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Priority Axis 2 -
Sustainable tourism



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„ПРОСВЕТА 1914“
ГР. МАЛКО ТЪРНОВО



KIRKLARELİ
İL KÜLTÜR VE TURİZM MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ

PROJECT WITHOUT BORDERS

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Programme for development of festivals and events in Strandja 2017 – 2020

In developing this program, an economic growth planning approach is used, measurable, socially oriented and fairly reflecting the principles of sustainable tourism as an industry.

The developed program aims to ensure the sustainable competitiveness of the Strandja fest region as a tourist destination, to support the sustainable development of the tourism industry, to rely as much as possible on the information obtained from the studies, reports, analyzes prepared within the project “Strandja – the mountain of festivals” funded under INTERREG Program IPA CBC Bulgaria - Turkey 2014-2020. This program takes into account the expectations and intentions of all stakeholders and is in line with the requirements for creating a correct, realistic and stable positioning of the Strandja fest region.

I. ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION AND TRENDS IN THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF STRANDJA FEST REGION

1. A general characteristic of the region

The region to the north is limited by Middle and Eastern Stara Planina, to the east - to the Black Sea, to the south - the StrandJa Mountain, the Dervent Heights and the Sakar Mountains. Here are situated the eastern part of the Upper Thracian Plain, part of the sub-Balkan valleys, the Burgas Lowland and part of the Sredna Gora - Sarnena Mountain.

The area of the region is 8193,35 sq. km.

Territorial structure consists of agricultural, mountainous and urbanized areas.

The population of the region is 405,601, the population density is 0.05 people / sq. km

Within the region are included the municipalities of Malko Tarnovo, Primorsko, Sozopol, Sredets, Tsarevo, Bolyarovo, Elhovo, Luleburgaz, Pinarhisar, Babaeiski, Vize, Demirkioy, Pehlivankioy and Kovchaz.

The main factors influencing the development of these municipalities and their settlements are the peripheral location in the border areas, the mountain character of a significant part of the

territory, the low density of the communications - transport links and the difficult accessibility. These factors are the basis of the demographic characteristics of the region with the lowest population density and the presence of many deserted settlements and aging populations, which predetermines the socio-economic backwardness and the lack of investment and entrepreneurial initiative (for Bulgarian part of the region).

Among the economic sectors of the region, biggest share has the service sector. The second largest economic sector is the industry. The agricultural sector ranks third.

Tourism has a leading position in the economy on the basis of favorable natural factors, built tourist facilities and infrastructure and traditional experience in providing seasonal tourist services.

The overall level of unemployment is around 10 %

The healthcare system maintains sustainable development and has a relatively well-established network of healthcare facilities.

The education system includes 3 universities and specialized higher education institutions. There are many tourist reserves on the territory of the region, many cultural events and festivals are organized.

Improving intra-regional communications requires further development of the regional road network, especially in peripheral and border areas. Air transport is represented by the airport for small airplanes in Primorsko for flights for tourist purposes.

2. The state of the regional economy

From an economic point of view there are great differences in the region - while the Turkish part of the region is experiencing continuous economic growth, on the Bulgarian side there is a rise in unemployment and a gradual depopulation of the territory.

According to EUROSTAT data for 2009, Bulgaria's GDP registered a decrease of 5,5% in real terms (- 4,2% for the EU-27). All economic sectors contribute to the decline in GDP, with industry contributing the most to the negative impact of the crisis. There is no data about the level of GDP per municipality in Bulgaria, on region level it is as follows: 10 310 BGN per inhabitant for Burgas region and 8159 per inhabitant for Yambol region. Kırklareli in gross domestic product is at 1% level.

There are significant disproportions at intra-regional level, with the development of tourism almost entirely concentrated in Burgas region. This is due exclusively to the coastal territory of

the region where the most attractive natural and recreational resources are located. The contribution of other areas is negligible.

Despite the intense tourist development of the coastline, there are unused resources and untapped opportunities on the territory of the region. Mineral springs, which allow for a combination of climate and spa treatment and extension of the tourist season, as well as the numerous monuments of natural and cultural heritage along the coast and in the hinterland, as well as the cultural and entertainment sites which offer the opportunity to enrich the holiday at sea and extend the tourist season. The region has a rich cultural and historical heritage and traditional crafts. All these resources are a prerequisite for the development of alternative forms of tourism - festival, cultural-historical, congress tourism, eco tourism, rural tourism, spa tourism, hunting and sports tourism. But tourism in the region still carries the mark of one-sided development. In this aspect, it is necessary to achieve a unified tourist identity of the region by including territories outside the established tourist centers.

3. Human Resources Development

By demographic and population structure indicators, the region is in a relatively favorable situation (the Turkish part of the region), but overall the negative trends of population decline and higher external migration are also characteristic of it (the Bulgarian part of the region). The negative trend of a continuous decrease in the number of the population in the region is preserved; the demographic situation is the result of the process typical for the whole region and partly for the EU - reduced fertility, increased urbanization, increased mortality and strong migration. Uneven distribution of population in the districts of the region; the largest is the population density in Burgas region, and the lowest is in Yambol district.

The main conclusions drawn from the analysis of the demographic structure and dynamics of the Bulgarian part of the region are that the population decreases significantly faster than the population in the country and this decrease for the last 10 years (2004 - 2014) is 18, 3% on average for the country 7, 2%. Negative trends in demographic development are also confirmed by the ongoing aging process and the steady decline in the absolute and relative share of residents aged 15 and above and the increase in the number of elderly people aged 65 and above. Birth rate is lower than the country average, mortality rate - higher than birth rates, natural growth is negative, with worse than average for the country. Reduction and aging is a process with profound implications for the economy, labor market and social systems and affects all aspects of the economic and social life of the area. The negative natural and mechanical growth is a potential problem for the vitality of the municipalities in the area.

It is necessary to invest in developing and improving the quality of human capital; increasing the quality of the workforce and ensuring employment for the unemployed over 55 and for the unemployed youths up to 29, who are the two groups most affected by the crisis of the population.

II. ANALYSIS OF STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRANDJA AS FESTIVAL DESTINATION

The State Policy for the Sustainable Development of Tourism in Bulgaria is integrated into the sectoral policies and is implemented by the Minister of Tourism with the participation of the other bodies of the central and territorial executive power within their competence.

In addition to the state, the interested private entities are allowed to take part in the process of forming and implementing the country's tourism policy, and this opportunity is provided by including them in the activities of various advisory and expert units that support the definition and implementation of national and local tourist politics. The participation of representatives of the tourism industry in the main bodies and organizations at all levels - national tourism council, tourism management organizations, expert commissions to the central and local administration, advisory councils to the mayors of municipalities, is a prerequisite for maximum openness, publicity and transparency of policy-making and decision-making in the field of tourism. This publicity enables the industry to participate in the decision-making process and is a guarantee of greater legality, efficiency and responsibility in tourism management. All entities associated with tourism must have specific responsibilities and commitments related to its development and management, stemming from their own specifics and interests.

Responsibilities of the state (public sector)

- To encourage the participation of all stakeholders (local communities, civil society, NGOs and the private sector) at all stages of the development of cultural tourism from planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and distribution of benefits;
- Ensure education and training opportunities for researchers, policy-makers and translators, people in the conservation process, tour operators and local communities;
- Distribution of sufficient financial and human resources to preserve, conserve and interpret the cultural heritage by providing a significant share of tourist fees and entrances for places and events;

- Develop a clear strategy for the development of cultural tourism in each area designated as a tourist destination in consultation with relevant stakeholders;
- Ensuring the necessary resources for monitoring and evaluation of the results of the development of cultural tourism;
- Ensuring the necessary technical, financial, marketing and promotional support for the less favored segments of local communities in cultural tourism destinations in order to provide them with conditions for the development of a sustainable tourism business and common tourism benefits;
- Supporting local tourism providers and tour operators developing inbound tourism in the selection of marketing channels for their products and services to ensure a fair distribution of benefits between local suppliers and foreign tour operators.

Responsibilities of the private sector

- Promote partnerships with local communities in the development of tourism and culture in order to maximize the benefit to the local economy as a result of cultural tourism;
- Providing an advantage to the local population in recruiting staff with training to enable the local population to be part of the tourism industry;
- Promote the importance of local cultures in protecting their characteristics, taking into account the reception capacity of the material and intangible heritage;
- Prioritizing local suppliers of goods and services to create jobs and maintain the sustainability of traditional arts and crafts.

Responsibilities of the local communities

- Use of festivals and other events to position the potential of cultural tourism for local communities;
- Active and organizational role in tourism planning and monitoring;
- Maintaining cultural values and living traditions through educational programs and conservation activities;
- Using innovative cooperative initiatives for the equal distribution of the benefits of cultural tourism;

- Effective work with the private sector to ensure responsible development for the local population and the sector.

Responsibilities of other stakeholders

- NGOs to work with local communities to achieve economic and cultural goals, through financial and consultancy support;
- Academic institutions should include studies and educational activities related to cultural tourism;
- National and international media should promote a true and complete picture of cultural tourism.

The program is based on the current socio-economic situation and potential of the region and is in line with the strategic orientation of the regional policy in the European Union (EU) and the national regional development objectives and priorities. The document complies with the provisions of: the municipal plans of the respective municipalities; Regional strategy for development of the Burgas region 2014-2020; Regional strategy for development of Yambol region 2014-2020; South-East regional development plan 2014-2020; National regional development strategy 2012-2022 and topics set out in the Bulgaria 2020 National Development Program, Strategy paper for Turkey 2014-2020; Trakya region development plan 2014-2023. In a wider context, the program takes into account the priorities and objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and takes into account the evolution of EU cohesion policy and the three new priorities for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The development process also takes into account the horizontal priorities of regional policy - sustainable development, equal opportunities and social inclusion.

The development of Strandja as a festival destination corresponds to the goals and priorities of a number of strategic documents at national, regional and local level.

National Development Program of Bulgaria 2020

The National Development Program of Bulgaria 2020 is the leading strategic document that specifies the goals of the country's development policies by 2020. Bulgaria 2020 expresses the adaptation of the priorities of the Europe 2020 strategy at national level aimed at ensuring a balanced socio-economic development of the country in accelerating the economic growth and lifting the living standards in the long run. The National Program monitors the current state of

economic development factors and focuses primarily on human capital, employment, infrastructure, technology and information systems.

Strategy paper for Turkey 2014 – 2020

Trakya region Development Plan 2014 – 2023

In both documents tourism as well as nature protection has been selected as key areas for development, including the cross-border aspect.

Regional Development Plan for the South East Planning Region

Vision for the development of the Southeastern Planning Region - an attractive place for living and business with a preserved natural and cultural heritage, effectively exploiting its potential to achieve sustainable and balanced socio-economic development, reinforcing its traditions in tourism and energy.

Strategic goal 1. Economic convergence of South-East region at interregional and intra-regional level by using the region's own potential in environmentally friendly development.

Priority 2. Development of sustainable forms of tourism and the cultural and creative industries in the South-East region.

Tourism, and in particular maritime recreational tourism, occupies a leading position in the economy of the Southeastern region. The branch develops as a serious economic activity that diversifies the economy of the region and creates different forms of employment.

The region has significant potential for the development of various forms of tourism outside the sea - mineral springs, numerous monuments of cultural and historical heritage, cultural and entertainment sites in major cities, natural resources and landmarks, traditional crafts. Their full use will make it possible to diversify the tourist product and extend the tourist season as well as to increase the revenues from tourism and employment throughout the year throughout the region. Achieving a unified tourist identity will be the basis for developing innovation and creating a positive image of the region.

Specific objective 3. Development and implementation of regional marketing and advertising of tourist products in South-East region.

Regardless of the existing favorable opportunities for developing alternative forms of tourism in the area, the potential has not been used rationally. Territories remote from the Black Sea coast

remain an unknown destination, developing mainly as tourist stops. The attraction and retention of tourists pass through the formation of an attractive tourist product and its popularization on tourist fairs and exhibitions.

Will be supported the creation of a regional tourist product, the conduct of marketing studies to support the creation of a regional tourist product, the development of brand strategies for the region, reflecting its cultural specificity, customs and traditions and cultural events that have periodic character - festivals, theater days, poetry days, etc. The integration into a regional tourist product of famous real cultural values, natural landmarks, local flora and fauna, local customs represented as a tourist attraction and cultural events will enhance the interest of tourists to the region and create a positive image and popularity.

In order to promote tourist products in Southeast region, it is of great importance to create and encourage the development of regional and local tourist associations and the partnership between them and between the municipalities in the area, as it is possible to achieve complementarity of tourist attractions and offer of tourist packages.

Specific Objective 4. Developing cultural and creative industries in Southeast region.

The cultural and creative industries are directly related to the overall cultural development of local and regional communities, with the revival and stimulation of traditional cultural industries in the field of art and crafts. Achieving this goal is particularly important for enhancing local and regional potential, cultural level and image of the area and quality of life.

Support will be given to organizing festivals in the region, presenting the cultural identity of the region and promoting it as an European cultural tourist destination.

Regional Strategy for Development of Yambol Region 2014-2020

Priority 1: Restoring and enhancing the competitiveness of the regional economy, 1.3. Development of sustainable forms of tourism in Yambol region.

Yambol region has the potential to develop alternative forms of tourism - numerous monuments of cultural and historical heritage, natural resources and landmarks. Their full use will make it possible to increase earnings and employment. Achieving a unified tourist identity will be the basis for developing innovation and creating a positive image of the area. In this respect special attention will be paid to the preservation and valorisation of real, movable and immaterial cultural values in Yambol region through the realization of activities for preservation, digitization, socialization, exhibition and promotion of cultural values on the territory of the region; construction and reconstruction of the infrastructure for access to and around the sites of cultural and natural heritage including for disadvantaged people, establishment of security zones,

determination of usage regime, establishment of management and operation rules; restoration and conservation of immovable cultural heritage from the architectural heritage. More efforts are needed to develop and implement effective marketing and advertising of tourist products in Yambol region.

Regardless of the existing favorable opportunities for development of alternative forms of tourism in the area, the potential has not been used rationally. Territories distant from Yambol remain an unknown destination. The attraction and retention of tourists pass through the formation of an attractive tourist product and its popularization on tourist fairs and exhibitions. Support will be given to the creation of a tourist product that will reflect the cultural specifics, customs and traditions and cultural events that have periodic character - festivals, musical days, theater days, poetry days, etc. The integration into a regional tourist product of famous real cultural values, natural landmarks, flora and fauna characteristic of the region, local customs represented as a tourist attraction and cultural events will enhance the interest of the tourists to the area and create a positive image and popularity. To promote tourism products, it is essential to create and promote the development of regional and local tourism associations and the partnership between them and between the municipalities in the area, as this can be achieved by complementing tourist attractions and offering tourist packages.

Program for the development of tourism in the municipality of Malko Tarnovo

Activities for the development of tourism in the municipality

- Carrying out annual empirical studies to research the needs and requirements of tourists and measure their consumer satisfaction in order to increase the quality of tourism services. This will increase the tourist staying, the popularity of the destination and the income from tourists.
- Trace all changes in the legal base concerning tourism and its development, as well as the organizational structure at state and regional level.
- Stabilization of supporting infrastructure to tourist sites.
- Carrying out campaigns to maintain and protect the municipality's cleanliness, including all tourist sites.
- Elaboration of installation and maintenance of tourist signs at key and suitable places, facilitating the tourists in finding tourist sights and destinations. Placing additional cards / boards / in the city.

- Project preparedness (preparation of projects in the working phase) under priority projects in the field of tourism.
- Development and realization of projects supporting the sustainable development of tourism on the territory of the municipality of Malko Tarnovo. Applying for external financing to national and international donors / funding organizations /.
- Conducting an intensive advertising campaign in specialized Bulgarian media. Identifying the media that best reflect the development of tourism in the municipality of Malko Tarnovo and presenting through them a valuable advertising product for the municipality.
- Attracting external institutions, structures and organizations to implement joint projects in the framework of a public-private partnership.
- Creating partnerships with national and international tourist fairs and exhibitions.
- Updating and production of new advertising materials - advertising films, maps, brochures, prospects, etc.
- Dissemination of information, knowledge, successful practices and preservation of local traditions and support for the activity and creativity of local cultural workers, folk dance and music groups and school creativity.
- Realization and participation in the events set in the Cultural Calendar for 2016 and 2017 of the Municipality of Malko Tarnovo
- Preparation of a package of tourist services, including for students, together with hotel representatives and managers of tourist sites.
- Preparation of an integrated ticket for cultural and historical sites, including the visit of two or more sites at a promotional price.

On a local level, tourism in the municipality of Elhovo is interpreted in the **Integrated Urban Rehabilitation and Development Plan of the town of Elhovo for the period 2014-2020** and the **Municipal Development Plan 2014-2020** as part of the *Strategic Goal 3 "Improving the Environment and Validation of Local Identity"*, *Priority 7: Optimal use of natural resources and cultural heritage for tourism development.*

The 2016 Tourism Development Program sets realistic goals that can be realized with available resources. The implementation of this program will enable potential investors to realize their investment projects in the field of tourism. The consultative council on tourism in Elhovo municipality has a major role in the implementation of the program. Theoretically, efforts to promote tourism are mainly directed at spreading more information about the destination and its attractions in an attempt to make it more known to the increasingly competitive international

tourism market. This is particularly true for regions that are remote from the main tourist areas. In view of the increasing competition in the tourism industry, the saturation and globalization of markets, it is necessary to develop a marketing approach for the positioning of the cross-border region. As a strategic positioning task, the management of the tourism industry is bound to the decision to create a competitive position of the offered products / services.

Highlights of the development of festival tourism, reflected in the Municipal Plan for Development of Municipality of Sozopol

In the municipality of Sozopol is successfully developed religious tourism, which is mainly related to the holy relics preserved in the local churches. It is necessary to develop specialized routes with interesting interpretation and animation, including the numerous chapels and churches in the interior (all have a healing spring and have been restored with municipal funds and in the village of Rosen the old school was restored).

The cultural life of the municipality seems very rich, but with the exception of Apollonia (a forum of elite national art), it remains low popularity beyond its boundaries. Attractive and valuable events are oriented mainly to guest tourists in the active season. Notwithstanding the new acquisitions, the infrastructure in the cultural area remains insufficient.

Strategic Objective 2 - Turning Sozopol Municipality into a leading destination of the south Black Sea coast for year-round and diverse tourism, Priority 2: Balanced use of resources for sustainable development and diverse tourism

Measure 2.1.1: Creation of tourist products and packages with a competitive advantage

Planned funds - 603,750 BGN

Measure 2.1.2. Increasing the qualification of the employed in tourism and the quality of service

In order to implement this measure, funding will be sought for activities that will increase the qualification of the employees in the field of tourism and the quality of service through the organization of trainings, seminars, etc. and enhancing quality control.

Planned funds - 562 250 BGN

Measure 2.1.3. Improving the marketing and advertising of the municipality as a destination for year-round tourism and the information base of tourism

The measure aims at creating a comprehensive marketing strategy and advertising for the municipality and the proposed forms of tourism, which will contribute to strengthening its

position on the local and international market. Further studies, processing and analysis of baseline data will be carried out to better manage the destination.

Planned funds - 948,750 BGN

Measure 2.2.3. Creating conditions for attracting investors in the field of tourism

Planned funds - 793 375 BGN

Municipal Development Plan of Sredets Municipality

Objective 2 - Improving the competitiveness of the municipal economy, Measure 5 - Development of cultural and ecological tourism as a diversifier of the profile of the local economy

Planned funds - 1 730 000 BGN

The measure includes:

- Conservation, preservation, promotion and development of the natural cultural heritage;
- Development of various forms of tourism - eco, hunting and fishing, cultural and rural;
- Promotion of the Sredets Municipality as a tourist destination.

Objective 3 - Integrated development of the municipal territory and its adequate infrastructure provision, Measure 3 - Development of tourist and cultural infrastructure

Planned funds - BGN 7 200 000

The measure includes:

- Stimulating the development of the accommodation base and servicing activities (including public catering establishments) by using the OP's capabilities;
- Attracting our and foreign investors to build a tourist infrastructure;
- Establishment of a tourist cultural and information center;
- Development of general and specialized tourist and cultural infrastructure.

Municipal Development Plan of the Municipality of Tsarevo

Priority 2: Development of sustainable forms of tourism

Measure 2.1.1: Supporting the development of the local tourist product and destination marketing

Measure 2.1.2: Development of natural, cultural and historical attractions

Measure 2.1.4: Development of a specialized tourist infrastructure influencing the extension of the season

Some of the strategies of the Municipality of Kırklareli towards the urbanization seem to be as follows:

1. For the aim of social, cultural and economic development

It is aimed to make Kırklareli a cultural, artistic and educational city where cultural, social and scientific activities are at the forefront and decisions are taken with a sense of governance.

In this scope, the targets were defined as Social Responsibility, Social Solidarity, Social Life, Disability Oriented Studies and Urbanism Consciousness.

2. Development-oriented sustainable urban management

To provide a municipality service that gives priority to the rights of the residents in which Kırklareli can live a healthy, contemporary, quality life standard.

Targets such as Infrastructure Services, Superstructure and Modern Facilities, Urban Traffic and Transportation in Public Transport, Increasing Green Areas, Environment and Public Health, Cleaning and Recycling, Urban Regulation and Control, Reconstruction, Planning and Expropriation and natural disasters have been determined.

3. Participation and effective communication with stakeholders

To organize meetings such as questionnaires and joint projects for informing, consulting, and decision-making, making important studies at the point of ensuring participation by establishing continuous communication and cooperation with stakeholders.

The targets in this context were identified as Public Relations and Communication, Citizen Participation, Civil Society Organizations and Stakeholder Relations, Personnel Participation, City Council and Affiliated Assemblies.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE FESTIVAL RESOURCES

The scope of the analysis is the territory of Strandja mountains, on which the study should extend, is problematic because the mountain is overlapping with the Sakar Mountains. There are different opinions and publications on the impact of Strandja on the territory of the settlements. In consultation with the partners, the scope of the study was broadened. It was accepted that the following borders are accepted for the territory of Strandja: to the east Strandja reaches the Black Sea, to the north it extends to the municipalities of Sozopol, Sredets, and Burgas, to the west come several villages from the municipalities of Elhovo and Bolyarovo, to the south is the Turkish border and the Turkish part of Strandja. The municipalities of Malko Tarnovo and Tsarevo are entirely covered by Strandja. Of the municipalities of Burgas, Elhovo, Sozopol, Primorsko, Sredets (17 settlements), and Bolyarovo (15 settlements and non-urban areas) are included certain settlements that fall within the territory of Strandja. Elhovo Municipality is one of the constituent municipalities of Yambol region. Out of the 22 settlements, 11 fall within the boundaries of the Strandja Mountain: the town of Elhovo and the villages of Borisovo, Boyanovo, Goliam Dervent, Granitovo, Lesovo, Malomirovo, Melnitsa, Razdel, Stroyno and Chernozem. From the municipality of Bolyarovo 15 of the settlements fall within the borders of Strandja Mountain: Bolyarovo, villages: Voden, Vulchi izvor, Golyamo Krushevo, Dennitsa, Dabovo, Igluka, Kamen peak, Kraynovo, Oman, Popovo, Ruzhitsa, Stefan Karadjovo, Strandja and Sharkovo.

The mountain location and proximity to the sea give it the advantage of combining different types of tourism - sea, eco, rural, hunting, and cultural. Strandja is a living museum of the intangible cultural heritage - here one can still see traditions preserved for millennia - Fire Dance, White Kuker, Strandja panagiri, ancient ottoman festivals such as oil wrestling, and festivals related to the mountain's natural heritage. The people of Strandja are very proud of their cultural heritage and preserve it in their everyday life. Today one can still experience those old Strandja traditions that have survived the ages.

In recent years some traditional fairs and festivals in Strandja increased their popularity. They have kept the region's uniqueness and have become important assets and opportunities to develop economically sustainable touristic products and alternative and diversified tourism activities in order to enhance the economic situation in the area.

The study of the Strandja festivals took place from June to September 2017. At first, a list of organizations and institutions involved in holding festivals and local events in the eligible cross-border area Bulgaria- Turkey was prepared. The list of stakeholders included local authorities, culture centers, and cultural associations and institutions in the districts of Burgas, Yambol, Kirklareli, as well as stakeholders in regional and national level.

The methods of collecting information included:

✓ Official sources of information.

The National Statistical Institute published information about the total number of festivals and celebrations. **On the territory of Burgas they are 502, while on the territory of Yambol they are only 33.**

✓ The National cultural calendar, cultural municipal calendars, and calendars of culture centers provide more complete information about events and other information such as the place, date of implementation, organizer, etc. Some information sites also provide information about festivals in the Bulgarian part of Strandja such as www.sabori.bg, fest.bg etc.

In this regard, we must point out that cultural calendars are filled with many different events and celebrations of national and church holidays, as well as various initiatives for children and young people. In this regard, we specify that no events such as the “Martenica Workshop” or a single concert are comparable with events such as big festivals, but they are still events in the cultural calendar. Also, in many cultural calendars, the exact total number of events can not be determined due to a lack of information, so the events we included in the original project were determined according to the following initial criteria:

1. The event has public support – it’s included in the calendar – is on a municipal or national scale, and has specified date and venue, and organizer.
2. The event has a program.
3. The event is open to the general public.
4. The event is authentic, including demonstrates the cross-border identity and culture of the region, presents local customs, folklore, crafts, modern literature, music, dance, other arts, creative industries.
5. The event attracts the audience and has the potential to develop tourism and promote the cross-border area.

✓ Meetings and interviews with stakeholders and organizers of various events, tourism professors from the College of Tourism at Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov, tour operators and others.

✓ Case study

On the base of preliminary research Bulgarian experts report draft 1- A list of 135 festivals and events identified on the territory of Bulgarian Strandja and draft 3 – where some events and meeting were united and result is 92 festivals and events.

On the territory of Turkish Strandja were identified 20 festivals.

A record of the local festivals in the eligible cross-border area Bulgaria- Turkey was elaborated. The record included the following fields of data for each festival: festival’s name, range and theme, dates, duration, frequency, location (regional unit, municipality), site, description of some of main tourist resources in area (some history of villages), the contact details of the organizers (name, address, phone number, fax, e-mail, communication manager, website, social media if they have such).

Mapping of the local product festivals took place in the context of creating a webpage www.strandja-fest.info.

In order to be defined, the 24 festivals in Bulgaria were described in draft 2 and sorted as follows:

Type	Description	Descriptions, Comments, Suggestions, Decisions
Traditional customs, meetings and fests in settlements	One day program which attracts mainly local people who meet their relatives and friends. Every settlement has similar fests, limited finance for advertisement or programme. Financed by municipalities, sponsors, culture centers	<p>These events are very important for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage - folklore, traditions, customs. Most of them are included in the cultural calendars of the municipalities. All described information for settlements and traditions is to be included in the calendar of the project site http://strandja-fest.info/ and other promotional tools - Facebook, Twitter, Google +, newsletters,</p> <p>These events are dropping out of the top 20 popular holidays and festivals in Strandja.</p> <p>Exception - Summer cultural holidays in the town of Malko Tarnovo because this fest has rich programs, attracts a large audience, and has wide advertising</p>
Temple celebrations and religious	They offer one-day or several-hour long programs. They are held in accordance with the religious calendar. They are celebrated in many	These events are very important for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage - folklore, traditions, customs. Most of them are included in the

holidays	settlements, attract mainly local people, their relatives and friends. They are financed by municipalities, community centers, donors, church. No advertising or limited event advertising.	<p>cultural calendars of the municipalities.</p> <p>Our goal is to gather information about popular areas and architectural sights related to those holidays - eg. churches and monasteries.</p> <p>This information will be included in the calendar of the project site http://strandja-fest.info/ and other promotional tools - Facebook, Twitter, Google +, newsletters,</p> <p>However, these events will be dropped out of the evaluation for inclusion in the 20 most popular festivals and festivals in Strandja.</p> <p>Exception: Nestinarstovo – the Feast on the day of St. Konstantin and Elena and Fire-dancing ceremony in the village of Balgari.</p>
Popular festivals	Wide program - one day or longer, included in a national cultural calendar, events with traditions that attract a large audience unique to the region and the country, rich program, widely advertised, events with great tourist potential, many of them and international popularity.	<p>To be included in the calendar of the project site http://strandja-fest.info/ and other promotional tools - Facebook, Twitter, Google +, newsletters,</p> <p>To be included in short list and evaluated along with Turkish proposals for inclusion among the 20 most popular festivals and festivals in Strandja.</p>

The present program brings together about 200 festivals from the Bulgarian and Turkish parts of the region from different sectors of art (including visual arts, cinema, music, theater, etc.), festivals of different sizes, budgets and geographical coverage.

Trends in the development of Strandja as a festival destination

- It takes years to promote each event and to popularize it, to become a symbol of attraction for a large number of tourists.
- Festival tourism is changing world-wide. Events, festivals and various attractions are part of the cultural, folklore, religious and wine tourism. Besides presenting about history, culture, legends and crafts, they also create memories. Modern tourists travel more and more, choose more and more advantageous offers, but for their money they are looking for knowledge, authenticity and experience.
- Sports events, festivals and attractions always attract more tourists and, therefore, more revenue. They are of interest to young people. Festivals and events also require animation and interactivity and an element of uniqueness that attracts visitors to a place. The goal is to introduce the tourists into the atmosphere of time.
- The relative share of people who are interested in sports and attend sports events is high, which determines the significant economic and social impact of this type of event on the event destination. Sport has become a business industry that attracts admirers, advertisers and the media. For the development of this type of tourism in terms of economic and social benefits, medium-sized sporting events are recommended.

PROFILE OF THE TOURIST

Together with the dynamic change in tourism worldwide, consumers' psychology changes as tourists seek new experiences, unconventional destinations, satisfaction of interests and emotions.

IV. SWOT ANALYSIS OF REGION STRANDJA FEST

Strengths

- Favorable geographical location - proximity to rich natural potential - river valley of Tundja and Strandja and Sakar mountains;
- Preserved natural environment, natural landmarks, rich flora and fauna, availability of reserves, protected areas, localities and zones;
- Favorable climate - mild climate with moderate temperatures in the summer;

- Existence of interesting sites of the cultural and historical heritage - rich cultural and historical heritage - archaeological and architectural monuments, churches and chapels, preserved folklore, lifestyle, traditions and authentic dishes;
- Preserved crafts and preserved traditions in the local population, which can be turned into tourist attractions - knitting, weaving, embroidery, fishing, beekeeping;
- A variety of events throughout the year. A unique element in the tourist product;
- Potential for the development of various forms of tourism;
- Using the mythical element and recreating ancient customs;
- Folklore traditions that can become tourist attractions;
- Organizers have full control over festivals;
- Festival organizers are mostly permanent because they are organized by local governments. For this reason, it is also possible that the festivals are sustainable;
- Since the owners of the festivals are not private institutions, they are mostly and primarily for the benefit of society;
- Festivals have a very important role in promoting and branding the city;
- Festivals have programs and update them annually with an innovative approach;
- Relatively well-developed accommodation base;
- Existence of specialized tourist infrastructure - built places for short recreation in the nature equipped with benches, fountains, gazebos and toilets;
- The local population is hospitable and has a good attitude towards tourism;
- Clearly expressed desire by local and regional authorities to support the development of tourism.

Weaknesses

- Although the festival organizers are public institutions, they may need varied stakeholders such as universities and NGOs in their surroundings;
- They may need a large number of participants;

- They need very good advertising and promotional planning;
- They can be easily influenced by various political negativities such as terrorist attacks in the country and region;
- Inadequate number of employees in festivals;
- Poor condition of the technical infrastructure - municipal roads, water supply, sewerage; hospital infrastructure;
- There are no accommodation facilities with 3, 4 or 5 star categories;
- Insufficient specialized tourist infrastructure - eg. in Strandja there are not any hut, camps, bicycles and parking for cyclists;
- Lack of or insufficient places for entertainment in the villages - cafes, restaurants and additional tourist services;
- Low qualification of staff in the service sector as a whole;
- Insufficient information provision - lack of signboards;
- Lack of additional tourist services;
- Tourism resources are not used as tourism products and included in the tourism industry;
- Limited offer of tourist packages;
- Enhanced migration processes, especially among the young population;
- The region has no image of a tourist destination;
- Lack of a common information system and registers of immovable cultural values;
- Lack of financial resources for the preservation and restoration of cultural values;
- Aging population. There are no young people to whom traditions, customs and traditions could be given;
- Insufficient means of advertising the STRANDJA FEST region as a tourist destination;
- Insufficient use of modern information tools to promote the destination;
- The development of modern information technologies and reservation systems is lagging behind.

Opportunities

- It is an important source of culture for society;
- They are an important leisure / recreational activity;
- Festivals have a significant growth potential;
- Festivals are tourism-focused and can benefit from their facilities;
- Since the festivals are not profitable for the primary purposes, financial losses can be very low;
- The stakeholders are from the important institutions of the region;
- Offering "specialized" packages;
- Plan and implement targeted media campaigns and enhance advertising to promote tourism;
- Identify the area as an attractive tourist destination - events and festivals are an effective means of attracting tourists to destinations that are not familiar to them;
- Creating new facilities and improving infrastructure;
- Creating a strong positive image of the destination - attracted public attention, media coverage helps to promote the destination;
- Increasing the activity of the international collaborations for exchange of experience and good practices and realization of joint projects;
- Funding of projects under EU programs and funds and other donor programs;
- Strengthening the region's advertising as a tourist destination and promoting cultural heritage, including by including the municipalities of the region into a regional tourist product;
- Socialization of tourist sites - cultural, ecological and building of related infrastructure for a comprehensive tourist product on the territory of the region.

Threats

- Natural elements such as bad weather can not be controlled;

- Financial resources are inadequate in the long run and there is uncertainty about the pace that can be separated;
- Increasing costs day by day;
- The cost of bringing famous people who support the festival program to a significant extent and also play a big part in the advertisement of the province, especially like the concert, is costly;
- Due to the increased costs, we have to make less various programs than the previous year's program;
- Festivals have difficulty in finding volunteers;
- Overlaps in the calendar of the festivals throughout the region, especially on nearby routes as a competitive;
- Loss of the unique element in the product in the commercialization of authentic customs and traditions;
- Negative impact on local communities by mass attendance;
- Exceeding the capacity of the destination;
- Not utilizing tourist potential;
- Frequent changes in the existing regulatory framework;
- Natural disasters and the risk of deterioration of environmental parameters;
- Strengthening the unfavorable trends of demographic indicators;
- Recessions and crisis phenomena;
- Lack of encouragement, state support and funding for improvement and development of rural areas and infrastructure;
- Risk of deterioration of environmental parameters.

The calendar aims to ensure events of high artistic value that shape the cultural image and identity of the region. Events ensure the achievement of continuity and recognition of cultural life as well as ensure dynamics and genre diversity

ACTIONS

- Developing a plan and determining the potential of events and festivals and their potential for future development;
- Promoting effective interregional coordinated cooperation to build a network of festivals in the region;
- Assisting regional and municipal authorities to apply for funding from international programs and projects for the development of high-potential regional festivals.

V. FINANCING OF FESTIVAL AND EVENTS

Main sources of funding:

- Local authorities - municipal budget
- Chitalishta receives from the state, support from local authorities, different sponsors, financing of different projects
- Other non-governmental organizations - cultural foundations, associations
- Museums
- Various sponsors-local companies, private donors
- Directorate of Strandja Nature Park

Municipal budget

In almost all municipalities in Strandja, funding for events and festivals is carried out under the following mechanism: The list of events in the Cultural Calendar, including the total budget, is accepted as an annex to the Municipal Council's decision for the adoption of the annual budget of the municipality. It includes events funded or co-organized by the municipality; all festivals that receive some funding from the municipality enter the Cultural Calendar. Funding for traditional festivals and events is provided in municipal budgets for the calendar year.

Financing initiatives coming from "external partners and organizations"

An agreement with the author / promoter of the proposal is reached, with municipalities pursuing their objectives and priorities in the Municipal Development Plan and the Municipal Management Program. The amount of funding is determined through negotiations, according to the budget of the municipality, and the final decision is taken by the Municipal Council. Although the decisions on the amount of funding for the festivals are taken by the City Council and the relevant commission, respectively, in practice there is rarely no expertise for their proper spending.

Most of the major festival events are funded under the "Other Cultural Activities" paragraph of the municipal budgets. This creates their security and sustainability, but it is burdened with too many co-ordinating procedures in the municipal administration system.

Community centers

2017

Municipal subsidy for the community centers in the municipality of Malko Tarnovo for 2017 is 65 000 BGN.

Other cultural activities - 64 000 BGN

Sozopol

Other cultural activities - 415,000 BGN

Other cultural activities in others. settlements incl. Chitalishte - 117 100 BGN

Museums, Art Galleries, Monuments of Culture and Ethnographic Complexes of a Local Character "- CCI" Museum Center "-236 480 BGN

Primorsko

"Holiday, Culture"

Expenditures for external services - 342 000 BGN

Subsidies for non-profit organizations - 300 000 BGN

Tsarevo

Municipal subsidy for community centers in Tsarevo municipality for 2016

Other cultural activities - 176 561 BGN

In this activity the funds financed with local revenues are included, which covers the activities of the community center, the mayoralty and the municipality for the realization of cultural events, preservation of the local traditions and customs according to the established cultural calendar of the Municipality, as well as for events from international, nature.

Activity "Community centers" - 115 225 BGN

This activity includes the salaries, subsistence and subsistence expenses of the subsidized units in the community centers in the territory of Tsarevo Municipality.

Sredets

Budget 2017

"Holiday, Sports, Culture and Religious Activities" - 47,0000 BGN

Financing - state activities, Chitalishte - 45 000 BGN

Bolyarovo

2016 The municipal budget approves estimates for non-profit organizations, as follows:

- 10.1. Community center "Vazrazhdane" town of Bolyarovo - 65 700 BGN
- 10.2. Community center "St.Karadza" village of Karadzhovo - 7 300 BGN
- 10.3. Community center "Svetlina" village of Mamarchevo - 7 300 BGN
- 10.4. Community center "Anna Mayumunkova" village of Voden - 7 300 BGN
- 10.5. Community center "N.Vaptsarov" village of Popovo - 7 300 BGN
- 10.6. Community center "Prosveta" village of Krushevo - 7 300 BGN

There is no separate item for events and other cultural activities.

Elhovo - budget 2017

Community centers - 192 500 BGN

Other cultural activities - 56 942 BGN

The larger municipalities, mainly on the Black Sea coast, outnumber the municipalities from the interior by a relative share of attracted funds from the state budget, organizations from abroad and donations.

The organizers of festival events in Strandja are supported by voluntary work, non-financial support from companies, private persons, as well as from state and municipal companies. These results show that the model in the management of festivals has also created a solidarity effect by various representatives of the local community.

Research also shows another major weakness in local culture management: lack of co-ordination in the organization of festivals and well structured municipal cultural calendars. Local administrations still perceive the programming of cultural and artistic activities during the year as a list of events and not as an effective tool for the realization of cultural policies.

Stranja Nature Park Directorate

Stranja Nature Park Directorate conducts the state policy for management and control of the protected area in order to protect its unique nature in the long term and to ensure the sustainable socio-economic development of the area.

The main financial source for the activity of the direction is the state budget through the Forest executive agency / Ministry of agriculture, forests and foods. In recent years, activities has been funded by applying for projects and programs to regional, national and international donors. The directorate does not have a legal basis for generating income from its activities.

According to the Stranja Nature Park Directorate status, all revenue generated on the spot by the Directorate - sales of advertising materials, tourist services, etc., is paid into the accounts of the Forest executive agency.

Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Culture (MC) is the first-budget spending unit responsible for the implementation of national cultural policy - including in relation to festivals. The Ministry of Culture pursues a policy of cultural protection and development by financially supporting cultural initiatives, targeted programs, creative projects and other.

In 2017-2018, the Ministry of Culture's activities are focused on the implementation of 12 priorities, among which support and funding opportunities and events are found in the following:

Priority 17.1. Promoting the formation of a new spiritual environment for ethno-cultural interaction and integration of all religious groups in the unified Bulgarian nation

Objective 1. 3. Realizing creative projects and programs

Indicator - 42 supported creative projects and programs

Priority 17.3. Conversion of Bulgarian culture and spirituality to the basic image of the national identity

Objective 8. Creating conditions for new international achievements of Bulgarian artists by providing scholarships, prizes for young authors, support for participation in fairs, festivals and biennials.

Indicator - 52 supported festivals, competitions, shows and events for children and young people on a competitive basis in the field of theater, music and dance.

Priority 17.8. Modern development of the community centers network in the country through additional sources of funding; change in the legislative base of the community centers.

Priority 17.11. Improving the reform of the performing arts and providing means to raise the standards of cultural institutes.

46. Expanding the scope of the financial resource to support the performing arts, including private stage organizations, on a project-by-project basis. Annually holding competitive sessions on basic and target programs. Progressively increased resource by 10% per year; Regularly informing and publishing session results.

Indicator: Number of projects funded and implemented.

There is no precise data on the funding of festivals from the MC's budget, but in the published Economic Survey on public support for cultural projects, in particular festivals, at national and municipal level in 2015, the total value of the festivals funded for 2013 is 1 184 393 million BGN or 0.92% of the MC's budget, for 2014 - 1,968,701 million BGN - 1.43% of the MC's budget.

In 2017, it is clear from the MC's website that the MC supports projects from the financing of performances and concerts in the country in the field of professional musical art. In 2017 there are 17 for the country, but there is not one in Strandzha.

Session for financing festivals and competitions in the field of music and dance art 2017

In 2017, 30 festivals and events were funded. The financial support is from 1200 to 13 000, but again there are no festivals from Strandja. Some of the more popular festivals received funding are 20 International Jazz Festival Bansko 2017, Ethno Rila 2017 / sixth edition / and others.

National Fund "Culture"

The Bulgarian organization, which supports at national level the creation, development and dissemination of the Bulgarian culture and art in the country and abroad, created by the Law for Protection and Development of Culture and started functioning from November 2000. Its main objective is to support the development of culture by collecting, managing and spending funds for the implementation of the national policy in the field of culture set out in the programs of the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria for the relevant period and in the Law for Protection and Development of Culture. The priorities in the activity of NF "Culture" are also in compliance with the criteria of the chapter "Culture and Audio-vision" of the Treaty on the Accession of Bulgaria to the European Community.

The governing body of the National Culture Fund is the Managing Board, chaired by the Minister of Culture. Members of the Management Board are prominent cultural figures, representatives of creative alliances and one representative of the municipalities, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Finance.

Fund resources are raised from a subsidy defined in the Law on the State Budget of the Republic of Bulgaria for the respective budget year and other sources of financing referred to in Art. 31 of the Law on Protection and Development of Culture. Fundamentally, funds are provided for creative projects aimed at developing the cultural sector. The financing of creative projects is carried out after the announcement of competitions on a program prepared and approved by the Management Board.

At the beginning of each year, the Governing Council of NF "Culture" formulates the priority areas for which financial support is provided. The main principles in the work of NF "Culture" are the transparency and the competition principle. Competitions have the right to equal participation of individual artists, private, municipal and state cultural organizations. The NF "Culture" works on the basis of Fund Rules and Activities (hereinafter referred to as the NFC Rules) and the Governing Council, according to Article 23 of the Rules, the subsidy of the projects is based on the competition principle. All cultural organizations, including not-for-profit organizations, as well as individual cultural actors, will be invited to the competition, and the applicants will submit documents in a different format for each competition. The grant of the NFC can not exceed 80% of the cost of the project. Those who submit a justification for securing at least 20% of the cost as a 5% must be provided as cash and the remaining 15% may also be non-cash contributions / staff, premises, equipment.

The Fund implements two instruments to achieve its objectives: grants to support creative projects and strategic activities for information, technical, financial and expert support for the development of the cultural sector as a whole.

In principle, NFC funds from the state subsidy are allocated according to the defined strategic objectives and priorities according to programs approved at the beginning of the year and according to a decision of the MB. The objectives and priorities for 2017-2018, which are specifically aimed at supporting festivals, have been described above. Many of the fund's programs have been and can be funded projects that are part or somehow connected to festivals and thus represent (at least indirectly) funding for festivals.

With regard to the strategic activities of NFC to support the formulation and implementation of cultural policy, festivals have been promoted and supported - intangible not through funding - but by providing opportunities for participation in international, national and (from 2015) local cultural forums (including festivals) of representatives of Bulgarian culture and art; visits to foreign managers and programmers in the field of culture and arts, travel expenses, partial fees, etc. through the so-called Program "Mobility", Program "Debutes", Program "Audiences", "Target financial support for programs and projects of great national cultural importance".

Financing from external sources

Projects funded from external sources - such as loans provided by banks. In this case, the project poses serious requirements that should convince the bank in its economic viability and the return on investment.

But most often, the concept of a project is associated with the free provision of public funds. In this case, the focus is on solving issues that are important to society or the achievement of public benefits. But the rules and requirements are even tougher and bureaucratic. The justification for this is the need for transparency and control over the use of public funds.

International IFPC Culture Promotion Fund

Application for funding of cultural projects under the aegis of the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture under the aegis of UNESCO (IFPC).

Public funding

The potential beneficiaries of the assistance (beneficiaries) - municipalities, individuals, ST, LLC, cooperatives, community centers, local, regional and national associations and associations to have their own cash resources available for the implementation of the projects. This money is needed to carry out feasibility studies - working projects, architectural surveys, and general

expenses related to consultations, fees, etc. Only after completion of the projects the beneficiaries receive the final amount of the EU grant.

State aid - State aid is defined as "any aid granted by the state or by the municipality through state or municipal resources, directly or through other persons, in any form whatsoever which distorts or threatens free competition by favoring the certain undertakings, the production or marketing of certain goods or the provision of certain services".

Financing under Operational Programs

- **Rural Development Program 2014-2020**

Sub-measure 6.2 - Start-up for non-agricultural activities

Funding activities for tourism development (construction and renovation of tourist sites and development of tourist services) are funded.

No financial assistance is provided for the construction and renovation of tourist sites and tourist services in resorts and settlements along the Black Sea coast and mountain resorts with developed mass tourism (listed in an annex to the program).

Sub-measure 7.5. Investments for public use in recreational infrastructure, tourist infrastructure

Sub-measure 19.2. Implement operations within community-led local development strategies. (CLDS) is implemented through integrated and multisectoral local development strategies based on the characteristics of the specific territory and developed on the basis of local needs and potential

The measure has a potential contribution to the achievement of thematic objectives related to innovation, mitigation of climate change and conservation of Natura 2000 protected areas included in the Partnership Agreement. The approach is applied on a territorial principle at the level of a municipality or a union of neighboring municipalities and / or neighboring settlements part of municipality / s. Each community-led local development strategy covers an area of between 10,000 and 150,000 inhabitants.

- **Operational Program “Regions in growth” 2014-2020**

The main objective of the Programme is at the national level, the implementation of a model of moderate polycentrism for the territory of Bulgaria, which leads to a decrease of internal and external migration.

Priority Axis 6: Regional Tourism

Investment priority: Conservation, preservation, promotion and development of the natural and cultural heritage, Total budget on the priority axis: 100 755 882.00 EUR

The priority axis focuses on the preservation, preservation, promotion and development of cultural heritage by developing fully integrated and integrated tourism products for cultural monuments of national and global importance.

- **Operational Program "Innovation and Competitiveness" 2014-2020**

-

The main objective is to achieve a dynamic competitive development of the economy, based on innovation, optimization of production chains and high added value sectors.

- **Operational Program "Human Resources Development" 2014-2020**

Objectives - higher and better quality employment; institutional capacity and modernization of public policies; reducing poverty and promoting social inclusion.

Budget - EUR 1 092 248 077.

Priority Axis 1 "Improving access to employment and job quality" Title of procedure: "Active"

- **Danube Transnational Cooperation Program 2014-2020**

Territorial Coverage - The Danube Program fully covers the geographic scope of the EU Danube Region Strategy, including the participation of 9 EU Member States: Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany (Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg), Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia and 5 candidate countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Moldova, Montenegro and 3 regions of Ukraine - Ivano-Frankivska, Zakarpatska and Odessa.

The total budget of the Danube program is 222 million EUR.

The target groups and main types of beneficiaries are national, regional and local authorities as well as non-governmental organizations.

Priority Axis 2 "Environment and Culturally Engaged Danube Region" is the main priority axis in which projects from the tourism sector can be found by:

Specific objective 2.1: Sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources.

Possible directions are: cultural-historical tourism, ecotourism, alternative tourism, etc.

Specific objective 2.2: Restoration and management of ecological networks and corridors - ecotourism, alternative tourism.

Priority Axis 4 "Well-managed Danube Region" also provides opportunities for development of tourism projects.

Specific objective 4.1: Increase institutional capacity to address major societal challenges.

Specific objective 4.2: Improvement of management systems and capacity of public institutions involved in the development and implementation of the objectives of the Danube Program.

- **Balkan - Mediterranean Transnational Cooperation Program 2014-2020**

Territorial scope - three EU Member States: Greece, Cyprus and Bulgaria and two EU candidate countries: Albania and Macedonia.

Objective - to enhance the quality of territorial, economic and social integration processes and to contribute to the cohesion, stability and competitiveness of the region through the development of transnational partnerships and joint actions on strategic issues.

Total budget: 39 727 652 EUR.

Beneficiaries of the Program may be: local, regional and national authorities; regional development agencies; environmental protection organizations; agencies for development of all forms of tourism; protected zone management organizations; NGOs and civil society organizations; agencies to promote small and medium-sized enterprises.

Opportunities offered by the program for the tourism sector:

Priority Axis 1: Entrepreneurship and innovation - devoted to activities to build regional entrepreneurial potential, improve competitiveness, promote and support the creation of new small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Priority Axis 2: "Environment" - Strengthening integrated cooperative approaches to preservation and management of the rich natural and cultural heritage in the region as a prerequisite and basis for sustainable development and inclusive growth. It will also support the development of the region as a tourist destination, encouraging the development of identity "Balkans - Mediterranean".

- **INTERREG Europe Programme 2014-2020**
-

Territorial scope - the whole territory of the European Union, Norway and Switzerland.

Objective of the program - to continue the process of experience sharing and policy-making between public authorities to improve the implementation of policies and programs under the Investment for growth and jobs goal.

Total budget of the program - 359 000 000,00 EUR

Beneficiaries under the program - The program allows public authorities and public law organizations and non-profit organizations to carry out private-sector activities engaged in regional development across Europe to exchange practices and ideas for the implementation of public policies, thus finding solutions to improve their strategies for the benefit of citizens in line with the Europe 2020 priorities for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Opportunities offered by the program for the tourism sector:

Priority Axis 2: "Competitiveness of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs)"

Indicative activities: Interregional cooperation projects and Policy-making platforms to enable partners from different partner countries to work together on issues of common regional interest in SME growth and entrepreneurship policy.

Priority Axis 4: "Environment and resource efficiency"

Indicative activities: Interregional cooperation projects and platforms assimilation policies aimed at enabling partners from different partner countries to work together on issues of common regional interest policy to support the preservation and development of natural and cultural heritage.

- **Joint Black Sea Basin Operational Program 2014-2020**

Territorial coverage - Romania (Southwest); Bulgaria (Northeast and Southeast); Greece (Kentriki Macedonia, Anatoliki); Macedonia (Thracians); Turkey (Istanbul, Tekirda, Edirne, Kirklareli, Kojaeli, Sakarya, Duzheda, Bolu, Yalova, Zonguldak, Karabuk, Barton, Kastamunu, Gankur, Sinop, Samsun, Tokat, Jorum, Amasia, Trabzon, Gumushane, Russia (Rostov region, Krasnodar region, the Autonomous Republic of Adygea), Ukraine (Odessa, Mikolaiv, Kherson, Zaporozhye and Donetsk region, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan (whole countries).

Objectives - to promote the economic and social development of the regions on both sides of the common borders and to address the common challenges in the areas of: environmental protection, public health, safety and security.

The total budget of the Program amounts to 53,942,456.70 EUR.

Opportunities offered by the program for the tourism sector:

Priority objective 1.1 - Joint promotion of business and entrepreneurship

Development of joint cross-border tourist products and trans-national thematic routes. Promoting networking and connectivity between tourism and cultural institutions of the participating regions. Development of common tourism packages geared to specific markets and innovative

tourism products. Jointly promote the opening of the Black Sea region to the international and non-European tourism market. Exchange of "good practices" in the development of environmentally friendly tourism policies. Promoting the historical heritage and supporting its preservation in order to encourage tourist visits. Joint promotion of cultural activities and events. Improving the quality of tourism services and improving the skills of tourist staff, through student exchange between educational institutions and the joint creation of on-line educational programs in the tourism and cultural heritage sectors.

- **INTERREG - IPA Cross-Border Cooperation Program Bulgaria-Turkey 2014-2020**

Common strategic objective: Strengthen the capacity for cross-border cooperation between Bulgaria and Turkey in the field of nature conservation and sustainable development of tourism, which will lead to the strengthening of territorial cohesion in Europe.

Opportunities offered by the program for the tourism sector:

Priority Axis 1 "Environment"

1.1. Preventing and mitigating the effects of natural and man-made disasters in the cross-border area

1.2. Improving nature conservation capacity, sustainable use and management of common natural resources through joint initiatives in the cross-border area

Priority Axis 2 "Sustainable Tourism"

2.1. Increasing the tourist attractiveness of the cross-border area by making better use of the natural, cultural and historical heritage and related infrastructure

2.2. Increasing the potential for cross-border tourism through the development of common destinations

2.3. Increase networking for the development of sustainable tourism through cross-border cooperation initiatives

VI. STRATEGIC PART

1. Vision

Strandja Fest – a region with sustainable developed all-year festival tourism, preserved traditions and costumes, nature and cultural heritage

2. Strategic goals

- Keeping and preserving traditions and customs in the Stranja cross-border region;

- Full performance and lasting saturation with modern features of cultural heritage and European creative ideas, approaches and interpretations;
- Sustainable use of natural resources;
- Strandja Fest- a competitive tourist destination for sustainable all-year festival tourism.

3. Priorities

Priority 1: Integrated development of Strandja Fest region as a tourist festival destination

Measures:

1. Identify all stakeholders for the development of festival tourism in the region.

1.1. Creating a stakeholder database; mailing lists, etc.

1.2. Dissemination of information to the stakeholders, related to the development of the Strandja fest as a festival destination.

1.2. Establishing a unified system for describing all events and festivals in Strandja region.

1.2.1. The development of a joint cross-border calendar, which is updated on a monthly basis. The calendar aims to provide events of high artistic value that shape the cultural image and identity of the region and help preserve traditions and customs. Events ensure the achievement of continuity and recognition of cultural life as well as ensure dynamics and genre diversity.

1.2.2. Updating of information in the e-calendar of the platform festivals and other promotional tools Strandja fest.

1.3. Optimizing the work of the cultural and tourist structures for organizing and promoting the festivals in the Strandja fest region.

1.3.1. Discussions and suggestions for optimizing the work of tourist information centers in Strandja region.

1.3.2. Discussions and suggestions for optimizing the work of museums in Strandja region.

1.3.3. Discussions and proposals for optimizing the work of the community centers in Strandja region.

1.3.4. Discussions and proposals to optimize the work of Turkish cultural and tourist organizations in the Strandja region.

1.4. Development of tourist products for festival tourism.

1.4.1. Development of new local and regional tourist products for festival tourism.

1.4.2. Development of integrated tourist packages - involving two or more products, major travel motivators- Events and Festivals, Food and Beverages, Adventures and Nature, Sports, Cultural Heritage, Crafts and Traditions.

1.4.3. Identification and development of new joint cross-border tourist products based on a joint festival calendar, local and regional tourism resources.

1.5. Building capacity for integrated development of Strandja as a festival destination.

1.5.1. Activities to improve cooperation in developing and implementing tourism policy between institutions, businesses and NGOs.

1.5.2. Activities to improve collaboration and dialogue with creative organizations and the non-governmental sector in the formulation and implementation of policies in the field of event organization and performing arts.

1.5.3. Activities to increase the skills and qualifications of staff working in the tourism sector.

Priority 2: Presentation of cultural, natural, folklore and musical heritage in Strandja fest Measures:

1. Organization of cultural events - themed festivals, concerts, exhibitions and presentations to tourists in the region.

2. Develop events based on folklore, traditions and customs.

3. Development of joint cross-border tourist products.

4. Organization of joint events for the different target groups - children, young people, workers, pensioners.

7. Organization of joint paintings, photographers and visiting exhibitions of the works representing the region of Strandja as a festival destination.

8. Inventory of tourist sites for holding special events.

9. Organization of meetings and discussions to discuss and diversify the program of existing events - new interpretations, attractions, innovative techniques.

10. Representing European creative ideas, approaches and interpretations, both in terms of cultural content and in terms of involving the public and the urban / rural environment.

Priority 3: Promoting effective interregional coordinated cooperation to build a network of festivals in Strandja fest region

Measures:

3.1. Establishment of Strandja fest regional tourism network, definition of objectives and areas of cooperation.

3.1.1 Developing and signing a Memorandum for cooperation and development of Strandja fest Network.

3.1.2. Definition of the Strandja fest network management and coordination committee.

3.1.3. Elaboration of a network development program, including the services it offers to its members.

3.2. Activities to attract local stakeholders and build a strong partnership for the development of Strandja as a festival destination.

3.2.1. Organization and participation of members of the network in joint seminars, round tables, trainings, dissemination of newsletters for the Strandja fest network activity. Participation in round tables and discussions on integrating culture and related industries as an integral part of sustainable development plans at local and regional level.

3.2.2 Activities to attract local tour operators - organization and participation in exhibitions, exchanges joint seminars, round tables, trainings, dissemination of newsletters for the activities of the network Strandja fest.

3.2.3. Activities to promote entrepreneurship in the field of culture and art. Discovering and exploiting the potential of the arts, cultural and creative industries for the integrated development of the region.

3.2.4. Activities to expand partnership, identify and create clusters for destination development.

3.3. Development, support and implementation of projects related to the creation and maintenance of a favorable environment for the development of the festivals in the region, the promotion and dissemination of the festivals' image as an important factor for the cultural, social and economic development of the cities and regions.

3.3.1. Developing concepts and projects for organizing and conducting events, improving and building new infrastructure, supplying equipment, enhancing knowledge and skills, exchanging know-how, and more.

3.3.2 Attracting sources for financing the cultural sector and development of Strandja as a festival destination.

3.4. Stimulating and facilitating the exchange of information, experiences and best practices between festivals, stakeholders to make them more successful, more competitive and more interesting to their visitors.

3.4.1. Stimulating and supporting international cultural cooperation and exchanges between the festivals in the Strandja region and around the world.

3.4.2. Actions to promote the development of culture and tourism as a resource to achieve regional objectives of other sectoral policies such as education.

3.4.3. Presentation of the Strandja festivals in front of the local, national and European authorities as well as in national and international organizations.

Priority 4: Marketing and promotion of the Strandja region as a festival destination

A leading message in our marketing campaign will be the presentation of the Strandja Fest region as **“One destination - two countries, a variety of festivals and experiences”** and the positioning of the border region as a "Transborder Destination" offering visitors a wide range of festivals, culture and traditions, nature, emotions and experiences.

Measures:

4.1. Activities to promote and disseminate the image of festivals as an important factor in the cultural, social and economic development of cities and regions, both in Bulgaria and in Turkey and around the world.

4.1.1 Develop an annual promotional plan according to the potential of events and festivals and their future development potential.

4.1.2. Updating information about events, festivals, publishing of joint advertising and information materials.

4.1.3. Organization of information and touring tours for journalists and tour operators.

4.2. Development and realization of joint partnership projects for establishing the Strandja region as a destination for festival tourism.

4.3. Creating a national and international distribution network to attract tourists and promote individual and group trips and participations in festivals

4.4. Participation in regional, national and international tourism fairs.