

Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform

INTERIM REPORT

A. Reporting period: March 2018 – December 2019

B. Interim reports:

- Presentation on CCIC 2019 (11-13.12.2019, Vienna)
- 6 weeks prior meeting of WG 2020 (dates tbc)

C. Final Report

- 8 weeks prior meeting of CCIC 2020 (dates tbc)

D. STAFF

CSTC_RO

- Official representative institution(s) as per partnership agreement between
Ministry of Tourism
Brasov County Council
- Number of staff – **5**
- List of staff (names/functions)
Alina Szasz – Public Manager Brasov County Council
Alina Negoescu – Councillor Brasov County Council
Silviu Zeleniuc – Councillor Ministry of Tourism
Octavian Arsene - Councillor Ministry of Tourism
Roxana Niculescu – Councillor Ministry of Tourism
- Tasks allocated
 - Coordinator
 - Communication officer
 - Financial Officer

CSTC_PL

- Official representative institution(s)
Carpathian Euroregion, Poland
- Number of staff **2**
- List of staff (names/functions)
Dawid Lasek - Vice-President of the Board of the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion, Poland
Monika Wędrychowicz – Association of the Carpathian Euroregion, Poland
- Tasks allocated
 - Coordinator
 - Communication officer

CSTC_UA

- a. Official representative institution **REGIONAL TOURISM ORGANIZATION OF ZAKARPATTIA** as per UKRAINE NTTTF meeting minutes 22.08.2017
- b. Number of staff - **5**
- c. List of staff (names/functions)
 - Valentyn Voloshyn**
 - Anzhelika Klayzner**
 - Iryna Shchoka (EWS)**
 - Vasyl Fomenko**
 - Oksana Serdiuk**
- d. Tasks allocated
 - Coordinator **Valentyn Voloshyn**
 - Communication officer **Anzhelika Klayzner**
 - Project officer **Iryna Shchoka (EWS)**
 - Financial Officer **Vasyl Fomenko**
 - Liaison Ministry of Economic Development **Oksana Serdiuk**, head of tourism and resorts Dept, Ministry of Economic development and trade.

E. Volunteers:

- a. Number of volunteers - **2**
- b. List of volunteers (names/institutions/period of stay)
 - **Oleksandr Bursanov**, NGO Carpathian Trails coordinator
 - **Andriy Ginkul**, NTO Ukraine, **2016-2017**
- c. Tasks allocated and ToR
 - **ongoing work over the development of the common Carpathian system of trailblazing**
 - **development of the legal framework for RTO Zakarpattia functioning 2016-2017 as CSTC-Uzhhorod; development of the winning project proposal**
- d. Call for volunteers – posted on ETE, Carpathian Convention website, Parties – also remote volunteers with specifically assigned tasks)

F. Overall budget for CSTP operation

CSTC_RO

- a. Ministry of Tourism
- b. County of Brasov
- c. Voluntary contributions
- d. Generated projects

CSTC_PL

- a. Ministry of Tourism
- b. Woj. Podkarpackie
- c. Voluntary contributions
- d. Generated projects

CSTC-UA

- a. Ministry of Economic Development and Trade **0**
- b. Zakarpattia Oblast **0**
- c. Voluntary contributions **0**
- d. Generated projects: 2 projects - one already winning and awarded. Budget for the CSTC-Uzhhorod approx. EUR 71.000 for 18 months (incl. 5 staff, CC WG ST meeting, international event, webpage, publicity). The Ministry of Regional Development of Ukraine signed the respective Agreement with Zakarpattia regional state administration. Based on the Memorandum between Zakarpattia regional state administration and RTO Zakarpattia, the grant agreement between them is expected to be signed in Q1 2019.

G. Work programme 2018-2020

• Meetings of the CSTP

25th - 26th January 2018, Ministry for the Environment of the Slovak Republic; Elaboration of joint work programme and indicators for the 3 CSTCs for 2018-2020

MEETINGS OF THE CSTP

25th - 26th January 2018

**Ministry for the Environment
Slovak Republic**

**Tourism fair Slovakiatour
Bratislava**



- ❖ Joint **work programme and indicators** for the 3 CSTCs for 2018- 2020 years
- ❖ Joint **reporting format** to WG Sustainable Tourism and Carpathian Convention Implementation Committee (CCIC)
- ❖ Joint **communication strategy**
- ❖ Content and management of the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Platform's website (<http://cstp.center/>), managed by the European Wilderness Society
- ❖ Further up-date of the Database on the Sustainable Tourism in the Carpathians <http://www.ceeweb.org/stcdb/>
- ❖ Update on current and planned projects for implementing the Carpathian Sustainable Tourism Strategy
- ❖ Effective implementation of a Carpathian Brand



MEETINGS OF THE CSTP

22– 23 March 2018

Association of the
Carpathian Euroregion

Slovak Republic,
Lešnica, Chata Pieniny



METHODOLOGY Place Brand Trigger

Model of place brand implementation

1. Establishment of DMO
2. Development of the Carpathian key of experiences
 1. Development of flagship products
 2. Marketing communication
 3. Commercialization of the offer



- Activities of Work Programme achieved

ACTIONS FROM COUNTRY ACTION PLAN

Act. 1 Initiate destination and/or country specific tourism product development (e.g. rural tourism, slow tourism, heritage tourism, ecotourism in protected areas, spa tourism, dark sky parks, social tourism and handicapped tourism), focusing on all seasons

CSTC-RO:

In 2019, following the evaluation process, the Ministry of Tourism together with the Ministry of Environment, Ecotourism Association of Romania and National Institute for Research and Development Romania recognized the Țara Dornelor area as the 5th ecotourism destination in Romania.

Act.4 Set principles and develop guidelines on sustainable tourism infrastructure and activities

CSTC-RO:

ThreeT - Interreg Europe

June 2018 – November 2022; Budget: 1.892.764 eur

<https://www.interregueurope.eu/threet/>

1. Livorno Province Livorno Italy – Lead partner
2. Tuscany Region Florence Italy
3. Regional Council of Jyväskylä Finland Central Finland
4. Planning Authority Floriana Malta
5. **Kujawsko-Pomorskie Torun Poland Voivodeship** 186.275 EUR
6. Local Government of Santa Cruz Spain the island of Tenerife de Tenerife
7. **Brasov County Brasov Romania Council** 184.511 EUR
8. **Self-Government Dunántul Hungary. Office of Vas County** 182.871 EUR
9. Regional Giessen Germany Management Central Hessen GmbH



Three T
ThemaXc Trail Trigger



Make "thematic trails" sustainable eco-tourist means for enhancing protected, accessible and visible territorial natural and cultural assets. Facilitating: **inter-modality; human-powered ("green" or "soft") mobility; asset visibility** - 3 key-factors leading to the successful development and sustained use and maintenance of trails, ultimately triggering territorial development.

Main benefits for the participating regions (CSTP) are:

- ❖ Public accessibility and forms of sustainable enhancement of cultural and natural heritage improved
- ❖ New practices about green mobility, inter-modality and innovative information adopted
- ❖ Effective system for monitoring the Action Plan to assess the actual influence of its actions on regional development strategies
- ❖ Increased competence and skills of partner staff and key-stakeholders.



The Romanian Ministry of Tourism has elaborated the National Ecotourism Development Initiative, approved by government decision no. 358 of May 30, 2019. The work continues with establishing the Action Plan for Ecotourism which will have to be finalised in the next 2 years.

Regarding investments, the Romanian Ministry of Tourism has prepared a government decision no. 10 of February 19, 2019 for establishing measures regarding the financing of investments in tourism and amending some normative acts.

Ministry of Tourism is part of the RAMSAT project "Revitalization of Disadvantaged Areas and Mountain Areas through Sustainable Alternative Tourism" together with Rășinari City Hall and the Development Agency Region Center. The main objective of the RAMSAT project, funded by the Interreg Europe 2014-2020 program, is to improve the implementation of regional development policies and programs, in particular investments and jobs in the field of sustainable tourism.



Act.5 Support rural tourism which is maintaining traditional land use (e.g. beekeeping, food production) Linking the activities of Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Development – are we maintaining traditional land use?

- *identify relevant documents*
- *identify relevant projects*
- *identify gaps and communicate to responsible bodies*
- *upload documents on the homepage*

CSTC-RO:

From 2018, producers, farmers and beekeepers who carry out their production activity in the mountain area can promote their food with the "mountain product" label on their products, based on a Romanian Government Decision that regulates the institutional framework and some measures regarding the conditions of use of the mention of "mountain product". Products must comply with sanitary veterinary rules and can be easily recognized by the consumer. On the other hand, consumers can be informed about the importance of biological quality and health guarantees of "mountain food", which will increase the demand for such products (a measure implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture through the Mountain Zone Agency, based in Vatra Dornei). A Best Practice Guide on the Right of Use of the "Mountain Product" label and a National Mountain Products Register have been developed in 2018.

Act.6 Support the establishment of regional Carpathian touristic (destination) brands contributing to the preservation of landscape character and tangible/intangible cultural heritage, possibly connected to a Carpathian brand

CSTC-RO:

Attendance of the CC WG Cultural Heritage in Budapest between 04 - 05.04.2018.

CSTC-PL:

Ongoing implementation of the **Carpathia Brand** Assumptions:

- ✓ work on the preparation of a basket of tourism products as ready-made sales packages.
- ✓ presentation of the Carpathia brand and the hiking tourist offer within the first edition of the Young Explorers' Academy during the 10th edition of the Subcarpathian Kaleidoscope of Travel.
- ✓ conducting promotional and marketing campaigns, including the presentation of the Carpathian Brand "Carpathia" and hiking tourism offers as part of the third edition of "Euroregionalne Dni Jakubowe" which took place on July 20, 2019 in Nowosielce in the Przeworsk Commune and participation in Open Days of European Funds in Stalowa Wola on May 11, 2019;
- ✓ creation of the event of the Carpathian Brand "Carpathia" - Agrobieszczady in Lesko, which took place on July 28, 2019 as the Tourism, Forestry and Local Product Fairs, the next

edition is scheduled for 1-2 August 2020. The Association of the Carpathian Euroregion Poland is a co-organizer of the event;

- ✓ study visit for representatives from Chinese travel agencies organized by the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion Poland from 4th to 18th of October 2019 together with local authorities and partners from Poland and Slovakia. The package that was presented was based on the flagship attributes of the "CARPATHIA" Brand: authenticity, experience of space, multiculturalism and humility towards nature. At the invitation of the Association, 10 tour operators from the Guangdong province of south-eastern China took part in the visit. Within 15 days, participants of the expedition visited over 50 places and travelled almost 3000 km. From Rzeszów to Košice, through Jarosław, Przemyśl, Solina, Muczne, Lesko, Zagórz, Sanok, Krosno, Jasło, Biecz, Sękowa, Uście Gorlickie, Bardejov, Prešov, the guests rated the attractiveness of the "CARPATHIA" Brand in terms of the Chinese market, which is a very promising source of a new volume of tourists in the Carpathians. They learned and experienced the wealth of nature and Carpathian culture. They not only admired the museum collections, historic churches, but also followed tourist trails and could taste regional cuisine. Thanks to the cooperation of ACEP self-governments member and partners from Poland and abroad, we were able to prepare a 14-day-visit programme.



Art.7 Support the development of cross-border tourism cooperation, favorable visa regime where applicable, and linking of trails-implementation to joint cross-border tourism products

CSTC-RO:

The project **Danube Ecotourism**, co-financed through Interreg Romania-Bulgaria, Priority Axis 5: An efficient region with an overall budget of 749423.85 EUR, finished in august 2019.

It aimed at increasing the capacity of CBA public administration and civil society to identify measures for eco-tourism development, find EU financing sources, draft and implement successfully the resulting cross-border projects. To support this capacity building, the project aimed also at better integrating local administrations into EUSDR relevant networks of administrations and experts.

In order to achieve these objectives the project organized 6 series of trainings as the core activities to train local human resources – the Danube Officers. Practical applications of the trainings was done during familiarization trips and by creating 10 ecotourism products, while an ecotourism conference and landscape contest brought the CBA and the best ecotourism experts and landscape planners into closer contact. A series of communication and visibility actions drew the attention of the general public and of other EUSDR areas to CBA ecotourism potential and its new Danube Officers.

The result was the development of a cross-border network of local public administrators able to steer the cross-border development of sustainable tourism at a cross border and Danube level: a network of Danube Officers as described by the EUSDR Annual Forum in Ulm in 2015 – that has the tools to implement projects for eco-tourism development in the CBA.

The Ministry of Tourism (MT) as partner was involved in all the 18 activities of the project which involved: participation and preparation of trainings, participation in study visits, press conferences, web content development - platform, identifying associations of travel agencies and operators and contacting them to involve in the process of validating cross-border ecotourism products. At the same time, MT was responsible for the implementation of the activity 13: *Creation of an informal „Natural landscape protection partnership” and cross-border landscape contest.*

Romanian Ministry of Tourism organised the **Consultative Forum of European Cultural Routes**, which took place in Sibiu and Cisnădie, between 02-04.10.2019, where proposals were also presented for new cultural routes, including the **Transhumanity Route** (a Carpathian Route from Romania to Poland).



Romanian Ministry of Tourism approved 5 sections of tourist routes from **Via Transilvanica** - the latest project of the Tășuleasa Social Foundation, which will cover 950 km in the

Carpathians of Romania, from Putna, to Drobeta-Turnu Severin and will cross Transylvania through 8 counties.



CSTC-PL:

Submission of 5 microprojects (3 - lead partner, 2 - project partner) under the second call of the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020. The projects' subject matters include hiking, spa towns, World War I fortifications, legends and Carpathian cuisine.

Ongoing activities related to the establishment of the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation.

Development of a model tourism product (cross-border, Polish-Slovak) taking into account the preferences of hikers and presenting advantages of the border region. Developed as part of the project "Hiking without backpack - use and promotion of cultural and natural heritage resources of the border region" a model tourism product „Hiking without backpack” assumes cooperation of 6 to 8 hotel (accommodation) facilities, which are connected in a trail in a form of loop across the border region. The product consists in hiking from the first facility along the loop for the number of days corresponding to the number of facilities on the trail. Tourists departing of the first object leave there their luggage and a car. The owner of the facility carries luggage or, if necessary, delivers the car to the next facility. This allow the tourists to know natural and cultural attractions in a convenient way. In addition, there were conducted trainings for individuals and institutions involved in tourism development activities, the offer and services of hotel and catering facilities were adjusted to the standards of hiking.

Conducting joint Polish-Slovak promotional and marketing campaigns including: participation in fairs in Berlin, Poznań and Bratislava, production of a promotional video, publication of press materials in national and international industry press, publication of a guide with a map

and an image folder, newsletter, organization of study tour for famous European bloggers in the field of hiking; conducting the Carpathian Cooperation Forum (discussion panels with the participation of Polish, Slovak and European experts); conducting 2 events promoting hiking across the border region (concert, stands with a tourism offer of border region, quests, tasting regional products).

On 7.09.2018 in Ustrzyki Dolne, a special Functional Cross-border Development Area under the name "Kremenaros" was established within the framework of the Carpathian Euroregion. As part of the signed declaration, representatives of Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine expressed, among others, the will to create the development strategy, structures and effective mechanisms supporting development cooperation of all interested partners from the areas around the tripoint borders of the Republic of Poland, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine at the Kremenaros (Krzemieniec/Kremenec) summit in the Carpathians. The registered office of FCDA "Kremenaros" was established in Ustrzyki Dolne on the territory of the Republic of Poland, and the coordination of further work and the construction of institutional facilities for FCDA "Kremenaros" was entrusted to the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion Poland with registered office in Rzeszów. In total, the declaration was signed by 3 representatives of Poland, 8 Ukraine and 1 Slovakia.

Beginning the implementation of the "**EtnoCarpathia**" project (Interreg V-A Poland-Slovakia 2014-2020 Programme), aimed at increasing the attractiveness and visibility of the Polish-Slovak border region through the use of cultural heritage resources. In cooperation with the Ethnographic Museum in Rzeszów (PL) and the Municipal Cultural Centre in Vranov nad Topľou (SK), the project assumes the following series of activities related to the following ethnographic groups of the borderland: Polish Uplanders (Pogorzans), Lemkos, Boykos, former inhabitants of contemporary Šariš, Zemplín and Zamagurie. The result of the project will be the creation of a new tourism product - "EtnoCarpathia" based on the heritage of selected Carpathian cultures. This product will be developed under the joint, already existing international Carpathian brand Carpathia and will offer tourists to learn about the authenticity and multiculturalism of the Polish-Slovak part of the Carpathians, diverse crafts and unique traditions of this area. The finished tourism product will fit into the latest trends in tourism, positively affecting the tourist value of the region; (coordinator - Dawid Lasek);

On 07.10.2019 in Ożenna near Krempna the Cross-Border Functional Area (CFA) "**Low Beskids**" was established. The will to cooperate within the initiative was expressed by partners from Poland and Slovakia. The territorial scope of the CFA "Low Beskids" includes on the Polish side: Krosno, Jasło and Gorlice Counties, Krosno City with county rights, and on the Slovak side: Svidnik, Stropkov and Bardejov Districts. The Association of the Carpathian Euroregion Poland is responsible for the coordination of activities on the Polish side, and the Association of the Carpathian Euroregion Slovakia-North together with the town of Svidnik is responsible for the Slovak side. Ultimately, the "Low Beskids" CFA have to be a model example of the cross-border use of innovative development mechanisms. It will also be a "laboratory" for pilot implementation of the Carpathian Brand "CARPATHIA" using the potential of the indicated area.



Art.9 Ensure participatory involvement (e.g. workshops, online consultations) of local communities in regional product development. Design a pilot area and develop a methodology for participatory involvement of local communities

Art. 10 Develop programs for promoting and funding the preservation of local cultural and natural heritage through tourism

CSTC-RO:

Romanian Ministry of Tourism organised the European Destinations of Excellence contest in 2019, under the theme health and relaxation tourism. The winners were Tăuții Măgherăuș – Maramures County, Albac –Alba Iulia County, Figa Baths Park - Bistrita Nasaud County, Harghita County and Ocna Șugatag – Maramures County, all situated in the Carpathians.



Art.11 Establish the Sustainable Tourism Task Force as part of the Sustainable Tourism Working Group of the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians

Art.12 Enhance the national coordination structure and encourage establishment of management centers on sustainable tourism, if applicable, in the Carpathians

Art.16 Develop programs for promotion of local cultural heritage tourism in the Carpathian countries taking into account the specificity and diversity of all the regions and sub-Carpathian areas

CSTC-RO:

Conclusion of the partnership between the SKV Association, Sibiu County Council and the European Ramblers Association, for organizing the Eurorando event in Sibiu, between 26.09-03.10.2021. Eurorando is an event initiated by the European Ramblers Association, which is organized in different mountain areas of Europe, where thousands of hikers meet to cross the mountain trails in the area. In Sibiu are expected 3000 hikers from all over Europe, to cross mountain routes in the Southern Carpathians, in the area of Făgăraș, Lotru and Cindrel Mountains.

Support for the organization by the SLGM, in Brasov of the Congress Union of International Mountain Leader Associations (UIMLA) - world forum for hiking guides, which took place between 7 and 10 November. 2019.



Art.17 Enhance and support trans-boundary cooperation

CSTC-RO:



Green Pilgrimage Supporting Natural and Cultural Heritage is an European project, financed by the INTERREG EUROPE programme, which aims to create a network of pilgrimage routes at European level that will promote a better intercultural and inter-religious understanding and raise awareness about the history and the common cultural and natural heritage.

The project partnership includes seven institutions in five European countries (The United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, Italy, and Romania). The National Institute for Research in Development in Tourism (INCDT) is the Romanian partner in the project.

Under this project, it has been created a network of stakeholders which supports its development. It consists of: the Ministry of Tourism, the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Romanian Gendarmerie ('Jandarmeria Română'), Harghita County Council, Suceava County Council, Neamț County Council, Iași County Council, 'Via Mariae' Association, the National Forestry Authority Romsilva ('Regia Națională a Pădurilor «Romsilva»'), the Administration of «Vânători Neamț» Natural Park etc.

Up to date, a series of working meetings have been organized at national level with the view to increasing the degree of information and awareness of the target group on the importance of pilgrimage tourism, on the benefits and the regional economic impact of this form of tourism, as well as on and the importance of developing one or more national pilgrimage routes.

During these meetings, speakers presented examples related with the international experience gained, such as the good practices resulting under the project, and discussed the possibilities of developing a pilgrimage route in Romania.

Discussions focused on the extension of the 'Via Mariae' route, an international pilgrimage route dedicated to the Holy Virgin, which makes the connection between several important international pilgrimage sites: Mariazell (Austria), Czestochowa (Poland), Medjugorje (Bosnia-Herzegovina), and Șumuleu-Ciuc (Romania). Also, the partners proposed its extension aimed at including the Orthodox monasteries in Neamț and Suceava counties and the city of Iași into the route. So far, local actors have identified the trail of the future pilgrimage route.

The activities in which the Romanian Ministry of Tourism has taken part include the following:

- ✓ It has contributed to the identification of the good practices related to the development of pedestrian and pilgrimage routes in Romania and it has uploaded a good practice in the 'INTERREG EUROPE Policy Learning' platform; this good practice focused on 'The economic and the social development of the local communities, based on the religious monuments included in UNESCO heritage';
- ✓ It has taken part in all the meetings organized at national level under the project and in three inter-regional study visits in Suceava (2017), Santiago de Compostela (2018), Norfolk (2019);
- ✓ It has contributed to the development of the national Action Plan by integrating certain good practices disseminated by the other partners;
- ✓ It has concluded a collaboration protocol with the National Forestry Authority meant to support this project through the marking of the routes belonging to the forest ranges. Also, it will conclude protocols with the regional public authorities in the counties of Neamț, Suceava, and Iași for the extension of the 'Via Mariae' route;
- ✓ It will be involved in the implementation of the Action Plan (e.g. Establishing regulations and policies for the homologation of tourist tracks other than those situated in the mountain area; extending the 'Via Mariae' route).



The **IMPACT - Innovative Models for Protected Areas: exChange and Transfer** funded by the INTERREG EUROPE program, aims to introduce lessons learned from exchanges of international experience in new strategies in which the conservation measures are combined with measures regarding the sustainable development of the protected areas.

Partners from six countries (Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Lithuania and Romania) and a large variety of protected natural areas throughout Europe are included in the project. The Romanian partner within the project is the National Institute of Research and Development in Tourism.

Under this project, at national level, it has been created a network of stakeholders which supports its development. It consists of: Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of European Funds, Ministry of Environment, National Forest Administration-Romsilva, Vânători Neamț Natural Park Administration, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Administration, Rodnei Mountains

National Park Administration, Iron Gates Natural Park Administration, Tara Hategului Dinosaur Geopark.

Stakeholder meetings, interregional events and study visits contributed to the exchange of experience between regions and partners, presenting numerous good practices identified in different areas, such as: sustainable tourism in protected areas, management of the Natura 2000 network, green infrastructure, awareness raising on biodiversity conservation and capacity building of staff and stakeholders.

The first phase of the project was completed with an action plan for each country / region involved, by integration some of the good practices provided by the other partners. Among the actions included were: improvement of the perception of the local population towards the protected areas; awareness raising among young people about regional biodiversity; development of the visitor infrastructure of the protected areas; development of ITC applications for self-guided tours in protected areas; development of ecotourism in protected areas and in their surroundings; management of tourist flows in protected areas. Currently, the implementation of the action plan (the second phase of the project) is underway.

The Ministry of Tourism, as member of the national stakeholder group, participating in two meetings, in Bucharest and Hateg, helping to identify the national best practices and the actions that should be introduced in the Action Plan.



The **Transdanube Pearls- Network for Sustainable Mobility along the Danube** project is co-financed from the European Regional Development Fund, through the INTERREG DANUBE Transnational Cooperation Program 2014 - 2020. The main objective of the project is: to develop the Danube regions by ensuring a viable, socially equitable mobility for the visitors and inhabitants of the respective areas by developing multimodal, environmentally friendly and efficient transport systems and sustainable tourism services.

The project will establish a network of tourist destinations engaged in the development of sustainable mobility in tourism. As part of this network, the visibility of the destinations will increase by offering visitors unique opportunities to travel along the Danube with sustainable means of transport. It offers to visitors the opportunity to access Pearls without using the personal car but only the existing combination offered by the mobility services.

In Romania, the region established as a "pearl" within the project covers the distance between the city of Orșova and the commune of Berzasca. These two territorial administrative units are part of the only counties in Romania that are located on the Danube and have territories included in both the disadvantage mountain area and the Carpathian Convention.

Within the project, professional training courses will be organized, which will provide local and regional stakeholders the necessary capacity to develop future services in the field of sustainable transport and tourism. The knowledge gained during the courses will be enriched by the experiences gained during the development of the information and mobility services

resulting from the project - mobility services that will contribute to overcoming the deficiencies and will improve their quality to and within the tourist destinations.

Also, with a view to improving access to information on existing mobility services, the focus will be on setting up regional mobility centers, which can operate both within existing tourist information centers and as shopping stopping points (en one-stop-shops). The information platforms on international mobility and tourism will allow tourists access large information about the possibilities of traveling in the regions along the Danube without using a personal car. The specific offers of sustainable mobility in the field of tourism will offer attractive packages for visitors who prefer to follow a certain route.

The project partnership consists of public administrations and local authorities from 9 countries Austria, Germany, Croatia, **Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia**, Bulgaria, Slovenia. The Ministry of Tourism was Associate Strategic Partner of the National Institute for Research Development in Tourism and attended to the official opening meeting of the project. The ministry also had discussion with european partner about the elaboration of the national cycling strategy.

Art.19 Support the establishment of destination management organizations (DMO) in key touristic areas (if applicable) to implement sustainable tourism management schemes with local stakeholders

CSTC-RO:

The Romanian Government adopted in 2018 the legislation to approve the procedure for setting up, running, accrediting and re-accrediting the destination management organizations (DMO's).

The Romanian Ministry of Tourism, organised in Brasov, between 2-5.07.2019, an informative mission about the functioning of the Destination Management Organizations in Romania, in partnership with the European Tourism Commission and the OECD. The meeting was attended by guests from 21 counties in the country, representatives of professional tourism associations, Regional Development Agencies and local authorities. The objective of the meeting was the elaboration by the OECD experts of a manual for the operation of the future DMO's in Romania.



Romanian Ministry of Tourism certified in 2019 two new ecotourism destinations: Tara Dornelor and Tusnad.



Art.21 Establish and support a Carpathian Coordination Platform, if applicable and based on available funding

CSTP

The creation of the CSTP is mentioned in Annex 1 - milestones of CSTP.

The CSTP is guided and monitored by the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism (WG Sustainable Tourism) and the Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention. However no agreement is signed yet between the centres and the CSTCs as requested also by by the 2017 CCIC *“The Secretariat will prepare draft agreements and share it with the CCIC members by the end of January 2017”* and by the COP 5 also *“requests the Secretariat to elaborate collaborative agreements with the centers”*;

The agreement must be a basis for operational functions of the CSTP with information about each Centre, indicative list of possible roles / responsibilities / tasks and projects, will be signed by all the Centres and the Secretariat. It will include functions, operations and formal

governance to give the proper authority for the Centres to monitor the implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and its Strategy.

CSTP with CSTC_RO and CSTC_PL made steps towards collecting data on the level of implementation. However, due to lack of dedicated personnel and funding or frequent changes in governments, the activity of the Centres is insufficient to provide a clear image of the degree of the implementation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and its Strategy.

Art.25 Enhance international cooperation of entities responsible for sustainable tourism development in individual Parties

CSTC_PL

Implementation of the project "Hiking without backpack - use and promotion of cultural and natural heritage resources of the border region" (Interreg V-A Poland-Slovakia 2014-2020 Programme), aimed at increasing the attractiveness of the Polish-Slovak border region through the use of cultural and natural heritage resources, mainly in terms of the development of hiking



1. „Hiking without a backpack” – use and promotion of cultural and natural heritage of the border region

Partners:

1. ASSOCIATION OF THE CARPATHIAN EUROREGION POLAND
2. ASSOCIATION OF THE CARPATHIAN EUROREGION SLOVAKIA-NORTH

- ❖ aimed at increasing the attractiveness of the Polish-Slovak border region through the use of cultural and natural heritage resources, mainly in terms of the development of hiking

SOURCE OF FINANCING: European Regional Development Fund
Cross-border Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A Poland-Slovakia 2014-2020

IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD:
01.03.2017-30.10.2018

TOTAL PROJECT VALUE:
657 072 EUR (100%)



Implementation of the "**EtnoCarpathia**" project (Interreg V-A Poland-Slovakia 2014-2020 Programme). In 2020, a cataloguing of cultural resources of seven selected cultures of the PL-SK border region is planned. As a result of the cataloguing, a report will be created together with a knowledge base. One of the main elements of the report will be the cataloging of resources based on cultural areas (e.g. design, cooking, spiritual culture, craftsmanship, music). Based on the cataloguing report, a strategy of 7 sub-brands forming 1 tourism product will be prepared. Then two publications will be issued. One of them will be of a scientific nature, addressed to people and institutions related to ethnography of the border. The second publication will be of a promotional nature and will be issued as an image album covering identified and cataloged brand cultural areas. In addition, handicraft workshops and information meetings will be held.



Art.26 Implement campaign, especially in the Carpathian part of the country, to raise the awareness among local population of sustainable tourism and the Carpathian Convention

CSTC_RO

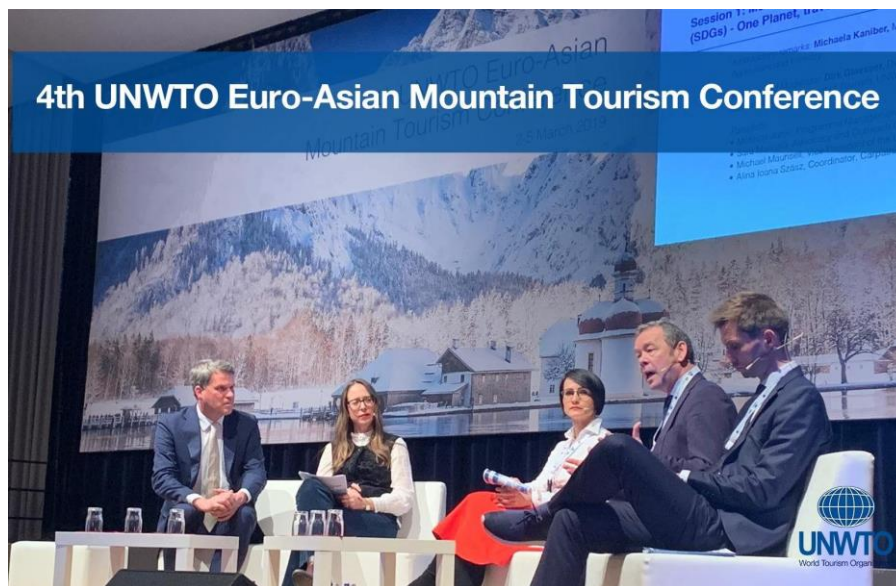
CSTC_RO has undertaken different Carpathian promotion activities by attending events with a panel on Carpathian Convention and organizing info trips for opinion leaders and journalists:

- ✓ Info trip, organized in July 2018, for journalists from several European countries (including Poland) in Brasov, Bran and Sibiu, with a visit to Transfăgărașan. The visit was organized to promote the Romanian Presidency of the EU Council in 2019.
- ✓ Info trip organized for 02-04 November 2018 for the leaders and opinion formers from the country, participants in the symposium "Cultural Patrimony of the Carpathian Gate", an

event that aimed at preserving and developing the Brasov immaterial cultural heritage, at the confluence of the Ardeal and Muntenia provinces - the mobile and immaterial cultural heritage represented by the traditional costume from the Bran-Moieciu-Fundata area (eco-tourism destination Carpathians Gate), artefacts, local crafts from the textile arts. Event participants visited traditional museums in the area, popular costumes and authentic household items, traditional houses, craft workshops, leisure areas in nature.

- ✓ Info trip for tourist guides organized in Bistrita-Nasaud county, 26-28.11.18, for the promotion of Colibita resort, rural tourism, villages in the Rodna and Călimani Mountains, Sângiorz Băi spa resorts, traditional folk crafts and crafts, museums and Via Transilvanica.
- ✓ Promoting sustainable active tourism in the Carpathians by co-organizing the Carpathian MTB Epic Event. The event consisted in a world-class bicycle competition, an ambitious mountain-bike cycling project in Romania, which brought to the start athletes of world caliber and amateur cyclists from 21 countries. <http://carpathianmtb.ro/multimedia/>
- ✓ Infotrip organised by Romanian Ministry of Tourism, in partnership with TTF and Direct Airport, in the counties of Brasov and Covasna, for the members of the incoming commission of the National Association of Tourism Agencies, who participated in the Transylvania Tourism Fair, Brasov 2019, in the period 22-24.03.2019.
- ✓ Participation of the Romanian Ministry of Tourism in four outdoor / sporting events in the series of MTB camps organized by the local partner The North Quest: Village Warrior Camp – Apprentice, Warrior, Road, Women, organized in May 2019, in the Ecotourism Destination EcoMaramures –Mara-Cosău-Creasta Cocoşului in Maramureş County.
- ✓ Infotrip organised by Romanian Ministry of Tourism in Sibiu County for the participants present at the Consultative Forum of the European Cultural Routes, in Sibiu, between 2-4.10.19.
- ✓ Infotrip organised by Tara Dornelor Association for the members of the ecotourism association, to present the new ecotourism destination Tara Dornelor.
- ✓ Presentation of the Protocol on Sustainable Tourism and it's Strategy during the project **Cooperation of V4+ rural tourism actors through social and digital innovation** implementation, in 05 February 2019, Cserkút, Hungary

- ✓ 02-05.03.2019 4th UNWTO Euro-Asia Mountain Tourism Conference on Mountain Tourism – Berchtesgaden, Germania



- ✓ Attendance of the Regional Development Agency campaign for the next programming period to identify the needs for projects in Region Center of Romania



- ✓ In the period 22-23.10.2019 during the annual INSTO meeting INSTO, Madrid, Spain with the support of Michael Meyer (Ecological Tourism in Europe), a meeting with the Sustainable Tourism Observatory of South Tyrol was established for February 2020.



The Sustainable Tourism Observatory of South Tyrol (Italy) _meeting in Feb 2020



ACTION FROM JOINT ACTION PLAN

Art.1 Develop, maintain and keep up to date a common online Carpathian platform on sustainable tourism, including products and services database, trans-boundary products and mapping, as well as good practices, with continuous updated information, and including the preparation of a Carpathian touristic map

Art.4 Develop a Carpathian-wide quality standard system for local products and local services (e.g. “Local food”, “Local accommodation”, “Local experience – how to guide tourists”, “Code of Conduct for Tourists in the Carpathians”)

CSTC_RO

Cooperation of V4+ rural tourism actors through social and digital innovation project

Support local entrepreneurs to increase the quality and the visibility of rural tourism and craft initiatives

September 2018 – February 2021

<http://carpathian.ruraltourism.humtour.com/>

Budget: 104.580,00 EUR

- Humtour Limited Liability Company – Hungary - Lead Partner
- Ekopsychology Society – Poland
- Art and Craft of Stiavnica Civil – Slovakia
- Homeland Museum of Knjaževac – Serbia
- Vavel - tourism business – Serbia
- Brasov County Council - Romania



CSTP:

- ❖ Contact and maintain the connection with ecotourism organizations, local producers, craft artists
- ❖ Support the project workshops' implementation with experts in the field of tourism marketing, experts on rural tourism and local product management and on community development
- ❖ Spread the call for application within our network, find and send participants to the workshops
- ❖ Collaborate to the development of the workshops' handbooks and booklets
- ❖ Provide support to the organization of the Carpathian Rural and Agritourism Fair 2020
- ❖ Promote the project and spread the outputs of the project via our CSTP, other platforms and network

Cooperation of V4+ rural tourism actors through social and digital innovation project

Support local entrepreneurs to increase the quality and the visibility of rural tourism and craft initiatives

OUTPUTS

1. **Management Tools** for Rural Tourism Entrepreneurs- Enhancement of How to Attract Tourist Ecotourism Handbook (Product) - 29/10/2018-11/02/2019
2. **Management Workshop on Rural Development and Innovation** (Event-Public), Roudnice nad Labem, CZ - 13/02/2019-16/02/2019
3. **Marketing Tools** for Rural Tourism Entrepreneurs- Enhancement of How to Attract Tourist Ecotourism Handbook (Product) - 29/10/2018-06/05/2019
4. **Digital Communication and Building Identity Marketing Workshop** (Event-Public), Banska Stiavnica, SK - 12/05/2019-15/05/2019
5. **Tools for Social Entreprises, NGOs and Rural Tourism Entrepreneurs**- Enhancement of How to Attract Tourist Ecotourism Handbook (Product) - 29/10/2018-23/09/2019
6. **Social Entreprises and Community Development in Rural Areas Workshop** (Event-Public), Szekszárd, HU - 06/10/2019-09/10/2019
7. **Webinar about Digital Communication and Building Identity** (Product) - 22/05/2019-20/12/2019
8. **Webinar about Rural Development and Innovation Management** (Product) - 25/02/2019-20/12/2019
9. **Webinar about Community Development and Social Entrepreneurship on the Rural Areas** (Product) - 18/10/2018-20/12/2019



CSTC_PL

Submission of the **"EtnoCarpathia"** project (Interreg V-A Poland-Slovakia 2014-2020 Programme), aimed at increasing the attractiveness and visibility of the Polish-Slovak border region through the use of cultural heritage resources. *The project is on the standby list, currently awaiting the decision of the European Commission regarding the transfer of additional funds from the POLAND-RUSSIA Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020*

In cooperation with the Ethnographic Museum in Rzeszów (PL) and the Municipal Cultural Centre in Vranov nad Topľou (SK), the project assumes the following series of activities related to the following ethnographic groups of the borderland: Polish Uplanders (Pogorzans), Lemkos, Boykos, former inhabitants of contemporary Šariš, Zemplín and Zamagurie. As part of the project, there will be created a tourism product "EtnoCarpathia" offering authentic experiences related to the Carpathian culture and creating a coherent offer of cultural heritage cognition. The product preparation will be a result of the cataloguing that will allow to identify the most interesting resources of each studied culture. Then, for each of these resources, a separate tourist package will be developed. The finished tourism product will fit into the latest trends in tourism, positively affecting the tourist value of the region. They will enable better visibility and promotion of cultural elements that are underdeveloped. The project will positively affect the consolidation of elements of culture being at risk of disappearing and will prepare local communities to create and promote their own cultural offer, thus enhancing their cultural identity



2. EtnoCarpathia - increasing the attractiveness and visibility of the Polish-Slovak border region through the use of cultural heritage resources

Partners:

1. ACEP
2. Culture Centre Vranov nad Topľou
3. Regional Museum In Rzeszów

CSTP:

- ❖ ethnographic groups of the borderland: Polish Uplanders (Pogorzans), Lemkos, Boykos, former inhabitants of contemporary Šariš, Zemplín and Zamagurie.
- ❖ A tourism product "EtnoCarpathia" offering authentic experiences related to the Carpathian culture and creating a coherent offer of cultural heritage cognition.
- ❖ the project will positively affect the consolidation of elements of culture being at risk of disappearing and will prepare local communities to create and promote their own cultural offer, thus enhancing their cultural identity

The project is on the standby list, currently awaiting the decision of the European Commission regarding the transfer of additional funds from the POLAND-RUSSIA Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020



Art.7 Design, where applicable, a common system of marking trails throughout the Carpathians

Art.9 Initiate resource mobilization for the implementation of the strategy at national and international level involving all relevant stakeholders

CSTC_RO

ThreeT - Interreg Europe

June 2018 – November 2022; Budget: 1.892.764 eur

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/threet/>

1. Livorno Province Livorno Italy – Lead partner
2. Tuscany Region Florence Italy
3. Regional Council of Jyväskylä Finland Central Finland
4. Planning Authority Floriana Malta
5. **Kujawsko-Pomorskie Torun Poland Voivodeship**
6. Local Government of Santa Cruz Spain the island of Tenerife de Tenerife
7. **Brasov County Brasov Romania Council**
8. **Self-Government Dunántul Hungary. Office of Vas County**
9. Regional Giessen Germany Management Central Hessen GmbH

186.275 EUR

184.511 EUR

182.871 EUR



Three T
Thematic Trail Trigger



Make "thematic trails" sustainable eco-tourist means for enhancing protected, accessible and visible territorial natural and cultural assets. Facilitating: **inter-modality; human-powered ("green" or "soft") mobility; asset visibility** - 3 key-factors leading to the successful development and sustained use and maintenance of trails, ultimately triggering territorial development.

Main benefits for the participating regions (**CSTP**) are:

- ❖ Public accessibility and forms of sustainable enhancement of cultural and natural heritage improved
- ❖ New practices about green mobility, inter-modality and innovative information adopted
- ❖ Effective system for monitoring the Action Plan to assess the actual influence of its actions on regional development strategies
- ❖ Increased competence and skills of partner staff and key-stakeholders.



During project implementation one of the strategies reviewed in order to elaborate the Brasov County Action Plan is the Strategy for the Sustainable Development of the Carpathians. Moreover, after the study visit in Hungary both countries decided to focus on two actions during the second phase of the implementation of the ThreeT Project:

- ✓ extending the St. Martin Route from Szomabt to Brasov



- ✓ connecting EuroVelo Route EV14 with EuroVelo Route EV6 through Romania (via Brasov)

One of the Romanian members within the National Tourism Task Force initiated the organization of the 48th Annual Conference of European Ramblers Association which took place in Braşov in October 2017. The European Ramblers Association (ERA) has 3 mil members, 60 mountain and hiking associations from 35 European countries.

Romanian Ministry of Tourism, in cooperation with the Government, the World Bank and stakeholders elaborated a new **national tourism development strategy and action plan**, to be adopted in 2019.

Art.10 Initiate the exchange of good practices and lessons learned from the operation of DMOs in terms of sustainable tourism in the Carpathians

From 2018, Romanian Ministry of Tourism in partnership with OECD are implementing an European funded project to exchange good practices to develop the DMO's in Romania.

The Romanian Ministry of Tourism, organised in Brasov, Sighisoara, Alba and Cluj an exchange of good practices with the DMO from the Zilina Region - Slovakia, which undertook a working visit to Transylvania, between 20-25.10.2019.



Art.13 Analyze the touristic resources of the Parties based on research, to identify the key-areas and products to be involved, and undertake further detailed research. Consultation system of all Carpathian countries on the procedure of developing the Carpathian brand and how we can take over on the initiative made by Carpathian Euroregion (in preparation for the following actions from the Jointed Action Plan 4, 3,2,12,11, 18)

Romanian Ministry of Tourism, through its territorial offices is developing a database containing information from each county on protected areas, nature monuments, parks and reservations in the mountain area, mountain hiking trails, ski slopes.

Furthermore, in order to implement the Strategy's actions, a network of 27th representatives from the counties and 7 RDA's was created to have a close cooperation with the national tourism task force members and the territorial representatives of the Ministry of Tourism.

Art.15 Develop a methodology for monitoring the impacts of existing and planned tourism development on biodiversity and landscapes, including the social, economic and cultural impact, and prepare for Action

Art. 16 Initiate the establishment of an organizational unit (Carpathian Observatory on Sustainable Tourism), contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Protocol and this Strategy by monitoring and evaluation of tourism activities in the Carpathians

CSTC_PL

Ongoing cooperation with statistical offices of Poland, Ukraine and Slovakia, including the creation of the Carpathian Tourism Observatory as part of the Regional and Cross-border Research Centre at the University of Rzeszów (Coordinator - Mr Dawid Lasek).

Art.19 Support setting up of a common mechanism for the implementation of the strategy

CSTC_UA

Development of the legal framework for RTO Zakarpattia functioning 2016-2017 as CSTC-Uzhhorod;

Development of a winning and awarded project proposal with a budget allocation for the CSTC-Uzhhorod approx. EUR 71.000 for 18 months (incl.5 staff, CC WG ST meeting, international event, webpage, publicity)

- Forecast on activities for the next reporting period

Ongoing cooperation with the above-mentioned institutions, programmes, events etc.

Implementation of the "**EtnoCarpathia**" project (Interreg V-A Poland-Slovakia 2014-2020 Programme). In cooperation with the Ethnographic Museum in Rzeszów (PL) and the Municipal Cultural Centre in Vranov nad Topľou (SK), the project assumes the following series of activities related to the following ethnographic groups of the borderland: Polish Uplanders (Pogorzans), Lemkos, Boykos, former inhabitants of contemporary Šariš, Zemplín and Zamagurie. As part of the project, there will be created a tourism product "EtnoCarpathia" offering authentic experiences related to the Carpathian culture and creating a coherent offer of cultural heritage cognition. The product preparation will be a result of the cataloguing that will allow to identify the most interesting resources of each studied culture. Then, for each of these resources, a separate tourist package will be developed. The finished tourism product will fit

into the latest trends in tourism, positively affecting the tourist value of the region. They will enable better visibility and promotion of cultural elements that are underdeveloped. The project will positively affect the consolidation of elements of culture being at risk of disappearing and will prepare local communities to create and promote their own cultural offer, thus enhancing their cultural identity;

Development of the results of the project "Hiking without backpack - use and promotion of cultural and natural heritage resources of the border region" (Interreg V-A Poland-Slovakia 2014-2020 Programme):

- co-organization in Lesko of the next edition of the "Agrobieszczady" Tourism, Forestry and Local Product Fair - the Carpathia Brand event
- submission of microprojects under call of the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020. The projects' subject matters include hiking, spa towns, World War I fortifications, legends and Carpathian cuisine;
- preparation of Carpathia brand tourist packages for various groups of recipients: CARPATHIA ACTIVE, CARPATHIA HIKING, CARPATHIA CASTLES
- preparation of a study visit for tour operators from China
- ongoing cooperation with the above-mentioned institutions, programmes, events etc.

CSTC_RO

Meeting of CC WG Tourism Romania in 2020 that puts forward proposals for actions to the Working Group on Sustainable Tourism of the Carpathian Convention – proposal for this meeting to be organised in Brasov, in February 2020.

Organize at least two events, within a public relations campaign, which will include press conferences, seminars, speeches, conducted at national and international level, for promotion and development sustainable tourism in the Carpathian Mountains;

Conduct an on-line advertising campaign and off line environment by publishing brochures, leaflets, other advertising materials, and developing the Carpathian Convention section on the official website of the institution. For 2020 we plan to elaborate Carpathian Thematic Brochures: Natural, Carpathian Cultural Heritage, Carpathian Intangible Heritage, Cultural Routes in the Carpathians, UNESCO World Heritage in the Carpathians;

Conduct a promotion campaign by participating in fairs, exhibitions with a Carpathian Convention component;

Monitoring programs for projects that are carried out at national level in the Carpathian Mountains;

Conclude partnerships with local public authorities, central public authorities, non-governmental organizations from Romania and international, other legal entities for the promotion and sustainable development of the Carpathians;

Produce an annual calendar of actions for the following year;

Encourage the establishment of other CSTCs in the Carpathians;

Propose programs to promote tourism in the Carpathian countries, taking into account the specificity and diversity of all regions and sub-Carpathian areas;

Implement a campaign in the Carpathian region, to raise awareness among the local population in the field of sustainable tourism and the Carpathian Convention;

Support the establishment of regional Carpathian tourist brands to help preserve the character of the tangible/intangible cultural landscape and cultural heritage connected by a Carpathian brand.

Place / Date:

CSTC - RO
on behalf of CSTP