

HERITAGE ALIVE!

Regional Policy Implications and Recommendations

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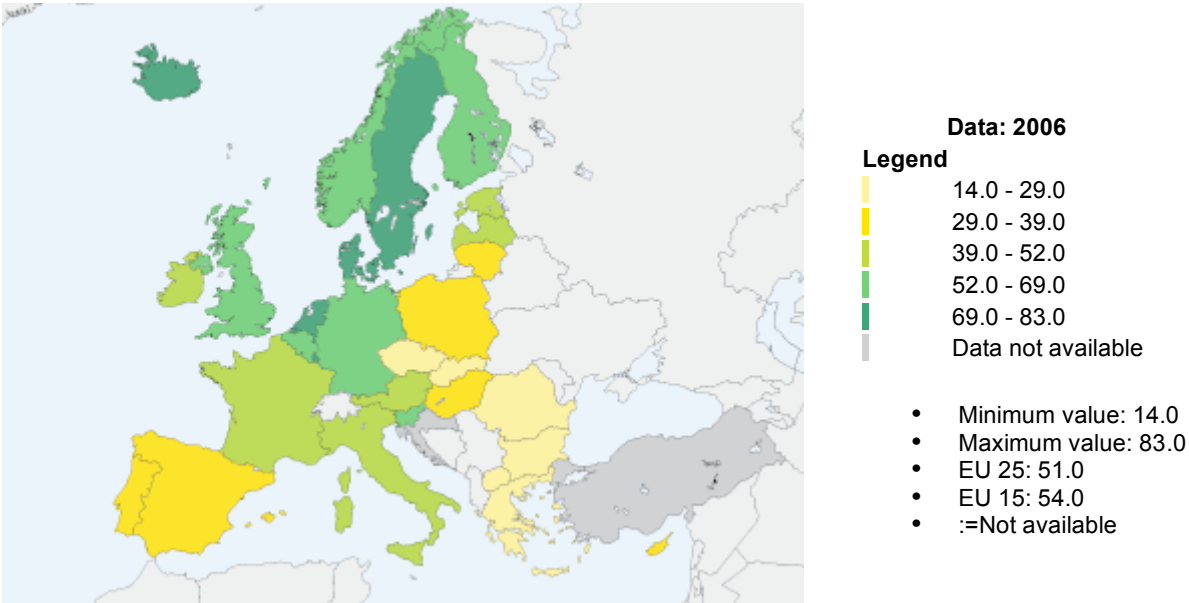
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Executive summary

Information Technology (IT) is widely used nowadays, as the world moves towards globalisation, and its role in the economy is growing every day.

Level of Internet access - households
Percentage of households who have Internet access at home



Source: Eurostat, EuroGeographics Association for the administrative boundaries

The tourist industry started to use Information Technology several decades ago when airlines, hotels and car rental companies, etc. realised the necessity of providing information online and built up Computer Reservation Systems (CRS), which enabled them to provide immediate online information about flight details, hotel rooms, weather, etc. Those travel agencies that were IATA agents were able to access one of the CRS and provide better service to their customers. Nowadays the internet is the most widely used technology in the world.

Technology and tourism are the fastest developing sectors of the global economy. IT and internet technologies are very important factors in the tourism of the future. The United Nations is paying special attention to IT-based tourism development or 'e-tourism'. The organisation has examined how developing countries can take advantage of IT-based tourism in their countries to boost their economy and how they can use IT and internet technology today to sell their products.

Our current programme was based on the theory that tourism could be encouraged more effectively through the use of IT¹. The HERITAGE ALIVE! programme was designed to implement two pilot projects which would use IT and internet technologies to develop the World Heritage Sites and cultural sites of Europe.

Three communities, Hollókő, Salzburg and Sighisoara took part in the Virtual Tourist Guide pilot project. The Virtual Tourist Guide pilot project aims to use IT and provide something new for the visitors. In this project a PDA was chosen as the hardware for the virtual tourist guide because of its ability to use multimedia-based applications.

Gorlice, Perperikon and Urbino took part in the second pilot project, the Learning Quest. The Learning Quest is based on the WebQuest model, which uses Internet connections and web technology. The users of the new device were encouraged to “communicate” and interact with their physical heritage and thus gain a better understanding of their cultural heritage.

The project itself was designed:

- to be the engine for regional development
- to strengthen social cohesion
- to strengthen identity
- to support the creation of new opportunities for employment in the region.

After completing the pilot projects, the project members discussed their experiences in Hollókő, Hungary, between 24-25th September 2007. Presentations about each site created a unique atmosphere in which the main goals were realised and all the results reported by members showed that investment in IT and internet technology for the development of tourism is worthwhile.

In addition to their economic aims, the pilot projects played an important role in strengthening the identity and the social cohesion of local communities. At each site a complex programme was completed and all the major goals of the project were achieved by the participants.

Strengthening identity and cohesion was emphasised by all the participating cities. In Salzburg routes are specially designed to help the local population to develop domestic tourism. Perperikon and Gorlice also emphasised this aim by paying great attention to the Learning Quest, in which different sections of the population took part. In Hollókő the project paid special attention to folk art as a unique heritage of the local people.

The same theme emerges when we study the projects of the other cities: i.e. Urbino and Sighisoara.

In accordance with the main theme of the entire project, participating members naturally focused on and demonstrated these **direct effects**. However, increasing the number of employment opportunities can also contribute to the development of the region/city and may be regarded as an **indirect effect** on regional development.

What is meant by direct effect in this project?

Direct effect is what we see immediately: different groups of the population working together and cooperating, e.g. through the Learning Quest and by collecting local information, to construct a database that is user-friendly, interesting and capable of providing a good introduction to the location for visitors.

¹ Source: Dr. Zimányi Krisztina – Dr. Herdon Miklos: *Business Infocommunication Technologies in Tourism*, 2003

What is meant by indirect effect in this project?

The HERITAGE ALIVE! project has great economic potential, which we propose to follow up. The software applications developed for each pilot project can be applied to electronic tourist devices. These devices must be made readily available, so it would be necessary to provide them in sufficient quantity and improve methods of access to their information content.

Without doubt IT is the engine of development. Tourism and IT technology are natural partners. If we wish to develop tourism and the tourism-related fields of the economy, we cannot manage without IT. Information Technology can support every field of tourism and it has a wide range of uses. For instance, an information board supported by a special database could act as an interactive map. If we have highly developed IT, it is easier to evaluate data and offer information to tourists. For that purpose the Internet is vitally important because it is becoming the primary source of information. If we want to know something or are looking for something, it is natural nowadays to go to a search engine to find the answer.

In the HERITAGE ALIVE! programme we do not recommend that the application used (VTG) should be provided for visitors to the sites on a "Rent a Virtual Tourist Guide" basis because that raises a number of problems like safe renting out and return, the expense of the devices and the risks of damage or theft.

The software application is backed by a powerful database, which is a very good tool for Destination Management and Destination Management Marketing purposes. It can be the engine of development for marketing purposes because it can provide information, advertise products and services and be constantly updated. This will require cooperation between service providers so that the database may be kept up to date.

There may be no direct income from the Virtual Tourist Guide if it is provided on the web free of charge, but there will be some indirect income from the fees that the users pay to their service providers, the telephone companies.

The participating communities fall into two groups, distinguished by their different needs for development. Regional development is most important for Gorlice, Perperikon, Sighisoara and Corfu, while direct development of the community is the main consideration in Salzburg, Hollókő and Urbino.

1. Preamble and general introduction to the “HERITAGE ALIVE!” programme

***“Cultural identity is not set in stone;
it’s in the experiences people share.”***

John Pereira, HERITAGE ALIVE! Project Manager

The HERITAGE ALIVE! project is being conducted from April 2006 to March 2008 under the European Union’s INTERREG IIIB CADSES Neighbourhood Programme. The project has been selected for co-funding under CADSES Priority 3: Promotion and management of landscape, natural and cultural heritage, Measure 3.1 – Protecting and developing cultural heritage.

The HERITAGE ALIVE! project aims at identifying and developing ICT applications that engage the local community and visitors in an active cultural dialogue in order to nurture a deeper understanding of – and respect for – Europe’s World Heritage. HERITAGE ALIVE! aims to strengthen the capacity of European cultural heritage sites to become dynamic centres of regional development and attract tourism, while at the same time preserving their unique heritage. The integrated, sustainable development of such sites is very important for the cultural diversity and identity of Europe’s regions.

The HERITAGE ALIVE! project partners develop, implement and transfer knowledge about the best use of information and communication technologies to promote their cultural treasures and establish a dialogue between local people and visitors. In this work the partners understand that cultural heritage makes a major contribution to regional development, local/regional cultural identity and cultural tourism. Moreover, the regional cultural heritage is seen as an important aspect of the quality of life, sense of place and the living culture of the local people.

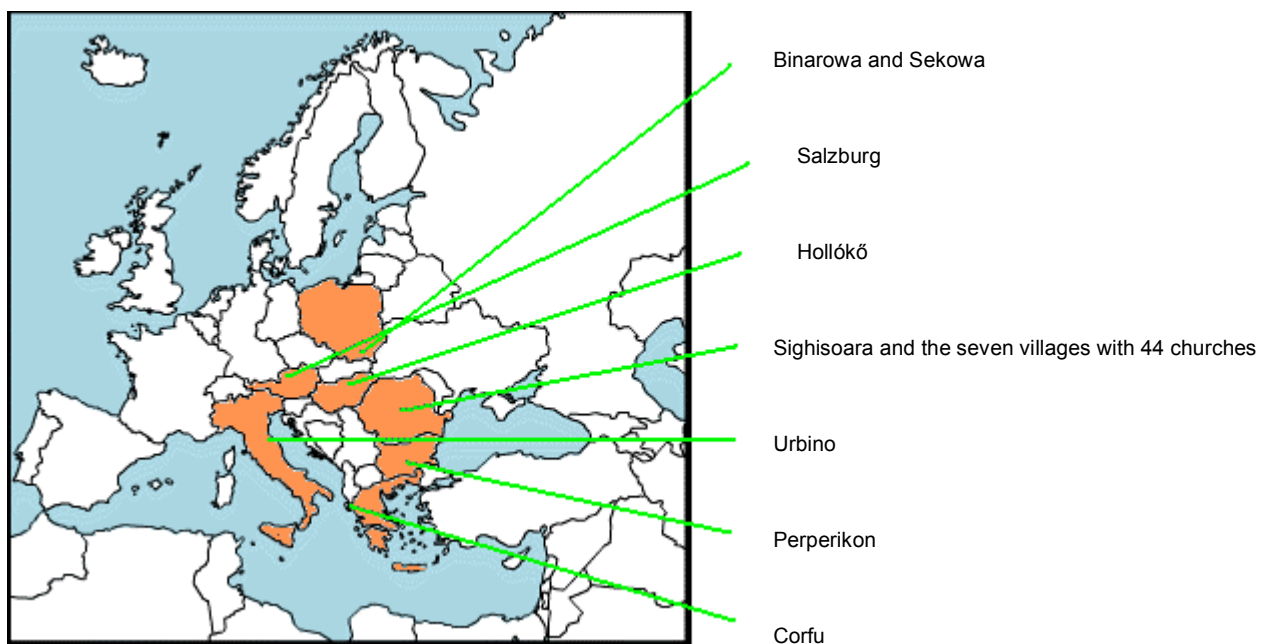
HERITAGE ALIVE! establishes a transregional partnership to make better use of the region’s World Heritage in order to stimulate economic prosperity, strengthen social cohesion and promote regional identity through the use of new media and technologies. The project:

- identifies Best Practice ICT applications that engage users in an active cultural dialogue to strengthen regional development and identity.
- develops and demonstrates two ICT applications in the form of pilot projects:
 - the Virtual Tourist Guide to open up both the regional heritage and the economy for tourists.
 - Learning Quests to raise cultural awareness of the local population, and children in particular, in an adventure-like environment.
- develops and disseminates specific Good Practice Guidelines for WH Sites and tourism providers.
- develops and disseminates Policy Recommendations and Future Scenarios for regional development and spatial planning.
- maximises the transfer of results by giving presentations at events for specific target groups and conducting a feasibility study for future investment.

HERITAGE ALIVE! is a network of diverse heritage sites, united by one common goal. The HERITAGE ALIVE! network comprises partners from very different heritage sites: an archaeological site in Bulgaria, a historic village in Hungary, villages with unique monuments such as wooden and fortified churches in Poland and Romania, a hill-bound historic town in Italy and historic city centres in Austria and on an Ionian island in Greece. Some of the partner sites have World Heritage status while others are aiming to be enrolled in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The project partners are:

- Salzburg Research Forschungsgesellschaft m.b.H. (AT) – Lead partner
- Department for the Preservation of the Historical City of Salzburg (AT)
- Administrative District of Gorlice (PL)
- Municipality of Urbino (IT)
- Municipality of Hollókő (HU)
- Region of Ionian Islands (GR)
- Centre for Economic and Social Analyses and Strategies (BG)
- Municipality of Kardzhali (BG)
- Mioritics Association (RO).



Source: Hazai Domestic Regional Development Inc.

The diversity of the project partners is one of the strengths of HERITAGE ALIVE! because the partners in the network have the same goals: to develop, implement and transfer knowledge about how to promote their cultural treasures and to establish a dialogue between local people and visitors by using interactive media.

The HERITAGE ALIVE! partners aim to develop novel approaches in communicating their heritage and to deploy these in the form of trials in their region. Consequently the partners' work can become a model for many other similar heritage sites.

World Heritage Sites are important drivers of regional development, both economically and socially, because they attract tourism. They are the cornerstones of regional identity. However, it is often difficult for sites with World Heritage status to make the concept of World Heritage understood by their local communities and by visitors and tourists.

The HERITAGE ALIVE! partners undertook to prepare the *Regional Policy* paper and *Future Scenarios* document in order to give information, explain the implications and make recommendations to regional development and spatial planning authorities.

This Regional Policy paper (*Regional Policy Implications and Recommendations*) sets out to identify:

- the economic implications of the HERITAGE ALIVE! project results and approaches to fostering regional economic development (e.g. strengthening of regional economies and local crafts, job creation and action to reduce the emigration of local population from inner cities)
- the social relevance and benefits of the project results and the development of approaches that foster social cohesion and regional cultural identity.

We hope that this document will help the HERITAGE ALIVE! partners to find opportunities for the continuation of the programme and will show the ways in which their plans can be developed and implemented.

2. Introduction to the two pilot projects generated by the programme

2.1. Virtual Tourist Guide

2.1.1. Introduction to the method

The Virtual Tourist Guide (VTG) system is based on a distributed and dynamic information model that is broadcast to hand-held PDA units by a cell-based wireless communications infrastructure. The VTG system uses multimedia-based software of the type used in GPS, mobile phones, etc. The PDA is able to receive and transmit signals, as a mobile phone or GPS does, and its software application is able to use the VTG's database. Technically it behaves first like GPS in that the device is able to determine its own location. It can then gain access to a database that contains the tourist information relevant to that place.

Typically such a device with the necessary software can access the database and then explore the unique aspects of the heritage sites from different viewpoints.

Using VTG not only provides a new means of navigation but it is also a new method of communication that can bring information directly to the recipient, i.e. the tourist.

The VTG can be used as an effective tourist guide which is always up to date.

A VTG can function in several modes, such as:

- *Map and Guide Mode:* The Map Mode provides a map of the site being visited. As the user walks around, a display of the map is present on the screen at all times with a coloured dot showing where the visitor is. In the Guide Mode a trail is marked on the map with a related set of interesting attractions. The attractions are highlighted on the map. When the user walks near a highlighted attraction, the system goes automatically into Attraction Mode. The visitor may return at any time to the Guide Mode by selecting the Guide tab. In this mode, either the system can suggest a tour based on personal interests and preferences of visitors or they can create their own tours.
- *Attraction Mode:* The Attraction Mode acts as a digital tourist guide, supplying the user with hypertext information about the selected attraction. Hypertext allows the user to browse through the information.
- *Web Mode:* In this mode visitors can search the web for additional information, using the Google search engine.
- *Communications Mode:* In this mode visitors can use email to contact friends or service providers such as the local Tourist Information Centre.
- *Diary Mode:* In this mode visitors can write down their experiences and impressions and add images from their own cameras. The editor uses the Guide Interface in order to link annotations and images to the relevant attractions along their chosen route.

2.1.2. Introduction to the technology

As we said, the VTG system uses a hand-held PDA unit,

The VTG provides visitors with context-aware information which is enabled by Bluetooth, GPS, and web technologies.

In the World Heritage VTG the PDAs obtain positioning information by receiving location messages from strategically positioned base stations (using Bluetooth or IR) and from GPS. This approach is adopted rather than one solely based on Global Positioning System (GPS) techniques, mainly because it is often not possible to “see” a sufficient number of satellites in a built-up area to obtain accurate positioning. The combination of GPS and Bluetooth base stations supports the level of connectivity to information if no GPS connection can be established.

The Virtual Tourist Guide uses and represents various types of geographic and hypertext information. The information model manages the requirement for representing geographic information by including special navigation point objects. These can be used together with location objects for determining the best route between a starting point and a destination. For example, a fortress in a historical city contains geographic information on how to get there, detailed information on the destination (e.g. opening hours) and hypertext links to related information. Each Virtual Tourist Guide portable unit is able to receive local pieces of the information model and can operate even when it is disconnected from the network.

2.1.3. Experiences of the three sites

Hollókő (Hungary)

The focus of the VTG is on different crafts, traditions, living stories and the social life of the village. The VTG offers three groups of stories:

- stories of the Lady Piroska: explanations of old traditions and stories connected with courtships and marriage ceremonies,
- stories of the Lady Erzsébet: explanations of old traditions and stories connected with the built heritage, crafts and traditional dress, and
- stories of the local young children (Karolina): explanations of present village life with links to historical facts about the village.

The stories are told through images, texts, and video sequences.

The technical application used in Hollókő showed that it is not yet 100%. It needs improvement. Briefly the application is based on a hidden source of signals on the site. The mobile device interprets the received signals, identifies its location and displays information.

Trials revealed problems, even with the latest technology. Hollókő used the UMPC mobile device, a location-based service (WLAN-Bluetooth). It also became clear during the project that versions of the Guide in several languages are needed.

The interactive features of the VTG are an interactive map and the device’s ability to send digital postcards.

During the test period Hungarian tourists were Hollókő's main target group.

Hollókő's findings are very interesting and useful for the future: they reveal both positive and negative results.

For example:

- Sometimes two active points were seen on the screen while one of them was still far away from the location. It appeared active but the content was not accessible.
- When the user reaches another active point, its window pops up but audio-visual playback is very slow.
- Because of the walls (mud bricks) Bluetooth technology cannot work the same way as in a brick house.
- The device is easy to use, especially with a stylus, but the screen is hardly visible in bright sunshine.
- The sophisticated hardware specification requires a relatively big financial investment.
- It is a good point that, when the tourist arrives at a new location, a pop-up window on the screen draws attention to it. Unfortunately the previous window still remains visible and is a distraction.

Battery lifetime will be a very important consideration when VTG is to be used in future. During testing of the device (Type: ASUS R2H) in Hollókő the batteries had to be charged very frequently. The user's enjoyment of the presentation and the whole impact of this new technology will be completely spoilt if the battery fails in the middle of the tour.

Salzburg (Austria)

In Salzburg the Virtual Tourist Guide (VTG) was used in order to raise local awareness and to evoke the spirit of the place. It was noteworthy that the Salzburg VTG did not rely solely on its prestigious connection with Mozart. Although the city is best known for this famous musician, the VTG makes a point of drawing attention to other attractions of the city. The VTG was focused on drawing the users' attention to the unexplored and less famous aspects of its cultural heritage by choosing such themes as:

- The life and works of Georg Trakl
- Latin Inscriptions
- Historical Taverns (hotels, breweries, cafes, etc.)
- Historical doors
- Historical windows
- Time travel through historical maps, paintings, and photographs – Salzburg through the Ages.

The VTG incorporates six themes that are directed more at local residents than tourists. The objective was to raise the local population's awareness of the cultural heritage of the city and its UNESCO World Heritage status, so it used the guide to enhance the sense of place and contribute to the strengthening of cultural identity among residents and people from the surrounding districts.

One of the main findings is that locals and visiting tourists share an interest in cultural tourism. It also became evident that other cultural routes needed to be devised that would be attractive to tourists. For instance, by adapting the “wine route” concept, beer routes, chocolate routes (Mozart Kugler) and gastronomy can also be promoted as attractions.

The project demonstrated that there is a potential for the development in Salzburg, especially among the young people. Projects such as the VTG experiment help a great deal in increasing the sense of identity of local people.

The device was tested and used among local inhabitants and the experiment showed that users were happy with it. They praised the simplicity of its use. One test user described the navigation as “...*extremely simple*” and even as “*great*”. Another particularly appreciated the fact that the main navigation only uses three buttons – a forward and a backward button plus the mouse button to confirm actions.

While many test users found that it takes a few minutes to get used to the navigation, users generally were quickly able to navigate seamlessly through the application. Even users with little Internet experience had few problems with the main navigation: “...*easy to navigate even though I would not describe myself as very experienced with the Internet. It works rather intuitively. You never feel that you can go completely wrong with it.*”

It was noted that younger persons particularly found the navigation easy and very intuitive; within a very short time they navigated through the application without any problems. Test users appreciated that they had to press forward (or backward) in order to read content of a particular Point of Interest instead of having to scroll. In the future use of VTG the age of potential users must be taken into account when the type of device to use is being considered. It is well known that elderly people can have problems with the mobile telephone – especially with the keyboard.

Sighisoara (Romania)

The VTG focuses on the historic centre of Sighisoara and its fortified church. It was intended to help visitors to gain a deeper understanding of the multicultural history and life in the city.

The guide aims to show little-known points of the city and allows users to follow three thematic routes that invite visitors to explore the history and cultural richness of Sighisoara:

1. the development of the urban environment of the town and the history of particular buildings and places from the beginning in the 12th century to the present;
2. the social life of the citizens, craftsmen and peasants in and around the town (the inhabitants of the city, the stories of the people from Sighisoara) ; and
3. the natural and human threats that Sighisoara has faced during its history

One of the main findings is that too much content was provided.

In Sighisoara the mobile phone - Nokia N80 and Sony Ericson - was used for the VTG.

36 users were involved into the testing of the VTG. As a result of the project the users' profile can be expressed as follows:

- Ages 20-55
- Familiar with mobile phones and internet browsers
- Countries of origin: South Korea, Austria, France.

One finding of the project is that some youngsters were more interested in the mobile phone than in the information that they could have obtained with it.

At the same time the VTG project for Sighisoara proved the worldwide observation that there is a growing demand for cultural tourism.

The project showed that Sighisoara is visited by many visitors who do not stay overnight in the city. The average stay is approximately 2 hours.

Those who tested the devices used in Sighisoara had many negative experiences, for example, with the text displays.

If a real thematic route existed, supported by relevant marketing activity, other places of interest might have been included. There is Sibin – 100 km away from Sighisoara – which has a good motorway connection to Sighisoara.

Another possibility that must be considered for the future is ecotourism and bike tourism (please note that, although there are bike routes, more cycle tracks need to be constructed).

For the time being the name of the city – Sighisoara – and its historic image seem to be enough to attract visitors but in future they might not be enough. Therefore new attractions must be created. For example, using VTG as they did in Salzburg and Hollókő could give the opportunity for 360° panoramic depiction of historic events such as battles.

The above information is based on discussion with the representatives of Sighisoara at the two-day workshop in Hollókő. Unfortunately full information about the evaluation of the project and work carried out by Sighisoara has not yet been forwarded to us.

2.1.4. Future development possibilities of the VTG method

From the project the participants learned new ideas on how to develop the Virtual Tourist Guide in the future. Here are some possibilities for development in the near future.

The VTG device is an excellent way to provide information because it is portable and can be used as visitors and tourists travel from one site to another. The device can be used when travelling by car, bicycle or motorcycle. On the use of VTG in cars or while driving a motorcycle, experts suggest that advice should be sought from a traffic safety specialist on how to use it safely on the move. Why do we think it is useful or could be useful? Because the device is small and information can be targeted. On the VTG - for example while using one's own PDA device as a GPS (which is one way to develop in the future) – pop-up messages can come up through the internet connection giving route directions or just suggesting where to go to eat a good lunch, repair the bike, etc.

The device could be a very useful way of avoiding overcrowding and maintaining the sustainability of sites within a city. The VTG is therefore envisaged as a potentially effective tool of Destination Management.

The VTG could show original pictures of a site as it looked in former times. The pictures of it in earlier years could not only show what it looked like but also give an impression of how it was used and how people lived. In the 21st century, with the present time all around us, we can still think about the past and experience a real feeling of it with some imagination and the help of the VTG.

PC games relevant to the site in question can be developed: e.g. Hollókő – castle-related game, Corfu – wind surfing, Urbino – some student/school year related game, Perperikon – stone mining, Salzburg – salt mining, etc.

The VTG could be used in restaurants as a source of information for the tourists. While customers are waiting for the meal to be served, the VTG might show how the food is prepared. A device located on the table could have a direct connection to the kitchen. Remember that in Greece the owner invites guests into the kitchen and is not offended at all if one of the guests pops in. He is proud to show the guests around. This approach is very guest-minded, proving that there is nothing to hide in the kitchen. It is totally open. "Please take a look or even come and taste while your food is being prepared."

A new way of taking advantage of the VTG is to link it and use it for developing E-tourism. When you arrive at a site, the site management can provide a booking system for various services. What kind of booking system are we speaking about? We mean not only hotels but the actual services provided by museums. With the help of VTG the visitors can plan their arrival at a place. Everybody has already had the experience of finding that there are dozens of visitors hanging around a castle, museum or fortress waiting for the next tour. If you are lucky it is only few minutes after your arrival, but you might have to wait an hour. Every reader of this document has probably arrived at least once at a site (e.g. a church) and found it closed, but these annoyances can be avoided. If the information can be made interactive and brought directly to you, your questions can be answered.

Without leaving home you could be a virtual tourist anywhere in the world and that may raise your interest in visiting a place. This kind of information could be connected to a Customer-to-Customer web site and special notices from service providers could be linked in directly.

Suppliers can sell their products through e-commerce on the World Heritage Sites. For example, a coupon system can be devised for tourist packages which include accommodation, travel, admission tickets and other services.

New appliances such as CD-ROMs, DVDs, digital postcards, webcams, videos, etc. can also be used as marketing tools.

Last but not least, the content of the PDA can be supplemented with special information – e.g. an art guide, rainy day alternatives and offers, a calendar of excursions, etc.

2.1.5. SWOT of the VTG

Strengths

- Curiosity and desire can be served or, by using curiosity, desire can be aroused to visit the site.
- Tourists and visitors can be managed – it is a tool for site management to maintain sustainability and to avoid crowds around the site.
- Broad variety of “à la carte” programmes.
- Young people’s interest is directed and also managed – future visitors can be gained.
- Video can be shown.
- Interaction is possible. Feedback can be invited.
- 2-way communication is possible
- It is easy to update the information and manage the content.
- It can help to strengthen the local economy.
- With the help of VTG all elements of the tourist product – attraction, service, infrastructure, transportation – can be managed.
- Printing can be reduced.
- The VTG promotes environmental protection because it is paperless.
- Use of the information is easy with the device.
- The device can present the content in audio, text and video format.
- Virtual postcards can be sent with the device through an Internet connection.
- Multimedia content can be downloaded with the device: i.e. photos, videos, podcasts and radio on the internet.
- The device can give information in any foreign language that is installed.
- The device can help effectively with orientation on the spot (through Map and Guide Mode).
- The device can make the trip more enjoyable by enhancing the experience.
- It can give very accurate information (you can store specific times in connection with events and opening hours for buildings).
- You can explore the Heritage Site in three dimensions.
- The method gives the chance to explore unique aspects of the Heritage Site.
- VTG provides Internet access.
- You can download much of the required software from the internet.

- VTG can be used as a marketing tool.
- The device gives information not only for tourists but for local residents too, thereby enhancing their bonds with the place.
- It ensures equality of access. Handicapped people can use it too. The device can help their development, because anybody can use it.
- Customer self-service: customers can choose what information to retain and ignore information that they do not need.
- Use of the device is cheaper than paying a personal guide.
- Visitors can get to know the city or community at their own speed.

Weaknesses

- Tourists and visitors usually look for printed material.
- The language of the device is preset.
- The device is expensive and, however much care is taken to avoid theft, there is no guarantee that it will not be stolen.
- The screen cannot be seen in bright sunshine.
- The investment may depreciate very quickly because of advances in technology.
- It is difficult to protect copyright.
- The technology and the device are relatively expensive.
- The device cannot provide new information. It has only the information that was uploaded onto it, so the tourist cannot ask it for more.
- Because of its small size and its small screen, only a few people can use the device together.
- Middle-aged and elderly tourists may not be interested in technological devices and they may not want to learn to use them because they think it is too difficult, therefore they may ignore the service.
- Choosing a destination becomes impersonal because the guide is virtual.
- Batteries may need to be recharged before users have finished using the information.

Opportunities

- Development of devices and technology with the help of European funds.
- Regional policy encourages such developments.
- The geographical information system is established and it supports the Virtual Tourist Guide system.
- New developments for the dissemination of virtual tourism by various new methods (i.e. CD, DVD, video and animation, virtual games, technology on the spot which provides information and allows postcards to be sent through the internet, webcams).
- Websites are appearing onto which people can upload their pictures and videos about their trips. These can provide useful and interesting information for anybody who is planning a trip. They are more up to date than material in magazines, they present reality and the customer promotes the product for other customers.
- E-tourism is developing.

Threats

- Technical development worldwide may be too fast and the development of the VTG may be unable to keep up.
- The demand is not yet reaching the BEP (break even point) and use of the device must be sponsored in order to avoid financial loss.

- Financial resources may limit further development.
- Lack of sponsors may limit financial resources.
- The Internet service may break down while the device is in use.
- Growing competition in the online market: other people may start to use this technology.
- As a result of the fast development of technology, more advanced hardware and software may appear on the market. These devices would then become obsolete and there would be no support for their further development.

2.2. Learning Quest

2.2.1. Introduction to the method

The Learning Quest model is based on the WebQuest model developed by Professor Bernie Dodge (University of San Diego) and Tom March in 1995. According to Bernie Dodge's article "*Some Thoughts About WebQuests*" a WebQuest "...is an inquiry-oriented activity in which some or all of the information that learners interact with comes from resources on the Internet..."².

HERITAGE ALIVE!, however, adopts a more open approach which specifically seeks to integrate new media and technologies (in particular the Internet) with the physical cultural heritage (World Heritage): Through the use of new media users should be encouraged to communicate and interact with their physical heritage and thus get a better understanding of their cultural heritage.

But although HERITAGE ALIVE! uses the WebQuest model, it is not restricted to the use of the Internet. Accordingly HERITAGE ALIVE! adopted the term Learning Quest because the quests in the project aim at integrating new technologies — in particular the Internet — with activities in the physical space (World Heritage). Users are encouraged to use the Internet and also to visit libraries, museums, palaces or other historical places or buildings and to interview experts.

Central to the theory of WebQuests and Learning Quests is the transformation of knowledge. "*The main critical attribute of a WebQuest*", Tom March points out, "*is to facilitate this transformation of information into a newly constructed, assimilated understanding.*"³ Also WebQuests [Learning Quests] integrate individual and group-related tasks. Users are encouraged to fulfil specific tasks and to transform this information in a new understanding through group activities.

To develop this central notion further, Tom March has provided a more detailed definition of WebQuests which also applies to HERITAGE ALIVE!'s concept of Learning Quests:

*"A WebQuest [Learning Quest] is a scaffolded learning structure that uses links to essential resources on the World Wide Web [or other means in Learning Quest] and an authentic task to motivate students' investigation of a central, open-ended question, development of individual expertise and participation in a final group process that attempts to transform newly acquired information into a more sophisticated understanding. The best WebQuests [Learning Quests] do this in a way that inspires students to see richer thematic relationships, facilitate a contribution to the real world of learning and reflect their on own metacognitive processes."*⁴

² Bernie Dodge, *Some Thoughts About WebQuests*, 1995. Download: http://webquest.sdsu.edu/about_webquests.html, 22/01/2007.

³ Tom March, *What WebQuests Are (Really)*; Download: http://bestwebquests.com/what_webquests_are.asp, 22/10/2007.

⁴ Tom March, *What WebQuests Are (Really)*; Download: http://bestwebquests.com/what_webquests_are.asp, 22/10/2007.

2.2.2. Introduction to the technology

The method of Learning Quest is based on Internet connection (hardware) and web technologies (software). To implement an effective method both these conditions must be fulfilled by the participating stakeholders.

- *Internet connection (hardware)* must be broadband and uninterrupted to allow continuous access to information material. As the evaluation of the pilot projects shows, connection became a crucial problem in Gorlice.
- *Web technologies (software)* should be used to give structure to the information collected for the use of Learning Quest developers and users. Creating a website, updating a database, maintaining continuous web-service and providing server support are essential conditions.

2.2.3. Experiences of the three sites

Against this background Learning Quests were developed and implemented in the form of Pilot Projects in three HERITAGE ALIVE! sites: Urbino (Italy), Gorlice (Poland) and Kardzhali (Bulgaria).

All three Learning Quests were aimed at different target groups and have different objectives. The Urbino Learning Quest was aimed at local arts/design students in Urbino (university level); the Gorlice Learning Quest was aimed at school children in Sekowa and Binarowa (ages 13-15); and the Kardzhali/Perperikon Learning Quest was aimed at school children from two local school classes in Kardzhali (ages 15-16).

The *Urbino Learning Quest* required students to develop a promotional plan for the city of Urbino, in order to boost tourism, and to develop suggestions for improving Urbino's potential to attract and welcome tourists.

In the *Gorlice Learning Quest* students had to complete various tasks, similar to different levels of an educational game, connected with the Wooden Churches in Sekowa and Binarowa. Students who completed all the tasks received diplomas.

The main objective of the *Kardzhali/Perperikon Learning Quest* was to assign students to work out a web-based tour guide of the ancient archaeological site of Perperikon (near Kardzhali) and the whole region, targeted mainly at other students of the same age group. The tour guides present historical periods and civilisations, social and economic relations, myths, legends and heroes.

Gorlice (Poland)⁵

In Gorlice the aims of the Learning Quest were to make people aware of their cultural heritage and to involve young people from secondary schools in Binarowa and Sękowa.

This Learning Quest was a project inspired by a once popular strategic game for teenagers, "Civilization". The main idea was to progress through five levels of knowledge which symbolically represent five periods in the region's history.

⁵ Detailed information is available on the following website: www.unesco.gorlice.pl

The project had two stages. At first a group of young people was chosen, whose task was to work out each level of the story. The second stage of the project was open to all students who wished to be involved. They had to complete a written test to assess their knowledge. The tests were prepared during the project work and they were based on the information from the project web page and from other sources. The tests were available on the website on certain days only, which were announced beforehand.

Various techniques and materials were used by the students when they did the tasks:

- texts (general descriptions, introductions to each level of the project)
- photos as a support for the texts (e.g. weddings, parish festivals and celebrations)
- audio recordings (e.g. interviews with priests, the locals and academics - historians)
- films (stories, etc.)
- descriptions of the wooden architecture and of World War I Cemeteries Routes
- gastronomy (the most popular recipes for dishes typical of the region and local ethnic groups, photos of meals)
- virtual exhibitions of the materials prepared by children and teenagers (drawings)
- links to the web pages of UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- press cuttings about the objects and the project.

Each student had an opportunity to earn an appropriate "title", depending on their work results (e.g. "Settler", "Industrialist", etc.). The title depended on the score that they had obtained in a test. At each level students received diplomas to confirm their standard of achievement. All the students received their diplomas at a special ceremony.

The ceremony was used to fulfil parallel aims: firstly to award the students who performed best in the Learning Quest; secondly to present our mutual output and exchange experiences; thirdly to promote the "HERITAGE ALIVE!" project and spread knowledge about it and fourthly to thank the authorities, teachers, priests and people involved in the Learning Quest for their unpaid participation, efforts and contribution. The ceremony thus became a multi-purpose event, which concluded the project by publishing its results.

In Gorlice 87 students took part, 11 of whom obtained the highest title of "Guardian of Heritage". The programme evoked great interest and involvement among the local people and the schools involved decided to continue their cooperation.

The programme greatly broadened the students' knowledge about the Heritage Sites while the residents discovered the treasures of their motherland and became more receptive towards innovative actions.

Perperikon (near Kardzhali - Bulgaria)⁶

Learning Quest, as a method, has not been applied in Bulgaria before. Certain elements of this approach were used as part of the educational process but it has not yet been fully applied.

Two schools were selected in Kardzhali to participate in the Learning Quest on "Perperikon". The pilot project was supported by the two school boards, the Regional Museum of History in Kardzhali and The Regional Library. Not only teachers in History, Geography and Information Technologies but also experts at the museum took part in the discussion of the details of the concept.

⁶ Detailed information is available on the following website: www.kardjali.bg/perperikon07/

Before winning the students' agreement to participate in the pilot project, the method of the Learning Quest and the project objectives were explained. 36 students between the age of 15 and 17 took part in the operation. Based on their interests, students were grouped into 10 teams. Each team was assigned its own task, to prepare one part of the Perperikon Virtual Tourist Guide for students.

Members of the teams carried out all the research activities and gathering of information during their free time. All teams visited The Regional Museum of History and the historical complex of Perperikon. The process of gathering, summarising and analysing information took two months and finally each team presented its work in Microsoft Word format.

With the help of teachers in Information Technology, all the teams converted their work into HTML format and then designed each part of the guide.

Participants themselves see the whole process as a great challenge and an incredible experience. Each team presented its three months' work at the Town Hall of Kardzhali Municipality to teachers, representatives from the Regional Inspectorate of Education, the Regional Museum of History and regional media.

Urbino (Italy)

Urbino has a rich cultural and historical heritage. Today it is a small Italian city, famous for its university. The Learning Quest aimed to improve the students' sense of cultural identity with the city. Many students are aware of its past but are not particularly interested in it.

The specific objective in Urbino was to involve our young people in understanding the value of their city and the complex mechanics behind promoting a city – including consideration of not only their own immediate needs but also those of other citizens and interest groups. The objective was to create a Communications Plan to promote Urbino.

The Urbino State Institute of Art was involved in the pilot project: 39 Graphic Design students in the 17-19 age group. They participated in Marketing Communication Seminars to gain a basic understanding of a Communications Plan.

The process had five phases. After the Preliminary Seminars, students were randomly assigned to the city's main interest groups in the second phase (Getting to know your city) in order to mimic "real life" situations. During the Group Work (Phase 3: Listening to your city) each group researched their needs and wants through online searches, development of questionnaires and field research. Finally the students decoded the data and, through guided group sessions, defined their objectives, target audience and positioning.

The pilot project developed a valuable "real life" learning experience that engaged the participants' interest while yielding useful data for the city. Although the Learning Quest was used for commercial and not educational purposes, it is very relevant to the development of the method.

In conclusion, the method engaged students in a real-life scenario which was embraced by students, school officials and teachers, and it provided relevant learning experience which will be valuable in the student's future careers. There was a problem with the delay in project completion, which arose because of the school's programme.

2.2.4. Future development possibilities of the LQ method

The Learning Quests method can be developed in many ways for the future. The pilot projects of HERITAGE ALIVE! proved its efficacy in improving local people's knowledge of Heritage Sites.

The sites have identified different opportunities for future development, which can be used by all the participating project partners.

- *Gorlice* intends to have more meetings between schools (e.g. for competition), to include more practical tasks (interviews with the locals, etc.), to improve the IT platforms and tools in order to overcome technical problems and to have more useful materials ready at the start of the next project.
- *Perperikon* would focus more on a particular period or aspect of the site to narrow the broad range of interests covered by its Learning Quest. More time is needed to carry out the activities of the Learning Quest in order to ensure the success of continuation projects, as was found at Urbino.
- *Urbino* sees the opportunity to make it an integral part of its schools' programme and anticipates many new results from repeating the experience.

It can also be made into an open concept by involving more stakeholders in the Learning Quest. Cooperation with museums and Non-Governmental Organisations could achieve greater sophistication by making more information available.

The publication of the Learning Quest's results is vital, to disseminate the results and encourage more heritage sites to upload new information. All partners proposed to continue investing in this method in order to include more information on other heritage sites throughout Europe. European funding, especially for the new members states, could be an important resource for building on the pilot project of Learning Quest.

The Learning Quest method gives the chance to develop more ways of promoting cultural heritage sites. By using ICT tools and the LQ method, new paths of development could be opened:

- Virtual, interactive CD-ROMs and study-books about the cultural heritages could be published. All the information collected for LQ purposes can be used in different formats. Study books could be used in primary school education, while CD-ROMs containing all the information on a tourism area and its cultural heritage sites could be offered for sale to tourists.
- Quiz programmes between different schools ("Who knows most about World Heritage Sites?") could help to involve more students in the game. This would improve the knowledge of students who do not live in the heritage site's municipality.
- Networking between Learning Quest schools (knowledge transfer programmes and promotion of the method) would foster cooperation in quiz programmes (see above) and new LQ programmes could be created by other municipalities or cultural heritage sites. Networking would help to share knowledge of the advantages and the problems of the method, which would enable it to be applied more effectively by newcomers.
- E-learning programmes about the local cultural heritage could be developed. Information from LQ programmes on a higher level, with more academic content, could be used in university education programmes. Thus the Learning Quest method could become part of a university's curriculum and make information available for research, even on sites in distant locations.

Access to information on the experiences of pilot projects and future developments was limited by the project participants.

2.2.5. SWOT of the LQ

Strengths

- Innovatory approach for the students and teachers (Gorlice).
- Useful tool in education (Gorlice).
- Created partnership between stakeholders (students, teachers, local authorities, Regional Museum of History) (Kardzhali).
- Motivation for studying heritage and culture (Kardzhali).
- Catalyst for learning about local heritage (Kardzhali).
- Strengthens social cohesion (Gorlice, Kardzhali).
- Bridging generations (digitalising the stories of the elderly by young people through Learning Quests).
- The method teaches interactively so that learning is a pleasant experience for the user.
- It reduces the time required for learning processes (Urbino).
- It raises awareness (Gorlice).
- Furthermore, users are led on to seek new information if they find the right answers for their questions.
- Today almost every computer user can use the Internet.
- “The Web is the World's Biggest Encyclopaedia.”
- The method motivates cooperation.
- The users (usually students) learn to handle information.
- The method motivates the users in decision-making by question-to-question method.
- The method develops problem-solving skills.
- The users are limited by timeframes during the Learning Quests, therefore they plan their work and learn to manage their time.
- IT tools increase learner motivation.
- The method is result-oriented, because the solutions of users will be evaluated.
- Students' critical thinking is inspired.
- Through the method the cultural awareness and understanding of local communities will be stronger.
- The Learning Quest Model is an inquiry-oriented activity in which all of the information interacts with resources from the Internet.
- Open approach to integrate new media and IT technologies with education programmes on the physical cultural heritage.
- Through the method people can adopt a friendly attitude towards local institutions.

Weaknesses

- The programme is designed for young people. It can exclude elderly people who are not competent in IT (Kardzhali).
- It supports traditional educational tools but does not aim to replace them (Gorlice).
- Access to the Internet is limited in some places; this restricts the use of the Learning Quest (Gorlice).
- Not everybody has a computer.
- During the data collection process on the Internet, unreliable information can be included in LQ material.
- Effectiveness of the method is reduced if team members are not motivated to work together.
- As in all evaluation and verification processes, it is always difficult to determine exactly when the planned objectives have been fully achieved.
- Compiling the questions for the Learning Quest is extremely difficult.

Opportunities

- Some parts of the method could be implemented in traditional programmes (Kardzhali).
- Support of regional policy allows further developments.
- ITC and information technology are developing globally.
- The importance of the Internet is increasing and more and more information is being uploaded onto the Web.
- The growth of interest in World Heritage locations will be encouraged.
- The importance of e-learning is increasing.
- There will be money to publish the results in book form.
- Ability to present work on the Internet.
- Cooperation with museums.
- Cooperation between school teams.

Threats

- Lack of political or administrative support.
- Advances in information technology will not stop but they will not become available in every location.
- Breakdown of the Internet service delays work.
- The quantity of information published on the Internet is increasing. So is its inaccuracy. This decreases trust in the method.
- New programmes and methods will be evolved, which will compete with this method.
- It is hard to promote an innovative tool like the Learning Quest.

3. Regional Development on the Related Sites of the Participating Regions/Cities of the Project

3.1. Regional Development of the Region of Gorlice, Poland

3.1.1. Introduction to the Region

Gorlice is located in the South-Eastern part of Poland, which is one of the most economically and socially depressed parts of the country. The Administrative District of Gorlice consists of 10 communes (1 urban commune - Gorlice, 1 urban and rural commune - Biecz, 8 rural communes - Bobowa, Gorlice, Lipinki, Łużna, Moszczenia, Ropa, Sękowa, Uście and Gorlickie).

The area is basically agricultural but tourism has become more important in recent years, especially because of its spas and its rich cultural heritage. The region has much to offer for eco-, health and cultural tourists. It has many forests (41% of the area) for walking, cycling or horse riding (e.g. the horse studs in Gładyszów), the spas of Wysowa Zdrój and Wapienne and the beautiful Klimkówka Lake. The region has also preserved its unique cultural character with the living traditions and customs of the two local ethnic groups: the Łemkowie and the Pogórzanie.

At the end of 2006 the unemployment rate in the Administrative District of Gorlice reached 21.1%, higher by 6.2% than the national unemployment rate of 14.9%. It was also higher by 9.7% than the regional unemployment rate (11.4%). The unemployment rate in the European Union (EU25) at the end of 2006 was 7.6 %⁷.

The most famous items of the built cultural heritage are the churches of St. Michael the Archangel in Binarowa and St. Philip and Jacob in Sękowa, because of their status as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The Church of St. Philip and Jacob in Sękowa, built approximately 1522, is one of the very few wooden churches in Poland from the 16th century that has retained its original architecture. The Church of St. Michael the Archangel in Binarowa, built at the end of 15th century, is also a monument of wooden architecture with rich Gothic paintings and fittings in the interior. Both monuments were registered as UNESCO World Heritage sites in 2003. The area of Biecz commune (incl. Binarowa) is 99 km² and Sekowa commune is 195 km². 17,461 people live in Biecz commune (incl. Binarowa) and 4,842 people in Sekowa commune. The daily number of visitors in 2005 was approximately 10,000 people.

There are also many other unique places and objects, such as Biecz with its original medieval town-planning structure and the small chapels and statuettes of saints by the sides of many roads.

It must also be noted that the rural areas have seen considerable socio-economic changes and changes in lifestyle in recent years.

⁷ Statistics of EuroStat: EURO-INDICATORS 15/2007 - 31 January 2007 (according to these statistics unemployment in Poland in December 2006 reached 12.8%).

3.1.2. SWOT of the Region

Strengths

- The region has many forests (41% of the area) for walking, cycling or horse riding (e.g. the horse studs in Gładyszów).
- There are the spas of Wysowa Zdrój and Wapienne and the beautiful Klimkówka Lake.
- The region has also preserved its unique cultural character with the living traditions and customs of the two local ethnic groups: the Łemkowie and the Pogórzanie.
- Excellent topographical and landscape conditions (Low Beskid with its highest summit, Lackowa, 1000 m. n. p. m.);
- Sources of mineral waters and healing clay (borowina) in Sekowa.
- There are perfect conditions for hosting tourists in this region.
- There are plenty of monuments to be seen, as well as the mountains and forests.
- There are many farms, perfectly suited to the requirements of agro-tourism.
- The strongest and most diverse region in Poland is the Malopolska region⁸.
- The information structure in the region is well developed⁹.
- Information technology is popular in the region¹⁰.
- The Churches of St. Michael the Archangel in Binarowa and St. Philip and Jacob in Sekowa have had UNESCO World Heritage status since 2003.
- There are good services for tourists in the administrative district of Gorlice.
- The town of Gorlice is the unofficial capital of Beskid Niski and Pogorze (the Plateau), where the countryside is well kept and abundant in water sources. Attractions in the area include the Magura National Park, the Sightseeing and Landscape Parks and the artificial bay in Klimkowka (3km²).
- Town centre of Biecz (church, walls with towers, town hall, museums: House and Keep, The Kromers House, Queen St Jadwiga Hospital, Count's Castle)
- The district is rich in natural resources and culture.
- Gorlice district is ideal for excursions.
- In Gorlice there is a regional museum with a collection of archaeological exhibits.
- The wooden Gothic churches are valued by the local people.
- The existing cultural potential (including European cultural routes that run through Poland) and the potential of nature and measures planned in the field of culture create favourable conditions for the development of infrastructure for tourism¹¹.
- Popular legends (Becz the Robber and the Executioners' School) and the local speciality "Castle ginger bread" will help in the promotion of Biecz.

Weaknesses

- The communication network is still insufficiently developed for the publication of tourist information in the region.
- Economic development within the region is unbalanced¹².
- The economic activity of inhabitants of the region is unbalanced¹³.
- There is a high unemployment rate (22.1%-2003) in the Gorlice district.
- The birth rate is low in the Gorlice district.
- In Gorlice city the number of inhabitants is decreasing.

⁸ Source: The Regional Innovation Strategy of the Malopolska Region for 2005-2013 (2005)

⁹ Source: The Regional Innovation Strategy of the Malopolska Region for 2005-2013 (2005)

¹⁰ Source: The Regional Innovation Strategy of the Malopolska Region for 2005-2013 (2005)

¹¹ Source: National Strategic Reference Framework

¹² Source: The Regional Innovation Strategy of the Malopolska Region for 2005-2013 (2005)

¹³ Source: The Regional Innovation Strategy of the Malopolska Region for 2005-2013 (2005)

- The Administrative District of Gorlice is remote from major cities.
- Accommodation infrastructure exists but still needs to be developed. At present it is mainly represented by agro-touristic farms and boarding-houses.

Opportunities

- It is in the Regional Innovation Strategy of the Malopolska Region for 2005-2013 (2005): Development of ecological farms.
- It is in the Regional Innovation Strategy of the Malopolska Region for 2005-2013 (2005): Development of pro-ecological companies operating in the agricultural processing and environmental protection sectors.
- It is in the Regional Innovation Strategy of the Malopolska Region for 2005-2013 (2005): Development of the leisure industry.
- The National Strategic Reference Framework includes support for the health care of employees.
- The National Strategic Reference Framework recognises that new jobs in the tourism sector contribute to the growth of employment. Growth in this sector would in turn stimulate an increase in employment in the production of goods and services.
- It is near to border crossings to Ukraine and Slovakia.
- The district can support investments for tourism and create new workplaces with help from European funds.
- The Special Economic Zone "Euro-Park" Mielec Gorlice Precincts, situated in the North Eastern part of Gorlice, is attracting investment.
- New investment is welcomed.
- Cooperation between the schools of Binarowa and Sekowa.
- Participation in the "Learning Quest Pilot Project" of the HERITAGE ALIVE! programme.
- The demand for World Heritage tourism will increase.

Threats

- The region may not attract resources for the development of tourism.
- The region may not be able to use the advantages of the co-operation/project with partners.
- The Regional Innovation Strategy of the Malopolska Region for 2005-2013 (2005) criticises the ineffective use of funds.
- The Regional Innovation Strategy of the Malopolska Region for 2005-2013 (2005) identifies the underdeveloped transport infrastructure of Malopolska as a threat.
- The Regional Innovation Strategy of the Malopolska Region for 2005-2013 (2005) notes the slow pace of economic change in rural areas, which hinders innovative undertakings.
- There may be no new investors willing to develop the economy and tourism of Gorlice district.
- The district may not receive enough resources to communicate its values.
- Many young people move away or go abroad from the Administrative District of Gorlice.
- There is now a serious risk of thefts and attempted thefts from churches within the district of Gorlice. (it was in 2006)
- Poor financial state of businesses.
- The market for agricultural products is not well organised.
- Lack of governmental agricultural policy.

3.1.3. Development concept for the Region

The description of the regional strategy on future development is limited because of the available resources. The description of the region is therefore based on the development concept of two major municipalities.

Biecz and Sekowa are important tourism centres in the region, which attract most of the visitors arriving in the region. Their rich cultural heritage provides a foundation for future development.

Biecz with its historical centre has good opportunities for development, especially in the field of tourism. The development areas in tourism concentrate on the following strategic and operational goals:

1. TO ATTRACT TOURISTS TO COME AND STAY LONGER IN THE COMMUNE
 - 1.1. Creation of an integrated image of the commune for marketing.
 - 1.2. Building an infrastructure for tourism, sport and leisure.
 - 1.3. Sanitary infrastructure extension (Preparation of plans for sanitary infrastructure extension in the commune with the help of European funds.)
2. TO INCREASE COMMUNE PROFITS FROM TOURISM
 - 2.1. Creation of favourable conditions for tourism development.
3. CREATION OF NEW JOBS IN TOURISM
 - 3.1. Development of accommodation (hotels, etc.) and catering businesses.
4. TO RESTORE THE MEDIEVAL MAGNIFICENCE OF THE TOWN OF BIECZ
 - 4.1. To improve the appearance and ambience of the Old Town.
 - 4.2. Promotion of the commune's tourist attractions.
 - 4.3. Coordination of promotion and development of tourism.

As the goals show, the most important issue in tourism is development to create jobs and increase the number of tourists in the region.

Binarowa is a small village located in Biecz Commune. Many development ideas for Binarowa are included in the Strategy of Biecz Commune. This village is focusing specially on tourism development.

The major development goal of Sekowa is the sustainable social and economical development of Sekowa commune based on its natural treasures, history, and the activity and potential of its inhabitants. In the field of tourism Sekowa identified the following strategic goal: to develop tourism in Sekowa commune by promoting its tourist attractions and specialised services.

Major goals in the field of tourism are:

- A highly developed infrastructure for tourism.
- Promotion of its Spa and mineral waters.
- Development of quality tourism to attract the wealthy part of society.
- Development of individual tourism.
- Use of forests for hunting.
- Cultural, pleasant and hospitable services for tourists.
- Highly effective fundraising for tourism development.
- Professional promotion of tourist attractions of the commune.
- Cooperation with neighbouring communes and Slovakia.
- Development of the Ski Complex in Magura.

Gorlice's participation in the Learning Quest pilot project revealed some technical problems with IT. These problems were overcome during the implementation of the Learning Quest but the situation is still not quite satisfactory. Further development is needed in order to continue with the Learning Quest initiative and to ensure high-quality services for visitors.

The IT applications could be used not only for the Learning Quest topic (introduction to the Heritage Sites of the wooden churches), but also to provide a virtual guidance and information package for tourists who visit the region in search of its natural beauty (websites on the region's flora and fauna, etc.).

The development of rural tourism, equestrian tourism and bicycle tourism are also important objectives and, as the Learning Quest showed, these could promote the rural lifestyle and bring additional income into the local communities.

Although the cities have a developed tourist infrastructure, there is no joint strategy for the communes. There is no opportunity to concentrate on development objectives. Most policies are oriented towards individual, small-scale tourism developments which are not able to attract new, large target groups of tourists to the region. A cooperative effort is needed to create a joint tourism strategy which will appeal to more sectors of the tourist market.

3.2. Regional Development of the Region of Ionian Islands, Greece

3.2.1. Introduction to the Region

Corfu is one of the main Ionian Islands and its capital, the City of Corfu, applied in 2006 for World Heritage status for its historic centre. Corfu has experienced a rich flow of history through time due to its advantageous geopolitical position, which has placed it at the crossroads between East and West.

The area of Corfu Island is 591 km² and the old town in City of Corfu is 2.26 km². Around seven thousand people live into the Historical centre of Corfu. 40,000 people live in the town of Corfu including the suburbs. The total population of the island of Corfu is around 110,000. Almost 1,200,000 visitors arrived in 2006 alone, the majority of them during summer time (May to September). (The number of the tourists was 1,924,913 people in 2005.)

The City of Corfu (Kerkyra in Greek) began its main phase of urbanisation in the early 14th century. Most of the buildings in the historic centre were constructed before the end of the 18th century during the Venetian, French and English occupations. The ensemble of the buildings, streets and squares displays the architectural influences of several historic periods such as the Old and the New Venetian Fortresses, the Town Hall Square, the Square of the Saints, the Ionian Academy and the Palace of St. Michael and St. George.

For Corfu tourism is the main industry that defines the economic operation of the island. The majority of the population depends on it. Since the 1970s Corfu has seen a continuous development of tourism, which has become the most dynamic branch in the island's economy. On account of its geographical position, its international airport and its ferry connections, Corfu is one of the western gateways to Greece. The north and east coasts of Corfu have most of the package holiday resorts as well as more up-market holiday villas, while the southern resort of Kavos is particularly attractive to young holidaymakers.

With some exceptions the interior of the island has relatively little tourism. It should also be noted that the focus on tourism activities in the coastal areas has resulted in a depopulation of many villages, the gradual abandonment of farming and a low level of manufacturing activity with only small craft-type units. In Corfu Island the tourist peak period is about four months of the year.

Other types of tourism, such as conferences, thematic and active tourism, must be promoted to extend the tourist season.

3.2.2. SWOT of the Region

Strengths

- Corfu has most of the package holiday resorts.
- The island has ideal climate conditions.
- There is a variety of activities in unique destinations.
- Corfu Island is famous as the greenest of all the Greek islands and for its particularly beautiful scenery and very friendly locals.
- There are unique historical monuments (most of the buildings in the historical centre were constructed before the end of the 18th century).
- The island is the favourite holiday resort in Greece.
- The landscape is beautiful.
- The inhabitants are friendly.
- A long and beautiful canyon can be visited.
- The island could attract tourists at every season of the year.
- There are palaces, fortresses, museums, libraries, galleries, churches, interesting public buildings and private mansions, public, private and archaeological sites, sites of natural and special interest, traditional houses, olive groves, picturesque ports and clear blue sea.
- The southern resort of Kavos is particularly attractive to young holidaymakers.
- There are many sports on offer for holidaymakers and residents alike, such as scuba diving, golf, tennis, cycling, boating, water sports, etc.
- The island has an airport with regular domestic flights to and from Athens.
- The island possesses a developed transport system.
- Corfu is one of the western gateways to Greece.
- The island has a strategy to develop a more qualitative cultural tourism approach. The application for World Heritage Status for the historic centre of the City of Corfu is an important element in this strategy.
- 4/5 of the region's GDP comes from services that contribute directly to tourism: 20% of the region's GDP comes from hotels and restaurants. (Ionian Islands).

Weaknesses

- Local and regional stakeholders are not well identified.
- With some exceptions the interior of the island has relatively little tourist trade.
- The island has not conducted a feasibility study for future investment.
- The tourism activities in the coastal areas have resulted in a depopulation of many villages, the gradual abandonment of farming and a low level manufacturing activity with only small craft-type units.
- Unemployment in the region rose by 1.2 units in 2001 to 10.2% of the workforce, the largest rise in the country, with 10.5% for the whole of Greece.
- The peak tourist season lasts only about four months of the year.

Opportunities

- A successful application for World Heritage status would allow both the preservation of the old town of Corfu as an important heritage treasure and the extension of cultural tourism beyond the tourist peak period of about four months.
- European funds for continuous development of tourism (i.e. geographical position, its international airport and its ferry connections).
- The island can support investments for tourism and create new workplaces through European funding.
- New investments are welcomed.
- Corfu Island can use foreign capital. With such investment the community can participate in joint projects for tourism.
- Local development cooperation between foreign investors, the municipality, local entrepreneurs and local inhabitants for development.
- Keen competition can develop the economy of the city.
- General Objective 3 of Thematic Priority “Investment in the productive sector of the economy” by the National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013 for Greece states that, to increase demand, it is important to upgrade the quality of tourist products and services at all levels.

Threats

- The region may not attract outside financial sources for its development.
- Global warming may cause unendurable and irreversible effects, which may damage tourism and the economy of the region.
- The island may not be able to achieve European Union standards of tourism and environmental protection.
- There may be no new investors who can develop the economy and tourism of Corfu Island.
- The competitiveness of entrepreneurs in the field of tourism will decrease if there is a shortage of resources for necessary developments.

3.2.3. Development concept for the Region

The role of World Heritage in the regional development of Corfu will make an important contribution to:

- the increase in the quality of tourism.
- improvement of the existing infrastructure.
- organisation of cultural events and festivals.
- social and economic benefits for the locals.

The Management Action Plan for the Island consists of a set of guidelines to protect the cultural values represented by the old town of Corfu. In particular the structure of city, its unique architectural style, the ancient fortifications and natural environment need to be protected. The old town in its entirety is seen as a historical monument and a source of cultural and social awareness. The local community needs cultural, social and economic support in order to protect the rich heritage of the island.

A management organisation coordinates all the actions in order to develop the necessary infrastructure to promote cultural heritage and, at the same time, to safeguard the environment and enhance the social cohesion in the Island. A systematic search for financing opportunities from relevant funds is being conducted in order to complete cultural projects and programmes.

Not only the infrastructure of the cultural heritage but the whole tourist infrastructure should be upgraded to a higher level. Although the levels of tourism services are higher than the average, they need to serve the needs of different kinds of tourist groups.

As a major goal, out-of-season tourism services are crucial to the extension of the tourist season. Conference tourism and nature tourism must be developed to make the island more attractive to new types of visitors. For the development of tourism in general, the airport should be increased in capacity and moved out of the city of Corfu in order to protect the city's cultural heritage and its environment.

There is a master plan to protect the monuments from possible dangers. Research must be done on the dangers (apart from natural disasters) that may threaten momentum in the future.

Full advantage must be taken of new technology to record information on all the monuments in the historical centre and make it available to everyone who is interested. A database must be published through various outlets, containing records of every monument and information from the GIS system. It can use methodology similar to that of the Virtual Tourist Guide.

The results of the HERITAGE ALIVE! project could put the aim of the master plan into effect and could create a Frequent User Group by bringing the Learning Quest and the Virtual Tourist Guide to the attention of all visitors to the Old City of Corfu.

The local community needs to be made aware of the social and economic benefits of cooperation to improve the existing infrastructure. A campaign should be launched to publicise World Heritage values and explain how important they are for the protection of local culture and the local economy which depends on these sites.

Therefore cooperation with the local educational authorities at all levels is essential in order to initiate a flow of information about cultural heritage in education, using new technology such as e-learning and the Learning Quest. This will enable new generations to understand why the values of cultural heritage should be protected and developed.

The public authorities have taken the following steps to implement the Management Action Plan:

- Strategic Directions in European Funding into the Old City to develop the road, sewage, water, power and telecommunications systems.
- Increased levels of staffing in all departments associated with the monitoring and implementation of the Management Action Plan.
- Planning of conferences and educational meetings to emphasise the importance of IT in the transfer of cultural information.

3.3. Regional Development of the village of Hollókő, Hungary

3.3.1. Introduction to the village of Hollókő

Hollókő is a small heritage site in the northern part of Hungary 110 kilometres from Budapest, the capital of Hungary. The region suffers from critical economic and social conditions. Hollókő is a well preserved traditional village, the most unspoilt in Central Europe, which features the harmonious architectural style of the Palóc people. The village, with its 58 protected buildings and its surroundings, was registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987. It was the first village to be granted World Heritage status by UNESCO. The buildings display the beauty of the local rural architecture, traditional crafts and the life style of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Hollókő developed mainly during the 17th and 18th centuries and is a living example of rural life before the industrial revolution. The justification in the recommendation to the World Heritage Committee emphasises that Hollókő has been preserved as a result of its sustained traditional village life and not as a “museum village”. The everyday life, the historic buildings and the surrounding natural area all contribute to the village’s cultural heritage.

The area of the old village is 1.41 km² and the whole area of Hollókő is 5.18 km². Approximately 380 people live in the village.

Hollókő welcomes 100-120 thousand tourists per year. As a major tourist attraction the village can contribute to further development and job creation in the wider region. But maintenance of the World Heritage Site also places a considerable burden on available resources. Due to the demographic structure of the village, social and health services are also of primary importance; 70% of the population is over the retiring age. The municipality runs a care service for local people. The village also has its own day-care kindergarten and primary school as well as a community and cultural house and a youth club.

As a tourism-oriented village of long standing, Hollókő has completed many projects in tourism (PHARE 2002-2003 – Reconstruction of Old Village centre of Hollókő, INTERREG III.A – Touristical development in Hollókő and Rimóc).

3.3.2. SWOT of the village

Strengths

- The village has been a World Heritage Site since 1987.
- It already has good facilities for rural tourism. It not only arranges accommodation but also offers comprehensive programmes for visitors (for example: the Easter in Hollókő Festival, historically inspired performances in Hollókő Castle, World Heritage Day and Nógrád Dance Night).
- There is a Public Foundation in Hollókő that organises tourism in the village. It contributes to the development of Hollókő and the promotion of tourism in its immediate area.
- There is a Tourinform Office.
- There are entrepreneurs in the field of tourism.

- There are cultural and natural attractions that attract international attention: the village museum, post museum, Hollókő Castle and the Landscape Protection Area.
- The hospitality of the inhabitants is exceptional.
- The village has a good record of public safety.
- ATM is provided for tourists.
- The village conservation area includes 58 protected buildings in the old village. It maintains classic examples of folk architecture of the 17th century, traditional activities and traditional lifestyle.
- This was the first Hungarian World Heritage Site and it was the first village in the world to be awarded this prestigious title by UNESCO.

Weaknesses

- The number of inhabitants is low and more than half of the inhabitants are pensioners.
- The number of children is decreasing, therefore the kindergarten and primary school are under threat of closure.
- The quantity of services and the standard of health care are on a low level.
- There are not enough employment opportunities, therefore the migration rate is high.
- The standard of living is low. The village is situated in the poorest area of the country.
- Infrastructure of the settlement is anachronistic and it needs development.
- The roads are in a bad state and there is no high-speed rail link.
- There are illegal rubbish dumps.
- The rate of unemployment is well above the national average.
- There is a lack of first-class hotel accommodation.
- Proficiency in foreign languages among the population and business people is low.

Opportunities

- Demand is increasing for World Heritage tourist packages.
- Demand is increasing for rural tourism.
- There is increasing demand for variety in tourism packages, including the role of tourism in health care.
- There are priority projects which can improve the infrastructure: for example, roads.
- Hollókő plays an important role in the promotional material for regional and county tourism issued by the Hungarian National Tourism Office and the Secretariat of the Hungarian World Heritage Commission.
- The number of visitors from other countries can increase because Hollókő is situated near the Slovakian border.
- Financial resources of European Union funds. For example: ÉMOP 2.1. – Tourist attractions of the area, sustainable development of products, support of tourism infrastructure - Hollókő, a World Heritage location.
- Participation in the “Virtual Tourist Guide” pilot project within the framework of the Heritage Alive programme.
- Hollókő can use foreign investment and, with the investment community, it can take part in cooperative projects for tourism and local development.
- Cooperation between foreign investors, the municipality, local business people and residents for development.

Threats

- Shrinkage and ageing of the population.
- Underdevelopment of the microregion of Hollókő, which suffers from unemployment higher than the national average and is socially and economically disadvantaged in terms of regional development.
- In the area there is a shortage of capital and hardly any foreign investment.
- They may be unable to develop tourism because of a lack of resources.
- The competitiveness of businesses may decrease because of the lack of resources and lack of necessary developments.
- Hollókő may be unable to attract funding for the development of tourism.

3.3.3. Development concept for the village

Future plans for the development of the village are focusing on the inhabitants' living conditions and standard of living, the protection of the culture and tourism. As a part of this strategy important objectives were determined.

The creation of a "Hollókő brand" would help to sell products that appeal to tourists. The Hollókő brand could be limited to selected items of the best quality which are produced locally. This could result in more income for the municipality and its local producers.

A new image for the village will be needed. The traditional, Hungarian folk-image should be renewed and made more appealing to the younger generation and to visitors who arrive in Hungary just for a short period. The image should be based on a partnership between the new infrastructure and the old traditions, which are well combined in Hollókő's VTG pilot project.

One of the traditional elements of the village is the Castle area, which has just completed a renovation programme on a small scale. The Castle area is intended to accommodate festivals and plays in a unique setting and to offer daily programmes especially for children. Even the stones removed during the renovation of the Castle will be used to create a recreation park. Through this development the potential for tourism in the village will be increased and the Castle will become more attractive to visitors.

It is important to improve living conditions to halt the decrease in the number of inhabitants. The physical and IT infrastructure should be brought up to the same level as in the rest of Hungary. Job opportunities should be created to make the village attractive for young people and jobs in tourism may be the only sector in which there are development opportunities.

Education has a major role to play in maintaining obligatory school services and the knowledge of old traditions. Assuring the future of the school would help to maintain the village's living cultural heritage. Without schools, most of the young families would not remain in the area to keep the village's rich cultural heritage and traditions alive.

A planned Little Zoo with local animals will have both educational and tourism purposes. To educate visiting school groups especially, the Little Zoo will give an opportunity to show traditional animals and their role in the daily life of the village.

The Virtual Tourist Guide pilot project could help to improve the overall infrastructure of tourism. PDA technology could be used to assist other projects (e.g. the Castle development project). In addition, high quality hotel accommodation and a better infrastructure for managing traffic are needed. Tourism based on the appeal of the natural surroundings would also be an important target for the village's tourism development strategy.

The Virtual Tourist Guide would enable many development areas to support the general development of Hollókő.

Educated inhabitants could be persuaded to remain in the village by advanced IT technology and its associated employment opportunities. New job opportunities in business and IT will require their skills. The school has a crucial role in this process. If the teachers can provide these skills, then their pupils will be able to take advantage of the new opportunities in employment and business.

An important source of employment for young educated persons will be private investment in a high-class hotel, which is planned. The investment will focus on providing an hotel of large capacity to serve groups of foreign visitors. Associated services such as conference facilities and a fitness centre will help to attract tourists to stay longer in the area and not just pay a half-day visit to the village.

3.4. Regional Development of the location of Perperikon, Bulgaria

3.4.1. Introduction to the location

Perperikon (15 km northeast of the town of Kardzhali) is located in South Eastern Bulgaria near the borders of Turkey and Greece. The City of Kardzhali is the administrative, commercial and cultural centre of the Eastern Rhodopes. Perperikon, which has been inhabited since ancient times, is located on a 470 m high rocky hill in the Eastern Rhodopes. It was known as a medieval fortress but in 2000 archaeologists discovered a unique Thracian palace and a huge cult complex, hewn into the rocks, that is believed to be the place of the sanctuary and oracle of Dionysus of the Besi. The Municipality of Kardzhali is actively pursuing the aim of enrolling the site on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The number of tourists in Perperikon was approximately 5,000 between 2004-2006.

The area of Perperikon is about 1 km². 240 people live in the village of Gorna Krepost (located below Perperikon) and 70,196 people in Kardzhali.

Tobacco-growing is the main branch of agriculture but industry is well-developed and advanced as well. The main industrial activities are the extraction and processing of ores and non-metallic minerals, mechanical engineering and clothing manufacture. Regional development is uneven: the Municipality of Kardzhali is reasonably well developed but the rest of the region is less developed.

The Eastern Rhodopi region offers cultural and historical tourism, especially in cooperation across national borders with Macedonia, Greece and Turkey. The region faces many development challenges, including the effects of economic restructuring in the last decade. Traditional industries such as tobacco-growing and mining have been in decline over that period and the local people are looking for alternative opportunities. The overall goal is to achieve a solid regional economic development for the benefit of the citizens, thereby removing the social barriers faced by vulnerable groups and ethnic minorities in the region. The development of public-private partnerships and the involvement of the non-governmental sector are understood to be key elements in this development strategy.

In its regional development the Municipality of Kardzhali is concentrating its effort on cultural tourism, which has been identified as one of the priorities in the Municipal Development Plan. Therefore the municipality aims to protect and promote the regional cultural heritage and local culture (e.g. historical sites, landscapes, customs, etc.). This requires improvements in the tourist infrastructure and the further development of specific tourist attractions, for example: the folk festival "The music of Rhodopi" and the summer festival "Culture and art without frontiers"; waymarking of eco-routes in the region; restoration works at the monastery complex of St. John the Precursor (better known to English speakers as John the Baptist) and refurbishing the regional museum in Kardzhali. A key element of the cultural tourism strategy is the further excavation, preservation and promotion of the archaeological site of Perperikon, which is the largest megalith ensemble in the Balkans.

The Municipal Development Plan aims to make Kardzhali an important economic centre of its region.

3.4.2. SWOT of the location

Strengths

- The service sector in Bulgaria has been developing quite dynamically, driven by private sector expansion in areas like communications, finance, trade and tourism.
- Numerous unique Neolithic monuments, fortresses and other archaeological finds show the rich cultural and historical past of East Rhodopi region.
- The region provides excellent conditions for the development of cultural tourism and ecotourism
- The City of Kardzhali is the administrative, commercial and cultural centre of the Eastern Rhodopes.
- The Municipality of the City takes a keen interest in sustainable regional development of the city and the wider area of the district of Kardzhali.
- A major focus of the municipality in regional development is on cultural tourism, which has been identified as a priority in the Municipal Development Plan.
- The town of Kardzhali is the natural administrative, commercial, cultural and industrial centre not only for the municipality but for the East Rhodopi region.
- There exists a well-developed network of educational institutions – comprehensive schools, vocational schools, colleges and a branch of the University of Plovdiv.
- The district has an established network of hotels: each municipality has at least one hotel of good quality.
- Many non-governmental organisations implement certain initiatives and projects in order to support tourism development, such as excursions, hikes and summer camps in the territory.
- The Rhodope Mountains are suitable for hunting tourism.
- The artificial lakes are suitable for fishing tourism.
- The area is rich in ores and minerals.
- The area is very rich in art relics: there are many stone castles and palaces.
- The town developed because of its position on the trade routes during Ottoman rule.
- Perperikon is famous for its gold production.
- Perperikon is on a 470 m high rocky hill, which is thought to have been a sacred place.
- Perperikon is the largest megalith ensemble in the Balkans.
- It is believed that Perperikon is the site of the sanctuary and oracle of Dionysus of the Besi. This gives it a special appeal as a tourist attraction.

Weaknesses

- The municipality is located in a peripheral area, remote from the capital city and the central points of the country and from border check-points, ports and airports.
- Transport connections for tourists are only partially developed.
- There is a lack of employment opportunities in the area because the decline of the local mining and tobacco industries.
- The telecommunications networks and the quality of their infrastructure in the Municipality of Kardzhali are unreliable and undeveloped because of the lack of public demand.
- Lack of infrastructure for technological transfer.
- Lack of suitable tourism infrastructure in the municipality.
- The state of the cultural infrastructure is dilapidated.
- The district's heliport, located in the town of Kardzhali, is not operational because of the lack of financial resources for its exploitation.
- Kardzhali is a poor, agricultural (primarily tobacco-growing) region.

- Agricultural activities (industry and services) are concentrated in the town, ignoring the demographic potential of the villages.
- The comparatively extreme summer and winter temperatures contribute to the increase in air pollution.
- The changes in the demographic characteristics are unfavourable: the region is characterised by a high level of human migration.
- The impressive Megalithic monument (Perperikon) has been destroyed by several attacks over the centuries, therefore its renovation needs continuous investment.

Opportunities

- The geographical location of the East Rhodopi region.
- The city can make use of foreign capital, together with local investors, to develop joint projects for the economy and tourism.
- Cooperation between foreign investors, municipality, local entrepreneurs and local inhabitants for development.
- Identification of local and regional stakeholders.
- The new N9 Corridor road and the customs post at Makaza Pass will connect the town of Kardzhali with Greece, located 57 kilometres from the city.
- The experience, good practices and materials from the project could be used by the six other municipalities in the Kardzhali region (Ardino, Djebel, Momchilgrad, Krumovgrad, Kirkovo, Chernoochene) and by other regions of Bulgaria. Kardzhali's municipalities have common problems and need to cooperate to find solutions.
- The "Support to e-government initiatives at local level through free and open source software in South East Europe" project. The South East Europe Project, centred on Greece, Turkey, Cyprus and Bulgaria, brings research and public affairs programs to bear on regional and functional issues.
- The future strategy of the bus company foresees gradual renovation of the bus station and increase in the range of services offered in the city.
- The Municipality of Kardzhali is actively pursuing the aim of enrolling the site of Perperikon on the UNESCO World Heritage List.
- Kardzhali can use the opportunities and advantages of Public-Private Partnerships.
- Participation in the "Learning Quest Pilot Project" of the HERITAGE ALIVE! programme.
- The Municipality of Kardzhali is included as an agglomeration area in the Operational Programme "Regional Development", which provides measures to support tourism development.

Threats

- The city may not find sustainable European sources for the development of tourism.
- Foreign investors may have attitudes that conflict with local traditions and culture.
- Unfavourable weather conditions can damage Perperikon.
- The National Strategic Reference Framework mentions that flood damage has a significant impact on the local and regional economy in these areas, especially in the agriculture, transport and tourism sectors.

3.4.3. Development concept for the location

Under its municipal development plan, Kardzhali has created an effective management system for the municipality. The city has also identified the necessary financial resources for its medium-term plan. It also includes a long-term vision for the city. The whole planning process is in line with the Lisbon Agenda and based on a multi-level, bottom-up planning system (municipal, district, regional and national plans for development).

The Bulgarian State is running a project to draw up list of national sites and cultural historical monuments and develop its control system. Through this system the development of heritage site such as Perperikon can be financially supported and developed to attract more visitors and can involve local inhabitants more closely.

The Arpezos Park is an important real estate development of the city, which could help in the regional development of the city. There are four development projects going on in this park (high-tech park, business park, administrative buildings and a shopping centre), in which private investments are supported by the Ministry of Regional Development and the European Regional Development Fund.

The development projects in tourism are still in the planning phase. The membership of the Tourist Council includes NGOs, tour operators and business people and ideas for developing the project will be based on their objectives. There is one tourism project in preparation, which consists of landscaping around two large artificial lakes. This will create a recreational area which will offer a range of activities for tourists. The development of natural sites is planned for the long term as an extension of the current economic and landscape development projects.

A major goal of the development projects is to improve services and create jobs which will raise the standard of living. Through the development of tourism, events such as cross-border festivals and summer festivals could be created and heritage sites such as St. John the Precursor and the Museum of Kardzhali could be renovated as the number of cultural and historic tourists grows.

The Perperikon Learning Quest pilot project helped to form new partnerships in the region. Sharing the project and its results with schools in the neighbouring countries will create new opportunities for educational tourism. New educational programmes will be vital, especially in the villages near Perperikon, so that people can earn a living from tourism and attract more tourists interested in cultural and ecotourism.

There is no overall strategy for tourism yet and the basic tourism infrastructure needs to be improved, e.g. with more quality hotels. At present there are only five 3-star hotels.

3.5. Regional Development of the City of Salzburg, Austria

3.5.1. Introduction to the City

The historic centre of the city of Salzburg is a magnificent example of a European ecclesiastical city-state with a dramatic townscape that developed from the Middle Ages to the 19th century. Salzburg has a large number of outstanding ecclesiastical and secular buildings from several centuries (in particular Medieval and Baroque), such as the Fortress of Hohensalzburg, the Abbey of St. Peter and the Cathedral of St. Rupert and St. Virgil. Its flamboyant Gothic art attracted many craftsmen and artists before the city became even better known through the works of the Italian architects Vincenzo Scamozzi and Santini Solari, to whom the centre of Salzburg owes much of its Baroque appearance. Furthermore, Salzburg is strongly associated with the arts, in particular music and Salzburg's famous son Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The historic centre of Salzburg was enrolled in UNESCO's World Cultural Heritage List in 1996.

The area of the Historic Centre of the City of Salzburg is 65.7 km² and the area of protected zones is 3.3 km² (i.e. 5% of the city district, 1,400 objects). 150,000 people live in the city and approximately 11,000 people in its historic centre.

The protected areas of the historical city cover 330 hectares (5% of the city district) with more than 1,400 built objects. With its beauty, its association with W. A. Mozart, the renowned Salzburg Festival, the fame brought by "The Sound of Music" and other distinctions the City of Salzburg attracts many tourists. In the "Mozart Year" of 2006 the number of tourists was 1,197,291 (2,232,076 overnight stays), but the number of day visitors was over 5 million in this year. However, some areas of the historic centre are overcrowded at peak times, many traditional shops in the centre have closed down because of increased rents and been replaced by international chains, and apartments for residents have become very expensive.

3.5.2. SWOT of the City

Strengths

- Well-developed Infrastructure.
- Well-established, export-intensive, specialised industries (electrical industry, paper manufacture and haulage) do not conflict with the development of tourism.
- Salzburg has good access to the main export markets.
- Cultural resources of the city are internationally famous (Festive games, Mozart).
- World Heritage in Salzburg: historical district of Salzburg (1996)
- Rich programme of events: Jazz Autumn, Castle concerts, Theatres, Advent festivals.
- Thermal baths are open throughout the year.
- There is a good range of services in the winter guest-houses in the mountains: ski hire, ski schools and a variety of cuisine.
- There is a varied and attractive natural environment.
- The city has its own reputation and image.
- It has a flourishing regional market.

- Its tourist industry is successful and of a high standard.
- Tourism organisations are professionally managed.
- Salzburg is “the home of rural hospitality”, the most important province and city of the country.
- There are more than 1400 built heritage attractions in the city.

Opportunities

- Priority 1 of the National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013 for Austria emphasises the importance of the innovative development of tourism.
- The city is easily accessible (A1, comfortable flights and fast EuroCity trains).
- The City of Salzburg is within easy reach of the Salzkammergut and the popularity of that destination provides another source of visitors to Salzburg.
- An increase in the number of projects will support tourism development.
- The city is a potential location for major Austrian events. (Austria and Switzerland organise the European Championship. According to the plans, they will hold three group matches in Salzburg).
- Demand for World Heritage tourism will increase.
- 2007-2013: the “Increase in Regional Competitiveness” project will facilitate the development of Salzburg’s infrastructure and economy.
- 2007-2013: European Regional Co-operation between Austria and Germany and European Regional Co-operation between Austria and Italy. The aim is to implement cross-border projects for joint economic development in order to raise the standard of living.

3.6. Regional Development of the Region of Sighisoara, Romania

3.6.1. Introduction to the Region

In Romania the Historic Centre of Sighisoara and seven villages with fortified churches, which were founded by the Transylvanian Saxons, were admitted to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1999. The seven villages founded by the Transylvanian Saxons are characterised by a unique land-use system, settlement pattern and organisation of family farmsteads that have been preserved since the late Middle Ages. The fortified churches, which dominate the area, illustrate building styles from the 13th to the 16th century. Sighisoara, which was also founded by the Saxons, is a fine example of a small, fortified medieval town that played an important strategic and commercial role on the fringes of central Europe for several centuries. The area of the city is 1.5 km² and 35,000 people live there.

Until the fall of Communism in 1989 the Saxons represented a major section of the population in the area. However, most migrated to Germany in the early 1990s. For example, in the World Heritage village of Viscri only 25 of the 350 Saxon inhabitants remained. State-owned farms, which provided most local employment, have collapsed and there is high unemployment in the area. The lack of infrastructure and services contributes to the continued emigration of the young and more able to the larger cities of the country. It is understood that Transylvania's natural and built heritage represents the best economic future for its inhabitants, based on opportunities such as cultural and eco-tourism and organic agriculture. However, the region needs not only considerable investment to better the economic and social conditions but also a renewal of the sense of belonging among its citizens.

The number of the tourists is 170,000 – 180,000 a year. Currently there is no organisation responsible for tourism development at regional or city level. There are private businesses that cater for tourists but the support of the municipality would be necessary to combine investment in tourism with the organisation of a programme and improvement of the infrastructure.

3.6.2. SWOT of the Region

Strengths

- High annual growth rates of GDP in Romania
- There are medium-quality guest-houses and hotels, providing comfortable standards for visitors.
- The quality of the roads is reasonable (E-60 is an international main road).
- The historic old village of Sighisoara has been a World Heritage Site since 1999.
- The following imposing Gothic style churches, built like fortresses for protection, have been under UNESCO protection since 1999:
 - Mures county: Saschiz
 - Brasso county: Prejmer, Viscri
 - Nagyszeben district: Biertan, Cristian, Valea Viilor
 - Alba county: Calnic

- The “Castrum Sex” medieval castle in Sighisoara, from which the Saxon conquerors originated.
- Vlad Dracul (also known as Dracula) was supposedly born here. His legend attracts many tourists to the city.
- The number of cultural monuments provides favourable conditions for tourism.
- Its description as the “Jewel of Transylvania” attracts visitors to Sighisoara with strange fascination.
- There are kindergartens, primary and secondary schools in Sighisoara.
- There is a city hospital, clinic and chemist in Sighisoara.

Weaknesses

- Weak tourism infrastructure and poor marketing nationwide.
- There are no built highways in Sighisoara and the surroundings where the fortress churches are located.
- The document “Hotarirea nr. Din 25 ianuarie 2007” privind constatarea încetării de drept a mandatului de consilier județean al domnului Suciu Victor” indicates that:
 - The lack of employment opportunities is clearly apparent (mainly only seasonable jobs).
 - The infrastructure is weak and undeveloped.
 - It is difficult to obtain medical services.
- In Sighisoara typical problems are:
 - Decreasing number of population.
 - High unemployment.
 - Lack of infrastructure.
 - Lack of services.
- The businesses in Sighisoara and in the Seven Villages possess few internal and external resources.
- Knowledge of languages among the inhabitants and business people in the city and rural communities is poor.

Opportunities

- The Priority Axis 5 of the Economic Competitiveness Operational Programme (by National Strategic Reference Framework) in Romania states that tourism in Romania should be developed, not only for tourists but also for business.
- The Priority Axis 3 of the Regional Operational Programme (by National Strategic Reference Framework) in Romania states that the regional local tourism should be developed in Romania (“Restoration and development of cultural and historical heritage”).
- These policies can support connections with foreign partners, the use of economic and cultural contacts, the development of plans and the motivation of foreign investors in cultural tourism.
- The role of the state in international organisations shows an increasing willingness to finance innovation companies in the medium-term.
- The highway from Brasov will affect Sighisoara too. The attraction of the city to tourists will increase with the building of the proposed airport in Brasov.
- The airport of Tirgu-Mures is near.
- The demand for World Heritage attractions will increase.
- The tourist trade of the Seven Villages can be encouraged by the increase in rural tourism.
- Sovata and its nearby thermal baths are known internationally.
- Support is available from the European Union for cultural and ecotourism.

- Participation in the “Virtual Tourist Guide” Pilot Project of the Heritage Alive programme.
- There is an increasing demand for cultural tourism.
- Other cities are within a reasonable distance (e.g. Sibin, appr. 100 km).

Threats

- The population is declining in numbers and at the same time getting older.
- Other Romanian locations may provide greater attractions for visitors.
- Foreign companies locate their sites around the capital or western counties of the country.
- The city and the Seven villages are situated in a region far from the country’s economic centre.
- The emigration of young people may become a permanent feature.
- The city and the Seven villages may not obtain sustainable European resources for the development of tourism
- Sighisoara may be unable to obtain other resources for the development of tourism.

3.6.3. Development concept for the Region

Sighisoara already has many visitors but they arrive mainly on day trips, usually on excursions from Bucharest . Approximately 70-80 % of the visitors are only excursionists.

One of the main problems is that very few visitors stay overnight. It will be vital to improve the road system and provide more overnight accommodation for visitors in good hotels.

In order to achieve that, local support must be won, so the city is working to raise local awareness of the problem.

The city has already started a public relations campaign to manufacture and sell various local products. Marketing is now becoming an very important tool in the life of the city: it includes promotions, exhibitions and the production of souvenir CDs and calendars.

One of the main aims of the development of the region is to ensure that business people and politicians speak the same language.

Sighisoara also has other opportunities to increase the number of visitors: the city can hold cultural events, offer organised cycle tourism, recommend tours of the Saxon churches and make the best use of the Dracula Park to lure more tourists.

3.7. Regional Development of the City of Urbino, Italy

3.7.1. Introduction to the City

The City of Urbino is located in central Italy, about 30 km from the Adriatic coast in the Province of Pesaro-Urbino, which is the largest of the four provinces of the Marche region. The province, like the whole region, enjoys a low unemployment rate (4.3% compared to a national rate of about 8%) because it performs well in service industries and manufacturing, although the share of the agricultural sector is below the national average.

The area of the Municipality of Urbino is 228 km², and the historic centre is about 1 km².

After the Second World War the City of Urbino was rather neglected but measures were taken for its regeneration and repopulation, particularly of its historic centre. Among the most important pillars of the regeneration efforts were the university and the tourism sector.

The hill-bound, walled historic town was enrolled in the World Heritage List in 1998. It is an exceptionally preserved urban complex, a pinnacle of Renaissance art and architecture, harmoniously adapted to its physical site and to its medieval precursor. The Palazzo Ducale is one of the most famous masterpieces of Renaissance art. Its two sharp Torricini (towers), almost sixty metres high, constitute an architectural innovation and represent the visual symbol of the city. In the 15th century Urbino was one of the most important centres of the Renaissance period. It was the birthplace of Raphael, Bramante and Barocci, and attracted many other outstanding humanist artists such as Piero della Francesca, Luciano Laurana, Leon Battista Alberti and Francesco di Giorgio Martini, who shaped its present-day form.

Today the university has 20,000 students while the city has a local population of 15,500. The university is highly innovative, leads many regional and international projects and is a vital part of the regional economy and cultural life. It occupies buildings in the old town as well as colleges on a nearby hill to house students.

Urbino has seen an increase in visitor numbers to 1,298,088 in 2005. It is visited by many visitors who spend only one or at most two days in the town. While it presents these visitors with a well-preserved and conscientiously managed cultural heritage environment, Urbino also needs to develop and promote new tourist products, e.g. creative cultural courses and events related to the arts and humanities, music, culinary culture and other topics of interest.

3.7.2. SWOT of the City

Strengths

- The economy of the Marche region is one of the most dynamic in the country. Its rate of growth in the 1996-2001 period was 2.5 % compared to 1.9 % for Italy as a whole.
- Economically the region is mostly reliant on medium and small scale productive industries, often family run.
- Hotels in the region: one and two star category. They are basic but good value.
- Gastronomy in the region is deeply rooted in peasant tradition.

- The region is the home of several specialities: truffles, formaggio di fossa (strong-flavoured cheese), mushrooms, oil, Autumn flavours in the areas of Pesaro and Urbino, art, history, charming itineraries and many village festivals.
- The region enjoys a very varied landscape, ranging from mountains and hills to beautiful beaches and fine, ancient medieval boroughs with modern centres suited to summer tourism.
- It is very active at European Project level as an important instrument for local development.
- Marche Regional Development Agency plays an important role in the economic development of Marche Region, supporting the planning guidelines provided by the regional administration by identifying local, national and international projects for sustainable development.
- In the Province of Pesaro the main features of the local economy are fishery, the furniture industry and tourism.
- The region's unemployment rate is low (4.3% compared to a national rate of about 8%).
- The Historic City of Urbino has been a member of the Italian Association of UNESCO World Heritage since 1998.
- It has been involved in several international co-operative projects, in which it has further developed and shared with partners its urban planning and cultural tourism expertise.
- It has an historic centre.
- The important pillars of the regeneration efforts were the university and the tourism sector.
- The university is highly innovative, leads many regional and international projects, and is a vital part of the regional economy and cultural life.
- The second and increasingly important socio-economic pillar is the tourism sector.
- The town, nestled on a high sloping hillside, retains much of its picturesque medieval aspect, somewhat marred by the large car parks below the town.
- The city hosts the University of Urbino, founded in 1564, and is the seat of the Archbishop of Urbino.

Weaknesses

- In the Province region the share of the agricultural sector is below the national average.
- The city has no formal tourism organisation.
- There are fewer residents of Urbino than students at the university
- The sense of local identity is not at a high level. The residents and the students do not appreciate the cultural values of Urbino.
- The number of parking spaces for tourists is small.
- The city is a cultural heritage. Development of its infrastructure presents problems.

Opportunities

- The geographical location of the Marche region.
- The region can take advantage of its proximity to the Adriatic coast.
- The Marche region can make use of foreign capital and co-operate with foreign investors in joint projects for tourism and local development.
- Co-operation between foreign investors, the municipality, local entrepreneurs and local inhabitants for development.
- The Marche region can combine two process, innovation and integration, in an active and functional way.
- An active strategy, relying on the strongest advantages of the Marche Region, is required in order to avoid the risks of being left passively on the outskirts.
- Keen competition can enhance the economy of the city.
- European resources for development of tourism.
- The increasing demand for cultural tourism.

- The city needs to reconcile globalisation with local traditions in its ambition to improve both productivity and the quality of life.
- Participation in the “Learning Quest Pilot Project” of the Heritage Alive programme.
- The university is willing to co-operate with foreign investors, the municipality, local entrepreneurs and local inhabitants for development.

Threats

- Foreign investors may adopt attitudes that conflict with local traditions and culture.
- Regions can lose cohesion, not only when productivity is affected by outsourcing as part of a general reorganisation of manufacturing capacity, but also by the growing control of production, commerce, banking and finance by outsiders.
- The city may not achieve the standards of the European Union in tourism and environmental protection.
- Urbino may be unable to obtain resources for the development of tourism.
- The university may lose ground in competition with other universities.

3.7.3. Development concept for the City

The city plans to develop a major tourist attraction: a cultural vacation that takes full advantage of Urbino’s cultural facilities.

At the same time the city must exploit the tourist potential of a small city that offers both relaxation and the attraction of cultural sites.

Urbino’s main aim is to develop thematic tourism that relates to the city’s main traditions.

Urbino is a university city. Its education, student life and student culture are based on several centuries of tradition. Up-to-date academic programmes could use this base to promote short courses for foreigners. Besides general education, cultural heritage conservation programmes could be promoted for regions and cities participating in the project and for other UNESCO Heritage Sites. New programmes are being planned in the field of creative cultural courses and events related to the arts and humanities, music, culinary culture and other topics of interest.

Gastronomy is an important field in tourism development. Besides new culinary programmes at the university, new kinds of gastronomic events could be developed. In the countryside new farm restaurants could be developed to serve natural food and organic farms could also be opened to tourists.

The city needs to increase its capacity to accommodate tourists. New parking places are required and redundant industrial buildings may provide some of the necessary space. Although the city has no rail connection, there are bus routes to the city and there is an airport only 30 minutes away.

The city has a long tradition of craftsmanship, especially in furniture and woodworking, which would be attractive to tourists.

The local inhabitants are a target group. Their interests must not be neglected if they are to feel a sense of identity with the city. In particular they need better parking provision. The students who live there should be encouraged to acquire more knowledge of the city in which they live and study through the experiences of the Learning Quest pilot project. This would increase their sense of identity with the city and bring benefit to the whole community.

4. Application of IT tools in regional development and creation of social cohesion

From a regional development perspective the seven sites involved in the cooperation project have different characteristics. A major point is that the focus on spatial development is at a different level in each site. The development area in Salzburg, Urbino and Hollókő is the municipality itself, while regional development is the main consideration at the other sites (Gorlice, Corfu, Perperikon and Sighisoara).

Different economic and social conditions apply at each site, therefore the problems are different. Unemployment and underdevelopment of the area are crucial in Hollókő, Corfu, Perperikon and Sighisoara but identity is a problem in Salzburg, Gorlice and Urbino.

Although both groups of partners regard tourism development as a solution to their problems, each site has its own needs, but they can all make use of IT tools.

The major development areas on the sites are:

Gorlice
Introduction of flora and fauna of the region through IT tools
Equestrian tourism
Agrotourism
Cycle tourism
Promotion of the natural environment
Spas
Development of other cultural sites
Development of local tourism products
War memorial tourism

Corfu
Extension of the tourist season
Promotion of inland and mountain areas
Protection of traditions (gastronomy)
Development of quality tourism
Development of Corfu city centre
Exploiting recreational and health opportunities in tourism
Expansion of the tourist infrastructure
Conference tourism
Promotion of the natural environment

Hollókő

Development of the tourist infrastructure
 Cultural heritage protection
 Promotion of the natural environment
 Castle tourism and attraction development
 Castle area: renovation programme – recreation park
 Study book on cultural heritage sites
 E-learning for tourism professionals
 A professional association for training young people in cultural heritage conservation
 Visitor management
 Little Zoo with local animals

Perperikon

Protection and development of local culture and heritage
 Landscaping around two large artificial lakes (creation of recreational areas that can offer a wide range of activities for tourists)
 Identity creation
 Development of tourist infrastructure
 Specific tourist attraction development (“The Music of Rhodopi” summer festival, “Culture and Art without Frontiers” events, eco-paths, restoration of St. John the Precursor church and Kardzhali Museum)
 Cultural and ecotourism
 Arpezos Park (high-tech park, business park, administrative buildings, shopping centre)

Salzburg

Quality cultural tourism development
 Cultural heritage development
 Shops featuring the products of local craftsmen
 Increasing the sense of identity and the knowledge of cultural sites among residents, especially the younger generation
 Continuation of cultural events

Sighisoara

Tours of the Saxon churches
 Tourism marketing development
 Development of tourism infrastructure and services
 Maintenance of the built Saxon heritage
 Cultural, eco-, bicycle and agrotourism
 Dracula Park

Urbino

Education and student heritage
 Gastronomy
 Organic food, organic farms
 Promotion of the cultural heritage of the city
 The legacy and traditions of artists and craftsmen
 Creation of cultural courses and events related to the arts and humanities, music, local cuisine and other topics of interest
 More parking places
 Increasing the sense of local identity

4.1. Economic implications of the project results and approaches fostering regional economic development

As an important part of regional development, the local economy should be made the engine of growth in the region. The HERITAGE ALIVE! project identified two major strategies for fostering regional economic development:

- job creation and
- attracting more tourists.

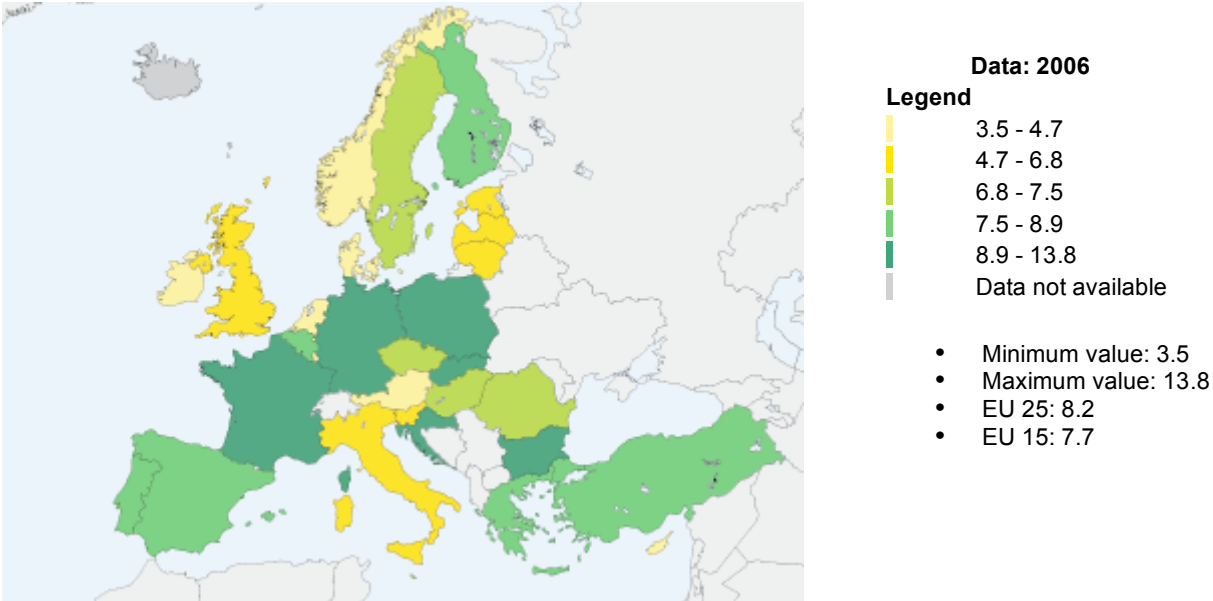
To achieve results in the long term, some major horizontal approaches should be followed. It will be necessary to encourage private investment to support every project. The infrastructure (community, environmental, touristic and traffic management) must be improved to make the region accessible, especially to tourists. Without such investment the development of attractions will benefit only the local residents and will not generate enough income for economic development.

Development must also be sustainable. The best choices will have to be made from the options available to ensure sustainable operation in future. The principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination must be followed throughout so that all social and residential groups may benefit from development projects. In addition all legislation for the conservation of heritage must be observed, so that the local heritage will be protected and local people will appreciate its importance.

Job Creation

As we mentioned, one group of project participants has to deal with a critical unemployment rate. Therefore their major challenge is to use their cultural heritage sites to create employment for more people who can make a contribution to tourism development.

Unemployment rate - total - %



Source: Eurostat, EuroGeographics Association for the administrative boundaries

Employment opportunities can be created in the following ways.

Graduate and postgraduate education programmes could be developed. Some project partners (Urbino, Salzburg) have great experience in the field of education up to university level. A major approach could be to use the techniques of educational programmes, especially in the field of tourism and IT, to implement local education programmes. By building partnerships between educational institutions on different levels, many new and useful education programmes could be launched (creative cultural courses and events related to the arts and humanities, music, culinary culture and other topics of interest). E-learning platforms would have to be provided to make the most up-to-date education programmes accessible even in the smaller villages. Professional staff in cultural heritage conservation could then receive continuing education, wherever they are located.

Specific training programmes need to meet certain requirements:

- In case of tourism training programmes courses in languages, informatics, catering, entrepreneurship and finance should be included to support job creation and employment in this sector.
- Informatics training programmes are needed to develop IT applications for the local community, both to strengthen the local infrastructure and to serve specific IT applications in tourism (e.g. VTG, LQ).
- Training in cultural heritage conservation is needed to produce professional staff who can protect and develop the World Heritage Sites. The University of Urbino can support the development of training programmes in this field.

Support for entrepreneurship should concentrate mainly on the development of new small and medium enterprises in tourism. These will provide self-employment opportunities, which will assist the general economic development by generating personal income and providing more services.

The creation of distance jobs could be promoted in the participating areas, especially where areas of dense population are widely separated. This would require an IT network with up-to-date hardware and internet applications and a well developed infrastructure. There are EU funds available to create such an environment.

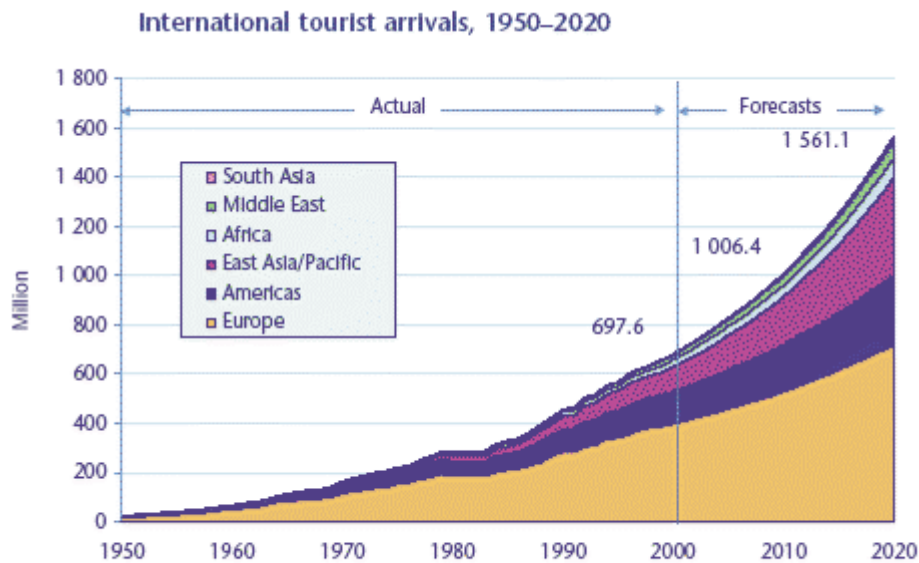
To maintain the transfer of knowledge between the regions, networking jobs could be created for those who are responsible for international relations. In this way the best practices in each region can be shared with other project partners.

Employment in the social economy is supported by the HERITAGE ALIVE! project. The project partners decided to create a network of civic organisations to disseminate the results of the project, create new cooperative projects and transfer knowledge. Civic organisations that wished to participate in this project were mapped during the application process. This network will provide paid and voluntary jobs that will make an important input to the labour market.

In order to measure the effectiveness of different job creation tools, specific indicators should be created for each one. Every training, entrepreneurship or social economy programme should be assessed individually so that its success in job creation may be evaluated.

Attracting more tourists

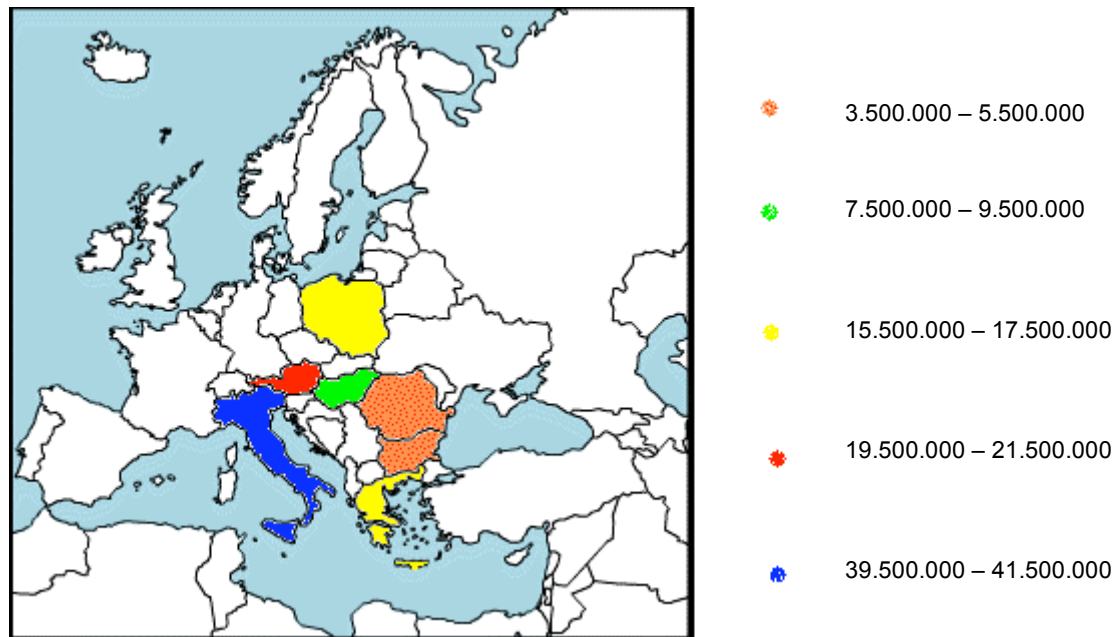
International tourist arrivals are increasing all over the world, including Europe, so the partners' chances of attracting more tourists to their countries are improving.



Source: WTO, *Tourism highlights edition, 2003.*

Comparison of the partners' countries shows that most tourists go to Italy, while Romania and Bulgaria are the least visited countries.

International tourist arrivals in the partners' countries (2006.) – The Austrian data also includes the number of day visitors.



Source: UNWTO – *Tourism Highlights, Edition 2007,* edited by Hazai Domestic Regional Development Inc.

The local economy of the participating regions can be stimulated most effectively by more active use of their cultural heritage sites as tourist attractions. The following improvements in services for tourists can contribute to this.

A major indicator of success would be an increase in the number of tourists and overnights at all sites. That would depend on the attractions offered in the area. Interest in cultural heritage will need to be raised by better publicity, specifically directed at tourists. The different attractions in each area should be presented in an organised way to encourage visitors to spend more time there. Associated services such as accommodation, restaurants, shops, etc., should also be advertised at the sites to present a more comprehensive view of the range of facilities for tourists in the area. This will help to increase the number of tourists and overnights.

The introduction of IT applications may attract a new generation of tourists to the area. IT could provide a general service for tourists during their stay with broadband Internet, a network for mobile devices, etc., and specific tools such as the Virtual Tourist Guide and the Learning Quest to introduce them to the cultural heritage of the region. The new technologies would help to promote the area, while the investment and the associated media coverage would draw in new groups of tourists. The investment in IT infrastructure would provide a better and more informative view of the area. The IT infrastructure would also be useful to local residents, who would have access to the new IT network and be able to benefit from it in their daily life. Thus it would also improve their standard of living.

With their capacity to collect and store data, the various IT tourist applications can make the stories and legends of the area and its cultural heritage available not just to tourists but to local inhabitants. This will help all interested parties to develop a more personal relationship with the area. That information would be a basis for related developments (publishing books and information CDs, etc.) and can be used in other ways to promote tourism with advertisements in the media, brochures and so on.

Data on tourism and information about the area can form a basis for business plans such as the Communication Plan for Urbino, which was based on VTG information. Thus the method can be not just an IT application for tourists but an important part of more comprehensive marketing activities. Information collection has an important role in planning, therefore plans which are based on collected tourism data would be more successful. The information would have to be reviewed regularly and updated from time to time, e.g. when a new hotel or restaurant is opened or a new attraction becomes available.

Learning Quest questionnaires could help to gather information about the needs of tourists and provide a basis for further development of the attractions and the infrastructure. These questionnaires should be used more frequently by all service providers to provide feedback information on the services offered to tourists.

There are growing opportunities in IT-based tourism. As well as the pilot projects (Learning Quest and Virtual Tourist Guide), other types of IT-based tourism projects could be undertaken such as:

- Digital recording of natural protected flora and fauna: the natural environment could be mapped and digitalised from paper records or original digital recordings (digital photos and videos taken in the wild).
- Collection of traditions and legends (Corfu, Holloko, Urbino): important events in history, festivals, theatrical productions and traditional customs should be recorded and preserved for future generations.

- Strategic computer games for promoting cultural heritage sites (Gorlice – war memorial tourism, Hollókő – castle games, Corfu – surf on the sea, Salzburg – salt mining or musical composition software): new private resources could be included and the younger generations could become better informed about the cultural heritage sites.
- Online gastronomy for promoting the regional food and drink of cultural heritage sites. Recipes can be provided in written form and in video format (Corfu, Urbino, Salzburg). Cookbooks and cooking demonstrations can be published online to promote local gastronomy as a marketing tool for the region.

Specific results from the LQ and VTG pilot projects can be used to promote other activities as well as cultural heritage tourism. Gorlice used the results of its LQ, which was based on the church programme, to advertise its spa to tourists. This flexibility creates new opportunities to attract visitors who are interested in different types of tourism.

Municipalities should use websites as a part of their marketing strategy. Information collected can be used on a municipality's website to attract more hits and bring greater benefit to the municipality. Increasing the municipality's web-content and improvement of its online booking systems can make a vital contribution to its ability to attract tourists.

Improvement of the website and online facilities can include online broadcasting of local activities:

- Pay-TV facilities at tourist events and cultural programmes (e.g. webcasting of theatrical productions)
- web cameras at the most important tourist attractions and views of the municipality.

Material developed for VTG can be adapted for use with PDAs and other mobile devices with more advanced capabilities. New thematic tourist routes can be created to focus on important features or periods of history of the particular tourist area.

4.2. Social implications of the project results and approaches fostering social cohesion and regional cultural identity

We now deal with the social implications of the development projects. The creation of social cohesion and identity is crucial in non-economic development issues, which concern society and local communities.

Some of the partners are socially disadvantaged by a high unemployment rate and low average income. Improvement of the local economy by the creation of jobs will help to raise living standards, which will slow the rise of the average age. Tourism is important for the social development of these municipalities because the new training programmes and job opportunities will provide better opportunities for the residents. The social problems that occur in better developed regions, where local producers are moving out of town, have different social implications. The loss of customers leads to loss of their livelihood and the municipality in general loses the shops that sell local products.

The marketing elements of tourism could enable local people to gain a better understanding of their shared values and the heritage sites. Campaigns to attract tourists could be supplemented by individual municipal projects directed at residents.

Social cohesion is necessary to achieve the major goals of regional development. The social elements of subsidiary projects have contributed to the success of the pilot projects by bringing special resources into play. Some specific elements could be very useful for regional development.

The Learning Quest was a useful way of creating partnerships between the stakeholders in tourism by encouraging their effective participation and input of knowledge into the LQ projects. The stakeholders were motivated by their keen interest in how this method would work out in practice. Their support will be vital for the future progress of the pilot projects.

The HERITAGE ALIVE! network, created during the period of the project, will have an important role in the social application of the outputs of the project. All the network partners can participate in the conservation of heritage sites and in the education of local people on the importance of these sites.

The establishment of a professional association in the field of cultural heritage conservation will help to make contacts with social organisations and schools with special emphasis on the under-18 age group. Such an association could make the younger generation more aware of the importance of cultural heritage and eventually generate a new elite of guardians of cultural heritage.

The involvement of neighbouring cities in the partner regions could create opportunities for new partnerships and a greater variety of tourist attractions to support regional economic development. In addition, partnerships between cities would improve the social cohesion of the region by creating a better understanding of the cities and their relationships with each other.

The **creation of identity** in the partner regions could be an important result of the pilot projects. Identity based on cultural heritage can create important inter-personal and inter-organisational links between the stakeholders, which will strengthen their common identity.

The pilot projects supported the creation of identity in the following ways.

The Learning Quest improved the residents' knowledge of their municipality and created stronger ties between them and their cities by giving them a better appreciation of their local heritage. Learning about local legends and heroes gave them new reasons for living in that city and fostered their sense of a shared identity with other members of the community.

During the data collection phase of the two pilot projects, important links were created between the older and younger generations. Most of the stories and legends about important people and events were known only by older people but the task of collection and digital recording of this information was allocated to younger people. Thus the traditions and values of the municipality were passed on and an important foundation for identity was included in the project. Connections or "bridges" had to be built between different sections of the community which are both important parts of the municipality's identity.

Strong personal links to local products (e.g. the shops selling traditional local products in Salzburg) can support both the local economy and identity. Traditional local products provide a common local identity because all members of the community are aware of these products.

Conservation of local culture and heritage maintains a sense of identity in each area and local products play an important part in this. Other elements such as festivals, cultural events and celebration of local customs also contribute.

Publishing collected information and making it available in book form or on CD-ROM (which is cheaper, environmentally friendly and a motivation to use IT) will allow the results of the project to be shared. Sharing will also strengthen local identity. These books and CD-ROMs can be used in schools and at meetings of social groups. They can also be sold as souvenirs at tourist information points.

Individual awards for "local patriotism", especially for young people, can strengthen their pride in the community. The 5-level award system for successful participation in the Learning Quest is becoming the chief motivation for protection of the local cultural heritage in Gorlice. It provides a good example for the other participating municipalities and for those that did not take part in the projects. The awards will become precious childhood memories and will remain part of the winners' personal identity throughout their lives.

Tourism should be regarded by residents as a useful tool for economic and social development. It can have positive effects on their personal income and their relationship with their community. It can also reinforce their sense of identity. Employment in tourism will bring them deeper knowledge and closer personal links with their municipality, its attractions and its culture.

5. Funds available for the continuation of the programme

European Unions Funds can be divided into the following groups:

1. **Structural Funds (European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund) and the Cohesion Fund**
2. Support for Agriculture
3. Public procurement
4. **Community Initiative Programmes**

The first and fourth groups are relevant to the “HERITAGE ALIVE” programme.

1. Structural Funds (ERDF, ESF) and the Cohesion Fund

From 2007 to 2013 regional spending is set to rise to 36% of the EU budget. In cash terms this represents spending over seven years of €308 billion. The aim is to encourage growth of the EU economy overall and to focus on three objectives: convergence, competitiveness and cooperation. The new approach has been named the Cohesion Policy.

The plan is for the Cohesion Policy to dovetail with the EU’s Lisbon Strategy to promote growth and jobs by:

- Making countries and regions more attractive to investment by improving accessibility, providing quality services and preserving environmental potential;
- Encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship and the knowledge economy through the development of information and communications technologies;
- Creating more and better jobs by attracting more people into employment, improving workers’ adaptability and increasing investment in human capital.

In the 2007-2013 period three funds will finance regional programmes, according to the nature of the assistance and the type of beneficiary:

- **The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)** will cover programmes involving general infrastructure, innovation and investments. Money from the ERDF is available for the poorest regions of all member states; (further information: <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/g24234.htm>)
- **The European Social Fund (ESF)** will pay for vocational training projects and other kinds of employment assistance and job creation programmes. As with the ERDF, all member states are eligible for ESF assistance; (further information: <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/g24232.htm>)
- **The Cohesion Fund** will cover environmental and transport infrastructure costs as well as projects to develop renewable energy. Funding from this source is restricted to member states whose living standards are less than 90% of the EU average. (further information: <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/g24233.htm>)

The four Community Initiatives (INTERREG, EQUAL, URBAN and LEADER+) were partly amalgamated into one of the three priority Objectives or into the European Territorial Cooperation Objective during 2000-2006.

Project proposals submitted to the **European Territorial Cooperation Objective** may qualify for ERDF support and three types of programmes can be distinguished under this Objective:

- **Cross-border cooperation:** within this framework border regions at the NUTS III level (border counties) are eligible for this funding
- **Transnational cooperation:** within this framework regions in different countries which can be defined as a whole from a certain aspect seek the best solution for common issues in the area together. The transnational programmes determine four priorities for the participants: innovation, environment, accessibility and sustainable urban development.

The partners of the HERITAGE ALIVE!, except Gorlice, are eligible to submit their proposals under the **South East Europe (SEE)** programme of the transnational programmes. The Polish partner is eligible for the **Central Europe Programme (CENTRAL)**, for which Hungary and Austria are also eligible.

Further information:

CENTRAL:

http://www.cadses.net/en/New_Programmes_2007_2013/Central_Europe.html

SEE:

http://www.cadses.net/en/New_Programmes_2007_2013/South_East_European_Space.html

- **Interregional cooperation, setting up networks and exchanging experiences:** the aim is to strengthen the efficiency of regional policy and the links between regional and local authorities and to exchange experiences and good practice. Relevant programmes are: INTERREG IVC, URBACT 2007-2013, ESPON 2013, and INTERACT II. Within this framework all regions of the European Union are eligible.

In the HERITAGE ALIVE! project **INTERREG IVC** and its **Priority 1: innovation and the knowledge economy** are particularly important. Information society, employment, human capital and education have major roles within this priority.

Further information: <http://www.interreg4c.net/>

4. Community Initiative Programmes

Community Initiative Programmes are integrated measures approved by the European Commission. Their aim is to support cooperation between member states in various areas linked to community policy over a period of several years. Community Initiative Programmes are financed by the general budget of the EU. The motivation behind the Community Initiative Programmes is to bring the European Union closer to its citizens and make them aware of the Community's policy objectives, the functioning of the redistributive support method and why and how the EU functions.

The following Community Initiative Programmes are particularly relevant to the HERITAGE ALIVE! project:

7th Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013)

The EU provides its support for research, development and demonstration of technology in a long-term framework programme. The EU spends almost 4% of its total budget on research and technological development in its member states. The 7th Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and

demonstration activities runs for seven years and has four specific programmes. It strives to strengthen excellence in science, technological research, development and demonstration activities through these programmes. The first specific programme (I. Cooperation) offers opportunities for the continuation of the HERITAGE ALIVE! Programme. The aim of this programme is to establish a leading role for Europe in ten key areas through cooperation between industry and research organisations. The EU supports research activities which result in collaborative projects and networks within the framework of international cooperation. The overall objective of the programme is to contribute to sustainable development and the improvement of industrial competitiveness. One of the ten key areas is "Information and Communication Technologies". The budget of the Cooperation programme is €32.4 billion.

Further information: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html

Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme – CIP (2007-2013)

The aim of the programme is to foster the competitive potential of enterprises. Its main target group is SMEs. It promotes innovation activities (including ecological innovation), makes access to financial sources easier and provides business consultancy in some regions. It fosters better access to information and communication techniques and their use, promotes the development of the Information Society and encourages the use of renewable energy sources and the efficient use of energy. The framework consists of three main parts: the most important to us is the **ICT Policy Support Programme**. The goals of the programme are to create a common information space in Europe, fostering innovation through the wide introduction of ICT and investment in it. Further goals are to create more effective and impressive services for an integrated Information Society and public utilities and to improve the standard of living. The available budget of the programme is €728 million.

Further information: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/eeurope/i2010/index_en.htm

eContentplus Programme (2005-2008)

eContentplus aims to involve the digital content and service industry more closely with education, culture and the public sector. The goal of eContentplus is to make digital content more available and user-friendly, thus making the creation and distribution of information by public utilities easier. The eContentplus programme aims to bring to all citizens and users the benefits of IT content and services, decrease the possible threats and create better opportunities for innovation and investment. Thus the programme primarily concentrates on methods and facilities that develop quality digital content, its publication, distribution and availability. The 4-year programme (2005–08) will have a budget of €149 million. The programme has three main areas:

- In the area of geographic information, eContentplus will encourage the amalgamation of existing national datasets into cross-border datasets which will serve to underpin new information services and products.
- In the area of educational content, the programme will support the emergence of an adequate information infrastructure and encourage the use of open standards to stimulate the deployment of effective pan-European learning services.
- In the area of cultural content, scientific information and scholarly content, eContentplus will support the development of interactive collections and objects from cultural institutions (archives, libraries and museums), and solutions to facilitate the disclosure, discovery and retrieval of these resources.

Further information:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/econtentplus/index_en.htm

Culture Programme (2007-2013)

The programme aims to contribute to the improvement of a common cultural space for European citizens by encouraging cooperation between creators, cultural sphere stakeholders and the cultural institutions of the participant countries. To promote the creation of a European identity it supports the mobility of cultural workers, their works and cultural products by encouraging movement between member states and dialogues between different cultures. The aim of the framework is to embrace the whole cultural sector in order to strengthen cultural cooperation at European level and thereby, in accordance with the creators' concepts, to strengthen the sense of European identity as well.

The new framework programme consists of three chapters:

- Support for Cultural Projects,
- Support for European-level Cultural Bodies,
- Support for analysis and dissemination activities.

The total budget of the framework will be €354 million in the period 2007-2013.

The proposal of the European Commission on the Culture Programme (2007–2013) is not yet approved formally by the European Parliament. Nevertheless it should come into force soon after the approval of the legal basis of the programme by the European Parliament. So that applicants may prepare their proposals as soon as possible, the Commission has decided to invite applications. The call for proposals does not place the Commission under a legal obligation. It can withdraw the invitation and issue a revised invitation with amended closing dates if the European Parliament modifies the legal framework significantly.

Further information: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/culture2007/cult_en.html

The Leonardo da Vinci Programme (2007-2013) (included in the Lifelong Learning Programme)

The Leonardo programme is the vocational training programme of the European Union. It aims to adjust the vocational training system to market demand and maintain its quality development, availability, content and methodical innovation. Since 2007 the programme has been included in the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013). One of the operational objectives of the Leonardo da Vinci subprogramme is “the development of ICT-based innovative content, services, methodology and training.” This applies exactly to the HERITAGE ALIVE! project. The total budget available for the Lifelong Learning Programme between 2007 and 2013 is €6.970 million.

Further information: http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/leonardo/index_en.html

There are other sources of funds for the continuation of the programme as well as European Union Funds. Partners can use their own financial resources, apply to their own governments for support or seek funding from investors to develop the use of ICT in tourism.

6. Regional Policy Recommendations

We asked the partners at the meeting in Hollókő about regional policy recommendations and they replied that they needed support from the EU and their governments to continue with the programme.

The pilot projects revealed new initiatives that need the support of regional policy so that they may be developed further. The regional policy recommendations for Regional Development and Spatial Planning authorities are as follows:

- To give priority in national and European plans to the development of the IT sector, the implementation of IT in tourism and support of the Learning Quest in educational development plans.
- To improve the tourism infrastructure in order to make destinations more accessible and provide high-level services for tourists.
- To incorporate the two pilot projects in the development plans and financial perspectives of each region.
- To apply to UNESCO and national governments for support for the maintenance of World Heritage Sites.
- To invite the Ministry of Education or the equivalent body in each participating country to support curriculum development on World Heritage Sites.
- To draw up policies for World Heritage Sites that will assist regional development.
- To stimulate the creation of a “cluster” around each UNESCO Heritage Site that will include in its membership all bodies that have an interest in the site. Possible members would be ministries, tourism organisations, local tourism companies, municipalities, civic organisations, chambers of commerce, cultural organisations, schools, universities, research institutes, local and regional planning authorities, etc.

These recommendations for regional policy should be used as the basis of an agreement for cooperation between the partners and any other supporting bodies to foster the development of IT-based tourism for the benefit of the UNESCO Heritage Sites. The agreement should be signed at the closing event of the HERITAGE ALIVE! project to express the common interest in future cooperation.

Appendix

1. Power Point Presentations from the Meeting in Hollókő, 24-25 September, 2007

The list of Power Point presentations from the meeting in Hollókő will be available for downloading soon on the HERITAGE ALIVE! website <http://www.heritagealive.eu/>.

Other PPTs are shown in the table below:

Sites	PPTs of Virtual Tourist Guide / Learning Quest	PPTs of regional development
Region of Gorlice, Poland	☺	Gorlice did not make an PPT but it gave us some information at the meeting and afterwards
Region of Ionian Islands, Greece	No pilot project on this region	☺
Village of Hollókő, Hungary	☺	☺
Location of Perperikon, Bulgaria	☺	☺
City of Salzburg, Austria	☺	☺
Region of Sighisoara, Romania	☺	No PPT from Sighisoara
City of Urbion, Italy	☺	☺

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