**COMMUNICATION PLAN**

**GENERAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

1. **Overall communication objectives**

The purpose of this communication plan is to raise public awareness on the real changes in the lives of the people, achieved within the Interreg- IPA CBC Bulgaria – Turkey Programme 2014-2020, as well to promote the opportunities offered by the Programme and the achieved results of the joint efforts for strengthening the Bulgaria- Turkey cross border capacity in the field of sustainable tourism, leading to enhancement of European territorial cohesion.

The envisaged general communication objectives within project № CB005.2.21.006 “Promote and Affect Tourism through History /PATH/”, implemented by Mineralni Bani Municipality /BG/ and Kırklareli Special Provincial Administration /TR/ aim to increase public awareness, public interest, encourage participation in project activities, clarify the opportunities and benefits of the project, and ensure transparency and openness in its implementation. The focus will be on providing information related to the project's features, sustainability and results. The aim is to bring information to the public and stakeholders through the use of a multilateral approach, thus optimizing the chance of success.

Furthermore, it is crucial to take into account the level of awareness of individual stakeholders. The underlying factors influencing the decisions that will be implemented include: the use of positive "speaking" and easy to understand messages; addressing people in their local environment, using their preferred media, local channels of information and comprehensible language; seeking active feedback from the target groups; building and validating team recognition; monitoring and evaluating information and communication activities in order to verify their effectiveness, efficiency and relevance.

The implementation of the activity is in full compliance with visibility requirements and guidelines provided in the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions, published at: <https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/_en>.

All information and communication materials related to the project will be prepared following the requirements described in the “Communication and Visibility Guidelines”, in accordance with the detailed technical requirements for the use of logos, information boards, roll- banners, publications, web presence and audiovisual materials.

1. **Target groups**

**Direct Beneficiaries.** This target group includes the direct beneficiaries (users) within the project:

* Tourist operators, entrepreneurs, local regional and national authorities as participants in the project activities (>40);
* experts in culture heritage (8);
* folklore music and dance groups (5);
* subcontractors (>15);
* administrative staff (6).

**Target groups** are the groups who will be positively affected by the project:

* Citizens of Mineralni bani (1157) and citizens of Hamdibey (700);
* Tourists of the CB region (>5000);
* Touristic agencies and enterpreneurs from the CBC region (30),
* The wide audience, reached through promotional materials, www, social medias (2500);
* Representative of district, regional and national institutions and stakeholders (8);
* NGOs (2)
* Medias (5).

**Final Beneficiaries,** who will benefit from the project in a long term**:**

* Citizens of Mineralni bani (1157);
* Citizens of Hamdibey (700);
* Visitors/ Tourists/ of the CB region (>5000);
* Users of promotional outcomes (>4000);
* Touristic agencies and entrepreneurs from the CBC region (30);
* District, regional and national institutions and stakeholders (8);
* NGOs (10);
* staff members of the district administrations (>600).

1. **Specific objectives for each target group, related to the action's objectives and the phases of the project cycle**

* ensure that the local population is aware of the role of the partners and of the EU financial support
* raise public awareness about improved touristic attractiveness of the cross- border area and the development of sustainable cross- border tourism as a means for socio- economic growth of the region;
* raise public awareness about the improved accessibility to touristic sites
* raise public awareness of the tourism potential of the region through tourist information and guides.
* develop cooperation and partnership relations with all stakeholders, at regional and national level, in order to realise the objectives included in the strategy;
* ensure exchange of knowledge and good practices in communication.

**COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES**

1. **Main activities that will take place during the period, covered by the communication and visibility plan**

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| **MAIN ACTIVITIES** | **TARGET GROUPS** | | |
| **DIRECT BENEFICIARIES** | **TARGET GROUPS** | **FINAL BENEFICIARIES** |
| **MEDIA COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES** | **🗸** | **🗸** |  |
| **BASIC NON- MEDIA TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES** | **🗸** | **🗸** |  |
| **COMMUNITY- ORIENTATED REPOSITORY** | **🗸** | **🗸** | **🗸** |

1. **Communication tools chosen**

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| **COMMUNICATION TOOLS** | **RESPONSIBLE BODY** |
| **MEDIA COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES** | |
| **Press- conferences**  Press conferences will be organized by each partner- opening and closing press- conference. Local and regional medias will be invited to these press events. | **LP, PB 2** |
| **Kick- off event**  The activity aims to create a mechanism for the successful achievement and dissemination of the project's objectives and promotion of the target area. Its objective is to involve the general public and give a wider notion of the project background, objectives, planned activities, its sustainability and results. Open and transparent participation of all stakeholders is imperative to foster the touristic potential and attractiveness of the CBC area and positioning it as unique and tourism destination.  The event will be organized in Kirklareli in two days.  Press- release and e- newsletter will be prepared and sent to local and regional medias. | **PB 2** |
| **Sod- turning and closing ceremonies of the construction and rehabilitation works**  Two official ceremonies will be organized by each of the partners in order to give a wider notion on the start and the completion of the reconstruction and rehabilitation works.  Press- releases and invitations to local and regional media will be sent. | **LP, PB 2** |
| **Short- video spot**  A project short- video spot shall be produced to promote the Project. The scenario of the video will be decided among the Project partners.  It will be distributed via Social Media, project website, and via e-mail to local and regional medias. | **LP, PB 2** |
| **e- Newsletter**  e- Newsletters containing information and visuals for the project published electronically. The newsletter will primarily focus on providing information about the project, set objectives and achieved results.)  e- Newsletters will be distributed via Social Media, project website, and via e-mail to local and regional medias. | **LP, PB 2** |
| **Press- releases**  Press releases will be prepared and disseminated to local and regional media organisations. Press releases will be available on the project website and official websites of the project beneficiaries. | **LP, PB 2** |
| **Tourism Boost Workshop**  The Tourism Boosting Workshop is targetted at tourist agencies and enterpreneurs from the CBC region, as well as at representatives of local, regional and national institutions and stakeholders. Its aim is to review of the existing model of tourism governance and to recommend changes that will make the target region more competitive.  The event will be held in Mineralni Bani /BG/ within 2 days.  Lectures will be distributed via the project website and social medias.  Press- releases and invitations to local and regional media will be sent. | **LP** |
| **Closing project activities event**  At closure of the project, representatives of the target groups will be invited to participate in a closing project event. Wide notion of the planned event and the achieved project results will be given through local and regional medias, social medias, project website, video- shot, etc. | **LP** |

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| **COMMUNICATION TOOLS** | **RESPONSIBLE BODY** |
| **BASIC NON- MEDIA TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES** | | |
| **Display panels**  During the construction, display panels will be placed on the work sites in order to present the project and finnancial support of the Programme.  The basic visibility elements on the display panels are:   1. EU emblem (European Union flag); 2. Programme logo; 3. The co-financing statement; 4. The project title. 5. Total amount of funding by the Programme; 6. Start and end dates of the construction/renovation. | **LP, PB 2** |
| **Questionarries**  At the closure of the project, in order to determine the level of satisfaction among the target groups of the project activities and achieved results, 100 questionarries will be distributed and complete.  The survey will mainly consists of short questions with a predefined set of responses (yes/no/don’t know; or along a continuum of 1 to 5), a space for commends and recommenadations. | **LP, PB 2** |
| **Roll- banners**  Roll- banners will be effectively used as a backdrop for all public events  The basic visibility elements on the banners are:   1. EU emblem (European Union flag); 2. Programme logo; 3. The co-financing statement; 4. The project title. | **LP, PB 2** |

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| **COMMUNICATION TOOLS** | **RESPONSIBLE BODY** |
| **COMMUNITY- ORIENTATED REPOSITORY** | |
| **Project website**  Publication of a web-site is a very easy way to get in touch with a larger audience, and to organize an info-bank, for facilitation and convenience of users and target groups. The goal is to focus and pile the most useful and essential information and documentation in order to alleviate the users’ efforts to the highest extent possible.  The project web- site will be elaborated, which will will include (but not be limited to):  - general information about the project’s objectives, activities and achieved results;  - projects database with the elaborated within the project promotional materials, guides, presentations, photos, video-shots, etc.  - information for mass media – press releases, announcements, news, events, awareness campaigns, photos, etc. | **PB 2** |
| **Official websites of project partners**  Regular dissemination of information about project progress will also be launched on the websites of the two municipalities, as the most useful and economic tool for promoting the Project and disseminate information to the target groups and the public in general | **LB, PB 2** |
| **Social media**  Social Media accounts will be created and social media will actively and constantly used to promote the Project. For the beginning Facebook will be launched and regular information with pictures and comments about the project will be uploaded at the social web based network. |  |
| **A Tourist Boosting Guide**  This action aims to promote the rich natural, cultural and historic heritage of Mineralni Bani and Demirkoy Municipality, to inform the general public and regional stakeholders about the opportunities for tourism development in the region.  The guideline will be created and distributed in hard copy and electronic format. It will be available on the project web site, but can also be distributed through e-mail. | **LP, PB 2** |
| **A tourist map**  Another tool to promote the CBC region is the tourism map.  The tourist map will be created and distributed in hard copy and electronic format. It will be available on the project web site, but can also be distributed through e-mail. | **LP, PB 2** |

1. **Completion of the communication objectives**

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| **INDICTORS** | | | | |
| **IN RELATION TO** | **ACTIVITY** | **TIMING** | **OUTPUT AND RESULT** | **QUANTITY** |
| **MEDIA COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES** | Press- conferences | 2nd and 8th trimester of the project | Number of press conferences held | 4 |
| Kick- off event | 2nd trimester of the project | Number of events held | 1 |
| Sod- turning and closing ceremonies of the construction and rehabilitation works | 2nd and 6th trimester of the project | Number of events held | 4 |
| Short- video spot | 8th trimester of the project | Number of short- video spots elaborated | 2 |
| e- Newsletter | At milestones | Number of e-newsletter distributed | 4 |
| Press- releases | At milestones | Number of press releases published | 10 |
| Tourism Boost Workshop | 8th trimester of the project | Number of events held | 1 |
| Closing project activities event | 8th trimester of the project | Number of events held | 1 |
| **BASIC NON- MEDIA TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES** | Display panels | 2th trimester of the project | Number of panels mounted | 2 |
| Questionarries | 8th trimester of the project | Number of questionnaries complete | 100 |
| Roll- banners | 2th trimester of the project | Number of roll- banners published | 2 |
| **COMMUNITY- ORIENTATED REPOSITORY** | Project website | Periodically | Number of web-sites elaborated | 1 |
| Official websites of project partners | At milestones | Number of official pages of the project partners | 2 |
| Social media | Periodically | Number of social medias pages | 2 |
| A Tourist Boosting Guide | 7th trimerster of the project | Number of copies printed and distributed | 1500 |
| A tourist map | 7th trimester of the project | Number of copies printed and distributed | 1500 |

**Resources**

1. **Human Resources**

The members of the Joint Management Team (JMT) are responsible for the implementation of the communication plan, namely:

* Teodora Pehlivanova- Project Manager
* Delcho Pehlivanov- Technical Assistant /LP/
* Hatice Serra Bayram- Project Coordinator /PB2/

The JMT will provide the MA with information on the quality and effectiveness of the publicity and information measures, supported by suitable evidence. The strategy could be revised, if necessary.

1. **Financial resources**

All measures for the Communication Plan implementation are covered by approved budget of the project. The total project budget amounts to EUR 421 584,61 EUR. The indicative amount foreseen for implementation of the information and publicity measures is EUR 19 310.