Tourism at Black Sea - Constanta (Romania) and Dobrich (Bulgaria)

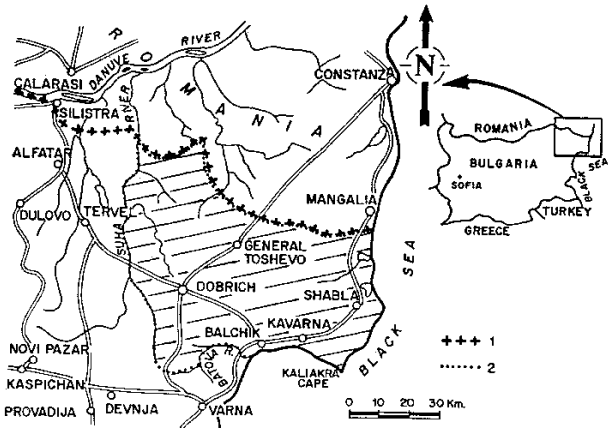
Brief summary of the measure and its origin

Dobrich (Bulgaria)

Costantza (Romania)

The Project Tourism at Black Sea is a cross-border cooperation project that was implemented between the cities of Constanta (Romania) and Dobrich (Bulgaria). An association aiming to develop the regional cooperation in tourism and related transport was set up by the partners (Mamaia Antrepreneurs Association, The Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Agriculture and Navigation Constanta, TUI international tour operator, Mamaia and Eforie Municipalities, the Romanian Association of Tourism Employers, Ovidius University of Constanta, the Chamber for Commerce and Industry Dobrich, the Regional Development Agency in Dobrich).

The overall objectives of the project were referring to the Black Sea tourism development and promotion and the cross border cooperation intensification between Romania and Bulgaria.



Key Stakeholders involved in the implementation of this measure

The target group of the project was an assembly of directly involved institution in the field of tourism within the two countries, represented by:

- Public local authorities from the cities with tourist potential from Constanta County and Dobrich Region
- Patronage associations in the tourist field from Constanta County and Dobrich Region;
- The main tour-operators from the region;

- Chambers of Commerce and Industry from Constanta County and Dobrich Region;
- Tourist related NGOs

The final beneficiaries of the project were the target group together with:

- hotel owners and the other businesses that develop activities in the field of tourism;
- Romanian, Bulgarian and other tourists that are visiting the region and the local communities within the area

Main problems and barriers occurred

The main problem that was identified since the beginning was related to the cooperation in the field of tourism between Romania and Bulgaria. This cooperation was more or less historical, originating in the feeling of competition and rivalry that exists between the two countries regarding this field.

Also, another problem that brought its contribution to the maintenance of this state of affairs was the lack of common tourist products, aimed to concretely integrate the geographical continuity of the Black Sea seacoast between the two countries.

In the meantime, one of the specific problems identified in Romania as well as in Bulgaria, was the relatively short period of time designated to the summer season, in comparison to other tourist destinations like: Spain, North of Africa, Greece, Malta and Cyprus. This lead to the necessity of discovering new niches and field of action, like cultural tourism, business tourism, spa tourism, cruising and itinerary tourism.

The other problem identified was the financial aspect related to the touristic promotion. It was proofed that it was much cheaper and efficient to develop an advertising campaign having as objective the entire region, presenting for the public various tourist attractions and objectives, instead of promoting one hotel or one resort only.

Quantification of investments

The main results of the project, that can be quantified are:

- the Black Sea Tourism promotion and development association and
- the study regarding the Black Sea Tourism development.

Furthermore, the different activities that were carried out during the project implementation can be quantified as investments. These are the following:

- Initial and continuous networking of project team
- Specific activities related to project visibility and transparency
- Purchase of products and services necessary for project implementation
- Draw-up of the study regarding the Black Sea Tourism development
- Three interactive seminars
- Set up of the Black Sea tourism promotion and development association
- Final evaluation of the project

Description of the services developed within this measure focused to emerging travel needs and in ensuring an equal access to tourism for all (reduction of barriers and social exclusion)

An important aspect that was tackled by the project and taken over by the tourist development association was the lobbing factor. This is considered to be a very important part as regard to the development of major tourist infrastructure projects and the insurance of financial resources needed to implement different actions on local level.

Contribution provided by the measure in the improvement of the tourist destination attractiveness in terms of accessibility[1] as well as in terms of quality of services[2]

The problem that the project approached was the relation between Romania and Bulgaria in the field of tourism that is very poorly developed as regard to the exchange of tourists and to the cooperation between the tourist operators. This refers as well to the exchange of expertise and the development of common touristic strategies for the production and promotion of integrated products.

In this context, the "Tourism at the Black Sea" project aimed to offer the two countries a common and permanent platform for dialog and cooperation in the field of tourism as well as to facilitate the contacts between the decision making factors on local levels and other involved stakeholders that are able to activate in the field of tourism.

[1] door-to-door services
[2] e.g. better, user friendly and more appropriate information, hospitality, effectiveness

Environmental aspect and implications

Along this project the sides of the environmentally friendly modes of transport were not directly approached, but this one in more appropriate for the Black Sea Region. Through South East Operational Programmes and Regional Operational Program will be made new leisure ports (three in Romania – Corbu, Mamaia, Tuzla and two in Bulgaria. These will promote the cruise tourism, as ecological tourism.
Inside the study, the concept that was considered was durable development. Regarding the development requirement for tourism by the Black Sea, this concept can be defined as application in assessment of natural and anthrop resources in a durable way for environment and rising generation, or for a shorter definition eco-development for tourism.

Economic development of the destination in terms of new investments generated by the measure

The project debates the objectives of the sea tourism development strategy and common organization able to manage in a seamless conception, that of long term development. At this point we can not appraise the amount coming from investments, but the project will be applied through Regional Operational Program, Competitiveness Operational Program and Romania-Bulgaria Cross Border Operational Program.

Safety and security aspects and related impact

The strategic objectives for tourism development and the both side of the border will lead to improved measures of safety regarding services, technologies, and infrastructure, but these are to be punctually debated in the time of this strategy implementation through individual projects.

The employment and career prospects for local people

The “Tourism by the Black Sea” project is a model of good practice as regarding to a concrete and efficient approach of cross border cooperation and continuous relations.
The implementation solution and methodology of this project can be easily extended to other areas, such as: economic cooperation and development, enhancement of commercial exchanges, environmental aspects approach, education, health, culture etc.

Acknowledgments

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