIH Adria services, and the development of RIMAP – matchmaking platform while providing the EDIH Adria consortium with direct contacts of potential local users.



Photo 7. EDIH annual award given to PRIGODA

Outcomes and visibility

The conference had great impact on the EDIH Adria project visibility and strengthening of project official communication channels, and most importantly, there was a notable increase in the number of expressed interests for EDIH services. Regional media outlets covered the conference with video segments and interviews filmed by an online media outlet before the conference as well as the press release that was distributed by the WP6 team to the media, after the event.

Biggest impact was visible in the newly formed project WhatsApp community that was utilized to communicate with the attendees before, during and after the conference. In total the WhatsApp community received 36 members on the day of

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

the conference who were active participants and continue to be part of the community.

The project`s LinkedIn page, as the main communication channel at that time, received a large spike in activity in the period immediately after the conference, as can be seen on the picture below:

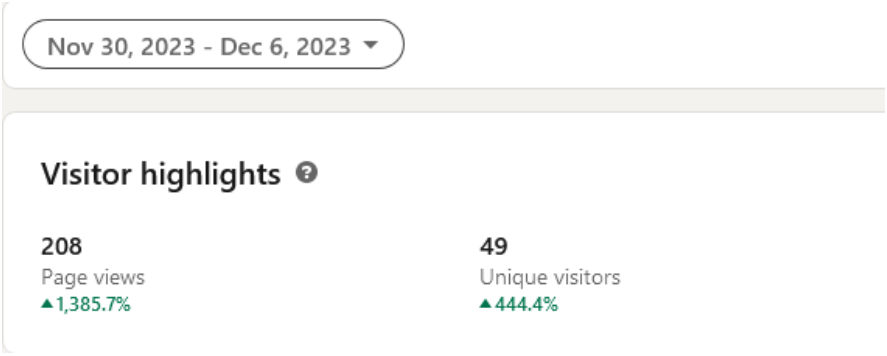


Photo 8. EDIH Adria LinkedIn profile post-conference activity

Additional Information

Originally, the stakeholder meetup was planned to take place 6 months after the conference, but since the conference was held in November, it was decided to incorporate the meetup as part of the conference in a form of a World Café. During the meetup the EDIH Adria project's offer, services, and competences were presented to potential users.

Potential users had a chance to meet EDIH Adria experts and teams in person and have a one-on-one conversation about potentials for cooperation and possibilities that EDIH Adria can offer them.

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske



Photo 9. EDIH Adria meetup session - Smart RI stand

EDIH Adria Annual Conference 2024

On **October 2nd 2024**, the EDIH Adria Annual Conference 2024 was held at **Production Park Torpedo**, **Rijeka, Croatia**. The conference served as the second major annual gathering of the EDIH Adria community, bringing together innovators, SMEs, public sector representatives and digital transformation professionals to share insights and experiences on digitalization, AI, cyber security and IoT adoption.

The theme **centered around user experiences with digital transformation services provided by EDIH Adria**, offering concrete case studies from SMEs and public organizations on how provided digital tools improved their operational performance.

Programme

Opening session and presentations were delivered by senior representatives from key partner institutions and invited experts, highlighting insights into recently

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

developed EDIH tools and services, outcomes from EDIH Adria services deployed over the past year and strategic outlook on region-wide digital innovation.

While central sessions included user experience panels showcasing digital transformation journeys, as follows.

Presentation of the AI Assistant developed for Adria PA

One of the most notable moments of the conference was the presentation of the AI Assistant developed for Adria PA, delivered by prof. Benedikt Perak. This innovative solution was designed to enhance internal and external communication processes, with a strong focus on automation and acceleration of client interactions.

Through a detailed live demonstration, Perak showcased how the AI Assistant operates in practice, emphasizing advanced functionalities such as data analysis, real-time query processing, and personalized user experience. Participants were able to see how this AI tool contributes to workflow optimization, increased operational efficiency and reduction of time spent on routine tasks.

Due to its innovative character and strong potential for broader application, the AI Assistant for Adria PA project was submitted for the EDIH Network Awards, further confirming its relevance within the European digital innovation ecosystem.



Photo 10. Presentation of the AI Assistant by Benedikt Perak

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Application of IoT Technologies in Solar Energy Projects – 3t.cable Case Study

Another significant highlight of the conference was the presentation of a digitalisation project implemented for 3t.cable, a company specialised in solar energy projects. The presentation was delivered by Saša Vojvodić (Ericsson Nikola Tesla), who outlined how IoT technologies were successfully implemented to optimise solar systems and improve their efficiency and long-term sustainability.

The presentation demonstrated concrete results achieved through IoT solutions, including enhanced monitoring of solar panels, optimisation of energy production, and reduction of maintenance costs.

This project illustrated how digital technologies can directly support energy sustainability and enhance business performance in the renewable energy sector, which was one of the key thematic areas of the conference. The 3t.cable IoT project was also nominated for the EDIH Network Awards, highlighting its innovation, scalability and practical value in digital transformation.



Photo 11. Saša Vojvodić delivering a 3t.cable case study presentation

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Panel Discussion: User Experiences and Interactive Exchange

The central interactive segment of the conference was a panel discussion moderated by Damir Medved, Director of the EDIH Adria project that featured user representatives Davor Car (3t.cable) and Đani Poropat (Adria PA).



Photo 12. Panel discussion

The discussion focused on practical experiences from collaboration with EDIH Adria and the implementation of digital solutions within both organisations. Panellists openly shared challenges encountered during digital transformation processes, as well as the expected long-term benefits that digital innovations bring to their operations.

Audience engagement was particularly strong, with numerous questions related to technical and operational aspects of implementation, making the discussion highly interactive and valuable for all participants. The dialogue further emphasised the importance of collaboration between the private sector, academia and innovation hubs in driving effective digital transformation.

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

EDIH Adria Annual Awards

The conference concluded with the EDIH Adria Annual Awards 2024 ceremony. In recognition of their outstanding contribution and successful cooperation within the EDIH Adria innovation ecosystem, awards were presented to:

1. Istrian Development Agency
2. Health Tourism Cluster



Photo 13. EDIH Adria award winners

These organisations were acknowledged for their proactive role in promoting EDIH Adria services, informing their respective stakeholder communities and facilitating connections with key regional actors.

European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Outcomes and visibility

The EDIH Adria Annual Conference 2024 once again confirmed the critical role of digital innovation in strengthening business competitiveness and organisational development. Participants expressed high satisfaction with the conference content, particularly valuing the opportunity to hear concrete, practice-based examples and to explore new digital transformation opportunities.

Special interest was shown in the Digitalisation Action Plan (DAP) and the Financing Capability and Opportunities (FCO) assessment service, which opened pathways for future digital projects and partnerships

The conference significantly enhanced EDIH Adria's visibility within the regional innovation ecosystem. Local and regional media covered the event extensively, and stakeholder engagement increased on EDIH Adria's communication channels.

Website visits to EDIH Adria began rising noticeably even before the conference, following the start of the promotional campaign. Traffic peaked around the event, showing strong interest and engagement from participants and the wider community. LinkedIn activity mirrored this trend, with increased impressions, clicks, and interactions during the same period.

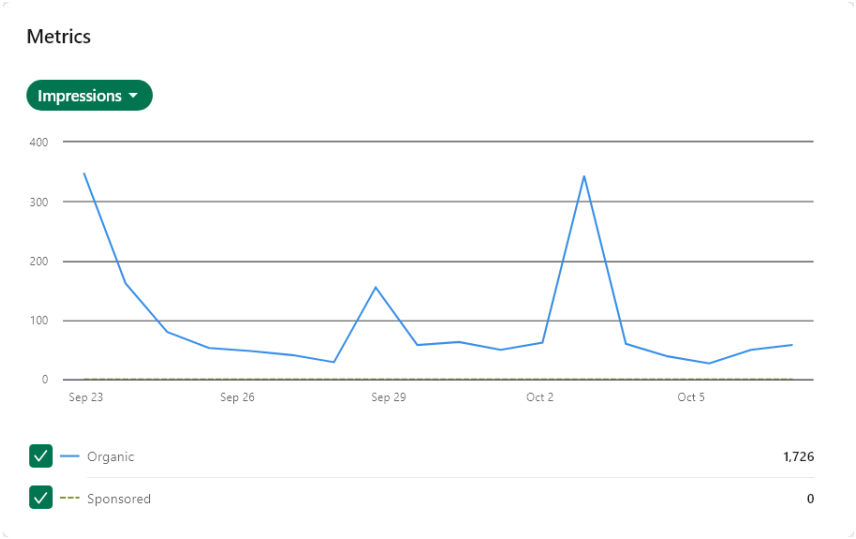


Photo 14. EDIH Adria LinkedIn activities

European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

EDIH Adria Annual Conference 2025

On **November 21st, 2025**, the EDIH Adria Annual Conference 2025. — titled "EDIH Adria Impact & Future –digital transformation without a break" — was held at **Hotel Bonavia in Rijeka, Croatia**.

The event marked the final major conference of the first phase of the EDIH Adria project, bringing together institutional partners, SMEs, public sector representatives, academia, and technology stakeholders to **showcase project results and discuss the future continuation of digital support services**.

The overarching theme centred on results, real-world practices, and the start of a new phase of digital innovation support, known as EDIH Adria 2.0, further expanding assistance in digital transformation.

Programme

The conference was opened by the project leader, Prof. Dr. Sc. Saša Zelenika, with welcoming addresses delivered by the City of Rijeka Deputy Mayor Saša Milaković, followed by a virtual address from the Project Officer, Mr. Alvaro Hernando Hernando.



Photo 15. City of Rijeka Deputy Mayor Saša Milaković opening speech

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

A comprehensive review of the project's achievements over its first three years — with metrics on services delivered, organisations supported, and impact on digital adoption was presented by the Project Director, Damir Medved.



Photo 16. Damir Medved presenting overall project results

In the following session Prof. Dr. Sc. Danijela Jakšić from the University of Rijeka, Faculty Of Informatics and Digital Technology, presented case studies and insights from successful digital transformation implementations across sectors, including SMEs and public institutions, illustrating practical applications of AI in optimization and service delivery.



Photo 17. Prof. Dr. Sc. Danijela Jakšić presenting EDIH Adria case studies

European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Particular interest among participants was generated by the presentation of the new programme period — EDIH Adria 2.0, focusing on AI, cybersecurity, and advanced digital services starting in January 2026. The presentation was delivered by Boris Golob, Director of STEP RI Science and Technology Park of the University of Rijeka, the future coordinator od EDIH Adria 2.0.



Photo 18. Boris Golob presenting EDIH Adria 2.0

Panel Discussion: "AI in Practice: Experiences from EDIH Ecosystems"

A central part of the conference was a panel discussion on the application of artificial intelligence in business. Moderated by Martina Dodić (Infobip), the panel included the representatives of the following EDIH Adria users:

- Zorana Matić (CENOSCO)
- Albert Novak (CARNET)
- Doc. Dr. Sc. Vladimir Mozetić (Poliklinika Primari)
- Dr. Sc. Ugo Toić (OTRA & City of Cres)

The panelists described how, through collaboration with EDIH Adria, they developed or enhanced AI solutions, ranging from decision-support systems and predictive analytics to the improvement of digital services for citizens and patients.

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske



Photo 19. Panel Discussion: "AI in Practice: Experiences from EDIH Ecosystems"

EDIH Adria Annual Awards

The ceremonial part of the conference was dedicated to the presentation of the annual awards for digital excellence, which were presented to the awardees by Prof. Dr. Sc. Saša Zelenika and Dr. Sc. Damir Medved.

The Social Impact Award was presented to Francesca Gržinić (City of Opatija) and Mario Rajn (Koprivnica-Križevci County).



Photo 20. Social Impact Award given to Mario Rajn (Koprivnica-Križevci County).

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

For outstanding contribution to cooperation with the small and medium-sized enterprise sector, the awards were presented to Dragan Sokolović (Smart Aqua) and Zorana Matić (CENOSCO).



Photo 21. Awards given to Dragan Sokolović and Zorana Matić

Finally, in the category of cooperation with local self-government units, the awards were presented to Marin Gregorović (City of Cres) and Sanja Cinkopan Korotaj (Tourism Board of the City of Pula).



Photo 22. Awards given to Marin Gregorović and Sanja Cinkopan Korotaj

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Outcomes and visibility

The 2025 conference significantly elevated visibility of EDIH Adria activities and achievements throughout Jadranska Hrvatska, highlighting concrete impact metrics, user success stories, and the transition into a new phase of strategic support for digital innovation. Participation from over 3000 users across sectors underlined the hub's role as a central pillar of regional digital transformation.

Participants gained practical insights into advanced technologies, opportunities for further financing, and collaborative approaches to sustain the digital transformation momentum beyond the project's first phase.

The conference received extensive coverage from local and regional media, while engagement across EDIH Adria's communication channels saw a noticeable uptick.

Ahead of the third conference, website visits again increased as promotion intensified. The event itself led to a further surge in traffic, demonstrating growing awareness and active participation in EDIH Adria activities. LinkedIn engagement similarly spiked, reflecting the expanded reach and interest generated by the conference.

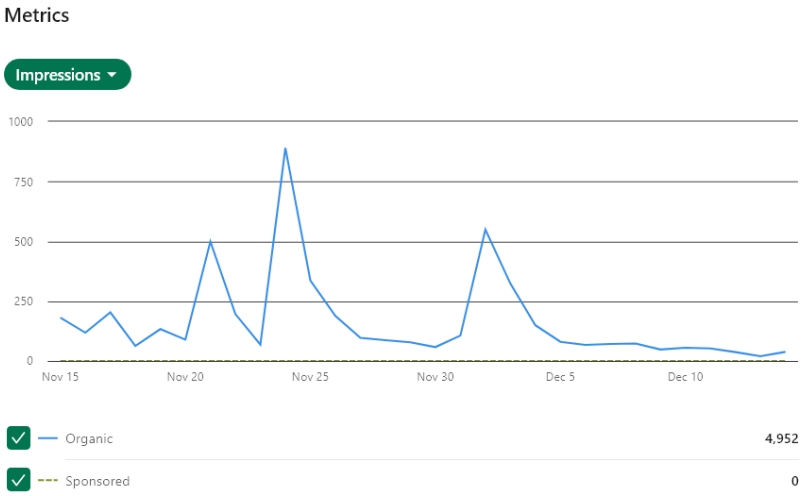


Photo 23. EDIH Adria LinkedIn activities

European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Networking and Matchmaking Activities at EDIH Adria Conferences

The EDIH Adria annual conferences served not only as platforms for knowledge dissemination but also as crucial networking and matchmaking hubs. Each conference was strategically designed to facilitate meaningful connections between SMEs, public institutions, technology providers, academic researchers, and ecosystem stakeholders through structured and informal networking opportunities.

Conference 2023: World Café Format as Stakeholder Meetup

The inaugural 2023 conference introduced an innovative approach to networking through the integration of the originally planned stakeholder meetup directly into the conference program in the form of a World Café session.

Networking Structure:

- Dedicated meetup session following main conference program
- World Café methodology enabling rotational small-group discussions
- Direct access to EDIH Adria experts organized by competency areas (AI, IoT, HPC, cybersecurity, digital transformation)
- One-on-one conversation opportunities between potential users and consortium members
- Smart RI and partner organization stands for technology demonstrations
- Facilitated partner matching for specific service needs

Matchmaking Outcomes:

- 36 participants actively engaged in ongoing WhatsApp community for sustained communication
- Direct identification of service needs leading to subsequent Digital Maturity Assessment requests

- Face-to-face clarification of TBI opportunities and project scope

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

- Formation of project partnerships between technology providers and SMEs
- Initiation of conversations resulting in follow-up individual consultations

The World Café format proved particularly effective for SMEs unfamiliar with EDIH services, as it created informal yet structured environment where businesses could explore cooperation possibilities without formal commitment. This approach reduced barriers to engagement and enabled participants to identify precise service alignments through direct expert interaction.

Conference 2024: Enhanced Business-to-Business Connections

The 2024 conference evolved the networking format by creating multiple touchpoints for stakeholder interaction throughout the event, with particular emphasis on connecting existing users with potential new clients.

Networking Mechanisms:

- Panel discussions featuring user testimonials creating natural matchmaking opportunities
- Coffee breaks strategically positioned between presentations to facilitate informal conversations
- Designated networking zones with sector-specific information materials
- Success story showcases enabling peer-to-peer learning between businesses
- DAP and FCO service desk for immediate consultation scheduling
- Informal lunch networking enabling cross-sector dialogue

Matchmaking Focus Areas:

- Connection of businesses interested in AI implementation with experienced user case studies
- IoT solution providers networking with companies exploring sensor technology adoption
- Public institutions sharing experiences with digital transformation initiatives

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

- Identification of collaborative opportunities within health tourism cluster
- Technology supplier contacts for businesses advancing from TBI to implementation phase

Particular attention was given to connecting organizations that had completed successful digital transformation projects with those at the beginning of their journey. This peer-learning approach proved highly effective as businesses valued hearing directly from similar organizations about practical implementation experiences, challenges overcome, and measurable results achieved.

Conference 2025: Comprehensive Ecosystem Integration

The final conference represented the culmination of three years of ecosystem development, with networking structured to consolidate relationships, foster EDIH 2.0 collaboration, and integrate the full spectrum of regional digital innovation stakeholders.

Advanced Networking Infrastructure:

- Structured networking sessions organized by technology domain (AI, IoT, HPC applications)
- Sector-specific breakout discussions (SMEs, public sector, academic research institutions)
- Interactive demonstration zones showcasing TBI project results available for technology transfer
- RIMAP platform live demonstrations enabling real-time researcher-business matching
- Award winner presentations creating recognition and partnership opportunities
- Future collaboration planning sessions for EDIH 2.0 continuity

Strategic Matchmaking Outcomes:

- Facilitation of multi-partner consortia for regional development projects

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

- Connection of research institutions with businesses seeking R&D collaboration
- Matchmaking between solution providers registered on RIMAP (236 scientists, 108 companies, 38 public organizations)
- Identification of technology transfer opportunities from completed TBI projects
- Formation of preliminary partnerships for EDIH 2.0 service delivery expansion

RIMAP Platform: Digital Matchmaking Infrastructure

Complementing in-person conference networking, the RIMAP (Regional Innovation Matchmaking Platform) provided continuous digital matchmaking infrastructure accessible to all conference participants and broader ecosystem stakeholders.

RIMAP Networking Capabilities Presented at Conferences:

- 236 registered scientists with documented expertise profiles enabling targeted collaboration identification
- 108 companies offering digital solutions, equipment, and specialized services
- 38 public organizations seeking innovation partnerships and technology adoption support
- 19 specialized research equipment catalog facilitating shared infrastructure access
- 34 specific knowledge areas enabling precise competency matching
- 66 research problems posted by businesses seeking scientific collaboration
- 239 news and updates maintaining ecosystem engagement and partnership awareness

At each conference, RIMAP demonstrations highlighted the platform's role in extending networking beyond event boundaries. The 2025 conference specifically showcased RIMAP 2.0 enhancements, including improved search functionalities,

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

automated matching algorithms, and integrated communication tools enabling sustained stakeholder relationships.

Conference-to-Platform Conversion:

- Conference attendees directed to RIMAP registration for sustained access to ecosystem resources
- Business cards and contacts systematically entered into platform database
- Follow-up communications channeled through platform messaging to maintain engagement
- Conference-identified partnership opportunities documented as research problems or collaboration requests
- Technology demonstrations from conferences archived as platform content for ongoing reference

Quantified Networking and Matchmaking Impact

Across three annual conferences (2023-2025), systematic networking and matchmaking activities produced measurable ecosystem strengthening outcomes:

Aggregate Conference Networking Metrics:

- 233 total participants across three conferences representing diverse stakeholder categories
- 33 expert speakers facilitating knowledge transfer and partnership formation
- 3 structured panel discussions enabling multi-stakeholder dialogue
- 6 case study presentations showcasing successful digital transformation collaborations
- 9 award recipients recognized for ecosystem contributions and partnership excellence

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Networking-to-Service Conversion:

- Documented increase in service inquiries immediately following each conference (average 20-35% spike in website traffic post-event)
- Multiple Digital Maturity Assessment requests initiated through conference networking contacts
- Formation of TBI project partnerships directly attributable to conference matchmaking
- Cluster organization engagement leading to systematic member referrals to EDIH services
- Regional development agency collaborations enabling broader SME outreach

Beyond-Conference Networking Initiatives

Conference networking was systematically extended through complementary initiatives maintaining stakeholder engagement and facilitating ongoing matchmaking between events:

Digital Communication Channels:

- WhatsApp community (36 active members from 2023 conference) enabling rapid information exchange
- LinkedIn engagement spikes correlating with conference announcements and follow-up content
- Systematic email campaigns to conference attendee databases with partnership opportunities
- Website traffic increases during promotional periods creating additional discovery opportunities
- RIMAP platform activity sustained through regular news postings (239 items) keeping ecosystem informed

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Sector-Specific Networking Events:

- Kastav Smart City conferences (4 editions) focusing on smart city technologies and sustainable development
- Health tourism cluster engagements connecting digital solution providers with sector-specific opportunities
- EEN (Enterprise Europe Network) collaboration enabling cross-border matchmaking
- Participation in 50+ external events reaching 9,000+ participants with EDIH Adria networking opportunities
- University research showcases connecting academic capabilities with business needs

Success Stories Emerging from Conference Networking

Concrete partnership outcomes directly attributable to conference networking and matchmaking activities:

Documented Collaboration Examples:

- PRIGODA (2023 award winner): Intensified partnership leading to RIMAP platform development collaboration, systematic SME referrals, and joint regional innovation initiatives
- Istrian Development Agency (IDA) (2024 award winner): Expanded collaboration resulting in multi-municipal digital transformation projects and cluster engagement facilitation
- Kvarner Health Tourism Cluster (2024 award winner): Network connections enabling member organization access to AI and IoT solutions for patient experience enhancement
- 3t.cable case study: Conference presentation leading to additional solar energy sector inquiries and technology transfer interest
- Adria PA AI Assistant: Showcase generating public sector interest in similar AI implementation projects
- Cross-EDIH partnerships: Conference networking with other Croatian hubs (AI4HEALTH.Cro, CROBOHUB++, AI and Gaming EDIH) facilitating user referrals and knowledge exchange

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Strategic Value of Conference Networking for EDIH Ecosystem

The systematic integration of networking and matchmaking into conference design delivered multiple strategic benefits extending beyond individual partnership formation:

Ecosystem Strengthening:

- Visibility creation: Conferences positioned EDIH Adria as central coordination point for regional digital innovation, attracting stakeholders who might not otherwise engage with hub services
- Trust building: Face-to-face interactions enabled relationship development essential for subsequent service uptake and collaborative project formation
- Knowledge circulation: Networking facilitated informal knowledge transfer complementing formal presentations, enabling practical learning about digital transformation implementation
- Community formation: Repeated annual gatherings cultivated sense of shared purpose among diverse stakeholders committed to regional digital advancement

Service Pipeline Development:

- Lead generation: Conference networking systematically identified organizations at various digital maturity stages requiring tailored EDIH services
- Service awareness: Direct interaction clarified complex offerings (DMA, TBI, Bootcamps) more effectively than digital marketing alone
- Referral mechanisms: Established trusted relationships enabling systematic peer-to-peer and cluster-based referrals
- Continuity planning: Conference networking laid groundwork for EDIH 2.0 by identifying committed stakeholders interested in sustained collaboration

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Best Practices for Conference-Based Networking and Matchmaking

Three years of EDIH Adria conference experience yielded actionable insights for maximizing networking and matchmaking effectiveness:

Format Design Principles:

- Combine structured and unstructured networking: Formal sessions (panels, World Café) complemented by generous informal interaction time (breaks, meals, reception)
- Create low-barrier entry points: Demonstrations, stands, and casual conversation zones enabling hesitant participants to engage without formal commitment
- Facilitate sectoral clustering: Organize discussions by technology domain or industry sector enabling relevant peer connections
- Incorporate peer testimonials: User case studies create natural matchmaking through attendees seeking similar organizations for advice
- Provide continuation mechanisms: Establish communication channels (WhatsApp, LinkedIn, RIMAP) enabling relationships to develop beyond single-day events

Technology Integration:

- Digital platforms (RIMAP) as networking infrastructure: Create persistent ecosystem visibility extending conference connections
- Social media amplification: Systematic LinkedIn and website activity pre- and post-conference expanding reach beyond physical attendees
- Contact management systems: Capture participant information systematically for follow-up engagement
- Visual documentation: Photos and videos shared publicly creating secondary networking opportunities through social proof

Stakeholder Engagement Tactics:

- Recognition programs: Awards create aspiration and motivate ecosystem contribution, naturally highlighting successful collaborators
- Expert accessibility: One-on-one consultation opportunities enabling immediate relationship formation with EDIH specialists

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

- Multi-year consistency: Annual repetition builds anticipation and enables relationship deepening across multiple interactions
- Collaborative program design: Involve key stakeholders (clusters, development agencies, research institutions) in planning to ensure relevant networking opportunities

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Concluding remarks

After the successful completion of a 3 -year EDIH 1.0 cycle, The EDIH Adria Annual Conferences have proven to be a pivotal platform for fostering digital transformation across the Adriatic region.

Bringing together stakeholders from the industry, public administration, and academia, these events provide a unique opportunity to showcase successful digitalization projects, exchange practical insights, and strengthen collaboration within the innovation ecosystem.

Altogether, the conferences attracted 233 participants, had 33 renowned speakers, 3 panel discussions, 6 case study presentations and awarded 9 EDIH Adria awards.

By combining expert presentations, interactive panels, and award recognitions, the conferences not only increase awareness of EDIH Adria's services but also actively support the adoption of advanced technologies, driving long-term competitiveness and sustainable growth for organisations in the region.

Summary of the Reports on EDIH Adria annual conferences

	EDIH Adria annual conferences			
	Year	**Number of speakers**	**Number of participants**	**Number of EDIH Adria awards awarded**
	2023.	12	95	1
	2024.	9	55	2
	2025.	12	83	6
Total	-	**33**	**233**	**9**

Table 1: Aggregate conference data for the period 2023-2025

European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske



Photo 24. EDIH Adria 1.0 consortium

The EDIH Adria conference experience demonstrates that systematic networking and matchmaking constitute core hub value, not merely supplementary conference activities. By designing events explicitly to facilitate stakeholder connections, provide multiple interaction modalities, integrate digital persistence mechanisms, and measure relationship development outcomes, conferences become strategic ecosystem development tools rather than simply information dissemination events.

The documented outcomes—from immediate service inquiries to sustained multi-year collaborations—validate that investment in networking infrastructure delivers measurable returns for hub performance. The World Café format, sector-specific breakouts, award recognition programs, RIMAP platform integration, and systematic follow-up communications collectively created an ecosystem where digital transformation knowledge circulates freely, partnerships form organically, and regional innovation capacity systematically strengthens.

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

For EDIH 2.0 and future hub initiatives, these experiences suggest that conference networking should be approached as strategically as service delivery itself, with deliberate design, resource allocation, and outcome measurement ensuring maximum ecosystem benefit from stakeholder gathering opportunities.



EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske

Attached documents:

1. EDIH Adria Annual Conference & Meet-Up 2023 Agenda
2. EDIH Adria Annual Conference 2024 Agenda
3. EDIH Adria Annual Conference 2025 Agenda
4. EDIH Adria Annual Conference & Meet-Up 2023 Attendance list
5. EDIH Adria Annual Conference 2024 Attendance list
6. EDIH Adria Annual Conference 2025 Attendance list

EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA MINISTARSTVO GOSPODARSTVA
Projekt je temeljem Ugovora o dodjeli bespovratnih sredstava br. 101083838, sufinanciran od strane Europske unije iz programa Digitalna Europa (DIGITAL) te iz Državnog proračuna Republike Hrvatske