



Network Sustainable Development Plan

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Cultural Treasure House Project is aimed at developing a new common touristic product in a large region, including the area of Haskovo District in Bulgaria and Kirklareli District in Turkey. The major goal of the project is achieving cooperation between the involved partners in this region for development and offering a common tourism product, adapted to the principles of sustainable tourism development. The successful implementation is the key to the harmonious achievement of the three biggest goals in modern life of any community: economic, socio-cultural and environmental prosperity.

The area of the Cultural Treasury House project includes simultaneously the most interesting cultural sites, some of the vulnerable ecosystems located in the region of Strandzha-Sakar and the Eastern Rhodopes and covers part of the Thracian lowlands in Bulgaria and Turkey. It can be identified as the tourist route "Thracian Megalithic Kaleidoscope", which includes two tourist destinations: "The Stone Memory of Thrace" and "Thracian Megaliths and Rock Monuments".

The Thracian Megalithic Kaleidoscope Tourist Route is a new touristic product that combines the efforts of stakeholders on both sides of the border into a common cross-border network, which is a voluntary partnership aimed at servicing and organizing the new cross-border touristic product. The partnership network guarantees the quality presentation of the cultural sites, the local specifics, the cultural traditions, forms a responsible attitude towards the environment and concern of the hosts for the health, safety and comfort of the tourists. It gives an advantage to the tourist sites, included in the destination, as it helps their socialization and popularization. Their specifics and landmarks are taken into account, bearing the traditional color and atmosphere of the cross-border region, and at the same time the contemporary needs and interests of the tourists are taken into account, creating maximum conditions for their satisfaction. It highlights the general requirements for a culture of service, hospitality, local cuisine, service and authentic experience. In addition, the partnership network brings together various stakeholders involved in the process of tourism policy-making, tourism services and coordinates their actions in the context of the pandemic situation.

The activities within the project unite in general promotion and advertising tourist services from the cross-border territory of already formed, but not sufficiently developed new tourist sites and destinations, such as:

- the established in terms of tourism settlements such as: Igneada, Kıyıköy and Vize in Turkey and Ivaylovgrad and Minerelani Bani in Bulgaria;
- new rural areas for tourism, scattered in the Bulgarian and Turkish parts throughout the project area,
- the cities: Haskovo, Harmanli, Svilengrad, Dimitrovgrad, Topolovgrad, Kirklareli, Luleburgaz and Demirkoy.

The strategic location of this area, located on the road connecting the Middle East and Asia Minor with the Balkans and Europe, determines the importance of the region in the study and dissemination of cultural monuments. The integration of this rich touristic resource on both sides of the border in a larger scale of interaction as the establishment of a cross-border tourist route would be a good prerequisite for a more successful presence in the Balkan markets of Bulgaria and Turkey, looking for the attraction of Greece as a partner.



For this purpose, additional actions are needed to implement new models for responsible consumption of all types of resources: cultural, natural, energy, human. This new kind of attitude towards the tourist product of each community can be ensured by building a **sustainable partnership between the tourist businesses, with the support of local and state authorities and the non-governmental sector on the territory.**

How will be the actions synchronized in this so diverse territory, which at the same time is so interesting and challenging for the tourist who is always looking for new experiences?

How to apply the principles of sustainable tourism in this region, which, in addition to the various destinations mentioned, is also separated by a state border and a language barrier?

The establishment of new partnerships needs to be regulated by creating new models of integration and building a common organizational structure.

2. SUMMARY

A sustainable approach to the management of the tourist sector in a given area requires balanced actions to achieve sometimes mutually counterpoised goals in order to offer tourism that is economically and socially viable, without negatives for the local culture and environment. This means harmonizing the three interdependent pillars in the activities of each community, which are:

- **Development of a successful business;**
- **Preservation, development and responsibility for the cultural heritage;**
- **Limiting the harmful consequences for the environment.**

Achieving sustainable tourism is an ongoing process and requires constant monitoring of impacts, introduction of the necessary preventive and corrective measures when necessary. Sustainability in the tourist business implies active cooperation between tourist enterprises, museums, tourist centers, national, regional and local authorities within a tourist destination in order to meet a wide range of challenges, while at the same time competing in certain areas. A sustainable approach to tourism requires informed participation of all stakeholders, active partnership, and strong professional and political leadership in order to reach consensus.

The challenge is unique and the Cultural Treasury House project supports the process of creating new partnerships for sustainable tourism development by initiating, coordinating and supporting the implementation of several consecutive steps:

1. Promotion of the principles for sustainable management of tourist destinations.
2. Adaptation of the tourist services in the separate destinations to the standards for sustainable tourism and their unification into a new regional product.
3. Support for the establishment of a Partnership Network / PN / from tourist enterprises, sites in the project region and public structures.
4. Synchronization of the actions of the partners included in the Partnership Network for successful destination management.

The implementation of these basic steps will significantly increase the efficiency in the management of the complex of interconnections and activities in the formation and supply of the



tourist product in the region in a way that leads to economic growth for local communities, ensuring the sparing use of cultural and natural heritage, together with the commercial success of the individual participants in it.

3. PARTNERSHIP NETWORK GOALS

As one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy, tourism has many diverse impacts, the main ones being on people's lives and well-being and on the environment. The opportunities given by natural, economic, social and cultural resources are limited, provided that a process of uncontrolled expansion of tourist activities is started. Thus, the restructure of tourism under the principles of sustainable development against the background of new challenges and requirements of changing trends is emerging as a key challenge for the viability, efficiency, effectiveness and competitiveness of tourist destinations.

The workshops for **registration of consent for participation** in the network for attracting additional partners on the territory were held in August and the beginning of September in the cross-border territory. They were held in order to provide an opportunity to strengthen the partnership between museums, tourist centers, tourist business, local and regional authorities, public structures and other stakeholders, by setting up a voluntary **Partnership Network to promote sustainable tourism** in the area of project actions.

Those of the participants in the workshops, who declared their readiness to **comply with the requirements for quality and sustainability of the tourist services offered by the project** in order to adapt to the new requirements for the tourist product in the region covering the territory of the Cultural Treasury House project, have been invited to join the network. Possible joint actions of the Network were discussed, as well as ways to make them more effective in meeting the objectives of the new partnership. The four focus groups held in September complemented the requirements and expectations of the stakeholders, as a result of which some of them agreed that the application of the principles of sustainable development can guarantee the upward trend of destinations in the region because it allows achieving **the following goals**:

- **support for all sectors** that are directly or indirectly dependent on the tourist industry;
 - **generating profit** from the tourist activity for the private structures;
 - **promoting the identity** of the destination in terms of its cultural heritage;
 - **preservation of the natural and cultural heritage** for future generations;
 - **stimulating the labor market** by creating new jobs;
 - **protection of life and health** of tourists visiting the destination;
 - **ensuring the protection of the environment** and the ecosystem in the region.

4. ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENT FOR SERVING THE TOURIST ROUTE “THRACIAN MEGALITHIC KALEIDOSCOPE”

4.1 Business Description

The principles of sustainable tourism are applicable to all forms of tourism, including mass tourism, as well as in all types of destinations. As tourism is implemented at local and regional



level, the measures related to it must be developed and implemented at the same level in order to meet as much as possible the specific needs and constraints that exist. Because, along with the traditional problems, in each destination there are challenges specific to it. For example, both the destinations "Stone Memory of Thrace" and "Thracian Megaliths and Rock Monuments" offer a product that includes elements mainly of cultural tourism, complemented by hiking, eco, wine and rural tourism. Their successful combination depends both on the capabilities of the tourist businesses and on many external factors - the degree of support from local and state/governmental authorities, the status of infrastructure, the availability and degree of interpretation of natural and cultural heritage, the state of public transport and electronic communications, the level of public services in municipal centers, the pricing policy of the main stakeholders and those providing additional services, as well as local and regional policy. In the palette of the general tourist product of the region one can add the possibility to complement rural and ecotourism in the region of Mineralni Bani, Harmanli, Svilengrad, Topolovgrad, Ivaylovgrad, Igneada, Kıyıköy, Vize, Demirköy and Kirklareli, where prerequisites for their development are created.

4.2 Development trends

In the cross-border area the most popular are the opportunities for cultural tourism thanks to the rich historical heritage such as: fortresses and bridges, museums and historical sites, natural sites and monuments.

The state of tourism resources by 2021 implies an upward development of the tourist businesses uniting the efforts of all stakeholders to implement the principles of sustainable tourism.

In the region of Haskovo there are many sites of cultural and historical heritage, among which the most famous are: Alexanderovo Tomb, Bukelon Fortress near the village of Matochina, Thracian Tomb near the village of Mezek, Neutzikon Fortress in the village of Mezek, Villa "Armira" in Ivayovgrad and others. The conditions for the development of balneological tourism in the village of Mineralni Bani, which are located 18 km from the regional center, are also good, but they are not included in the destination at this stage.

In the Turkish part of the destination there are the following possibilities: Fortress near the village of Kömurkoy; The Foundry of Sultan Fatih I; Kıyıköy Fortress; Vize Fortress; Kanlagechit - Kirklareli and others.

The listed sites have tourist characteristics, but are relatively underdeveloped, but joined to the joint destinations they will get the opportunity for their active socialization.

The creation of supply chains and value chains, although strange to the people involved in cultural activities, must in fact be accepted and developed by every museum and every cultural community. If each creative team cooperates with cultural artists or cultural organizations in the region, such as the "Night of Museums" or the "Open Doors Day", will provide a great variety and richness of cultural events, which will attract tourists' attention. For each major holiday, museums should work with local schools and community centers, as well as other cultural institutions, to offer the adolescents a range of interesting cultural initiatives, such as the practice of RHM - Haskovo. Thus they inform them about the cultural heritage, traditions and customs, but also in an interesting and fun way offer teenagers the historical and ethnographic facts. Besides, similar events can be used by tourists who are interested in visiting them. All local and regional structures and artists united in



this way will create supply and value chains, ensuring greater publicity of their work and manifesting as partners who can organize attractive campaigns for tourists.

4.3. Competition of offered major tourist products

With regard to the competition of the new tourist product in its summer segment, there are expectations that it will become more competitive in the overall offer of all opportunities and products together in combination and complementarity of the individual tourist packages. Its direct competitors on the Bulgarian market are: the southern Black Sea coast in Bulgaria and the region of the Black and Aegean coasts in Turkey.

The destination is relatively competitive on the Bulgarian market in offering products for cultural, ecological, rural and wine tourism, as in the region especially in the Eastern Rhodopes there are many interesting tourist sites that attract the attention of visitors. At the same time, the shortage of interesting integrated tourist products puts the territory and the developed destinations at this stage in a more uncompetitive state compared to the Bulgarian competitors from other parts of the country. Not so popular destinations hinder the access of tourists from Turkey to the interesting tourist sites in the cross-border part of Bulgaria, although this is an accessible area, easy to visit and reflects historically important cultural and ecological sites that are important for the common future of cross-border territory. On the other hand, knowledge of customs and traditions brings people together, improves partnerships and creates conditions for common businesses.

The situation is similar on Turkish territory. Market tourism is developed mainly in the destination Haskovo-Svilengrad-Edirne and vice versa. This is a major destination for suitcase traders who run a business and travel daily. However, they cannot be defined as tourists and guests, but as traders. People who visit Edirne to shop and eat delicious local dishes, such as Edirne liver, baklava, tulumbichki and others, can be defined as tourists. Some of them also visit the cultural sites in the city. However, a very small percentage of these tourists enter the cross-border area, they do not visit the famous cultural and ecological sites and do not stay overnight. In this way, they miss the opportunity to get acquainted with the cultural and ecological heritage located in the neighboring country, which will enrich them and provide more information about the history, ecology, traditions and customs of our southern neighbors, which are so close and so related to the Bulgarian ones.

There are also certain traditions for visiting cultural events / fairs, festivals, folklore fests /, held on both sides of the border, which in previous years were more active, but recently, especially in a pandemic, they tend to decline. They have been developed on the basis of twinning between the municipalities on both sides of the border and the exchange of amateur folklore groups. The proximity of folklore, Balkan cuisine, traditions and customs brought people together, created durable friendship and demand for new contacts. The different political tendencies in the leaderships of some municipalities have caused the reduction of such events, which have rendered a beneficial effect on the development of bilateral partnerships.

All the above trends deprive potential Bulgarian and Turkish tourists of quite pleasant experiences, of missing real opportunities for information, entertainment and quality recreation at a very short distance, which saves time for long travel and money and allows the creation of a common integrated tourist product, based on sustainable partnerships.



The competitive advantages of the two destinations are generally enhanced by the good price-quality ratio of the services offered. It is especially important that they are offered all year round during the four seasons of the year, which implies opportunities to increase the average annual employment of the hotel and restaurant facilities.

4.4 Service Providers

The providers of the main tourist services on the territory of the two destinations are quite a lot and they can hardly be listed exhaustively. In the cross-border area, service providers can be grouped as follows:

- Museums / cultural sites /;
- Environmental NGOs, representing ecological sites or biodiversity;
- Tourist information centers;
- Travel agents;
- Hotels, restaurants, guest houses, shops and attractions;
- Municipalities with their tourist structures;
- State structures: District administrations, RIEW, etc .;
- Other NGOs involved in tourism, culture and ecology;
- Community culture centers, organizing festivals, fairs and other fests.

After identifying the key figures, workshops were held to reach an agreement on cooperation and inclusion of the cross-border network for sustainable tourism development with:

1. Museums:

- ✚ ***Museums in Haskovo region:*** Regional Historical Museum - Haskovo, Historical Museums in Dimitrovgrad, Harmanli and Svilengrad;
- ✚ ***Museums in the Kirklareli area:*** Kirklareli Historical Museum, Ataturk House Museum, Ali Raza Effendi Ethnographic Museum, Museum of Local Culture, Open-Air Archaeological Museum - Ashapanar.

2. Tourist Information Centers - Haskovo / OP "Sports, Recreation and Tourism" - Haskovo / and Svilengrad;

3. Tour operators/travel agents, hotels and restaurants:

- ✚ In Haskovo region: Sarnela Travel Agency; Lucky Star Tours Ltd., Emmaus Social Pilgrimage Cooperative, Radina 2003 - Harmanli, Park Hotel "Europe" - Haskovo, Hotel "Izvorite" – Mineralni Bani, Family Hotel "Olympia" - Mineralni Batni, Family Hotel "Roxana" – Mineralni Bani ".
- ✚ In the area of Kirklareli: Igneada Resort Hotel, Meltem Hotel - Igneada, Longozsphere Clamping - Igneada, Lozengrad hotel - Kirklareli, Marbes hotel - Kirklareli, Kaya Palas Hotel - Kirklareli, Parlak resort hotel – Demirkoj, Line Hotel - Kirklareli, Çatkapi restoran – Igneada, Rota Balik restaurant – Ineada, Kyuchuk Mustafa restaurant - Kirklareli, Ayan Kardeshler restaurant (meatball) – Kirklareli, Meziyet restaurant – Kirklareli, Yüce Aytaç et Mangal – Kirklareli, Priest House restaurant – Kirklareli, Vino dessera bağ evi Restaurant - Ahmetçe



Village / Kirklareli, Kardeşler restoran Restaurant - Demirkoy, Mercan Restaurant – Kıyıköy, Balıkçı Yasin Restaurant – Kıyıköy, Trulya Mutfagi Restaurant, - Demirköy, Gulay Mutfa restaurant - Demirköy, Doa restaurant – Vize, Koza Park - Kirklareli, Leszet Estuary Restaurant - Igneada.

4. Local and regional authorities:

- ✚ **In Haskovo district:** Mineralni Bani Municipality and Stambolovo Municipality and District Administration - Haskovo.
- ✚ **In the area of Kirklareli:** Hamdibey mayoralty, Kayakyoy municipality, Vize municipality.

5. Non-governmental organizations:

- ✚ **In Haskovo region:** Union for Reconstruction and Development - Haskovo, Center for Development of Mineralni Bani Municipality - Mineralni Bani village.
- ✚ **In the Kirklareli area:** none.

4.5 Customers

Potential users of the new tourist product of the cross-border region are residents of central southern Bulgaria and northeastern Turkey in the region located in Strandzha and at the foot of the mountain, in Kirklareli district, stretching from Sakar Mountain, along Strandzha and reaching the coast of the Black Sea. Customers of cultural, ecological, rural, maritime, gambling and market tourism are the potential users on both sides of the border. Visitors from third countries are rare in the region. Clients of rural tourism are mostly Bulgarian citizens, while products with a predominant environmental focus are in demand and will be increasingly sought not only by Bulgarians and Turks, but also by visitors from third countries.

The tourist product of the cultural monuments has been partially offered so far, but this has not formed a certain consumer attitude towards it on the Bulgarian and Turkish markets. Studies conducted so far on the Bulgarian market show that the tourist flow is formed mainly by people living in Sofia, Plovdiv, Haskovo, Stara Zagora, Yambol, Sliven, Burgas and Varna. They visit Turkey mainly for market and culinary tourism and rarely pay attention to local cultural and environmental attractions, so combining culinary and wine tourism with cultural sites would speed up the process of increasing interest in cultural heritage. Seaside tourism is not well developed here and is quite poorly popular, so it can be offered by Igneada/Demirkoy and Kıyıköy /Vize.

The Turkish tourist flow in Bulgaria is directed mainly to the gambling halls and the visit of cultural and ecological sites is very rare and incidental. Lack of information, lack of organization and opportunities to visit such attractions prevail. It is necessary to look for additional opportunities for the development of SPA tourism, which can be successfully developed in Mineral Baths, especially since it offers such services that are not so popular among Turkish guests from the cross-border area. These services are used mainly by Turkish settlers, who know the healing effect of mineral water.

Foreign tourists in the cross-border area come from Greece and Romania, but their number is smaller within the total tourist flow.



5. ACTION PLAN OF CROSS-BORDER PARTNERSHIP NETWORK

There are many opportunities for joint actions that potential members of the Network will be able to implement: uniting the efforts of all institutions and organizations working for the development of tourism in the region, discussion by representatives of all stakeholders of the main priorities for tourism development in the two destinations of the region, creation of the Organization for Management of the Tourist Route "Thracian Megalithic Kaleidoscope", introduction of electronic means for more successful promotion of the tourist products, creation and realization of a common/general plan for the tourist development of the region.

What are the actions that Network members need to be involved in, in order to achieve sustainable tourism management of destinations in the project region?

5.1. Actions to increase the social and economic **benefits for the local community:**

5.1.1 monitoring and periodically informing the local community about the economic contribution of tourism to the economy of the respective destination;

5.1.2 ensuring fair and equal employment and training opportunities for women and young people in the field of tourism, as well as equal pay and training opportunities in management positions;

5.1.3 encouraging and facilitating the participation of Network representatives in tourism planning and the ongoing decision-making process;

5.1.4 assistance in improving access to natural, historical, archaeological, religious, spiritual and cultural sites and attractions.

5.2. Actions to increase **environmental benefits:**

5.2.1 reduction of water consumption by the members of the Network;

5.2.2 assistance and implementation of systems for the use of energy from renewable sources by the members of the Network;

5.2.3 reduction of pollution when tourists visit cultural and ecological sites;

5.2.4 reduction of noise and light pollution in destinations;

5.2.5 limiting human impact on natural ecosystems, especially in areas with Natural Landmark status and varying degrees of protection;

5.2.6 support for biodiversity conservation throughout the project area.

5.3. Actions to increase the **benefits for cultural heritage:**

5.3.1 adapting the rules for visits to cultural and historical sites that are most sensitive to human presence, within the principles of sustainable management;

5.3.2 wider use of elements of local art, architecture, or cultural heritage specific to different destinations;

5.3.3 improving the protection of local historical and archaeological sites;

5.3.4 initiation of archeological excavations and restoration of important cultural sites;



5.3.5 conducting joint excavations, cross-border conferences, seminars and workshops;

5.3.6 predominant reproduction of folk music and dances typical for the individual destinations and interpretation during their live performance;

5.3.7 design and construction of new sites in the style of local cultural heritage.

6. EXECUTIVE MEASURES OF SUGGESTED ACTIONS

Identifying the key figures and undertaking steps to integrate them into the cross-border partnership network is the first stage in developing a sustainable tourist product and serving it effectively.

To achieve a sustainable tourist product and network operation in the cross-border area, the following prerequisites are required, which have already been implemented under the project:

- Description of the **cultural and ecological sites**, suitable for their inclusion in a sustainable tourist product;
- Description of the **commercial sites**, with potential for providing conditions for food and rest of the tourist flow;
- Attracting the attention of **local and regional public structures** responsible for the development and implementation of policies for sustainable development of the territory;
- Identification of the key figures related to the creation and offering of the tourist product and its gradual supplementation;
- Identification of **communication channels and mechanisms** of interaction and connection between stakeholders in the development and enforcement of tourism products in the cross-border area.

All this has been done so far and in itself it guarantees the preconditions for a good future work of the Network.

The key figures outside the representatives of the retail outlets/sites are generally divided into several groups:

- Regional and local authorities;
- Museums;
- Tourist information centers;
- Tour operators/travel agents;
- Carriers;
- State structures /governmental bodies/: RIEW, etc.
- NGOs and community centers;
- Media, etc.

The developed destinations under the Cultural Treasure House project list in detail the **cultural and ecological sites, museums, tourist centers and tourist structures in the municipalities, as well as the commercial sites** that can be used to serve the destinations. They are listed by name in



the Agreement and represent the main basis for the development of the future tourist product. After the identification of the key figures, steps were taken for their inclusion in the Network - workshops, talks were held and preliminary declarations were signed, registering the desire of the interested parties to join the Network. Four focus groups were also held to help discuss and adopt the most appropriate duties, responsibilities and benefits for the various members of the network. Additional meetings were then held to declare their final decision to sign the agreement, which provides the necessary contracting for cooperation and inclusion in the Cross-Border Partnership Network for the Development of Sustainable Tourism in the Cross-Border Territory. In parallel with the final partnership declarations, 'de minimis' declarations were also signed.

Of particular importance for the sustainability of the tourist product is the planning of approaches and consistency for their implementation in future work with the stakeholders, as well as their involvement as partners and members of the cross-border network in the development and implementation of the tourist product.

This result can be achieved by taking the following steps:

1. Involvement of some of the key partners in the information initiatives and in the current discussions of the problems in the field of tourism and the disclosure of its future potential;
2. Collection of up-to-date information about the available resources and sites, suitable for development of sustainable tourism on the cross-border territory;
3. Development of tourist products;
4. Building a Network and signing an Agreement;
5. Networking.

The creation of a sustainable Network is only possible on the basis of a broad representation of stakeholders. This process requires the precise identification of stakeholders and their long-term involvement in the system. The success of the sustainable development of tourist products depends to a large extent on **good communication between its members, on awareness and publicity**, which must be given a special place in the plan. For these reasons, it is necessary to provide conditions for ongoing information to the local population in the process of serving the destinations, encouraging stakeholders to take advantage not only of the web-sites of the two museums, project partners, but also of the sites of the network members. .

The identification of the communication channels and the connections between the members of the network will help to optimize the organization and to popularize the created tourist products to the maximum extent. This will be done mainly electronically.

This includes all activities and relationships related to the presentation of information to the media, citizens, national, regional and local structures and institutions, as well as other stakeholders to be involved in the event of opportunities at a later stage. To this end, it is necessary to use different **approaches and communication channels**, suitable for the transfer of information to the main target groups. These are mainly: **Websites, Internet, advertising materials: photos, leaflets, movies, presentations** and more. Particularly important for the sustainability of the network are the forms of work and mutual information such as conducting **workshops, trainings and establishing contacts with members of the tourist network by phone, fax, e-mail, Skype, Facebook** and others.



Conducting workshops, partnerships, seminars, exhibitions and expositions could create conditions for mutual information and coordination of efforts, for registration of problems and identification of new effective solutions. The collection, systematization and directing the information to the target groups through the use of modern approaches and information technologies is especially important for the efficiency of the work in the Network. That is why it is of great importance that the collected information is up-to-date, reliable, systematized and directed according to the needs of the potential tourists and the requirements of the members of the Network.

A particularly important condition in the process of work is to continue to involve *local and regional media*, which will ensure publicity of the campaign and information activities, and they will expand the social base and will attract the attention of more stakeholders.

The content and future implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Network must be in line with the following basic principles:

- **Transparency** - all activities must be widely promoted, in order to ensure full transparency for the general public.
- **Partnership** – The network should be built in close cooperation with the main stakeholders.
- **Communication, regarding the specific demands** – the information should be disseminated in a language, accessible to interested parties. The envisaged measures should be implemented taking into account the specific needs of the individual groups.

With the activation of the tourist flow in both destinations and the active involvement of the network members, it is necessary in the future to move to a second stage of the establishment of the network, which requires the development and creation of the following products:

- 6.1 **Charter of the Network**, regulating common for the destination requirements for quality and sustainability of the offered services, and in perspective also introduction of a system for voluntary certification of the tourist offer in the region;
- 6.2 **Consultation mechanism** within the partner network;
- 6.3 Support from and for the members of the Network for preparation and implementation of projects under the European programs and other external donors in the local community **for stabilization of employment**;
- 6.4 **Optimizing the destination management organization**, to be responsible for coordinating efforts for the sustainable development of tourism.
- 6.5 Development and defence before a donor program of a project proposal for **institutional strengthening** of the Destination Management Organization, which will ensure sustainability and resources for the preparation and implementation of the following programs:
 - **Monitoring program** with an annual public report in response to the accumulation of environmental and socio-cultural problems at the level of individual destinations;
 - **Program for seasonality management in tourism**, aimed at reducing the impact of seasonal fluctuations in tourism in the region;



- **Program for adaptation to climate changes**, which will identify the risks associated with climate change and the corresponding responses from the tourist sector.

6.6 Developing and enriching the created website for promotion of the destinations.

The accessibility and attractiveness of a tourist destination today depends largely on its presence in the information space. In this regard, it is necessary to carry out activities related to the promotion of destinations on the Internet, by maintaining a common for the region of the project tourist portal with links, photos and descriptions of tourist sites. For this purpose, the created and maintained website of the project will be used. Internet-online advertising allows with a relatively small budget to perform a set of influential activities in support of each of the destinations in the region:

- publishing banners in selected web-sites and in banner exchange networks;
- publishing advertising or PR articles in online media and portals;
- publishing information in thematic portals, magazines, classified sites, rankings;
- publishing up-to-date, user-provoking news and up-to-date events from the destinations;
- targeted indication of information through Internet search engines;
- use of thematic lists for sending mass messages by e-mail;
- indirect methods of advertising, such as: participation in social forums, publication of photos from destinations, etc .;
- providing access to advertising and popular movies about the destinations;
- creation and publication of an interactive tourist map, which should contain information about the main tourist attractions, routes, places for accommodation and food, sites of natural and cultural heritage in the territory of the destinations

6.7 Work Program

№	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION of actions	EXPIRY date	WHO is in charge
1.	Creating a project document of an Agreement of the Partnership Network	The document is a fundamental regulation on the principles of partnership of the Network, members, as well as on the most general requirements for the destinations for quality and sustainability of the services. To be signed after its discussion until the end of the project.	September 2021	RHM – Regional Historical Museum (RHM) – Haskovo and Kirklareli Regional Directorate of Culture and Tourism



2.	Developing a project for the Sustainable Development Plan	The Sustainable Development Plan will ensure the sustainability of the Network and will regulate the communication in the overall sustainable management of tourism in the region. Discussed during focus groups and workshops. Adopted at the Conference, which is held under the project.	September- October 2021	RIM (RHM) Haskovo and Kirklareli Regional Directorate of Culture and Tourism
3.	Organizing repeated visits of the applicants for joining the Network of the interested parties, for signing of final declarations for membership in the Network.	During the visits of the applicants for inclusion in the network and during the workshops, the Agreement Document of the Partnership Network and the Sustainable Development Plan will be presented and discussed. In this way, those who wish to become members of the Network from the potential partners will be finally identified and the developed drafts of the main documents will be edited.	September 2021	RIM (RHM) Haskovo and Kirklareli Regional Directorate of Culture and Tourism
4.	Organizing an InfoTour for Network members	The tour is held in order to get acquainted with the tourist opportunities in the different locations of the region by potential members of the Network and journalists so that they can get to know and promote them. To create additional destinations in the future including other combinations of the described sites.	September 2021	RIM (RHM) Haskovo and Kirklareli Regional Directorate of Culture and Tourism
5.	Coordination and management of the Network	Within the framework of the project activities, the Network will be established, which will be involved in coordinating	During the project period	All Network members



		actions for sustainable development of tourism in the region for a longer period.		
6.	Activation of all electronic sources of information for promotion of destination	Activating all websites and social networks supported by the members of the partner network. Maintaining constant electronic contacts with the members of the Network for servicing the tourist product.	During the project period	RIM (RHM) Haskovo and Kirklareli Regional Directorate of Culture and Tourism
7.	Ongoing support for the creation and operation of the new tourism product in the new destinations	Network members have to present products that meet the concept of sustainable tourism and to maintain and develop it.	During the project period	RIM (RHM) Haskovo and Kirklareli Regional Directorate of Culture and Tourism and the other museums
8.	Identification of appropriate programs for Institutional Strengthening of the Network	By developing and defending a project proposal to a donor program, a financial opportunity for sustainable functioning of the management structure of the two destinations must be provided.	During the project period	All Network members
9.	Development of projects for expansion of the destinations and the scope of the Network by its individual members	Development of separate projects to increase the quality of the tourist services, their scope and sustainability.	During the project period	All Network members
10.	Attracting local and regional media	In order to expand awareness, the mass media will be attracted by providing constant connections and exchange of information.	During the project period	All Network members
11.	Protecting all cultural sites from destruction and damages.	When servicing the tourist flow, all attempts to cause damage to cultural sites should be monitored and prevented.	During the project period	All Network members



12.	Working actively for the socialization of cultural and natural sites	Improving the access, advertising and public popularity of the main cultural and natural sites.	During the project period	All Network members
13.	Monitoring the observance of cleanliness and non-pollution of the cultural and natural sites included in the two destinations	The hygiene of the tourist sites, as well as the protection of the biodiversity are important requirements that must be observed during their visit by the tourists with whom the members of the Network are engaged.	During the project period	All Network members
14.	Development and expansion of the common website for destination promotion	Gradually expand and enrich the website created under the project for destination promotion.	During the project period	RIM (RHM) Haskovo and Kirklareli Regional Directorate of Culture and Tourism
15.	Transition to the second stage of the development of the Network	The second stage of Network development should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network Charter; • Consultation mechanism within the partnership network; • Support from and for the members of the Network for preparation and implementation of projects under the European programs and other external donors for the local community for stabilization of employment; • Optimization of the destination management organization; • Development and defence before a donor program of a project proposal for institutional strengthening of the Destination Management Organization 	January 2024	RIM (RHM) Haskovo and Kirklareli Regional Directorate of Culture and Tourism



		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of the following programs:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Monitoring program;- Program for seasonality management in tourism;- A program for adaptation to climate changes, which will identify the risks associated with climate change and the corresponding responses from the tourist sector.		
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