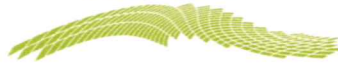


PRONACUL



INTERREG V-B ADRIATIC IONIAN PROGRAMME ADRION

PRONACUL Pilot Actions

Promotion of natural and cultural
heritage to develop sustainable tourism
in protected areas

**Work package: T1 Common methodology for management of natural and cultural
heritage**

Activity T1.5 - Common methodology application in pilot areas

PRONACUL



INTERREG V-B ADRIATIC IONIAN PROGRAMME ADRION

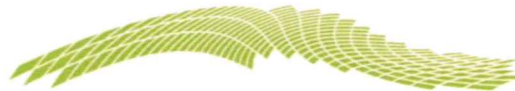
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INTERREG V-B ADRIATIC IONIAN PROGRAMME ADRION

Promotion of natural and cultural heritage to develop sustainable tourism in protected areas

A document on attesting the definition and implementation of the Zagorje ob Savi pilot action and its achieved results

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| WORK PACKAGE | T1 - Common methodology for management of natural and cultural heritage |
| ACTIVITY | T1.5 - Common methodology application in pilot areas |
| DELIVERABLES | T1.5.1 - Zagorje ob Savi pilot action |

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Introduction

As it was set by its main project objective, PRONACUL project goal is strived to achieve a higher level of capacity for the stakeholders in the fields of identification, promotion, improved management and environmental actions of natural and cultural heritage in the pilot area and thus concepting idea for sustainable tourism development in ADRION area. The Zagorje ob Savi pilot action represents one of the initial steps for promotion, identification and creating new conditions for the development of tourism in the area, taking into account the important cultural and natural heritage assets that are available.

The document Zagorje ob Savi pilot action is based on one side for the purpose of identification of cultural and natural heritage which represents one of the key results of the PRONACUL project. On the other side for achieving greater promotion and preservation of natural and cultural heritage for jointly promoting the common ADRION areas as a passable cultural and natural tourist destination. The data gathered and analysed in the pilot action study presents a status of the existing conditions in which is defined the state of cultural heritage and the possibility for tourism offer in the municipality of Zagorje ob Savi. To obtain all the needed data from the field of heritage and tourism development, in particular, to identify the needs for the development of tourism in the municipality of Zagorje ob Savi, we obtained data from various sources, contacting private and public sector providers, NGOs and other actors in this and complementary fields.

Common methodology was implemented thru workshops and trainings, tested and proposed to be later applied in all pilot areas, whose experiences will result in a joint proposal for identification new ideas for further projects to continue the cultural and natural heritage development in these areas.

The most important part of the project was given with pilot actions implementation (small scale Investments such as electric vehicle and e-charging station) in the line with data from Common methodology for management of natural and cultural heritage (workshops, trainings, etc.) which were conducted and thru gathered data evaluated through implementation of pilot actions.

Pronacul and its activities, being oriented towards preservation of natural and cultural heritage linked ongoing tourism development with specific focus and attention to maintenance of specific relation between the nature/environment and tourism including corresponding natural/cultural/historical locations. At the same time, it offers a specific approach to synthesis that identifies the development opportunities that will determine the scope and intensity of the development of tourism activity.

The pilot action ideas that formed during the PRONACUL project were integrated in the promotional mechanisms of PRONACUL project (printed material, website, social networks etc.) as well as own promotional resources and well-developed relations with local, regional and national media. Promotional articles and material were reported through regular project reports. Whole pilot action represents innovation for Zagorje of Savi area as these kinds of contents never before in such a scale used and metalogical analysed. The data shows that the natural and cultural heritage pilot areas have a high potential to significantly improve all aspects of tourism, not just in municipality but on wider Zasavje area.

1. Identification of needs, aim of study and implemented PRONACUL objectives of the pilot action study

A common methodology for the management of natural and cultural heritage in the Adriatic-Ionian area was created and implemented, with the active participation of all key stakeholders including established local, regional, and national stakeholders in tourism. The activities were supported by a virtual chamber, a platform that was established for the purpose of promoting the methodology and transmission and application in other areas.

The Regional development agency has decided through the proposed project content to raise awareness and raise recognition value for the promotion and interpretation of the existing natural and cultural heritage of the project area in municipality Zagorje ob Savi, to raise awareness of natural and cultural resources and valorise them through new sustainable tourism offer. To do so, an electric vehicle has been rented for the duration of 2 years.



Electric vehicle as a small-scale investment

The new electric vehicle as a small-scale investment had the purpose to drive visitors, tourists and locals from more remote rural areas such as Natura 2000 sites, thus helping with transit and reducing CO2 and PM10 emissions, as we anticipate less fossil fuel in regard to diesel bus. Photovoltaic cells on the roof of the electric vehicle will allow to some extent charging by the use of renewable resources.

The operation is co-funded by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund. The operation is conducted under the Interreg ADRION program.



Parking space for Electric vehicle and free charging station

In regard to renting an electric vehicle the purchase of an electric charging station was also a smart solution and thus implemented in the small scale investment. The main purpose of the purchase of an electric charging station was to make it easier and faster to charge the electric vehicle (electric van / electric bus) and thus to provide more passenger support. With the purchase of the electric charging station, it was ensured that the electric vehicle is always ready.



An electric charging station – free charging

The operation is co-funded by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund. The operation is conducted under the Interreg ADRION program.

Some of the important electric vehicle stop locations which were in close proximity of Natura 2000 sites were marked with new info tables that were designed for the identification and promotion of natural and cultural heritage.



PRONACUL info tables near electric vehicle locations

The concept of project development was prepared based on the envisaged development strategy, which defines the potential development of tourism in the Zasavska region. Particularly in the part of integrating the different providers and achieving a level of awareness of the heritage tourism, achieving adequate identification of tourism potentials arising from the appropriate use of cultural and natural heritage, the potential of people's customs and traditions, indigenous cuisine and the promotion of exercise and recreation in nature. Based on this fact, it was decided to put into function existing attractions and resources that are available, using new funds from different project's sources of funding and earmark them for promotion, maximize the usage of management of tourism attractions, enhancing the necessary infrastructure and support infrastructure object, educating working class in the tourism industry and to actively involve different stakeholders and local, regional and national bodies to contribute to tourism development.

The Regional Development Agency of Zasavje (RRA) installed environmentally friendly informational boards about protected Nature 2000 areas in the municipality of Zagorje ob Savi. These boards were equipped with feature maps and presentations of the area, as well as rare animal and plant species characteristic of each specific area. The boards were produced for Slovenian and English, allowing

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visitors, tourists, and locals to learn about the unique features of each Natura 2000 areas in Municipality Zagorje ob Savi.



PRONACUL info sign boards

Regional development agency strategic placed these informational boards as part of aim to raise awareness and promote natural and cultural heritage, as well as habitat conservation for the development of sustainable tourism in protected Natura 2000 areas in the municipality of Zagorje ob Savi.

In order to improve policies for better management of natural and cultural heritage in the pilot area, several trainings and workshops were organized with a wide variety of stakeholders and key tourism providers. The received data during trainings and workshops helped to understand and analysed key knowledge and with the help of methodology to identify and to disseminate the gathered data to policy makers in a form of recommendations for concrete local, regional and national policy documents.

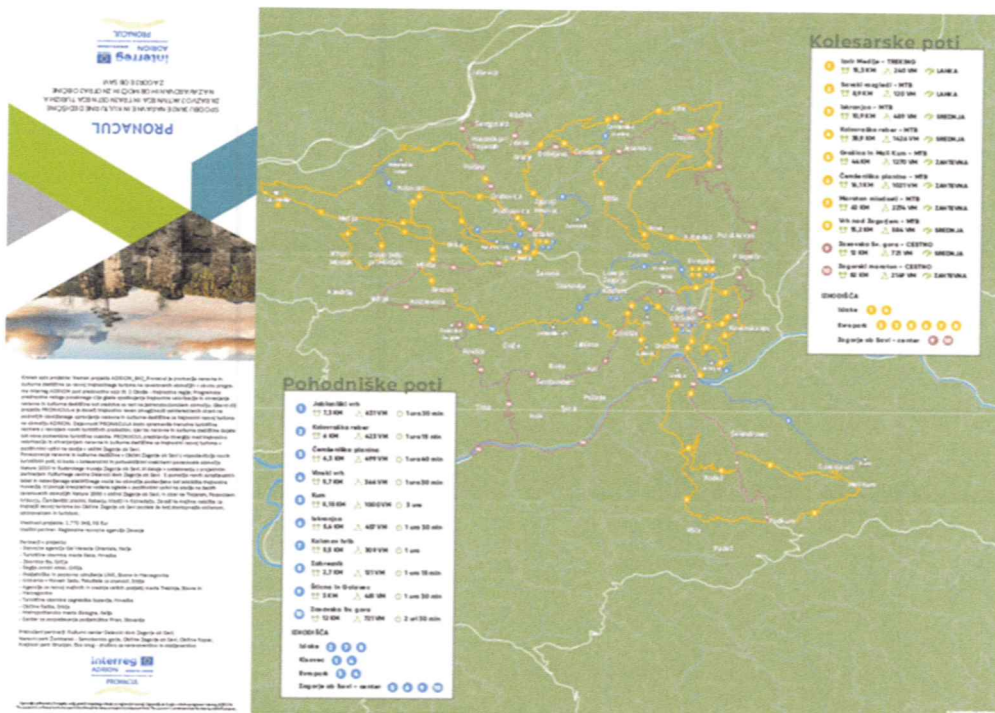


PRONACUL workshops and trainings

With the help of workshops and trainings and analyses carried out within the framework of PRONACUL project, it was defined how to exploit the many tourism potentials in the future and how to put the Zasavje region on the tourism map.

As part of the PRONACUL project activities, Regional development agency Zasavje teamed up with the Zagorje Valley Cycling Club and the Zagorje Mountaineering Association and created new hiking and cycling trails that connects Nature 2000 areas on one side, and showcasing important hiking and cycling tourism offerings within the municipality of Zagorje ob Savi on the other.

The operation is co-funded by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund. The operation is conducted under the Interreg ADRION program.



New hiking and cycling trails – PRONACUL brochure

Like already mentioned, the project's main aim was not only to achieve higher level of promotion for the stakeholders in the fields of improved management of natural and cultural heritage for sustainable tourism development in ADRION area. But also, to make a practical extent on natural and cultural assets in pilot areas and also to enhance the current tourism offerings by developing new tourism products.

Therefore, RRA Zasavje organizes several free excursions to the Zgorzje ob Savi Nature 2000 areas with the use of an electric vehicles, thus boosting the importance of unique biodiversity of Natura 2000 Zgorzje ob Savi and the importance for further development.



PRONACULS free excursions

The operation is co-funded by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund. The operation is conducted under the Interreg ADRION program.

In course of the renting time, we organized and implemented several tourist visits to the pilot Natura 2000 areas and Mining Museum Zagorje ob Savi. A free electric vehicle trips were planed once a week during the time of ongoing PRONACUL project. Each passenger received a PRONACUL leaflet for easy presenting and discovering the facts of natural and cultural heritage represented by Natura 2000 and the mining museum.

In such way we closed the gap to unknowing the facts of Natura 2000 and the mining culture and thus boosted the accessibility for everyone, even the handicaped, to be able to visit the locations and to connect with the natural and cultural heritage that is in the pilot area available.

2. How the Zagorje ob Savi pilot action has been implemented and how its results made impact

The proposed idea was that the Zagorje ob Savi pilot action should be implemented in close cooperation with various local organizations dealing protection (natural and cultural), cycling association and hiking association, tourism providers in general, as well a national organization that is in charge for protection of natural heritage RS (Natura 2000 sites), Cultural center Zagorje ob Savi as associated project partner and in charge of several cultural heritage sites and Municipality Zagorje ob Savi which is responsible for managing the environment, development, infrastructure for most of the areas.

Pilot action was implemented according to project content, expectations of Municipality Zagorje ob Savi and also without any visible risks in terms of project implementation, especially for the natural heritage areas. All providers have been accordantly informed and included in the project content. That is why all the communication and data gathered during the project duration, was provided to all. And all included organizations were invited to accept the integration in the Virtual chamber, thus acting as an advisory body for key stakeholders in mountain regions who want to use the same framework for managing natural and cultural resources, as well as a link to other protected areas in the Adriatic-Ionian region.

Following feedback from data, gathered from a variety of involved organizations for the pilot area, the common methodology has been refined and presented at a variety of events that were

organized during the project so that policymakers could share their experiences in applying the methodology's guiding principles to the various policy documents at their disposal.



PRONACUL tourism conference event

Implementation of the project and its lessons learned showed that tourism valorization of cultural and natural heritage in the Zagorje ob Savi pilot area can have positive impact towards protected areas as it affects level of attention by all relevant stakeholders. It shows the importance for preservation and for heritage valorization of cultural and natural heritage areas and the way to include them in a smart and safe way so that the future od development wound do them no harm.

The Zagorje ob Savi pilot action underlined and introduced some positive behaviour patterns for usage and promotion od cultural and natural heritage sites to use them for tourism industry. It showed several new project ideas on how to incorporate them and achieved data and to form new project ideas and new project. Several project ideas were presented to be written on behalf of the PRONACUL project.

3. How outcomes of Zagorje ob Savi pilot action shall be collected and made publicly available

PRONACUL project helped Municipality of Zagorje ob Savi to get resourceful and specific data for natural and cultural heritage elements, to show that it has a big potential to make a change and that can help to influence local stakeholders for the enrichment of the tourist offer that is available. The pilot action showed that the potential is there. And it also showed which small- and large-scale investment are necessary in order to make a wider impact on the tourism development for the pilot area.

It showed that planning alone and making adaptations without the involvement of local population and organizations that are involved in tourism in general and specifically in environmental, cultural heritage and NVO-s, is not a viable option. Follow-up on completed projects it frequently from the decision makers overlooked, despite being an important step in any partnership. Following up on a project after it has been finished is an important component of the assessment and monitoring stages, but it is also a helpful tool for measuring the project's absorption and outreach to the local society.

Moreover, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as the real backbone of regional economies, benefit greatly from effective collaboration and new project ideas help them do so through co-financing efforts or giving professional support. And in the field of tourism, this are twice as important in the bigining stages.

An important contribution of the PRONACUL reflects in rentment of a free electric vehicle and an e-charging station as a small-scale investment. During the project duration several important trips were made with a wide rarity of visitors. Some Forgan visitors, being for the first time in Zasavje region. And the possibility and accessibility that there was all the time, made an impact in the number of visits which increased.



Organized PRONACUL promotional trips

The operation is co-funded by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund. The operation is conducted under the Interreg ADRION program.

A huge impact was done from several promotional events in regard to which a boost to a rich gastronomy experience, which comes from several typical food types that relate to the mining and glass industry and originate from the municipality Zagorje ob Savi. A protectional event has been done as it showed the need that the region must protect by name a important regional cultural disk, called Zasavska jetrna klobasa.



Cultural heritage on a plate (local cosine)

By organization and implementation of various trainings, workshops, capacity building activities, dissemination and capitalisation activities, a Stakeholders network has been established in the course of the project. Stakeholders' capacity networks were supported by mutual cooperation among local, regional, national public bodies, tourism providers and other organisations with specific roles for each protected area. Capacity networks were composed by relevant stakeholders with the ability to contribute to the Application of the common methodology in pilot areas. Stakeholders represented the power, resources and influence in the field of natural and cultural heritage in protected areas to develop sustainable tourism.

Experiences from the pilot areas helped formulate proposals for inclusion of a common methodology, that connects all PRONACUL partner destinations by a regional route, which will be certified by the European Institute of Cultural Routes, with a possibility to be placed under "Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe".

4. The role of the project partners/institutions in the Zagorje ob Savi pilot action implementation

The pilot action was implemented in close cooperation with various local and regional organizations dealing with tourism and connected with tourism activities as well as with various organizations dealing protection (natural and cultural fields), cycling association and hiking association, regional tourism providers in general, as well a national organization that is in charge for protection of natural heritage (Natura 2000 sites), Cultural center Zagorje ob Savi as associated project partner and Municipality Zagorje ob Savi.

Other organizations dealing with tourism services in natural environment and tour operators interested in development of this tourism branch, participated in project capacity building program and offered their services in order to support the process and to get new ideas and make new plans for new project content after the completion of the PRONACUL project.

The initiative of the PRONACUL project has been extensively to promote national and cultural heritage in pilot area through its newsletter and the publication of articles on its website. We used a variety of project-defined communication tools to communicate with the general public, potential stakeholders and others active in the field of natural and cultural heritage.

Particular role of the project partner in terms of pilot action realization was related to gather the data and to promotion of newly developed contents and to make aware the possibilities for new project to come. With all the data gathered, the suggestion was done for a new united project solution that would continue the natural and cultural heritage development on the pilot area and inclusion its findings and suggested new content, new programs, new routes and new small-scale investments for the use in the tourism industry.



Media castle, an important PRONACULs trademark

During the project duration, several conferences were organized, several media appearances and advertisements were done on different local, regional and national medias, several digital activities including social media and multimedia were weekly done for the goal of busting the promotion, two specific events were organized with aim of presenting of new contents and collecting and evaluating these ideas to use for further projects.



Local and regional media coverage

Promotional packages for dissemination of the project results were prepared. A common promotional material was prepared in accordance with common visual identity.



PRONACUL brochures and promotional packages

Moreover, the public opinion recognized cultural tourism (natural and cultural heritage) in the municipality Zagorje ob Savi as main attraction for archiving goals in which policy makers could act, while the fundamental conclusion was that the tourist offering must be differentiated and strengthened as it is.

5. Where the achieved pilot action results are reflected and what is planned for pilot action follow up

For the further development of pilot action in Municipality of Zagorje ob Savi, it is important to say that making protective activities in cultural heritage such as cuisine heritage, mining and glass heritage and natural heritage, such as Natura 2000 sites (preserved nature (biodiversity), including Natura sites and protected areas), can on long turn also impact the market values, thus creating greater added value or new jobs through their activities, especially in tourism and related services. Within the Municipality of Zagorje ob Savi there are seven important protected Natura 2000 sites. These areas are: Trojane area, Posavje hills, Čemšeniška planina, Reber, Medija, Kotredež and Kandrše - Drtjščica. Each area boasts a different and specially protected habitat type of plant and animal origin, which represents an important value and therefore needs to be protected.

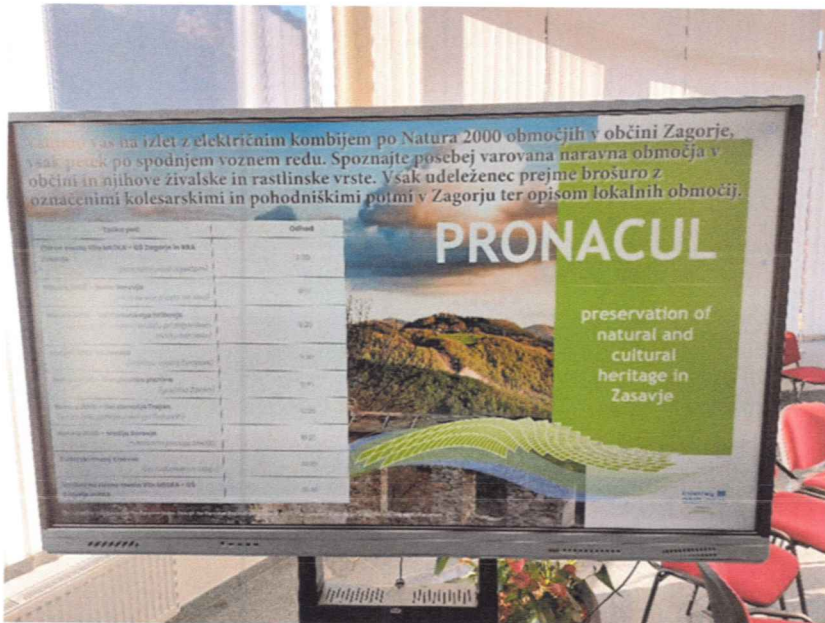
The document also defines some future interventions if not given will endanger the habitats of individual animal and plant species in Natura 2000 areas up to certain limits. Like planned construction of hydroelectric power plants on the Sava River partially endangered their habitat.

The document states that the environment for the future development of the municipality of Zagorje ob Savi in many respects is sufficiently concrete and sustainable development and planning for the future, but in Natura 2000 areas will need to plan carefully and in accordance with guidelines, but on the other hand with sufficiently ambitious issues, which can ultimately bring quality results to the development of tourism while preserving plant and animal habitat. The environment alone cannot be practically preserved without strategical development and regular monitoring plans on a long term and including them in new tourist offer to come.

An electric vehicle that was set up as an eco-innovation, offered guided tours with positive environmental impacts on six Natura 2000 protected areas in the municipality Zagorje ob Savi. This small-scale investment is now making municipality Zagorje ob Savi more accessible to its citizens and tourists, symbolizing basic orientation in the pursuit of cleaner air in the Zagorje valley. Designed to drive both tourists and locals from more remote rural areas, thus reducing CO₂ and PM₁₀ emissions, anticipating less fossil fuel vehicles transportation, contributing to the improvement of the environment in the ADRION area.

7 Info sign boards on selected natural and cultural heritage pilot locations with information about Natura 2000 sites and cultural importance places were in course of project designed and new sign boards are planned to come. The newly designed cycling and hiking trails that are illustrated in a newly produced leaflet are making an impact on new tourism arrivals.

Other smaller equipment such as big flat LCD screens are a good way to help with promotional process, especially in the usage on workshops and trainings. Many of workshop and training attendants on these confirmed the importance of such content trainings and workshops and defined that this is the right way to get the field data that is usually not stated.



State of the art LCD flat screen for promotion and content dissemination

The key conclusion during the implementation of all pilot action ideas was, that pilot action in Zagorje ob Savi was welcomed and appreciated by all relevant subjects and general population. Managing of pilot action results was assigned to regional development company as a key regional institution. It is expected that it will maintain outcomes of it regularly and make efforts to improve it and in regard to data prepare new steps and new project content. It is also expected that new corresponding contents will enrich existing offer having in mind the momentum and positive approaches by all important and relevant stakeholders in Zagorje ob Savi.

5.1 The key guidelines formed and given due to the pilot action

- Reduce the burden on the environment that can be caused by the development of tourism by promoting environmentally friendly activities suitable for the local (geographical meaning) tourism economy.
- Development or construction of a protected tourist and recreational infrastructure, especially in and around national, regional, and landscape parks, to direct public access to areas (including recreational) in protected areas.

The operation is co-funded by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund. The operation is conducted under the Interreg ADRION program.

- Introduction of zoning in protected areas to guide public access with defining several categories of areas: from areas where a visit ban applies to areas where it is desirable to develop appropriate tourist infrastructure (as for example Triglav national park).
- Promoting environmentally friendly and balanced tourism growth and nature-friendly forms of such economic use of space while reducing pressure on biodiversity.
- Spatial orientation and timing of prevention activities disruption and destruction of animals and plants.
- Raising the awareness of tourism workers and tourists about the importance of biodiversity for quality tourist offers (eg nature conservation competitions or environmental awards)
- Involvement of schools and educational institutions in the process of learning about the biodiversity of Natura 2000 areas.
- Promotional campaigns for the local population on the importance of Natura 2000 sites
- Promotional events that raise public awareness in the field (eg. photo shooting where we look for an animal with a camera, camps on the outskirts of areas, observatories for witnesses and butterflies, ...).

5.2 Opportunities for further development of cultural and natural sites on pilot area

The identification and formulating new solutions:

- Training the local population to lead and implement new activities and measures of conservation of the protected areas, especially national, regional, or Landscape parks.
- Strengthening the capacity of relevant institutions involved in biodiversity conservation diversity and sustainable use of its ingredients.
- Promoting organic farming and supporting the marketing of organic products from park areas.
- Implementation of agri-environmental programs to help conserve important habitats and enable the profitability of farms with extensive agricultural production.
- Supporting such modernization and renewal of agricultural holdings as contributing to greater sustainability and lower environmental impact.
- Promoting economic diversification and the development of complementary activities on farms.
- Promoting the integration of cultural programs with biodiversity programs diversity and protection of cultural heritage.
- Timely identification and prevention of negative trends.

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the local population - tourists |
| 8 | Press releases about natural and cultural offer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - new content articles - radio and television shows on natural and cultural offer - Natura 2000 species - habitat | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wider population of Zasavje - local population - tourists |
| 9 | Organization of educational trips with a rent e-van to Natura 2000 sites | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use of a free e-van to facilitate access to Natura 2000 sites | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wider population of Zasavje - local population - tourists |

5.4 SWOT analysis of natural and cultural heritage to develop sustainable tourism in pilot action areas

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich natural and cultural heritage (facilities, landscape, food, customs and people) • unique Natura 2000 biodiversity and sites • diversity of Natura 2000 plant species • diversity of Natura 2000 animal species • peaceful environment of Natura 2000 sites • diverse cultural heritage (mining and glass heritage, NOB heritage) • favorable location in the heart of the country • a good starting point for visiting Ljubljana and most of the major tourist attractions in Slovenia • proximity to all regional tourist points • proximity to international airports • a lot of craftsmen and artists in rural areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal framework limitations • low level of community involvement and cooperation between all • so far there has been no focus on tourism development in regard to Natura 2000 sites • too little promotion toward natural and cultural heritage • organic farms are not being converted to tourism • poor indications and no sign boards of Natura 2000 sites • lack of parking spaces near the Natura 2000 sites • accommodation capacities are drastically lacking • hiking trails are not connected into a product that would keep the visitor in Zasavje at least all day |

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a large number of organic farms (no use of pesticides) • greater opportunities for tourism development than has been the case so far (abandonment of heavy industry) • some hiking trails and hill points already known in Slovenia • landscape parks (Kum, Mrzlica, Kopitnik and the future Čemšeniška planina and Krvavica Landscape Park) • Posavsko hribovje is already a well-known brand for tourism in Slovenia • Pilgrimage – every Sunday once a month to Zasavska sv. Goro • many important and interesting buildings derived from heritage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are no major events in the countryside (lacking connection with Natura 2000 sites) • there is no regional company that would take care of tourism development • the promotion of tourism and Zasavje is not in one place - all too fragmented • cultural heritage is not significantly included in the tourist offer • habitats and species of Natura 2000 are not properly presented to the visitor • “Local development strategy” for rural areas in Zasavje municipalities does not define tourism as a key factor in rural development - although tourism will continue to do so in the future • despite the possibilities, the countryside is not working towards tourism development • many caves, but most unexplored • pilgrimage Sunday and godfather's Sunday not used for tourist opportunities • excursion tourist farms often operate as amateurs |
| <p>Opportunities</p> | <p>Threats</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable and responsible tourism development in connection with natural and cultural heritage • eco-tourist farms in the countryside • rural accommodation (rural villas, tourist farms, eco-camps, tent excursions on Natura 2000 sites) • natural and cultural programs for children in cooperation with school system • Zasavje cuisine is actively involved in the tourist offer • at least 1 souvenir shop per municipality and local products that represent important natural and cultural heritage • hiking trails integrated into natural and cultural heritage offer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too slow development of tourism regarding the natural and cultural development • if there is no company for the development of tourism in Zasavje, there can be no tourism as such • too little informing and education of people about tourism opportunities (Natura 2000 potential and cultural heritage) • mass tourism (destruction of the cultural landscape and environment) • lack of professional staff and inadequate staff in the areas that shape tourism development |

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new events that promote natural and heritage tourism offer • "The path through the National Liberation War in Zasavje" as an internationally recognized tourist attraction • Valvasor's heritage linked into a common product • Kum Landscape Park as a product of tourism integration with Natura 2000 sites • new sports infrastructure on natural heritage sites • thematic hiking and cycling trails with connection with natural and cultural heritage • cultural and eco-tourism at a high level • natural and cultural tourism as one of the main branches of the economy in Zasavje • cooperation with institutions (new programs to promote and secure natural and cultural attractions) - preservation of the cultural landscape and environment • developing new regional tourism offer in connection with natural and cultural heritage • potential opportunity for new jobs • valorization of natural and cultural heritage of all 4 municipalities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • excessive marketing of products on the Internet (every tourist provider MUST have its own website) • work in the short term without thinking about the future of tourism • bureaucracy and administrative barriers that are hindering the development of tourism • inadequate renovation of buildings and monuments (deterioration of cultural heritage sites) • COVID-19 pandemic (epidemiological measures and restrictions) • bad protectional policies in Zasavje region (hard industrial priority) • weak tourism development system • fear and rigidity of the local population in the development of natural and cultural tourism • discrepancies between the four municipalities |
|---|--|

One of the most important aspects is to define the importance of natural and cultural aspects within municipality Zagorje ob Savi and to make and confirm a long-term plan for how to use them and integrate them into a sustainable tourism offer.

Wider investment in tourism and supporting infrastructure is needed to enable and facilitate the conservation and valorization of cultural, historical, and natural heritage. In addition, future activities in the field of further tourism development should include a greater share of human resources in connection with research, innovation, and development in the field of tourism and heritage. Promoting the development of smart, sustainable, and responsible tourism, while preserving and valuing cultural, historical, and natural heritage, is crucial, as is encouraging private and public investment in sustainable, reliable, responsible, and low-carbon tourism growth.

This also provides many new opportunities for tourism valorization and presentation of cultural and natural heritage based on different approaches and promotion methods. Therefore, it is necessary to strongly encourage the improvement of existing tourism and tourism support programs, as well as the development, establishment, and implementation of programs to increase the specialization/diversification of tourism products and services in order to further identify and valorize the resources in the Zagorje ob Savi municipality area. This can make a significant contribution to the development of selective and distinctive forms of tourism, such as excursion tourism, sports tourism, adrenaline tourism, cultural tourism and many more different specialised forms of tourism. Certification of tourism products (granting the use of the Visit Zagorje ob Savi brand and the wider Visit Zasavje brand) is one of the key future activities of tourism product development, which can raise the level of quality and increase the implementation of education and training programs for entrepreneurs and all tourism employees.

In addition, the proposed pilot actions, which are given in table Proposed promotional and tourist activities in natural and cultural areas and identified based on of the SWOT analysis of natural and cultural heritage to develop sustainable tourism in protected areas, also indicate the needed proposals for the development of a specific methodology for sustainable tourism development, which includes the natural and cultural heritage of the Zagorje ob Savi municipality area. This means that the further development of tourism within the municipality of Zagorje ob Savi should take into account each of the components individually and carefully consider how they can be improved in an integrated, sustainable and responsible way. Only in this way can tourism in the municipality of Zagorje ob Savi be developed further in safety and sustainable manner, giving priority to the appreciation of natural and cultural heritage.

Ultimately, the greatest challenge of all for both natural and cultural heritage is the chronic lack of resources – both human and financial – to study, plan and implement actions as well as promote and capitalize on such heritage values.

INTERREG V-B ADRIATIC IONIAN PROGRAMME ADRION

**A document on attesting the definition and
implementation of the pilot action and its achieved
results – Rijeka Tourist Board**

**Pronacul - Promotion of natural and cultural
heritage to develop sustainable tourism
in protected areas**

Work package: T1 - Common methodology for management of natural and culture heritage

Activity: T1.5 Common methodology application in pilot areas

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Turistička zajednica grada Rijeke
Rijeka Tourist Board



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Introduction

The Trsat Castle stands as a beacon of historical significance and cultural heritage atop a hill overlooking Rijeka, Croatia. As part of the PRONACUL project, aimed at promoting and preserving natural and cultural heritage, the Rijeka Tourist Board undertook a pivotal pilot action to enhance the management and visitor experience at this iconic site. Through the implementation of innovative systems for ticketing and surveillance, coupled with a methodological approach rooted in stakeholder engagement and technological integration, the project sought to usher in a new era of sustainable tourism and heritage conservation.

This report outlines the comprehensive efforts undertaken by the Rijeka Tourist Board in executing the pilot action, detailing the methodological approach, implementation process, achieved results, and planned follow-up strategies. By delving into the collaborative endeavours of project partners, the impact on visitor experience, and the broader implications for cultural heritage management, this report provides insights into the transformative potential of leveraging technology and community engagement in safeguarding and promoting cherished historical landmarks like Trsat Castle.

1. Overall goal that suggested the conceiving and implementation of pilot action, its rationale, how it has been designed, including the further identification of implemented tool(s)

Project PRONACUL primarily focused on the creation and application of a Common methodology for management of natural and cultural heritage, with the participation of all project partners. The implementation of various components of this methodology played a crucial role in achieving significant objectives, not only for local communities but also across the entire transnational network.

Rijeka Tourist Board contributed with transnational framework analysis of Croatian laws and collecting good practice database focused on cultural and natural values present in Rijeka city and its surroundings. Furthermore, it was organized several workshops and training with local, regional and national representatives, as well workshops for local stakeholders with the aim of connecting local public and private sector stakeholders. After implementation of the mentioned activities, national stakeholder capacity network was formed. Common Methodology was implemented in selected areas, especially in a small-scale intervention at Trsat Castle – Rijeka Tourist Board’s pilot action.



The Trsat Castle represents a strategically embossed lookout on a hill 138 meters above sea level dominating Rijeka. It was mentioned as a parochial centre for the first time

in 1288. At this same site there was a Liburnian observation post from prehistoric times, used for monitoring the roads leading from the hinterland to the coast. This location served well to the

Romans to establish their defence system, the so-called Liburnian limes, whose starting point was the Tarsatica fortress town – which was situated at the site of today’s Old City of Rijeka.

The plateau of the Trsat Castle offers a magnificent view of the ruins of these limes situated on opposite hills, Katarina and Kalvarija, as well as of the whole area of the Rijeka’s Old City. The Trsat Castle is one of the oldest fortifications on the Croatian coast which preserves the features of the early medieval town construction.

Today the Trsat Castle, beside the Bazilisk souvenir shop, has been enriched by new facilities and events – visual arts gallery, open-air summer concerts and theatre performances as well as fashion shows and literary evenings.

Considering that the Trsat Castle is a valuable protected cultural asset and the most visited cultural and touristic place in Rijeka, it is necessary to ensure a sound management system and ensure constant maintenance and improvement of the interpretation of the content. Applying the Common methodology created through the PRONACUL project, a document Transformation of the Trsat castle investment documentation was created in which actions were proposed to improve the quality of the content and management of Trsat Castle. The goal of this pilot action is the constant protection of the cultural property under the protection of the Ministry of Culture and Media - Rijeka Conservation Department, the safety of visitors, facilitation of business and cooperation with all users of the space itself. Given that, Trsat castle is mostly visited by large groups, and it is necessary to improve the surveillance system and the ticket sales system. Until the implementation of the pilot action, i.e. the purchase of a system for selling tickets for the permanent exhibition of the Trsat Castle, the tickets were made in printed form and the employee of the Tourist Information Centre had to manually issue tickets and write down the serial numbers of the tickets in a special table in order to track the number of tickets sold, and thus the number of visitors.

According to the rules of the Interreg ADRION program and the internal regulations, Rijeka Tourist Board started the purchase of the ticket system on 27/04/2021. The supplier was a company from Rijeka, Kupuj online, which delivered everything stated in the procurement documentation on 18/06/221, which was confirmed by the record of the handover of the ticketing system.

Procurement of the surveillance system began on 07/05/2021. The supplier is the company Securitas from Rijeka. Handover of all equipment completed on 05/06/2021. Given that Trsat Castle is under the protection of conservators, the Ministry of Culture and Media - the conservation department in Rijeka requested the replacement of the pillars that are necessary for placing cameras in strategically relevant places. By letter dated 07/06/2021, anthracite poles were requested. After a subsequent agreement and asking for an additional offer from the supplier, the pillars were placed according to the conservator's instructions.

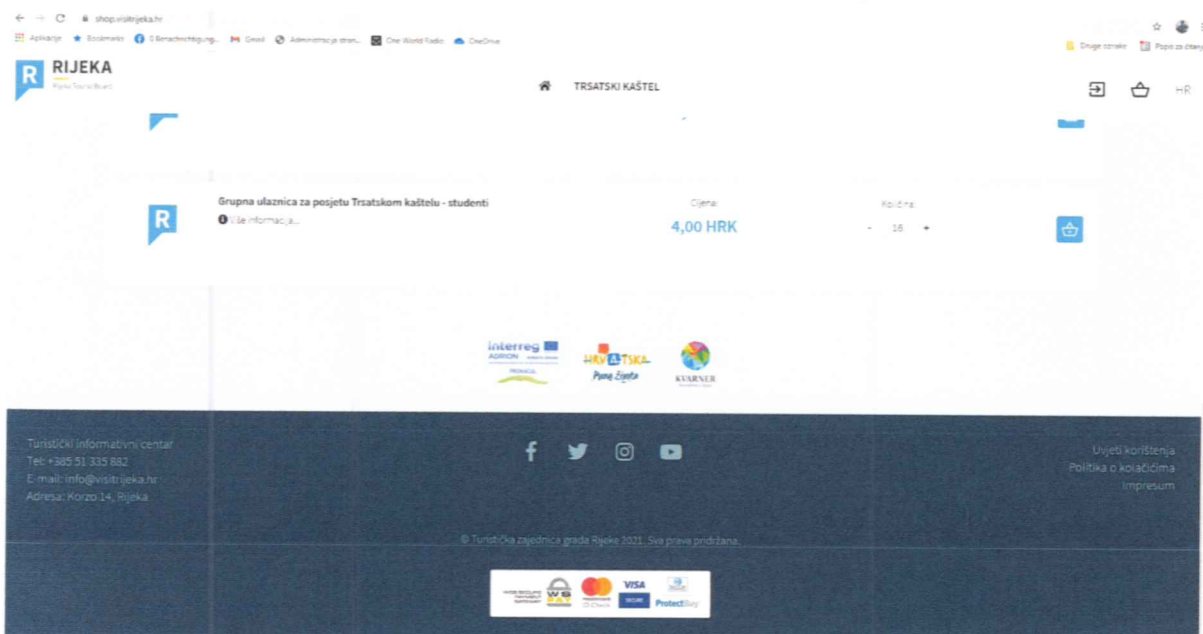
Although Trsat Castle is owned by the City of Rijeka, and the Rijeka Tourist Board has a concession over it, the mentioned equipment is owned by the Rijeka Tourist Board and is entered in its inventory.

2. Thorough description of the supporting methodological approach highlighting elements of novelties, excluded and adopted approaches and reason why

The pilot action was implemented according to the planned activities within the Pronacul project. The methodological approach included the participation of local stakeholders who actively participate and carry out their activities in the premises of Trsat Castle, such as users of the catering facility located in Trsat Castle, organizers of various events, concerts, summer evenings, Advent, the Summer in Gradina festival, and local associations which nurture the history and heritage of Trsat Castle by forming their activities around the above. Also, support for this pilot action was given by local, regional and national institutions that are in any way relevant to the preservation and development of the Trsat Castle. The workshops were attended by representatives of the City of Rijeka from the Department of Culture, representatives of the Maritime and History Museum of the Croatian Littoral, the Natural History Museum of Rijeka, the Archaeological Museum of Zagreb and the Ministry of Culture and Media - Rijeka's conservation department, under whose protection Trsat Castle itself is.

When drafting the project specifications for acquiring a ticketing system, emphasis was placed on its versatility beyond just ticket sales for Trsat Castle. The aim was to integrate the system

with other present and future services at the castle. Furthermore, to enhance sustainability and accessibility, integration with the Rijeka CityCard platform was implemented. This platform centralizes various city services and subscriptions, providing citizens of Rijeka with a convenient, crowd-free, and immediate online platform for accessing these services.



When acquiring the surveillance system, particular attention was given to selecting materials capable of withstanding the typical weather conditions in the Trsat and Trsat Castle area, notably strong winds and frequent rainfall.

To ensure the effective operation of the aforementioned systems, training sessions were conducted for Rijeka Tourist Board staff. During these sessions, practical demonstrations were provided to illustrate the functioning and utilization of the systems.

To promote the pilot project, various promotional channels were utilized, including the promotional tools provided by the Pronacul project (such as printed materials, website, and social media platforms), along with the project's own promotional resources. Additionally, established relationships with the media were leveraged to enhance visibility and reach.

While the implementation of ticketing and surveillance systems is not unprecedented in the broader Rijeka region, it represents a novel development for Trsat Castle, which previously lacked these functionalities.

The introduction of ticketing and surveillance systems has the potential to significantly impact the further development of Trsat Castle in several ways. First, these systems can enhance the



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visitor experience by providing more convenient and efficient ways to purchase tickets and ensuring greater security and supervision during visits. This may stimulate increased visitor numbers and ticket sales, potentially resulting in higher revenues for the maintenance and enhancement of the castle.

Additionally, the implementation of these systems can provide better information and data on visitors and their preferences, which can help make informed decisions about future marketing strategies and event programs. Moreover, the surveillance system can provide additional protection for cultural and historical artifacts within the castle.

On the other hand, the introduction of new technologies may require adjustments in staff work and management, but it can also provide an opportunity to enhance their skills and abilities. These systems can also contribute to strengthening the perception of Trsat Castle as a modern and technologically aware cultural and tourist destination.

The implementation of ticketing and surveillance systems will have a positive and comprehensive impact on the further development of Trsat Castle, providing a better experience for visitors, improving management and preservation, and promoting the castle as an important cultural attraction in the region.

3. How the pilot action has been implemented and its results, including the environmental impact



The pilot action was executed through a systematic approach involving the deployment of the newly acquired systems and the coordination of training sessions for Rijeka Tourist Board staff. These sessions ensured that employees were proficient in operating and utilizing the systems effectively. Additionally, the project leveraged various promotional channels, including those provided by the Pronacul project and the project's own resources, to raise awareness and generate interest among the target audience.

In terms of results, the pilot action achieved several key outcomes. Firstly, the systems were successfully implemented, enhancing efficiency and service delivery at Trsat Castle. Secondly, the training sessions equipped staff with the necessary skills to operate the systems, ensuring smooth functioning. Thirdly, the promotional efforts contributed to increased visibility and engagement with the project, attracting both locals and tourists to the castle.

Regarding the environmental impact, the pilot action aimed to minimize its ecological footprint. For instance, the procurement of weather-resistant materials for the monitoring system mitigated potential environmental damage caused by adverse weather conditions. Additionally, the implementation of digital ticketing systems and promotional efforts through online platforms reduced the consumption of paper and other resources associated with traditional promotional methods, thereby promoting environmental sustainability.

4. How outcomes of pilot action shall be collected and made publicly available



The outcomes of implementing pilot actions for the ticketing and surveillance systems at Trsat Castle are multifaceted. First, systems significantly improve the visitor experience by streamlining ticket purchasing processes and enhancing security measures, thereby increasing visitor satisfaction. These systems also contribute to increased revenue generation by optimizing ticket sales and providing valuable insights into visitor behaviour. Moreover, the implementation demonstrates innovation in cultural heritage management and promotes Trsat Castle as a modern and appealing tourist destination. Additionally, collaboration among stakeholders, including the

Rijeka Tourist Board and local businesses, strengthens partnerships and lays the groundwork for future initiatives. Overall, these pilot actions showcase Trsat Castle's commitment to preserving its historical significance while embracing technological advancements to enhance visitor experiences and sustainability.

To ensure the outcomes of the pilot action for the ticketing and surveillance systems at Trsat Castle are collected and made publicly available, several strategies are employed. This includes preparing comprehensive reports and documentation detailing the findings, successes, and lessons learned. Information is disseminated through the official website of Rijeka Tourist Board, and other relevant online platforms, such as social media. Press releases and media coverage were used to announce key outcomes to the public. Given that one of the tasks of tourist boards is to keep records and report on the number of visitors, the Rijeka Tourist Board regularly reports

to the media, i.e. the local population, on the number of visitors in the city of Rijeka itself, but also on the number of visitors to Trsat Castle, given that Trsat Castle is the most visited cultural attraction in the city.

5. The role of the project partners/institutions in the pilot action implementation

Trsat Castle, as pilot area in Pronacul project, is owned by the City of Rijeka, and the Rijeka Tourist Board manages the Castle. As part of the project, the Rijeka Tourist Board procured equipment, supervised the execution of the works and was in constant communication with the competent conservation department, respecting all conditions during the installation of the surveillance system. To contribute to project's overall objective - promotion and preservation of natural and cultural heritage – Rijeka Tourist Board tested surveillance and ticketing system and plays a vital role in implementing the pilot action. Their responsibilities include gathering requirements from tourism stakeholders, providing user feedback, and testing system prototypes. Additionally, they promote and encourage adoption of the systems among tourists and local businesses through marketing efforts and collaborations. The Rijeka Tourist Board also analyses data generated by the systems to gain insights into tourist behaviour and preferences, informing strategic decision-making. Throughout the process, they collaborate closely with local stakeholders to ensure alignment with broader tourism goals and address any challenges that may arise.

Also, several press conferences were organized, press releases were published and the results of the pilot action were presented during the event at the Trsat Castle, which has a large response from the local population - Return of Frankopan.

6. Where the achieved results are stored and planned pilot action follow up

The achieved results of the pilot action, encompassing data, reports, and documentation, are stored in a centralized database of Rijeka Tourist Board. This specific database serves as a comprehensive record of the pilot action outcomes, findings, and lessons learned. After the project, the data will be monitored by employees of the Rijeka Tourist Board, who were trained to work with both systems in order to monitor changes and react to new situations in a timely manner.

Purchased equipment such as Hybrid video recorder, hard disc, HD camera, IP camera, Network (IP) mobile PTZ camera for web streaming, LCD monitor, UPS device, Rack cabinet 19", 12U, Network switch is located in the Trsat Castle and is entered in the inventory list of the Rijeka Tourist Board.

As for the planned follow-up to the pilot action, it involves evaluating the effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the outcomes through quantitative analysis, qualitative assessments, and stakeholder feedback. Continuous monitoring and adaptation will ensure that the solutions remain responsive to evolving needs and feedback. If the Rijeka Tourist Board no longer manages Trsat Castle, all plans and up-to-date knowledge and results resulting from the testing of this pilot action will be transferred to the future manager.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the pilot action undertaken by the Rijeka Tourist Board as part of the PRONACUL project represents a significant step forward in the management and promotion of Trsat Castle. Through the deployment of modern ticketing and surveillance systems, coupled with a methodological approach grounded in stakeholder collaboration and technological integration, the project has not only enhanced the visitor experience but also contributed to the preservation and sustainable development of this cultural treasure.

The successful implementation of the pilot action underscores the importance of innovation, community engagement, and strategic partnerships in effectively managing and showcasing cultural heritage sites. By embracing new technologies and methodologies, the Rijeka Tourist Board has demonstrated its commitment to advancing the tourism industry while safeguarding the rich history and heritage of Trsat Castle.

Looking ahead, the lessons learned and outcomes achieved from this pilot action serve as valuable insights for future endeavours in heritage conservation and tourism management. By continuing to prioritize sustainability, accessibility, and stakeholder collaboration, Trsat Castle can serve as a model for cultural heritage sites worldwide, ensuring that they remain vibrant and relevant for generations to come.



PRONACUL



INTERREG V-B ADRIATIC IONIAN PROGRAMME

ADRION

NECROPOLIS SITE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Promotion of natural and cultural heritage to develop sustainable tourism in protected areas

WORK PACKAGE: T1 – Common methodology for management of natural and cultural heritage

ACTIVITY: T1.5 – Common methodology for application in pilot areas

DELIVERABLES: T1.5.4. Necropolis site investment program

The operation is co-funded by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund. The operation is conducted under Interreg ADRION programme.

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INTRODUCTION

Necropolis site investment programme is document based on identification, improvement, valorisation and promotion of cultural (and natural) heritage. Investment programme was developed within PRONACUL project, established by Adriatic-Ionian partnership including partners from Slovenia, Italy, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Greece. PRONACUL emphasises idea of promotion and preservation of natural and cultural heritage and development of transnational strategies for sustainable tourism based on protected areas and promotion of ADRIAN area as an attractive tourist destination.

Association LiNK, as one of PRONACUL partners, focused on 2 necropolis sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Dugo Polje Jablanica and Radimlja Stolac.

Necropolis site investment programme is a development document, representing potential as well as possibilities for further development initiatives for sustainable tourism development and valorisation of cultural and natural heritage.

During development of necropolis sites investment programme, representatives of private, public and NGO sector were contacted and included, for purposes of analysis of current state and identifying needs and possibilities for further action.

Objective of Necropolis sites investment programme is to support sustainable tourism development based on rich cultural and natural heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

1. PRONACUL – INTER-REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

PRONACUL project (Promotion of natural and cultural heritage to develop sustainable tourism in protected areas) emphasizes idea on promotion and preservation of natural and cultural heritage and support the development of transnational strategies for jointly promoting the ADRION area as a tourist destination.

Partners and associated partners have established partnership based on joint objectives for improvement of heritage sights, protected by UNESCO or Natura 2000 within PRONACUL's pilot areas.

Project is being implemented within ADRION programme.

PRONACUL's overall objective is to achieve level of capacity for the stakeholders in the fields of improved management of natural and cultural heritage for sustainable tourism development in ADRION area.

PRONACUL's activities will make changes to the current situation by developing new tourist products, that will drive PRONACUL partners into position, where natural and cultural heritage will be perceived as new content. Changes will be made by increasing management for preservation of natural and cultural heritage for other purposes, which are appropriate for this period of time and estimated development. This will be achieved through development, application and promotion of a common methodology for management of natural and cultural heritage in Adrion area based on a participatory approach to stakeholders.

Common methodology will be tested and later applied in 15 pilot areas, whose experiences will result in a joint proposal for identification of the Regional Route.

Activity will be supported by the virtual chamber established for promotion of the common methodology and its transfer to other ADRION areas. The chamber will be a consulting body for tourism developers, where regions will exchange experiences and best practices in managing natural and cultural heritage.

In order to improve policies for better management of natural and cultural heritage the common methodology will be disseminated to policy makers in a form of recommendations for concrete local, regional and national policy documents.

PRONACUL project is being implemented by:

- Regional development agency Zasavje, Slovenia (Lead partner)
- Project partners: LAG EASTERN VENICE VEGAL (Italy), Rijeka Tourist Board (Croatia), Illia chamber (Greece), Region of Ionian islands (Greece) Entrepreneurship and Business Association LiNK (BiH), University of Novi Sad, Faculty of science (Serbia), Public institution »Agency for development of Small and Medium Enterprises of City of Trebinje (BiH), Zagreb County Tourist Board

- (Croatia), Municipality of Raška (Serbia), Metropolitan City of Bologna (Italy), Centre for promotion of entrepreneurship Piran Ltd (Slovenia),
- Associated partners: Cultural centre Zagorje ob Savi (Slovenia), Public institution »Nature park Žumberak« - Samoborsko gorje (Croatia).

1.1. Role of Association LiNK in PRONACUL partnership

Taking into account the vision and mission of the Association "LiNK", as well as the designated goal of the PRONACUL project to ensure sustainable development of tourism in protected areas, the contribution of the "LiNK" consisted of various strands of support: the improvement of the tourist offer and accompanying content (including initiatives for the development of small businesses that are key to the sustainable development of tourism), networking, promotion, and valorization, as well as improvement of strategic documents and improvement of communication between different stakeholders and competent institutions.

Association "LiNK" took part in change-making activities by developing new tourist products which will lead to a different perception and an enhanced offer of natural and cultural heritage. The changes were achieved thanks to the heritage management activities that were appropriate for the time period and the expected development. These activities were created on the basis of the Common Methodology for the Management of Natural and Cultural Heritage in the Adriatic-Ionian Region.

The Common Methodology, which is based on a participatory approach toward the stakeholders, was applied in the targeted area with the aim of establishing a regional route. These activities received the support of the Virtual Chamber, a platform established for the purpose of promoting the Methodology and its transfer to other ADRION areas. The Chamber serves as an advisory body for all stakeholders in the field of tourism development, and it offers the space where the regions may exchange experiences and best practices in the management of natural and cultural heritage. In order to improve local policies for the management of natural and cultural heritage, a Common Methodology has been shared with policymakers in the form of recommendations for specific local, regional and national strategic documents.

2. NECROPOLIS SITES IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Medieval tombstones (stećci) represent a genuine artistic expression created in specific circumstances of intertwining of various cultural influences. By diversity of types, abundance, richness of decorative motives, the occurrence of inscriptions of different content, the context of their creation, stećci remain a unique phenomenon in medieval European artistic and archaeological heritage.

Ever since they were first created, stećci have been deeply rooted in various traditions and beliefs. Phenomena associated with them (superstitions, folk tradition and tales) show some very similar patterns encountered in their entire area of outspread. Epigraphy and symbols on stećci have significantly influenced contemporary literature and other forms of art.

Stećci bear an exceptional testimony to the medieval culture of Southeast Europe that was developed within a unique historical context in an area where medieval cultures and traditions of the European West, East and South meet. They represent an extraordinary testimony of medieval culture that developed in a unique historical context. The exchange of different values was illustrated by the fact that members of all social strata were buried under stećci, regardless of their then ethnic, political and religious affiliation. As much as they are associated with the general medieval sepulchral practice, it is the multitude and monumentality but also the interconfessionality of stećci as elements of cultural heritage that make this region stand out from the overall corpus of the medieval European heritage. This uniqueness and richness is the basis for creating a particular tourism product such as the one Radimlja necropolis has to offer. The value of stećak tombstones is determined by good location and small interventions in nature and in an environment where such interventions exist.

The economic value is firstly considered through future development of cultural tourism, development of the accompanying services and products and enhancement of the quality of living.

Bearing in mind that Bosnia and Herzegovina is known for the largest number of stećak necropolises, i.e. stone tombstones from the Middle Ages that represent one of the mysteries of Bosnia and Herzegovina's history, "LiNK" focused its activities on two necropolises that are under UNESCO protection: Radimlja (Stolac) and Dugo polje (Jablanica).

2.1. Necropolis "Dugo Polje" Jablanica

The stećak necropolis "Dugo Polje" (Jablanica) is reputed to be one of the most beautiful and best-preserved necropolises in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is located in a unique mountain setting, in the heart of the Blidinje Nature Park, and it contains 150 stećak stones of different shapes and sizes, 32 of which have interesting decorations. The necropolis is managed by the Municipality of Jablanica.

Blidinje area, where Dugo Polje is located, includes multiple necropolises: Risovac Dugo Polje, Ponor, Jezero, Donje Bare and Barzonja. In later periods, especially during industrialization, the population migrated to other, mainly urban, areas, leaving those regions uninhabited.

The site Dugo Polje has been inhabited since prehistoric times. At the site Barzonja, the remains of open prehistoric settlements were discovered. At the site Podjelinak, there is a prehistoric fort, a small settlement (50 x 25 meters), where pieces of earthenware and grindstones were found, probably dating from the Bronze and Iron Ages. At the site Sesaruša, the remnants of prehistoric ruins (85 x 85 meters) and a Roman fortification abounded in archaeological material pointing to the Bronze, Iron and Roman periods. Three cairns: the Snake cairn next to the main road, another cairn in Risovac and a third one near the village of Orašac, most probably represented road signs, judging by their position and appearance, of a road passing through here in the Roman period. Historical information on the region from the medieval period is scarce. From 1325, Blidinje had been part of the medieval Bosnian state ruled by the Kotromanić dynasty. In 1357, it was given, together with western Hum, to the Hungarian King Ludovik I as a dowry for his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Duke Stjepan II Kotromanić. After the death of King Ludovik, the area was regained by the medieval Bosnian state, under which it remained until 1463.

Blidinje is a karst plateau extending north-east/south-west between the mountains of Čvrsnica, Muharica and Vran. Dugo polje, where the necropolis with stećci is located, lies at the foot of Mount Vran between Lake Blidinje and Hrbina. It covers an area of 90 x 36 meters south of a macadam road. A few stećci are oriented in the southeast-northwest direction. Several irregular fragments of slabs and chests sunk into the ground have been observed between the stećci. All stećci are made of limestone from a nearby quarry slopes of the Mount Vran or from Zreonice, where there was another quarry. The necropolis has 150 tombstones; 72 slabs, 59 chests, 14 tall chests, 4 gabled roof stećci with base and 1 gabled roof stećak without base.

Decorations are found on 32 stećci: 5 slabs, 22 chests and 5 gabled roof stećci – with the most common motif of rosettes appearing 34 times. There are 19 crosses, 4 of them stylized and 1 double cross. One tombstone bears an interesting combination, constituting one of the distinctive features of the necropolis – two arms of the cross ending as an anchor and two as trefoil lilies. There are 16 crescent moons, most frequently combined with a rosette. A shield and sword appear in three places and a sword alone in one. Two shields have heraldic symbols – rosettes or diagonal bands with a vegetal ornament in the form of a lily.

The Municipality of Jablanica as responsible institution for promotion and maintenance of necropolis has benefits from group and individual visits, as visits to necropolis are related to local resources and tourist destinations. This necropolis also has a benefit, from a nearby mountain resort in Blidinje from where interested tourist (individual or in groups) can visit the site. Dugo polje necropolis is promoted within Museum "Battle on the Neretva River" which creates an additional promotion of Dugo Polje necropolis.

Municipality of Jablanica benefits from visitors and generates new income for local community buying local products and souvenirs. Municipality benefits also from creation of new jobs, in production and service activities, therefore, tourist resources and cultural heritage are important strategic objectives of the Municipality.

The necropolis of Dugo polje is maintained by the Municipality of Jablanica, which means primarily periodic mowing of grass and low vegetation around the stećak tombstones and the removal of rubbish.

Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina provided funds for implementation of project of permanent systematic conservation of Necropolis with stećak tombstones 'Dugo Polje', which was completed in 2008-2009.

Incomes from tourism, taxes etc. are collected into municipal budgets. Municipality of Jablanica is allowed to finance regular maintenance of necropolis through their budget.

The site is in satisfactory condition. Upon completion of works on permanent systematic conservation of the stećci, an inspection established that the stećci on Dugo polje necropolis at Blidinje were in good condition.

First activities carried were the conservation of stećak tombstones (2008/2009), installation of tourist signs and promotion of the necropolis as part of the promotion of inscriptions of stećak tombstones as a unique phenomenon on the World Heritage List. Than the promotion within the tourist promotion of Jablanica Municipality contributed to increasing its visibility. However, good governance practice should also include economic valorisation and the execution of concrete steps that would contribute to economic gain and sustainable governance.

Dugo polje has several advantages that can be used - location in the Nature Park, relatively easily accessible necropolis. What needs to be done is to raise the awareness of the local community about the importance of its preservation and sustainable use for tourism purposes.

In this sense, the sustainable use of means striking a balance between:

- The need for the physical protection of stećak tombstones from decay,
- Protecting and managing the natural environment,
- Acquiring knowledge interdisciplinary research.

- The involvement of local communities,
- Economic valuation.

Presentation and interpretation of nominated property focuses, along with the logistical part necessary for meeting tourist requirements, also on the narrative part aimed at bringing the values and attractions as close as possible to the visitors in order for them to have a better understanding of their value which is protected through the relevant legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Stećci bear an exceptional testimony to the medieval culture of Southeast Europe that was developed within a unique historical context in an area where medieval cultures and traditions of the European West, East and South meet. They represent an extraordinary testimony of medieval culture that developed in a unique historical context. The exchange of different values was illustrated by the fact that members of all social strata were buried under stećci, regardless of their then ethnic, political and religious affiliation. As much as they are associated with the general medieval sepulchral practice, it is the multitude and monumentality but also the interconfessionality of stećci as elements of cultural heritage that make this region stand out from the overall corpus of the medieval European heritage. This uniqueness and richness is the basis for creating a particular tourism product such as the one Dugo polje necropolis has to offer

The nominated cemeteries are mainly found in the regions of exceptional natural features and pristine nature. Tombstones – stećci at cemeteries are mostly intact in their authentic setting. Some monuments are sunken, lying sideways or lying down at most of the graveyards. Impact of plant organisms, and climate. The prevalent issue related to the surface of the monuments on which no cleaning or conservation procedure has been undertaken, is related to lichen, moss and gray colouring because of dirtiness. Natural phenomena, primarily harmful actions of water on the stone, produce the most evident adverse impact. This primarily applies to stone cracks that are further deepened and washed out by water. Salts that cause stone cracks due to their changing volume pose additional problems. Mineral-petrographic features of the stone used for production of the stećci can also change, if macro and micro environmental conditions for these monuments change.

The Dugo polje necropolis is located in a very popular tourist location and easily accessible to visitors. Activities planned by the project - protection of the necropolis, procurement of equipment and promotion will contribute to making it more organized and better visited.

The Municipality of Jablanica has realized the importance of connecting the sites with the cultural and historical heritage, especially through the implementation of joint projects. In that way, experience and the possibility of getting acquainted with better management practices are exchanged.

The key factor for success is to implement a management plan that enables the protection, use of the necropolis for educational and scientific purposes, but also contribute to the development of cultural tourism without compromising its authenticity.

Measurable performance indicators are attendance statistics run by responsible institution. The fact is that only small groups of tourists visit Dugo polje necropolis. Given their position in the environment, visitors are mainly mountain climbers and eco – tourists.

Accurate data on the number of visitors of the memorial complex of the Battle on the Neretva River is visited by approximately 20,000 visitors annually.

Dugo polje can certainly be the creator of new opportunities and the basis for developing a strategy for cultural tourism in the Municipality of Jablanica.

Dugo polje together with Nature Park that includes Jablaničko and Grabovičko lakes, Prenj and Čvrsnica mountains, and the rivers of Neretva, Doljanka and Šanica can become a main generator for further Municipality development in tourism, cultural and creative industries as well as in catering services.

2.2. Necropolis "Radimlja" Stolac

The stećak necropolis "Radimlja", located in Vidovo Polje near the town of Stolac, represents one of the most valuable necropolises. It features 135 stećak stones, 63 of which are decorated. The most recognizable motif from this necropolis is a male figure with a raised open hand which seems to inform the traveler that (s)he will encounter hospitable and friendly people in the hard and karst region of Herzegovina. The necropolis is managed by Public institution Radimlja Stolac.

It is an area characterized by Mediterranean (maritime) climate. The site includes stećci situated inside the parcel known as Stare grobnice (Old Tombs), an area located to the north and south of the existing Mostar – Stolac road. The necropolis is lined with cypress trees on the southeast boundary and where the Radimlja River, a right tributary of the Bregava River, meanders. The monuments of this necropolis were lined up and oriented northwest-southeast. Limestone was used from the nearby quarry at Ošaničko hill, about 800 meters northeast of the necropolis, where an unfinished stećak has been standing to this day.

Public institution Radimlja is local institution in charge for management and it is a promoter of the necropolises of Radimlja and Boljuni (a nearby necropolis). In addition

to preserving the National Monument, Public institution Radimlja pursuing a practice that derives some financial benefit for the Municipality of Stolac.

Public institution Radimlja as responsible organization for promotion and maintenance of necropolis has benefits from group and individual visits, as entrance to necropolis is being charged. This necropolis also has a benefit, considering that it is located next to the Mostar-Stolac Road, and attractive and popular location, with huge tourist potential, nearby great tourist destinations from the region. Many tours that are on the way to Mostar pass by and stop at the necropolis. Furthermore, the necropolis of the stećak tombstones of Radimlja is one of the one-day trips offered to multi-day stays of tourists in Mostar. Many educational visits are organized by primary and secondary schools from entire Bosnia and Herzegovina as well.

Municipality of Stolac also benefits from visitors, who visit Radimlja and generate new income for local community buying local products and souvenirs. Municipality benefits also from creation of new jobs, in production and service activities.

Radimlja has a long tradition of visiting (long before nomination). Special moment is inscription UENSCO World Heritage list in 2016 (together with rest of necropolis in Bosnia and Herzegovina and 3 neighbouring countries). First steps taken after founding Public institution Radimlja were fencing the site as result suggested by Commission to protect national monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina in favour of its further protection and presentation.

Sustainable development of tourism based on necropolis site means striking a balance between:

- The need for the physical protection of stećak tombstones from decay,
- Protecting and managing the natural environment,
- Acquiring knowledge interdisciplinary research.
- The involvement of local communities,
- Economic valuation,
- Improvement of content for visitors.

In that sense at Radimlja the first step taken were fencing the necropolis and ticketing the entrance to the necropolis.

Public institution Radimlja developed certain products for target groups of tourists and others beneficiaries: children 's contents (Project small guardians of cultural heritage which includes costumed guides, children 's polygon with mini stećak tombstones for age up to 7 years), medieval lectures with the Association of Knights of Herceg Stjepan Kosaca for higher grade of primary and secondary schools, gallery and multimedia space intended for smaller seminars, workshops and presentation of the necropolis to groups in case of rain and bad weather conditions, information centre with the entire tourist offer of Stolac, souvenir shop with products exclusively from local craftsmen - catering

services and wine tasting, introduced a bike friendly standard (the necropolis has the infrastructure for reception of cyclists, parking lots, bicycle repair equipment, chargers for el. bicycles, first aid and own fleet of 7 bicycles for rent-a-bike), own publishing activity (monograph Conversation with Radimlje, coloring book for children Little guardians of cultural heritage), the introduction of the concept of a self - sustaining necropolis (use of own water from existing čatrnja for the needs of sanitary facilities, already existing irrigation system from čatrnja, planting lavender for production of own souvenirs), The site is to open a small coffee bar - holding various events at the necropolis (Stolac Municipality Day, presentation of monographs, poetry evenings, concerts, etc. at open in summer, art colonies, yoga classes).

Public institution Radimlja expands the tourist offer of Stolac through numerous projects through the organization of various manifestations at the necropolis of stećak tombstones which bring together not only the local population but also the wider population.

For example, since 2017, the institution has been organizing a social bicycle race which attracts all interested individuals, and at the center of the race (start and end point) is at the necropolis.

2.3. Protection and Management Requirements

Two documents upon which management of the Stećci-Medieval Tombstones is carried out are:

- Nomination Document for the Inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List
- Medieval tombstones Management plan

All nominated sites of this serial transnational nomination enjoy the highest degree of protection in accordance with the legislation of each of the countries, despite different legal and administrative systems for the protection and management of cultural heritage. The management mode for each individual site is defined by individual Management Plans specific in terms of national legislation, legislation of Republika Srpska and the Federation of BiH in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina and local administrations, as well as the capacities of each of the individual states. There are several priorities in the implementation of these plans in the future, with an emphasis on preventing further deterioration of stećci mainly caused by various climate influences. An interstate coordination is anticipated to be established in the future with regard to the management and conservation of these monuments.

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes. Each State Party has appointed a coordinator, and together they form the International Coordination Body (or 'Transnational Coordination Committee') responsible for the

development of common management principles and objectives for the nominated components.

At the regional and local levels, activities are coordinated by the State Coordination Structures and by the site management structures. Financial resources for implementing the management system will be provided by each State Party for the components occurring on their individual territories. Policy framework: management plans and arrangements, including visitor management and presentation. The participating States Parties have prepared common Management Plan documents (2013-2023) for the nominated sites within their territories in compliance with existing legal protection for cultural heritage and spatial planning. While not entirely identical in their structure, these plans are clearly formulated according to an agreed approach, and contain a common vision, uniform conservation standards, and shared management principles, a range of shared interpretation objectives and models of tourism development. There are also site level management plans for most of the components. Each of the Management Plans identifies factors and processes of deterioration of the stones, and proposes clear actions for each component site.

2.4. Monitoring

The nomination dossier outlines a set of seven indicators for monitoring the state of conservation by the participating States Parties. These focus on the condition of the stećci and the effectiveness of conservation measures. While one of the indicators measures the 'impact of development' on a monthly basis, this could be further elaborated, and include levels of visitation (where relevant). ICOMOS considers that the specified indicators appropriately focus on the state of conservation of the stećci, but that these could be further augmented by indicators associated with visitation and use to assist with the management of the serial property.

2.5. The responsible bodies for the implementation

The responsible bodies for the implementation of above named documents at the state level and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina level are:

- **Commission to Preserve National Monuments:**

In Bosnia and Herzegovina all the nominated sites have been declared national monuments by the **Commission to Preserve National Monuments**, and boundaries and buffer zones established. Protection measures are stipulated by the Law on Implementation of the Decisions of the Commission to Preserve National Monuments established through the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of the Federation of BiH, nos. 2/02, 27/02, 6/04, and 51/07; and the Official Gazette of the Republika Srpska nos. 9/02, 70/06, and 64/08).

- **The Federal Ministry of Physical Planning** that performs management, professional and other duties in the jurisdiction of the Federation, related to: physical planning and regulation; land use policy at the Federal level.
- **The Institute for the Protection of Monuments** that performs professional and other tasks that mostly require the application of professional, scientific and creative methods of work and related administrative tasks in the field of protection and use of cultural and historical heritage.

For all monuments, especially those belonging to National monuments and World heritage sites, the Decisions of the Commission to Preserve National Monuments as well as the Law on the Spatial Planning of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina shall apply. (Official Gazette of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2/06 Article 34).

LiNK established cooperation and carried out consultations with all relevant target groups during implementation of pilot investment programe, including responsible bodies mentioned baove (on national and regional level).

3. NECROPOLIS SITES INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Stećci bear an exceptional testimony to the medieval culture of Southeast Europe that was developed within a unique historical context in an area where medieval cultures and traditions of the European West, East and South meet. They represent an extraordinary testimony of medieval culture that developed in a unique historical context.

The objectives of investment programme are aimed at:

- Raising public awareness about the importance of preservation and valorisation of stećak tombstones;
- Promoting their cultural, scientific and educational value,
- Developing strategies for social and economic growth via improvement of offer for visitors and development of supporting activities and businesses.

3.1. Implementation of pilot project PRONACUL

Through implementation of necropolis site investment programme, the following was supported and achieved:

- Capacity building for better heritage management,
- Promotion and valorisation, networking,
- Improvement of content for visitors of necropolis sites,
- Strategic approach and involvement of relevant stakeholders.

3.1.1. PILOT DUGO POLJE

Upon identifying the weaknesses and needs of these necropolises, PRONACUL pilot action worked on resolving weaknesses and using opportunities.

The necropolis "Dugo Polje" Jablanica is located in a beautiful natural mountain environment, but before the PRONACUL project, it did not offer any additional content for visitors. There were no sitting areas, no place for waste disposal, no lighting. Necropolis, even though located in Nature park, was facing issues of waste disposal and lack of supporting content for visitors. Additionally, buses and cars passed through protected area, as there was no visible sign, fence or board around the area. Necropolis also needed additional modernized promotion tools and promotion content.

Based on identified needs and issues, Elaboration of investment was done in close cooperation with Necropolis site manager and relevant stakeholders, including local and regional institution, small businesses, NGOs. Elaboration of investment was done by certified company and it was consulted and approved by Ministry of spatial planning of BiH and Institute for protection of monuments of FBiH (Annex I).



Photo: Elaboration of Necropolis site investment DUGO POLJE

Through the project, general offer and preservation of monuments was significantly changed by purchasing and installing equipment:

- 8 benches for sitting,
- 8 trash cans,
- 2 sets of canopies with tables and benches,
- Information boards and info panels,
- Solar lighting.

Investment ensured better content for visitors, promoting area as attractive for all visitors, including children.

In addition, maintenance of the necropolis and regular removal of waste was ensured, which made the necropolis much more attractive for tourists and short excursion trips.



Photo: Necropolis site investment DUGO POLJE

Finally, another activity within the PRONACUL project which serves to enhance the promotion of the necropolis and to improve its contents was the installment of the interactive smartboard in the Museum in Jablanica, which is the first stop for all tourists and visitors in Jablanica. The user-friendly and content-rich application "Experience Jablanica" features all the relevant information for tourists, predominantly information about the cultural heritage and other contents of the necropolis

Upon installation of new equipment, special attention was paid to promotional tours and exhibitions, press conferences, creative workshops and 1on1 meetings, for purposes of promotion of implemented action and engaging other stakeholders to use its potential and preserve the heritage.

For purposes of networking and strengthening international collaboration, representatives of the Municipality of Jablanica, and local stakeholders took part in the 7th EUSAIR Forum, an event of a macro-regional character that was held in May 2022 in Tirana, where the PRONACUL project was also presented.

Stories and advertst about implemented pilot project on necropolis sites were promoted vial local and national TV and radio stations, and promo events for tour-operators and other stakeholders were organized.

Aiming to intensify their promotion, a promotional video that presents the "Dugo Polje" necropolis and its new content for visitors was created. The video is available to the interested public on the YouTube channel of the Association "LINK": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vAwNHrSWlrM>

3.1.2. PILOT RADIMLJA

The lack of facilities and equipment, specially when it comes to content for children as target group, was identified at the necropolis "Radimlja" Stolac. In elaboration of investment were included all relevant stakeholders – site manager, Public institution Radimlja, local and regional institutions, SMEs and other stakeholders.

Elaboration of planned investment was done and consulted and approved by Ministry of spatial planning of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Institute for protection of monuments of FBiH (Annex II).

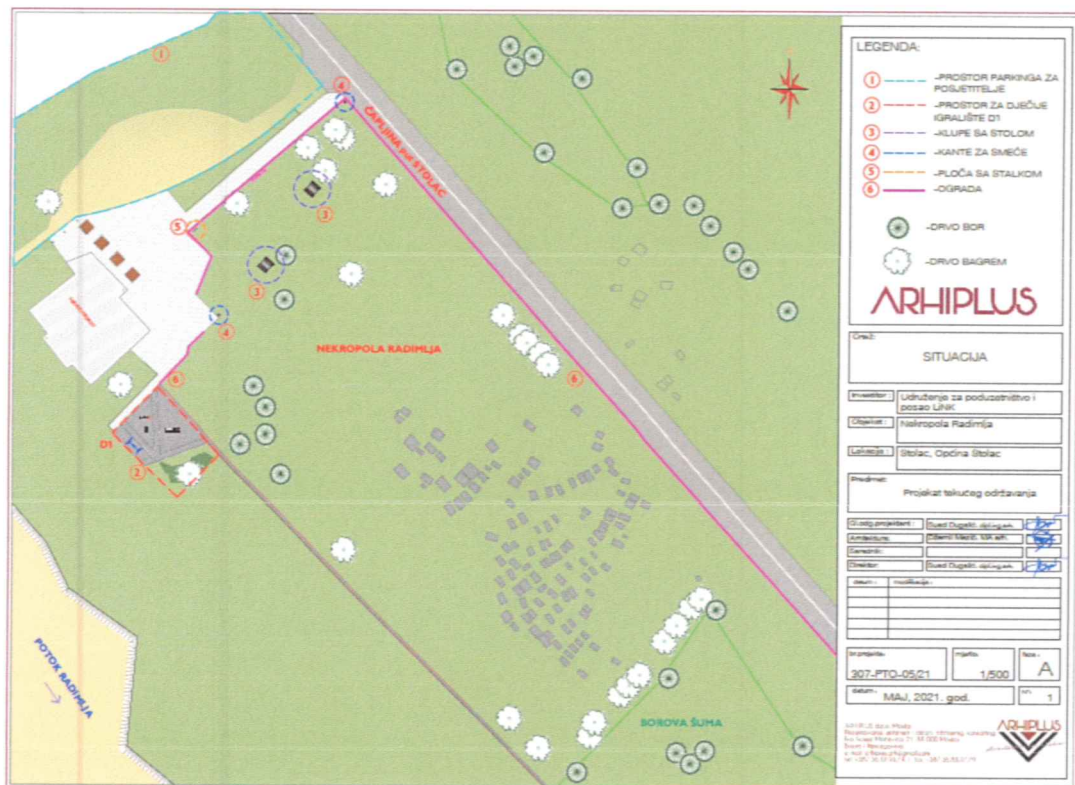


Photo: Elaboration of Necropolis site investment RADIMLJA

Thus, through the PRONACUL project the following was done:

- 4 new benches for sitting were purchased,
- 2 tables,
- 2 trash cans,
- A playground/park with content intended for the youngest visitors was established – equipment was purchased with support of PRONACUL project (Phase I) and works and arrangement of field was done with support of local governance (Phase II).
- Smart board featuring the application "Explore Stolac" that evokes the rich history and cultural heritage of this small and interesting town
- Video surveillance equipment was installed, which ensured better protection and made "Radimlja" the first necropolis under video surveillance.



Photos: Necropolis site investment RADIMLJA

After finalization of the planned investment, promotional tours and exhibitions were organized, press conferences, creative workshops and 1on1 meetings, for purposes of promotion of implemented action and engaging other stakeholders to use its potential and preserve the heritage. Various school visits were organized by Public institution Radimlja, in close cooperation with schools from Stolac and region.

For purposes on networking, representatives of the Public institution Radimlja took part in the 7th EUSAIR Forum, an event of a macro-regional character that was held in May 2022 in Tirana, where the PRONACUL project was also presented.

Stories and adverst about implemented pilot project on necropolis sites were promoted and promo events for tour-operators and other stakeholders were organized.

3.2 Economic importance of necropolis sites

The localities where the stećci are located, as well as the four necropolises that have been declared national monuments, have been of very little interest to tourists until now. These localities are covered by the signalisation of the necropolis, the installation of an info board with the GPS coordinates of the bicycle path available for mobile phones (in Bosnian and English) and benches for sitting.

The estimated number of users on an annual basis if we are talking about the locality of the municipality of Jablanica is constantly increasing. It is estimated that over 8.000 visitors visited the "Dugo Polje" locality in 2021 /excursion for children, cyclists, mountaineers.../ Official data are available in Public institution Museum »Battle for the Wounded on Neretva« in Jablanica, as all organized tours visit Museum and Necropolis Dugo Polje. These are official data gathered based on tickets of the Museum, but it is estimated that real number is much bigger.

The economic profit is still low, as Municipality still have to work intensicly on the site promotion, potentially setting up a body within municipality that will take care of this site as well as an overall promotion of the wider area of Jablanica region with all because a lot of work is needed to promote the given locations, the formation of institutions that will take care of the said localities. As tourist offer is key for sustainable development, support to small businesses that can additionally promote the area and offer supporting products and services need to be a direction for further actions of the Municipality. This includes various businesses, such as traditional products and services, PR and tour-operators, creative industries (digital marketing, photo&video production etc), in order to ensure quality offer and readiness of the business sector to respond to demands of visitors. What is visible is that tourist agencies include the given localities in their offer.

Presenting accurate economic and financial indicators related to the necropolis is demanding because there is no official data realted only to necropolis, nor an organization that keeps data on the number of visitors to the necropolis.

The fact that it is located within the extremely visited Nature Park and that it is relatively easily accessible speaks in favor of the claim that the necropolis is well visited and that it occupies a significant place in the overall offer of the Priory Park and contributes to the economic development of the area.

What we do have is an overview of visitors of Museum in Jablanica which is a part of the route that includes necropolis, so these data are only one part of total visitors of the necropolis and they are presented in the tables below.

| Period | 01.01.2020. - 31.12.2020. | 01.01.2021. -31.12.2021. | 01.01.2022. -30.09.2022. |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Number of visitors Dugo Polje, Jablanica | 4.378 | 8.347 | 18.327 |

Table 1: Overview of visitors Jablanica (Dugo Polje)

Regarding Stolac and Radimlja necropolis, overview of visitors of Radimlja necropolis is available in the tables below.

| Period | 01.01.2020. - 31.12.2020. | 01.01.2021. -31.12.2021. | 01.01.2022. -30.09.2022. |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Number of visitors Radimlja, Stolac | 2.826 | 6.443 | 12.323 |

Table 2: Overview of visitors Stolac (Radimlja)

Presented numbers of visitors show that these sites have potential to generate income (touris-based income) and therefore local businesses should be involved. There are some effort in this regard, i.e. Public institution Radimlja established cooperation with local crafts for production of souvenirs, which are being presented and offered at the site. But, these types of cooperation need to be further enriched and additional local stakeholders need to be included so that integrated offer can be presented to all visitors of this region.

GDP and tourism development

The results of the European comparison program of prices and GDPs showed that BiH's GDP per inhabitant in PPS for 2020 amounted to 22.255 billion KM, which is 33% of the EU 27 average. According to the data, the gross domestic product in 2021 amounted to 25.229 billion KM and is nominally higher by 13.4% compared to 2020. Real GDP growth was 8.1%.

Most significant GDP growth was recorded in the areas of **accommodation and food preparation and serving, namely 19%**, administrative and auxiliary service activities 18.5%, manufacturing industry 16.2%, information and communications 14.8%.

These indicators keep increasing in 2022 which indicates that **tourism and supporting businesses** (accommodation, food production, services, promotion, creative industries, tourism agencies, traditional products...) have huge potential to generate income and contribute to increase of GDP.

3.3. Social importance of necropolis sites

Necropolis Dugo polje has prominent scientific, educational and cultural values. Visiting this specific historical site allows us to feel the spirit of this place, get to know the spirit of the event and feel the works of our ancestors. The social significance of the necropolis is reflected in its touristic and educational potential, which can be used to connect different social groups.

The State Commission for the Preservation of National Monuments made a decision that the historical area - necropolis with 150 stećak, Dugo Polje locality, Jablanica municipality, Historical area-necropolis with 21 stećak, Ponor locality, Jablanica municipality and Historical area-necropolis with 41 stećak, Risovac locality, the municipality of Jablanica are declared National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The social significance is of great importance, both for Jablanica as well as for the wider region on economic, touristic and social level. That is why through this strategy it would be important to promote further steps and concrete activities in order to further enhance the social significance of the localities.

As far as it considers PI Radimlja, it is highly included in local and regional various cultural events organised by other public bodies or NGOs. As well, institution is strongly collaborative with academic and research society from country and abroad.

It should definitely be accepted that in the future steps it is necessary to recognize and create new tools that would additionally increase the social presence of localities in the communities they gravitate to, as well their importance in wider context. The heritage value of a site, building or object lies in its cultural significance, which is a combination of historical, symbolic, spiritual, aesthetic, and social values.

The contribution of the educational function of heritage institutions is included under citizens' cultural participation. Noted separately is the contribution to tertiary education and vocational training by many academic, specialized and highly skilled professionals of the cultural heritage sector.

Particularly highlighted should be the contribution cultural heritage makes to soft location factors such as cultural identity, quality of life and sense of belonging. While museums and sites will rarely be a determining factor in locational decisions of businesses and individuals, their presence can still be an important secondary factor.

3.4. Spatial - Environmental importance of necropolis sites

When working with protected sites, biodiversity and environment protection should be specifically taken into account, as well as development goals of the 2030 Agenda. Furthermore, it is very important to include the environment segment and climate changes as one of the most important global issues in the sphere of the proper methods for future protection of the cultural heritage and natural monuments. To achieve positive results and to understand the importance of environment we have to be oriented to sustainable approach of tourism and sustainable cultural heritage.

Sustainable development is a complex concept, seen as the essential imperative of our time. Brundtland Report, also called *Our Common Future*, publication released in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development was the publication that has introduced the concept of sustainable development.

Sustainable development was not a new concept, but it marked the urgency of a new awareness because it highlighted the responsibility of humans for their descendants. The definition of sustainable development given in the Brundtland report can be considered the starting point of a new era: the era of sustainability.

Sustainability is originally based on three pillars, environmental, economic and social dimensions. It has evolved through time into more complex and holistic concept thanks to the contribution of international debates and meetings.

According to some authors, today there are four pillars of sustainability, including human in addition to these three. But fourth pillar seems to be flexible yet very important and always connected to human beings. During the Johannesburg Earth Summit of 2002 culture was introduced as the fourth pillar of sustainable development. It was further recognized as such during the World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders of 2010. Despite this, cultural aspects were historically marginalized in sustainable development goals.

Climate change and environmental degradation are among the biggest challenges of our times, threatening Europe and the world. Even though protected areas, they are still facing serious threats, as fires (for example Dugo Polje is located in Nature park, and surrounding natural resources are of huge importance). The European Union (EU) is taking action and leading the way, striving to become the first climate-neutral continent.

This also applies to cultural heritage. Sustainability is one of the five pillars of the Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage, which highlights its potential to enhance social capital, boost economic growth and secure environmental sustainability. Culture and cultural heritage can help to achieve inclusive and sustainable development.

Three clusters of actions presented in Framework:

1. regenerate cities and regions through cultural heritage
2. promote adaptive re-use of heritage buildings
3. balance access to cultural heritage with sustainable cultural tourism and natural heritage.

3.5. Political importance

Necropolis sites, as an important cultural monument, are often mentioned in the agendas of local politicians. Utilization of the necropolis for tourist purposes is one of the foundations of local strategies of tourist and cultural development.

The localities themselves in the area covered by the strategy are part of municipal development strategies that are used for the purpose of tourism development, and which should be additionally processed, promoted and used for the purpose of development, establishing cooperation with other municipalities, establishing joint promotion as well as development for all sites.

In the case of Radimlja necropolis it is good to mention that the site is known as symbol of historical development of the country and as such part of obligatory school agenda.

3.6. SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis are built upon experiences of local and regional stakeholders, and based on the results of the workshops held in the delegated sites.

Strengths:

- There is a large number of preserved monuments of cultural heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Cultural heritage monuments included in the UNESCO list
- There are a large number of interested subjects who are ready to get involved in and contribute to the preservation and tourism promotion of the localities themselves for the purpose of tourism development / tourist agencies, mountaineering organizations, cycling associations...
- Preserved natural landscapes and rich natural heritage near the cultural sites

Weaknesses:

- Degraded awareness of the value of what we have to offer when we talk about natural/cultural heritage
- Cultural/historical monuments are not always part of public institutions that would additionally take care of the mentioned localities.

- Within development strategies, they did not receive a significant place, very few measures, plans and activities the mentioned localities have in the final development plans.
- Lack of support for development of supporting businesses, which can assure sustainability (traditional products, PR, creative industries, video and photo production, food production, etc)

Opportunities:

- Linking with other actors of development from the local level to the inter-municipal, regional and national level in order to come up with joint offers, to create joint projects for the purpose of developing cultural heritage – i.e. PRONACUL Virtual chamber and PRONACUL network of stakeholders,
- Networks of stakeholders on regional and international level which can assure involvement in greater value chains
- Joint activities for the purpose of promoting the locality
- A large number of actors ready to work in the field of cultural heritage development
- Development of tourism through a more active approach to cultural heritage

Threats:

- Weak interest of local communities in participating in locality promotion programs
- Lack of funds for the preservation and improvement of the localities themselves

4. A STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING TRANSNATIONAL, NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND LOCAL POLICIES – FURTHER STEPS

Through direct communication with representatives of competent institutions, small businesses, media, and other relevant stakeholders, the results of the Transnational Analysis and the key measures of the Common Methodology were analyzed. Within the economic, social, financial, ecological, and political analysis, various aspects and impacts on the development of sustainable tourism and the preservation of cultural heritage were considered. Consequently, we have identified key strengths and opportunities that should be used, as well as weaknesses and threats that should be prevented and reduced. Finally, by analyzing strategic documents at different levels, we have generated three main goals on which the following steps and strategies should focus:

Goal 1: Connect all stakeholders from the local to the regional level in order to preserve cultural heritage, promote it and create joint offers, programs, and projects in order to protect authenticity.

Goal 2: Influence decision-makers to include cultural heritage in all strategic strategies of municipalities, cities, and regions and to use the potential of cultural heritage through action plans for the purpose of economic development of the localities themselves.

Goal 3: Provide support to the development of relevant supporting businesses in order to ensure the sustainable development of tourism.

By applying the Common PRONACUL Methodology for the Management of Natural and Cultural heritage, we have generated a set of 26 recommendations and measures to improve the strategic documents at different levels. These recommendations predominantly relate to the preservation of cultural and natural heritage, promotion and networking, and development of new businesses.

As a result of the proposed initiatives:

1. The Municipality of Jablanica adopted a proposal to support the development of creative industries, which are an accompanying and crucial component of the sustainable development of tourism. To be more precise, the Municipality of Jablanica, recognizing the importance of this branch of industry for the sustainable development of tourism, accepted the proposed initiative for the establishment of the Creative Resource Center, which will serve as a support hub for the development of creative industries in this municipality. The focus of the Center will be put on the development of photography, video production, creation of authentic souvenirs, and investment in digital marketing and related branches of the economy, which will contribute to better visibility and promotion of the region and serve to attract additional visitors.

2. The analysis conducted within the PRONACUL project showed that it is important to preserve the natural heritage and natural assets surrounding the necropolis also. Therefore, an initiative was sent to the Civil Protection Services at the local and regional level to establish and implement additional fire prevention measures, having in mind that wildfires negatively affect the "Dugo Polje" necropolis every year. As a result of the initiative, the Civil Protection Service has accepted the efforts and launched the procedure of establishing a prevention system in the area of Blidinje, which will include two rotating cameras for early fire detection. This measure should significantly improve the preservation of the natural environment around the necropolis and reduce the risk of disasters in the future and it should be finalized in period 2023-24.

The results of the aforementioned activities within the PRONACUL project are quite encouraging; a significant increase in the number of visitors was recorded in the stećak necropolises "Dugo Polje" Jablanica and "Radimlja" Stolac in 2022 – there were more than 400% visitors compared to 2020.

CONCLUSION

Tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries and is a major source of income for many countries. Being a people-oriented industry, tourism also provides many jobs, which have helped, revitalize local economies. It is an excellent way to encourage and provide access to cultural heritage, but at the same time it can bring a lot of issues and challenges, mostly related to overpopulation, cultural appropriation, economical and environmental issues and loss of authenticity.

In other words, tourism brings money and jobs to cities and regions, but it can also harm the daily lives of residents, as well as the culture and heritage of the area.

Considering the possible negative effects of excessive tourism and its impact on cultural heritage, some local communities and heritage experts have occasionally opposed tourism and its development.

However, with strategic thinking, planning, and action in the direction of sustainable tourism, negative consequences can be reduced, and positive outcomes can be increased.

Involving local communities and other stakeholders in the decision-making processes, supporting small businesses and initiatives, increasing network of stakeholders and capacity building, involving new tools and approaches are some of the key steps for ensuring results that will benefit both cultural heritage and the local population.

The objective of sustainable cultural tourism is to ensure good conservation practices along with authentic interpretation that supports the local economy, which is precisely what the Necropolis site investment programme strives for



INTERREG V-B ADRIATIC IONIAN PROGRAMME
ADRION

Pilot Action Report

Center for promotion of entrepreneurship Piran Ltd.

Work package: T1 - Common methodology for management of natural and cultural heritage

Activity: T1.5 - Common methodology in application in pilot areas

Deliverable: T1.5.5 - Pilot Action Report



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1. Introduction

This document is based on the existing situation of the Landscape Park Strunjan.

The document consists of a description of the protected area (pilot area) and the management of the natural and cultural heritage, the strategy and its objectives in the field of sustainable tourism and nature conservation, the implementation of the pilot actions and their results in relation to the goals of the strategy, a description of the role of the project partner in the implementation of the pilot actions and a description of where the results of the pilot actions are located and stored.

2. Description of the Protected Area – Landscape Park Strunjan

Pilot area The Strunjan Landscape Park is a preserved piece of nature in the Gulf of Trieste, which is unique due to its location by the sea. It was established in 1990 by the municipality of Izola and Piran on the basis of the valid Act on Natural and Cultural Heritage. The natural attributes of the Strunjan peninsula, its Mediterranean climate and lee position in particular, have enabled the population of this area and the development of traditional economic activities in harmony with nature. Dispersed settlement, terrace farming, an inshore fishery and artisanal salt making have moulded a cultural landscape characterised by a variety of living and cultural environments. Saltpans, which are part of the cultural landscape with dispersed settlement, rural hedges and terraces separated by dry-stone walls, allows a quality co-existence of man and nature.

The Strunjan Saltpans are beside Sečovlje Saltpans, one of the last salt pans in the Mediterranean, where salt is obtained manually with a method which is several hundred years' old. Today, the economic role of the saltpans is subjected to the nature conservationist and cultural roles. The salt from the Park is a delicacy for gourmets; the preservation of saltpans heritage contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage; the saltpan area is giving a shelter to rare animal and plant species and it is at the same time a reserve of ecologically precious environment and remain of once rich Mediterranean cultural heritage which rapidly disappearing.

With its cultural landscape and activities, the park plays an important role for the local population, such as employment opportunities or as a promotion of local produce under the common brand Krajinski park Strunjan. The Strunjan Landscape Park is an important part of



the tourism offer for Istria, as well as for Slovenia, as it offers many activities such as hiking, cycling, water sports, education and workshops, etc.

Landscape Park Strunjan is composed of five main features – landscape territories: marine ecosystem, cliff wall, marine lagoon, saltpans and cultural landscape that compose Landscape Park Strunjan, through which the park is presented in this document.

2.1 Marine ecosystem

Landscape Park Strunjan is the biggest area of state-level protection in Slovenia that includes the sea: it comprises a 200-metre belt of coastal sea (also protected within the Strunjan Nature Reserve) and the entire Bay of Strunjan as far as Pacug.

The varied types of sea bottom and the living conditions characterising the individual marine zones compose a collage of habitats with vibrant animal and plant worlds. Along with the area surrounding the natural monument of Cape Madona at the far end of the Peninsula of Piran, the marine portion of the Strunjan Nature Reserve is the site of the greatest biodiversity in the Slovene sea.

2.2 Cliff wall

The most distinctive part of Landscape Park Strunjan are its cliffs, up to 80 metres high, which have been, together with their bosky edges and the 200-metre-wide sea belt underneath, declared a nature reserve. This is also the longest stretch of natural seashore in the entire 130 kilometres coastline between Grado, Italy and Savudrija, Croatia, which circumscribes the Gulf of Trieste. The precipitous faces and the pebbly beach at the foot of the cliffs are entirely left to natural processes, which constantly mould the friable layers of rock, finely chiselling their features.

The Cliffs of Strunjan, like most of the Slovene littoral region and the entire area of Landscape Park Strunjan, are composed of Middle Eocene flysch rock. Flysch is a heterogeneous formation characterised by rhythmically repeated sequences of various types of rock, which accumulated 40 million years ago in deep marine waters. Underwater avalanches of mud and sand provoked by earthquakes, violent storms or tsunamis slid down steep slopes and deposited in the deep sea with upward fining of the material. The accumulated sediments compacted and cemented into hard strata of flysch rock. Due to subsequent tectonic uplifts the sea basin narrowed, the sea receded and the flysch rocks wrinkled, crumpled and rose to the surface. A peculiarity of the flysch facies in the Slovene coast, however, is that the



sequences are occasionally intercalated with up to a few metres thick limestone layers, also termed megabeds due to their extent.

The appearance of the Cliffs of Strunjan is constantly changing. Its configuration was determined in its formative era by tectonic activity, which created picturesque faults, folds and fractures, most noticeable in Cape Strunjan in the west and Cape Kane in the east, while the changes that we are actually able to witness result from the processes of weathering and erosion. These produce gullies, rills and other landforms typical of cliffs.

The processes of erosion, which on the Cliffs of Strunjan occur quite rapidly, cause the surface to lower and the slopes to retreat inland. That is why we say that the cliffs are receding, about one centimetre a year on average. Due to the action of sea, rain, sun and wind the flysch rock cracks, crumbles and falls down.

The larger and mostly fairish rocks on the shore and in the shallows originate in the thicker limestone beds in the flysch; the grey or brown stones that cover the major part of Slovene shorefront and shallow seabed derive from sandstone strata, while marlstone is more susceptible to decay and together with the remains of sea organisms builds the silty substrate. The latter, combined with the shallowness of the sea and a relatively large number of small tributaries into the Gulf of Trieste, is a major factor influencing the turbidity of seawater in this area.

The giant blocks of limestone that can be seen on a walk on the beach are perfect for observing fossils. Among the most easily detectable are the calcareous shells of marine plankters (the so-called foraminifera), portions of broken off spines and tests of sea urchins and red algae remains.

2.3 Marine lagoon

Stjuža (from the Italian chiusa, meaning 'closed') is the only Slovene marine lagoon. The shoal formed through deposition of sediments by the Roja Stream, and after the construction of a dam, which artificially closed the bay over 400 years ago, the newly created lagoon remained connected with the sea only through a flow-through channel. As there are no water currents or major waves in it, the flow of water depends solely on high and low tides. Due to its shallowness (the average depth is 0.5 m), the water in the lagoon is subjected to rapid warming and cooling.

Before the 1950s, the aquaculture run in the lagoon exploited the animals' spring migration into the warmer, shallow part of the sea, where food was abundant. Fish swam into the lagoon



through the “fish gate” with no chance of return. With the water cooling down in autumn, the quantity of plant and animal organisms that the fish fed on became scarcer and the fish were ready to leave the lagoon, but were intercepted at the exit by fishermen. One ton of fish were caught by this method annually, mainly mullet, seabass, gilt-head bream and eel, but this just wasn’t enough for the activity to survive at a time of modern fisheries and fish farms.

Today, the lagoon area is an important part of the Strunjan Stjuža Nature Reserve, falling within the Natura 2000 network, the primary objective of which is to preserve biodiversity by safeguarding the habitats of endangered plant and animal species that are relevant not only for Slovenia, but for the entire European Union.

2.4 Saltpans

The Strunjan saltpans are the northernmost and smallest saltpans in the Mediterranean, where salt has been produced according to traditional methods for over 700 years.

Marine saltpans can be found along the coasts of the entire Mediterranean basin, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Black Sea. There are some 150 saltpans of various categories in eighteen Mediterranean countries nowadays, with ninety of them still producing salt and sixty-four inactive or abandoned. Only three saltpans in the Mediterranean have the status of protected areas: those in Cyprus, Slovenia and Italy.

The Strunjan saltpans were built on the flood plain of the Roja stream. The alluvial deposits at the mouth of the Roja raised the stream bed and created the conditions necessary for the formation of salt fields. They represent a unique landscape element between the sea and the land, the air and the ground. Their primary role was originally economic, but has since been replaced by the cultural and ecological. Today, the saltpans are a preserver of cultural heritage and traditional methods of salt harvesting and, most of all, a nature protection area, as they



provide an exceptional living environment for fascinating plant and animal species that have succeeded in adapting to extreme salinity.

These are the reasons why the Strunjan salt pans are protected as a natural and cultural monument situated within Landscape Park Strunjan.

In the salt pans, marine salt is obtained through natural crystallisation in the process of solar and wind evaporation. For that to occur, the seawater, or brine, has to complete the entire course of the salt pans, guided through salt ponds in which it becomes progressively denser.

2.5 Cultural landscape that composes Landscape Park Strunjan

The natural attributes of the Strunjan Peninsula, its Mediterranean climate and lee position in particular, have enabled the population of this area and the development of traditional economic activities in harmony with nature. Dispersed settlement, terrace farming, an inshore fishery and artisanal salt-making have moulded a cultural landscape characterised by a variety of living and cultural environments.

The Peninsula of Strunjan is a coastal area that has remained sheltered from intensive urbanisation and industrialisation. The peninsula and the Bay of Strunjan, which opens at the end of the Strunjan Valley and has been partly turned into salt pans, represent an integral landscape unit incorporating elements of both primeval and cultivated environment, a combination of natural features and testimonies of human activity.

Strunjan is the only town on the Slovene coast to have preserved the pattern of scattered settlement. Here, the typical Mediterranean clustered type of settlement never developed. The houses are scattered around terraced slopes, each reigning over its own stretch of land.

The most characteristic features of the agricultural landscape of the Koper littoral are cultural terraces, which prevent excessive soil erosion during heavy rainfalls and retain moisture deeper in the soil during summer draughts. Typical of Strunjan are vineyard-crop terraces,



orchard-garden terraces and particularly pure garden terraces. The latter are most suitable for growing early vegetables.

The cultivated slopes, converted into terraces, are most often supported by dry-stone walls built without binding agents, which create living spaces for numerous animal species.

Fishermen operate in the inshore belt of the park a few months a year. With small boats and nets, they catch minor quantities or large fish, allowing the fish population the opportunity to increase again during the rest of the year.

In the last decade, six commercial fishermen from the Strunjan boat harbour were allowed to fish in park waters. The dominant species in their catch were sole, cuttlefish, gilt-head bream, european flounder, common pandora, European seabass, red scorpionfish and black mullet.

Another source of income for the local people is shellfish farming. Two types of molluscs used to be grown in the area of the reserve and several other species, now protected, were harvested from the park's waters. The first shellfish farms in the Bay of Strunjan were set up for the cultivation of European flat oyster. The other species of shellfish that was and still is farmed, is the Mediterranean mussel.

The culture plots extend over a total of 11 hectares, and yield between 200 and 300 tons of molluscs a year.

3. Management of natural and cultural heritage

Protection status: Pilot area is protected as Landscape Park (national category of protection, which is V. IUCN protected areas management categories system). In order to protect natural values and preserve biodiversity and landscape diversity, the area of the Strunjan Peninsula was determined as the Strunjan Landscape Park. It covers 428.6 hectares, comprising a 4 km long shore of the Gulf of Trieste. The area of the park extends over the Strunjan Peninsula from Simon Bay to the mouth of the Strunjan River, including a 200 m long sea belt and the inner part of Strunjan Bay. The conservation objectives in the park are: conservation of natural values, conservation of great biodiversity, conservation of populations of endangered and internationally protected wild plant and animal species (hereinafter: plant and animal species), conservation of the least existing range of habitat types preferably maintained in a favourable condition, preserving the landscape with a mosaic arrangement of landscape structures, preserving the ecological characteristics of salt pans, lagoons and the sea coast, and natural processes and connections between the shower and tidal belt and the in littoral. The following narrower protected areas are defined in the park:



- natural value Strunjan cliff, with part of the sea and the immediate hinterland is determined for the Strunjan Nature Reserve;
- natural value Strunjan - Stjuža, and the potentially special conservation area of the Strunjan Salt Pans with Stjuža, is determined for the Strunjan - Stjuža Nature Reserve;
- natural value Strunjan - Pine tree avenue, is designated as a Natural Monument Pine Tree.

International status: Within the Park, there are three Special Areas of preservation and one Special Protection Areas - Natura 2000 sites, which cover 48.5% of the territory of the entire park.

In the Landscape Park Strunjan in total there are:

- 3 narrower protected areas
- 1 natural monuments
- 2 nature reserves
- 13 natural values
- 13 cultural monuments
- 24 units of cultural heritage

Pilot area visitation and stay info: The park area is not a closed area, for this reason visitors are not measured. The park area can be entered from several sides. Manager of the Strunjan Landscape Park monitors the number of visitors who choose to take a guided tour. The number of visitors in the period 1.4.2024 – 31.3.2023 was more than 6000. Within the Park there are several accommodations as hotels; private apartments; bad and breakfast, for which no separate overnight stay statistics are kept, but within the tourist destinations of Piran and Portorož. The average length of stay is 2 days.

4. Strategy and its goals

The strategy of Strunjan Protected area is to combine protection of nature with the sustainable use and management and to ensure wellbeing of the local community, visitors and the integrity of the society. Sustainable tourism takes into consideration three dimensions, the ecological, economic and socio-cultural. Hence, sustainable tourism is cooperation in order to promote economic, social and environmental wellbeing. In line with the principles of



nature protection and sustainable tourism, environmental resources should be used in respect to the natural environment and the uniqueness of local communities.

Tourism in protected areas must be coordinated with the objectives of the protection. The strategy of sustainable tourism in Strunjan Landscape Park is defined through five landscape territories:

- Marine ecosystem
- Cliff wall
- Marine Lagoon
- Saltpans
- Cultural landscape that composes Landscape Park Strunjan

The basis of the strategy are three main objectives on which park management is also based on:

- nature conservation
- visitation
- sustainable development

Those objectives are defined in an existing 10-year management plan of the park. It may be concluded that the greatest pressure on the environment is exerted in the summer months and that the visits should be limited or at least suitable directed and managed. In order to plan tourist activities in compliance with the principles of sustainable use, the carrying capacity of the place must be ascertained prior to making any plans. The carrying capacity of a place is an approach that in the long run provides for solid tourist services on the one hand and for preservation of natural resources on the other.

The goals to manage environmental impacts and constantly improve environmental management are:

- Support the preservation of valuable features at the sites and promote their protection
- Minimising environmental impact
- Strength local aspect
- Promote growth and local economy



5. Implementation of pilot actions and results in relation to the goals of the strategy

Centre for the promotion of entrepreneurship Piran Ltd. as a project partner of the project ProNaCul of the programme Interreg Adrion supported the goals of the strategy, to manage environmental impacts and constantly improve environmental management, by purchasing sign boards, equipment for Visitor Centre and providing promotional material intended for the pilot area Landscape Park Strunjan.

As part of the project, the pilot area received 6 electric bicycles, 22 wood chairs and a smart TV for Visitor Centre and various promotional materials of nature futures, cultural heritage and activities in the park and its surroundings (flyers, brochures, promotional packages). As part of the project, 15 board signs were purchased and located along the roads or paths to inform visitors about farms or agritourisms and the proximity of natural or cultural attractions.

| D.T1.5.5 | Description |
|---|---|
| Small scale investment: Innovative electric bicycles | 6 innovative electric bicycles were purchased in Period 5.2 for the visitors of the park. |
| Promotional material of natural features, cultural heritage and activities in the park and its surroundings | Promotional material for the visitors of the park was provided in Period 4. Promotional material is located in the Visitor Centre. |
| Additional equipment for the Visitor Centre in the park | A new television was purchased for the Visitor Centre in the park in Period 5.2. |
| Additional equipment for the Visitor Centre in the park | 22 wood chairs were purchased for the Visitor Centre in the park in Period 5.1. |
| Direction/Sign boards for farms and agritourism, cultural and natural landmarks | In the park area, (directional) signs for farms and agritourists offering products (5x), signs informing visitors of the proximity of natural or cultural attractions in the park (9x) and sign informing visitors that they have just enter the park area (1x) have been placed along the roads and paths. Sign boards were purchased in Period 3 and in Period 5.2. |



By purchasing the equipment, the Center for promotion of entrepreneurship Piran Ltd. project partner contributed to the objectives of the strategy. By purchasing 6 electric bicycles, it contributed to 'minimising environmental impact' as visitors will be able to move from one attraction to another within the park in a more sustainable way, thus contributing to reducing the carbon footprint. With the equipment for the Visitor Centre project partner has contributed to the promotion of the protection of the park's natural and cultural sites, as visitors will be able to learn about the importance of the park's natural and cultural sites in a more attractive and innovative way when they will visit the Visitor Centre. This will encourage them to think about the importance of preserving the sites both in the Park and elsewhere in the world. The project partner has also contributed to the 'preservation of valuable features at the sites and promotion of their protection' through the installation of an entrance board for the park and orientation boards for the individual sites. The boards remind visitors that they are within a protected area and that there is an important natural or cultural feature in their vicinity that is worth protecting and preserving. By placing sign boards which inform and direct visitors to tourist farms or agro-tourisms, the project has contributed to the objectives of 'strengthening local aspect' and 'promote growth and local economy'. This will help visitors to find local providers offering seasonal local products or home-made products made from local seasonal fruits and vegetables.

6. The role of the project partner in the pilot action implementation

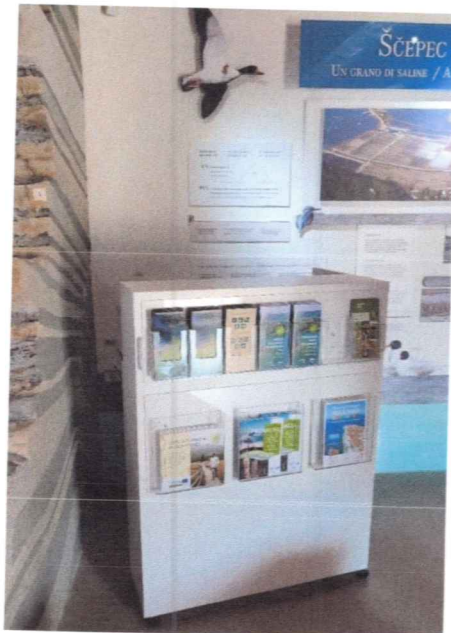
Pilot actions were implemented in close cooperation between project partner the Center for promotion of entrepreneurship Piran Ltd. and different local stakeholders such as Public Institute of the Landscape Park Stunjan, which is responsible for the managing of the Park, farmers and local school Training Centre Elvira Vatovec Strunjan. It was very important for the project partner to work closely with the stakeholders, especially in the erection of (orientation) signs, as the issue of placing elements within the protected area is important especially from a visual point of view. Placing too many elements in a space (in our case sign boards) or placing elements in inappropriate locations can quickly lead to visual pollution, which in consequence reduces the value and attractiveness of the protected area as a whole.

The project partner has also promoted all the new additions in the park on radio and television, as well as on online channels and social media.

7. Where the results of the pilot action are located and stored

Equipment such as chairs, television and promotional material are located in the Visitor Centre, located between the salt fields and the Stjuža, while the e-bikes for free rental are located in the nearby Oleander Hotel, as there is no storage space for them in the Visitor Centre. Visitors are informed about the possibility to rent bikes free of charge both at the Visitor Centre and at the Oleander Hotel itself.

PRONACUL



One of the sustainable tourism themes that is becoming more and more popular in practice is visiting local homesteads and farms. For this reason, the project partner, the Centre for the Promotion of Entrepreneurship Piran, together with the Strunjan Landscape Park Public Institution, has erected sign boards leading to individual Strunjan (tourist) farms with additional offerings. The owners offer farm tours, purchase of local produce and products and gastronomic offers made from their own and local products.

PRONACUL



When you turn right on the main road from the direction of Izola, just before the Strunjan Avenue, onto the parallel side road, you will see two sign boards leading you to the Silvano Knez Farm and to the Knez Homestead. The Silvano Knez Farm boasts a large number of khaki plantations of three different types, and offers vegetables, melons and khaki products. The Mladen Knez Homestead has large plantations of olives, artichokes, kakis and figs. Other fruit and vegetables are also grown. In addition to fresh produce, their offer includes olive oil, pickled olives in salt water, natural cosmetics, artichoke tea and homemade delicacies such as fig and kaki jam. In addition to these, they also offer

accommodation in apartments.

If you continue past the Sosič House, you will soon see the sign board of the Giassi-Žagar Excursion Farm, which produces eco kakis and indigenous varieties of artichokes. They also offer products made from kakis, such as jams, dried kakis and kaki vinegar. Tasting of their products and produce is also possible at the presentation of the farm.



On the road along Stjuža, which leads to Strunjan beach, you can see two more sign boards. The first one leads to Mario Giassi Farm, which boasts khaki and olive groves and vegetable production, and the second to Trani Farm, which offers vegetables, khaki, olives and grapes, as well as oil and wine.

PRONACUL



In addition to the sign boards to the homesteads, the project partner has also installed a new entrance sign to the Park, along the main road with the tree-lined avenue leading to the Strunjan beach and the Krka Hotel. The results showed that the most frequent reason for violation of the protection regimes in the Park is that visitors do not know that they are in a protected area. This was the reason for the installation of the above-mentioned entrance sign.



Signboards indicating the park's attractions and the institutions based within the Strunjan Landscape Park have been placed at various locations within the protected area, as shown on the map below.

PRONACUL

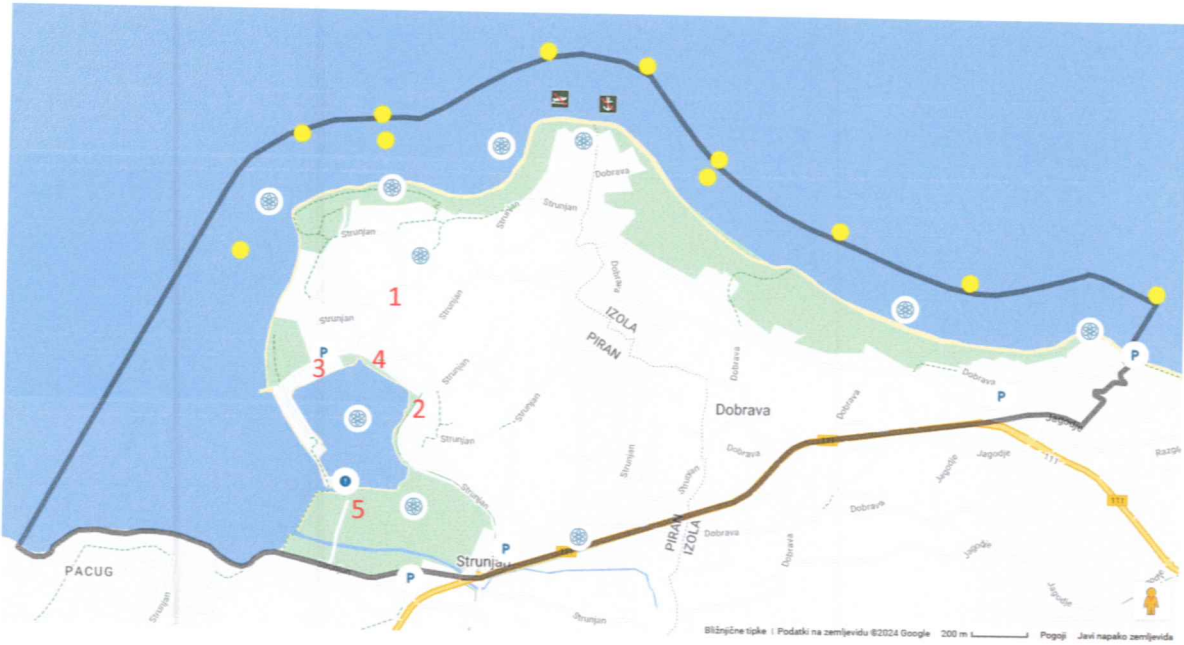


Photo 1 and 2: Location 1 (board 'Zaliv Sv. Križa') and 2 (board 'Center za obiskovalce Krajnskega parka Strunjan') on the map

PRONACUL



Photo 3 and 4: Location 3 (boards 'Strunjske soline' and 'Center za obiskovalce Krajinskega parka Strunjan') and 4 (board 'Center za usposabljanje Evira Vatovec Strunjan') on the map

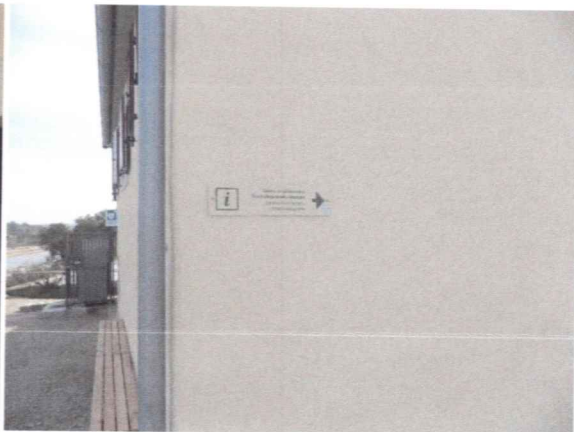
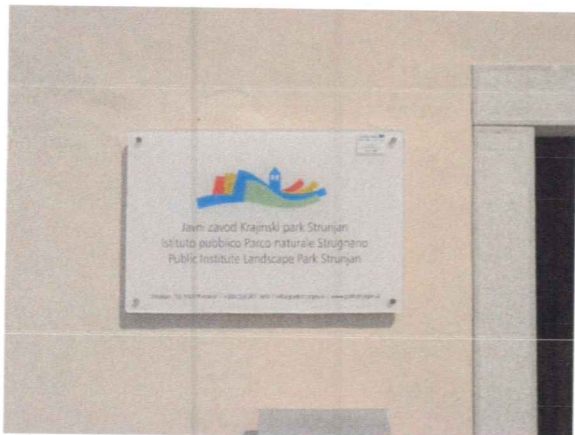
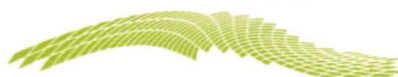


Photo 5 – 8: Location 5 (board 'Javni zavod Krajinski park Strunjan' and 3 boards 'Center za obiskovalce Krajinskega parka Strunjan')



PRONACUL



PRONACUL

Promotion of natural and cultural heritage to develop sustainable tourism in protected areas

**A document on attesting the definition and implementation of the
pilot action and its achieved results**

Development Agency of City of Trebinje - TREDEA

Work package: T1. Common methodology for management of natural and cultural heritage

Activity: T1.5. Common methodology application in pilot areas

Deliverable: T1.5.6. Trebinje pilots

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Introduction

As it was set by its main objective, PRONACUL project (Promotion of natural and cultural heritage to develop sustainable tourism in protected areas) strived to achieve higher level of capacity for the stakeholders in the fields of improved management of natural and cultural heritage for sustainable tourism development in ADRION area. On the other side, developing sustainable tourism in protected areas represents other objective which is visible also from the project's title and its general approach.

Despite being the project dealing with the area of tourism, preservation of natural and cultural heritage stays firmly behind Pronacul project, with particular focus on natural heritage of selected locations. Selected location in Trebinje was neglected considering its tourism valorization, but having potential for significant tourism development. It is important to mention that, while all selected pilot areas were locations protected or recognized by UNESCO or NATURA 2000, "Orjen" mountain in Trebinje was recognized by NATURA 2000 and became park of nature during the project realization.

Capacity building program included series of trainings and workshops for relevant stakeholders, particularly for local regional and national and bodies and tourism operators. Besides gaining new skills and information, participants were in position to nominate key issues and recommendations to be incorporated in project documents and to be promoted through Virtual Chamber of the project. Trainings and workshops in Trebinje brought together stakeholders from the private, public and NGO sector. Exchange and confrontation of opinions contributed to making practical conclusions regarding further steps when it comes to the protection and touristic valorization of the Orjen Nature Park.



The particular part of the project dealt with pilot actions implementation (small scale investments) in the line with Common methodology for management of natural and cultural heritage which was tested and evaluated through implementation of pilot actions.

Pronacul and its activities, being oriented towards preservation of natural heritage which is linked to tourism development, take particular attention to maintenance of specific relation between the nature/environment and tourism including corresponding natural/cultural/historical locations.

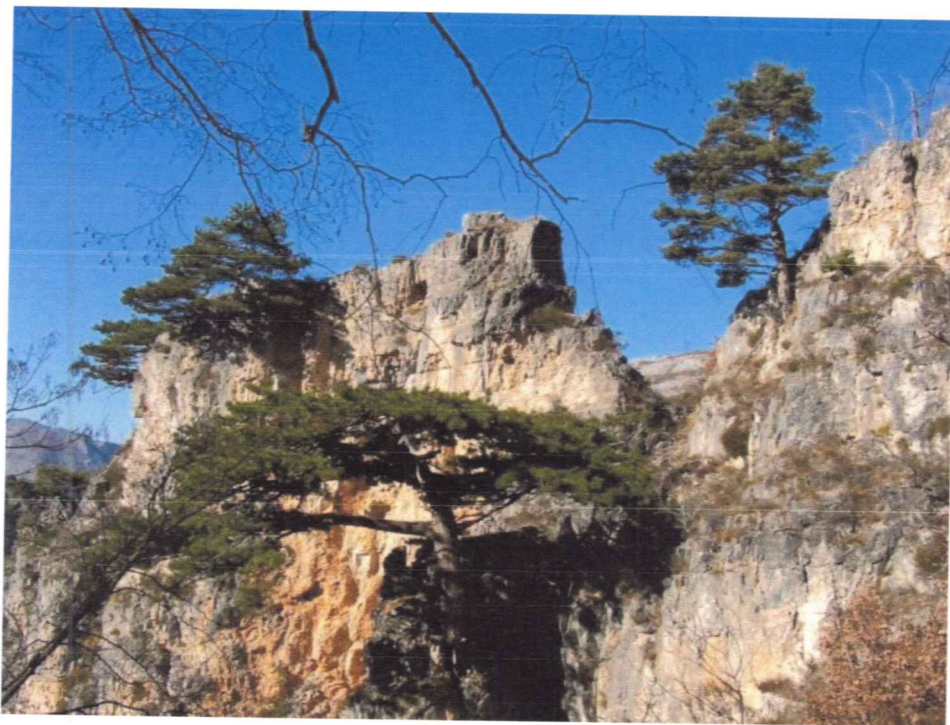
1. Overall goal that suggested the conceiving and implementation of pilot action(s), its rationale, how it has been designed, including the further identification of implemented tool(s)

Project PRONACUL laid its main expectation on development and application of Common Methodology where all partners contributed to its development. Implementation of its segments lead to achievement of some of the most important goals, particularly for local communities but also for whole transnational partnership.

In Trebinje, it included activities such as contributions to development of transnational framework analysis and good practices database, contributions to establishing joint guidelines management system including realization of capacity building program, establishing national stakeholders' capacity networks with performing various surveys, and especially Common methodology application in pilot areas or its main part - implementation of small-scale intervention at Park of Nature "Orjen".

In other words, common methodology targeted management of natural and cultural heritage based on a participatory approach involving relevant stakeholders. The methodology was applied and tested in pilot areas by following agreed methodology and implementation of pilot actions, with the particular intention of developing new natural and cultural tourism contents/destinations or improving the existing ones.

Orjen is the highest mountain in Dinaric maritime part, and its highest peak (out of 5 peaks over 1800m) “Zubački kabao” is 1894 meters high. Today’s structure of Orjen was formed by glaciers which caused part of its floral diversity. Main factor that influenced flora on Orjen was its climate, with cold and wet winters and long summer dry periods. Along with karsts areas, there are also parts covered with fir, endemic “Munika”, black pine and beech forests. There are also different endemic species which were not sufficiently introduced by science, such as particular kinds of Iris, Paeonia mascula, Acer heldreichi or Batula pendula...



Orjen/Ubla is very attractive location for mountaineers or enthusiasts such as hikers, picnickers, or nature devotees. Expeditions can be organized from Montenegro (Herceg Novi, Kotor, Risan) or from Bosnia and Herzegovina (Trebinje). As Orjen is located between three neighbouring countries (BiH, Montenegro and Croatia), it is very easily accessible for international tourists, adventurers or scientist from any of these countries.

Because of its various values, Orjen was recognized by NATURA 2000 and declared as Nature Park at the end of 2020 by relevant authorities.

Implementation of ADRION - PRONACUL project in Trebinje confirmed its initial assumptions on two levels, on partnership/project level where PRONACUL's basic idea was based on analysis and comparison of natural and cultural heritage potentials and its valorization across Adrion region, and locally where local tourism required introduction of active and outdoor contents.

This leads us towards the originating of idea for pilot action within Pronacul project in Trebinje as it can be considered from different perspectives. Namely, local people and visitors recognized the beauty and potential of "Orjen" mountain so mountaineering club from Trebinje had nominated the idea as a very important for further development of tourism, while the other perspective would be that Trebinje as a growing tourist destination needed an extension of its tourist offer from urban part towards surrounding rural areas which was also confirmed within local development strategy and local tourism development strategy. In addition, following the logic of increasing number of visitors in Trebinje from all over the world and increasing interest for Trebinje as a destination which means a chance for income generation, transnational aspect of the project offered an opportunity for strong promotion of these contents as a part of joint tourist product.

Having all this in mind, the project was designed according to proposal by local mountaineering association "Vučji zub" which suggested the type and scope of contents to be introduced. It was followed by providing all necessary permits such as "Location permit", "Opinion on no negative influence on environment" and developing of construction project which was adopted by City of Trebinje Assembly by its Decision from 05/01/2021. All aforementioned documents were included in eMs reports during the project implementation and confirmed by FLC in BiH, and are available upon request.

So, full set of documentation provided and available in terms of realization of pilot action in Trebinje include: developed Study of justification of pilot action, Construction Project, Location permit, Opinion on no negative influence on environment by relevant local authority, Construction permit, Decision on Acceptance by City of Trebinje Assembly,

provisional and final acceptance forms and financial documentation, photos and media articles.

The procurement of the equipment was conducted according to ADRION program rules and the evidences are also available in archive of Development Agency of City of Trebinje. Tender was initiated on 13/07/2021 and concluded by signing the Contract with selected company "GRATEH d.o.o. Mostar" on 31/08/2021. Procurement was completed by the signing final acceptance form and final payment on 29/06/2022.

Unfortunately, Park of Nature "Orjen" is still not organized in a way of having system of registering visitors or selling tickets so the evidence on visitors through the time of project implementation is based only on lists of participants from organized events, media articles and photos. However, project has significantly improved pilot area as attraction and affected increase of visits.

2. Thorough description of the supporting methodological approach highlighting elements of novelties, excluded and adopted approaches and reasons why

The pilot action was implemented according to the planned activities within the Pronacul project. Methodological approach used comprised participation of all relevant stakeholders in order to ensure providing contents relevant for organizations dealing with preservation of nature and tourism as well as for visitors and local community as a whole. Beside aforementioned initiative which came from local mountaineering association "Vučji zub", support in realization of pilot action and Pronacul project was provided also by local authorities, managing organization of Park of nature "Center for Karst Management", Institute for Protection of Cultural-Historical and Natural Heritage RS, as well as other organizations and tour-operators interested in development of this kind of offer in Trebinje. In addition, particular attention was paid to compatibility of the pilot action with existing natural, technical and human resources. In order to achieve expected results, participation of local stakeholders was necessary and several local departments and organizations supported the initiative.

When it comes to practical and technical realization of pilot action, project team paid the attention to ensure procurement of quality equipment having in mind safety of visitors and users in general.

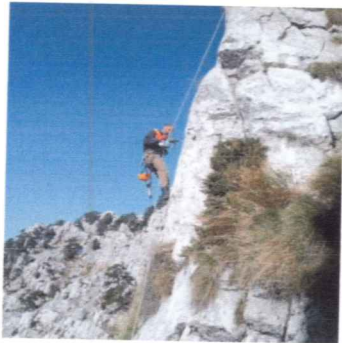
It was decided to place artificial climbing rock and mini zip-line for children near the mountaineering hut with aim of easier maintenance and services. All equipment, including via-ferrata, was handed over for usage to mountaineering association “Vučji zub” considering their dedication and experience as a basic precondition for further functioning of future processes in terms of tourism operating on “Orjen” mountain.

For promotion of the pilot action, project has used the promotional mechanisms of Pronacul project (printed material, website, social networks etc.) as well as own promotional resources and well-developed relations with media. Promotional articles and material were reported through regular project reports.

Whole pilot action represents innovation for Trebinje since these kinds of contents never before existed in this area. On the other side, placing Trebinje and Park of Nature “Orjen” on the regional tourist maps represents real novelty approach which has the potential to significantly improve all aspects of rural tourism in wider Trebinje area.

3. How the pilot action has been implemented and its results, including the environmental impact

Besides following agreed Common Methodology of Pronacul project. pilot action was implemented in close cooperation with various local organizations dealing with organizing routes in nature and tourism in general, as well as with Institute for protection of Cultural-Historical and Natural heritage RS and Center for Karst management which is responsible for managing Park of Nature “Orjen”. Mountaineering Club “Vučji zub” had particular role through its advisory and volunteering. Namely, beside professional advisory related to tourism in mountain areas and preconditions that need to be taken into consideration, members of Mountaineering Club “Vučji zub” participated in transportation of procured equipment to hardly accessible areas of the mountain and it also included support to the installation of via-ferrata, marking signs and other equipment.



Pilot action was implemented according expectations and without any considerable problems, and also without any visible risks in terms of project implementation.

Achieved results, beside new tourism contents in rural areas according to the list of procured equipment as stated in project and strong promotion in regional tourism spheres, included also improved safety of visitors who are hiking or mountaineering at “Orjen” mountain, increased momentum of new initiatives and more interest by authorities on various levels, increased number of visitors and increased number of enthusiasts and volunteers.

Together with announcement of the Park of Nature “Orjen”, introduction of new contents through Pronacul project brought the new level of awareness by visitors and local population as well as some rules to be respected according to legislative related to protected areas on national and regional levels.

Implementation of the project and its lessons learned showed that tourism valorization of cultural-natural heritage can have positive impact towards protected areas as it affects level of attention by all relevant stakeholders and that heritage valorization as itself need as preserved as possible goods to be promoted amongst tourists.,

Besides that, and having in mind the nature of the action and types of equipment procured, project and its pilot action brought positive impact to environment preservation since it underlined and introduced some positive behavior patterns. As a reflection to Pronacul pilot initiative in Trebinje, some other projects have been realized so mountaineering hut is now equipped with eco-septic, new beds for accommodation facilities, preparation and initial

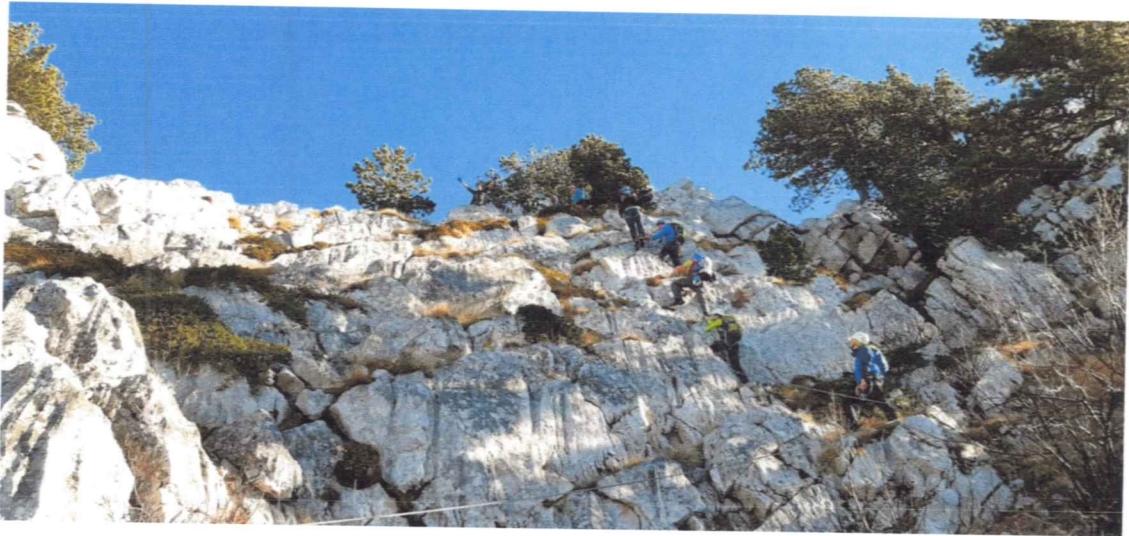
works for sanitary facilities have been conducted, access roads are being regularly maintained etc.

4. How outcomes of pilot action shall be collected and made publicly available

PRONACUL project strongly influenced the enrichment of the tourist offer in Park of Nature Orjen, and its tourist valorization, which caused increase of visits to the Mountain. Even if it still requires investments in proper infrastructure and contents, preserving of its natural and cultural values still remains the main goal through future initiatives.

Aforementioned contribution of the project to the overall offer beside natural resources reflects in developed Via-ferratta, 10m high artificial climbing rock and 50m mini zip-line for children in front of Mountain Hut “Ubla”, 5 boards with information about Orjen, its flora and fauna, available trails etc placed on visible locations, 2 hiking and 2 cycling trails marked and one mountain resting place which was placed on the location of “Pirina poljana” at Orjen.





Rights for use of outcomes of pilot action in Trebinje (eg. via-ferrata, artificial rock, mini zip-line, resting point/viewpoint and marking signs) are being transferred to Mountaineering club “Vučji zub” Trebinje which will also take the responsibility for its managing and maintenance in future. This was also agreed with local authorities which expressed their dedication to provide support to these kind of activities in future.

All contents are available to visitors according to set timelines which are being regularly announced on web page or social networks pages of Mountaineering club “Vučji zub” Trebinje. They also ensured availability of trained tourist guides according to the interest of visitors.

Outcomes of pilot action are also promoted by Tourist organization of City of Trebinje as a regular part of Trebinje tourist offer



Communication with Pronacul partnership and other organization from ADRION region in order to maintain existing and developing new joint tourist products.

5. The role of the project partners/institutions in the pilot action implementation

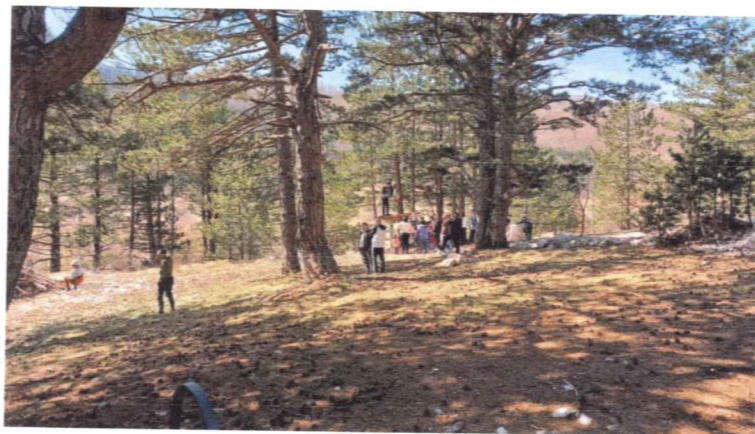
As already mentioned, pilot action was implemented in close cooperation with various local organizations dealing with organizing routes in nature and tourism in general, as well as with Institute for protection of Cultural-Historical and Natural heritage RS and Center for Karst management which is responsible for managing Park of Nature "Orjen". Mountaineering Club "Vučji zub" had particular role through its advisory and volunteering. Other organizations dealing with tourism services in natural environment and tour operators interested in development of this tourism branch, participated in project capacity building program and offered their services in order to support the process.

Project partner, Development Agency of City of Trebinje - TREDEA, had the coordinating role and became kind of focal point with role of cohesion processes maintaining amongst all involved organizations. Also, TREDEA monitored realization of all project activities in Trebinje including pilot action, which means several visits to the field and ensuring all administrative processes were completed according to requirements.

Particular role of the partner in terms of pilot action realization was related to promotion of newly developed contents. Two media conferences were organized, several media appearances and advertisements, two specific events were organized with aim of popularization of new contents and cooperation with media and public in general was on very good level.

6. Where the achieved results are stored and planned pilot action follow up

The equipment for via-ferratas and additional protections is placed at the “Orjen” peaks “Vučji zub” and “Kabao”, while artificial climbing rock and mini zip-line were placed in front of the mountaineering hut “Ubla”.



5 Info boards with information about Orjen, its flora and fauna and available trails are placed as follows: three info boards in front of mountaineering hut, one board at the starting point for the almost all routes in Orjen, and one info board on the location of “Pirina poljana” together with resting place/viewpoint. Marking signs for two hiking and two cycling trails were placed on visible locations along these trails across Park of Nature “Orjen”.





Other smaller equipment such as climbing belts and sets, GPS devices and drilling machine are placed in mountaineering hut “Ubla” at Orjen.



All documentation related to the realization of the pilot action is placed in partner’s premises and available upon request, and most of it (according to possibility to present it in form of accessible electronic version), was also attached to regular eMs reports by the partner.

Pilot action in Trebinje was welcomed and appreciated by all relevant subjects and general population. Managing of pilot action results was assigned to mountaineering club and, according to their main activities, it is expected that they will maintain outcomes of it regularly and make efforts to improve it in coming period. It is also expected that new corresponding contents will enrich existing offer having in mind the momentum and positive approaches by all important and relevant stakeholders in Trebinje.