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COMMON STRATEGY to identify trails/circuits for green and healthy tourism along the Danube

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HIKING & RUNNING ADVENTURE



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Green Tourism Products eMS code ROBG 291

**Common strategy to identify trails/circuits
for green and healthy tourism
along the Danube**

Hiking & Running Adventure

**Get ready for an inspirational hiking and running
adventure!**

**Explore the Romanian-Bulgarian cross-border through
our hiking and running trails along the Danube river,
that combine inspiring natural scenery with cultural
vibrancy!**

**Discover some of the most beautiful trails
to fuel your dreams!**

This strategy was conducted within financing contract no. 79 732/12.07.2018 for project implementation "Green Tourism Products", ROBG code 291, co-financed by the European Union, through the European Regional Development Fund, under the INTERREG V-A Romania - Bulgaria, Priority Axis 2 "A Green Region", 3rd Call.



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I. INTRODUCTION



1.1. Project description

"Green Tourism Products" (abbreviation: *Green Tour Pro*) project (eMS code ROBG 291) is financed through INTERREG V-A Romania - Bulgaria programme, 3rd Call, under Priority Axis 2 "A Green Region".

The financing contract was signed in the summer of 2018 and had an implementation period of 18 months, until January 2020. Its total value is EUR 498,884.65, out of which EUR 424,051.94 represents the total value of European Union contribution, through the European Regional Development Fund.



1.2. The objective of the project

As part of the "Green Tourism Products" project, unique tourism products have been developed for nature lovers and outdoor activities enthusiasts, through hiking and running events in the area of natural attractions and cultural sites in the Romanian-Bulgarian cross-border region.

Through these activities, which combine ecotourism and sports tourism, we want to promote areas with unique characteristics for the cross-border region, which, through their extremely rich and varied natural habitats, they are truly unique and priceless.

The target group of the project is represented by the general public, basically everyone who is interested in taking part in hiking and running adventures in the heart of nature, from amateurs to performance athletes, families, groups of friends or adventurous colleagues etc., who want to participate at outdoor activities, combined with a healthy lifestyle.



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These actions will also contribute to the economic growth of both Bulgaria and Romania, creating a closer link between the two neighbouring countries.

The green banks of the Danube in Romania-Bulgaria cross-border area, the woods, wetlands and islands offer an opportunity for diverse outdoor activities and by networking of different stakeholders, diverse products can be developed.

Cross-border touristic offers allow local tourists to meet neighbouring cultures and nature and give visitors from distant countries the unique opportunity to discover a whole new region consisting of various landscapes, ethnicities and traditions.

The project partners identified two new activities that combine green tourism with healthy activities whilst with small costs. These activities had a significant growth in the last years and could have a major impact on the cross-border region, especially the Danube region. The proposed activities are hiking and marathons on the natural and cultural sites that the cross-border region has to offer.

Common hiking standards, which will be introduced to stakeholders from Romania and Bulgaria, aim to draw hiking and accommodation conditions closer to tourist expectations, nevertheless preserving the countries' unique appearance and atmosphere. The marathons will promote the region, a healthy lifestyle and will attract tourists in the region by organizing events/trails on important natural and cultural areas.

The projects' specific objectives are the following: development of two common strategies for improving the sustainable use of the natural and cultural heritage; increase in the number of overnight stays in the Romanian-Bulgarian cross-border region, up to 5,140, due to the new integrated tourism products created by the project and the pilot actions developed during the project implementation period and also during its sustainability period.

The new integrated tourism products will focus on attracting school groups, families and friends on weekends and vacations to participate in recreational sports activities by running and hiking, in the cross-border area with vestiges and unique cultural and natural values.



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1.3 Project`s partners

"Green Tourism Products" is a project implemented in partnership by ACTIS Sports Club Association from Calarasi (Romania), as lead partner, together with ARETE - SPORT Association from Belogradchik (Bulgaria) and the Association for Improvement of Inter-Human Relations (AIRI) "Harald Gormsson" from Mavrodin (Romania), as partners.

Together, the three partners had developed in the implementation period new tourism products by organizing ten pilot actions consisting in hiking trips and marathons events held in the area of natural and cultural sites of the Romanian-Bulgarian cross-border region, in order to promote and capitalize on the cultural and natural heritage, for the sustainable economic development of the border area.



The purpose of **ACTIS Association** and its partners is to organize and develop sports activities, to promote mass sports and a healthy lifestyle, as well as to participate in sports activities and competitions.

The association has relevant experience in the project field, having an important role in the development of essential sports activities, through its knowledge and expertise regarding the sports events logistics and conducting sports activities in a safe and relaxing manner in the touristic areas of the cross-border.



ARETE-SPORT Association aims to promote local, cross-border, regional, interregional, national and international cooperation, through an intelligent, sustainable and inclusive environment, as well as growing and protecting the cross-border identity. The association also aims to promote the sustainable development of the regions, including the cross-border area between Bulgaria and Romania, as well as to encourage, enhance and develop



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tourism and to protect, conserve, promote and develop cultural and natural resources and heritage.

ARETE-SPORT is an active organization with experience in the field of education in the cross-border area. ARETE-SPORT works to ensure the balance between theory, interactive study techniques and the creation of self-teaching best practices. The approaches and methods provided for the project, as well as the preparation of the association, provided stability and easy traceability of the results of the financing contract.



Starting from the desire to promote the green shores along the Danube river and the cultural and natural heritage from the northern to the southern areas of the Danube, the **Association for the Improvement of Human Relations "Harald Gormsson" (AIRI-HG)** contributed together with the project partners at developing new tourist packages, accessible and environmentally friendly, consisting of hiking and marathons in the cross-border area. These two outdoor activities had become increasingly popular in recent years all over the world, and thereby "Green Tourism Products" project aims to offer an alternative more accessible touristic package both financially, and logistically for the sports enthusiasts who want to spend their weekends or vacations in the middle of nature, along the Danube river, having also the advantage to be close to the main urban centres in Romania and in Bulgaria as well.





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II. ROMANIA - BULGARIA CROSS-BORDER AREA



Romania and Bulgaria's accession to the European Union has led, among all, to the fact that Danube has become more or less a component of the EU, with the few countries crossing the Danube not being part of the European Union (Serbia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine). The benefits of this status are now countless.

The Danube, as part of the EU, can open the Union to the Black Sea region, Central Asia or the South Caucasus, which will lead to better economic development, competitiveness, environmental protection and, of course, general security, not just the transport corridors.



The cooperation of the states crossed by Danube river will lead to a better protection of the environment, which in turn will greatly reduce the risk of natural disasters, such as droughts or floods. But important steps need to be taken in this regard, and the modernization of transport interconnections between people is a very good starting point.



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The ultimate goal is a better education, a better workforce and a better security, which will lead to the development of the area, in some places (Romania and Bulgaria) being some of the poorest areas of the European Union.

Tourism is perhaps the most important and offering way of development of the area, Danube being all over the world recognized for its natural multiculturalism, created in centuries of history, multiculturalism that generated from cosmopolitan cities to historical sites, more and more varied than in any basin river in this world. With the help of good and sustainable infrastructure, all this cultural mix can be presented to a much larger number of tourists than it is at the moment.

◆ The tourism potential of cultural and natural heritage - Romania

Of the 266 historical monuments of national interest, 84.9% of them are on the Romanian territory, which means 69 monuments and archaeological sites and 155 monuments and architectural ensembles.

This is a very important asset for the economic growth of the area, from tourism. It also helps that the monuments are distributed relatively evenly in the counties on the border, being concentrated around places with high urban density as follow; 73 in Constanta county, 34 in Dolj county, 32 in Teleorman county and 13 in Calarasi county.



Comana National Park, Giurgiu county - Neajlovului Delta

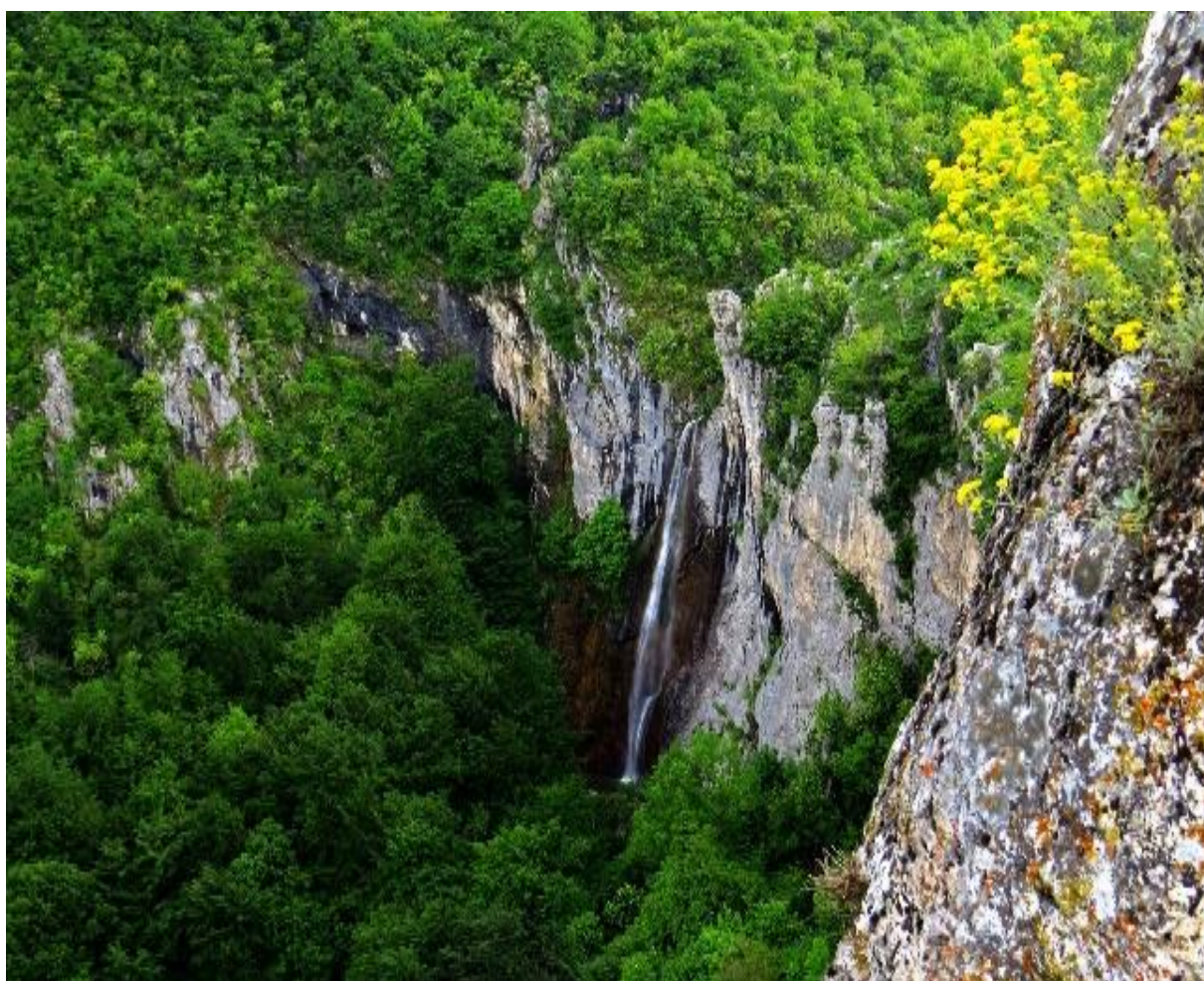
The natural heritage is an attraction for tourists. Biodiversity offered by the Danube basin, relief, from mountains to meadow, vegetation etc., all represent points of interest for tourists, points on which cross-border tourism can be developed sustainably.



In the Romanian area there are three natural parks and one national park. Romania also has 15 Ramsar sites, areas of international interest. Natura 2000 sites are mainly concentrated in two counties, Mehedinti and Constanta.

◆ The tourism potential of cultural and natural heritage - Bulgaria

The Bulgarian tourism potential is slightly deficient, in comparison to the Romanian one, when it comes to historical monuments of national interest, but it compensates through the natural resources and the high number of protected areas.



Skaklya waterfall, 1.5 km south of Vratsa

It is noted by UNESCO sites in the Ruse and Razgrad districts. In the Bulgarian area the district of Veliko Tarnovo is the one with the most monuments, 10 in number. The district Dobrich has 7, Ruse has 6, and the districts with the least are Pleven, Silistra and Montana, each with 2.



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Dobrich district from Bulgaria is the most developed, due to the best infrastructure for the agreement tourism, the only one directly comparable with Constanta county from Romania.



Veliko Tarnovo - city view

For cultural tourism, Veliko Tarnovo is the leader of the Bulgarian side, here the main tourist flows come. Veliko Tarnovo also dominates the historical tourism side. As part of mountain tourism, it is practiced in Vratsa and Montana districts. In Vratsa, ecotourism is also practiced, and in Montana, business and spa.

The districts along the Danube in Bulgaria have 4 natural parks and 6 Ramsar sites. The Natura 2000 sites are uniformly concentrated, unlike in Romania, these being in the mountain area of Montana and Vidin districts and in Silistra, Pleven, Razgrad and Dobrich districts.

Along the Danube there are some natural protected areas, 3 biosphere reserves of international interest, Natura 2000 sites, all of which can be easily included in tourist circuits for a sustainable development of cross-border tourism.





III. ROUTES IDENTIFIED FOLLOWING THE STUDY CONDUCTED WITHIN THE PROJECT

According to the study conducted within the project, the following cross-border areas from Romania and Bulgaria are involved:

- seven counties from Romania: Mehedinti, Dolj, Olt, Teleorman, Giurgiu, Calarasi, Constanta;
- eight districts in Bulgaria: Vidin, Vratsa, Montana, Plevna, Veliko Tarnovo, Ruse, Silistra, Dobrich.



The purpose of this project was to create new tourist products in the form of hiking and running in the neighbouring districts and counties along Danube shores. These activities will contribute to the popularization of the environmental and cultural resources that Bulgaria and Romania have to offer in the project eligible area. The ultimate goal is to increase the number of overnight stays in the region, in order to sustainably develop the tourism economy.

In many cases, some areas are not quite popular, except for the coast with Constanta county and Dobrich district, they will be accessible to all tourists who want to visit some cultural sights, admire some beautiful landscapes and do all this in a healthy way, without high costs, and for this, hiking and running are the perfect



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formula. These allow everyone, at their own pace, to visit and focus on what they find interesting and to enjoy these cultural and natural resources offered by the Danube area.

The routes identified within the study are 10, half in Romania, half in Bulgaria, divided as following:

- 3 hiking trails in each country (duration: 3 days) with a distance of 10 - 30 km/ day - 30 - 90 km, in total;
- 2 marathon trails in each country (duration: 1 day) for a distance between 3 and 20 km.

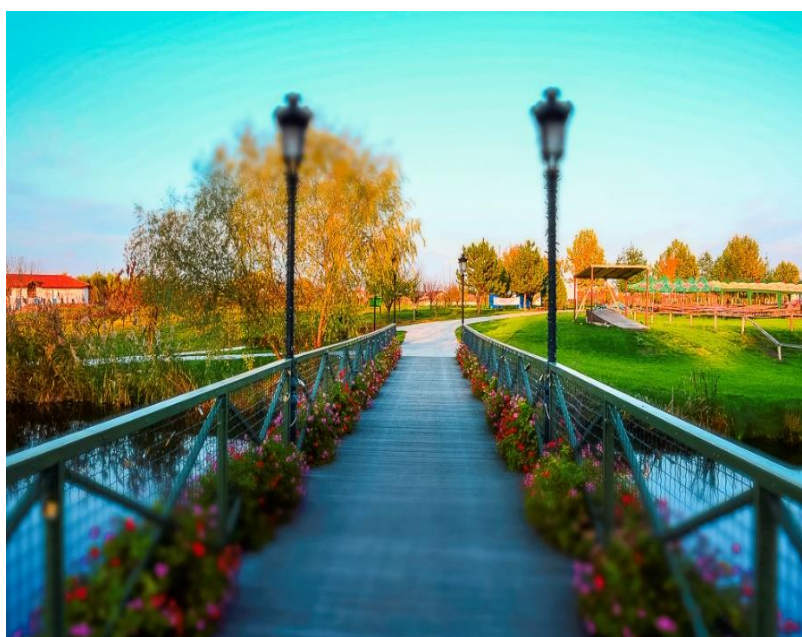
This information, as well as the scheduled events and other information are detailed on the project`s website and mobile application, and also you can find more on our social media accounts.



3.1. 1st Integrated Tourism Product - Marathon Trails in Romania

◆ Marathon trails in Comana

For running trails in Giurgiu county, Comana Park was chosen as the main tourist objective due to its unique natural scenery beauty and its location, being situated near Bucharest, at only 39 km from the capital, and at same distance from the city centre and being built around Neajlov Delta.

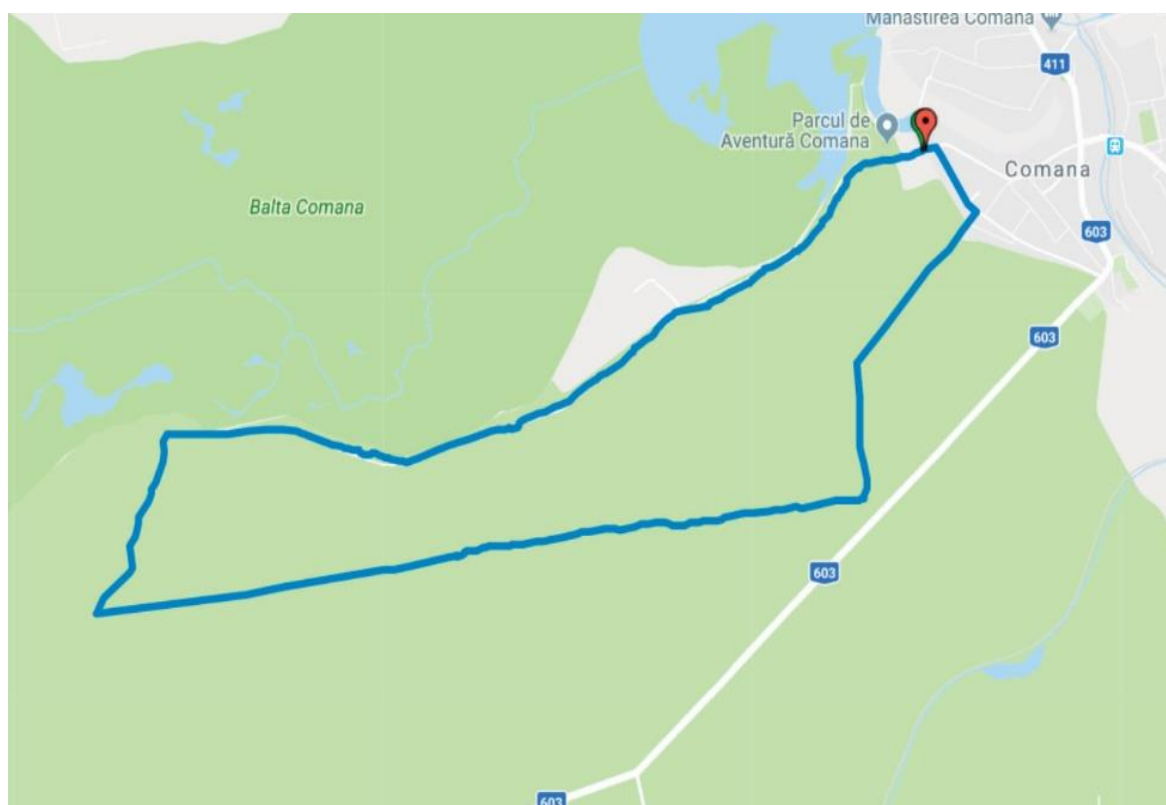


Romania's most important area in terms of biodiversity, second only to the Danube Delta, the Comana Natural Park has a surface area of almost 25,000 hectares



and a very rich offer: tourist routes through the dense woods, where you can see century-old trees, nature monuments, lake arrangements, as well as a monastery reminding everyone of the legendary ruling prince Vlad the Impaler. There is also an adventure park close by, tailored for families.

The running trail has 10 km, and the difficulty level varies on portions of the route, having both easy areas and for professional athletes, with differences of level, ascent and descent, and rugged terrain. The marathon trail has the same finishing and starting point. The trail can be crossed several times so that the marathon kilometres are entirely covered. The multiple markings in the park make it possible to shrink or lengthen the route or to offer other variants depending on the type of running event.



➤ Tourist attractions in the area

- Padina Tatar, the scientific peony reserve;
- Oloaga Gardens, the scientific reservation of thorns;
- Lake Comana, the second biodiversity reserve after the Danube Delta and the third wetland in Romania;



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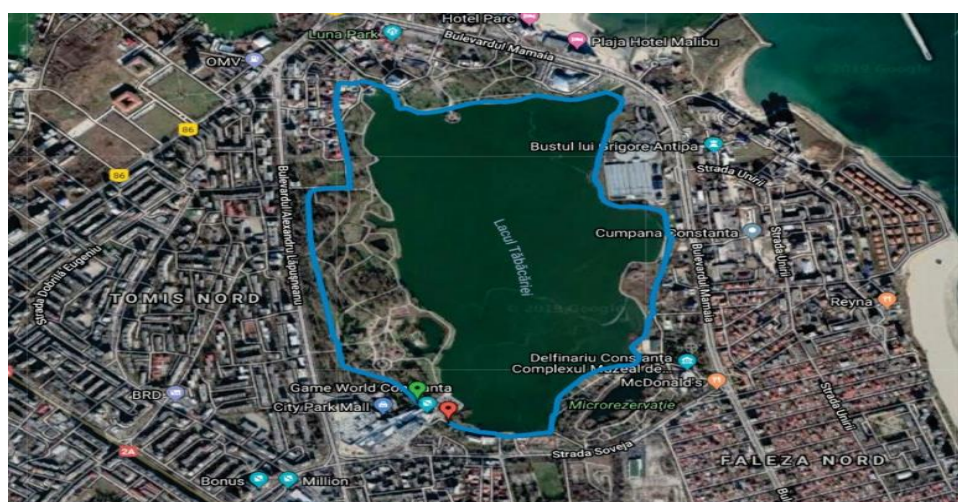


- Aventura Park, one of the most popular parks of this kind in Romania, offers tourists activities, Tyrolean, bicycle rental, paintball etc.;
- Comana Monastery, built on the ruins of an old monastery founded by Vlad Tepes, was erected by Radu Serban (1588) and rebuilt by Cantacuzino (1700).



♦ Marathon trails in Constanta

For running trails in Constanta county, the city of Constanta was chosen as the host of these type of sports event, and one of the



route proposals is in the heart of the city, in Tabacarie Park. The marathon trail has a low difficulty level and a length of 4.4 km in a green area, with paved alleys and tall trees that stand guard in front of the sun's burning rays.



Choosing to participate at marathon events here, the more or less athletes will have the opportunity to go for a run in the morning and then enjoy some of the most famous touristic attraction that the city of Constanta has to offer.

➤ **Tourist attractions in the area**

- **The “Pr. Ion Borcea” aquarium from Constanta**, which was built between 1955 and 1958 and is located on the cliff below Regina Elisabeta Boulevard, near the Casino in Constanta, in the historical centre of the city, being an emblematic building. The aquarium has to approximately 2,000 fishes from 60 different species, divided into the three sections of the aquarium, the marine section, the indigenous freshwater and the exotic species, representing a collection of freshwater and saltwater fish from Romania and other all over the world countries.



- **The Museum of the Romanian Navy** - the former Naval School houses the Marine Museum, a unique museum in the country. It has an area of 10,775 square meters, divided into 30 rooms and exhibits 37,800 pieces grouped in 33 collections, 22 being museum collections, 8 documentary collections and 3 different ones, organized by thematic-chronological criteria.



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- **The Museum of Folk Art in Constanta**, which is located in a building from 1893 and considered an architectural monument, that was once a post office and a town hall, has a national character and includes exhibits of all genres of folk art divided into geographical areas. Exhibits include ceramics, wood and glass icons, metal, folk wear, bark, fabrics, textiles, ornaments, household items made of ceramics, wood, metal or interior fabrics - wipes, table tops, sheets, bed sheets, bark, pearl, pillow tops (cotton, borangic and wool).





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- **The Museum of National History and Archaeology in Constanta** was founded in 1878 and is considered one of the richest museums in Romania and has unique exhibits of extraordinary value as the white marble Glykon snake and the collection of coins engraved with the Scythian kings. His exhibits are mostly pieces of Hamangia and Gumelnita cultures, from the Neolithic era, various statues of Greek deities, works of art, agricultural tools from the slavery period, Greco-Roman amphorae, sarcophagi dated as belonging to the 1st - 3rd centuries etc.



- **The Constanta Harbour Museum**, located in a modest and attractive building in the port of Constanta on the North, the museum was inaugurated in 1996 to celebrate 100 years since the beginning of the construction of the modern port of Constanta. It has an internal exhibition where the port's evolution is presented through various exhibits consisting of reproductions of documents, sketches, maps, press articles, etc. and an outdoor exhibition where there is an anchor, a bucket used for loading/unloading vessels and a metal boiler, made in Germany.



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- The "Ion Jalea" Sculpture Museum, located in a historical monument building done in neo-Romanian style by the architect Victor Stefanescu, has exhibitions consisting of works donated by the plastic artist Ion Jalea (1887-1983): sculpture (108 works), drawings and sketches, reliefs, statues, busts.



- The Casino from Constanta, which is one of the emblematic buildings of the city of Constanta and of the whole country being strongly identified with the cliff at the Black Sea. It was built between 1909 and 1910, in Art Nouveau style, and at the time of construction was seen as too complex in details and decorations. The casino has



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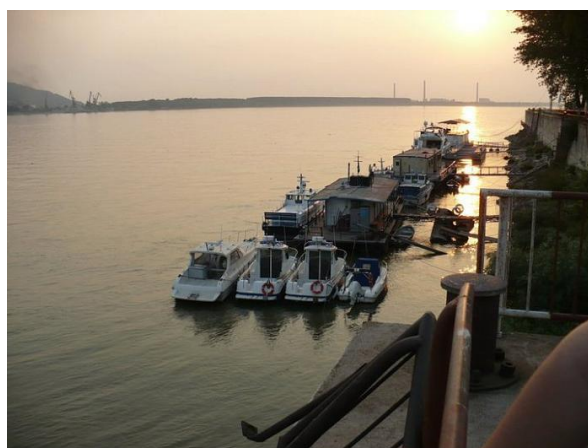


been introduced in a restoration project that will be implemented in the next financial programming period. This emblematic building can be seen in various Romanian or international films, at the moment being closed, but used as background for various artistic actions from classical music concerts to international fashion shows.



◆ Marathon trails in Zimnicea

For Teleorman county, a perfect route was chosen for organizing running events in the city of Zimnicea. Taking advantage of the city's position on the banks of the Danube, it had been identified a running trail for marathons. It has a distance of 5.9 km on the river bank with the departure and arrival near the Cantina Restaurant, whom route has a low difficulty level.





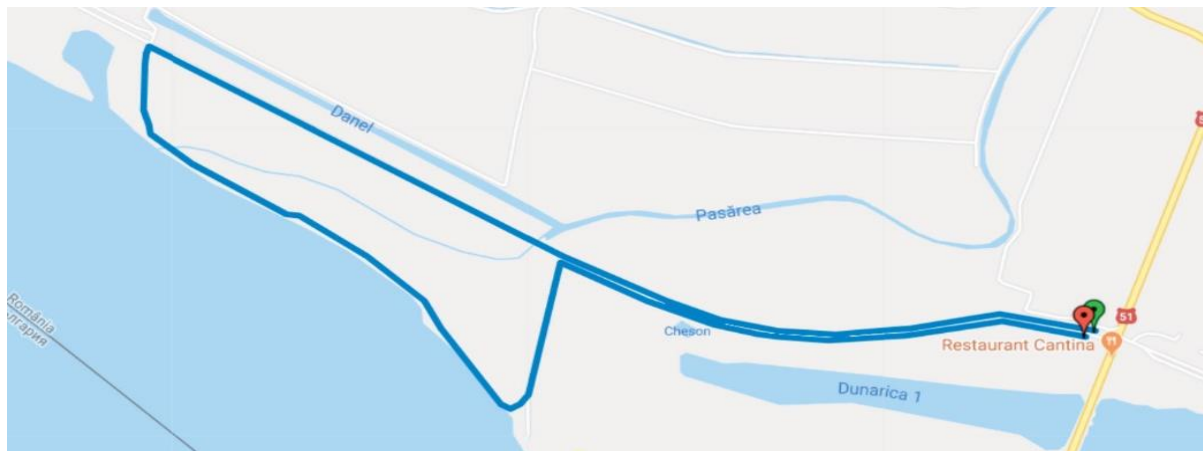
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➤ Tourist attractions in the area

- **The archaeological site from Zimnicea**, located in the southernmost point of Romania, it comprises a complex that extended over a long period of time, from the Bronze Age to the Medieval Age. Here is the oldest Geto-Dacian fortress in Muntenia, Zimnidava, which would later become, under the rule of Mircea cel Batran, a medieval fortification called Dezimnikos;
- **Lake Suhaia Nature Reserve**, which is located in the territory of Suhaia commune and protected aquifer area, includes 11 species of rare plants and protected wild birds at European level. The surface of the reservation is 1,455 ha.



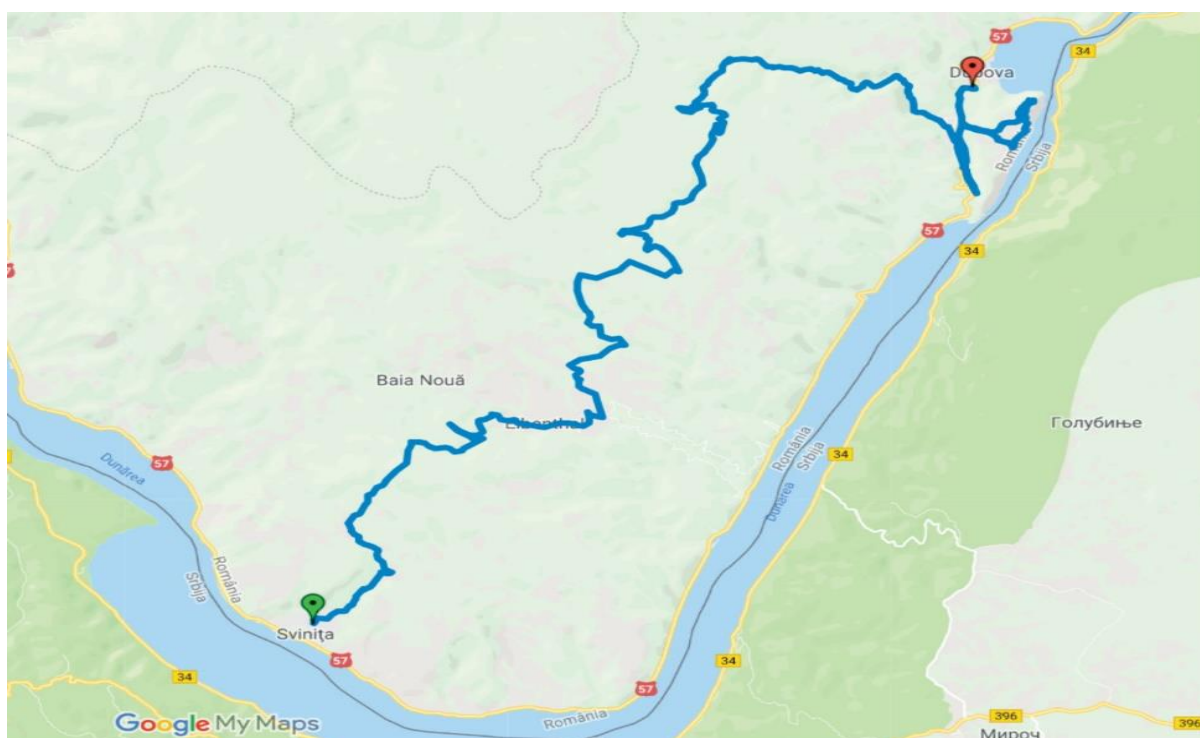


3.2. 2nd Integrated Tourism Product - Hiking Trails in Romania

♦ Hiking trails in Mehedinti

In Mehedinti county, the hiking study proposal is a 43.8 km trail, which has the starting point from Svinita to Eibenthal - Liubotina - Cremeneasca - Ponicoava Cave - Large Boilers till Dubova. Svinita is a commune in Mehedinti county, located on the Danube (in the area of the Banat known as *Clisura Dunarii*).

The town of Eibenthal, founded in 1827, is home to one of the largest Czech communities in Romania. Considered the safest and most welcoming place in Romania, the village of Eibenthal surprises the traveller through the well-preserved traditional houses and the warmth of the people. It is a time forgotten place and a magnificent hiking staircase. The route continues through the Liubotina Valley of the river of the same name, tributary of the Danube. We notice the spectacular landscapes given by the cascades formed in the riverbed and the beech forests in which there are also specimens of shingle, rare and protected conifer in Romania. The whole area, the Danube and the hills Codicea Mica and Codicea Mare, can be best admired on the Rudina plateau.



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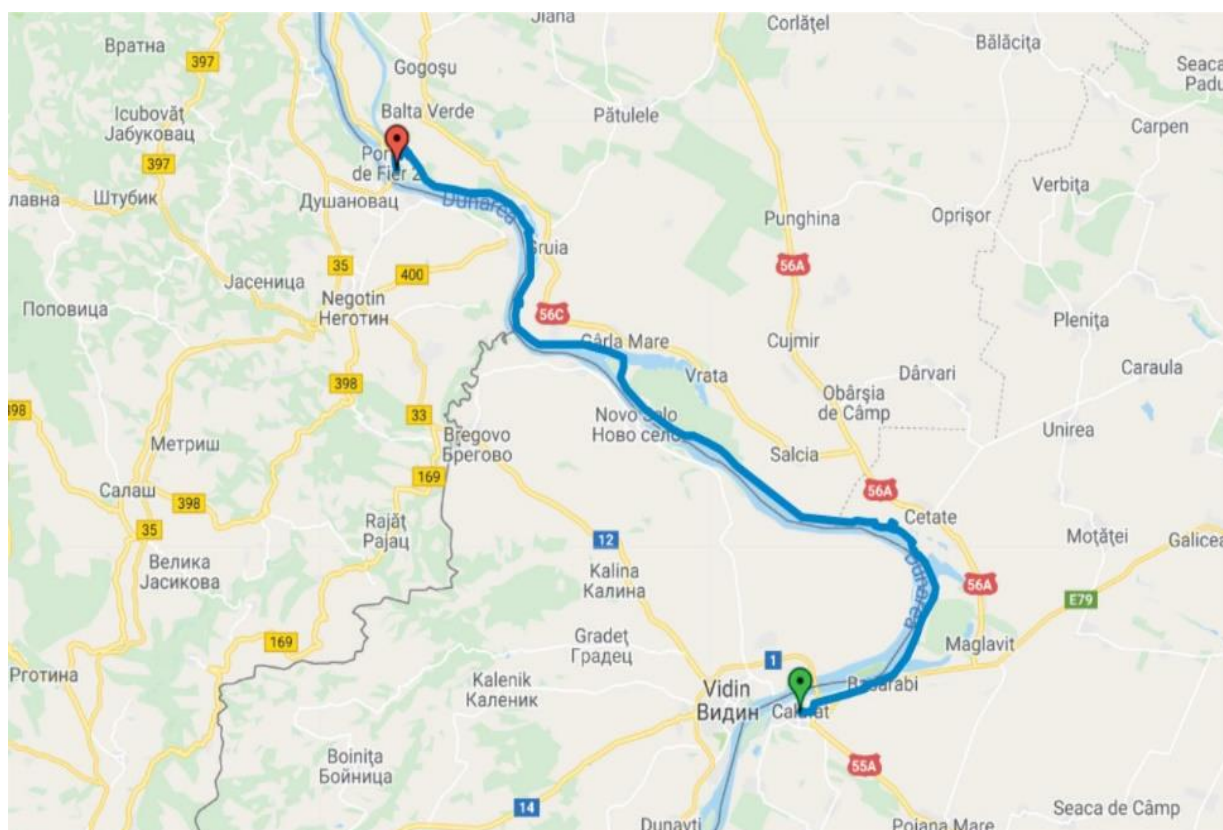
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- **Turina's Cave;**
- **The medieval fortress TRICULE (TRI-KULE),** built in the 16th century was occupied by Austrians, Turks and Hayduke, due to its strategic position. Initially it had three towers, of which only two remained, each with two levels with connection between them on walls with palisades.

◆ Hiking trails in Dolj County

One of the proposed hiking trails in Dolj county has 73 km long and is identified on the route Calafat - Port Citadel - Salcia - Garla Mare - Gruia - Iron Gates 2. It has the starting point from the city of Calafat and, despite its long distance, it has a low difficulty level. The route follows the banks of the Danube, crossing spectacular, wild areas, beaches, and the cultural port of Citadel. The hiking trail captures the most unique and beautiful landscapes offered by the Danube in all its surroundings. The Danube bank also offers a lot of camping places, the area being known for not having a varied range of accommodation units.





➤ Tourist attractions in the area

- **Gruia protected natural area** within the commune of Garla Mare is the place of landscapes and picturesque touristic objectives. Here you can find the Church of the Holy Ghost Descent as well as Garla Mare Island, near the town. What makes this place special are the archaeological sites where numerous artefacts dating from the Middle Bronze Age have been found;



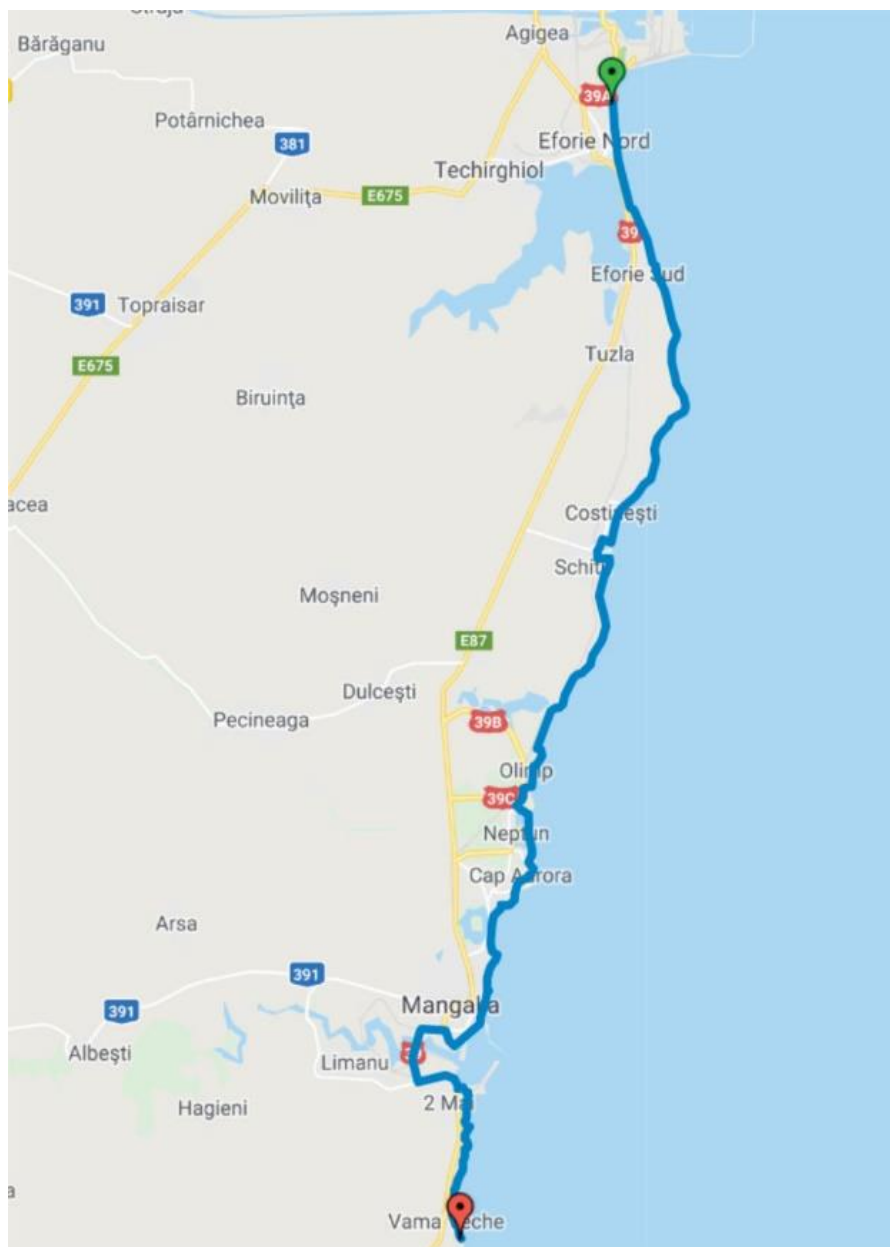
- **Cetate cultural port** is at this moment a place restored by the poet Mircea Dinescu, where various cultural activities take place, from sculpture, film, theatre, poetry, literature and even gastronomy. In the past it was a former grain export port. In time it became an international tourist center;
- **Golenti Lake**, a pond included in Natura 2000, where the fishing takes place according to the norms of protected areas, is one of the most important ponds in Dolj county and offers a magnificent landscape;
- **Marincu Palace**, a monument of architecture of local interest was designed by the French architect Paul Gottereau, the same architect known in Romania and for other important buildings in Bucharest and not only, the Royal Palace in Bucharest, the Central University Library, the CEC House on Calea Victoriei as well as the Jean Mihail Palace, currently the Art Museum in Craiova.



◆ Hiking trails in Constanta county

Constanta county has so much to offer that after organizing a run in the city of Constanta the beach offers the perfect place for organizing a hiking and the proposed hiking will be done on the route Eforie Nord - Eforie Sud - Costinesti -

Mangalia - Vama Veche. Measuring 45.5 km in length, the difficulty level is low, the idea behind being to offer a fun hiking adventure, not physically demanding, relaxing, designated to those who need to disconnect from the daily stress. Breathing the salty sea air and walking through the sand will relax and well dispose all participants. The two nights can be spent in the multitude of accommodation units offered by the



seaside resorts. The hiking will take the enthusiasts through the southern resorts of the city of Constanta as well as on the wild beaches between the resorts. The final destination is Vama Veche.



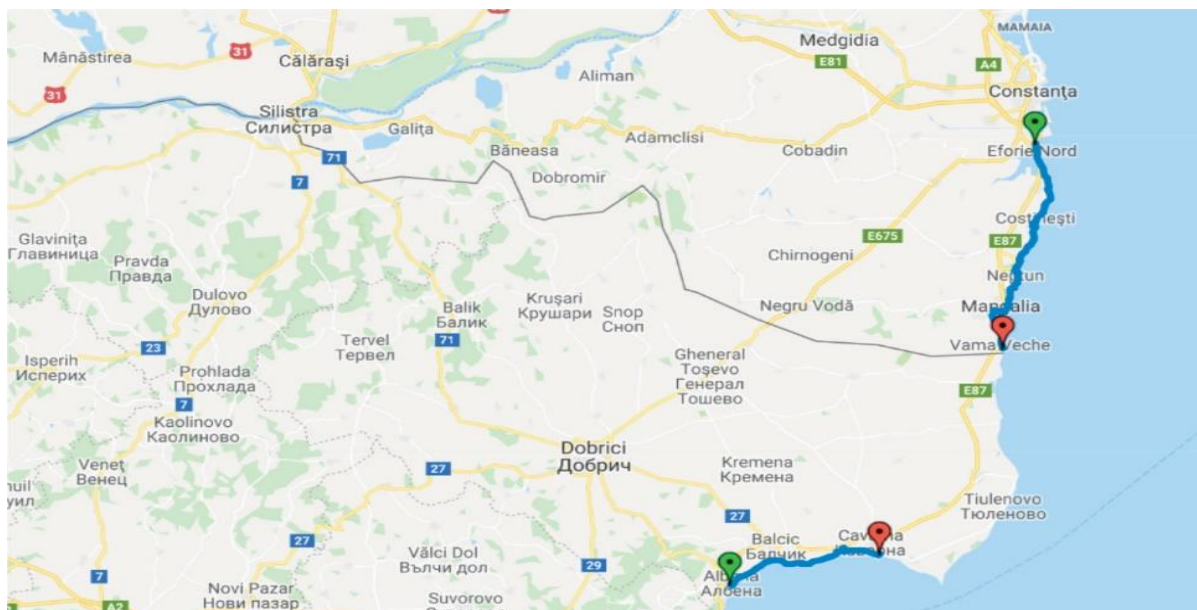
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➤ Tourist attractions in the area

- **Techirghiol Lake**, known for sapropelic mud and salt water, which have special therapeutic effects for joints;
- **Esmahan Sultan Mosque** from Mangalia is the oldest Muslim place of worship in the country, attested in 1575, and is surrounded by the 300-year-old Mohomedan cemetery. This mosque serves the Turkish-Tatar Muslim community in this area. The mosque is a historical monument registered with the name Geamia "Esmahan Sultan" in the list of historical monuments in Constanta county. In 2008, through the goodwill of a businessman, the mosque was put into capital repairs and was completely refurbished;





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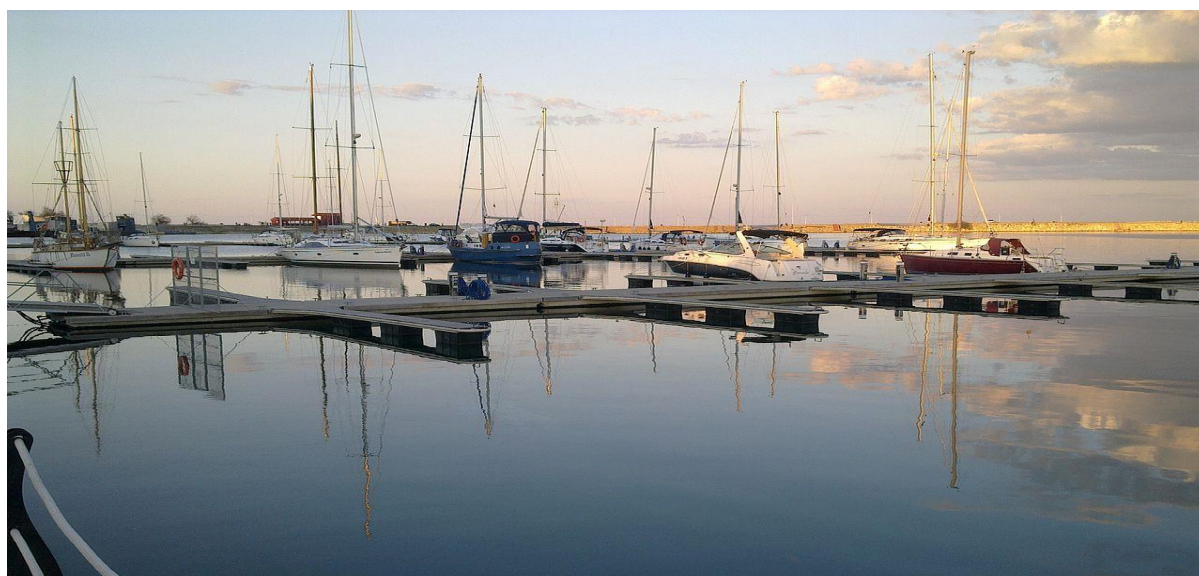


- **Callatis Archaeology Museum** - Following the modernization works of the city in the 1950s they revealed a lot of vestiges and artefacts that led to the establishment of the museum in 1959. The remains found are from the Neolithic, Greek, Roman and Roman-Byzantine periods.



The various vestiges present throughout the city, such as the defense wall of Callatis fortress, the Roman-Byzantine Necropolis and the princes' tomb belong to this museum. Inside the museum the tourists can see in the multitude of exhibited columns, capitals, friezes with metopic, ceramic vessels, amphorae, statues, glass vessels, funerary stars, inscriptions, representations of deities, ornaments and jewellery, coins, utensils and many other objects of historical significance as well as the moment when the oldest written document in our country was found, the papyrus tomb, dating from the fourth century BC;

- **Mangalia tourist port**, meant for small boats, up to 18 m long, is the most modern tourist port in Romania and from it departs to the ports near the Black Sea, the Romanian ones Vama Veche, 2 Mai, Limanu, Venus, Neptun, Olimp, Costinesti, Eforie Sud, Eforie Nord, Agigea, Constanta, Mamaia or Midia or from nearby Bulgarian cities, like Varna for example. Here local companies organize sea trips;

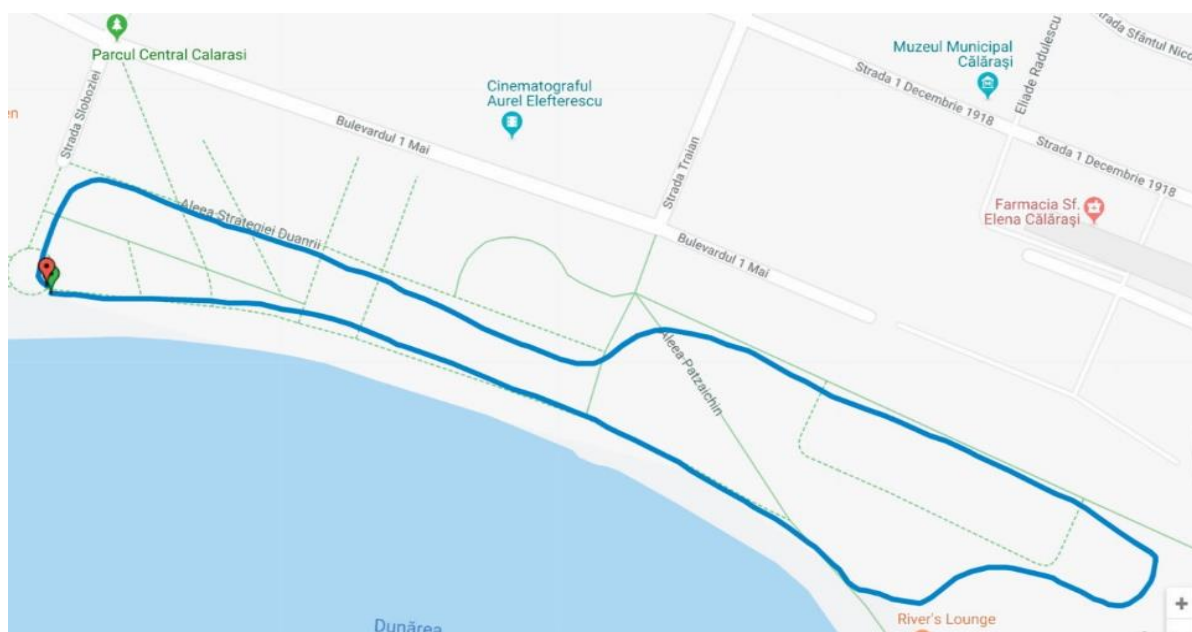




- **Comorova Forest** - Initially it was a forest with some species of dwarf oak (*Quercus robur*) oak trees, also comprising cedars, cypress trees and sheltering 4 families with a total of 14 souls, a group of Greek fishermen, Turkish or Romanian sheep breeders and Bulgarian gardeners who cut down much of the forest in time and in its place appeared the resorts of today Olympus, Neptune, Jupiter, Aurora, Venus and Saturn. At the moment, it is declared a forest reserve and a dendrological park with an area of 1.2 ha;
- **Limanu cave**, with a length of 3.64 km, located in the area of Limanu commune, on the shore of Mangalia Lake, is considered a unique monument of nature.

♦ Running and hiking trails in Calarasi

In Calarasi, for the running trails it was identified a beautiful area from the Danube shore, in the green Central Park, which perfectly captures the essence of the project, ecotourism along the Danube in the form of running and hiking. The chosen route is 1 km long, with the arrival point the same as the starting point, the number of laps being set on the day of the event, depending on the participants and their level of preparation, several rounds of 3, 5, 7 km to marathon trail can be organized smoothly. The route has a low level of difficulty, on the paved alleys of the park, suitable for everyone, the difficulty being given only by the number of laps set by the organizers.





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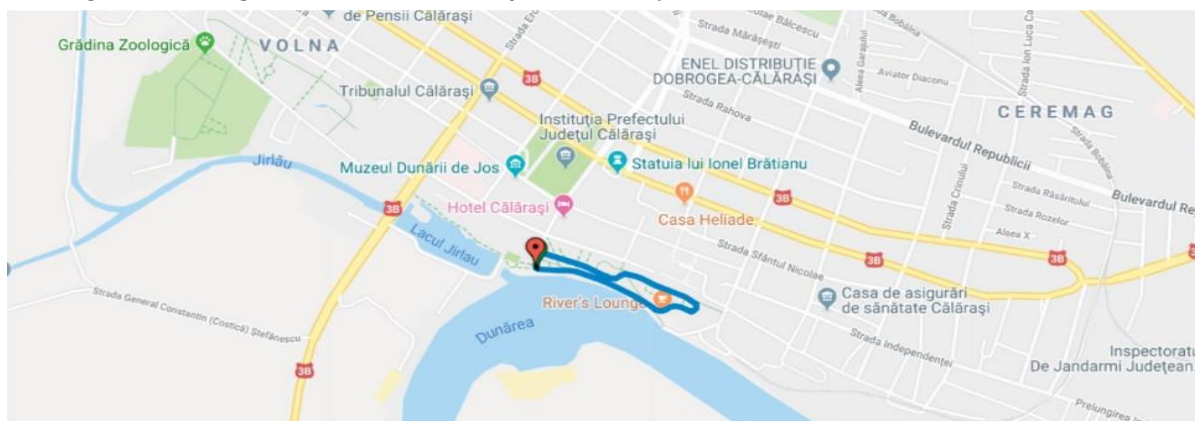
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Another running trail, which is close to the one previously presented and which enjoys the same beautiful landscapes and running conditions can be found in Dumbrava Park. Here the route has the same starting and finishing point, its length varying between 800 m and 1.2 km, the running taking place both on the specially arranged running track and on the paved alleys.



For hiking in Calarasi, a route was chosen on the island near the city to capture the wild charm of the Danube, also being close to the urban centre, is complete safe. The route is 60 km long and has a slightly medium difficulty level, with few level changes. The route impresses through the landscapes offered by the wilderness of places untouched by civilization, spectacular landscapes with the flora and fauna of the Danube. There are multiple campsites for those who want to spend the night in nature.





➤ **Tourist attractions in the area**

- **The Zoo**, which was founded in 1980 on June 1st and which at the very beginning had several mammals, wild and domestic, and a personal collection of exotic birds, soon became one of the largest zoos in the country. In 1985, following a flood due to an unfinished dam, most of the animals died drowned.

Forming close links with other zoos outside the country, the zoo in Calarasi reaches 1990 in unique animals in Romania and is the only zoo in the country that reproduces exotic animals like the Siberian tiger, jaguar or ostrich emu. Some of these animals came either from other zoos or from the Globe Circus. The latest building in the zoo is the Aqua terrarium, a collection of exotic fish and various reptiles;



- **The Lower Danube Museum** was established in 1951 and over the years has undergone several administrative periods. It was initially an archaeological museum in Calarasi due to the efforts of some intellectuals from the city, who discovered several archaeological sites, so that in 1968 it became part of the Ialomita County Museum, the archaeology section, so that in 1981 this section became the Calarasi County Museum and in 1990 to be renamed the Lower Danube Museum.



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In 2003 the archaeology section will be re-established, to which researchers from other museums in the country also contributed. The museum holds over 40,000 pieces;

- **Statue of King Carol I.** His Majesty King Michael I of Romania also took part in the unveiling of the statue;

- **The ruins of the Byzantine fortress**

Vicina, which is the second site in size after the one from Sarmizegetusa, located on the island of Pacuiul lui Soare and most of it is submerged in the



Danube, the costs for any restoration action being too high to be ever saved and preserved. This unique place, where live many species of birds and wild animals, is one of the main attractions of Calarasi county.





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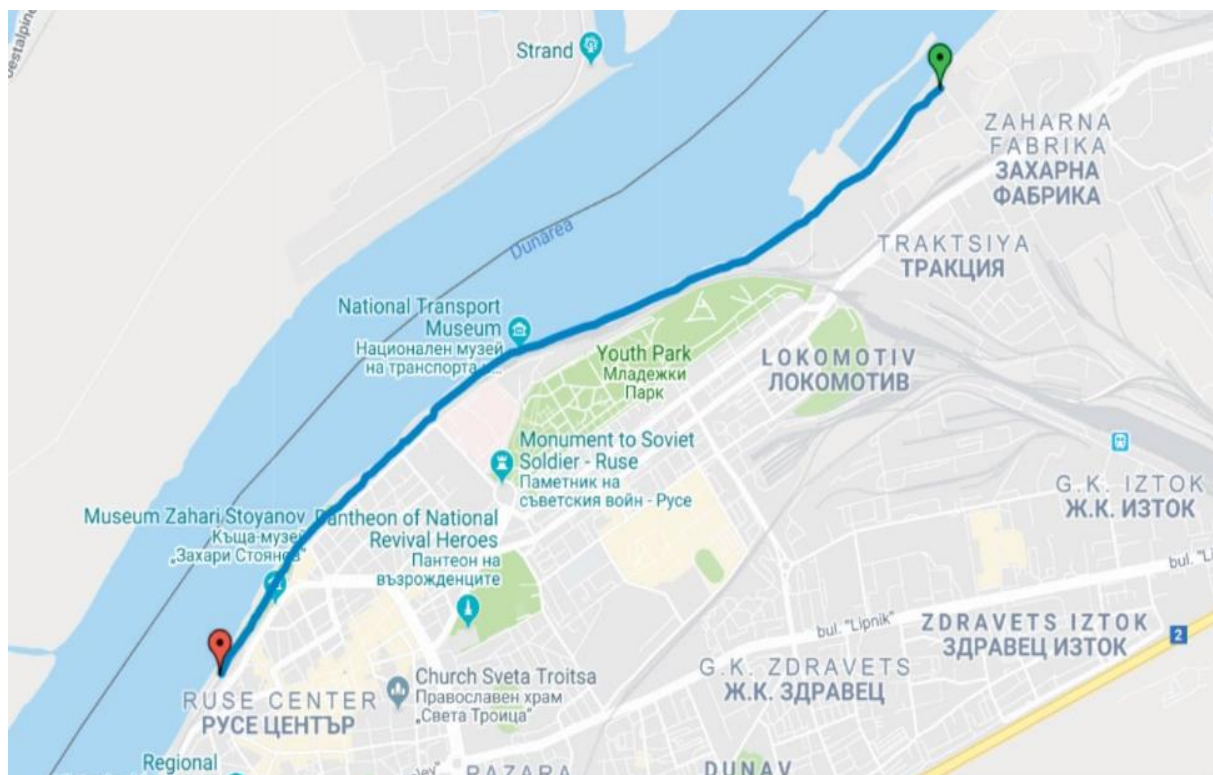


3.3. 1st Integrated Tourism Product - Marathon Trails in Bulgaria

◆ Marathon trail in Ruse

The first proposed route for running in Bulgaria is on the Danube bank in the Ruse city. With a length of 8.4 km, the route is on a pedestrian alley with a low level of difficulty, accessible to anyone. The route is designed for both the best physically prepared and those running for pleasure. With the FINISH point in the same place as the START point, depending on what the participants want, the route can only be travelled in one direction, its length becoming 4.2 km.

The route was chosen to capture the essence of the project, running along the Danube river.



➤ Tourist attractions in the area

- The house of Elias Canetti, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1981;
- Aleksandrovska, the main street of the city, is a mixture of buildings with architecture in different styles, neo-baroque, neo-rococo and other architectural styles;



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- **The old centre of Ruse** is located around the Russian History Museum and there are several buildings here that are worth visiting. The regional library "Liuben Karavelov", former Bulgarian writer and activist of the national rebirth movement, is a building in the Baroque style, predominantly in the city of Russia, as well as the former bank of brothers Ivan and Stefan Simeonov;
- **"Sava Ognianov" theatre**, the city theatre built between 1898-1902 in neoclassical style, also a symbol of the city;
- **The Russian History Museum**, founded in 1904 is the site of 140,000 exhibits, and its main exhibit is the Borovo treasure, It represents all the objects extracted from the archaeological excavations of the medieval city of Cherven and from the ancient fortresses of the Danube Yatrus and Sexaginta Prista;

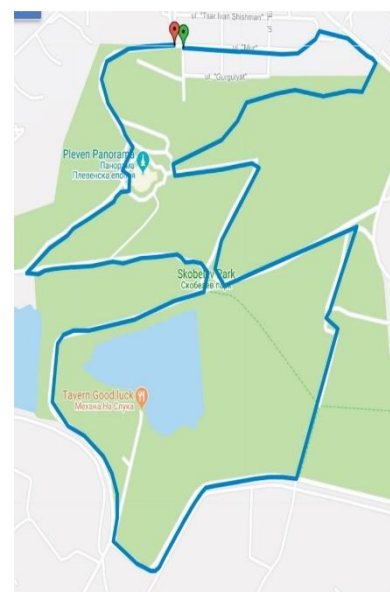


- **The Roman fortress "Sexaginta Prista"**, an ancient fortress in the city of Ruse, its name means "the port of the sixty ships";
- **The Kaliopa House** hosts an exhibition of everyday objects, clothes, jewellery, accessories, cutlery, etc. which presents the history of the urban development of the city of Ruse, its cultural diversity, its connection with Europe and the cultural influences that led to the development of the city in its present form. Also here are reproductions, or models, of interiors from other historical periods, a living room, a music room, a bedroom, a drawing room are redone.



◆ Marathon trails in Pleven

Pleven District is the home of a 5.4 km run through Skobelev Museum Park, in the vicinity of Pleven. It was built between 1904 and 1907 on the battlefield of the Siege of Plevna during the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-78. The park is located in a valley called Martva Dolina, due to the 6,500 Russian and Romanian soldiers injured and killed during the battle. Dozens of Russian war cannons are arranged as batteries in the park, the park being a favourite destination for walks by Pleven residents. Panorama Plevna, another landmark dedicated to events in the siege of Plevna. The difficulty level is easy.



➤ Tourist attractions in the area

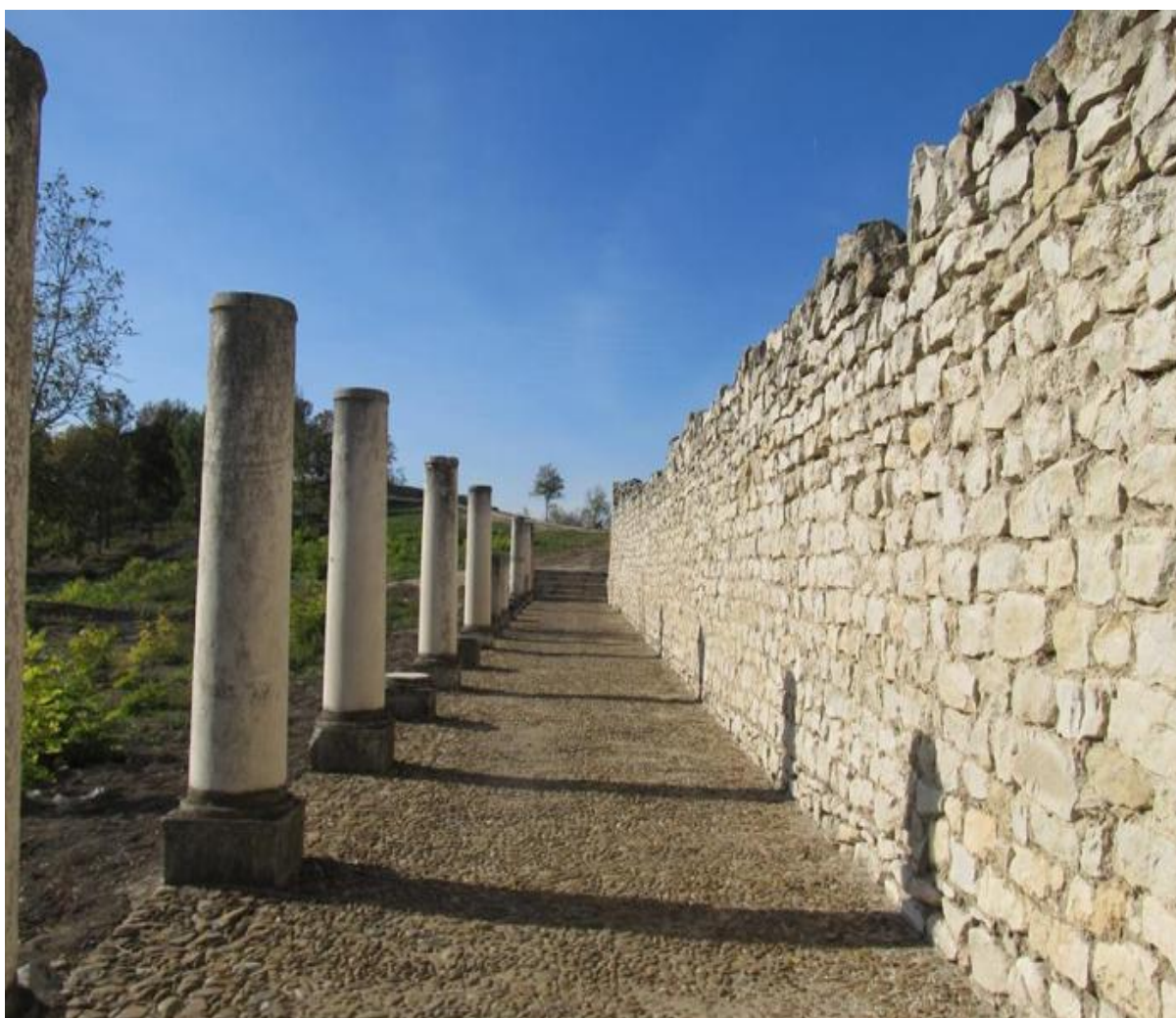
- **Kaylaka Park** - The name *Kaylaka* comes from the Turkish word *kayalik* and means rocky place. It is a large park and a protected area south of Pleven, Bulgaria, located in a karst valley. The park is spread over an area of 10 square kilometres and is surrounded by steep cliffs ideal for mountaineering. The ruins of the Roman fortress Storgosia are located in Kaylaka, as well as ponds and reservoirs with boats and pedals, a swimming pool, hotels, cafes, restaurants, discos and playgrounds;





- **The Roman fortress Storgozia.** Initially only a Roman road became a fortress in late antiquity due to Gothic raids and other barbarians after 238. At the beginning of the 4th century it was fortified with a defensive wall 2.20 meters wide.

The archaeological excavations also discovered two gates and three defensive towers, as well as residential buildings, a large 4th century basilica and a public stable. The fortress existed until the end of the sixth century, when the settlement of the Slavs led to its abandonment;



- **The Wine Museum** was opened on September 17th, 2018 in a cave in Kaylaka Park. It is about 5 km away from the centre of Pleven, which makes it a beautiful, special and easily accessible destination. Bulgarian and French architects, designers and oenologists and curators of the Pleven Museum of History contributed to the creation of this museum.



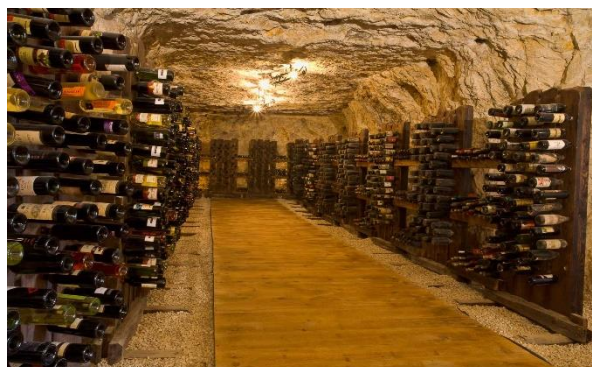
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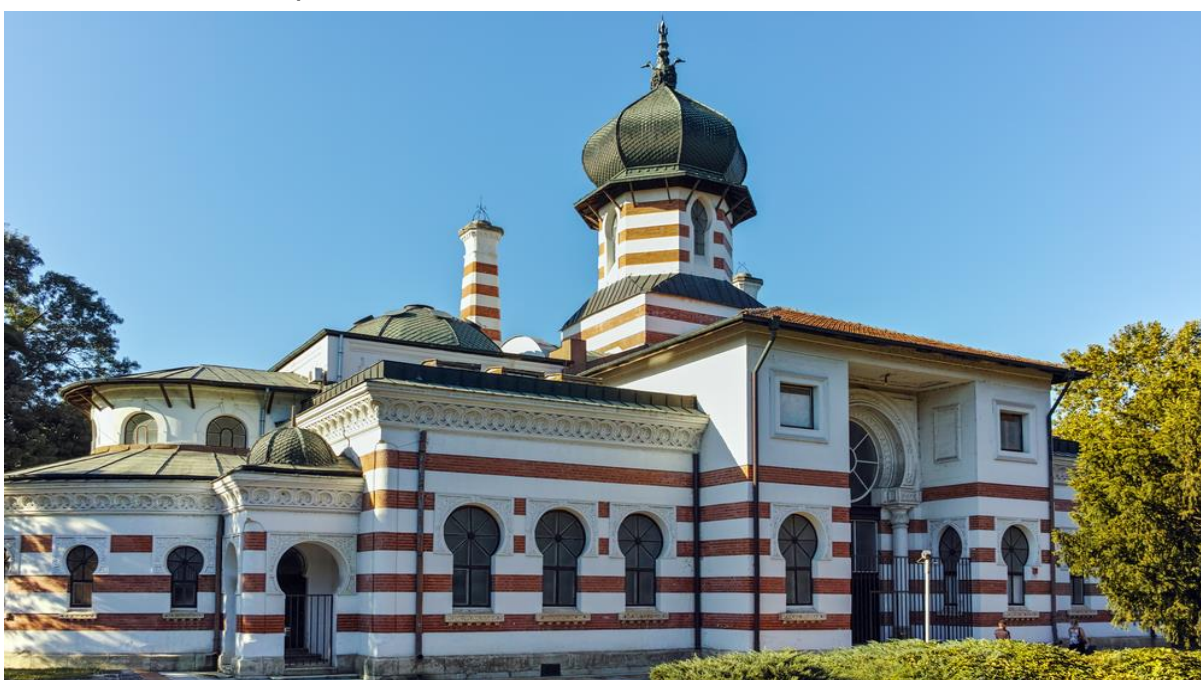


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The museum has over 6,000 bottles of Bulgarian wine from all regions of the country and many of them are for sale. In addition, the museum boasts the largest collection in the country with more than 7,000 old wines (between 30 and 90 years old). Apart from wines, they are exhibited with various objects used in the process of wine production from several historical periods, even from the Thracian period. In the cellar are kept in 100 barrels of French oak wines from all over Bulgaria;

- **Saint George`s Chapel** - The Conqueror was built between 1903 and 1907 in neo-Byzantine style by the architect P. Koychev and is dedicated to the Russian and Romanian soldiers who fell in the liberation of Bulgaria during the sieges of Plevna in 1877. The icons in the mausoleum of the chapel are the works of Bulgarian artists. The mausoleum chapel bears the name of Saint George, the patron saint of the soldiers, and is also present in the coat of arms of Pleven.

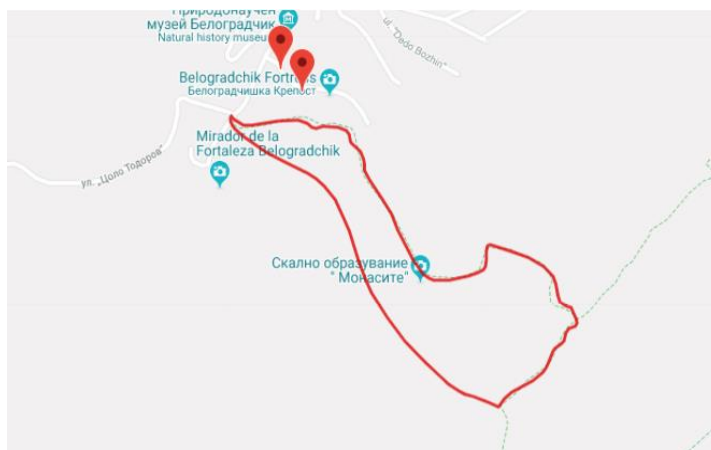




◆ Marathon trails in Belogradchik

Belogradchik is located in the north-western part of Bulgaria, 55 km from Vidin and 70 km from Montana. It is picturesque in the western part of the Stara Planina Mountains, at the south-western tip of the Belogradchik garland, 545 m above sea level. Through the Oreshets railway station, the city has a connection with the Bulgarian railway network.

Well located and welcoming, Belogradchik is one of the most attractive national tourist attractions in Bulgaria. The unique nature and rich historical heritage are defined as one of the most interesting and desirable tourist attractions in Bulgaria.





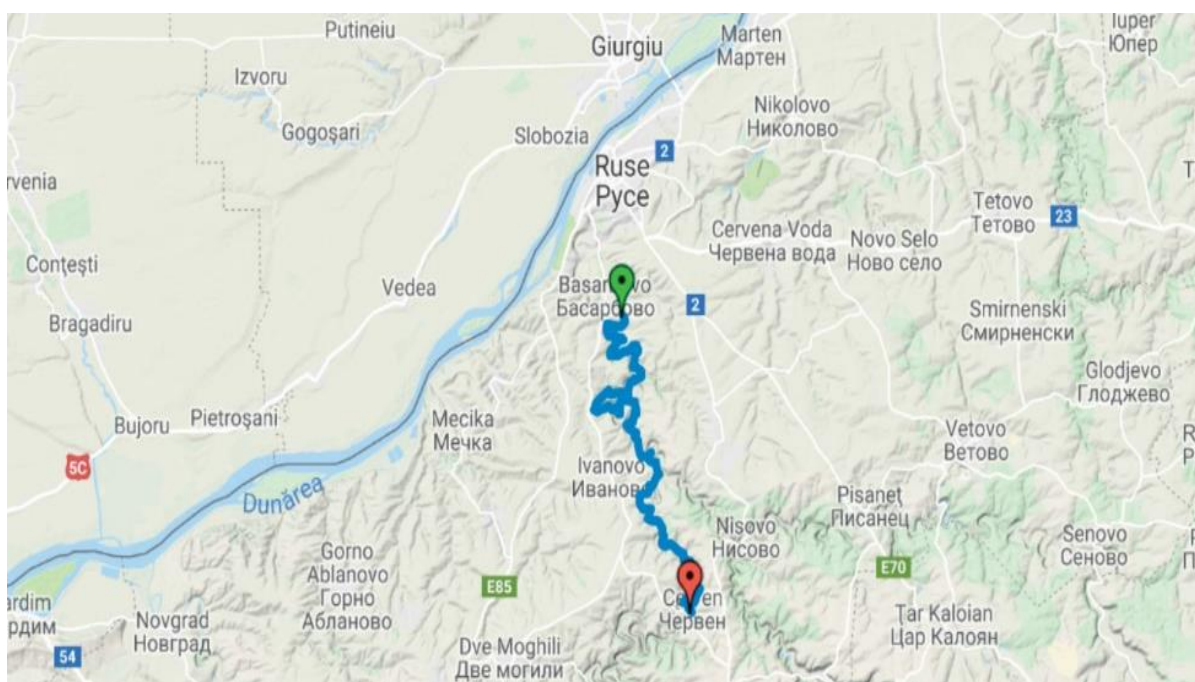
3.4. 2nd Integrated Tourism Product - Hiking Trails in Bulgaria

◆ Hiking trails in Rusenski Lom Park

The first proposal for a 3-day hiking events (2 nights) is in the Rusenski Lom Natural Park, on the river valley of the same name, it is a protected park and known for its impressive biodiversity. This should be considered when organizing the hike and it is our recommendation for participants to take anti-mosquito and tick spray to avoid any inconvenience that may occur. The sun lotion is understandable for any summer hiking.

The difficulty level of the route is medium to easy, with no really difficult areas to travel or high-level changes. It is a platform that can be walked easily. The route starts from the right of the Basarabov Monastery and follows the existing path. You pass through the village of Krasen and proceed further to the town of Bojicen, where the first night will be.

From Bojicen you go further through the park to the rock churches of Ivanovo. The next night will be in Kosov, so that in the morning, he will leave for the final hike, Cherven fortress. The established route has 39.5 km.





➤ **Tourist attractions in the area**

- **The 14th century medieval town of Cherven** offers a beautiful view of the town and the Cerni Lom river. It is known for how well various elements of that period were preserved, the fortified walls, the workshops of that period, the rooms of the nobility, various objects, ceramics, jewellery, all these being part of the Borovo treasure exhibited at the Russian History Museum.

A brief history of the fortress shows that the city was the successor to a former Byzantine city from the 6th century, but the area has been inhabited since the arrival of the Thracians. Cherven was first mentioned in the eleventh century in an old apocryphal Bulgarian chronicle. It became important after 1235, when it became the seat of the medieval Bulgarian Orthodox Bishopric in Cherven. It was affected by the Mongol raids of the Golden Horde in 1242 and was briefly conquered by Byzantine troops during the reign of Tsar Ivailo (1278-1280);



- **The Monastery of Saint Dimitrie Basarabov in the rock** - Although founded during the Second Bulgarian Empire, the oldest written mention of the monastery dates from the fifteenth century in an Ottoman fiscal register. The monastery became famous in the 17th century, after the death of St. Dimitar Basarbovski.



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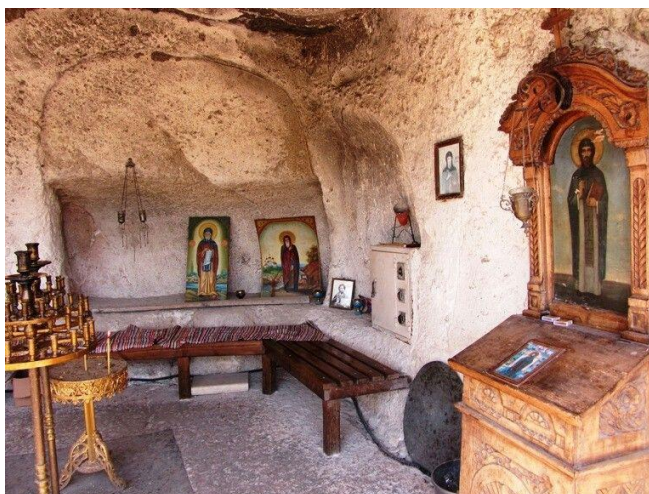
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St. Dimitar Basarbovski was a shepherd and led an ascetic life on the cliffs of the monastery. He died in 1685. He was buried in the village church, but during the Russian-Turkish war of 1768-1774, General Pyotr Saltykov agreed to transfer his relics to Russia. The road passed through Romania. At that time,



there was a plague epidemic in this country. Legend has it that when the relics of the saint entered Bucharest, people ceased to die of plague. The inhabitants of the city asked the general to leave the saint's body there. Today, his relics can be found in Bucharest, in the church of St. Constantine and Elena. In 1937, Father Hrisant settled in the Basarbovo monastery and reopened it. The monastery celebrates its saint on October 26th - St. Dumitru's Day;





- **Orlova Chuka Cave** is located in the Danube Plain, north-eastern Bulgaria, Rusenski Lom Park. With a total length of 13,437 m, Orlova Chuka is the second longest cave in the country after Duhlata.

The cave was discovered in 1941 and opened to tourists in 1957. Orlova Chuka is home to 14 species of bats. In the cave were discovered spikes, spears and ceramic pieces dating from prehistoric period. The fossils of cave bears were also found here;



- **The rock churches in Ivanovo** are a group of monolithic churches, chapels and monasteries, in the Rusenski Lom Natural Park, built from solid rocks 32 m above the river on which the banks are built and completely different from other monastery complexes in Bulgaria, located near the village of Ivanovo. The complex is famous for its beautiful and well-preserved medieval frescoes.

The complex was noted for its frescoes that became famous, very well preserved, from the 13th and 14th centuries, representing very well the Bulgarian medieval art. The complex consists of the Chapel of St. Michael the Archangel ("The Underground Church"), the Baptistery, the Gospodev Doll Chapel, the Church of St. Theodore (the Demolished Church) and the main Church.



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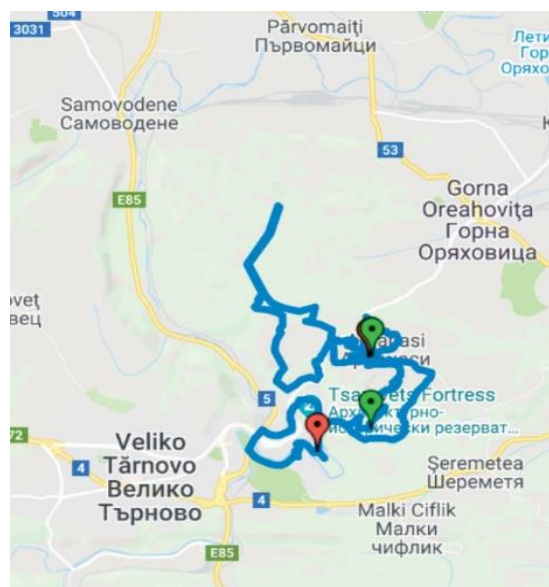


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◆ Hiking trails in Veliko Tarnovo

In Veliko Tarnovo district, the proposed hiking route is 31 km long and takes place in Arbanasi and the surrounding region and then descends to the old town of Veliko Tarnovo, where you can explore the many sights offered by the old medieval city. The difficulty level is very varied, with beginner areas, urban areas, through Arbanasi and Veliko Tarnovo, up to intermediate and even advanced in the forest areas.



➤ Tourist attractions in the area

- **Gurko street** is one of the most picturesque streets in the old town. It is named in memory of Russian General Joseph Vladimirovich Romeyko-Gurko. During the Russian-Turkish war (1877-1878) he liberated the city of Tarnovo on July 7th, 1877.



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General Gurko is commemorated with a bust in Marno Pol Park in the city centre. Annually, on that date, he is celebrated with an official cadet honour guard from the city's National Military University, and the local branch of the "Traditsiya" Historical Society ("Tradition") is rebuilding the event;

- **Charshia Samovodska Street** developed as a business center during the Bulgarian Renaissance. There are numerous craft stores, which have retained an old craftsmanship tradition.
- **Tsarevets Fortress** is a medieval fortress located on a hill with the same name in Veliko Tarnovo. It served as the capital of the second Bulgarian empire and was the seat fortress of many Bulgarian kings. At the moment it is a popular tourist attraction. It has three entrances; the main entrance is located on the eastern side of the hill. The complex is located in the centre, surrounded by an interior stone wall, two battle towers and two entrances - north and south. It consists of a throne room, a castle church and the king's room. The restoration of Tsarevets began in 1930 and was completed in 1981 in honour of the 1,300th anniversary of the establishment of the Bulgarian state.





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- The "Renaissance and Constituent Assembly" Museum;



- **Arbanasi** is a picturesque town belonging to Veliko Tarnovo, located on a plateau, 4 km from Veliko. It is known for its rich history and for a large number of historical monuments, such as the 16th and 17th century churches and examples of Bulgarian national architecture, which have transformed it into a popular tourist destination.

In the 18th century, Arbanasi was regularly attacked by Phanariotes rulers from the Romanian country, and a number of expelled Valai nobles were temporarily settled in the village, e.g. Nicolae Brancoveanu, Ioan (Iana-che) Vacarescu etc. In 1790, in Arbanasi there were 17 nobles



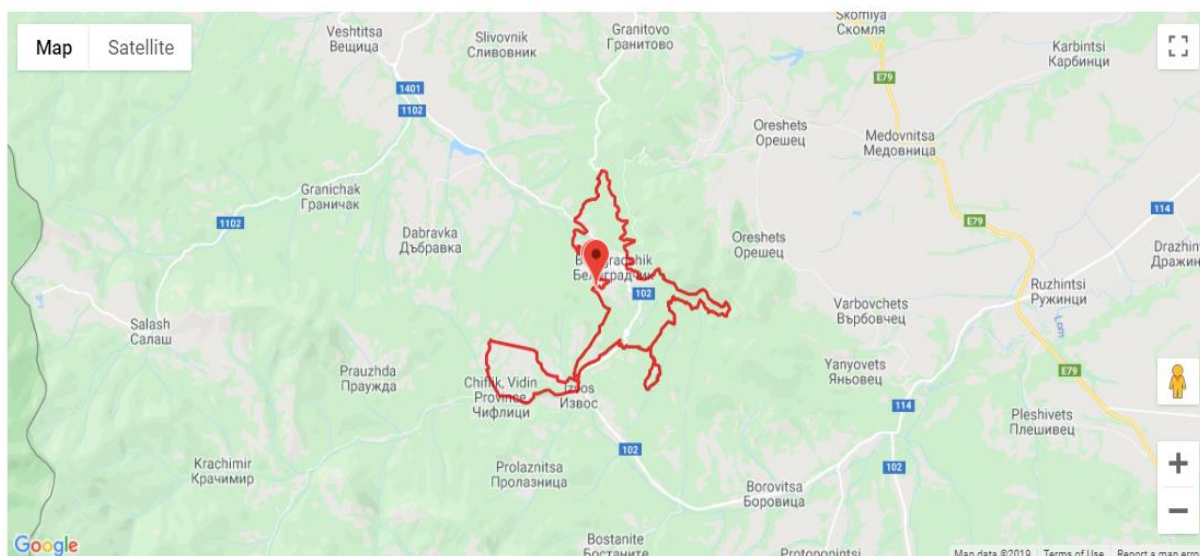
from the Romanian Country with their families. Up to now, some of the houses in Arbanasi are named after the former owners of the Wallachians (Brancoveanu, Cantacuzino, Filipescu). Today it is in the UNESCO heritage and a special tourist attraction with places and other tourist structures, souvenir shops etc.



◆ Hiking trails in Belogradchik

In Bulgaria, the Belogradchik forest and unique place to connect with nature in the fall await us, where we will discover, by foot, hiking trails among the most spectacular rock formations in the Balkans, considered to be the natural wonders of the country, some of them reaching up to 200 meters in height.

The cliffs surrounding Belogradchik are rock formations created by the erosion of sandstone and Triassic conglomerate layers. The enchanting natural monuments were carved by rainwater and winds over a period of more than 200 million years, transforming the deformed stone into sculptures that resemble the mythical creatures, human figures and even animals and birds. Belogradchik rocks have been declared a natural monument since 1949.



➤ Tourist attractions in the area

- **Belogradchik Fortress**, one of the most famous better-preserved medieval fortresses of Bulgaria, is located near the city of Belogradchik, being the main tourist attraction of the area from the northern slopes and the Balkan Mountains. It is a cultural monument of national importance with the walls of the fortress over 2 meters thick and up to 12 m in time. The fortresses are fortified for separate care, which are connected to each other and a total area of 10,210 meters. It is possible to rebuild in recent years for a cultural monument become;



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- **Belogradchik rocks** are a group of strange sandstone and conglomerate formations, located on the western slopes of the Balkan Mountains (Stara Planina), near Belogradchik in north-western Bulgaria. The rocks vary in colour, from red to yellow in the first place; some stones reach up to 200 m height.



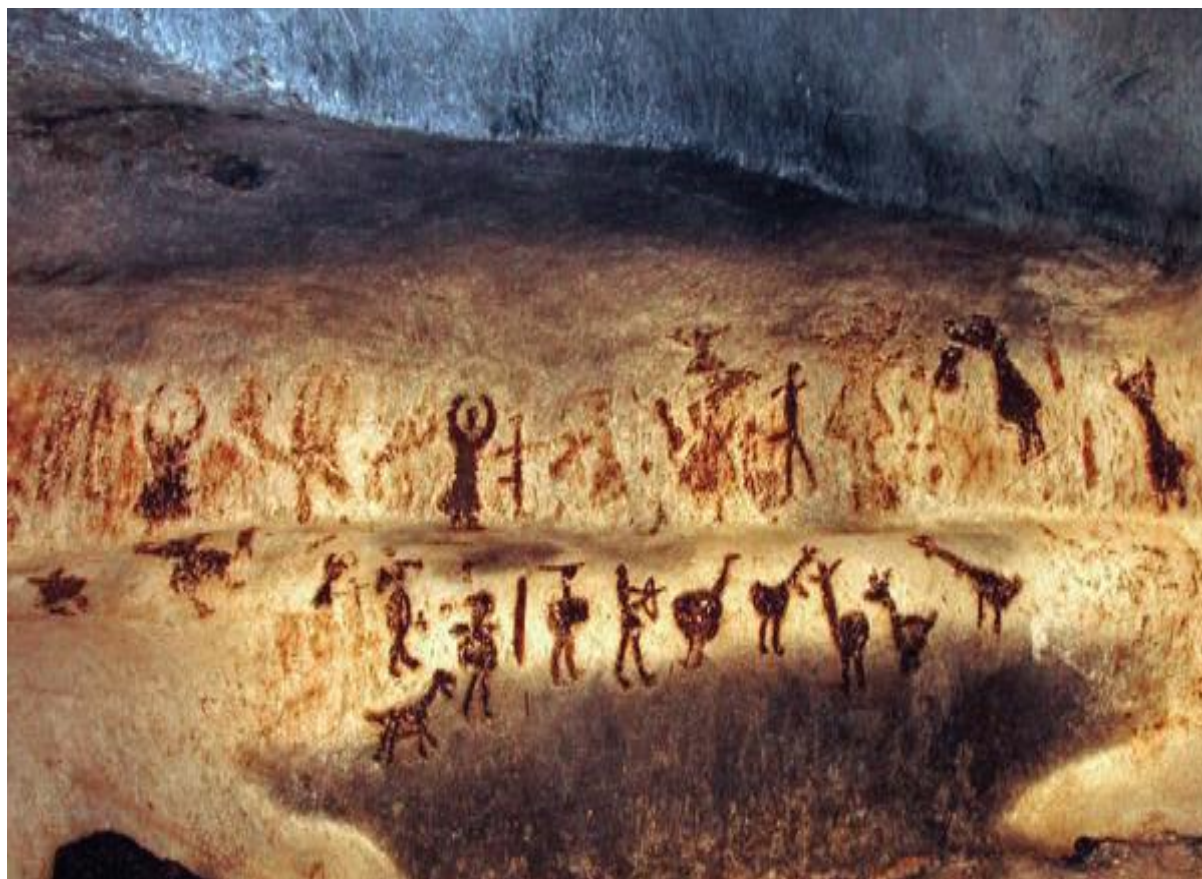


Many rocks have fantastic shapes and are associated with interesting legends. The 'Monks', the 'Bear', the 'Shepherd Boy' and 'Adam and Eve' are just some of the named formations.

The rocks were sculpted over millions of years by natural compression. Several hiking trails of varying difficulty lace through the rocks. The tourist information center has a map of the routes. Belogradchik stones have been declared a natural monument by the Bulgarian government and are a major tourist attraction in the region. They are the only habitat of the endemic Bulgarian plant *Hieracium belogradcense*, which is on the verge of extinction.

- **Magura cave** is located in north-western Bulgaria, near the village of Rabisha, 25 km from the town of Belogradchik in the province of Vidin.

The prehistoric mural paintings in Magura are very similar to those of the Grotta dei Cervi in Italy, which have an exceptional expression and a great artistic depth and are considered the most significant works of art of the European post-Palaeolithic era. In 1984, the site was inducted into the UNESCO World Heritage List;





- **Vida fortress** is a medieval fortress in Vidin in north-western Bulgaria and the main landmark of the city. It is made up of two concentric curtain walls and approximately nine towers of which three are kept at their height from the medieval period, including the original tents and is said to be the only medieval castle fully preserved in the entire country. The construction of the fortification began in the tenth century, instead of the ancient Roman castle Bononia.



Baba Vida's building is related to a legend, according to which a Bulgarian Danube king who ruled Vidin had three daughters: Vida, Kula and Gamza. Before his death, he divided his land into three. Vida, the eldest, was given Vidin and the countries from the north to the Carpathians, Kula was distinguished with Zaječar and the Timok Valley, and Gamza was to lead the countries west to Morava. Although Gamza and Kula married noble men and warriors, Vida remained unmarried and built the fortress in her city. The name of the castle means Grandma Vida.





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IV. INPUTS, ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS OF THE PROJECT

Romania - Bulgaria cross-border area is full of cultural and historical features, which makes it a beyond belief landscape. There are many ways of discovering the Romania-Bulgaria cross-border area and enjoying the natural and cultural heritage outside the big cities.

Several national parks, nature reserves, important wetlands and beautiful islands as well as some UNESCO World Heritage Sites shape the unique natural landscape, ideal for active holidays. Less known, hiking and running trails lead along the river, but also turn aside revealing beautiful landscapes in the both countries.

The unspoiled small towns and villages in the rural areas keep their authentic way of life, old traditions and customs and offer a great journey through the rich cultural diversity. Hiking and running trips along the river basin represent some of the best ways to get to know Romania and Bulgaria countries, discovering their uniqueness and cultural commonality.

Therefore, offering to the potential tourist some alternatives routes to enjoy nature and discover the cultural and historical heritage from the CBC area, the phenomena of hiking and running can become an ordinary activity for tourists. The variety of natural, as well as cultural heritage along the Danube is huge, waiting to be discovered.

Visitors should get the possibility to widen their horizons and encounter a unique hiking and running experience within a variety of landscapes and regions.



4.1 Project main objective

The main objective of the project is to develop integrated tourism products based on green and healthy activities with small costs and easy to do in the cross-border region.

Hiking and running enables tourists to get to know countries and cultures in a direct way. Therefore, the established cross-border hiking and marathons trails along the Danube should not only support the touristic infrastructure, but also strengthen the bond between the two neighbouring countries.

The three partners - ACTIS Sport Club Association, ARETE-SPORT Association and "Harald Gormsson" Association for Improving Human Relations - have started the project implementation by purchasing within the European contract specialized equipment necessary for carrying out ecological and sporting tourist activities in complete safety and leisure conditions.



Thereby, they had purchased the followings:

- all the necessary camping equipment for the hiking adventures:
 - tents, open tents, sleeping bags, camping equipment and equipment, cooking equipment, front lantern
- the necessary equipment for organizing outdoor running events - marathons:
 - banners, pop-up displays, timing system, sound system, open tent, traffic cones, race signalling, Start/ Finish line signalling.



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All the specific equipment purchased serve enthusiastic tourists, nature lovers, from both countries. For this reason, all the equipment is located both in Romania, at the headquarters of the ACTIS Association, in Calarasi, as well as in Bulgaria, at the headquarters of the ARETE-SPORT Association, in Belogradchik.



4.2 Project main results

The activities developed during and after the project implementation period will increase the number of tourist overnights in the region to cover 0.97% from the programme result indicator for this priority axis.

The project is estimated to increase the number of overnight stays in the Danube area, during the project implementation period and its sustainability stage, having as target group former sportsmen, enthusiastic athletes and families with children, practically all the people who like spending time outdoors and participate at sports activities in the middle of the nature.

The partners predicted that the number of overnights will be increased during the project sustainability stage, when minimum one marathon event/ hiking expedition/trail adventure per year in Romania/Bulgaria will be organized either by the project partners, either by other entities which has already gained over time a greater awareness and notoriety through their periodical sports events, that are already well-known by the local communities and active tourists that chose to spend their vacation in an healthy manner in the middle of the nature, discovering on these occasions the local history and all the tourist attractions.

As previously said, the tourism products that will be promoted by the project can be organized by the project partners or could be done individually or by organized groups. For a marathon event or hiking trip, there is no need of an authorized guide and can be done by anyone, as long as they respect the indications made available by the project outputs.

The beneficiaries estimate an increased total number of overnights generated by the project also by making available all the project outputs (equipment, web



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portal, mobile application, running and hiking trails identified in the CBC region, pilot actions etc.), during 5 years after the project completion.

According to the data published by the National Institute of Statistics (NIS), the arrivals registered in the tourist reception structures in Romania, in the first nine months of 2019, amounted to 10.449 million, meaning an increase of 4.4% on the same period of the previous year. According to the quoted source, during the analysed period, out of the total number of arrivals, those of the domestic tourists in the tourist structures with accommodation functions represented 79.8%, the rest of 20.2% being foreign tourists.

Regarding the overnights registered in the tourist reception structures in our country, during the period January - September 2019, they reached 23.902 million, an increase of 6% compared to those recorded in the first nine months of 2018. In addition, during the same period, of the total number of overnight stays, those of Romanian tourists in the tourist reception structures with accommodation functions represented 82.8%, while the nights of foreign tourists were 17.2%.

Source info: <https://www.bursa.ro/institutul-national-de-statistica-turism-in-crestere-in-primele-noua-luni-ale-lui-2019-86313834>



According to NIS, the situation for both Romania and Bulgaria of the capacity and activity of tourist accommodation in 2019 was the following:

County	Accommodations capacity	Arrivals	Overnights	Indicators of net use capacities in function
ROMANIA				
Calarasi	885, out of which 279 in function	22,000	55,000	19.6
Constanta	85,285, out of which 10,149.1 in function	1,163,000	4,542,000	44.8
Giurgiu	636, out of which 225.4 in function	25,000	48,000	21.1
Teleorman	1,259, out of which 285.2 in function	12,000	18,000	6.3
Dolj	2,448, out of which 872 in function	97,000	175,000	20
Mehedinti	2,174, out of which 713.1 in function	92,000	201,000	28.3
Olt	837, out of which 309.8 in function	35,000	73,000	23.6
County	Establishments - in numbers	Bed places - in numbers	Overnights - in numbers	Arrivals - in numbers
BULGARIA				
Silistra	12	527	1,453	976
Dobrich	41	4,085	8,654	4,818
Veliko Tarnovo	100	4,216	16,913	9,645
Pleven	22	1,201	4,330	2,545
Montana	21	1,102	3,181	1,863
Vidin	24	805	2,787	1,742
Vratsa	23	827	4,295	1,756
Ruse	47	1,963	8,512	5,337

Accommodation capacity existent at 31st July 2019, according to <http://www.insse.ro> and <https://www.nsi.bg/>.



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4.3 The logistics behind conducting pilot actions

In the following we will present from the logistical point of view the actions carried out by the project partners in organizing all the ten pilot actions.

Through the 2019 **RUN for FUN events** we have launched a campaign against sedentarism, by promoting a healthy lifestyle and fighting for the sport to become a "compulsory matter" in the people`s lives. We believe in moving the world through sport!

Running has a lot of benefits. Running provides an important metabolic stimulus, as caloric burning increases for a long time even after the run is over. In addition to a higher resting metabolism, a constant running routine improves overall endurance. The more you practice the art of running, the more exercise you maintain, which in turn allows your muscles to increase their ability to create energy efficiently.

Endurance training can help in all aspects of everyday life, both on the road and outside. Along with endurance, strengthened muscles and increased metabolism, running also supports the health of the most vital organs, most importantly, the heart. Lifting heartbeats for constant periods of time, through activities such as running, strengthens this major muscle and increases the efficiency to pump oxygen throughout the body. Circulation improves as blood vessels dilate and lung capacity increases. Over time, these auxiliary systems - the lungs, vessels, capillaries and cells - adapt to a higher level of energy consumption and increase efficiency in daily life. This leads to better cardiovascular health as a whole, along with a heart that is less demanded by activities in daily life.

Hiking also contributes overall to health, as well as running, but at a lower level, the effort made is not of the same intensity. The effects of hiking are mainly on the psychic level, being proven to reduce the main problems of the modern man, anxiety and depression, managing to calm and disconnect from the daily stress the participant. Hiking is often not done by a single person; it is done in a group and the



social component is again very important. Participating at the hiking events has a great meaning also at the social level, this type of recreation having the power to bring people together and create long lasting friendships.

In the following we`ll present the used methods and regulation in organizing the outdoor events. In order to have many participants and to create a carefree running or hiking event, where people enjoy and have a good mood, we had to make a good planning for these adventures.

Therefore, we created a well-established program and a set of clearly defined rules, with which we managed to organize ten outdoor sporting events without any incident, offering many interactive and fun activities, so that those who participate feel good, run or walk with joy in the locations established by the routes identified in our previous study.



4.3.1 Planning the marathon events

Organizing a marathon can be a very enjoyable and rewarding experience. Although there is more work involved than most of the runners might realize, making the first race evolve from an idea into reality is ultimately very gratifying for the event organizers. Below are some of the most important steps that we took and we recommend others to consider when planning, promoting, and executing the marathon event (most of the same steps apply to cross and half marathons as well).

First of all, when planning the running event, it is important to **consider the options for a location** at which the race will be held, the characteristics of the course, and whether or not it will be implemented a theme for the event. For our events we chose a theme for both type of sports - running and hiking also. We chose to make it fun, so all the interested people to be able to participate - from the families with small children, to students, former sportsmen and professional athletes. This is why we chose to name all the marathon events RUN for FUN, adding to each one the place and, in some cases, the type of the run - trail etc.

The second important step was to **create an online registration** using the website developed through the project, named *GreenTourPro.eu*. Creating online



registration form we could increase the number of participations, using a simplified registration process and utilizing a simple checkout process, that didn't require accounts for runners.

Another important thing in creating the event is based on **the running location**. The location of the event must take concern where a sizable portion of the prospective runners live. Depending on the expected size of the event (we had a target group of a hundred expected at each marathon event), it is also need to take into consideration the hotels in the area to accommodate the runners. As it pertains to picking a location, the event organizers also have to take factor in the scenery of potential running routes.

Also, it's important to **create a running course**, that gives participants a unique experience. Often runners want a route that is flat or gentle downhill, so to draw more participants, it is ideal to avoid hills. Also, in choosing a course, we found it necessary to minimize expenses. For this reason, we had for our 4 marathon events both an out-and-back and a loop course to avoid the expense of transporting runners.

With all these details settled, now it's time to take consideration on **the theme of the event**. As we previously presented, we chose to have a fun event.

Fun runs have become increasingly popular in the past few years. They range from costume races to interactive activities carried out during the event, in which you involve the participants to complete some fun tasks. It seems that fun runs tend to attract more participants that don't consider themselves to be runners. It is more of the thrill than the running that brings these extra participants out.

We recommend as well others to have *charitable cause runs*, that have a similar effect of bringing out participation from people that may not have otherwise considered a 5K, 10K, half-marathon or marathon. During the sustainability period of the project we will try to organize such events.

Also, as a recommendation for planning a fun run or a charity running event, we strongly recommend to consider the expenses associated with the theme chose, and make adjustments to the event to fit the theme. For example, for a Halloween race you might consider holding the event in the evening. When deciding to involve



a charity the organizers have to reach out to a few charities to see which ones would help the most with volunteers and promotion of the event.

The next step is about promoting the running event. When promoting marathon, half marathon or 5K the organizers have to come up with a good name, and a strategic advertising plan. For example, all our running events had the same name, having the same theme - RUN for FUN. Although, the running events were organized on different dates and locations, all participants knew what it was all about and that behind all is the same organizer. For this reason, we were pleasantly surprised to discover among the runners, participants who also came to our previous events.

When planning the name for the event the first thing we did was to find out which names are already taken in the local area, and nationally. Similar to a business, the event name gives a feeling and imply an experience. Names absolutely matter! So, because we planned a fun run, we picked a symbolic name for all the events. Also, in some instances it is wise to name the event after have picked a course or theme.

Another important aspect in organizing these events is given by permits! For this matter, we made sure to check with the local government to determine what permits are required for the type of event we created. We were required to take a permit, for having coverage to protect our NGOs responsible for putting on the event.

Also, being a public meeting (because it involved the participation of at least one hundred people), we needed to provide first aid services, in case of accident of the runners. For this we appealed to the Red Cross volunteers from the localities where we organized the running events. We have an aid station placed at the Start/ Finish line.

For the protection of the participants against possible dangers, we had with us the Gendarmerie, which ensured the safety guard for the entire duration of the events. Also, we made sure to have the proper traffic safety devices like cones, track marking tape and curve signage.

Although our events were not competitions, the only competition being for some runners with themselves in establishing a Personal Best, we had a timing



system. We recommend others to make sure that they get the right timer for their needs, because timing is a large portion of a running event budget.

For a proper running event, taking in concern the distance and the time spent making effort, for the participants we provided **hydration and fruits station**. We had a lot of water bottles (0.5l) and many fruits, like apples and bananas, well known for their intake of vitamins and potassium, so necessary in the process of dehydration of the athletes during the endurance running events.

We recommend others organizers to provide plenty of water, and if possible, another beverage with electrolytes to runners, to energize them. Often these stations are placed every 5 kilometres/2 miles. For longer runs like marathons these stands sometimes include fruits like apples, bananas, oranges, lemons, food, like energy bars (that can be eaten easily and digested quickly), and even also pain relievers and ice buckets.

The best promotion of the project was provided during the marathon events through **the participation kit**. This contained the followings: T-shirts, caps, eco-friendly pens, memory sticks USB, key holders, waist bag and rain coats.

We recommend other organizers to provide their runners with at least shirts. Often this is an athletic polyester shirt, but 5K events sometimes provide cotton shirts to reduce cost. Another recommendation regards medals, which are usually given to participants that complete a marathon or half-marathon, but some other running events give them out as well. Be aware that medals can be pricey if they are purchased in small quantities. Also, if your event is a race, it's recommended to have awards for age division winners.

Sometimes these awards are just for first place, but they often go three to five deep. Some large races choose to give out prize money. USATF (* Source of information: <https://www.usatf.org/governance/bylaws-regulations>) regulations stipulate that overall awards need to be based upon gun time. Age division awards can be based upon chip time.

A mandatory thing in organizing a public sport event is given by the **portable restrooms**. Restrooms are a very important part of any event of this type. We had at each marathon event both in Romania and Bulgaria, two portable restrooms.



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The organizers have to take consideration that the longer the duration of the event the more important they become. Even with a 5K they should consider having portable restrooms in the finish area at a minimum, and probably have some at the starting line (if there are two different location for Start and Finish lines), and a couple on the route.

The opening of the event registration is another important step in organizing the marathon. We had the registration online, on the project`s website - www.greentourpro.eu. Taking in consideration the fact that we faced in a very short time many situations in which we depended on external factors, such as weather, authorizations, services necessary for a good organization of events, we had to open online registration shortly time before the events.

But all this time we made an intense promotion on the social networks of the project (Facebook & Instagram), which provided us with a good dissemination of events, so that at the Start we managed to have more participants than we initially expected.

We recommend other organizers to open registration early to have greater participation. Usually, runners that visit the organizers website throughout the year may not think to come back in six months & register. The ideal time to open registrations is immediately after the previous instance of the event, usually one year before. This ensures that participants will be able to sign up as soon as they are ready. Also, it is important to remember that the greatest source of event growth is friend and family referrals from the participants that have already signed up. The earlier the organizers can have people signed up for the event, the more time they have to talk about that event.

At the end of all marathon events we took care of all **the courses clean up**. This is the final stage in a public running event, where attend many people. For this job, having in thought that we didn`t have financial coverage by the project, we appealed to the help of our partners and friends, who were by our side in this final stage, extremely important for the nature of the project, through which we come to offer and promote a new type of eco-friendly tourism.



Clean up is often a job that is overlooked. But we recommend other organizers to give special importance to this stage. Events can be banned from communities if they are not left as clean as they were found. It is generally a good idea to have fresh bodies of people in charge of clean-up that didn't have to help with the set up. At the end of an event both organizers and other volunteers will be exhausted, so try to have fresh people come in to help clean-up.

In organizing the marathon events within the project, we created a series of **PARTICIPATION RULES**, which were made public on the website, before the day of the running event. The rules of participation for the Marathon events had the following characteristics:



RUN FOR FUN is an event for outdoor movement. The purpose of the event is for fun, not competition

*The event had mostly three ROUTES *:*

- Kids Trail - 1 K (1 lap)
- Popular Trail - 5 K (5 laps)
- Marathon Trail - 42 K (42 laps)

** The MARATON route was intended for professional athletes, the test being one of endurance, to which all those who wanted to test their limits were invited to start. Because it was not a competition, the distance travelled by those enrolled in this sample does not have a minimum limit, being set only the maximum limit of the distance taken - 42 km.*

*** The tracks were run in tandem, with the official start being given at the same time for all 3 samples*

EVENT KIT

The event package contained the following:

- Contest number
- Timing chip
- RUN FOR FUN instructions
- T-shirts



** at the end of the events the participants received: caps, eco-friendly pens, memory sticks USB, key holders, waist bag and rain coats. The distribution of these promotions took place at the end of the event, due to the fact that we had more participants than expected.*

PARTICIPATING CONDITIONS

Details of running routes

- *For the Kids Trail, the minimum age * of registration was 10 years, and the maximum of 14 years.*
- *For the Popular Trail, the minimum age of registration * is 14 years.*
- *For the MARATON Route, the minimum age of registration * is 16 years.*

** Age was considered at the date of the event.*

The RUN for FUN marathon route was properly signalled by the organizers. The organizers of RUN FOR FUN recommended the participation only to those who were capable of medical effort.

Who could attend?

Minors participated either with a parent (confirmed with the CI on the spot) or on the basis of the Statement of Responsibility for the participation of a minor under the age of 18, signed by the parent (or legal guardian), who was aware of the Regulation and assumed, together with the participant, the risks and implications of participating in the event. Unaccompanied minor participants had to come to the event with the statement signed by the parent/ guardian.

Categories of routes

- *Kids Trail: Men's Open; Women's Open*
- *Popular Trail: Men's Open; Women's Open*
- *MARATHON Trail: Men's Open; Women's Open*

All categories of routes were organized for both categories of sexes, regardless of age.

For those "on the run" who wanted to exceed their own limits - Beat their Personal Best, the results with the times obtained were provided by the referees at Finish.

Rewards for participants

The rewards were awarded at the end of the event, in the order of arrival at the Finish line, by categories of routes and categories of sexes. The rewards consisted of promotional materials and were limited in number.



Required equipment

The participants were required to wear the number given in a visible way, on the front of the shirt or pants, throughout the event and running shoes.

Registration and validation of entries

The registration for the running event was FREE. Registration was done by completing the registration form available on the website www.greentourpro.eu. After completing the form, the registered person received an e-mail confirming the registration. Also, those wishing to participate at our events, had the opportunity to register in the event day, at the ORGANIZER's pavilion, in the open stage area, within the limits of the available places.

The renunciation/ surrender of a place of registration had to be made and announced before the event, at the e-mail address: office@actisclub.ro.

The validation of the entries and the lifting of the number of participants took place on the day of the running events, between 07:00 and 10:00 AM, at the stand of the ORGANIZER, the open stage area.

Upon validation of the registration, the participants presented their identity card and signed the Declaration on their own responsibility in case of accident.

Withdrawal from the running event

The ORGANIZER reserved the right to stop a participant in the following cases:

- was injured after the start, and the state did not allow him to continue the route;*
- in exceptional cases.*

Trail safety

Any accident involving RUN FOR FUN participants, which occurred during the event, due to the non-observance of the rules of the event and the rules of civic conduct would have been the responsibility of those involved in the accident.

The runners were responsible for their participation, the ORGANIZER assumed no obligation in case any of them would have got injured or other consequences that may have arisen due to participating in running events. Along the route it had been present a first-aid team from the Red Cross, ready to intervene in case of accidents, with a medical point in the Start/ Finish area.



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4.3.2 Planning the hiking events

Connect with Nature and Collect Experiences on epic hiking journeys in Southern Romania and in the northern Bulgaria! Take in splendid architecture proof of the living of our ancestors, small traditional villages and outstanding breathtaking sceneries.

Very often tourism is built on the detriment of nature. We think and do differently, always putting the effort in preserving nature and supporting local communities. Our core value is the belief that sustainable travel with local experiences is the best travel!

On the HIKE for FUN adventure, our mission was to serve as a bridge between the travellers, who are ready to seek out adventure and collect new experiences, and our hosts and local villagers who are eager to provide them with the best thrills and amazement possible inside the CBC area.

Both neighbouring countries reveal their rare beauty, warm culture and colourful history for all to enjoy. Throughout our HIKE for FUN adventures, we offered travellers the opportunity to explore ancient crossroads and delve into the revival of a region once scarred by conflict and wars. This region is remarkable for its popular culture and lifestyle.

The objective of HIKE for FUN events was to promote green and historic tourism, by exploring the CBC area, by foot. So, at our hiking events we invited people who are looking for a unique personal experience in places that inspire and bring them closer to the true values that are unaltered, in a beautiful adventure on our trails, where they had the chance to discover exciting destinations for the lovers of unpaved paths and authentic beauty.

We, along with our partners, had organized six pilot actions during the period of May till November 2019, in the most beautiful natural areas from the Romanian-Bulgarian cross-border. All these events lasted for 3 days each and had no costs for the participants.

Whilst hiking and travelling around CBC area is important to follow a few simple steps to help minimise your impact on our beautiful natural environment.



In order to spread the word on the simple rules to follow in the beautiful natural areas from Romania and Bulgaria with breath-taking landscapes, to explore and discover its wilderness, we summarised the Environmental Care Code we follow in a comprehensive infographic.

With input from various other nature conservation NGOs, we have created a list of **Care Codes**, including a 'Leave no trace' code and an Activity Minimal Impact Code, which we took in consideration in organizing the hiking events.

Before every hike, it is important to make a list of everything is needed to be done and prepare before setting foot on the trail.

1. Plan ahead and prepare

Plan ahead by considering the goals of the event and those of the group participating in it. Know all the information needed about the chosen location, by getting local information, skills and gear needed to make the hiking trip a success.

2. Travel and camp on durable ground

Some areas are more fragile than others. In choosing the places to camp and travel in our events we took care to be on the most durable surface as possible, the best ones are tracks, gravel and most grasses. Impacts on fragile natural features caused by travel and camping can take many years to heal.

3. Dispose of waste properly

In all our hiking trips, we took care not to leave behind food scraps or anything that would harm the environment. As users of the outdoors, we all have a responsibility to clean up after ourselves. Rubbish and toilet waste are unsightly and can introduce unwanted organisms into the environment.

In planning the hiking event, we had to prepare in order to have a successful experience and participants an enjoyable adventure. For these, we took in consideration the followings:

- ✓ **Alerts:** Learning about changes in conservation areas that might affect the safety or enjoyment of our trips;
- ✓ **Weather and conditions:** Overlooking the weather forecasts for the national parks and other conservation areas where we had planned the hiking trips, as well as severe weather warnings;



- ✓ **Maps:** Finding out and consulting available maps so we could adequately plan for the trips;
- ✓ **Plan for a safe trip:** Planning the land-based hiking trips into the outdoors from the cross-border area. For all the hiking events we had three To Do things to check before: plan, prepare and equip well for a safe and enjoyable adventure of any hiking length.

In organizing the hiking events within the project, we created a series of **PARTICIPATION RULES**, which were made public on the website, before the day of the hiking event, and also at the technical meetings organized before all the departures in the hiking adventures. The rules of participation for the events had the following characteristics:



HIKE for FUN was a hiking event, throughout we aimed to promote green and historical tourism, by exploring, by foot, some hiking trails identified in the CBC area, in the heart of nature.

The hiking routes were in a natural setting, through forests, on rugged terrain (earth/ gravel), on ascending/ descending paths through the characteristic vegetation of the area, to meet many Belvedere points, from where we enjoyed absolutely impressive and spectacular landscapes.

Throughout the events, all the participants were accompanied by the members of the Organizer team. It was strictly forbidden to the participants to deviate from the trail proposed and crossed by the group, as well as to abandon the camping area.

Hike for Fun events were intended for hikers in the middle of wild nature on rugged terrain at moderate pace for several hours.

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

Event details

The routes are in an area with remarkable tourist potential, but unexploited, in the middle of nature, through forest, on rugged and rocky terrain.



Event objective

- popularizing the hiking trails in the event area;
- educating participants in the spirit of nature protection.

Who could attend?

The minimum age of registration was 14 years. Minors could participate either with a parent (confirmed with the CI on the spot) or on the basis of the Declaration on their own responsibility signed by the parent (or legal guardian), who were aware of the regulation and assumed, along with the participant, the risks and the implications of participating in the event. Unaccompanied minor participants could come to the events with the Declaration signed by the parent/ guardian.*

** is considered the age fulfilled at the date of the event*

Although the hiking events were also for beginners, HIKE for FUN organizers recommend to participate only those who are medically fit and experienced and have spent before the night in the middle of nature, in tent. Also, the organizers recommended that participants were properly equipped for the hikes they took part in, for the guarantee that even in less favourable weather, hiking still remains a pleasant experience.

Required and recommended equipment

- sports shoes, with semi-rigid sole, and ankle protection;
- cap or bandana;
- appropriate clothing taking into account the weather forecast;
- long and warm clothes;
- waterproof pants;
- the medicines usually used by the participants and something anti-allergic (e.g.: Claritin)
- solution against mosquitoes;
- sleeping pad/mattress;
- hydration containers.

Warnings

Weather: Sometimes due to weather conditions and for the participants safety it could had been necessary to partially or entirely change the route to be travelled. These changes would had been done by mutual agreement, with the explanation of all the variants, but the Organizer would had been the one to have made the final decision, if it would had been mandatory. Due to a good planning before all the hiking events, we weren't forced to apply any of the above.



Organizer's instructions: All indications of the Organizer were adhered to without comment, without the participants trying to influence its decisions.

Registration and validation

Registration was done by completing the registration form available on the website www.greentourpro.eu. After completing the form, the registered person had received an e-mail confirming the registration. Registration for all events was FREE.

In total, 20 places were available.

The renunciation/ assignment of a place of registration had to be announced by e-mail at office@actisclub.ro. The validation of the entries and the lifting of the participant kit took place on the first day of the hiking event, at the technical meetings.

Upon validation of the registration, the participants presented their identity cards and signed the Declaration on its own responsibility in case of accident and the Attendance List.

Withdrawal from the event

The ORGANIZER reserved the right to withdraw a participant in the following cases:

- in case of injury, if the state does not allow the participant to continue the trail;*
- in exceptional cases.*

The participants were responsible for participating in these events, the Organizer assumed no obligation in case any of them got injured or other consequences that may had occurred during these events.

Event cancelling

The organizer reserved the right to change the location of the events at any time, with the obligation to announce the changes in advance. The organizer reserved the right to cancel/ postpone the events in exceptional cases, on the condition that all participants were notified in advance. In case of bad weather conditions and/ or other special conditions, the Organizer reserved the right to stop the event or to change the time barriers.

In case of force majeure, we understand the events that could have influenced the smooth running of the events such as: major floods, natural disasters or other major events that cause the Organizer to cancel HIKE for FUN.



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4.4 Integrated Tourism Products



4.4.1 Marathon Trails in Romania

♦ RUN for FUN Calarasi

When: April 13th, 2019

Where: Romania, Calarasi municipality, Dumbrava Park

Running terrain: asphalt

Categories of running routes:

- Children trail
- 3K RUN
- 5K RUN
- MARATHON

Who: 240 participants

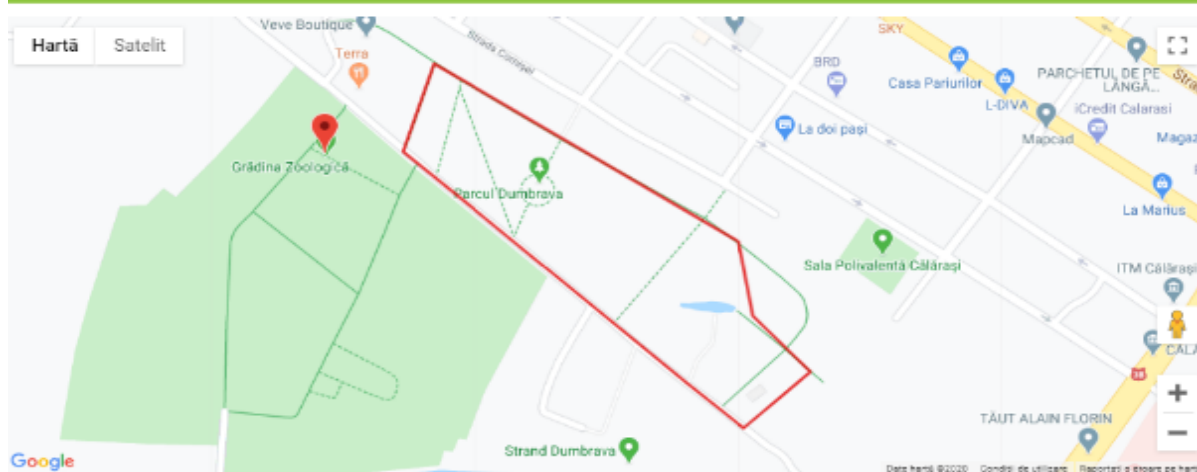
Map route:

Parcul Dumbrava

Detalii traseu

Locație: România - Călărași
Tip traseu: Alergare
Dificultate: Începători
Lungime traseu: 1.00km

Harta traseu





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Lap length: 1 km

Event duration: 4h

Participation kit: The event package contained: Event number, Timing chip, RUN FOR FUN instructions, T-shirts.

** at the end of the event the participants received: caps, eco-friendly pens, memory sticks USB, key holders, waist bag and rain coats. The distribution of these promotions took place at the end of the event, due to the fact that we had more participants than expected.*

Event No:



Event T-shirt:





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Special guest: Constantina Dita, Romanian long-distance runner, who specializes mainly in the half marathon and marathon. She was the marathon gold medallist at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, having previously won a bronze medal at the 2005 World Championships in Athletics. She also represented Romania at the Olympics in 2000 and 2004. She has a marathon best of 2:21:30 hours. She was the champion at the 2005 IAAF World Half Marathon Championships - the first Romanian to win that honour. She was also the 2004 Chicago Marathon winner.



Warm-up crew: Family Road entertainment crew





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Event feedback: the event represented a euphoric, uncompetitive running, without a podium and without registration costs, through which the joy and the fun were celebrated, through movement. All the people, from children to the elderly, lined up at the beginning, with emotions and appetite for fun, although the weather was less friendly. In the end, the participants were rewarded on stage with many surprises, consisting of different promotional materials made within the "Green Tourism Products" project.

Through the 2019 RUN for FUN events we had launched a campaign against sedentarism, by promoting a healthy lifestyle and fighting for the sport to become a "compulsory matter" in the people`s lives.

We believe in moving the world through sport! So, by this on-road running event we challenged locals and enthusiastic and active tourists to join us and live the RUN for FUN experience at its 1st edition!



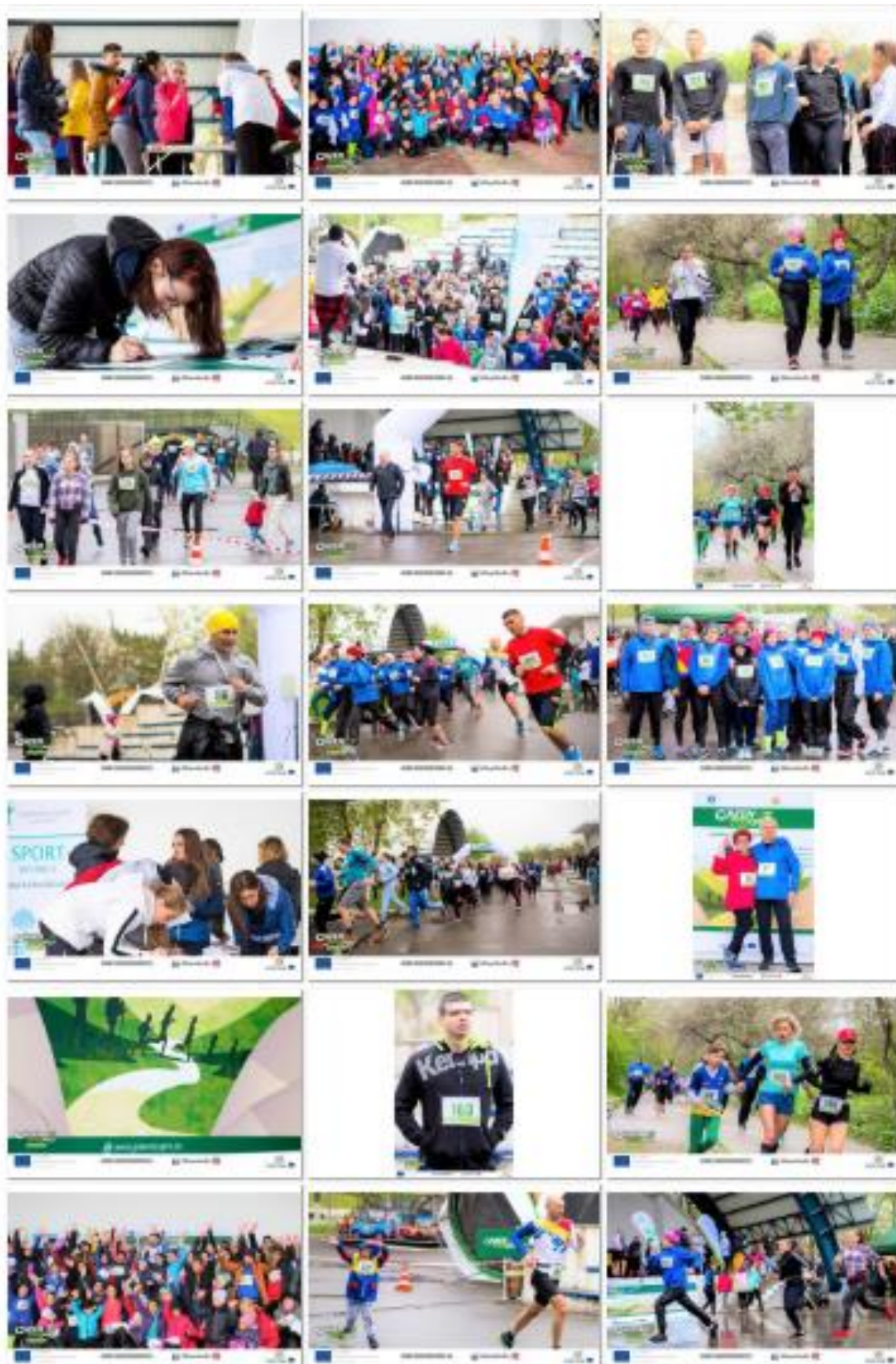
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♦ RUN for FUN Mamaia

When: April 14th, 2019

Where: Romania, Constanta municipality, Mamaia

Running terrain: asphalt

Categories of running routes:

- Children trail
- 4K RUN
- 6K RUN
- MARATHON

Who: 162 participants

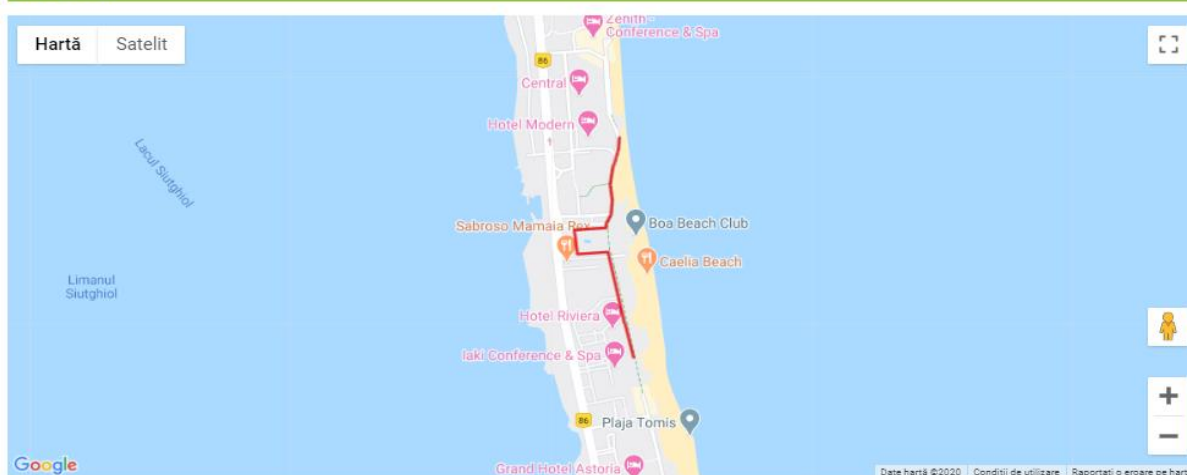
Map route:

Faleza Mamaia

Detalii traseu

Locație: România – Constanța
Tip traseu: Alergare
Dificultate: Începători
Lungime traseu: 1.00km

Harta traseu



Lap length: 1 km

Event duration: 4h

Participation kit: The event package contained: Event number, Timing chip, RUN FOR FUN instructions, T-shirts.



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** at the end of the event the participants received: caps, eco-friendly pens, memory sticks USB, key holders, waist bag and rain coats. The distribution of these promotions took place at the end of the event, due to the fact that we had more participants than expected.*

Event No:



1



Event T-shirt:





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Special guest: Dumitru Raducanu, Romanian rowing coxswain (currently retired). He competed at the 1984, 1992 and 2000 Olympics and won a gold, a silver and a bronze medal. At the world championships he won one gold, three silver and two bronze medals between 1985 and 1999. Raducanu took up rowing in 1982, and after retiring from competitions in 2000, works as a rowing coach at Farul Constanta.

Warm-up crew: Family Road entertainment crew

Event feedback: On a windy cold weather, an impressive number of Romanian and Bulgarian runners - from sports enthusiasts to performance athletes, from children to the elderly - participated in the RUN for FUN Mamaia, eager to spend their Sunday actively. It was a FUN day, with lots of fun and laughter. At the end of the running event, the participants were rewarded on stage with many surprises, consisting of "Green Tourism Products" project promotional materials.





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4.4.2 Marathon Trails in Bulgaria

♦ RUN for FUN Belogradchik Trail Marathon

When: November 16th, 2019

Where: Bulgaria, Belogradchik

Running terrain: trail run

Categories of running routes:

- Children trail
- Popular trail
- MARATHON

Who: 107 participants

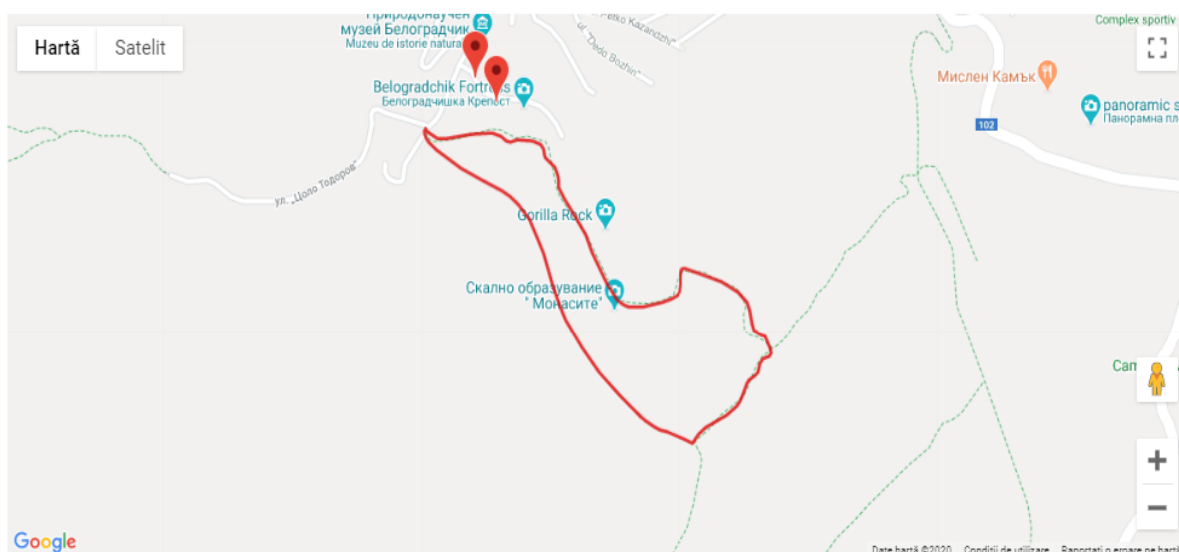
Map route:

**Cetatea
Belogradchik**

Detalii traseu

Locație: Bulgaria – Vidin
Tip traseu: Alergare
Dificultate: Începători
Lungime traseu: 3,40km

Harta traseu





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Lap length: 1 km

Event duration: 4h

Participation kit: The event package contained: Event number, Timing chip, RUN FOR FUN instructions, T-shirts.

** at the end of the event the participants received: caps, eco-friendly pens, memory sticks USB, key holders, waist bag and rain coats. The distribution of these promotions took place at the end of the event, due to the fact that we had more participants than expected.*

Event No:



Event T-shirt:





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Event logistics:

- Presenter of the event;
- Special guest for the opening of the event;
- Warm-up crew;
- DJ and animators;
- RO-BG interpreter;
- Professional photographer;
- Professional sound system;
- Stands with water and fruits;
- Chemical toilets for participants;
- Signage of the trail with markings and cones.

Event feedback: Belogradchik Trail Marathon offered a memorable new experience to all participants at its premier edition, in 2019. A new story is waiting to be written for any runner daring to explore the wild Belogradchik, representing one of the last genuinely wild regions in Bulgaria. The event was open to both competitive and enthusiast participants and offered either individual or relay formats.

The stunning scenery, entirely new tracks passing through forests and natural and historical areas of untamed beauty, a friendly and vibrant atmosphere, all concurred to ensure an unforgettable experience, worth being shared and further relived.





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♦ RUN for FUN Belogradchik City Marathon

When: November 17th, 2019

Where: Bulgaria, Belogradchik

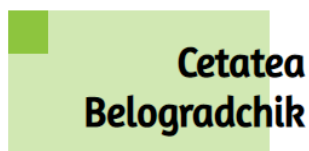
Running terrain: asphalt

Categories of running routes:

- Children trail
- Popular trail
- MARATHON

Who: 107 participants

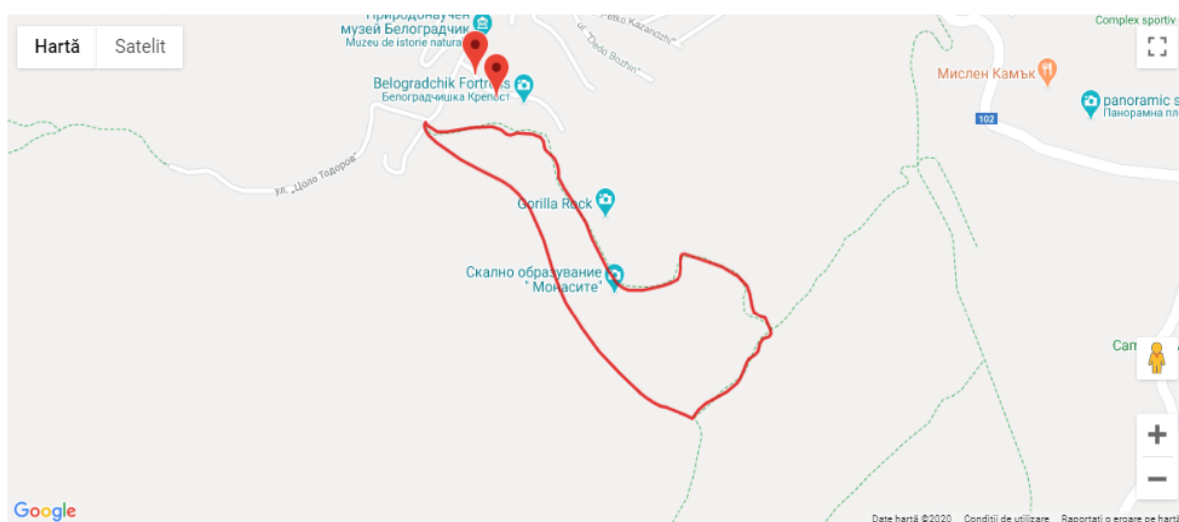
Map route:



Detalii traseu

Locație: Bulgaria – Vidin
Tip traseu: Alergare
Dificultate: Începători
Lungime traseu: 3.40km

Harta traseu



Lap length: 1 km

Event duration: 4h

Participation kit: The event package contained: Event number, Timing chip, RUN FOR FUN instructions, T-shirts.



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** at the end of the event the participants received: caps, eco-friendly pens, memory sticks USB, key holders, waist bag and rain coats. The distribution of these promotions took place at the end of the event, due to the fact that we had more participants than expected.*

Event No:



Event T-shirt:



Event logistics:

- Presenter of the event;



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- Special guest for the opening of the event;
- Warm-up crew;
- DJ and animators;
- RO-BG interpreter;
- Professional photographer;
- Professional sound system;
- Stands with water and fruits;
- Chemical toilets for participants;
- Signage of the trail with markings and cones.

Event feedback: Belogradchik City Marathon meant for the participants an enthusiastic experience of one of the most spectacular hassle-free marathon and beautiful new running event. Everybody was welcome, from professional athletes to amateur runners. Belogradchik City Marathon, as all the RUN for FUN events organized through `Green Tourism Products` project, was dedicated to bring social change, powered by enthusiasm and fantastic atmosphere. It was an outdoor mass event, which was NOT a competition and it had NO Registration FEES. So, by this on-road running event we challenged locals and athletic tourists to join us and live the Belogradchik City Marathon experience at its 1st edition!





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4.4.3 Hiking Trails in Romania

◆ HIKE for FUN Island Trail Calarasi

When: June 13th - 16th, 2019

Where: Romania, Calarasi, Great Island

Hiking terrain: hiking trails on moderate terrain

Hiking route: in natural setting on the Danube shore, through forests, on sand and rugged terrain (earth/ gravel), on ascending/ descending paths through the characteristic vegetation of the area

Who: 20 participants (limited number - `the first come, the first served`)

Map route:

Insula Calarasi

Detalii traseu

Locație: România – Călărași
Tip traseu: Drumeție
Dificultate: Începători
Lungime traseu: 60.00km

Harta traseu



Equipment free of use for the participants: tent, sleeping bag, hiking backpack, hiking sticks, camping furniture - tables, folding chairs, cooking equipment and accessories, shovels, front lanterns

Participation kit: t-shirt, cap, raincoat, key ring, pen, agenda, memory stick (64 Gb).



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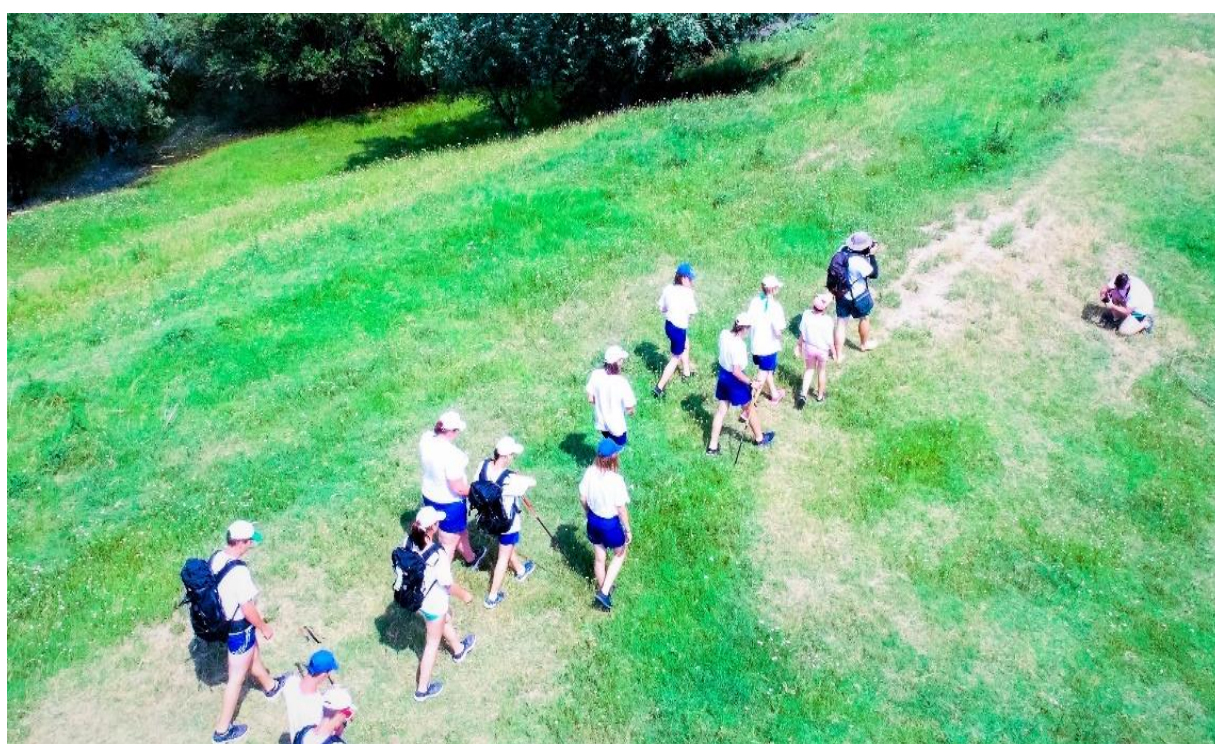
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Event feedback: the hiking event was intended for a limited number of participants - 20 people, together with whom we spent quality time, through outdoor movement, campfire hiking and camping under the open sky, in the green grass on the Great Island in the area of Calarasi municipality. The Island Trail aimed to promote green tourism and natural areas on the Danube, by exploring, at the foot, hiking trails identified in the heart of nature, concealing an amazing natural wealth, which offered participants a unique and so diverse spectacle through the deltaic flora and fauna existing along the Danube.





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♦ HIKE for FUN Danube Trail Adventure

When: June 27th - 29th, 2019

Where: Romania, Calarasi, Great Island

Hiking terrain: hiking trails on moderate terrain

Hiking route: in natural setting on the Danube shore, through forests, on sand and rugged terrain (earth/ gravel), on ascending/ descending paths through the characteristic vegetation of the area

Who: 20 participants (limited number - `the first come, the first served`)

Map route:

Insula Calarasi

Detalii traseu

Locație: România - Călărași
Tip traseu: Drumeție
Dificultate: Începători
Lungime traseu: 60.00km

Harta traseu



Equipment free of use for the participants: tent, sleeping bag, hiking backpack, hiking sticks, camping furniture - tables, folding chairs, cooking equipment and accessories, shovels, front lanterns

Participation kit: t-shirt, cap, raincoat, key ring, pen, agenda, memory stick (64 Gb).

Event feedback: Danube Trail Adventure was a new hiking adventure on the Great Island from Calarasi - a place of heaven in which many species of birds and rare animals find shelter, being mostly covered with forests where are beautifully interwoven wild flowers and vines, and long sandy beaches.



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◆ HIKE for FUN Danube Boilers Trail

When: August 7th - 9th, 2019

Where: Romania, Mehedinti, Orsova

Hiking terrain: hiking trails on moderate terrain/ asphalt

Hiking route: in natural setting on the Danube Gorge shore, through forests, on ascending/ descending mountain paths through the characteristic vegetation of the area

Who: 20 participants (limited number - `the first come, the first served`)

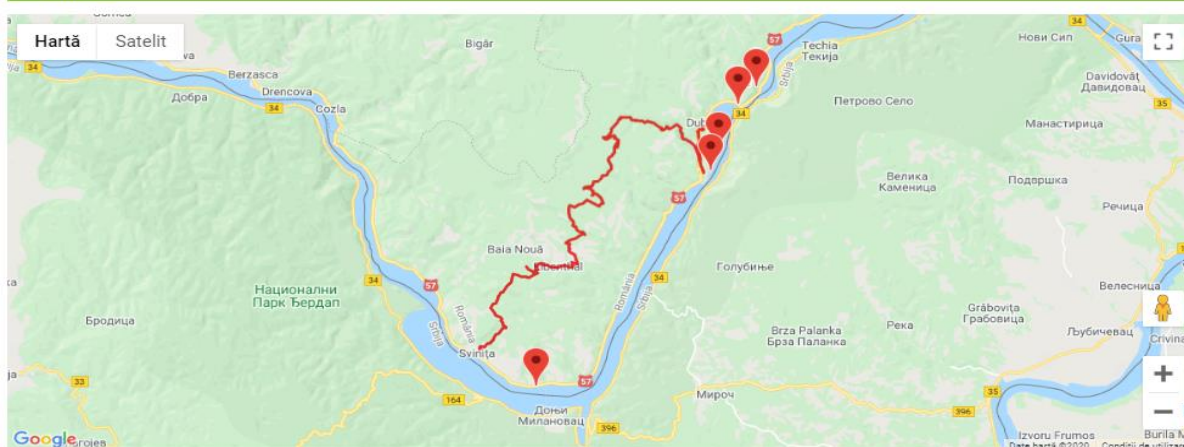
Map route:

Svinita - Dubova

Detalii traseu

Locație: România - Mehedinți
Tip traseu: Drumeție
Dificultate: Începători
Lungime traseu: 43.80km

Harta traseu



Equipment free of use for the participants: tent, sleeping bag, hiking backpack, hiking sticks, camping furniture - tables, folding chairs, cooking equipment and accessories, shovels, front lanterns

Participation kit: t-shirt, cap, raincoat, key ring, pen, agenda, memory stick (64 Gb).

Event feedback: Danube Boilers Trail was meant to promote green tourism, by exploring, on foot, footpaths mountain on the Danube Gorge, which is considered the most beautiful in Europe. The 84-mile Iron Gate is one of Europe's most impressive gorges, known as one of the narrowest stretches that crosses from Romania on the right and Bulgaria on the left, to Serbia. The river carved this narrow pass way between the Carpathian Mountains and the Balkan Mountains. The area between Ogradena and Dubova is a unique natural monument in Europe.



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4.4.4 Hiking Trails in Bulgaria

◆ HIKE for FUN Belogradchik Trail Adventure

When: September 9th - 12th, 2019

Where: Bulgaria, Vidin, Belogradchik

Hiking terrain: hiking trails on moderate/rocky terrain

Hiking route: in natural setting in Belogradchik green region, through forests, on ascending/ descending mountain paths through the characteristic vegetation of the area

Who: 20 participants (limited number - `the first come, the first served`)

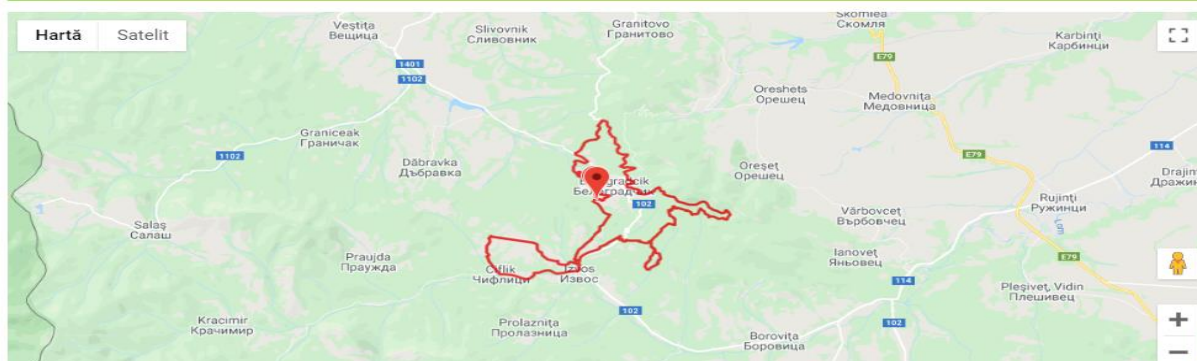
Map route:



Detalii traseu

Locație: Bulgaria – Vidin
Tip traseu: Drumeșle
Dificultate: Intermediari
Lungime traseu: 32.30km

Harta traseu



Equipment free of use for the participants: tent, sleeping bag, hiking backpack, hiking sticks, camping furniture - tables, folding chairs, cooking equipment and accessories, shovels, front lanterns

Participation kit: t-shirt, cap, raincoat, key ring, pen, agenda, memory stick (64 Gb).

Event feedback: Few tourists know the Belogradchik region, where truly unique natural beauty can be found. The landscape here took us to the famous natural setting of the "Avatar" movie, being full of rocks that stretch on an impressive surface of 90 kilometres and reaching heights up to 200 meters, eroded by wind and precipitation, which formed over 200 million years ago.



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The event was a beautiful hike in the middle of nature in the Belogradchik area, to discover some of the more spectacular landscapes in Europe and to connect new friends with young people with shared values and passions for nature, with whom we spent quality time, through outdoor movement, camp fire and sleeping under the open sky.





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◆ HIKE for FUN Belogradchik Fall Adventure

When: November 1st - 4th, 2019

Where: Bulgaria, Vidin, Belogradchik

Hiking terrain: hiking trails on moderate/rocky terrain

Hiking route: in natural setting in Belogradchik green region, through forests, on ascending/ descending mountain paths through the characteristic vegetation of the area

Who: 20 participants (limited number - `the first come, the first served`)

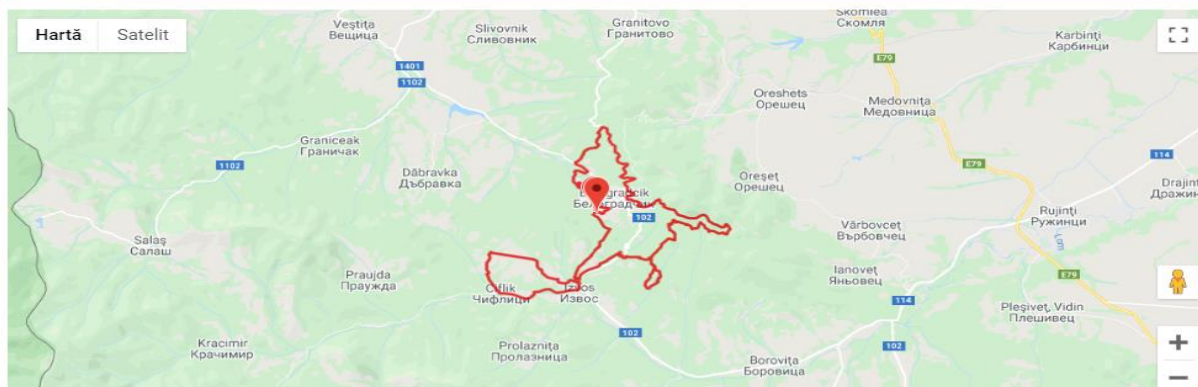
Map route:



Detalii traseu

Locație: Bulgaria – Vidin
Tip traseu: Drumetie
Dificultate: Intermedieri
Lungime traseu: 32.30km

Harta traseu



Equipment free of use for the participants: tent, sleeping bag, hiking backpack, hiking sticks, camping furniture - tables, folding chairs, cooking equipment and accessories, shovels, front lanterns

Participation kit: t-shirt, cap, raincoat, key ring, pen, agenda, memory stick (64 Gb)

Event feedback: ARETE-SPORT Association organized a hiking event for nature lovers and outdoor hikers in the green area of Belogradchik, at the beginning of November, to walk among the most spectacular rock formations in the Balkans, from the north-western part of Bulgaria, abounding in landscapes and natural places of rare beauty. Autumn is the most spectacular season when nature gets impressive colours and the weather is perfect for a hiking adventure.



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◆ HIKE for FUN Balkan Adventure Tour

When: November 1st - 4th, 2019

Where: Bulgaria, Vidin, Belogradchik

Hiking terrain: hiking trails on moderate/rocky terrain

Hiking route: in natural setting in Belogradchik green region, through forests, on ascending/ descending mountain paths through the characteristic vegetation of the area

Who: 20 participants (limited number - `the first come, the first served`)

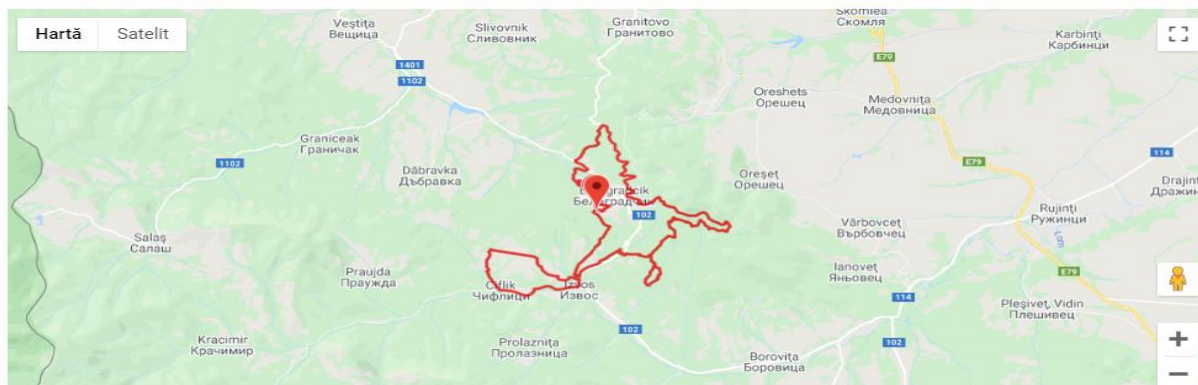
Map route:



Detalii traseu

Locație: Bulgaria – Vidin
Tip traseu: Drumetie
Dificultate: Intermediari
Lungime traseu: 32.30km

Harta traseu



Equipment free of use for the participants: tent, sleeping bag, hiking backpack, hiking sticks, camping furniture - tables, folding chairs, cooking equipment and accessories, shovels, front lanterns

Participation kit: t-shirt, cap, raincoat, key ring, pen, agenda, memory stick (64 Gb)

Event feedback: The event was a remarkable experience that offered a unique connection with Nature on this epic hiking journey through in the north-western Bulgaria. This event was about taking in splendid architecture proof of the living of our ancestors, small traditional villages and outstanding breath-taking fall scenery.

The Balkans reveal their rare beauty, warm culture and colourful history for all to enjoy, throughout exploring ancient crossroads and delving into the revival of a region once scarred by conflict and wars.



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V. PROJECT`S OUTCOME AND IMPACT

The project partners identified two new activities that combine ecological tourism with sports tourism, at low costs. These activities have known a significant increase in recent years and have the capacity to become a new form of active tourism with a major impact on the cross-border region, especially on the Danube region. The proposed activities are hiking and marathons on the natural and cultural sites offered by the cross-border region.

The common hiking standards are aimed at developing attractive hiking and accommodation conditions to meet the expectations of tourists, while retaining the unique landscape and atmosphere of the cross-border area.

The marathons are one of the newest forms of tourism, which are welcomed by both locals and enthusiastic active tourists, who enjoy outdoor movement. Through this type of touristic product, the project partners managed to promote the region, a healthy lifestyle and attracted tourists to the cross-border area, by organizing joint events in some of the most beautiful and rich natural and cultural areas from Romania and Bulgaria.

These actions will also contribute to the economic growth of both Bulgaria and Romania, through tourism development, creating a closer link between the two neighbouring countries. Tourism is perhaps the most important and offering way of development of the area, Danube being all over the world recognized for its natural multiculturalism, created in centuries of history, multiculturalism that generated from cosmopolitan cities to historical sites, more and more varied than in any basin river in this world. With the help of good and sustainable infrastructure, all this cultural mix can be presented to a much larger number of tourists than it is at the moment.



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The green banks of the Danube in Romania-Bulgaria cross-border area, the woods, wetlands and islands offer an opportunity for diverse outdoor activities and by networking of different stakeholders, diverse products can be developed.

Cross-border touristic offers allow local tourists to meet neighbouring cultures and nature and give visitors from distant countries the unique opportunity to discover a whole new region consisting of various landscapes, ethnicities and traditions.

✓ New tourism products

The project partners identified two new activities that combine green tourism with healthy activities whilst with small costs. These activities had a significant growth in the last years and could have a major impact on the cross-border region, especially the Danube region.

Together, the three partners had developed in the implementation period new tourism products by organizing ten pilot actions consisting in hiking and marathons events held in the area of natural and cultural sites of the Romanian-Bulgarian cross-border region, in order to promote and capitalize on the cultural and natural heritage, for the sustainable economic development of the border area.

The purpose of this project was to create new tourist products in the form of hiking and running in the neighbouring districts and counties along Danube shores. These activities will contribute to the popularization of the environmental and cultural resources that Bulgaria and Romania have to offer in the project eligible area. The ultimate goal is to increase the number of overnight stays in the region, in order to sustainably develop the tourism economy.

In many cases, some areas are not quite popular, except for the coast with Constanta county and Dobrich district, they will be accessible to all tourists who want to visit some cultural sights, admire some beautiful landscapes and do all this in a healthy way, without high costs, and for this, hiking and running are the perfect formula. These allow everyone, at their own pace, to visit and focus on what they find interesting and to enjoy these cultural and natural resources offered by the Danube area.



The routes identified within the study are 10*, half in Romania, half in Bulgaria, divided as following:

- 3 hiking trails in each country (duration: 3 days) with a distance of 10 - 30 km/ day - 30 - 90 km, in total;
- 2 marathon trails in each country (duration: 1 day) for a distance between 3 and 20 km.

*This information, as well as the scheduled events and other information are detailed on the project`s website and mobile application, and also you can find more on our social media accounts.

Routes





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✓ Equipment free of use for the new tourism products

The three partners - ACTIS Sport Club Association, ARETE-SPORT Association and "Harald Gormsson" Association for Improving Human Relations - have started the project implementation by purchasing within the European contract specialized equipment necessary for carrying out ecological and sporting tourist activities in complete safety and leisure conditions.

Thereby, they had purchased the followings:

- all the necessary camping equipment for the hiking adventures:
 - tents, open tents, sleeping bags, camping equipment and equipment, cooking equipment, front lantern
- the necessary equipment for organizing outdoor running events - marathons:
 - banners, pop-up displays, timing system, sound system, open tent, traffic cones, race signalling, Start/ Finish line signalling.

All the specific equipment purchased serve enthusiastic tourists, nature lovers, from both countries. For this reason, all the equipment is located both in Romania, at the headquarters of the ACTIS Association, in Calarasi, as well as in Bulgaria, at the headquarters of the ARETE-SPORT Association, in Belogradchik.

Running & Hiking Events

FREE EQUIPMENT

- camping - hiking - running -





✓ **Increased number of overnights in CBC region
through the new tourism products**

The activities developed during and after the project implementation period will increase the number of tourist overnights in the region up to 5,140, covering 0.97% from the programme result indicator for this priority axis.

The project is estimated to increase to 5,140 overnight stays in the Danube area, during the project implementation stage and its sustainability stage, having as target group former sportsmen, enthusiastic athletes, and families with children, practically all the people who like spending time and have sport activities in nature.

The partners predicted an increased number of overnights during the sustainability stage, when minimum one marathon/ hiking expedition/ trail adventure per year in Romania/Bulgaria will be organized either by the project partners, either by other entities which has already gained over time a greater awareness and notoriety through their periodical sports events, that are already well-known by the local communities and active tourists that chose to spend their vacation in an healthy manner in the middle of the nature, discovering on these occasions the local history and all the tourist attractions.

As previously said, the tourism products that will be promoted by the project can be organized by the project partners or could be done individually or by organized groups. For a marathon event or hiking trip, there is no need of an authorized guide and can be done by anyone, as long as they respect the indications made available by the project outputs.

The beneficiaries estimate also the increased total number of overnights to be generated by making available all the project outputs (equipment, web portal, mobile application, running and hiking trails identified in the CBC region, pilot actions etc.) during 5 years after the project completion.



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✓ IT products for the new tourism products

During the project implementation, an interactive web portal - www.greentourpro.eu - was created to support both tourism products and a mobile application - GreenTourPro - with hiking/ marathon routes and other means of online communication (social media accounts - Facebook & Instagram - @ GreenTourPro).

○ www.greentourpro.eu



Website launch: march 2019

Website developer: „HARALD GORMSSON” Association

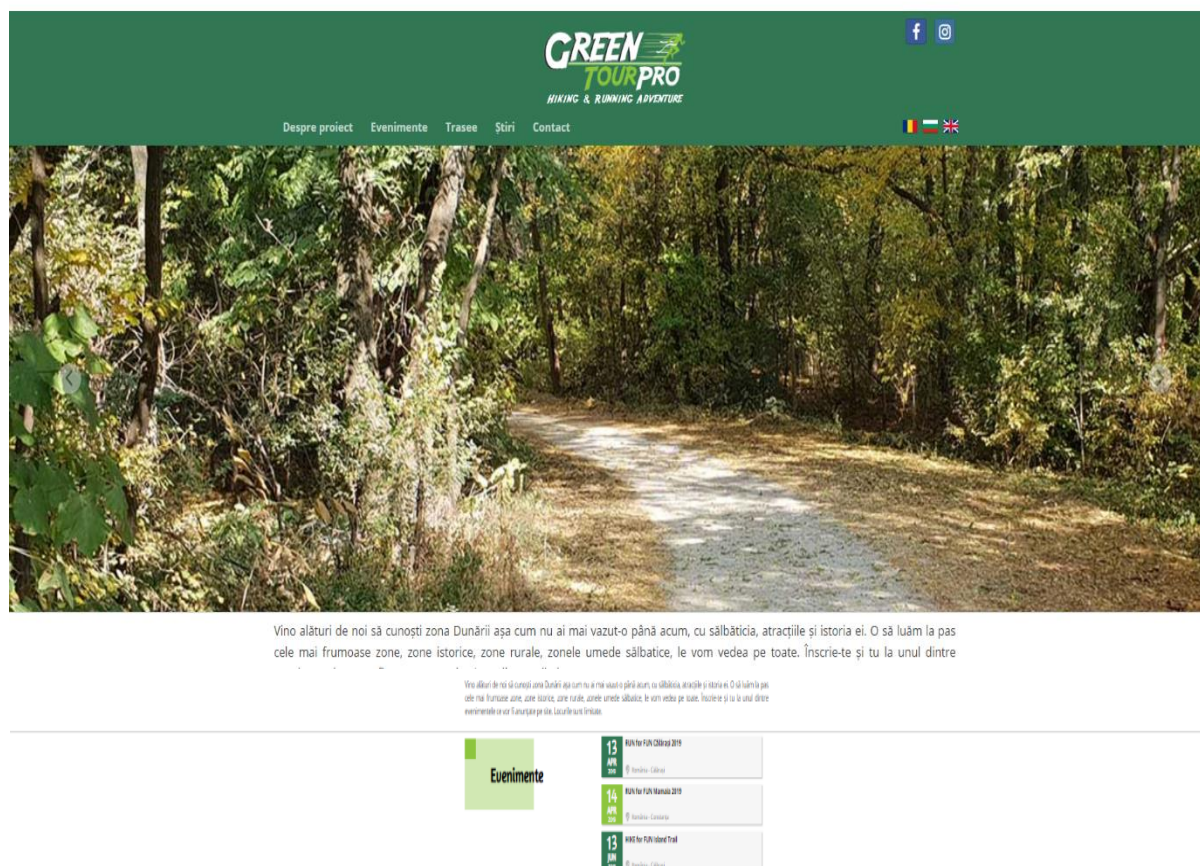
Website objective: the web portal aims to improve the access to information of both stakeholders and tourists

Website reach: 20k visitors*

* Value reached at the end of the project implementation period



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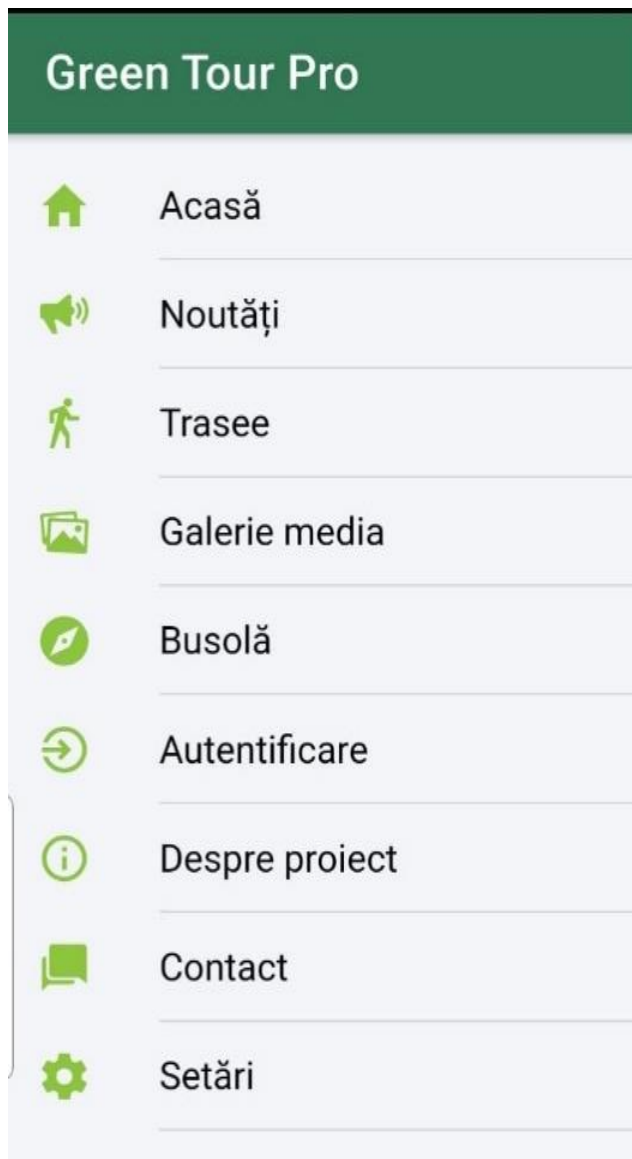
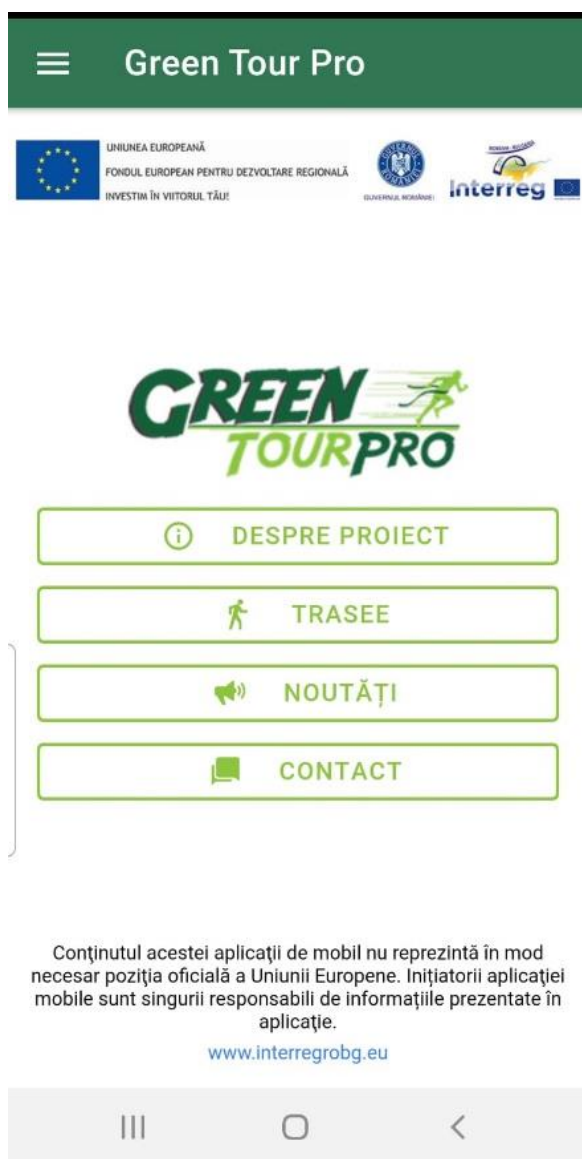
○ GreenTourPro



Mobile application launch: march 2019

Mobile application developer: „HARALD GORMSSON” Association

Mobile application objective: the mobile application is the new mechanism used in the project implementation and after, to attract young people and foreign tourists, as it helps them by providing information much faster and more efficiently than conventional methods.





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- www.facebook.com/GreenTourPro



FB page launch: January 2019

FB page admin: ACTIS Association

FB page objective: promote *Green Tour Products* project and its activities

FB page likes/ followers: 403/407*

FB page biggest post reach: 9,1k*

* Value reached at the end of the project implementation period

Post Details

Green Tour Pro
Published by Diana Irina [?] - April 9 [?]

Putem călători pe harta evenimentelor de alergare, care promovează mișcarea ca stil de viață sănătos!
Vino să petrecem ziua de sâmbătă într-un mod activ, în aer liber, în parcul Dumbăva!

Orice categorii de traseu alegi, oricât de înalt sau repede alegi, promitem să-ți oferim multe câștiguri, voce bună și surprize cât mai FUN!

Nu uita! Vei avea oportunitatea de a alege alături de Constantina Dita, singura campioană olimpică la maraton a României!

Întâi pe site-ul nostru www.greentourpro.ro, celele detalii despre eveniment și completează Formularul de înscris din subiectul paginii - <https://www.greentourpro.eu/event/2-run4fun-calarasi>.
PS: Inscrisura este GRATUITĂ!

Ha să RUN for FUN! AAAAA

13.04
ora 10:30

Parcul Dumbăva CALARASI

Get More Likes, Comments and Shares
Boost this post for \$30 to reach up to 23,000 people.

4,010 People Reached 415 Engagements

Boost Post

Performance for Your Post

167 Readers, Comments & Shares [?]

4,010 People Reached

130 Like	30 On Post	100 On Shares
2 Love	1 On Post	1 On Shares
2 Comments	0 On Post	2 On Shares
33 Shares	30 On Post	3 On Shares

248 Post Clicks

11 Photo Views	11 Link Clicks [?]	209 Other Clicks [?]
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NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide Post 0 Hide All Posts

0 Report as Spam 0 Unlike Page

Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts

Green Tour Pro
Published by Diana Irina [?] - August 6 at 10:54 PM [?]

HIKE for FUN - Danube Boilers Trail 🇷🇴🇧🇬 Am pornit, la pas, într-o nouă aventură, pentru a descoperi peisaje îmbietoare într-una dintre cele mai frumoase zone din România - Cazanele Dunării.

Pe traseul Svinița - Dubova ne propunem să promovăm turismul verde, prin explorarea, la picior, a unor poteci de munte de pe Defileul Dunării, care este considerat cel mai frumos din Europa.

Datorită curenților puternici și a creșterilor de pe fundul apei, în această porțiune Dunărea... See More

Get More Likes, Comments and Shares
When you boost this post, you'll show it to more people.

679 People Reached 90 Engagements

Boost Post

Performance for Your Post

1,073 People Reached

358 3-Second Video Views

53 Reactions, Comments & Shares [?]

40 Like	11 On Post	29 On Shares
1 Love	0 On Post	1 On Shares
1 Comments	0 On Post	1 On Shares
11 Shares	11 On Post	0 On Shares

70 Post Clicks

20 Clicks to Play [?]	0 Link Clicks [?]	50 Other Clicks [?]
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NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide Post 0 Hide All Posts

0 Report as Spam 0 Unlike Page

Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts

Green Tour Pro
Published by Diana Irina [?] - June 29 at 11:42 PM [?]

Un nou weekend, o nouă AVENTURĂ! 🌿🏃🏆

HIKE for FUN - episodul 2 "Danube Trail Adventure": Ziua străbăteam la picior trasee de drumeție în mijlocul naturii, să admirăm spectacolul oferit de fauna și vegetația deltaică de pe malul Dunării, iar seara stăm la povești, în jurul focului, și ne pierdem în constatații pe cerul senin.

To be continued...

00:27

Get More Likes, Comments and Shares
Boost this post for \$30 to reach up to 12,000 people.

1,073 People Reached 123 Engagements

Boost Post

Performance for Your Post

1,073 People Reached

123 Engagements

Boost Post

Green Tour Pro shared a post.
Published by Ionut Iordache [?] - April 13 at 7:31 PM [?]

Astăzi la Calarasi am creat niste amintiri minunate, va asteptam maine in Mamaia (parcarea Hotel Rex) pentru o noua nunda de distractii!

<https://www.facebook.com/2014431532003668/posts/2142926855820831/>

3,621 Views

Green Tour Pro
Published by Diana Irina [?] - April 13 [?]

Start RUN for FUN Căărășii!

Mulțumim tuturor pentru participare!! A fost cu adevărat de neuitat!!

PS: Discază în orice piasă de postări cu foto și video de la eveniment, câștigând cu ochii pe @GreenTourPro

Boost Unavailable

14.04

GREEN TOUR PRO
RUN FOR FUN

14 RUN for FUN - Mamaia
Public · Hosted by Green Tour Pro

Sunday, April 14, 2019 at 10:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Location: Mamaia, Romania

Hosted by Green Tour Pro

About Discussion

0 Likes 0 Comments 0 Shares

2 posts require approval.

40 More · 58 Interested

See who

Steliana, Alina and 11 other 1 month used



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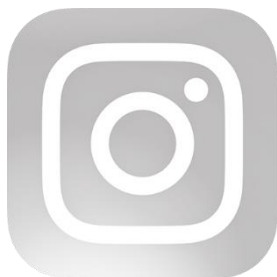
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- www.instagram.com/GreenTourPro



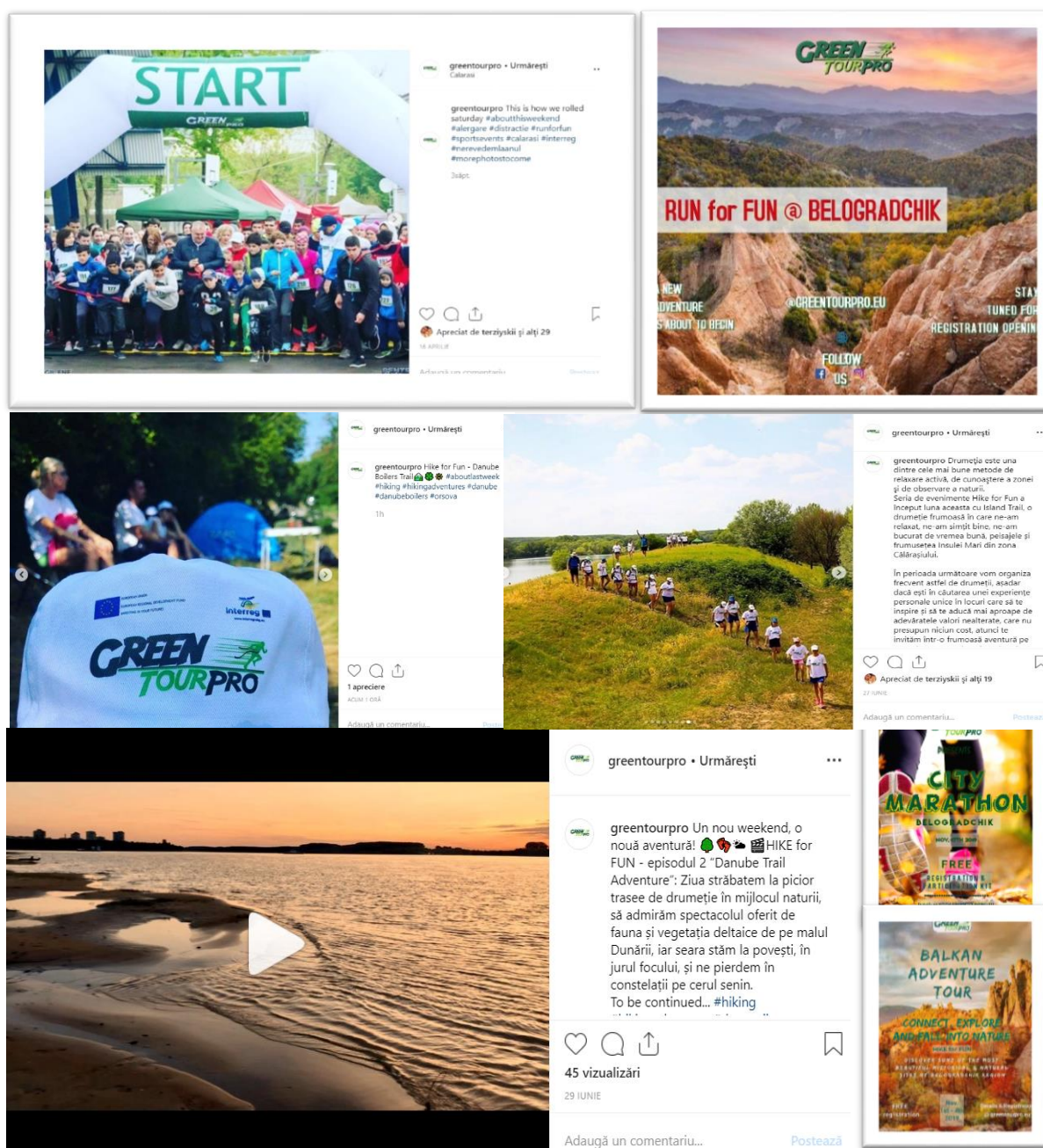
Insta account launch: January 2019

Insta account admin: ACTIS Association

Insta account objective: promote *Green Tour Products* project and its activities

Insta account followers: 90*

* Value reached at the end of the project implementation period





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Even if the statistical data are not available individually for the countries bordering the Danube, according to a study by Deutsche Wanderinstitut e. V., the typical hiking/ running tourist can be described by framing the following standards:

- Demographic: 48 years (m & f), higher incomes;
- Tour duration: 9 - 14 km / 2.5 - 4 hours;
- Hiking grounds: nature, tranquillity and relaxation;
- Planning: Internet, recommendations, maps, books for hiking;
- Tours: circular routes and day trips;
- Paths: trails with many attractive points (attractive tourist attractions) and natural routes.

Therefore, offering the potential tourist alternative routes to enjoy the nature and to discover the cultural and historical heritage of the eligible area of the program, through hiking and running, is to earn a trust and permanent capital as usual tourist activities for those interested in the project area. The variety of natural and cultural heritage along the Danube is immense. There are numerous castles and ruins, beautiful cities that reflect the turbulent historical past or lively cities of urban culture along the river, waiting to be discovered.





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These IT products are the main instrument that will be used by the project team in the sustainability period in order to achieve the indicators. The IT products will be used in as follows:

- news and information in order to promote the CBC region;
- information to promote and raise awareness on maintaining a clean environment;
- good practice examples of ecological activities carried out by volunteers;
- news about the activities carried out by the project partners, relevant for the Green Tour Pro target group;
- promotion of the future events that will be held by the project partners.

The project beneficiaries will ensure the availability of the new integrated tourism products for at least the next five years after ending the project implementation period. Therefore, it is expected to generate a remarkable number of visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attraction, consequently, to improve the sustainable use of natural heritage and resources and cultural heritage.

All the activities implemented through the project will be developed in the benefit of the communities. The equipment will be available for all the interested participants at our future sports events free of charge; therefore, no costs will be requested by the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries' main aim is to attract tourists in the CBC area, using the touristic products developed in the project implementation period.





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VI. CONCLUSIONS

Romania-Bulgaria cross-border area is full of cultural and historical features, which makes it a beyond belief landscape. There are many ways of discovering the Romania-Bulgaria cross-border area and enjoying the natural and cultural heritage outside the big cities.

Several national parks, nature reserves, important wetlands and beautiful islands as well as some UNESCO World Heritage Sites shape the unique natural landscape, ideal for active holidays. Less known, hiking and running trails lead along the river, but also turn aside revealing beautiful landscapes in the both countries.

The unspoiled small towns and villages in the rural areas keep their authentic way of life, old traditions and customs and offer a great journey through the rich cultural diversity. Hiking and running trips along the river basin are some of the best ways to get to know Romania and Bulgaria countries, discovering their uniqueness and cultural commonality.

Therefore, offering to the potential tourist some alternatives routes to enjoy nature and discover the cultural and historical heritage from the CBC area, the phenomena of hiking and running can become an ordinary attractive activity for tourists. The variety of natural, as well as cultural heritage along the Danube is huge, just waiting to be discovered.

Visitors should get the possibility to widen their horizons and encounter a unique hiking and running experience within a variety of landscapes and regions.



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The main objective of the 'Green Tourism Products' project, implemented in partnership by ACTIS Sports Club Association from Calarasi (Romania), as lead partner, together with ARETE - SPORT Association from Belogradchik (Bulgaria) and the Association for Improvement of Inter-Human Relations (AIRI) "Harald Gormsson" from Mavrodin (Romania), as partners, is to develop integrated tourism products based on green and healthy activities with small costs and easy to do in the cross-border region.

Hiking and running enables tourists to get to know countries and cultures in a direct way. Therefore, the established cross-border hiking and marathons trails along the Danube should not only support the touristic infrastructure, but also strengthen the bond between the two neighbouring countries.

These two outdoor activities had become increasingly popular in recent years all over the world, and there by "Green Tourism Products" project aims to offer an alternative more accessible touristic package both financially, and logistically for the sports enthusiasts who want to spend their weekends or vacations in the middle of nature, along the Danube river, having also the advantage to be close to the main urban centres in Romania and in Bulgaria as well.

Together, the three partners had developed in the implementation period new tourism products by organizing ten pilot actions consisting in hiking and marathons events held in the area of natural and cultural sites of the Romanian-Bulgarian cross-border region, in order to promote and capitalize on the cultural and natural heritage, for the sustainable economic development of the border area.

The purpose of ACTIS Association and its partners was and remains to organize and develop sports activities, to promote mass sports and a healthy lifestyle, as well as to participate in other sports activities and competitions, that will take place in the CBC area.

The associations had accomplished a great experience in the project field, having an important role in the development of essential sports activities, through its knowledge and expertise regarding the sports events logistics and conducting sports activities in a safe and relaxing manner in the touristic areas of the cross-border.



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All the three beneficiaries have the capacity to continue the project activities after its ending. `Green Tourism Products` will be considered as a pilot project, because it has a lot of potential, being a green tourism product that had never been before its start professionally organized in the Danube region. Through it will enhance the Danube region potential and will attract a lot of adventurers to the cultural and natural sites of this region.

Following the implementation of strategies for creating and promoting tourism products, tourism activities can be implemented in a sustainable way in the long term, at which all the interested people will have free access to the created products.

For organizing marathons or hiking expeditions, there is no need for an authorized guide and can be done by everyone, as long as they comply with the indications provided by the project results.

All the specific equipment purchased will serve in the next period enthusiastic tourists, nature lovers, from both countries, in all the future events to be organized. For this reason, all the equipment is located both in Romania, at the headquarters of the `Green Tour Pro` Touristic Center, in Calarasi, as well as in Bulgaria, at the headquarters of the `Green Tour Pro` Touristic Center, in Belogradchik, at the Sports Hall.

The number of overnights will be increased during the sustainability stage, when minimum one marathon per year and minimum one hiking expedition per year in Romania/Bulgaria will be organized:

So, the purpose of all these activities developed during and after the project implementation period is to increase the number of tourist overnights in the region up to 5,140, covering 0.97% from the programme result indicator for this priority axis.

The project is estimated to increase the overnight stays in the Danube area, during its sustainability stage, having the same target group as in the implementation period - former sportsmen, enthusiastic athletes, families with children, practically all the people who like spending time and have sport activities in nature.

This indicator is to be achieved in the sustainable period, when minimum one marathon and minimum one hiking expedition per year in Romania/Bulgaria will be



organized either by the project partners, either by other entities which has already gained over time a greater awareness and notoriety through their periodical sports events, that are already well-known by the local communities and active tourists that chose to spend their vacation in an healthy manner in the middle of the nature, discovering on these occasions the local history and all the tourist attractions.

These types of events will follow the methods used in the pilot actions, using the same principles of organizing sports events, which will have the same purpose like the previous ones of promoting the CBC region from a tourist point of view.

The trails identified, the types of actions and all the other tourism products developed in the project implementation period can be further promoted through events organized by the project partners or through the events carried out by other entities sharing same purposes and values as us.

A marathon event/a hiking trip/ a trail adventure, using the equipment purchased through `Green Tourism Products`, can be realized by anyone, as long as the indications made available by the project outputs are respected.

In the CBC region, more and more sports events are organized every year, which have gained notoriety over time. For this reason, we have proposed that in the period of sustainability we will join other consecrated events that enjoy a massive recognition. These events already recognized by the locals and not only represent a good opportunity for us to make our project known and promote it to as many people as possible.

The beneficiaries estimate an increased total number of overnights generated by the project also by making available all the project outputs (equipment, web portal, mobile application, running and hiking trails identified in the CBC region, pilot actions etc.) during 5 years after the project completion.

The trails identified, the types of actions and all the other tourism products developed in the project implementation period will be further promoted through events/adventures organized by the project partners or through the events carried out by other entities sharing same purposes and values as us.



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This strategy will be used by the project beneficiaries as a practical guide in the sustainable period of `Green Tourism Products`, which is meant to support the project teams to reach their proposed indicators. Also, this material will be made public to other NGOs interested in promoting the cultural and natural values of the CBC region, as well as organizing sporting events in order to promote tourism in the Romanian - Bulgarian cross-border area.



Website: www.greentourpro.eu
Mobile application: GreenTourPro
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ GreenTourPro](https://www.facebook.com/GreenTourPro)
Instagram: GreenTourPro



ACTIS Sport Club Association - Lead Beneficiary

Address: 50B Republicii street, postal code 910005, Calarasi municipality, Calarasi county, Romania

Telephone: +40 371 015 145

Fax: +40 242 316 141

E-mail: office@actisclub.ro

Website: www.actisclub.ro

ARETE-SPORT Association - Partner

Address: Han Krum 7 street, postal code 3200 Byala Slatina, Vratsa, Severozapaden, Bulgaria

Telephone: +359 889 726 793

E-mail: aretessport@abv.bg

"Harald Gormsson" Association for Improving Human Relations - Partner

Address: Mavrodin, postal code 147185, Teleorman county, Romania

Telephone: +40 724 813 104

E-mail: sebastian.baranga@live.com

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