Press release

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**March for Europe turns border crossing into a celebration of culture and sport**

**From 1 to 10 May, Nova Gorica and Gorizia will host the second of the four mass events of the European Capital of Culture 2025 Nova Gorica - Gorizia. A vibrant programme in the borderless area surrounding Europe Square will unite culture, sport, and entertainment across open-air venues.**

The organisers of the European Capital of Culture 2025 Nova Gorica - Gorizia revealed the details of the second mass flagship event at today's press event. The March for Europe will bring together people from both sides of the border in a unique way with sporting, cultural, artistic and musical activities **between 1 and 10 May**, underlining the importance of connecting and transcending borders.

"It is important that the March for Europe brings together culture and sport. It will also not only cross the Slovenian-Italian border this time, but also, thanks to the twinning of the municipalities of Nova Gorica, Gorizia and Klagenfurt, it will build on the concept of borderlessness to the whole Alpe-Adria region. On 1 May, the region will already be connected through the participation of international delegations in the Borderless Friendship March, as later through the artistic content in the Ingeborg Bachmann Dome and, last but not least, through the sounds of the three countries. The three nations that have historically coexisted in this area will also be joined by the other 2025 ECoC—Chemnitz. Europe’s uplifting overcoming of the past, with a futuristic dance-robot finale on 10 May, will inspire us all," said **Mija Lorbek**, CEO of the GO! 2025 Public Institute.

The March for Europe officially begins on Thursday, **1 May at 8 o’clock in Europe Square** with the traditional *Friendship March* in an extended version with various sports and Borderless Party and a full day of music. On the same day, the opening of the intermedia installation of the official ECoC Crossings programme, produced by BridA, will take place in Bevkov Square. The Borderless Party will continue in the sounds of the opening ceremony, presenting electronic music from the borderless Alpe-Adria region with a musical overview of different generations. Headlined by the hit-making Austrian duo Klangkarussell, that published its new single *Afterglow* this February.

In the days that follow, visitors can enjoy a wide-ranging programme celebrating culture, sport, and music in the borderless area around Europe Square. Among others, Borderless Basketball, Borderless Street, Borderless Football / Calcetto, creative workshops for the youngest in The Playground, Green Points and Movement, a dance-literary programme in the Ingeborg-Bachmann Dome, the opening of the Tree Orchestra in the Rafut Park, The Day of Borderless Festivals (Festival of Crafts and Entrepreneurship, Tastes without Borders, Rose Festival, Festival of Amateur Culture, announcement of the winners of the Entrepreneurial Wine 2025 competition), Europe Day with the premiere of Anja Medved's film *Ne pozabi me* and closing with the dance-robot performance *Inferno* by MN Dance Company. **Lucija Sila**, Assistant to the GO! 2025 CEO for Cross-border Cooperation summarised the latter: "These robotic exoskeletons were originally developed to support people with disabilities. Some visitors will have the opportunity to try them out and feel for themselves what it is like to have your movements guided by a robot."

"The cultural and sporting introduction to the month of May will be followed on 24 May by the finish of the 14th stage of the Giro d'Italia near Europe Square, right in the heart of another sporting and cultural weekend from 23 to 25 May. From May to 30 September, a new weekend *hop-on hop-off* bus service will take visitors to the Goriška region main attractions. This will be an additional opportunity for visitors to organise a trip and explore our area," concluded **Samo Turel**, Mayor of the City Municipality of Nova Gorica.

"Sport is undoubtedly an important theme. This is evidenced by the number of events we have been able to organise in this context," added **Romina Kocina**, Director of the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (GECT GO / EZTS GO).

The programme combines both the official European Capital of Culture programme with the larger cultural-tourist potential "*Stop the City!*" events as well as the accompanying programme of the Small Projects Fund GO! 2025 (funded by the Interreg Italia-Slovenia programme and managed by GECT GO). It is organised by, among others, the GO! 2025 Public Institute with its partners the City Municipality of Nova Gorica, the Municipality of Gorica (I), GECT GO / EZTS GO, the Nova Gorica Sports Institute, the Nova Gorica Chamber of Craft and Entrepreneurship, the Nova Gorica and Vipava Valley Tourism Institute, the Public Fund for Cultural Activities Nova Gorica.

"This is an incredible opportunity for the two cities to grow together. The European Capital of Culture project is rapidly expanding, and this is the most important thing. Associations, businesses, schools, in fact everyone has started to believe in the ECoC. Perhaps our greatest achievement is that every citizen feels like an active participant in this shared story," summarised **Patrizia Artico**, GO! 2025 Committee of the Municipality of Gorizia. Among other things, she pointed out that both cities have experienced a 35% increase in accommodation, as more and more visitors are coming.

More information is available on the ad-hoc project website [www.go-borderless.eu](http://www.go-borderless.eu) and on the official ECoC website [www.go2025.eu](http://www.go2025.eu).

*The* ***European Capital of Culture*** *is a project of the European Union. The mission of the European Capital of Culture GO! 2025 is to transcend borders, both physical and mental, as reflected in the "GO! Borderless" slogan. The project aims to unite Nova Gorica and Gorizia—two cities with rich yet distinct histories and cultures—in a shared vision of cross-border cooperation and daily life. A programme of cultural and artistic events will serve as a means to achieve these objectives, striving for the highest quality and going beyond the ordinary. The first highlight of the ECoC was the opening ceremony From Station to Station on 8 February, followed by the Tastes without Borders culinary festival (26–28 September) and An Enlightened Closing Ceremony (1–5 December).*

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