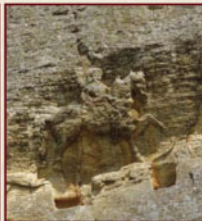
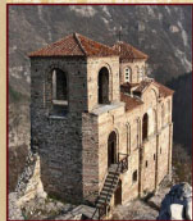


sustainable tourism development



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Operational Programme Regional Development 2007-2013 in support of sustainable tourism development

Elaborated under project: BG161PO001/5-01/2008/056
Production and distribution of informational materials for the Operational Programme
"Regional Development" 2007-2013 (OPRD)
Priority axis 5: "Technical assistance" OPRD. The project is financed by the European
Regional Development Fund and state budget of the Republic of Bulgaria.





Tourism is considered one of the most important sectors in Bulgarian economy. Its potential is verified by contribution to the gross domestic product, export of currency revenue, as well as job creation. However, high territorial concentration in combination with product uniformity and gaps in marketing of tourist destinations lower the chances for the former growth rate to continue in mid-term and long-term perspective.

Therefore, one of the specific objectives of Operational Programme Regional Development 2007-2013 (OPRD) is to improve the regional tourism potential for development and marketing of sustainable, diversified and region specific tourism products with higher added value.

Priority axis 3 under OPRD "Sustainable tourism development" aims at surmounting the following problems:

- Need of product diversification and strengthening of specialized types of tourism, particularly cultural, ecological and spa tourism;*
- Need of economic diversification of different territories and regions, lowering territorial concentration and seasonality in the tourism sector;*
- Need of additionality and synergy of activities at local, regional and national level;*
- Need of more information related to diversified tourism potential and supply of Bulgarian tourism areas and zones, improvement of their image;*

The priority axis suggests the following mechanisms to overcome the problems:

- Encouraging partnership at regional level between central and local administrations and representatives of the tourism branch – local, regional and national tourism associations;*
- Encouraging practical application of strategic approach in preparation and implementation of projects, strengthening the commitment of beneficiaries with the aim to achieve sustainability of results. Projects funded under Priority axis 3 are developed in accordance with the sector's strategic documents: the National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development for the period 2009-2013; Concept for Development of Bulgarian Culture; Strategic Plan for Development of Cultural Tourism in Bulgaria, and other strategic documents for tourism development at district, regional and municipal level.*

- Encouraging cooperation between institutions at central and local level with representatives of the civil society for achieving coordinated approach and improvement of the legislative basis in the tourism sector. The Managing Authority elaborates grant schemes involving all stakeholders in a broad dialogue, including the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism, Ministry of Culture, National Institute for Immovable Cultural Heritage, non-governmental organizations such as the National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria, etc.

The total amount of support provided in line of Priority axis 3 "Sustainable tourism development" is BGN 387 million, comprised in 3 operations:

- **Operation 3.1.** "Enhancement of tourist attractions and related infrastructure";
- **Operation 3.2.** "Development of regional tourism product and marketing of destinations";
- **Operation 3.3.** "National tourism marketing"



Operation 3.1 "Enhancement of tourist attractions and related infrastructure"

Operation 3.1 aims at developing integrated and specific tourism products on the basis of competitive and demanded attractions that contribute to diversification and territorial division of tourism. Specific activities are related to improvement of the condition of immovable cultural valuables and natural landmarks on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria through a set of measures for development of an integrated tourism product – combination of activities on conservation, restoration and preservation, construction of tourism and technical infrastructure and marketing activities for promotion of the project. The operation's budget is approximately BGN 300 million.

The Managing Authority of OPRD published 4 grant schemes, which covered 100 % of the operation.

Beneficiaries are the Ministry of Culture, Council of Ministers and all municipalities on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Within the framework of the operation will be improved and socialized 120 tourist sites-cultural valuables and 4 sites-natural landmarks for a total of BGN 247 million.

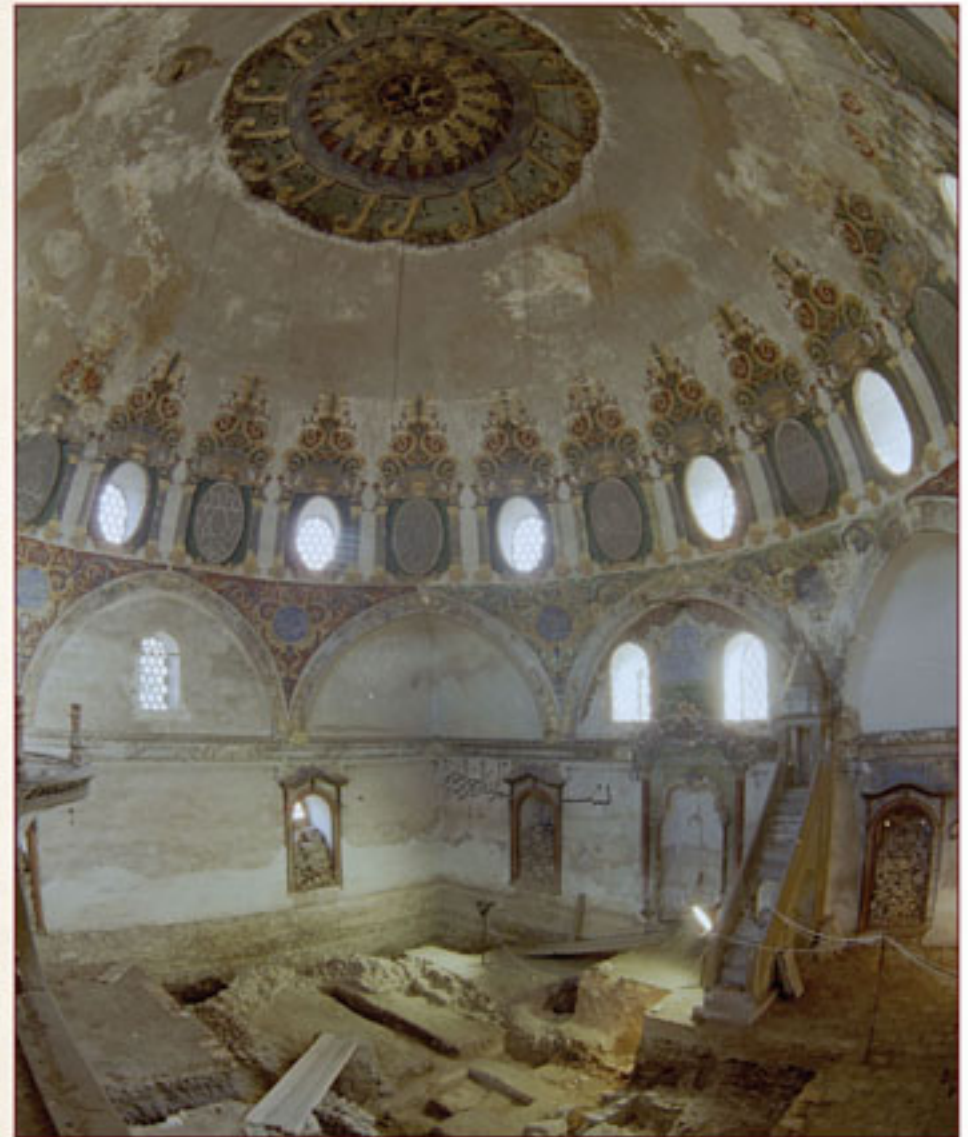
Tourist sites to be supported are located on the territory of the entire country – along the Black Sea coast, in proximity to mountain resorts, also in the interior, and this will contribute to diversification of the tourist product and decrease territorial concentration.



Scheme BG161P0001/3.1-01/2008

"Support for monuments of culture of national and world significance contributing to sustainable tourism development"

The scheme is published on 15 June 2008 with specific beneficiary the Ministry of Culture. Financial resources amount to BGN 38 million. Supported are immovable cultural valuables of national and world significance managed by the Ministry of Culture, contributing to development of sustainable tourism development, diversification of tourist supply and an increase of tourism benefits. In 2009 a Framework Agreement is signed with the specific beneficiary for the total scheme amount aiming at implementation of the Mid-term Framework Investment Programme. Within the scheme will be modernized key cultural and historical sites as the Ancient Complex "Serdika" in the city of Sofia, the National Historical and Archaeological Reserve (NHAR) "Pliska", the Architectural and Historical Reserve (AHR) Nikopolis ad Istrum, "Sv. Georgi" (St. George) Church in the Arbanassi village, Eski Mosque in the city of Stara Zagora, the Red Church near the city of Perushtitsa, the Cruciform Barracks in the city of Vidin, "Shushmanets" Mound.



The first tourism project successfully put into exploitation is the restored **Eski Mosque in the city of Stara Zagora.**



Project info:

Contract BG161P0001/3.1-01/2008/001/2 “Conservation, restoration and exhibition of Eski Mosque and establishment of Museum of Religions, city of Stara Zagora”

Budget: BGN 2 368 381,31

Description:

Conservation and restoration works will be implemented on:

- discovered archaeological structures (early Christian church and pagan sanctuary);
- mural paintings in the interior of the mosque;
- wooden decorative elements of the mosque's interior;
- metal bars on the lower row of windows in the interior;
- cleaning and jointing of facades, etc.



Among the projects of the Mid-term Framework Investment Programme of the Ministry of Culture stands out the project for modernization of the **Ancient Complex Serdika In Sofia City** (so-called **Largo**). The innovative project aims at harmonizing the historical heritage within modern urban environment through restoration, adaptation and exhibition of archaeological valuables from ancient Serdicae and the surrounding area.



Project Info:

Contract BG161P0001/3.1-01/2008/001-006 "Ancient Cultural and Communication Complex "Serdika"

Budget: BGN 15 801 989,13

Description:

The Ancient Complex is situated in the center of the capital with a total territory of about 19 500m², it will be a convincing advertisement for diversified cultural tourism in our country with enormous development potential. The project's sites of intervention are figuratively divided into "Largo" zone (Nezavisimost Sq.) and "Maria Luisa Blvd." zone. The project solution presents architectural and landscape design of the two central spaces, having a common boundary between transport communications to the south and west (Maria Luisa Blvd. and Dondukov Blvd.), and zones around central buildings. The envisaged design of the archaeological level will be covered on Nezavisimost Sq. and covered and uncovered on Maria Luisa Blvd., which spatially and functionally connects and integrates built historical zones – the existing underpass with "Sv. Petka Samardjiyska" (St. Petka of the Saddlers) Church and the underpass in front of the Presidency with the exhibited East Gate of Serdika.

The Ancient Cultural and Communication Complex "Serdika" with its new underground spaces will contain the discovered and adequately designed archaeology, locations for exhibition of artifacts found in other parts of the ancient city, areas for organization of cultural city events, areas for historical and tourist information services, servicing areas.

Within the framework of the scheme to receive support is the first Bulgarian capital **Pliska**.

Project Info:

Contract BG161P0001/3.1-01/2008/001-003 “Recovery and socialization of National Historical and Architectural Reserve “Pliska”

Budget: BGN 1 268 977,94

Description:

The project envisages preservation, socialization and valorization of NHAR “Pliska” and its adjoining spaces and buildings. Specific activities are related to a partially uncovered fortified wall to the north, a design of visitors’ lanes leading to archaeological valuables in the reserve, clearing and recultivation of vegetation in the areas around the East Gate, entire refurbishment of the museum.



Schemes BG161P0001/3.1-02/2009 "Support for development of tourist attractions" and BG161P0001/3.1-03/2010 "Support for development of natural, cultural and historical attractions"

OPRD provides a total of approximately BGN 202 million for projects of municipalities to develop tourism products on their territory through restoration, conservation, preservation, socialization and promotion of immovable cultural valuables and natural landmarks. Two grant schemes were launched in 2009 and 2010. The resources are allocated for the modernization of 113 tourist sites. Support will be provided for two immovable cultural valuables of world significance; a number of historical and archaeological reserves; ancient and medieval fortresses; Thracian sanctuaries; churches; museums and museum-houses; a cave; paleontological collecting localities, etc.



Out of the nine material sites in the UNESCO World Cultural and Natural Heritage List in line of Priority axis 3 support are to receive the **Madara Rider** and the **Ancient City of Nessebar**.

Project Info:

Project BG161P0001-3.1.03-0044

“Bulgaria starts here”

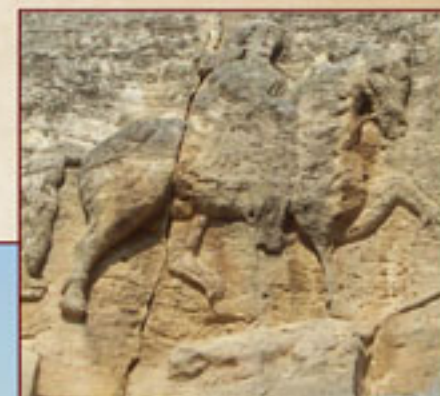
Budget: BGN 3 224 487,56

Beneficiary: Shumen Municipality

Description:

The preservation of the monument is a complex process based upon research of international experts as project interventions represent the first stage of conservation. In addition, a tourist information center is under construction on the territory of the National Historical and Archaeological Reserve “Madara”, which will serve for information and animation of potential visitors.

Shumen Municipality envisages development of other attractions on its territory – the Shumen Fortress near Shumen City and “Historical area of ancient Shumen”. For the Shumen Fortress are envisaged reconser- vation measures on the fortress walls and establishment of a tourist information center, as well as interesting animation techniques related to delivery of hot air balloons for attractive rides over the Shumen Pla- teau.



Project Info:

Project BG161P0001-3.1.03-0035 "Faith in Nessebar"

Budget: BGN 1 643 230,13

Beneficiary: Nessebar Municipality

Description:

The project aims to restore, preserve and socialize two of the ancient churches in Nessebar, "Sv. Yoan Krastitel" (St. John the Baptist) and "Sv. Paraskeva" (St. Parascheva), its related infrastructure, and to resolve issues related to tourism product diversification.

The third component of the project – development of the first section of the cultural and historical route "Spiritual path" from "Sv. Yoan Krastitel" Church to churches "Sv. Paraskeva" and "Sv. Arhangeli Mihail i Gavrail" (St. Archangels Michael and Gabriel). Replacement and placement of new indicative signs are envisaged in the Ancient City, replacement of the existing pavement, also development of a spatial design to emphasize the significance of the cultural and historical heritage sites.



Among the immovable cultural valuables of national significance in line of OPRD are to be supported the **Archaeological Complex Perperikon** in the East Rhodopes, **"Asenova krepost"** Fortress near the city of Assenovgrad, Historical and Archaeological Reserve **"Veliki Preslav"**, **Belogradchik Fortress**, **"Sv. Anastasia"** (St. Anastasia) **Island** and Architectural and Ethnographic Complex **"Etara"**, Architectural Complex **"Kabile"**, etc.

Project Info:

Project BG161P0001-3.1.03-0023 "Perperikon – home of gods and people"

Budget: BGN 3 844 099,61

Beneficiary: Kardjali Municipality

Description:

The project envisages activities of preservation and consolidation of the Acropolis and Sacred Palace. Main archaeological elements of the complex will be displayed in art lighting, which will be complemented by holographic images and 3D designs at "Perperikon" Hall, set in the Kardjali Regional Historical Museum. Socialization of the site will include pedestrian passages to the Acropolis with recreational and viewing platforms, and visitors' pedestrian network with observation and exhibition places. New techniques are envisaged for interpretation and animation of the attraction, namely organization of historical reenactment "Wine and fire rite" with authentic sounds and rhythms of the region and adequate scenery and costumes. For effective positioning of the newly created product in the tourism market for the Archaeological Complex Perperikon will be developed an integral marketing strategy.



Project Info:

Contract BG161P0001/3.1-02/2009/007
“Assenovgrad – sacred gate of the Rhodopes”

Budget: BGN 3 231 995,82

Beneficiary: Assenovgrad Municipality

Description:

The project activities include measures for overall and lasting improvement and renovation of the image of Historical Complex “Assenova krepost”, socialization of the crypt at “Sv. Bogoroditsa” (St. Mary) Church and improvement of the passage leading to the fortress. The visitors’ information center near “Assenova krepost” will be reconstructed and geographic information system delivered to provide visitors with a map of the location of different tourist attractions within the municipality and full information about them, including photos, video materials, graphics and three dimensional images.



Project Info:

Project BG161P0001-3.1.03-0013
“The century of Tsar Simeon comes alive”

Budget: BGN 2 779 355,42

Beneficiary: Veliki Preslav Municipality

Description:

The Historical and Archaeological Reserve “Veliki Preslav” (Great Preslav) embraces the ruins of the second Bulgarian capital Veliki Preslav (893-972). The Palace Church and Ruler’s Basilica will be preserved, restored and exhibited, and their surrounding areas will be improved. Field conservation and restoration are envisaged for the remaining buildings of the Inner-Town divided into entities: Palace Complex and Throne Room; square space to the east and south of the Palace; east building – part of a fortress wall with chain premises; east entrance. In order to complement the attraction the project provides for delivery, installation and equipping of pavilion as a tourist information kiosk.



Project info:

Project BG161P0001-3.1.03-0045 “Preservation of the cultural and historical heritage and diversification of tourism supply in the region of Belogradchik Fortress”

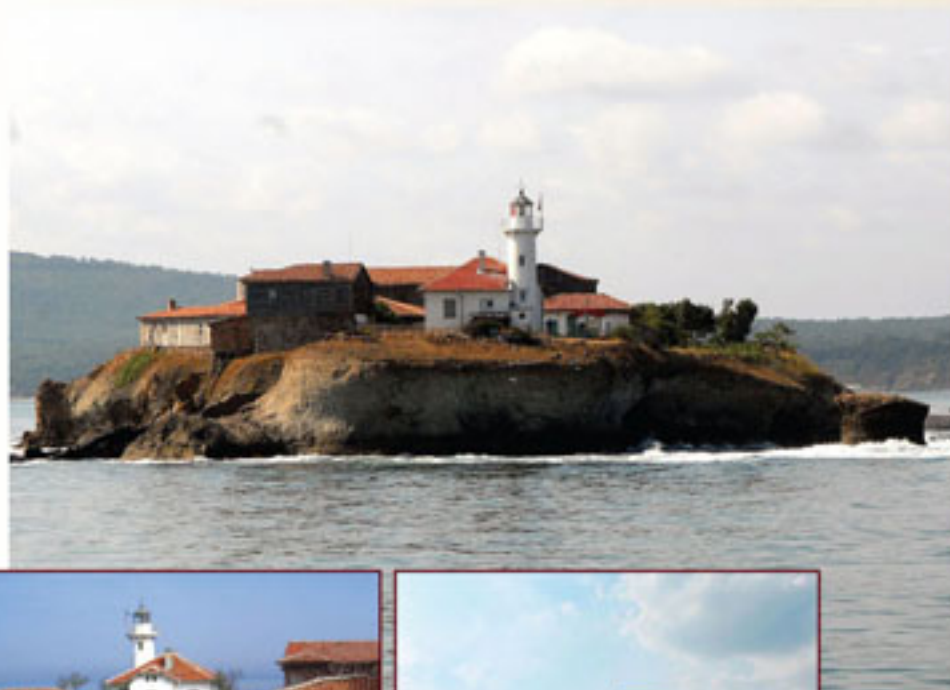
Budget: BGN 2 995 629,74

Beneficiary: Belogradchik Municipality

Description:

The project includes restoration works on the fortress wall, premises, walls and ornaments of the Belogradchik Fortress, shaping of main passages in an adequate manner, provision of accessible environment through ramps, building of a ticket information center, rehabilitation of the fortress road passage and parking lot, purchase of a tourist train for servicing of the fortress.





Project info:

Project BG161P0001-3.1.03-0019 “Cultural and historical heritage of “Sveta Anastasia” Island and Burgas City – an attractive and competitive tourist attraction”

Budget: BGN 5 559 576,36

Beneficiary: Burgas Municipality

Description:

The project envisages reconstruction and adaptation of the cultural and historical heritage of Sveta Anastasia Island. The “Sveta Anastasia” Church, big and small monastery buildings and monastery kitchens will be restored, and monastery health station will be established. Activities related to socialization and animation of the attraction will be implemented for achievement of a complete tourism product, exhibition of natural phenomena and attractions. Within the project will be built art lighting at the unique natural phenomena “The Mushroom”, “The Fossilized Pirate Ship”, “The Door”, “The Dragon”.

Also envisaged is reconstruction of the quay of Sveta Anastasia Island and reconstruction and functional organization of the Fore Bridge in Burgas Seaside Park. A small passenger ship purchased under the project will service a regular line from the quay at Fore Bridge in the Seaside Park to Sveta Anastasia Island.

In the city of Burgas will be set a tourist route as a connecting axis of a few monuments of cultural heritage and garden art of national significance. The route includes the square with Cathedral Temple “Sv. Sv. Kiril i Metodi” (St. Cyril and Methodius, the oldest Christian Temple in Burgas), the ethnographic, natural science, historical and archaeological exhibition of the Regional Museum-Burgas. It crosses Bogoridi St. (a group monument of architecture) and reaches the Historical Core in the Seaside Park (monument of garden art). At this point the route gets to the Fore Bridge – unique promenade area entering far at sea, from where a visual contact is made with Sveta Anastasia Island.

Project Info:

Project BG161P0001-3.1.03-0028 “Integrated project for development of cultural and historical tourism product and related infrastructure in Gabrovo Municipality”

Budget: BGN 195 596,17

Beneficiary: Gabrovo Municipality

Description:

Envisages is a complex of activities aimed at improving the condition and socialization of the attractions in AEC Etara and AHR Bojentsi – a Balkan dairy farm, new and old school, “Doncho Popa” (Doncho the Priest) house and “Mityo Stanev” house. Cultural-cognitive routes will be developed in both complexes.

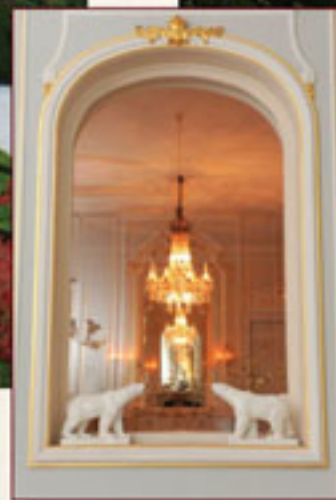
The attractions will be complemented by interventions in the sites on the territory of Gabrovo City. The exhibition in “Dechkovata kashta” (Dechko’s house) museum-house will be expanded; “retro style” drug-gery and “retro style” photographic studio will be created. In the former building of the Regional Historical Museum on 3 Hikotaevska St. will be established a new unique exhibition-attraction “Industrial Gabrovo”. It will present the city’s development in more recent ages with exhibitions of the industry in the end of 19th century, the period before 1944, the socialism era and contemporary times.



Scheme BG161PO001/3.1-04/2011 "Restoration and conservation of the Evksinograd Palace and its adjoining park"

The scheme is launched on 10.02.2011 with a total budget of BGN 10 million. Specific beneficiary is the Council of Ministers in its capacity of authority enforcing the right of state property over Evksinograd Palace.

Objective of the scheme is to support the development of Evksinograd Palace and its adjoining park as a competitive tourist attraction contributing to sustainable cultural tourism, diversification of tourism supply and an increase of tourism benefits. A former royal palace, dating back to the 19th century, located 10 km. northeast of Varna on a rocky cape over the sea coast, the Evksinograd Palace holds considerable potential to attract a significant number of tourists. The park, rich in diverse and rarely seen flora also contributes for it.

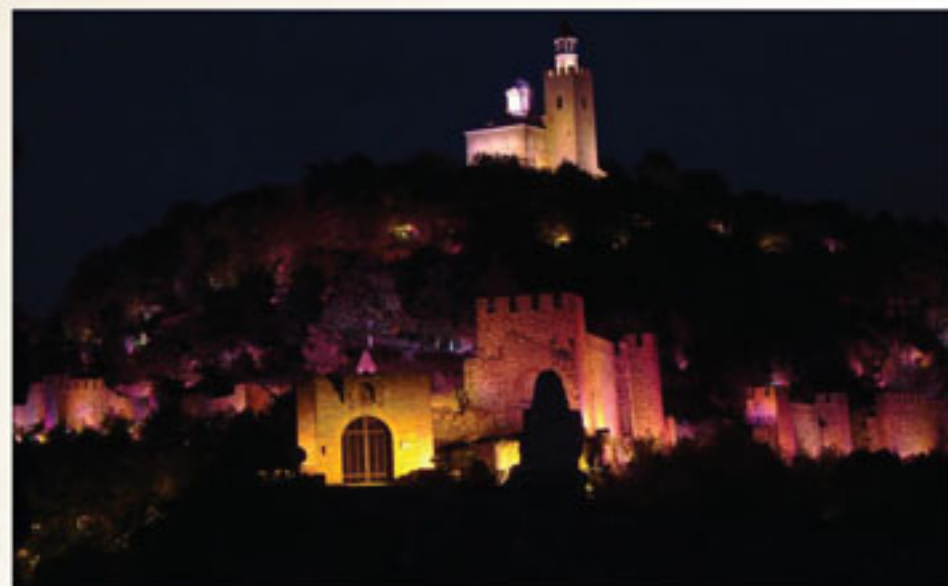


Operation 3.2 "Development of regional tourism product and marketing of destinations"

Operation 3.2 aims at increase the number of visitors and duration of their stay, to improve seasonal and territorial division of tourism in different regions and territories based on integrated management and marketing of destinations, and to use different means, techniques and systems providing effective tourism information and marketing. The budget of the operation is BGN 25 million.

Published are 2 grant schemes covering 100% of the operation.

Beneficiaries – the Ministry of Culture and all municipalities on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.



Scheme BG161PO001/3.2-01/2010 "Support for organization of events with regional and national scope and impact"

The scheme is published on 30 June 2010 with specific beneficiary the Ministry of Culture and financial resources of BGN 6 million.

In October 2011 is signed a Framework Agreement for the full scheme amount with the purpose to implement the Ministry of Culture's Mid-term Framework Investment Programme. The scheme supports organization of events with regional and national scope and impact – festivals, outdoor activities, and varied cultural events contributing to diversification and marketing of the tourism product. Events will cover different regions on the entire territory of the Republic of Bulgaria. Planned festivals break standard frames and transform the tourist attraction from a spectacle into creative empathy. New innovative methods will be applied for presentation of cultural, musical, culinary and craft features in the locations where festivals will be organized. Also envisaged are thematic film shows, performances, art installations, theatrical and musical spectacles, etc.

In the Mid-term Framework Investment Agreement stands out the project for European Capital of Culture that has high potential to achieve its objectives.



Project info:

Contract BG161P0001/3.2-01/2010/01-02 “European Capital of Culture – creating conditions for selection of Bulgarian city for European Capital of Culture in the end of 2012. Focus – Sofia, Varna, Plovdiv, Russe, Burgas, Stara Zagora, Veliko Tarnovo”

Budget: BGN 4 086 001,87

Description:

Festivals will be held in the focuses of 7 cities as follows:

- **Sofia** – Festival of Modern Art, Wine Festival, Festival of Street Art, Festival of the Balkan Music, Festival of the Opera and Ballet, Festival of the Museums
- **Varna** – Festival of the Opera and Ballet, Theatrical Street Festival, Medieval Festival and Antique Festival
- **Plovdiv** – Festival of the Opera and Ballet, Festival of the Museums, Festival of Art Schools “Youth within the Arts”
- **Russe** – Festival of the Opera and Ballet, “Music over the Waves” Festival
- **Burgas** – Festival of the Opera and Ballet, Festival of the Sun and Fire
- **Stara Zagora** – Festival of the Opera and Ballet, “Art and Culture” Festival
- **Veliko Tarnovo** – Festival of the Museums.

A common platform will be created for mega festival events with regional and national scope and impact of the cultural and creative industries focused on the seven cities – potential Bulgarian candidates for European Capital of Culture in 2019.



Scheme BG161P0001/3.2-02/2011 "Support for development of regional tourism product and marketing of destinations"

The scheme is published in November 2011 with a total budget of BGN 19 million. It is based on regional approach and partnership – a union of at least 3 municipalities to apply with a joint project. Eligible candidates and partners are all municipalities on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria. Local, regional and national tourism associations and their branches can participate as partners when necessary.

Main objective of the scheme is to develop regional tourism products based on natural, cultural and historical heritage and to improve the effectiveness of regional marketing and tourism regions with specific tourism features and opportunities.

Supported will be activities for implementation of information and promotional campaigns; participation in regional, national and international tourist fairs; organization of expedition tours; visits by travelling agents, tour operators, authors of travelling guides, journalists; introduction of contemporary technologies and information systems with the aim to improve information services, marketing and planning of tourist destinations.



Operation 3.3 National tourism marketing

Operation 3.3 aims at improve the effectiveness and influence of national marketing activities, marketing information and transparency in order to support diversification of tourism products and markets and sustainable tourism development. The operation's budget is BGN 64 million.

Under implementation is scheme BG161PO001/3.3-01/2008 "Support for effective national marketing of the tourism product and improvement of information servicing" covering the entire spectrum of activities of the operation.

Beneficiary is the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism in its capacity of institution exercising state policy in the field of tourism.

In 2008 is signed a Framework Agreement to the amount of BGN 64 million with the purpose to implement the Mid-term Framework Investment Programme of the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism.

Expected results of the implementation of the Mid-term Framework Investment Programme:

- *Impact on net revenue of international tourism – BGN 274 million;*
- *Impact on the number of nights spent – 1,5 million additional nights spent;*
- *Impact on the number of nights spent outside the recognized tourist centers – 0,5 million additional nights spent;*

- *Impact on use of bed places (reservation of the number of bed places) – a 2,6 % increase;*
- *Public reached by advertisement (TV, Printing press, Radio, etc.) – 310 million people;*
- *Visitors higher satisfaction rate of information services – 10%;*
- *Implemented projects for marketing and advertising/promotion of the tourism product – 11;*
- *Developed market and other tourism related surveys with national and supranational scope – 29;*
- *Broadcasted television materials and videos – 2530;*
- *Elaborated and disseminated promotional brochures (image, thematic), including CD – 1,8 million copies;*
- *Multimedia catalogue of tourist sites – 700.*



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