



CHRISTA - PGI00057
ACTION PLAN SUMMARY

SIBIU

Sibiu County Tourism Association

2018-2020

CHRISTA
Interreg Europe



2018 
EUROPEAN YEAR
OF CULTURAL
HERITAGE
#EuropeForCulture



1. Context

Sibiu County Tourism Association (SCTA) aims at developing and promoting tourism in the county of Sibiu, by supporting the drafting and the implementation of local, regional, national and European tourism development strategies, taking account of sustainable tourism principles. Therefore, per its mandate and per the central role it plays in the formulation of tourism policies at county level, SCTA has been directly involved in the drafting of Regional Operational Programme (ROP) 2014-2020, through its members within the public sector, as well as by collaborating with the Regional Development Agency (RDA) Centre.

2. Profile of the policy instrument

The Sibiu County Tourism Association has made it its mission to achieve a 5% increase of the number of visits to cultural sites financed through the **Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020**, thus supporting the *Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020, Priority axis 5: The improvement of the urban environment and the preservation, protection and sustainable exploitation of cultural heritage, Investment priority 5.1 – The preservation, protection, promotion and sustainable development of the natural and cultural heritage* through recommendations and suggestions for improvement and complementary measures for the development and promotion of innovative, sustainable and responsible tourism, including intangible heritage, through interpretation and digitisation.

Thus, IP 5.1 has a direct impact on the cultural and natural heritage, supporting its preservation, protection and deployment. 'At the same time, according to the Operational Programme, the implementation of this kind of actions will contribute to the preservation, protection and sustainable deployment of the cultural heritage, based on a sustainable approach, evenly distributed between the commercial and the environmental protection side, with major benefits for the local environment and communities.

From the viewpoint of the experiences of the resident population and of the tourists, they will appreciate more and choose those destinations that grant special attention to the environment, to the employees in the field and to the local communities, which will thus benefit from a significant improvement of their quality of life.'

Nevertheless, these principles are only partly found in the project scoring grid, which largely refers to waste management, to accessibility for all categories of users and to the correlation with local strategies and projects – not mentioning the need for a tourism development strategy or plan including the intended objective.

Consequently, funding focuses on interventions on buildings, equipment, also including digitisation and marketing activities – but for the singular objective.

3. Vision statement and goal



Sibiu 2020 - national leader in responsible and sustainable tourism.

A 5% increase in the number of visits to cultural sites financed through ROP 2014-2020.

4. Measures for the improvement of the public policy tool

Considering that ROP 2014-2020 is already under implementation, and that the call for projects for investment priority 5.1 closed on 25 November 2016 - at the level of the Centre Region, call coverage reaching 132.7%, as well as the multitude of factors and actors involved in the development of ROP 2014-2020, modifying the content of the current programme is a challenge that must be addressed carefully and responsibly, based on a thorough opportunity assessment.

In this context, potential contributions based on the assessment related to the present strategy and on the international experience gained through the CHRISTA project should rather focus on **an intermediary evaluation of the programme** and on **capitalizing the experiences** to date and, starting from these, on **the involvement in the programming process for the next period**.

The Action Plan includes an audit of the cultural resources influenced by public policy and an evaluation of their attractiveness for tourism, the capacity of tourism and associated infrastructure, the support for visitor accommodation and general travel trends impacting public policy (experiential tourism, sustainable tourism, bleisure tourism, culinary tourism, digitalisation and online reputation), a detailed description of visitor profile and of the main target markets. The plan tackles topics related to the notoriety and the attractiveness of the tourist destination where the cultural sites financed through ROP 2014-2020 are situated, SWOT and PESTEL analyses, as well as a diagnosis of challenges. A chapter is dedicated to the conclusions of the consultations with local actors, the local community, and the visitors, actors that should be permanently considered in view of consolidating the destination's participatory governance.

7 CULTURAL SITES will benefit from rehabilitation and improvement within the Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020 (the Fortified Evangelical Church in Sibiu, Cisnădie, Agnita, Șeica Mică, Miercurea Sibiului, Șaroș pe Târnavă and Ruja).

Once the works end, these churches will also be prepared for receiving visitors, as their promotion as tourist attractions is essential for the sustainability of the interventions.

When the planned works are completed, these fortified churches must be sustainably exploited, so that, due to advantages such as high notoriety or increased accessibility (each one of these monuments is situated in the central part of their area, close to numerous other amenities and facilities), they become "must see" objectives at county level. However, one challenge will be to also exploit these sites during works, when the monuments will be partially or fully closed.

5. ACTION PLAN



1. MEASURES TO INFLUENCE THE PUBLIC POLICY

The cultural sites need to be integrated as highlights in the cultural offer of the region and to be connected with the tourism sector.

At programme level

- ▶ An intermediate evaluation of the IP implementation, from the perspective of sustainable tourism - active involvement in the intermediary evaluation and revision process of ROP 2014-2020 - presenting a viewpoint on sustainable tourist exploitation of funded objectives.
- ▶ **Changes in programme management**
 - Including new evaluation criteria or reformulating existing criteria related to the projects' contribution to the development of sustainable tourism;
 - Introducing tourism strategies/plans in the list of evaluation criteria;
 - Including new types of activities in the category of eligible activities: cultural and creative activities aimed at the activation of rehabilitated objectives, innovative interpretation and guiding activities, etc;
 - Allowing objectives/their public spaces to be used temporarily for activations – enabling creative communities, through their own financial contribution amounting to a specific percentage, to transform degraded spaces (or to contribute to rehabilitation projects) and, in turn, to use those spaces for a certain period of time¹;
 - Including grant/financial tool systems to support the development of community, cultural and creative activities in the intervention area (depending on the specifics of the rehabilitated objective), thus supporting the activation of heritage objectives².
- ▶ Including the good practices and recommendations resulting from the CHRISTA project in the Action plan within the present Strategy, and promoting them so as to be included in the relevant county strategies;
- ▶ Involving relevant representatives of the Managing Authority of ROP and RDA Centre in the dissemination activities of the CHRISTA project;

¹ This suggestion is correlated to the proposal made by RDA Centre within the project CRE:HUB, based on the document Roadmap for enhancing Cultural and Creative Industries in Centru Region - Romania.

²Correlated to the proposal made by RDA Centre within the project CRE:HUB, on including the grant/financial tools systems to support the development of

- ▶ Presenting the relevant good practices and the recommendations resulting from the CHRISTA project during the events with beneficiaries of 5.1. , as well as the results of the implementation of local activities in the development process of the future Regional Operational Programme.

At local/regional level

- ▶ Supporting the financed objectives with examples of good practices from the activities of marketing, digitisation and interpretation;
- ▶ Supporting a higher number of visitors to the financed heritage objectives as follows: (1) promoting them through a thematic campaign and (2) through the cultural routes of each region, (3) by promoting the theme of fortified churches targeting the relevant target markets, according to the recommendations within the content and communication strategy and (4) by activating them through events;
- ▶ Developing public-private cooperation models for the sustainable management and marketing of heritage and for the implementation of the above-mentioned activities.

The implementation of such activities at a local level could constitute pilot-projects underpinning the contributions at programme level. In this context, the Romanian Evangelical Church A.C. and the Evangelical Parishes A.C. will be strategic partners of SCTA.

Players involved: ADR Centre, beneficiaries of the ROP 2014-2020 and of the new ROP

Timeframe: 2018-2020

Costs: 3000 euros

Funding sources: SCTA operating budget

creative districts and vicinities - attracting CCI companies and natural persons to certain areas of the city through lower rent prices in public, unused buildings; based on the document Roadmap for enhancing Cultural and Creative Industries in Centru Region - Romania.



2. CAPACITY BUILDING – POWERFULLY CONNECTED

- ▶ Run capacity-building workshops about sustainable cultural tourism (GP the Swedish model);
- ▶ Organise network events to facilitate cooperation among stakeholders and disseminate good practices (GP Veneto region DMO);
- ▶ Organisation of field visits and exchange of experiences at regional level;
- ▶ Organisation of an annual interdisciplinary conference (CHRISTA experts and partners will be invited);
- ▶ E-newsletter to share information and best practices and attract new partners;
- ▶ Organisation of formal or informal trainings (themes: interpretation of cultural heritage and digital skills – Interpret Europe guidelines);
- ▶ Volunteer programmes and internships for the cultural sites management and marketing;
- ▶ Technical assistance for the beneficiaries of the public policy and conclusion of partnership agreements.

Players involved: Beneficiaries of the ROP 2014-2020, local authorities, cultural, tourism and other interested stakeholders

Timeframe: 2018-2020

Costs: 15000 euros

Funding sources: SCTA budget

3. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ Develop innovative theme products and cultural routes adapted to the target markets and to the air connectivity efforts (GP Veneto region- pesca tourism, the Turaida Museum Reserve for the educational programmes);
- ▶ Develop cultural products within the European Cultural Tourism Year 2018 and Sibiu European Region of Gastronomy 2019 (GP Carnikava lamprey, the Catalan cuisine) ;
- ▶ Develop quality schemes for products and services including sustainability criteria;
- ▶ Partnership agreements with travel agencies and tour guides to sell the new products;
- ▶ 1 product manager within SCTA team;

Players involved: Beneficiaries of the ROP 2014-2020, local authorities, cultural, tourism and other interested stakeholders

Timeframe: 2018-2019

Costs: 20000 euros

Funding sources: SCTA budget, new projects, private contributions

Our core products

PEOPLE – locals, professionals and visitors



Routes

- Cultural routes-The cultural route of fortified churches
- Heritage routes, circuits and Local tours

Short escapades

- City Break
- Weekend in the rural areas
- Cultural events

Culture and nature activities

- Cultural experiences & hiking, biking and horse riding

Educational activities

- Workshops (during the restoration works)
- Summer universities for traditional crafts and creative industries
- School camps
- Specialised tours
- Educational activities for leisure

Gastronomy

- Food experiences
- Food events



4. COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION

- ▶ Development of a mobile application and a website user friendly and experience-driven (GP Venezia Nativa app, Central Macedonia augmented reality tools);
- ▶ Co-create content and cooperate with existing global online platforms (GB Burgas cooperation with Wikipedia);
- ▶ Authentic collection of shareable local stories (GP prismavg.se);
- ▶ Organisation of study trips for travel agencies and guides;
- ▶ Organisation of familiarization tours for media (TV, press, blogger, vlogger) to promote the new offers and products;
- ▶ Organisation of photo/video tours to document the new cultural offers and tourism products - - Made in Sibiu;
- ▶ #green getaway campaign;
- ▶ Creation of promotional materials;
- ▶ Social media campaigns;
- ▶ Development of treasure hunts using the new technologies;
- ▶ Attend at least 1 national and 1 international fair/year
- ▶ Organisation of a hackathon for cultural tourism;
- ▶ Create a network of ambassadors;
- ▶ Participate in national and international events;
- ▶ Engage in strategic partnerships.

Players involved:

ADR Centre, beneficiaries of the ROP 2014-2020, cultural and tourism stakeholders, ministry of tourism, ministry of culture, NGOs

Timeframe: 2018-2020

Costs: 50000 euros

Funding sources: SCTA budget, private contributions and new projects

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5. MONITORING the visitor economy, the sustainability of the destination and the progress of the Action Plan

The expertise provided by the International Center of Studies on Tourism Economics (Veneto Region) during the staff exchange programme gave an overall view of the importance of relevant indicators to shape development and marketing strategies for competitive and sustainable tourism destinations. Riga University inspired about the use of big data.

- ▶ Inventory of data sources (online and offline) and development of new measurement methods ;
- ▶ Data collection and analysis: 1) number of visitors at the cultural sites financed by ROP 2014-2020; 2) profile of the visitors; 3) contribution of sustainable tourism to society; 4) E-reputation analysis.
- ▶ Publication of the annual report at the beginning of the following year;
- ▶ Staff qualification and trainings.

Players involved:

- The cultural and tourism stakeholders provide qualitative and quantitative information
- National Institute for Statistics provides statistical data
- Lucian Blaga University has the role to provide methodology improvements
- Local authorities provide information about special tax collection and the use of public funds for cultural heritage protection and promotion
- Other public institutions provide information: Ministry of tourism, Ministry of culture, Sibiu airport, environment agency, employment agency
- The managing authority benefits from accurate data

Timeframe: 2018-2020

Costs: 5000 euros

Funding sources: SCTA annual budget

New projects for exhaustive studies

Date: Sibiu, June 2018

Signature:

Alin Chipăilă, President



