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# International Documentary Project

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<https://balkansexpression.org/projets/homo-adriaticus/>



## General Concept

*Homo Adriaticus* is an international and transdisciplinary documentary project led by the French cultural association **Balkans Expression**, based in Lyon, which coordinates all stages of production from France.

Co-produced with artistic and scientific partners from five countries of the Adriatic basin, this project highlights the identities, exchanges, environmental challenges, heritage, and cultural dynamics of the Adriatic coastline. It is a project managed from Lyon, with a Franco-Serbian production team (director, cameraman, dramaturge, and editor), and carried out in close cooperation with local actors on the ground.

## Main Objective of the Project

To conduct an in-depth documentary and cultural investigation aimed at exploring, questioning, and revalorizing the identity of the "*Homo Adriaticus*", a symbolic and collective figure embodying the multiple cultural, linguistic, and historical affiliations of the peoples of the Adriatic coast.

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## Specific Objectives

- Produce a 30 to 45-minute documentary short film structured around four main themes: founding myths, peoples and minorities, regional languages, and shared architectural heritage, intended for broadcast on French and international channels as well as digital platforms.
- At each phase of the project, produce a 5-minute video capsule highlighting the key moments of research and filming, incorporating the logos of partners, sponsors, and donors.
- Use the film as a tool for communication, advocacy, and public debate by organizing a major conference in Lyon in 2027, bringing together all key actors from the Adriatic region (public institutions, researchers, NGOs, artists, local representatives, etc.) around the common theme of protecting the Adriatic Sea and its coasts.
- Implement a series of educational and cultural events in partnership with schools, cultural centers, and universities.

## Team and Inspiration

The project lead in the field is Jérémie Perret, a researcher and PhD candidate in Modern History at CESR (University of Tours). His ongoing thesis, *Insularity and the State of the Sea: Governance of the Islands of the Adriatic Sea (1500–1571)*, focused on the Dalmatian archipelago within the Venetian maritime empire, serves as one of the main sources of inspiration for this documentary. He will provide an academic research dimension while facilitating contacts with local communities, experts, and institutions.

## Project Team:

### General Coordination and Project Authors

[Yasmina Zaabi \(France/Serbie\)](#) : Director, writer, and project coordinator at Balkans Expression.

[Jérémie Perret \(France\)](#) :Historian and PhD candidate at the Centre for Advanced Renaissance Studies (CESR), specialist in Adriatic history. His fieldwork and research in historical anthropology provided the intellectual inspiration for the documentary. He is responsible for conducting field investigations, scientific coordination, and liaising with local partners.

### **Creative and Post-Production Team**

[Aref Zaabi \(Serbie\)](#) : Lead editor, responsible for audiovisual post-production.

[Katarina Mitrović \(Serbie\)](#) : Dramaturge and screenwriter.

Director of photography, principal cameraman, and drone operator.

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### **International Dimension and Impact**

This project involves five countries in the Adriatic basin:

IT Italy, SI Slovenia, HR Croatia, ME Montenegro, and AL Albania.

Each country will be filmed immersively, and the footage, stories, interviews, and archives collected will allow exploration of:

- Environmental issues related to the Adriatic Sea,
- Linguistic and cultural diversity,
- Coastal ways of life,
- Historical and architectural heritage,
- Past and present migration flows.

The project also includes a series of 5-minute video capsules produced at each phase of filming, highlighting key moments and acknowledging sponsors, partners, and institutional supporters involved at each stage.

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## Project Management and Coordination Concept

The project is managed from Lyon (France) by the association **Balkans Expression**, a cultural platform founded by artists, researchers, and professionals from the Balkans, working to promote cultural cooperation and Euro-Mediterranean dialogue.

Balkans Expression develops and supports multidisciplinary projects with social and intercultural impact, collaborating in a network with artistic and scientific partners across Southeast Europe.

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## International Scope and Co-Production Structure

The project is an international co-production bringing together partners and collaborators from five Adriatic countries (Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, Albania), as well as France and Serbia.

Each partner contributes their expertise (access to archives, human resources, logistical support, funding, etc.).

Filming involves:

- Local researchers and cultural and academic actors in the field,
- A technical team based in Serbia and France,
- Artistic and logistical coordination from Lyon.

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## 1. Narrative Structure – Documentary Chapters

1. Myths and Founding Heroes
2. History and Minority Peoples
3. One Language, Many Languages
4. Architecture and Shared Memory

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## Partnerships and Expected Impact

The project aims to bring together:

- European cultural and scientific institutions,
- NGOs working on the preservation of linguistic minorities, cultural exchange, ecology, heritage, and dialogue,
- EU programs related to regional cooperation, sustainable development, and the preservation of shared heritage.

The 2027 Lyon conference will conclude the initiative, creating an interdisciplinary platform for exchange on the future of the Adriatic Sea.

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## Artistic Approach and Funding Strategy

The project will be carried out in several stages:

- Scientific preparation and field research
- International filming (Spring/Summer 2026/2027)
- Video capsules at each phase (5 min, making-of and promotional content)
- Editing and distribution (Summer 2027)
- Organization of the conference (Autumn 2027)

Funding applications will be submitted to:

- **European programs:** Creative Europe, Europe for Citizens, Europa Nostra, Interreg
- **Cultural institutions:** Métropole de Lyon, Ministry of Culture (France, Italy, Croatia, Montenegro, Albania), CNC, Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, cultural, tourism, ecological, and university institutes
- **International organizations:** UNESCO, UNHCR, Anna Lindh Foundation, Institut pour la Méditerranée
- **Media and broadcasters:** TV5 Monde, ARTE, Al Jazeera, national channels of the Adriatic countries

## Conclusion

*"Homo Adriaticus"* is a transnational documentary project at the intersection of social sciences, artistic creation, and cultural action.

It addresses both academic audiences and the general public, offering an original and sensitive perspective on the Adriatic as a shared space—one to protect, celebrate, and foster dialogue around in the face of ecological, identity, and migration challenges.

The project is ambitious, and a preliminary budget will be finalized by the end of 2025, with two separate budget lines planned: one for the production of the documentary film and another for the organization of the Lyon conference in 2027. The overall film budget will depend on the script and the locations selected for filming.

## Preliminary Timeline for the *Homo Adriaticus* Project

- **September 2025:**

Fundraising and partnerships

**Objective:** Mobilize initial private and institutional partners to unlock the necessary funds for the launch of filming in Italy and Slovenia.

- **October 2025:**

Professional trip to Piran, Slovenia – signing of the cooperation contract with EMUNI, agreement on a €5,000 investment in the documentary film.

- **Spring 2026:**

**First filming phase – Italy (Friuli Venezia Giulia region and eastern coast):**

One week of immersive filming to capture testimonies, landscapes, practices, and specific issues of the Italian coastline.

**Second filming phase – Slovenia:**

Focus on Slovenia's coastal region, the smallest yet strategically important in terms of biodiversity and sustainable development.

- **Summer 2026:**

**Third filming phase – Croatia:**

- Croatia, as a pioneering country in environmental protection in the Adriatic, plays a regional leadership role.



- Since 1991, nature protection has been enshrined in the Croatian Constitution as a founding value.
- Highlighting the growing importance of Croatian ports in global maritime traffic, such as the Silk Road.

- **Autumn 2026:**  
**Fourth filming phase – Montenegro and Albania:**
  - Emphasizing the importance of links between Albanian, Italian, and Slavic communities on both sides of the Adriatic, as an example of solidarity and centuries-old fraternity among coastal peoples.
- **Winter 2026 – Spring 2027:**  
**Post-production & Final Editing:**
  - Finalizing the film, graphic design, creation of language versions, coordination of distribution and promotional materials.
- **Autumn 2027:**  
**Film Launch and Promotion + International Conference in Lyon:**
  - Premiere screening of the film
  - Organization of a conference bringing together all Adriatic stakeholders around university practices and policies, as well as the preservation of the Adriatic Sea and coastline.

**Balkans Expression**  
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