

Hungary – Romania Cross-Border Co-operation Programme 2007-2013

“Organization of Thematic Tourism Programmes in the Körös Valley”

HURO/0901/241/2.1.3.

BÉKÉS-ARAD JOINT TOURISM MARKETING STRATEGY 2011 – 2018

Lead Partner:

Mid-Békés Territorial Development Municipal Association

Partners:

Körös Valley Nature Park Association;

**National Council of Romanian Small- and Medium-sized
Enterprises - Arad Branch**



www.kozepbekes.hu;



www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu

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I I. Introduction

I.1. The necessity of tourism marketing strategy

The Körös Valley and its natural values like the River Maros (Mureş), the mountains of Zarand, the neighbourhood of Arad, which are situated in Békés and Arad counties, are very little or not appreciated neither in Hungary nor in Romania from the point of view of tourism. The present tourism marketing strategy tries to solve this problem with the objective of introducing and popularizing the natural values of the two counties, an active way of spending free time and the tourism opportunities provided by the nature to the local inhabitants and the incoming tourists.

In Békés county there have already been significant investments, facilities have been built to provide service for the active tourism, however, the practical implementation, the wide range of tourism possibilities based on the built infrastructure and the organizing and offering of programs is still missing.

The tourism possibilities of Arad county – the hiking routes in the mountains of Zarand, Beli and Gajna, in the valleys of the rivers Fehér-Körös (Crişul Alb) and Maros (Mureş), in the wine region of Menes and the hiking routes in the neighbourhood of Arad – are not easily accessible because of the lack of information.

The present marketing strategy after outlining the present situation declares the guiding principles and possibilities that would allow organizing, communicating and implementing of active tourism programs in the two counties, on one hand giving incentive to the organizations dealing with tourism to introduce wider range of offers and popularize our natural values and inland tourism and on the other hand defining those marketing tools that can help to reach the local inhabitants and arriving tourists.

The strategy is part of the “*Organization of Thematic Tourist Programmes in the Körös Valley*” (HURO/0901/241/2.1.3. – *Active Tours*) project funded by the Hungarian-Romanian Cross-Border Co-operation Programme. The marketing activities are essential



elements of the project so that the region could conduct the proper communication, the increase of reputation and the creation of the regional image.

I.2. The introduction of the HURO/0901/241/2.1.3 - „Active tours” project

On the 1st of November the Mid-Békés Territorial Development Municipal Association in partnership with the Körös Valley Nature Park Association and National Council of Romanian Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises - Arad Branch started the project entitled “*Organization of Thematic Tourism Programmes in the Körös Valley*” (HURO/0901/241/2.1.3.), which is funded by the Hungarian-Romanian Cross-Border Co-operation Programme.

The objective of the Lead Partner, the Mid-Békés Territorial Development Municipal Association is to promote the socio-economic and cultural development of the three member towns - Békéscsaba, Gyula and Békés – and the Mid-Békés Centre (MBC). A coordinated development strategy needs to be carried out and the preparation and implementation of joint regional development programs are needed to fulfill the objective. One of the common development directions of the three towns is tourism based on the cultural and natural values of the region and the funded project gives great incentive to that, since the goal of the project is to let the Körös Valley become a well-known, popular and active tourist destination for inland and foreign tourists – with organization and coordination considering the natural and environmental sustainability.

In the frame of the project that has a total cost of 113.653 € (almost 32 million HUF) with 5% own contribution fifteen active tourist roads will be implanted in Békés and Arad counties and these are organized into program packages in Hungarian, English and Romanian brochures popularizing our values and attracting tourists into our region.

We help to provide a wide choice of possibilities for active tourism by acquiring plenty of equipment in the project: two outrigger canoes, 12 sports canoes, 22 bicycles, 9 GPS equipment for geocaching trips, 10 pair of Nordic Walking poles offer many possibilities for





tourism programmes. Another important part of the 18-month-long (November 1, 2010 – April 30, 2012) project is the building of four landing stage on the Élővíz-Canal and furthermore providing one landing stage on the frequently used part of the Kettős-Körös river between Békés and Köröstarcsa. These landing stages provide the proper and necessary infrastructure for landing and getting out on water trips which was required for a long time.

I.2.1. The objectives and the effects of the project

The main objective is the close and devoted cooperation of the four involved towns: Gyula, Békés, Békéscsaba and Arad so that the number of inland and foreign visitors would increase by the tourism development of the region.

The offer of the programme packages should be carried out by a joint tourist promotion regarding the four towns and so the partnership cooperation among these regions would grow stronger.

The creation of tour packages and the services that are connected to them would support the sustainable tourism development adjusted to the characteristics of the region. On the basis of the sustainable development principle the present needs should be fulfilled in a way that the future generation should similarly enjoy.

The main objective of creating many different tour packages is to support those exemplary sights that have tourism values and the cultural or active free time attractions, include them into their tourist routes and fund their development if it is necessary.

The effect of the overall objective will be felt on one hand among the inhabitants and on the other hand in the field of tourism regarding the service providers (supply) and the tourists who visit these places (demand).

By the implementation of the project the region could offer more attractive choice than ever and so its competitiveness would increase which – because of the multiplication effect – leads



to the improvement of the socio-economical state of these settlements and increase in keeping the population.

The general objectives of the project:

- Increasing the satisfaction of the arriving guests because of the tourism possibilities created in the project,
- Increasing the tourism capacity considering the sustainable development principles,
- Introduction and popularization of the natural and special tourist attractions found in the Körös Valley part of the counties of Békés and Arad,
- Extension of stay and decreasing seasonality by expanding the range of choice.

The specific objectives of the project realized by the project activities:

- Increase in the number of thematic programmes by at least 12 active tourist programme opportunities in Arad and Békés county
- Development of a special website that would introduce the region and the tour programmes in Hungarian, Romanian and English languages, (www.kozepbekes.hu, www.imm-arad.ro),
- Preparation of 15.000 copies of a publication introducing the tourist programmes in Hungarian, Romanian and English languages,
- Preparation of 2 roll-up banners in both counties which would show the results of the project and the tourist values of the two counties,
- Making active free time activities more popular and providing the necessary active tourist equipment (2 outrigger canoes and 12 canoes with oars, life-jackets, transport vehicles, 22 bicycles with helmets, 9 GPS equipment, 10 pair of Nordic Walking poles)
- Setting up 5 landing stages on the Élővíz-Canal and on the Kettős-Körös river.

The following multiplication effects can be realized by the project



www.kozepbekes.hu;



www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu

www.huro-cbc.eu; www.hungaryromania-cbc.eu



- Boost in the active economy based on local potentials (especially boosting the small- and medium-sized enterprises), increasing the chance of earning income for the employees working in tourism (ports, tour guides, accommodation providers, restaurants),
- Cooperation between the public and private industry,
- Increase of the value of municipality properties, increase of the municipality assets,
- Improving the living standards of the inhabitants by providing new knowledge,
- Protection of the natural values, spreading the examples of environmental-conscious and responsible behaviour which insures the sustainable development of the settlements,
- Providing the chance for extra profit for tourist service providers, tour guides.

I.3. The objectives of the joint marketing strategy

The objective of the tourist marketing strategy prepared for the project entitled Active Tours is based on three main pillars:

1. The sustainable utilization of the natural and tourist conditions and their conscious application to form a healthy lifestyle approach
 - The conscious connection of the sport – culture – tourism trifecta should be realized and as the future and developing branch of the region, it should have a generative effect on the creation of quality living space of the inhabitants and it should also have beneficial effects on the economy of the enterprises.
 - The propagation of the healthy and environmentally aware behaviour by making the active tourism more popular.
 - The possibilities of the active tourism land – *hiking, cycling* – and water – *kayak, canoe, outrigger canoe, thermal and health tourism* - elements should be connected to the river Körös and their backwater and to the cultural values of the settlements.



- The easy accessibility of the tourist attractions was the guiding principle during the compilation of the program packages.
 - The effective management and the marketing tasks of the region should be coordinated by an experienced organization with previous references.
 - MBC, who took the role of the coordination aims at the cooperation and the distribution of professional tasks among the members of the tourism industry should be realized.
2. Quality services and rich programme packages should be connected to the tourism offers.
- Complex programme packages that were created in the framework of the project should be available for those who want to relax, do sports, go hiking or go on an excursion. Three main types of services should be included:
 - o active tour programmes
 - o accommodation possibilities
 - o catering possibilities with hot meal kitchens and fast food
 - The availability of the connected services should be composed by settlements and in addition to the “veteran” tourists the new line of guests should find their directions.
 - Besides the hiking programmes there should be possibility to get to know the settlements of the region directly or indirectly with other opportunities for relaxing which should be available to the tourists as a package or as a separate programme element.
3. The development of the tourism of the region -as an economic take-off point - should be accompanied by conscious marketing activity
- The marketing activities developed in the project should present the four towns as one image element that has the following objectives:





- increase of the reputation of the tourist offers of the region (inside and outside the border)
 - increase of the popularity of active tours in inland tourism which helps the development of the quality of life and the conscious way of life
 - increase of the cross-border cooperation and as a result the number of foreign tourists grows
 - increase of the share from the profit of foreign and inland tourism
 - increase of the number of tourism investors coming from outside the region.
- A sustainable tourism industry should be established by embracing a long turn strategy where the developed marketing strategy innovatively follows the needs of the market.

It is an important goal to form the Körös Valley into an attractive eco-tourist target area by environment-friendly developments based on the natural and built values. The project, by developing possibilities for active tourism, would like to make the natural values and cultural heritage of the region more liveable and sustainably “utilizable”. The Active Tours project increases the tourist attractions that are defined as the take-off point of the region and it helps the MBC region to become a significant tourist region.

As partial objectives we define the better and more active utilization of the regional tourism resources and the thematic settling and better availability of the tourist attractions. It is eminent that the conscious and unified marketing and image characteristics of the region will be worked out and realized by the joining of the cooperating partners and with cross-border effect. The following objectives have to be taken into account:

- Creation of natural tourist paths that can be travelled on water, horse, foot or by bike on the line of the Körös rivers
- Involvement of the existing accommodation, resting and restaurant services
- Active involvement of the existing presentation and teaching paths, information bases in the tourist packages





- Involvement of the village tourism and village hospitality industry into the active elements
- Involvement of the existing small boat harbours and boat lifting stations as bases in certain stations of the trips
- Development and emphasis of tourist centres on the settlements (e.g. Dánfok, Körös Valley Visitor Centre)

One of the bases as a tourist centre of the program packages created in the “Active Tours” project will be the Békés – Dánfok resort centre. This resort that sets next to the Kettős-Körös River provides comfortable accommodation and catering for the visitors in a very pleasant environment. The Dánfok resort centre is also the starting point of many tourist programmes because of its good berth.

II. Status analysis of the project target region

II.1. Introduction of the Mid-Békés Centre

The Mid-Békés Centre (MBC) is a regional development sub-office based on the close cooperation of three towns (Békéscsaba – Gyula – Békés).

Founders:

- 1) Municipality of the town of Békés
- 2) Municipality of the city of Békéscsaba
- 3) Municipality of the town of Gyula

A new type of network based on the cooperation of small- and medium-sized towns. This new type of town–country relationship has the intention of developing the cross-border institutional connections. The objective of the strategy is to find take-off points based on local conditions by creating the Békés – Arad development axis which would lead to the increase in the economic boost.



The institutional coordination is provided by the Mid-Békés Territorial Development Municipal Association created in 1997. During its work they created the MBC - Arad Development Agency in the Interreg III/A project. Its main tasks are the following:

- Preparation and management of the development projects of the three towns and the connected regions
- Making the cross-border relationships more intensive
- Forming a joint development strategy with Arad County
- Working out and starting possible projects

The activities of the agency can be defined as the following:

- Forming a joint development strategy,
- Exchanging Hungarian know-how and Romanian know-how in investment promotion
- Constant communication of the MBC – Arad cross-border cooperation (workshops, seminars)
- Generating new projects, organizing, coordinating partnerships,
- Preparation of an eco-economy and bio food supply system
- Preparation of joint MBC – Arad health and eco-tourism programme packages (wellness programmes, bicycle and water tourism)
- MBC - Arad thematic publications

The cross-border partner is the CNIPMMR (Consiliul National Intreprinderilor Private Mici si Mijlocii din Romania- Filiala Arad/ National Council of Romanian Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises - Arad Branch) which has dynamic leadership, extended network of relationships and cross-border experience in Arad and its neighbourhood. The Agency gets to the enterprises, municipalities and non-governmental organizations of Arad and its neighbourhood through this partner. The chambers, NGOs, municipalities of towns and settlements and the network of Tourinform offices appear in fulfilling tasks on both sides.



The goal of the Agency is to help the social advance, structural transformation of the economy in the region and provide sustainable development both in the industry of environmental technology and agriculture.

The (submitted) projects that confirm the active work of the MBC:

- a. “Ételed az életed” (“Your food is your life”) project of the EEA and Norway Grants
- b. Notable project suggestion: KBC Biofinomító és Innovációs Klaszter Centrum (MBC Bio Refinery and Innovation Cluster Centre)
- c. Notable project suggestion: Environmentally aware waste handling and recycling system - „Települési hulladékból energiát” (Energy from waste of the settlements)
- d. Notable project suggestion: The MBC industrial area development program
- e. URBACT II: the central Brussels application for town network developments
- f. EDEN: „European Destinations of Excellence – The best destination of Hungary preserving the living heritage”
- g. HURO/0901/241/2.1.3: Organization of Thematic Tourism Programmes in the Körös Valley (funded project with € 113.653 total cost)
- h. HURO/1001/111/1.2.3: Körös Valley periodical publication (waiting for decision)

II.2. Körös Valley Nature Park Association (Körösök Völgye Natúrpark Egyesület)

The Körös Valley Nature Park Association is a close cooperation partner of the MBC Agency.

The Association has 22 members altogether at present and 10 of them are municipalities:



www.kozepbekes.hu;



www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu

www.huro-cbc.eu; www.hungaryromania-cbc.eu



Founding members:

1. Municipality of Békéscsaba
2. Municipality of Békés
3. Municipality of Gyula
4. Municipality of Mezőberény
5. Municipality of Vésztő
6. Municipality of Bélmegyer
7. Municipality of Doboz
8. Municipality of Köröstarcsa
9. Municipality of Tarhos
10. The Association of the NGOs of Békés
11. BÁÉV Ltd.

Further members:

12. Municipality of Körösladány
13. “WHITE CLUB for the Élővíz-Canal” Non-profit Company
14. Tourinform Office Békéscsaba
15. Tourinform Office Gyula
16. Henkel Hungary Ltd.
17. Association for Town Protection and Beautification
18. Dr. Molnár Zsolt
19. Körös Valley Tourist Association
20. Kayak-Canoe Club of Békés
21. Barna Ádám
22. Children and Youth Foundation of Békés County

The Association realized the following outstanding developments in the past four years:



www.kozepbekes.hu;



www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu

www.huro-cbc.eu; www.hungaryromania-cbc.eu

“Körösök Lágý Ölén” („On the Tender Waves of the Körös Rivers”) eco-tourism developmental program.

Targeted infrastructural developments were carried out in the frame of this project in Gyula, Békés, Doboz, Mezöberény, Köröstarcsa and Békéscsaba, such as: building new small boat harbour, establishing visitor centres, tour starting and finishing bases, eco-tourist information centres and creating passenger bridges, hiking and teaching paths, other tourist attractions and marketing tools.

The total cost of the project: 949.767.515 HUF.

„Magyar-Román mintaértékű turisztikai vállalkozásfejlesztő modell a Körösök Völgyében” (“Hungarian-Romanian exemplary tourism development model in the Körös Valley”)

The training of entrepreneurs of small- and medium-sized enterprises in the topic of tourism was carried out in the frame of this project. The training included many branches of tourism and cross-border relationships. A comprehensive enterprise-development strategy was devised based on the experience of the trainings and the survey of the Southern Plain Regional Labour Centre.

The total cost of the project: 26.737.276 HUF.

„Vendégfogadás a Körösök lágý ölén– Nők a turizmusban” (“Hospitality on the Tender Waves of the Körös Rivers – Women in Tourism”)

The project carried out trainings for women entrepreneurs and for women who would like to become entrepreneurs in tourism. Beside general business knowledge some practical workshops regarding the branches of tourism were part of the training. 80 women took part in the program altogether. The total cost of the project: 10.881.000 HUF.

“Without borders on two wheels” development of tourist bicycle road

The Association prepared the authorized construction and tender plans of a tourist bicycle road on the line of Bánya-tavak (quarry ponds) in Békéscsaba - Doboz - Sarkad - Méhkerék



border crossing - Salonta. Its total length is 45 km; the total cost of the project is 38.522.270 HUF.

“Without borders on two wheels” Bicycle Road Network Development Phase 1

In the possession of the authorized construction plans the Association won an application for the implementation of the tourist bicycle road. In Phase I. the nearly 30-km-long bicycle road will be built between Békéscsaba - Doboz, and Sarkad - Salonta. The total cost of the project is 5.067.000 Euros.

„Tematikus túraútvonalak a Körösök mentén” “Thematic tours along the Körös Rivers”

In the frame of the program we have started an information website (www.korosok.hu) since May 2009, prepared a free Körös Valley active tourism map in 4 languages, in 20.000 copies and placed 12 information boards in order to help the navigation of the people visiting the area.

The total cost of the program: 3.522.000 HUF.

„Vadregényes utakon Békés-Dánfoktól Vésztő Mágorig” (“On the wilderness path from Békés-Dánfok to Vésztő-Mágor”)

In the frame of the program we improved the existing but neglected tourist path by placing information boards, benches, tables, rain shelters, wooden bridges and other equipment and also did the rehabilitation of the environment. The total cost of the project: 13.342.800 HUF.

„Békési Szilvapálinka út” (“Plum Brandy Road of Békés”)

Three plum brandy manufactures in Békés, Békéscsaba and Gyula aimed to represent the plum brandy of Békés as a tourist attraction by creating tasting and presentation locations. The total cost of the project: 214.000.000 HUF.

„Zöld Lábnyomok Körös Körül” – multiplikátorképzés az iskolások és az idősek körében a mindennapi környezetvédelem témakörében a Körösök Völgyében” (“Green Footprints



Around the Körös” – training multipliers among school children and elderly people in the topic of environmental protection)

The objective of the project was to train multiplier teams of 3, who after returning into their institution would be able to create a green notice board, organize environmental and nature protection topic day or weeks by themselves and gather people who are interested in the topic around them and provide them workshops, self-study groups. 24 students and 24 pensioners took part in the 1-year-long training. The budget of the project: 13.452 Euros.

„Környezet- és természetvédelmi tréning pedagógusoknak” (“Environmental and nature protection trainings for teachers”)

The training presented such environmental and nature protection knowledge and possibilities through practical activities that are partly or entirely missing from the frame of education, but are essential for the development of an environment-aware lifestyle. More than 20 teachers took part in the 4-months-long training. The total cost of the project: 581.000 HUF.

„Zöldülj! Fordulj! – A ház körül, a házban, a természetben!” (“Turn around! Get green! – Around and in the house and in the nature!”)

The association received nearly 25 million HUF in the frame of the Environment and Energy Operational Programme to implement a one-year-long environmental educational programme. In course of this an attitude-shaping mobile exhibition was set up with relevant activity books and films about medicinal herbs and three times two-week-long series of programmes and family days, festivals are taking place until the closing of the project in February 2012.

„Körösök Völgye - Közép Békés” (“Körös-Valley, Mid-Békés”)

An active tourist guidebook is being published by the title mentioned above with the coordination of the Association. This program is financed entirely by the involved municipalities from their own source. We would like to publish this A5 size 220-page-long guidebook in 5000 copies and sell through several channels. It will be available mainly through the bookshop network of the Alexandra company and in the Tourinform offices,



tourism events, exhibitions and it will be sold directly to local companies. The total budget of the project: 4.350.000 HUF.

II.3. The trend of inland tourism especially the economic environment, state of natural and cultural life of the Mid-Békés Centre (MBC) area

The branch of tourism is continuously growing in global and in national point of view and one of the results is that for today it became one of the most important socio-economic factors of the world. It can be stated that tourism represents a significant part, 12 % of the gross national product of the world and provides employment for more than 200 million people. According to the forecast of the WTO (World Tourism Organization) both in the number of visiting tourists and profit there will be an average of 4.1% increase for the upcoming period and the number of tourist visitation will probably reach 1.56 billion tourists by the end of 2020.

Besides the quantity increase in the services that can be found in the tourism branch, a quality increase could also have been experienced which was caused by the changing consumer habits. The supply side has to react to this accordingly. The supply circle becomes more and more consumer-oriented in order to acquire and keep the solvent demand by taking the needs of the consumer protections movements into account. Parallel to this there is an increase in the amount and quality of information provided to the tourist. As a result of this process the market segmentation is growing and so the consumers with different needs form smaller or bigger groups and they can get higher quality program packages. In this sense we can talk about experienced and less experienced tourists. The first segmentation make it possible for organizers to offer higher quality, guest-friendly hospitality and good quality attractions to the experienced tourists since this type of conscious “consumers” pay very good attention to the price-value rate.

There is more and more need for the so called new types of tourism based on the experience of previous years. There is a growing interest in active holidays, sports, entertainment, adventures, a need for preserving our health and we would like to know more and more about the history of the places we visit and their natural surroundings. There is a tendency that



shows that those destinations are more popular that provide different sports and other free time activities, so that the utilization of body and mind can be realized at the same time.

The tourists sensitive to environmental protection and society look for well-organized and less polluted destinations and the cause of this is the better appreciation of the significance of the natural environment and cultural heritage. Parallel to this the demand for non-mass market products appears which could satisfy individual needs and it does not come together with the negative effects of mass production. The tourism development based on environmental awareness would like to create such a good quality tourism that will not create environmental and social problems and optimises the economic benefits.

The following types of tourism can be based on the most attractive tourist sights of Hungary: active, village, youth and eco-tourism, health tourism, business tourism, cultural, wine and gastronomy tourism.

In Békés county and more specifically in the region of MBC involved in the project, active, village and health tourism have the best conditions.

II.3.1. SWOT analysis of Békés County

STRENGTHS (Internal factors, existing positive conditions)	WEAKNESSES (Internal factors, existing negative conditions)
1.1. A region rich in natural values 1.2. Tourist attractions given by the Körös rivers 1.3. Unique, revealed thermal resource 1.4. Health and medical tourism facility 1.5. Well-qualified health industry and social human resources 1.6. Cultural diversity	a) Lack of tourism infrastructure, services, marketing and integration b) Lack of efficient flow of information c) Difficulties in accessing the public services d) Preliminary stage of the cooperation between entrepreneurs, institutions and non-governmental organizations

<p>1.7. Existing higher level educational centres (Szarvas, Orosháza, Békéscsaba, Gyula)</p> <p>1.8. Good ecological state</p> <p>1.9. Potential for renewable energy</p> <p>1.10. Excellent agricultural conditions</p> <p>1.11. Bio-agriculture</p> <p>1.12. High level agricultural working culture</p> <p>1.13. Significant workforce resources</p> <p>1.14. Free capacity of food</p> <p>1.15. High town population density</p> <p>1.16. Favourable railway-logistics conditions</p> <p>1.17. Cross-border relationships</p>	<p>e) Regions lacking entrepreneurship</p> <p>f) Scarceness of capital, companies having difficulties funding developments, weak capability for employment</p> <p>g) Lack of industrial culture</p> <p>h) Preliminary stage of the development of the tourism industry</p> <p>i) Weak employment rate</p> <p>j) Lack of professional workforce in certain areas and the limit of development</p> <p>k) The dangers of flood, groundwater rising and drought</p> <p>l) Aging population</p>
<p>OPPORTUNITIES (External factors, areas to be utilized)</p> <p>a) Better appreciation of natural values</p> <p>b) Growing interest in health, thermal, eco- and active tourism</p> <p>c) Growing demand for unique products and services</p> <p>d) Support of the use of the renewable energy resources</p> <p>e) Increasing IT networks</p> <p>f) Spreading of the atypical employment forms</p> <p>g) Development of the external</p>	<p>THREATS (External factors, negative effects to be avoided)</p> <p>a) The environment stress caused by the growing transit traffic</p> <p>b) Increasing separation inside the region and country</p> <p>c) Changes and anomalies on the labour market caused by the EU expansion</p> <p>d) Competitive economic branches avoid the region</p> <p>e) Low amount of EU funds get to the region</p>

<p>infrastructure connections</p> <p>h) Cross-border cooperation, programs as a result of the EU expansion</p> <p>i) Growing support of the environmentally aware agriculture</p> <p>j) Concept for groundwater economy</p>	<p>f) The defenceless agricultural market in the progressive competitive world</p>
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The aim, beside the development of the thermal and medical tourism, is to prepare active tourism program packages and the development of the tourism infrastructure. Taking the characteristic agricultural conditions of the county, which include the vertical integration of the undeveloped agricultural production and the low processing level of the products, as a starting point the organized tourism is the farsighted choice for the industry to be developed.

Significance of the waters

The reputation of the MBC region in Békés County is thanks to Körös Rivers, the thermal spa and the natural conditions. The economic and tourism development of the region moved forward in the past few years but the sustainability also has to be provided in the future. The tourism development of the region can fundamentally be arranged into two groups that are in close connection with each other.

Active tourism: Mainly the waters – by the Körös rivers -, the hiking routes, the natural values provide for shorter or longer periods active opportunities for relaxation to sports enthusiasts, families, youth, circles of friends and nature lovers. The water, horse riding, cycling and eco-tourist possibilities are outstanding that can be connected by organized programs and extended by relaxing, landing, resting and navigation alternatives. These natural resources can be utilized remarkably as an economic tool by the proper organizational background that takes sustainability into account. This would attract solvent demand by providing complex, one- or more-day-long active stay for the potential guests.

Medical tourism: Thanks to the started integrated developments the resources of the region, beside the active tourism, can be coordinated excellently with the complex services



provided to the people who suffer from illnesses. The medicinal spa service is outstanding in the region; all the three towns possess remarkable resources and infrastructure in the area of medical tourism.

The Mid-Békés Centre area

The Mid-Békés Centre is economically the most developed area of Békés county and also it gives its competitiveness.

Such traffic network nodes concentrate in this region like the Budapest – Békéscsaba – Lőkösháza international railway main line, the main roads 44 and 47 meet here and the Békéscsaba Regional Airport can be found here.

In contrast with the other parts of the county the transport possibilities, the human resources and the public and higher level education that are part of it are quite good which highly contributed to the fact that the engineering industry, outsourcing and renewable energy appeared in the area thanks to the investments of the private capital of big European companies and the national SMEs.

It can be stated that active tourism has its place in the Mid-Békés Centre development programme beside the medical and spa tourism, environmental technologies, agricultural innovation and the utilization of renewable energy. Medical tourism and the tourism development connected to it have to have an important role mainly in case of the three involved towns of Békéscsaba – Békés – Gyula completed with cross-border cooperation which would be in this current project with the town of Arad.

II.3.2. Introduction of the tourism position of the Mid-Békés Centre by a SWOT analysis

STRENGTHS (Internal factors, existing positive conditions)	WEAKNESSES (Internal factors, existing negative conditions)
a) The centre of Békés county, the pulling	a) Unified image, appearance



<p>force of the economy of the area</p> <p>b) Diversity of the cultural and gastronomy events</p> <p>c) Cultural, intellectual and art centre role in the region</p> <p>d) Concentration of the natural resources</p> <p>e) Thermal water resources, impressive spas, rehabilitation centres</p> <p>f) Moving into positive direction and ambitions for cooperation among the participants of the tourism industry. The beginning of a unifying process can be observed among the municipality, non-governmental organizations and the constantly joining entrepreneurs</p> <p>g) The growing positive image of the towns</p> <p>h) The appearance of sports and its connection to the natural resources: the growing strength of the sport – culture – tourism unit</p>	<p>b) Lack or little number of complex tourism packages</p> <p>c) Low level utilization of the natural resources</p> <p>d) Low national reputation of cultural values</p> <p>e) Few investors</p> <p>f) Low number of high quality and good category accommodation</p> <p>g) Accessibility from the centre of the country and from Western Europe is difficult – lack of a highway</p> <p>h) Low intensity in utilizing cross-border relationships</p> <p>i) Low rate of foreign tourists</p> <p>j) Lack of information boards in foreign languages</p> <p>k) Lack of organized travelling</p> <p>l) Poor choice in area-specific souvenir items</p> <p>m) Local inhabitants do not really believe in the attractiveness of the towns and the region</p>
<p>OPPORTUNITIES (External factors, areas to be utilized)</p> <p>a) Increase in the number and standard of organized events</p> <p>b) Increase in the amount of choice for organized programs in the autumn and</p>	<p>THREATS (External factors, negative effects to be avoided)</p> <p>a) Decrease or stop of the tourist traffic</p> <p>b) The infiltration of the peripheral situation into the public knowledge</p>

<p>winter period besides the open door, summer events</p> <p>c) Giving more importance to the environmental protection principles and utilizing the growing popularity of eco- and active tourism</p> <p>d) Make the Élővíz-Canal accessible for boats, removing obstacles</p> <p>e) Strengthening the horse riding tourism and its services, establishment of horse clusters</p> <p>f) Strengthening the village tourism by increasing the number of events and festivals and emphasize their uniqueness</p> <p>g) Increasing the international marketing intensity of the existing festivals</p> <p>h) Increasing the sense of national identity in the local inhabitants, increasing the internal PR activities</p> <p>i) More active involvement of the local inhabitants in non-governmental organizations and as a bottom-up aspect, survey their needs and build upon them</p> <p>j) “Medical Wellness” based on the thermal resources of the region and expansion of medical tourism</p> <p>k) Union among the settlements,</p>	<p>because of the low standards of infrastructure</p> <p>c) Strengthening of the competitiveness of rival destinations</p> <p>d) General lack of funds among tourist organization, institutions, NGOs</p> <p>e) Persistence of lack of capital, getting a loan or working capital gets more and more difficult</p> <p>f) Decrease of the ability to attract capital</p> <p>g) The conditions for a high standard tourist reception are not general</p> <p>h) Strong rivalry among the settlements of the region</p> <p>i) Growing burden on the tourism entrepreneurs</p> <p>j) Decreasing tourism competitiveness because of the incomplete and bad cooperation</p> <p>k) Decrease of the inland tourism caused by the less traveller’s cheques because of the restructuring of the cafeteria system</p> <p>l) the advantage of low process of Hungary would decrease further</p> <p>m) Bad economic environment, the multiplication effects of the economic and financial recession</p> <p>n) High unemployment rate, closing of</p>
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<p>increasing the cooperative activities, generating and implementing joint projects</p> <p>l) Strengthening the cross-border relationships and making them more active</p> <p>m) Maintaining and increasing application activities</p> <p>n) Construction of exhibition places, tasting sites and showrooms based on the “hungaricums” that can be found in the region and can be visited all year long, for example Csabai Kolbász (sausage), Békési Pálinka (plum brandy)</p>	<p>factories and services, termination of entrepreneurs and the decrease of the solvent demand</p>
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It can be stated that the income-generating ability of tourism is low despite the several beneficial conditions and the main cause of this is that tourism have not found its deserving place in the Körös Valley yet. For tourism to become properly integrated into the economic structure of the region and grow into a developing industry with long term sustainability the following things are highly needed:

- The **quality development of the tourist infrastructure** so that it would comply with the growing and changing demands of tourists. One of the main elements is the construction of the infrastructure that supports active tourism and widespread utilization of the cooperation among the participants of the tourism industry. Moreover the detailed mapping of the accessibility of the tourist attractions is needed and the programs should be created regarding that. There also lies a great opportunity in the tourist utilization of the backwater sites and their surroundings.



- **Enhancing the competitiveness of the services and program offers connected to tourism** would help the increase of the number of visitors and developing a positive image. During the preparation of the program packages as a guiding principle the seasonality has to be decreased, a constant opportunity for relaxation has to be provided for every period of the year. The unique spas and their services that can be found in all three of the towns are fit for this purpose. The objective is that complex tourist programs, program packages should be available for the potential visitors, tourists and they also include in their complexity not just the elements of active tourism but the hot meal restaurants and the medium or high quality accommodation, too. When offering these program packages it is an effective and exemplary guiding principle that a unified image is created for the offered services, tourist attractions and they should be presented via direct marketing process to the public.

II.4. Natural and cultural resources of the Mid-Békés Centre

The middle Békés region in Békés county got into the centre of the attention because of its unique tourist conditions. The rivers Fekete-, Fehér- and Kettős-Körös became more and more popular in the past decades considering water tourism and hiking in the nature.

The quarter of the population of the county lives in the three towns of Békéscsaba, Gyula and Békés that represent the core of this region. The economy, public administration and the centre of intellectual life of the county is situated in this region so it also became the central core of tourism.

The tourist developments are constantly managed in the region with the objective of carrying out the “sustainable tourism” that is put forward to realize those principles where the natural and cultural values are not endangered and will also be accessible for the future. For this sometimes we have to leave the fossilized traditions, stereotypes or sometimes they should be presented in a new form or completed with new opportunities. The active tourism offers that are based on natural values should be raised to a competitive level and maintained there. The



objective is to create a unified image where the elements of active tourism would receive a bigger role in the way that visitors could get to learn about the lives and culture of the region.

In the area included in the MBC there are several local attractions, sights and program opportunities from which the thermal water, the natural resources of the area and some exceptional historical sights should be highlighted. The standard of the tourist services built on these conditions is constantly growing, more and more well-organized programs, festivals, restaurants and hotels provide opportunities for relaxation.

The types of tourism available in the area:

Health tourism:

Health tourism is a concept that includes medical and wellness tourism where tourists travel to improve or preserve the state of their health or to achieve recovery by using the health tourism services provided by the given place they are staying.

The primary target group of health tourism are the people who suffer from some chronic illness or pain, whose main motivation comes from recovery and rehabilitation. This target group primarily needs medical treatments and secondarily take advantage of other tourism services. Hungary is in the top 5 countries that are rich in thermal water (1. Japan, 2. Iceland, 3. Italy, 4. France, 5. Hungary). In the middle Békés region excellent quality thermal water comes to the surface.

The primary target group of wellness tourism inside health tourism is the healthy guests whose main motivation is preserving their health. Their objective can be defines as recharging, indulging and last but not least using beauty treatments that are called passive wellness which appeared beside active wellness, i.e. possibilities for doing sports.

The region has really good conditions for active tourism. The living and backwater of the Körös River provide favourable conditions for the water sports pursuers so this sport can be the base of the plans. The Kettős-Körös starts from the junction of the Fehér- and Fekete –





Körös rivers and it defines the tourist characteristics of the region. The river Kettős-Körös has a calm flowage its surface is 100 m wide and it has an average of 6 m depth. The Fehér-Körös mentioned above has lower course characteristics from the Romanian Tenke but it is also navigable.

The Kettős-Körös and its backwater area is one of the cleanest rivers which are perfect for organizing water trips. The relatively constant level of water provides ideal conditions in summer for tourists who take part in organized or spontaneous boat trips or pursue water sports. The Small Boat Harbour of Békés makes the lifting and landing possible and a resting site ensures relaxation. The beach of Békés-Dánfok situated next to the harbour offers further programs for the hikers and sports enthusiasts.

Horse riding tourism:

The conditions of the region allow free reign for horse riding tourism inside the scope of active tourism which is remarkable to Western Europe since there the forests and fields are in private hands and so the number of great areas to ride a horse is very low. Further characteristic of the branch is that the national horse breeding industry would be able to provide excellent service with the help of targeted development and there are properly qualified professionals who could manage it. The horse traditions, the local's devotion, professional knowledge to horses and the unique, beautiful landscapes provide excellent conditions for horse riding tourism. The landscape of Békés is remarkably good for horse trips, horse riding and cross-country riding. The plain ground and the mostly ideal soil give countless opportunities for cross-country riding. The characteristic ground, grass, clay and sand paths make the shorter or longer ridings and taking part in organized trips possible for the fans of the sport since the amount of industrial establishments, asphalt roads is very little. As a beneficial result of the continental climate this sport can be pursued in ideal weather conditions from early spring to late autumn.

Bicycle tourism:



www.kozepbekes.hu;



www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu



Thanks to the low characteristic topography of the region cycling and organizing cycle trips is a popular relaxing and sports activity. Together with the spreading of the healthy lifestyle aspect and the constant increase of the fuel prices, the environmental protection aspect (air pollution) is also a significant factor why cycling is getting more widespread among free time and sports activities.

Considering the practice of the past period bicycle enthusiasts spontaneously or in an organized way appear in higher and higher numbers and more and more frequently on the roads. A well-constructed bicycle road network provides the accessibility of the three towns so the sightseeing on two wheels is also more popular among the residents.

The public roads and dams that can be used and recommended to be used by bikers cover the area and so several tourist roads can be created. The development of bicycle tourism of the region is treated with high importance as the implemented bicycle traffic developments funded from tenders show in the past years e.g.: the construction of the bicycle road that connects Békés and Békéscsaba. The natural values of our eastern neighbour, Romania will be within easier reach by the termination of the Schengen borders and the bicycle road currently being developed by the Körös Valley Nature Park Association.

Eco-tourism:

Ensuring the untouched natural environment and cultural attractions, traditions has to have a major role during the compilation of sport and tourist programme packages. “Eco-tourism is an environmentally responsible way of travelling and visiting relatively undisturbed natural areas in order to enjoy and appreciate their natural, present and ancient cultural values while protecting them by reducing the effects of the visit and giving social and economic benefits to the local inhabitants.” (National Regional Development Concept – 97/2005. (XII.25.) Decision of the Parliament)

Main characteristics of eco-tourism are the following:

- looking at tourism in the widest possible economic-social context,
- is based on natural attractions, but the built environment and cultural values also are important,





- sustainable use of natural and cultural resources,
- intention of sustaining the balance of the ecosystem,
- small groups,
- gives authentic experience for the participants, and offers the thorough and vivid observation of the area
- has a conscious educational and informational role,
- is open and accessible for everyone,
- protects the endangered natural environment, the participants assist in the preservation of the state of the natural environment,
- the services are environment-friendly, have environment-orientated concept,
- reduces the disadvantages of seasonality,
- restrains the pollution,
- the declaration of the responsibility of the travellers and their proper preparation, instruction and information.

The offers of eco-tourism are based on such incomparable attractions, like the beauty, diversity, speciality and uniqueness of the nature. Specific characteristic of the eco-tours is to visit romantic areas or to observe the flora and fauna in their original state.

The eco-tourist is a responsible traveller, whose main motive is to explore the nature and the culture nearby. It denotes a young social group with high education and income, who desire active recreation and need to have information about the area in advance. Eco-tourists are such sure-footed people, who like the proximity of nature or want to escape from the city, follow an environmentally aware and healthy life style. They are deeply interested in traditions, cultural and natural values, even in a scientific way. They can spend their time in the South-Great Plain Region in visitor's centres in natural parks and landscape protection areas e.g. Körös Valley Visitor's Centre in Szarvas, Körös Valley Nature Park Visitor's Centre in Békéscsaba, Gyulavári Castle in Gyula, and at natural science exhibitions and



collections such as the Forestry Information Centre in Gyula, in arboretums and open-air schools e.g. in Gyula-Városerdő and resort centres.

Cultural tourism:

The intellectual, cultural and architectural heritage of the area is rich. Its musical and art culture is well-known because of events and festivals, the folk-art values, traditions and the architectural monuments are significant, too.

Churches, bourgeois houses with the typical architectural style marks of the period and country houses are the remarkable values of the built environment in all of the towns. Museums and local historical collections preserve the folk-art, cultural historical values and curiosity of the settlements. Comprehensive and modern exhibitions of science, archaeology, ethnography and history, workshops for children (enamel oven, potter's wheel), a 3D projection room, a huge aquarium, several dozen of soft touch screens, and a voice-activated, multilingual lecturing system await visitors in the Munkácsy Mihály Museum in Békéscsaba. The greatest artist of Gyula is Erkel Ferenc. His birth-house was renovated in 2011, thus his work is introduced in an interactive way, among modern instruments and the memories of the past. The weekdays and holidays of the past inhabitants, the birds of the Körös region, and the memories of the painter Jantyik Mátyás and the archaeologist Banner János are presented on permanent exhibitions in the Jantyik Mátyás Museum and the Town Gallery of Békés. The heritage of Jantyik Mátyás and the historian Veress Endre is significant.

Hiking tourism:

The region has perfect facilities for many branches of hiking tourism. The undisturbed fields which extend to a great territory are rich in natural values. The Körös Valley Nature Park, which was founded by the project "On the tender waves of Körös Rivers", plays a large role in utilizing the facilities and adopting them to tourism development. The Kettős-Körös River gets full attention in the eco-tourist development of the Békés small region, first of all by supporting boat trips, bicycle, walking and horse-riding tours, hiking routes, exhibition rooms



presenting the natural and cultural values of the area and the selling of local and provincial goods.

Hiking tourism is a part of the eco-tourism. A new category, soft tourism is appearing as a part of this, which takes account of the non-violent behaviour considering the journey, the accommodation and also the spending of the free-time.

Fishing and hunting tourism:

Fishing and hunting have existed since the ancient times, and they are one of the most popular free-time activities in Hungary. There are approximately fifty-thousand hunters and almost one million fishers estimated. A separate service industry is based on these two kinds of tourism, which can also be found in the Körös region. During the decline of traditional mass tourism and the increase of demand for eco- or green-tourism, the fishing tourism offers a real alternative. The Körös region provides an ideal surrounding for the participants of both kinds of tourism.

The wildlife-management and the hunting can generate sources of income even in those areas where the agricultural activity cannot be carried out. The range of services can be expanded further if accommodation, hunting-seats and tour organizers join the hunting service. The cooperation of wildlife-management, nature protection and branches of tourism guided by the principle of mutual advantages is needed for the long-time development and sustainability.

Hunting has significant traditions in the region undoubtedly. Forests rich in small game are a favourable target area for hunting tourism. The area is rich in pheasant, hare and roe deer, and red deer, fallow deer, wild boar and from the birds wild duck also appears. Local associations of huntsman organize the wildlife-management and coordinate the local hunting tourism.

The living water and backwater of the Körös Rivers also give place for fishers. By the river Kettős-Körös we can mention Köröstarcsa as a fishing paradise, but fishing-places and floating stages can be found all along the riverside. Fishes native in Hungary are to be found in the Körös water: carp, crucian, bream, catfish, wall-eye, eel, bighead carp, and even brown bullhead.



On the whole, the natural beauty of the Körös area and the opportunities offered by the above mentioned branches of tourism make the region beloved for inland and local leisure programmes and also provide favourable conditions for foreign tourists.

II.4.1. Békéscsaba

Active tourism in Békéscsaba started with the bathing, which is connected to the history of the Élővíz-Canal. Its establishing began in 1777 in order to fulfil the need of the town for water and timber. The Canal – with its water arriving from the Fehér-Körös River – connects the three towns, Gyula, Békéscsaba and Békés as a green corridor. The swimming pool at the riverside was built at the beginning of the 20th century, now it is the modern Árpád Thermal and Open-air Bath.

Conditions of tourism

Békéscsaba is very rich in natural and built heritage as well. Among the towns of county rank, it is one of the most extended green belts. Thanks to its gardens, flowery squares, and pleasant walks visitors find it to be a friendly town. Tourist websites name it to be “one of the greenest Hungarian towns” and “the friendliest Hungarian town”.

It has many, mostly eclectic, secessionist buildings and churches of architectural significance, and collections presenting the ethnographic values and traditions: Town Hall, Hotel Fiume, Great Lutheran Church, Small Lutheran Church, Árpád Bath, Jókai Theatre, Munkácsy Mihály Museum, Munkácsy Mihály Memorial House, Slovakian Folklore House, Grain Museum, Jankay Gallery and the Fairy tale house. Among the many buildings of outstanding beauty we can find a few buildings in degraded or run-down state that spoil the appearance of the town and the general impression. Such buildings are for example the Körös Hotel, the 10 Szent István Square, the beer-house built in the 19th century and the István Mill. The renovation and utilization of these buildings is a problem to be solved in the future.

One of the most pleasant parts of the city is the bank of the Élővíz-Canal. The bank is adorned by the Sculpture Promenade consisting of the busts of the famous persons of the city. The city



has plenty of public artwork; many wells (such as the Angel Well) decorate the public squares of the city.

The bath of Békéscsaba, the Árpád Bath was built in 1927 and was renovated many times, now has the adequate infrastructure and services for the modern times, it offers many free-time activities for the city. The following services can be employed in the Bath, which is under continuous modernisation:

- 50m - long swimming-pool
- adventure pool, training pool and a giant slide,
- thermal water pool
- children's pool
- sport fields (beach volleyball, foot tennis)
- playground for children
- sauna (small and big), steam room
- healthcare services: massage therapy, underwater jet massage, underwater physiotherapy, solarium, infrared sauna
- services financed by state insurance: thermal pool, massage therapy, underwater jet massage, underwater physiotherapy in groups, swimming in groups

Chemical characteristics of the thermal water: alkali hydrogen-carbonated thermal water, 76-40 °C. The water breaking the surface from 800 m was proved to be medicinal water by the Minister of Health in 2001-2002, the bath was declared as medicinal bath in 2006. Balneological treatments have been carried out since 2004: massage therapy, mud pack, underwater jet massage, underwater physiotherapy in groups, swimming in groups with a physiotherapist.

Cultural attractions

The county town is extremely rich in cultural and sacral values, and the cultural tourism based upon them can be a flagship in the tourist development of the city.

The largest collection of the paintings and personal belongings of the internationally famous Hungarian painter, Munkácsy Mihály can be found in the town museum named after the



painter and in the nearby Munkácsy Mihály Memorial House. The most famous artist of the 19th century romantic-realistic painting is connected to the city, and this gives an opportunity to create a complex cultural offers connected to the name of the painter.

Main sights:

- **Great Lutheran Church:** The Great Lutheran Church standing on the Szeberényi Square was built in classicist “copf” style between 1807-1824 by the plans of Pumberger Ferenc, Czigler Antal and Hoffer Ferenc. Since it has seats and room for 3000 people, this is the largest Lutheran church in Central-Europe, and its tower is 70 m high.
- **Small Lutheran Church:** The Small Lutheran Church stands opposite the Great Church. It was built in baroque style in 1745, it has a fire-watch tower and a crested oven, and it is one of the oldest, still intact clerical buildings of the county.
- **Kossuth Square:** The Kossuth Square is the oldest resting place of the city. the main The Kossuth sculpture and the old “small station” building were its main values which were expanded by the renovated of the “Fishing-girl well” in 2002.
- **Roman Catholic Church:** The red brick neogothical two-towered Catholic Church gained its form in 1910; it was fully renovated inside and outside at the centenarian in order to become a prevailing element of the townscape.
- **Town Hall:** The Town Hall was built between 1870 and 1873 by the plans of Sztraka Ernő chief town architect. The façade was designed by Ybl Miklós in romantic style.
- **Hotel Fiume:** The Hotel Fiume reminds people to the bourgeois atmosphere of the second half of the 19th century and the elegance of the centenary. The Hotel was built in neo-classicist style in 1867-68, and was named after the railway line Nagyvárad-Fiume. Formerly it was called the Csaba Hotel.
- **Jókai Theatre:** It was built in 1877-1879 in eclectic style. The Vigadó on the first floor is a scene of outstanding cultural and social events. The theatre has had a resident company since 1954.



- **Angel Well:** The well can be found at the end of the promenade, at Petőfi Square, it was inaugurated in 2001. The well is decorated with the wing-bearing sculpture of the goddess of victory, Victoria because of the nearby army post.
- **Orthodox Church:** The Orthodox Church standing in the surroundings of the Bartók Béla Street housing estate is an interesting sight. It was built by Greek-Romanian-Serb believers in 1837-1838. The church is decorated with the iconostas brought from Sikló.
- **Slovakian Folklore House:** The Garay Street domicile, that has a veranda, the so-called “podsztyna”, presents the various colours and figures of the 19-century Slovakian interior decoration.
- **Békési Street Community Houses:** The town saved a building complex of Slovakian folk houses on Békési Street that fulfil public educational tasks now. Schéner Mihály, Kossuth laureate painter’s artwork, metal and wooden characters and the puppet exhibition of Lenkefi Konrád puppet artist can be found in the Fairy Tale House.
- **Munkácsy Memorial House:** The classicist mansion was built in 1830-1840 by Steiner Jakab and his wife, relatives and foster parents of Munkácsy. The young Munkácsy spent his childhood in this house. The Memorial House was opened in 1994 at the 150th anniversary of Munkácsy’s birth. An exhibition representing Munkácsy Mihály’s artwork with 21 paintings was arranged in the four back rooms to keep his memory.
- **Munkácsy Mihály Museum:** The Museum has more than 100-years-old past; it was founded by the Békéscsaba Museum Association established in 1899. The representative classicist building was inaugurated in 1914.
- **Jankay Collection and Contemporary Gallery:** The Gallery opened in October of 2003 as an exhibition room on the 3rd floor of the Csaba Centre, and it has functioned as a museum since the April of 2006. Jankay Tibor fine artist has left his life-work and wealth in his testament to his native town.
- **The Sculpture Promenade:** The residents of the town are proud of the Élővíz-Canal, which was dug by the inhabitants resettling the town on one hand in order to drain the





marshlands away and on the other hand to float down the timber needed for the house-building from the Bihar Mountains. The other bank is decorated with a sculpture promenade consisting of the busts of the famous persons of the city, like Munkácsy Mihály, Áchim L. András, Haán Lajos, Gyóni Géza.

- **István Mill:** The grand building was built in 1853 as a steam-mill, indicating the past significance of cultivation of corn in the city and its catchment area.
- **Jesus's Heart Roman Catholic Church:** The Roman Catholic Church in the Erzsébethely (Jamina) district was destroyed during the Second World War. The new church was given to the believers in 1993. The 500 square-metre large secco fresco of the Jesus's Heart Roman Catholic Church, work of Patay László, shows 530 figures, biblical characters among well-known historical, public and clerical figures.

Natural conditions

The surroundings of Békéscsaba is rich in untouched natural beauties, romantic landscapes and its utilization for tourist purposes offers an opportunity to connect as an example the eco-tourism and the active tourism. The Körös Valley Nature Park Association was founded in 2001 by the cooperation of nine Békés-county municipalities in order to protect the unique natural values and the drainage basin of the Rivers Körös. The aim of the prominently public benefit organization beside the environmental protection is also the development of eco-tourism and active tourism.

The Körös Valley Nature Park Association plays a major role in the life of the city since its Visitor's Centre was established as a result of the improvements in the nature conservation area, the "lungs of the city" Széchenyi park where beside permanent exhibiton displaying the wildlife of Körös Rivers, periodical exhibitions and environmental educational and approach-forming workshops for youth and children await the visitors.

The fauna and flora of the nature conservation area can be observed in the eco-tourist path in the park surrounding the visitor's centre.

Lovers of horse riding tourism also can find their account in Békéscsaba, since 11 rider country houses and many routes await the guests in the surroundings of Békéscsaba.



Póstelek, the remains of the floodplain forest lays only a few kilometres away and belongs to the town. The territory renovated in 2010 offers pleasant, active spare-time activities for the residents of Békéscsaba and Gyula, and the tourists of the region.



Crest



Logotype



Lutheran Churches, Békéscsaba



Munkácsy Mihály Museum



Jókai Theatre



Roman Catholic Church



Town Hall



Sculpture Promenade

Annual events:

The offer of gastronomy and cultural programmes of the city is rather wide-ranging; Békéscsaba hosts numerous national and international events. These events organized yearly or two-yearly can be classified as the most marketable products of tourism. Békéscsaba offers many grand events, festivals. Almost every month of the year has its traditional event.



- **Csaba Sausage Festival:** The most important tourist product of city is the Csaba Sausage Festival now traditionally organized in every October. It has become one of the most important national and international gastronomy events of the town since the first festival organized in 1997.
- **Csaba Carnival:** The gastronomy event in February builds upon the traditional ethnographic, local values and highlights the specific Csaba habits and activities of the carnival season.
- **Csaba Beer Festival, Csülökparádé:** The Csaba Beer Festival has been organized since 2001. It offers many delicacies and special articles. Visitors can get to know more than 30 kinds of beer, and the organizers never forget the knuckle of pork matching the beer perfectly. Live concerts entertain the audience every day.
- **Lecso Festival:** The aim of the event is to make widely known that the homeland of lecsó (thick vegetable stew) is Békés County.
- **National Solo Dance Festival:** the national prestigious event of the soloist of folk dance organized in every two year since 1974 on the initiative of Vásárhelyi László choreographer.
- **Békéscsaba Spring Festival:** Békéscsaba joined the cities organizing the Spring Festival for the first time in 2003.
- **Scherzo – National Festival of Musical Youth Theatres:** Békéscsaba hosts the Scherzo – National Festival of Musical Youth Theatres in the spring every two years. The participants are the best musical youth theatres of the country. The aim of the festival is to summarise the professional achievements of the musical youth theatres and the national measurement of the genre.
- **Town Hall Evenings:** The Town Hall Evenings assure summer theatre and musical programme series of high standards for the residents of Békéscsaba and the visiting guests since 1998.
- **ZENIT International Wind-band Festival – Musical Youth Meeting:** ZENIT which is more than 20 years old is a significant musical event of the city. Many outstanding national wind-bands and international artists perform for the audience.



The festival is also a competition and the awards are awarded based on the decision of well-known and acknowledged conductors and composers.

Tourism-related developments of the past few years:

- **Munkácsy Mihály Museum:** the museum displays the artwork of the famous painter and the history and ethnography of the region; it was completely renovated and equipped with interactive instruments.
- **Munkácsy Mihály Memorial House:** the formal mansion presenting the life and personal belongings of the painter was expanded with modern pedagogical equipment.
- **Bicycle road between Békés and Békéscsaba:** the bicycle and scooter traffic became safe on the approximately 10 km-long-distance between the two towns. The bicycle road is used also by joggers.
- **Ibsen House:** A new multicultural community place was opened in Békés county: the Békés County Education Arts and Culture Centre, which came into existence as a result of the investment of the Békés County Council and with the aid of the Norway Grants, plays a prominent role in transmitting the values of the county.
- **Póstelek Resort:** the company handling the area restored the once popular drive-in movie - the field functions as an ice rink in the winter, the tourist paths of the park, established fireplaces, renovated the camping and the Mókus Inn, and created a pet-zoo. The improvements are continuous.

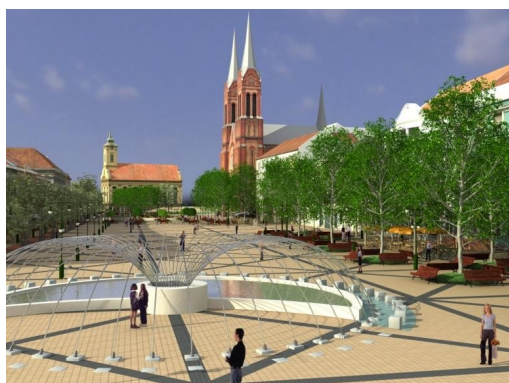
Other tourism-development plans:

- **Agora:** Total infrastructural renovation of the institutions organizing the cultural life of Békéscsaba, and establishment of a new youth and cultural centre.
- **Energy utilization in the Árpád Thermal and Open-Air Bath** through the tender KEOP-2009-4.2.0/B satisfying the local heating and cooling requirements by renewable energy sources (Békéscsaba is the main partner).
- **Establishing of a challenge park** with adventure fields in the forest on the territory of the city.



- Revival and spreading of the growth of **Csaba Gyöngye vine culture** and the legacy of Stark Adolf: forming a vineyard and visitor's centre to keep the memory of the famous vine enobler, and presenting local products.
- **Rehabilitation of the downtown of Békéscsaba**: forming the downtown into a public square by decorative stone pavement, fountains, and renovation of the buildings surrounding the square.
- **Market for local products**: converting the covered market in the centre of Békéscsaba and extend it with the selling of local products.
- **Development of the bicycle road network** along the Békési-Szarvasi-Orosházi Roads
- **Without borders on two wheels – bicycle road network development Phase I**: the aim of the project is to build a cross-border 27.8 km-long tourist bicycle road along the route Békéscsaba-Doboz-Sarkad- Méhkerék border crossing- Salonta. This investment is the first phase of the concept that will connect the Békéscsaba quarry ponds with the Madaras thermal bath by a single, near 60 km-long bicycle road.
- **Construction of the Brill Hotel**
The 3-star Brill Hotel was built in 2010 in the downtown of Békéscsaba. It stands at the disposal of the guests with 22 double rooms, 2 rooms with 3 beds, 1 room with 4 beds and a conference room for 90 people. Only a few meters away from the Hotel there stands the Brill Bistro, which has already been awarded by many prestigious gastronomy awards.
- **Development of the Fenyves Hotel**
The Fenyves Hotel was renovated in 2011 with the help of a 150 million HUF investment, and it is now the first hotel in Békéscsaba to offer the whole range of wellness services. Pools for adults and for children, jacuzzi, saunas and a massage room await those who wish to recharge.





Visualisation of the downtown rehabilitation



Visualisation of the Agora project

II.4.2. Gyula

Gyula, a city of spas, lies on the south-eastern part of the country, 220 kilometres far from Budapest and has 32000 inhabitants. The Gyulai Várfürdő is popular among foreigners and inland tourists; it has a past of more than 50 years.

Conditions of tourism

Gyula thanks its tourism first of all to the world-famous thermal water and the spa based on it. This spa –maybe the most beautiful in Hungary - was built on an 8.5-hectare park of the former Almásy castle and has been declared a nature conservation area. The main aspect when locating the buildings and the pools was to protect the trees of the castle garden from the construction as much as possible, so that the guests could find a spacy green area. It has been solved by the appropriate emplacement of the pools that one can find a quiet place in the spa even if there are ten-thousand guests a day.

- therapeutic department: thermal pool, massage therapy, underwater jet massage, bubble bath, underwater physiotherapy, traction bath therapy
- medical bath: the beneficial effects of the thermal water originates from its chemical components:





<i>chemical substance</i>	<i>mg/l (amount)</i>
<i>potassium, sodium</i>	683
<i>ammonium</i>	5,2
<i>potassium</i>	10,7
<i>magnesium</i>	1,3
<i>iron</i>	0,1
<i>hydrocarbonate</i>	1708,8
<i>nitrate</i>	0
<i>chloride</i>	88
<i>bromide</i>	0,1
<i>fluoride</i>	1,0
<i>iodide</i>	0,4
<i>sulphate</i>	12,8
<i>phosphate</i>	1
<i>pH</i>	7,95
<i>free carbonic acid</i>	35
<i>meta boracic acid</i>	15
<i>meta silicon acid</i>	70

The guests can enjoy the beneficiary effects of the thermal water in the shaded pool, in the Jacuzzi pool, in the pool with water jets, in the “octopus” thermal pool and in the Riding Academy spa.

- Castello Wellness and Sauna Park: the guests can use the inside and outside saunas, new services are the various sauna Aufguss-sessions such as beer-Aufguss, Magic of the ocean/Salt-Aufguss, Honey-Aufguss, Bastion-Aufguss, Erotic-Aufguss.
- Beauty Massage Salon: guests can choose among a variety of 40 different types of massage, provided in three categories, such as sour cherry massage, refreshing rosemary massage, regenerating apple massage, Indian lemon-grass oil massage.

Cultural attractions:

- **15th century brick castle:** the castle was built between 1405 and 1445 and made the town the centre of the area, it is the only intact gothic lowland brick castle in Central-





Europe. 24 exhibition rooms show the hundreds of years long past of Gyula town in an interactive way in the Castle Museum. The castle offers opportunity to organize various events: the newly consecrated chapel is suitable for organizing christenings and weddings; the knights' hall is open to receptions and conferences.

- **Gyula Castle Theatre** awaits the friends of drama with gems during the whole year. The summer theatre organizes productions of spectacular historical drama and various other genre, opera, operetta, ballet, puppet-show, classical music, medieval court music, jazz, folk music and folk dance at the summer evenings and awaits the tourists and the local residents too.
- **Lake Stage:** The Gyula Castle serves as a special historical scene for the nearby Lake Stage that is set on the boating lake and organizes various cultural events in the summertime.
- **Gyulavári Wenckheim-Almásy Castle:** its history started in 1716 and is connected to the Andrassy, Wenckheim and Almásy families. There are exhibitions, historical collections and an anthem-collection in the renovated castle building.
- **Erkel Ferenc Memorial House:** the Memorial House was the birth-place of Erkel Ferenc, the father of the Hungarian national opera and composer of the Hungarian anthem. The house was renovated in 2011, and now awaits the visitors with an interactive exhibition.
- **Dürer Gallery:** The father or Albrecht Dürer moved from Gyula, Ajtósfalva to Nürnberg during his journeyman years. The gallery can be visited only by appointment!
- **Kohán Gallery:** Kohán György Kossuth Award - laureate painter was born and raised in Gyula, and he left his artwork testament to the town of Gyula. The gallery can be visited only by appointment!
- **Downtown Roman Catholic Church:** officially it is a parish church for the Virgin Mary, and stands since the medieval ages, but gained its present form in 1777. It is a baroque, classicist style church.





- **Calvinist Church:** The baroque and classicist style church gained its present form in 1857. The inside is plain as the Calvinist puritanism demands. The oldest bell is from the chapel of the bathing house from 1785.
- **Church of the Miklós District:** the historic monument of the baroque, classicist church gained its present form in the middle of the 19th century. The decorated and painted, carved iconostas presents a unique value.
- **Lutheran Church:** the new Lutheran Church was inaugurated at the end of the 1920s, the chapel was finished in 1947.
- **Church of Saint Joseph:** the Germans settling here in 1724 built the church that gained its – already third – form in 1866 based on the plans of master builder Nuszbec József. Its style is classicist.
- **Ladics-House:** the one-storey bourgeois house was built at the beginning of the 19th century in baroque style, and has an L-formed base. The Ladics-House of Gyula is a special memory of the once bourgeois elite of the county, the family relics were collected through 3 generations. The museum presents the way of living and the dwelling house of a middle class family of the 19th century. It can be visited only by appointment.
- **The Hundred-year-old Confectionary:** The confectionary was opened by its first owner, Salis András in 1840. By now its original biedermeier furniture and wall-paintings were restored, and a confectionary museum was arranged. Its saloons where the guests can have the special products of the confectionary are still imbued with the atmosphere of the 19th century.

Natural conditions



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village at the junction of Fehér- and Fekete-Körös Rivers. Nowadays it is a resort with holiday houses, sandy beach, ferryboat, pleasure boat, port and various services related to water tourism. The image of the town is defined by its natural waters like the Fehér-Körös parting Gyula and Gyulavári, the Élővíz-Canal connecting three towns and the lakes around the town. The riversides assure an excellent place for those who are attracted to the undisturbed, peaceful natural environment outside the town. The Farmstead Museum was set up with the help of the voluntary donation of the Gyula farmers; it stands in the outskirts of Gyula in a puszta that was declared a nature conservation area because of its special flora and avifauna. The 2000-piece collection of the museum is unique in the region. A riding-school runs by the farmstead museum. Spare-time activities: excursions, riding, joyride, rangemen shows, stud leading, observing farm animals.



Logotype of the town



Crest of the town



The Gyula Castle





World Clock



Almásy Castle



The Riding Academy of the Castle Spa



Almásy-Castle in Gyulavári



Castle Spa – Wellness



Erkel Memorial House

Annual events

There are many cultural, drama, music, gastronomy and sport events from the early spring until late autumn in the rich event calendar of Gyula. The programmes are popular among the residents and the visiting guests, the town is a beloved tourist target thanks to its great events.

The annual events are the following:

- Gyula Spring Festival,
- Gyula Sausage and Ham Show,
- International Kisüsti Pálinka Festival, Exhibition and Fair,
- Medivid Agility and ParAgility Cup,
- Castle Spa Half Marathon and Relay Race,
- Sunday of the Gyula Flowers,
- Castle Garden Feast,
- International Day of Museums and Day of the Castle,
- Museum Night,
- events of the Summer Promenade,
- Körös Valley Medley,
- Gyula Castle Theatre Art Festival,
- Shakespeare Festival,
- Gyulai Castle Spa Cup,





- Folk-dance Festival of all Hungarians,
- Autumn Festival of Museums,
- Erkel Art Day,
- International Festival of Honey and Gingerbread

Tourism-related developments of the past few years:

Gyula became even richer because of the many investments of the past few years that make the town even more attractive for tourists.

- **Rehabilitation of the historical downtown of Gyula:** The Kossuth Square as the receiving gate of the town was given to the public as the result of the project in September 2006. Local residents and tourists have taken possession of the lovely and vivid square having many green fields, beautiful banks and well-managed environment. The special sculpture “Anamorfózis” stands on the square presenting the work Adam and Eve of Albert Dürer. The deformed picture lying on a horizontal surface is reflected on the polished metal mirror surface of a reversed truncated cone figure, and thus forms a normal enjoyable picture.
- **Tourism-related rehabilitation of Gyula downtown:** The downtown of Gyula was renovated in this project. The new decorated pavement, fountains, banks and lamps make the downtown very attractive. One of the lively spots of the town is the World Clock constructed after specific design. One can find every time belt of the world in the 3.5-ton-heavy emerald glass globe.
- **Port for small boats** was constructed on the Fehér-Körös River that due to the location of Gyula can serve as the departing and arriving point of water trips connecting the settlements as a form of inland and international eco-tourism. Those arriving into the town on the Körös River are awaited in an arrival and information building.
- The **Csigakert (Spiral Garden)** is one of the most significant green areas of the town. The special natural park was involved into the development with an eye on the values of the area. The former open-air stage was demolished, flowery lawn was planted and





the missing bushes, trees were replaced and a habitat was formed for water- and waterside plants.

- **Wenckheim-Almásy Castle:** A visitor's centre for tourists was arranged in the castle park and the castle building that was built in the 18th century in the Gyulavári district of the town. The aim of the centre is to show the cultural, natural, environmental and economic values of the South Great Plains.
- **Gyula, the Flowery Town:** There was emphasis put on the flowers and parks when beautifying the town. As a result of that Gyula won the first prize in the Flowery Hungarian Town Beautifying Competition in 2007. Thus Gyula represented Hungary in the European competition for towns and villages (Entente Florale Europe), and it won the silver award.
- **Hungarian Town of Culture 2008:** Gyula won the Hungarian Town of Culture award in 2008 because of its 600 years past, historical atmosphere, many national monuments, sights, sculptures, fountains, parks, cultural institutions, various events, conferences and renovated downtown.
- **Gyula, the town with two Hild awards:** The Hungarian Society for Urban Planning founded the award nearly 50 years ago. It was named after Hild János, city planner. He designed the city and route plans of Budapest in the early 19th century. The award is delivered biannually, once the three community awards, then the three individual awards. The town of Gyula got the community awards among the first ones in 1974, and then it was the third town to get the prestigious professional recognition for the second time in 2010. To win the award, the town had to make a tender based on a recommendation. Gyula won the award based on the unanimous vote of the evaluation committee for "the protection and creation of values during the development of the public squares of the historical town centre."

Other tourism-development plans

The leaders of the town and the tourism professionals wish to fill the infrastructure built in the past few years with content, programme offers.



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- The TDM organization was set up in Gyula. The Gyula Tourist Non-profit Ltd. handed in a tender to the New Széchenyi Plan South-Great-Plain Operative fund system with the title “Generating a Spa Tourist Destination Management Organization in Gyula”. The proposal won. The aim of the project is to organize a high-quality and more effective tourist management in Gyula with a new perspective, and to increase the number of guest nights and incomes of the tourist tax by 15%. The TDM organization intends to reach its goal via further marketing actions besides the existing ones. Thanks to the tender there was an opportunity to acquire equipment, train the TDM organization and the members, organize events and modernize and remove obstacles for handicapped people in the Tourinform Office. Two new jobs were created within the project; the workers can get salary addition. The tasks of the Tourist Non-profit Ltd. have changed in two ways since it became a TDM organization: it functions in the market environment and it carries out quality management and also monitoring tasks. Two main elements of the project related to the tasks were the construction of the new tourist webpage and the consumer satisfaction inquiry.
- Construction of the thermal park as a highlighted big project
- Development of industrial areas
- Improve the quality of the drinking water
- Construction of social welfare homes for elderly and physically disabled people
- Improving the quality services of the Castle Spa
- Arranging a centre for rehabilitation from locomotor disorders
- Improving the state of the inner traffic of the town (north bypass, Gyula-Sarkad)
- Construction of local bicycle roads
- Road development in the outskirts
- Utilization of the baroque Wenckheim-Almásy Castle

II.4.3. Békés

Conditions of tourism



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The water medicine and the opportunity for water sports are inseparable from the town of Békés. The artificial waterbed of the Kettős-Körös River leading from Szanazug towards Köröstarcsa lies in the outskirts of the town. The Fehér-Körös once run through the settlement and joined the Fekete-Körös. After the water regulation the Fekete- and the Fehér-Körös rivers have a junction at Szanazug and so the Kettős-Körös runs next to the town. The nearby river offers suitable opportunity for water tourism so Dánfok resort was established in the middle of the last century and the small-boat port was constructed by the dam in 2007. Thanks to the harbour and the small boat lifting station, the town of Békés has been connected into the water tourism in an active way. There is an opportunity for fishing and pursue water sports alongside the Körös River up to the Romanian border. The lower part of the river is accessible for ships down to the Tisza River between romantic surroundings.

The spa and the ambulance service centre was renovated in 2010 to provide relaxation connected to the water. The thermal water of the pools comes from two wells:

- 1.). The well nr. B-112 was bored in 1963. The well is 1198 m deep, has an output of 60 litre/minute, and 50 °C water that was declared to be medical in 1996.
- 2.). The well nr. B-155 is 1020 m deep, it was bored and declared to be medical water in 2004. The water output of the well is 530 litres/minute.

The water is sodium-hydrogencarbonated thermal water with low salt concentration and significant meta-silicon acid and organic substance content, contains iodid, and has a yellow-brown colour. It is appropriate for treating inflammatory and articular diseases, rheumatic diseases such as diseases of the hip, knees, ankles and spine, for inflammatory gynaecological diseases and for certain skin-diseases such as psoriasis. Services of the swimming pool: swimming pool, training pool, water jets for neck and waist, Finnish sauna, aroma-therapy, sun-deck, instruction in swimming and aqua-fitness.

Cultural attractions:

- **Széchenyi Square:** the “heart” of Békés, the central square was named after Széchenyi István in 1861 – first in Hungary, even before Budapest. The square lying



on the alluvial cone of the Körös is the administrative centre of the town since the 18th century. Here is the junction of the roads to Berény, Vésztő and Csaba.

- **The Holy Trinity Parish Church (Roman Catholic Church)** stands at the north-west part of the square, it was built in 1795 in baroque style. The picture of the high altar was painted by Bellért Péter and Nagy Ferenc. The monumental painting hanging on the side of the sanctuary is the last work of Jantyik Mátyás, a painter from Békés. A painting of Orlai Petrics Soma can be seen under it. Next to the church stands a cross. The nearby, first artesian well of the town, bored in 1912, still slakes one's thirst.
- The building of the **Tenement House** was called Hungarian Royal Hotel when it was built in 1885. Now the institutions of the Gallery and the Town Library use the building. The memorial plaque on the wall says that after the Second World War in 1949, the first provincial community centre was opened here. This was the function of the building until the earthquake in 1978.
- The **revolution memorial** of Veress Kálmán and the **Calvinist vicarage** stand on the Széchenyi Square. A memorial plaque on the wall of the vicarage commemorates of the visit of Arany János in 1851. Another memorial plaque stands for Karacs Teréz, the pioneer person of women's education in Hungary who also visited the town. Recently the memorial plaque of Szabó Lőrinc, famous Hungarian poet of the 20th century, was also revealed here.
- **Calvinist Church:** The zopf-style historic building of the Calvinist Church stands on the east corner of the square, it is visible from the Kettős-Körös River too, it gained its present form in 1905 and it is a defining element of the townscape. Classic concerts of the town are often organized in the church.
- Only a few steps away from the church there stands the historical building of the **Kollégium**, which functions now as an elementary art school. In the south-east part of the square is the monument of Pásztor János sculptor commemorating the soldiers who died during the First World War. Opposite to it there stands the broken bell which was revealed in 1996 in the memory of the Békés residents who died during the Second World War.



- The historical building of the first **kindergarten** of the town stands on the other side of the square, in the Petőfi Street. A little further is the Németh László Student's Hostel and the **Szegedi Kis István Calvinist Grammar School** which has been a school since its foundation in 1552.
- The **School History Exhibition** is arranged in the 19th century peasant house in 41 Petőfi Street. The building used to be the master's home and the school stood in the yard.
- One of the ornaments of the main square is the **Town Hall** built in 1904, with the sculpture of Irányi Dániel on the wall.
- **Jantyik Mátyás Museum**: The bust of Széchenyi István stands on the Széchenyi Square, in front of the baroque building of the Nagyház, a former Wenckheim-family property. The museum and local history collection named after the Békés originated 19th century painter, Jantyik Mátyás in 1971 is situated on the ground floor. The Museum Square was built in 1998 and has a grand fountain.
- The **Élővíz-Canal** runs through the Market Square. We can reach the Dr. Hepp Ferenc Elementary School and the folklore house in Durkó Street from the Market Square via the Csók Bridge. The folklore house presents the collected memories, material culture and pieces of furniture of the peasant farmstead and also gives place for various cultural programmes, such as the events of the "Nefelejcs" Cultural and Traditionalist Association of Békés.
- Once the **Korona Hotel** and **Korona Cinema** run on the Kossuth Street, the building is now a store and a bank, but the style of the original façade was preserved.
- The **Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church** by the roundabout was built for the Armenian and Greek believers and has a five-axis iconostas.
- **Békés Pálinka Centre**: The former synagogue in the Ady Endre Street was a Community Centre called "Zsinóros" a few years ago, now it houses the local gastronomy specialty, the Békési Pálinka.
- **Erzsébet-park**: the park can be found alongside the Élővíz-Canal, as well as the Sports Hall and the Tower Radio. The Eötvös József Faculty of the Békés Small-





Region Elementary School, the Békés Town Culture Centre, the Bagoly Restaurant and the birth places of Veress Endre historian and Jantyik Mátyás all stand in the park. The millennium memorial called the King's Gate, with the advice to Saint Emerich stands in the park, near the main square. The public square in the park is the home of many cultural events such as the Madzagfalvi Napok.

- The **Biocultural Association of Békés** has the widespread organic farming, the classifying of the products, the forming of a cleaner environment and life-style and the importance of quality in sight. Many bio-farmers are members of the association which is an important participant of the town events.
- The **Békési Pálinka Distillery and Pálinka Centre** showroom is based on the tradition of plum brandy distillation in Békés, the pálinka is made exclusively of plum grown in Békés and the neighbourhood. The steam locomotive, which provided the steam for the distillery for almost 10 years from 1988 can also be seen in the distillery. The locomotive is now a museum and showroom, the guests can taste here the fine drink after visiting the factory. The Pálinka Centre is a modern showroom in the heart of the city near the roundabout, it offers opportunity of tasting, and the customer can follow the road of the mesh on the internet. Visitors are awaited with a local product store, tastings and palinka vault.

Natural conditions

The town of Békés lies in a beautiful natural environment, the beauty of nature and the Kettős-Körös River attract the tourists. Many tour routes cross the town, the guests can walk, cycle or even row on them. The river with its original bends from Békés to Köröstarcsa is a natural beauty and popular water trip route within easy reach. In the middle part of this section, between 11-12 RKM, on the protected side of the circular dam stands the Bodoky Károly Water Conservancy Museum. This industrial-cultural heritage can easily be connected to boat trips, it presents the past and measures of river regulation and flood control.

The Dánfok Resort is in the outskirts of Békés. It has a green area planted with trees and a beach, so it offers pleasant free-time activities for the youth and the elderly people. Many



kinds of accommodation are available in the resort. Besides the hotel rooms of the main building, guests can stay in the separate round building, 16 wooden houses or camp site.

Many tour routes pass by the Dánfok Resort on the dam of the river, approximately a 100 m far from the resort: Doboz, bridge – Maró (Dam of the Kettős-Körös) – Dánfok – Békés centre (without signs) 8.9 km; Sikkony – Malomasszonykert – Dánfok – Békés bridge (red stripe) 7.1 km. The 15-km-long hiking route of Békés – Dánfok – Doboz bridge – Maró forest – Póstelek also runs next to the resort centre.

The Kettős-Körös offers an outstanding opportunity for fishers too, the whole Hungarian fish fauna can be found here: carp, bream, grass carp, starlet, mullet, pike, walleye, chub, catfish, silver bream, perch.



Logotype



Crest of the town



Békés – Calvinist Church



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www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu

www.huro-cbc.eu; www.hungaryromania-cbc.eu

Ambulance service centre, Békés



Town Hall, Békés



Swimming pool of Békés



Products of the basket-work from Békés



Kettős-Körös

Annual events:



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- **Madzagfalvi (String-Village) Days:** the event was named after the folk name of the town. It is a three-day event of sport, culture, tradition, fun and a meeting of the emigrants of Békés.
- **Békés-Tarhos Music Days (BÉTAZEN):** The name of Békés and the nearby village, Tarhos is connected by this festival from 1976. The more and more popular event recalls the memory of Gulyás György, his Singing School from more than fifty years ago and the mentality of the Kodály education.
- **My Voice** – singing competition
- **Békési Plum Pálinka Festival**
- **“We are in the same boat”** – boat trip
- **Harvest Day**
- **Békés Bicycle Festival**
- **International Csuta Art Colony**
- **Vintage Celebration**
- **Békés Pumpkin Celebration**

Tourism-related developments of the past few years:

- **Small boat harbour on the Körös River:** the harbour was constructed at the Békés dam of the Kettős-Körös River, in 2007, within the development of the Körös Valley Nature Park, from EU funds. The harbour is suitable for 85 boats, and is approximately 300 m far from the Dánfok Resort.
- **Swimming pool:** the swimming pool of Békés was renovated in 2009 by a 300-million-HUF investment. A 25 m long swimming pool and an 8x15 m large training pool were constructed. The swimming pool awaits the guests with modern dressing rooms, a hall sauna and sun-deck.
- **Complex Ambulance Service Centre of the Békés Small Region:** the institution assures the treatment of locomotor disorders via physiotherapy, balneotherapy, electrotherapy and rheumatologic treatments and a 4-bed pavilion suitable for day-care





will be constructed. New digital X-ray equipment will be purchased and the computer technology will also be modernized. The nearly 1800 m² new service centre is expected to become one of the leader centres of the health tourism of the region because of the nearby thermal water.

- **Roundabout:** The new roundabout at the crossing of Ady and Kossuth Street in the centre of Békés was finished in July 2010.
- **Bicycle road:** The last section of the Békés-Békéscsaba bicycle road was finished in 2010. The investment following the track of the former scenic railway cost 127 million HUF, 3 million of this was funded from the budget of Békés. The third section is 2700 m long, the full length of the bicycle road is 7400 m, and it is 2.6 m wide. Békés and Békéscsaba handed in a joint application, and they won 104 million HUF non-refundable EU and governmental grant. The 22.1 million HUF own contribution was financed by both of the settlements. As a result of the development, a 7.4 km long bicycle road connects the two settlements. The inner-city section are still missing in both towns, they plan to build it with the help of proposals.
- **Békés Card:** Using the card the customer or guest can gain certain discount from the price of the given service. The card is not only for visitors, local residents can also enjoy the benefits of the card. The aim of introducing this card was to strengthen the local purchasing capacity and the union of entrepreneurs.
- **The Dánfok Resort** can be found in the outskirts of Békés at a quiet but still popular place. The full capacity of the resort renovated in 2011 is 200 people. It has a green area planted with trees and a beach, so it offers pleasant free-time activities for the youth and also the elderly people. Many kinds of accommodation are available in the resort. Besides the hotel rooms of the main building, guests can stay in the separate round building, 16 wooden houses or camp site. There are 16 double rooms with shower and toilet in the main building. The public room on the first floor serves the comfort of the guests and the terrace is ideal for barbeque or garden parties. There are 5 apartments in the round building. An apartment contains one bathroom and two 5-





bed rooms (spare beds are available). It is near the water so it offers an ideal environment for excursions of smaller classes.

Other tourism-related development plans:

- **The development of the Dánfok Resort:** renovation of the sanitary block and the fence around the area, installing a security camera and access control system, insulation of the main building, repair of the roof and the heating system, renovation of the wooden houses, expanding the range of services.

II.4.4. General statements

Concerning the natural and cultural values of the region and the economic and social differences, we can state that inland tourism will change and strengthen opposite to the more expensive foreign visits in the next few years and decades. As a result of this structural change, the more - week - long holidays will become less frequent and the shorter but intense active free-time activities will replace them. Change of lifestyle appears not only in the everyday life but also affects the way of spending free-time and relaxation. The active and eco-tourism – based on the western social patterns – is more and more significant concerning the life of the individual, the family or the society as well. The natural, geographical and cultural conditions of the Körös Valley settlements meet these requirements even nationally. Attractive active and eco-tourist programme packages can be compiled based upon these conditions so the active relaxation and the protection and mapping of the natural values of the Körös Valley can also be carried out.

The following sport and relaxation programmes are emphasized in the frame of active tourism:

- Boat trips on the Kettős-, Fekete- and Fehér-Körös Rivers (canoe, kayak, outrigger canoe)
- Organizing outrigger canoe competitions, festivals
- Beach programmes in the Békés-Dánfok Resort



- Recreation based on thermal and medical waters
- Bicycle tours
- Hiking tours connecting the three towns
- Riding programmes and tours based on the existing facilities.

II.5. Natural and cultural history and conditions of Arad County

The South-Great Plain Region has played active part in building and maintaining cross-border tourist connections. This was the reason of funding the Hungarian-Romanian Tourist Joint Committee in 2004. The Committee has its sessions in rotation in Hungary and Romania, its task is to inform the members of the actual state of tourism in both countries. Joint marketing activities are worked out in form of agreements, and cooperation is carried out in the field of the development of health tourist clusters, education and training and rural tourism. The collaboration of the Békés and Arad County Chambers of Trade and Industry and the county-level cooperation are local initiatives pointing ahead.

II.5.1. Geographical data

Arad County is situated in the Western part of Romania, at the cross-road of some important national and international routes. Standing as an entrance gate to Western Europe and the South-East part of the continent, the Arad County has 4 border crossing points with Hungary at Varsand, Turnu, Nadlac on the road and Curtici, on the railroad, all for both persons and freight.

The area of the County is 775 409 ha, the area of the Arad Municipality is 4 618 ha. Total population (according to the 2002 census): 461 789 inhabitants out of which 82,2% are Romanians, 10,7% Hungarians, 3,8% Rroma, 1,0% Germans, 1,3% Slovaks, 0,4% Ukrainians, 0,3% Serbs, 0,3% other nationalities.



the point of view of the landscape: the Mountains: Zarandului, Codru-Moma, Bihorului, Metal ferrous, the Crisul Alb defile between the localities Varfurile and Aciuta, the Sebisului, Gurahont, Halmagiu depression, the Lipovei Hills, the Muresului, Crisurilor Plains and the Mures River Meadow.

Regarding hydrography, the main water flows are the Mures and the Crisul Alb. The Mures, the second river Romania's as to its length and hydrographic area after the Danube, crosses Arad County on a length of 250 km. The depth waters are of several types: thermal, semi thermal, bicarbonated, sparkling, ferruginous all used for curative purposes. There are lakes suitable for leisure activities: Taut, Ghioroc.

The climate is temperate continental with slight Mediterranean influences. Winters are not very cold, summers are hot, with a climate regime depending on the altitude of the relief. The annual average temperatures are 11° C in the plains and 5-6° C on mountain tops.



City Hall, Arad



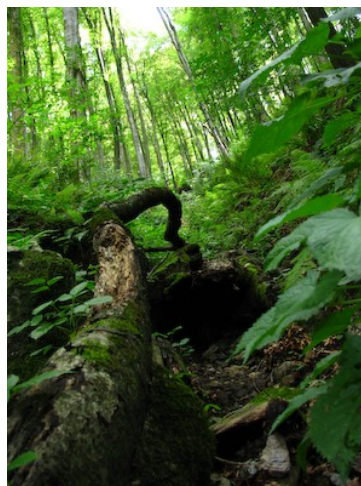
Cloister in Világos



Part of the Kelemen Palace, Arad



Entrance of the Grape and Vine Museum, Minis



Forest near Moneasa

II.5.2. Main tourist destinations

The Mures Valley

- the area between the settlements Lipova and Petris
- the mountain area up to the crest of the Zarand Mountains
- the area South of the River Mures up to the limit with Timis County
- information centre: the Lipova Museum

The Valley of the Crisul Alb River

- The area comprised between the settlements Ineu and Halmagiu
- The area South of Crisul Alb River, including the northern side of the Zarandului Mountains; the Halmagiu and Gurahont depressions
- Information centres: Halmagiu, Buteni (local museum)

The mountain area Codru-Moma

- The area comprised between the settlements Moneasa - Hasmas, Sebis - Moneasa
- Information centre: Moneasa

Arad Vineyard



www.kozepbekes.hu;



www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu

www.huro-cbc.eu; www.hungaryromania-cbc.eu

- Area comprised between the settlements Pancota and Baratca
- Mountain area up to Cladova Valley
- Information centres: Museum 'Ioan Slavici' and 'Emil Montia' - Siria

Thermal swimming places

- In the settlements Sofronea, Curtici, Macea, Dorobanti
- Information centre: at the Macea Botanical garden

The Mures River Meadow

- The Nature Park 'Lunca Muresului', under the management of the Arad Forestry Direction
- Information centre: will be built in the Ceala Forest as part of the Phare project by which the Nature Park 'Lunca Muresului' came into being.

Arad Municipality

- Downtown area - monuments of architecture
- Mureş banks and the Neptun swimming place
- Meadow forests at Ceala (East) and Vladimirescu (West)
- Information centre: INFOTOUR Arad on the main street

II.5.3. Forms of tourism in Arad County – according to the natural and anthropic resources

1. Cultural and historic tourism

Arad County, seen as a historical and geographical space has been known from ancient times and through the important communication routes which cross it has been in permanent contact with the Western civilization. This implies the fact that Arad area has been visited by many travelers. The city that lies on the banks of the river Mureş was once called 'the small Vienna'; the comparison with the famous capital can but honour us as beneficiaries of an



invaluable heritage. Arad County has various cultural and historical values due to the common past of the two countries. Therefore, a quick view of the cultural and historical values reveals the richness and diversity of our architectural patrimony:

- Medieval fortresses: Siria, Soimos, Dezna - 13th century, Ineu - 17th century;
- Castles and manors on the Mureş Valley
- The Royal castle at Savirsin
- The Turkish bazaar at Lipova - 1672
- Museums: the Arad Museum with its compartments of Arts, History and Natural Sciences
- The Museum of ecclesiastical art and cult objects - Gai Monastery
- The Memorial museum 'Vasile Goldis' Arad
- The Museum of the town Lipova
- The Museum 'Ioan Slavici and Emil Montia' in Siria
- The Museum 'Adam Muller Guttenbrun' Zabrani
- The Folk Arts Museum in Savirsin
- The Museum of vine and wine, Minis
- The Museum Codrii and Lunca Beliului
- Local smaller museums: Bata, Buteni
- Macea - caricature exhibition 'Stefan Popa Popa's' at the Csernovics castle
- The WWII Memorial at Paulis
- Sculpture camp at Casoaia
- Memorial house of Eugen Popa - Savirsin

There are many historical memories in Romania connecting to the Hungarian history. We can find the territory of the Világos capitulation, the cloister in Máriaradna, the remains of the castles of Lippa and Solymos, the old town centre of Arad in Arad County. Besides that, the history of the settlements having also a Hungarian name have a close connection to the former



Great Hungary, the Hungarian residents living here or certain historical remains refer to this fact.

2. Spa- and leisure tourism

The mineral waters, this gift of nature was held in high esteem from ancient times, offer possibilities of health improvement and leisure time, both for the young and adults. The emblematic resort for our county is **Moneasa**, also called 'the pearl of Western Carpathians' which is known for more than a century. Situated in a picturesque location, at about 100 km far from Arad, surrounded by the lime mountain crests of the Codru Moma Massive, crossed by clear water flows, forests and natural pastures, the locality has been known for its healing springs since the Roman times.

The Lipova - Bai Spa situated in a hilly area, in the outskirts of the town Lipova and 30 km from Arad. Its natural resources have been the mineral waters since the Ottoman occupation. The mineral waters are recommended for cardiovascular, hepatic, urinary diseases, endocrines disorders, etc.

The **geo-thermal waters** from Dorobanti, Curtici, Macea and Sofronea are also worth mentioning.

3. Religious tourism

The diversity of the ethnic communities living together with the Romanian majority, the Magyars, Germans, Serbs, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Jews and Rroma is reflected in the diversity of religions: Orthodox, Roman-Catholic, Church of the reform, Evangelic-Lutheran, Neo-protestants, Greek-Catholic and Mosaic.

For this reason, there is a great number of churches, cathedrals, monasteries, hermitages, wooden churches, etc.





4. Rural tourism

The geographical and ethnographical characteristics of the Arad county rural area are worth to be taken into consideration by the great majority of tourists wishing to spend a holiday in the countryside, far from the noise of the city.

There is quite of number of boarding houses and the tourists can admire and buy pottery objects, visit water mills, wooden churches and participate to traditional folk festivals covering all the seasonal events of the year. Local gastronomy is an attraction, too in terms of main courses and deserts.

5. Wine tourism

Wines occupy an important place in the offer, especially the reds from the Minis-Maderat Vineyards, and wine tastings are organized in wine caves at Paulis and Minis. Another traditional product is the 'tuica', similar to pálinka, made mainly of plums but of other fruits as well, like apricots, peaches, apples, berries.

6. Eco-tourism

Seems to become more and more a necessity to re-discover nature, to come closer to the flora and fauna and Arad County is rich in such natural treasures. For those tourists interested in this kind of activities, the proposals are quite tempting: the daffodils glade from Rovina, the Botanical Garden at Macea, century old forests of beech and common oak, leisure areas in the forests of the county, in the mountains and near lakes where nautical sports can be practiced.

II.5.4. SWOT analysis of Arad County

STRENGTHS

- Favorable geographic position, Arad is the entrance gate in Romania: 4 customs points, 3 on road and one on railway, which turns to be an important advantage for the development of the transit tourism

- The variety of the landscape (hills-plains-mountains)
- Natural parks and reservations, strong fishing base
- Geothermal water resources which led to the development of the balneal and spa tourism
- Marked mountain tours which could also be used for bicycle tourism
- The European trip road E7 crossing the county from West to East
- Diverse anthropic landscape: historical and architectural monuments, archaeological sites, castles, fortresses, wood churches, monasteries from 16-18 centuries
- Rich cultural offer: festivals and fests, theatre spectacles, concerts, exhibitions, sports contests, well preserved customs and traditions, intercultural environment due to the ethnical coexistence
- International language communication skills: English, German, French, Italian
- Membership of Arad municipality to the European Cultural Cities Association (AVEC) and participation of the Halmagiu community to an Interreg IIIC project, member of the European network for rural tourism
- Experience in developing EU programs in the field of tourism
- Modern mail and telecommunication services (mobile phone companies, cable phone companies), airport
- Diverse accommodation structures: boarding houses, camping, villas, hotels from 1 star to 4 stars, tourist halts, chalets
- Other services: banks, ATM, gas stations, car wash, auto garage
- Good functioning of the structures appropriate for business tourism: industrial zones, meeting and conference rooms, exhibition centres
- Active and competitive institutions focusing on promoting and developing the tourism: Arad County Cultural Centre and tourism information offices
- NGO's - main activity: tourism
- Web pages promoting Arad: www.arad.ro, www.virtualarad.net, www.cityinfo.ro/arad, www.primariaarad.ro, www.cjarad.ro, www.darnick.com,

www.luncamuresului.ro, www.statiuneamoneasa.ro, www.manastireabodrog.ro,
www.arad-bekes.ro.

WEAKNESSES

- Insufficient infrastructure in the agro tourism areas (water, water sewage and phone networks, wastewater treatment plants) and lack of modern roads
- Poor plans for landscaping
- Reduced number of agro tourism boarding houses
- Lack of leisure areas in the afforested zones
- Restraint leisure offer
- Insufficient promotion of the possibilities and resources regarding the tourist services
- Reduced tourist exploitation of the architectural and historical monuments
- Lack of tourist information centres in the customs points, railway stations, airports and main cities and resorts
- Lack of road tourist indicators system and mountain tourist signs
- Limited offers concerning sport activities - aquatic sports, winter sports and horse racing
- Inconsistent promotion among the population of the main activities and cultural-artistic events
- Physic and moral used public transportation means (busses, trains and tramways), inappropriate and not enough from the numeric point of view
- Reduced valorisation of the ancient train 'Green Arrow/Sageata Verde'
- Poor and not diversified souvenir offer
- Poor activity of the tourism agencies regarding the organization of the tourism tours in the Arad county
- Lack of qualified tourism guides in order to promote the local tourism attractions'
- Insufficient information sources via specific promotion materials
- Reduced decentralization of the local administration



www.kozepbekes.hu;



www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu



- Low degree of using modern financial and banking instruments (credit card, on line transfers)

OPPORTUNITIES

- Development of the cross-border co-operation tourism, in the framework of the Danube-Cris-Mures-Tisa Euroregion
- Specific collaboration perspectives (consultancy, know-how transfer, improving the quality of the services), in the framework created by the Assembly of the European Regions (ARE) and the Assembly of the European Winegrowing Regions (AREV)
- Establishing partnerships and developing projects with cities and provinces from other countries, i.e.: Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, France
- Approaching new concepts and regional tourism development strategies, common projects in the framework of the West Development Region (formed by the following counties: Arad, Caras-Severin, Hunedoara and Timis)
- Internal and external programs concerning the financing opportunities having tourism as target domain
- Participating at national and international tourism fairs - Bucharest, Budapest, Vienna, Berlin
- Local NGO's growing interest for tourism
- Good co-operation relations between the local institutions: County Council, City Hall and Prefect's office.

THREATS

- Neighbouring/competition of the well developed and valuable tourism potential counties (Bihor, Timis, Alba, Hunedoara)
- Damaged historical and architectural monuments
- Losing the customs and traditions from the rural area
- Cultural pollution, kitsch phenomenon spreading
- Depopulation of the communities and young people migration towards urban area



- Low living level of an important part of the population
- Inobservance of the legal regulations with bad results affecting the environment, protected areas, forest fund and water pollution
- Lack of proper road network

II.5.5. Conditions of tourism and development plans of Arad

The town of Arad is the Western gate of Romania and one of the most important traffic junctions on the Hungarian-Romanian border section. It is accessible on road through the border crossing points of Nadlac (50 km), Battonya (18 km) and Gyula (70 km), by train through Lőkösháza and by plane. The multicultural character of the town is represented by the nationalities living in the town: Romanian, Hungarian, Svab, Serb, Jewish. Every religion has its church: Roman Catholic, Romanian Greek Orthodox, Lutheran, Serb Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Neolog and Orthodox Jewish Synagogue, Neo-protestant chapels.

Architectural characteristics

The town Arad is an open-air exhibition presenting the architecture of the 18th and 19th centuries. The grand buildings of the main street bear the characteristics of neo-gothic, classicist, renaissance, baroque, secessionist or eclectic style.

A few examples of that: the Administrative Palace, the Palace of Culture, the Cenad Palace, the Neuman Palace, the Palace of Justice, the Palace of Finance, the Kelemen House, the building of the national Bank, the Szantay Palace, the Bohus Palace, Ardealul Hotel;

There are many other buildings and sites which were parts of the wealth of the old monarchy like: the old theatre, the Padlock House, Arad Fortress, the Old Customs House, the Water Tower, and the Traian Bridge.

Buildings of local historical importance

Some buildings commemorate the significant events that determined the history of the town, such as the Preparandia (the first Romanian teachers training college) – 1812, the Iron



Padlock House – 1815, the Old Theatre – 1817, the house with cannonball – 1800, the Water Tower – 1896, the old custom house – 1907.

Monuments

The oldest monuments of Arad are the statue of Saint John of Nepomuk – 1729, and the Holy Trinity statue – 1746, both are baroque style. Many statues decorating the downtown commemorate the heroes who died in the battles around Arad, such as the memorial of the 1848-49 Hungarian revolution, the martyrs of the First and Second World War, the heroes of the revolution in 1989. Besides that, we can see the busts of famous people of the cultural and political life and the modern stone statues of contemporary artist.

Churches and religious collections

Another characteristic of Arad is the variation of ethnic groups and the different practice of religion. Hungarian, German, Serb, Bulgarian, Slovak, Jewish and Roma residents live beside the Romanian inhabitants, and practice the orthodox, Roman catholic, Greek orthodox, Calvinist, Lutheran and neo-protestant religions.

Museum, exhibition rooms

The exhibitions of the museums of Arad have historical, natural science and art departments. Exhibitions of paintings, statues, photos, glasses, ceramics and textile are organized in the art galleries.

Symphonic concerts

The orchestra of the Arad State Philharmonia gives weekly concerts during the musical season from October to June. The concerts are held in the concert hall with perfect acoustics in the Palace of Culture or in the larger churches of Arad.

The Neptune beach and the bank of Mures





The Arad beach is of the largest area in the country. It is a real mini-resort separated from the city by the Mureş River. It is an ideal place for sun-worshippers and lovers of fresh air in the daytime. The visitors can enjoy five swimming pools, many playing-fields and sport fields, a smaller playground, many restaurants, pizza-terraces and confectionaries. Those longing for amusement in the evenings can choose from the offers of clubs, discotheques, music and dance. On the town side of the bank the Mureş Promenade can be found, a favourite walking place of the Arad inhabitants. The silence of the parks and the sight of the old river are especially pleasant and calming.

Theatres

The puppet show and the Arad State Theatre fulfil the needs of children and adults as well. Classics and plays of contemporary writers are part of the programme schedule. The performances are held on different stages such as the imposing Ioan Slavici State Theatre, the old theatre reminding the people of the atmosphere of the beginning of the 19th century, in the modern building of Jelen Háza (House of Present in Hungarian), or in club rooms.

Festivals

The town sometimes becomes a unique area of performances. It hosts the Arad Spring Festival in May, the Arad Days in August and the Wine Festival in September. The town gives place for other cultural events during the year, such as the classic drama festival, and the student theatre festivals in English or French language, the Teenplay and the Amifran, the festival of nationalities, the folk fair and the fair of civil organizations.

Cultural events

Traditional events in Arad:

- **Arad Days** – concerts, performances, open-air events
- **Cauldron Competition** (August),
- **Picnic in May** open-air Hungarian event,
- **Goulash Competition** (May),



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- **Békéscsaba-Arad Supermarathon** (May),
- **Folk festival** (May),
- **Port Artur rock festival** (May),
- **Underground** theatre festival (May),
- **Wine Festival** (October),
- **Etno-jazz festival** (October),
- **“Crystal” Ball** (December),
- **New Year’s Concert, Arad Spring Festival, Theatre and Underground Festival, National Drawing Biennale, Festival of Nationalities, Sacred Music Festival**

Sights of Arad.

- **The Fort of Arad** was built between 1763 and 1783 for the orders of Maria Theresa in the centre of the town, on the left side of the Mureş River in an area surrounded by the river as a loop. It is one of the best remained Vauban-style forts in Easter-Europe. It is the only Transylvanian which was built in the second half of the 18th century, the late period of building forts that had star-shaped bases.
- The Reconciliation Park is unique in the country, it was designed in 2004. Two monuments can be found here:
 - **The Statue of Freedom**, a work of Zala György was revealed in 1890 on the Freedom Square (Piata Avram Iancu), the Romanian government ordered to diminish it, and the statue was transported to different storerooms and after that to the fort. In 1999 it was brought out of the fort and was placed in the yard of the Minorite church. It should be placed on the Tűzoltó square in 2003, but the Romanian government suspended the work. The memorial was set up only in 2004 when the park of the Romanian-Hungarian reconciliation was designed based on the decision of the government.



- **The Triumphal Arch** was built after the plans of a Bucharest sculptor who characterized famous European and Romanian people of the 1848 revolution in his work.
- **Statue of the Holy Trinity**, the original statue was built in 1746 to commemorate the victims of the plague epidemic between 1732 and 1738, but because of its bad state, a new statue of Róna József replaced it in 1901 which can be seen today. It was attacked during the atheist campaign in 1960, it was decomposed and the bronze parts were placed in the hall of the Roman Catholic Church. It was restored to its original place in front of the theatre in 2007.
- **George Enescu Square** can be found next to the Palace of Culture with the busts of local Romanian personalities on the promenade and the **Obelisk of the Victims of the Communism** at the end of the promenade.
- Arad was the second Romanian town in 1989 to decline the communist dictatorship, as a remembrance there stands the **Obelisk of the Revolution** on the square in front of the Town Hall, and a black marble plaque **Heroes of 1989** in front of the green area in front of the Town Hall reminding everyone of those who died during the revolution.
- **The Town Hall** (Palatul Administrativ) was built between 1872 and 1876, it was inaugurated in 1877 after finishing the banquet hall, the Swiss clock was installed in the tower in 1878 and it is still working.
- **Palace of Culture** (Palatul Cultural) was built between 1911 and 1913, today the State Philharmonic Orchestra and the Historical and Natural Science Museum of Arad use the building
- **„Ioan Slavici” Classic Theatre of Arad** – the building was given to the public in 1874. The Emperor Francis Joseph watched the first show of the theatre. The building was reconstructed due to damage by fire twice in 1882 and 1955.



- **Hotel White Cross** (Hotel Ardealul) – it was built in 1840 at the place of an inn and a post-house. The composers Liszt Ferenc, Johann Strauss Jr., Johannes Brahms and Pablo Casals performed in the concert hall of the hotel. The White Cross is the oldest functioning hotel in Arad.
- **Romanian Greek Orthodox Church** – it was built between 1853 and 1873 at the place of the old church. The church was restored in 1905-1906, the bell was finished in 1764.
- **Romanian Greek Orthodox Church** – it was finished in 2008.
- **The “red” Lutheran Church** – it was built between 1905 and 1906 and named after its red bricks. The church was renovated in 1992-1994, sometimes it hosts organ concerts.
- **Obelisk of the Martyrs** was revealed on the 6th of October 1881 at the scaffold (Piata 13 Martiri), the monument is built of grey granite.
- **Serb Greek Orthodox Church** – the oldest church in Arad, it was built between 1699 and 1702 from the donation of Captain Iovan Popovici Techelia.
- **Neolog Synagogue** – it was built between 1828 and 1834 in Moorish style, sometimes it hosts concerts.
- **Palace of Justice** (Palatul Justitiei) - the building was given to the public in 1892 as a court and prison. Now the court and the attorney’s department use the building.
- **The building of the National Bank** was built between 1909 and 1910 by the order of the Arad-Csanád Joint Railways as a bank.
- **The Cenad Palace** (Palatul Cenad) was built in 1888 by the order of the Arad-Csanád Joint Railways as a head office.



- **Palace of Herman Gyula** – as a gem of the eclectic architecture, it was built by the order of Hermann Gyula in the beginning of the 1880 years.
- **The Padlock House** (Casa cu lacat) – it was built in 1815, a storey was added in 1851. A clinched log stood at the corner of the building protected by a locked band of iron. Now the clinched log as a memory of the medieval guild system can be seen in the museum. The Austrian secret police used the building after the 1848-49 war of independence.
- **Water Tower** – it was built in 1896 next to the fire station. It was used as a water tower and watchtower until the mid-1950-years. Now it is a private building, a coffee shop and an art gallery is in it.
- **Royal College** (Colegiul National Moise Nicoara) – it was built between 1869 and 1873 using the profit of the Fund of Bibich Jakabné Tomján Margit, it has been one of the best grammar schools of the town since its opening
- **The Preparandia**, the first teacher training college in Romanian language was opened in 1812.
- The **Conservatory** which was built in 1833 was the 6th in Europe following the conservatories in Paris, Prague, Brussels, Vienna and London.
- The **first official football match** was organized here on the 15th of August 1899.
- The first automobile manufacturer of the region was the **factory MARTA** in 1913.
- The **local electric trams** opened on the 10th of April in 1913 between Arad and Hegyalja as the first such trams in Eastern-Europe and it was the 8th in the world.
- The **first wagon and motoric train factory** of the region, the ASTRA-ARAD was founded in 1921 as the successor of the Johann Witzer wagon factory and MARTA automobile factory.





- The **first rowing competition of the country** was organized in Arad, on the Mureş River in 1923.
- The UTA stadium was built after the model of the **stadium of the Arsenal football team**, London. Its lawn was transported by plane from London. It was declared to be the most modern sport field of the country when it opened on the 1st of September 1946.

The directorate and office of the **The Nature Park 'Lunca Muresului** is in Arad, and the territory of the nature park spreads from the settlement along the Mureş, the area offers opportunities for active tourism within easy reach.

II.5.6. Accessibility of the region

Road traffic

The infrastructural gaps and underdevelopment are characterizing elements of the differences of the economic and social development in the area. The MBC region and its settlements are defenceless to the traffic system because of their peripheral position.

The quality of the road network is poorer in the region than the national average. The traffic conditions of the counties and areas of the South-Great Plain are uneven and this fact makes the expansion possibilities of the programmes more difficult. Bács-Kiskun and Csongrád County could connect to the European stream system in a relevant way in the period 2006-2010 thanks to the railway and motorway developments, but Békés county can only have railway developments.

There are no motorways, highways and no trunk roads in Békés County. The construction of the M44 motorway is in the planning phase.

The trunk road nr. 44 connects Kecskemét – Szarvas – Békéscsaba – Gyula – Romanian-Hungarian border crossing, the road nr. 47 connects Debrecen – Berettyóújfalu – Szeghalom – Békéscsaba – Orosháza – Hódmezővásárhely and Szeged, affording proper connecting



points. Other bypass-roads or roads with lower ranging connect the other settlements with the junction points.

Railroad traffic

Békéscsaba is the junction of the following three railroads:

Railroad nr. 120 (Budapest–Szolnok–Mezőtúr–Békéscsaba–Lőkösháza)

Railroad nr. 135 (Orosháza–Szeged)

Railroad nr. 128 (Gyula–Sarkad–Kötegyán–Vésztő–Püspökladány)

The Southern part of Transdanubia can be reached only by travelling through the capital because of the lacks of the railroad network.

The lacks of branch-lines make the railway travel even more difficult and that also restrains the possibilities of international connections. The missing development of the main railway network is an obstacle in the way of the inland and international tourist developments.

Border crossing points

Border crossing between Hungary and Romania is available on the following settlements: Gyula - Ant, Kürtös (on railway), Battonya – Torna.

The Schengen borders will be shifted to the east, to the borders of Romania and Bulgaria in the near future, so the border crossing from Hungary will be faster and more convenient without the control of the travel documents. As a result of it, control on the green border will be unnecessary, making easier the organization of tour programmes, excursions between the two countries even on water.

Bicycle traffic

The bicycle road network is under continuous development, but there are elemental gaps in its structure: the sections fully connecting the settlements are not constructed entirely, so the region cannot function as a unified network. More and more settlements have an inner connection system and the separate parts are starting to connect into one network.

Public transport

The long-distance, intercity and local transport lines depend on the settlements, but in general we can state that opposing processes occur because certain lines are installed and others are terminated.

Air transport

The reconstruction and renovation of the Békéscsaba Airport is a milestone for the region to become connected into the air traffic. The airport is capable of receiving small planes.

Water traffic

Water traffic is currently not used in the region. The dams in Békés County make the water transport on the Körös Rivers more difficult. The water level is very low and inappropriate for navigation in Arad County in summer. Because of these, the rivers are only available for boat trips.

II.6. The present active tourism possibilities in the MBC region and in the area of Arad County

ARAD COUNTY

The Nature Park 'Lunca Muresului www.luncamuresului.ro

We get to know the territory and the work of the Nature Park 'Lunca Muresului (Parcul Natural Lunca Muresului www.luncamuresului.ro) in Arad County during our study trip planned in the project. The headquarters of the association and its modern centre that is equipped with accommodation possibilities can be found in the town of Arad in the Ceala Forest. The association has the right of inspection and does environmental protection on the 17.456-hectare-wide area between the town of Arad and the border. They continuously organize eco-trips, excursions from spring to autumn and they also provide canoes and



bicycles. During the school year they organize environmental aspect forming programs for kindergarten pupils and students of schools. The Nature Park also fulfils the ecological and environmental protection tasks of the area, examines the animal and plant species which live there and also their behaviour, they help in the survival of a population and by creating study paths and giving guided tours they make it possible for the inhabitants, tourists, visitors to learn about these things.

Wanderers of Zarand – www.hoinariizarandului.ro

They mostly organize trips to the mountains of Zarand. The organization possesses two shelter houses on the settlements of Vasoiaia and Stranasa.

Condor Club

They handle the appointing of the tour paths and painting the signs.

Come with us! – Jöjjön velünk turistaegyesület (Come with us tourist organization)

They frequently organize trips in Arad County and they are very popular among the inhabitants.

BÉKÉS COUNTY

The first nature hiking organization in Békés County was the Békés Megyei Természetbarát Bizottság (Békés County Nature lovers' Committee) that appointed and painted the signs on most of the tourist paths that exist today. In 2006 the organization disassembled and their work, experience and the job organizing trips was continued by smaller tourist organizations and the Békés Megyei Természetbarát Szövetség (Békés County Nature lovers' Association). These organizations are currently the active participants in the offers for free time activities.

Körös Valley Nature Park Association www.korosokvolgye.hu

The objective of the association containing 12 Békés county settlements is to make the natural values of the Körös Valley more popular by organizing and implementing tourist and



www.kozepbekes.hu;



www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu

environmental aspect forming educational programs. The Association has already realized and going to realize several projects for the development of the nature tourism which we have already presented in details in chapter II.2. The association maintains a good relationship with national environmental awareness forming associations like the Hulladék Munkaszövetség (Waste Work Association) in Budapest, the Zöld Ernyő (Green Umbrella) in Kecskemét, the Csemete (Sapling) in Szeged or the Nimfea Union in Tiszakécske. One of its most important objectives is to make the Körös Valley a popular national and international tourist destination.

Körös-Maros National Park www.kmnp.hu

The Körös-Maros Nature Park fulfils the task of the inspection, maintenance and environmental protection of the nationally preserved and the Natura 2000 regions in Békés County. Their tasks include the popularizing and presenting the tessellated protected areas and special natural values to the inhabitants and tourists. In order to do there are permanent and temporary exhibitions in the visitors' centre, they create study paths, organize guided and professional tours and provide programs to learn more about the nature for kindergarten pupils, students and for the adult population. The most visited places of their tourist programs are the White Lake of Kardoskút, the Bustard Protection Station in Dévaványa, and the Fishing Lakes in Biharugra and the Anna Park in Szarvas. The national park provides accommodation and food on many of its sites.

Other tourist organizations

Százlábú Egyesület (Centipede Association), Békéscsaba www.szazlabu.hu

The association actively organizes and implements water trips and nature hiking programs on the Hungarian and Romanian sides of the Körös rivers and to the mountains and river valleys of Arad County from March to the end of October. In summer they organize free time camps from time to time in Mid-Békés. They also organize smaller tour programs for nursery pupils and students groups during the school year in September and in May and June. They pay close attention to the tourist development and take part in preparing the suggestions, plans.



www.kozepbekes.hu;



www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu

Fenntartható Térségért Alapítvány (FETA) (Foundation for a Sustainable Region)

www.feta.info.hu

They frequently organize bicycle events like the Békés Bicycle Festival. They are the local organizers of the International Hiking Festival and they organize bicycle trips, lend and repair bicycles in connection with the events of the region.

Csabai Bihargók, (Csaba Bihar Wanderers) Békéscsaba www.csabaibihargok.hu

The association that was founded as a commemoration to Czárán Gyula, who was a great explorer of the Bihar mountains and created many tourist paths, organizes nature hiking trips with professional pedestrian and bicycle guides all year long to the different parts of the Bihar mountains. They organize bicycle trips in Békés County in connection with special holidays, festivals and events.

Körös Valley Tourist Association, Békéscsaba www.kvte.hu

They are the ones who can be thanked for the creation and frequent maintenance of the tourist paths and the painting of the tourist signs. They organize the “Three towns” tour of Gyula, Békéscsaba and Békés along the Élővíz-canal every year. People can take part by bicycle, on foot or by canoe. They also organize the tours that reach the Mályvadi Forest which have different lengths.

The Great Plains Tourist Association in Mezőberény and the Tourinform offices in Gyula and in Békéscsaba also organize tourist programs

Mid-Békés Territorial Development Municipal Association www.kozepbekes.hu

Many thematic tourist programs have been developed in the previous projects of the association but their realization did not take place because of the lack of human resources. These program packages can serve as bases in the future:

- Sightseeing trips (Békéscsaba, Békés, Gyula, Szabadkígyós, Doboz)

Nature hiking, bird watching:



www.kozepbekes.hu;



www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu



- The Dévaványa-Ecsegi “puszta”
- Kis-Sárrét (Fishing lakes of Biharugra)
- White Lake of Kardoskút

Thematic trips:

- Hungaricum, culture and bathing – excursions to Békés, Vésztő-Mágor, Füzesgyarmat
- Nature and healing – excursions to Kardoskút and Orosháza-Gyopárosfürdő
- From counts to bandits – excursions to Szarvas and Kondoros
- Interactive history
- Literary adventures
- Gastro-trips

III. The fitting of the marketing strategy into regional and settlement strategies

The Mid-Békés Centre as the regional sub centre has the primary objective of economic development based on a close cooperation mechanism.

By founding the MBC the regional economic developmental aims of the three towns (Békéscsaba, Gyula, Békés) have been coordinated helping realization of the mutual developments that affect each other. It is also realized in the tourism areas.

The higher level development strategies also contain the objectives in the joint tourist marketing strategy and the exact projects. This provides the principle of subsidiarity from the EU regional development principles and helps the regional and cross-border cooperation.

The **Marketing Concept of the Mid-Békés Area** (Platán Média, 2000) analyses the marketing opportunities of the region from many points of view. Tourism appears among the take-off points of the region. The health tourism resources and position of Gyula can be declared as good even today and Békéscsaba has good possibilities – according to the marketing concept – in the area of conference tourism. (This declaration is in alignment with par of the concepts concerning Békéscsaba since the town plans mainly developments in



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culture tourism which could be added to the elements of conference tourism but gastronomy tourism would still be the most important part).

According to the target group needs survey: “The Mid-Békés area could fulfil the needs of “Adventure experience” and “Active wellness” tourists. These would be certainly added to the needs of the many guests looking for medicinal help currently in Gyula.”

The development objectives of the “Active Tours” project are the same as the tourism development objectives of the MBC, the settlement development objective of the member towns and the objectives included in the social and economic strategy of the county.

The main development pillars of the active tours project:

1. utilization of the natural and tourist conditions and its conscious use in forming a healthy lifestyle approach
2. quality services and rich program packages should be connected to the tourist offers
3. an effective and conscious marketing strategy should accompany the tourism of the region – as an economic take-off point

The three main pillars in the marketing strategy appear separately in the development concepts of the member towns. The different tourist functions of Békéscsaba, Gyula and Békés) complete and strengthen each other:

- Békés: active tourism (bicycle and water trips)
- Békéscsaba: culture tourism (gastronomy, Munkácsy)
- Gyula: health tourism (medical and wellness tourism)

III.1. The development concepts of the members of the Mid-Békés Centre

The following relevant development concepts were examined:



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www.korosoknaturpark.hu



- Socio-economic Program of the Municipality of Békés County 2007-2014
- Sustainable development of the Körös Rivers region, 2011
- Tourism development strategy of Békéscsaba town of county rank 2009
- Integrated town development strategy of Békéscsaba town of county rank, 2008
- Integrated town development strategy of the town of Gyula, 2008
- Integrated town development strategy of the town of Békés, 2008

III.1.1. Socio-economic Program of the Municipality of Békés County

The important development areas of the Municipality of Békés County are the increase of employment and safety. The strengthening of tourism appears among the intervening points with the emphasis on county marketing, complex thermal water utilization and cross border cooperation. This is included in the main objectives of the economic development program prepared for the 2007-2013 European Union budgetary period:

1. Boosting the international relationships and cooperation

- Renewal of the bilateral cooperation contracts signed with Arad and Bihor counties
- Setting up a shared committee with Arad and Bihor counties
- Preparation of joint development programs with the Arad County Council
- Building cross-border relationship to implement the marketing strategy

2. Development of the county marketing activities

- providing the unified availability and offer of the products-services of the county
- expanding the market possibilities
- positioning of the products of the county
- setting up of the Tourist Destination Management for providing the appearance of the unified marketing tools

- expanding the marketing tools: exhibitions, brochures, festival publications

3. Increase the sales of the tourist programs

- county marketing: expanding the marketing tools: exhibitions, brochures, festival publications
- complex thermal water utilizations
- accommodation development
- setting up an online booking system
- increasing the strength of active tourism
- synchronizing the opportunities in health tourism
- setting up a health tourism cluster

III.1.2. Sustainable development of the Körös Rivers region

The “Sustainable development of the Körös Rivers region” prepared in January 2011 is the joint strategy document of the settlements in the Körös Valley Nature Park Association.

The overall objective of the strategy is the improvement of the living conditions and income earning abilities of the inhabitants of the region by the preservation and development of the constructed and cultural values which would give everybody an advantage and meets the regional development, agricultural and biodiversity requirements.

The strategy defines three equal development priorities in order to fulfil the overall objectives:

- long-term protection of the natural and built environment
- developing multifunctional area agriculture
- creating the conditions for eco-tourism

The strategy defines different partial objectives in each priority that is in synergy. In case of the creation of the conditions of eco-tourism they are the following:

- presentation of the natural and cultural values





- preservation of the health of the local inhabitants and the guests, providing recreational conditions
- protection and cultivation of the environment
- increasing the income earning abilities of the inhabitants, creating employment opportunities

The strategy in order to fulfil the partial objectives also declares measurement target areas where the monitoring indicators to meet each requirements are defined. The measurements declared by the strategy to create the conditions for eco-tourism are the following:

- organizing tourism
- quality and quantity development of the accommodation connected to tourist attractions
- improving the conditions of receiving tourists

Organizing tourism

It defines among the general tasks the providing the flow of information, the involving of local communities into the development processes, the improving of living conditions, the creation of the unified image that emphasizes the uniqueness of the region, strengthening of the tourist marketing, preparation of tourist program offers.

Quality and quantity development of the accommodation connected to tourist attractions

The reputation and the accommodation capacity are influenced significantly by the contents, standards and the number of available services.

The quantity and quality developments of the tourist based infrastructure in these cases are essential. The strategy defines the expansion of the tourist accommodation (construction of village accommodation, medical resorts, youth hostels, campsites) and increasing the quality standards of the available accommodation based on the existing conditions.

Improving the conditions of receiving tourists

The appeal of the region can be increased by the expansion of the knowledge of the visiting guests and the development of the accommodating facilities





Beside the development of the basic infrastructure the development, presentation and creating the possibilities for presentations of the individual tourist targets are essential elements in developing eco-tourism.

III.1.3. Strategic objectives of Békéscsaba

Békéscsaba and its surroundings own good tourist conditions and colourful offers – especially in the areas of cultural and gastro tourism – however, it is a problem that they are not able to utilize it properly. The solution for this would be a complex tourism development.

Currently the most well-known tourist product of the town is the Csabai kolbász (sausage) and the connected Csabai Sausage Festival, the gastronomy and cultural tourist product. It is an objective beside this the Munkácsy-relics connected to the town would also appear as tourist products in the future and health tourism, conference tourism and active tourism investments should take place in the town.

Beyond the tourist product development, the development of the infrastructure is also very important. Many important tourism property developments are going to take place in the town: creating a Sausage visitors' centre, establishing a place for health tourism and a conference centre.

The tourism development strategy of Békéscsaba document prepared by the Budai and Barta Ltd. in 2009 suggests the development of the following areas:

- *Cultural tourism*
 - Utilization of the István Mill as a presentation site, rebuilding the old mansion to a restaurant
 - Creating cultural thematic trips
 - Tourist utilization of old mansions, castles
 - Stage adaptation of Munkácsy's life
 - Development of religious sites
 - Renewal and thematization of events
- *Village tourism*





- Preparation of complex and connected programs, development of accommodation sites, professional and language training of the human resources
- *Eco-tourism*
 - Further tourist development of the Körös Valley, joint marketing and program offers with Romania
- *Active tourism*
 - Development of horse riding tourism, bicycle tourism and water tourism<amp development of the infrastructure of fishing, hunting and sports
- *Development of youth tourism*
 - Development of the infrastructure, creating and modernizing accommodation sites
- *Development of health tourism*
 - Construction of a higher quality hotel connected to the Árpád Spa, development of wellness services, climatic examination
- *Conference tourism*
 - The choice of venues thanks to the on-going developments (Agóra project, Ibsen-house, Arad-Békés Expo) is constantly improving.
- *Thematic tours*
 - The strategy suggests the creation of tourism developments, thematic trips based on the Csabai sausage, the artwork of Munkácsy Mihály and the Slovak traditions
- *Gastronomy and drink culture*
 - The Csabai sausage, the “csabagyöngye” vine, the Hungarian and Slovak traditional meals, the hungaricums have possibilities according to the strategy.
- *Active tourism*
 - In active tourism the strategy emphasizes the forms of adventure park tourism, the bicycle, water, horse riding tourism, sport flying, hunting and fishing tourism.
- *Youth tourism*
 - It considers youth tourism a form of tourism that is closely connected to active tourism, giving the possibility to change the point of view of the participants and putting emphasis on the environmental education and the significance of

sustainability. Young people as a target group are the tourists of the future so they include the guests visiting the given destination (Békéscsaba and its surroundings) later. The basic possibilities of youth tourisms are organizing camps, forest school programs and class trips.

○ *Eco-tourism*

- The strategy promotes the work of the Körös Valley Nature Park Association situated in Békéscsaba which has carried out several developments and is planning complex eco-tourism developments concerning the Körös Valley in the future. It gives suggestions for developing “green accommodation sites” which would have a power network that is based on renewing energies and the accommodation would be the first one in Hungary that functions as a passive house.

The contents of the **integrated town development strategy of Békéscsaba** are the same as the ones in the Tourism Development Strategy. The town would like to strengthen its attraction towards tourists especially in the areas of gastronomy and culture tourism and so they could achieve that the number of guest nights spent in the town would increase.

The target areas which are important to be developed regarding tourism between the period of 2007-2013:

Agóra

Strengthening the tourism potential.

Adventure Park – Sports hall

The arrangement of the Park Forest that can be found in the target area and construction of a co called Adventure Park with different (mainly tradition preserving) tourist attractions.

Quarry ponds – fishing village

Reconstruction of some parts of the town which would fulfill the modern needs of our age with helping in settling such functions that do not put significant stress on the environment.



Strengthening the tourist potential of the area by “modifying” the quarry ponds into fishing villages

The rehabilitation of the growth of the Csaba Gyöngye vine with visitors’ centre, mini-manufacture and creating local products is a short term objective near the quarry ponds.

III.1.4. Strategic objectives of Gyula

The town of Gyula is one of the most important centres of tourism in the Southern Great Plains region. The development of the tourism in Gyula is emphasized in the town, regional and national development concepts.

The tourism, more specifically the health tourism is the area that could boost the economy of the town and expand employment considering the conditions and possibilities of the town. That is why the town would like the tourism to become a propulsive industry with more investments and improvement of services and so it could have an effect on other areas and on the economy of the town and the region.

The tourism development tasks of the town of Gyula divided according the parts of the town:

Újváros – Nagyrománváros

Emphasized great tourist projects: developing Gyula into an international spa-town – World Spa, Castle Spa health tourism development, Island Fort project, utilization of the Almásy Castle, the rehabilitation of the Élővíz-canal and it should be made accessible by boats

Belváros (Downtown)

Accommodation development (constructing a 5-star hotel near the Castle Spa)

Gyulavári – Dénesmajor – Városerdő

Eco-tourist development of the Körös-köz

Outskirts – Szanazug

Eco-tourist developments

World Spa project





This significant development takes place in the Gyula-Kisökörkörjárás area and it would significantly increase the popularity of the town.

The Integrated town development strategy appoints those target areas in the 2007-2013 period that will be the centres of development. According to this the significant investments of the town takes place in the Castle Garden area and Kisökörkörjárás area.

III.1.5. The strategic objectives of Békés

The main objective of the Integrated Town Development Strategy (ITDS) of the town of Békés is to increase the economic competitiveness of the region through the utilization of the potential of tourism in cooperation with the Mid-Békés Centre regions. Among the medium-term tasks there are the developments of the Town Spa and Health Centre and the Dánfok Resort.

After declaring the medium-term objectives the tasks have been defined regarding the different parts of the town:

Belváros (Downtown)

Making the Élővíz-canal accessible for boats, kayaks and canoes

Malomvég

Development of the Health Centre in the Town Spa area and expanding the connected recreation and free time activities

Dánfok

Development of the beach and the Dánfok Resort, creating further tourist attractions

Bánhida

Development of the Boat House

After defining the tasks for the town and the parts of the town it is the part of the ITDS to appoint target areas where the town would start development activities with the help of



proposals in the following 7-8 years. The most emphasized from these target areas are the *Spa development* based target area in the Malomvég and the *Tourist development of Dánfok* target area.

IV. Presentation of the active tourism programme packages

The state analysis above indicates that the area of the Körös rivers in Arad and Békés county are suitable for such thematic tourism programmes, as trekking, eco tours, outdoor, nature and environment educational programmes. It is also evident that the popularity of Körös Valley is not wide scale at all, rather it hides unused possibilities. In the present project this lack is intended to be supplemented – by, on one hand, the extension of tourism supply, on the other hand, by making the existing and new programme facilities better known through brochures and websites. New programmes will be the 15 thematic tourism routes in two counties that are still lacking. The definition of the routes are in close relation with their popularization, as it is inevitable that the tourist coming here feel good in this area and does not miss the programme facilities. To realize this goal, we take the tourism supply and provide further services and facilities.

By planning the routes the geographical, natural, infrastructural givens were determining and the special and unique qualities have been built-in. When introducing the settlements, these factors have been considered, as making a list of attractions. Most of the trekking facilities are existing routes, but their unified presentation has not been happened so far.

The supply of the active tourism facilities are broadened by the dragon boats, canoes, bicycles, GPS-tools, providing the possibilities of discovering the Körös Valley in a natural way. Water tours – according to the plans – will be modernised through five piers on Élővíz-canal and Kettős-Körös. Possibility of routes will be presented by two study trips for the tourism providers of Arad and Békés counties. On the programme facilities the websites will inform the public through the whole period of the project.

The routes to be presented below will be published in a brochure in more details, with attractive photos, maps, descriptions. The region is lead in by some interesting sentences, then the route, the details (distance, time, effort level, level difference (if there is), and



accessibility), the description of attractions, programme organisers, tour guides, accessibility of tourism information points follow.

IV.1. Tourism routes in mid-Békés

1. Route of the three towns (Békéscsaba, Gyula, Békés) by bicycle or canoe

The three towns in mid-Békés can be visited by bicycle all year round, by canoe on Élővíz-canal derived from White-Körös in spring and autumn. The canoe trip is not a round tour.

Route (can be started from each town according to the round route below): **Gyula** (Castle – Csigakert – Élővíz-canal – Main square – Service road by 44 – Póstelek - **Békéscsaba** – Körte sor – Statue promenade – Jókai Theatre – Town Hall – churches, Kossuth square – Slovak country house - Széchenyi park – Élővíz-canal – bike road by 470 – **Békés** – Petőfi square, central monuments – Elizabeth park – Port of small boats – Dánfok – Szanazug – **Gyula**

2. Adventure on Kettős-Körös (Békés – Köröstarcsa by canoe and bicycle)

Slightly curving section of the Kettős Körös between Békés and Köröstarcsa invites nature-fans to a pleasant ambiance. At half-way, the Bodoky Károly Water Management Museum can be found in the neighbourhood of the House of Dike-Watch at Hosszúfok-canal. Tourist can have refreshments in the port of Köröstarcsa. Attractions in the town are Folk and Eco-centre and country house, the reformed church and the Weaver's house and Horse yard. The way back is suggested by bicycle on the dike left side of the river, in good weather conditions. In rainy weather are hard to bike on the dikes.

Route: Békés Port of Small boats – Kettős-Körös towards Köröstarcsa – Bodoky Károly Water Management Museum – Köröstarcsa – cultural attractions – Way back to Békés on the dikes.

3. Rendezvous of the Körös rivers– Békés - Szanazug by bike and canoe

The route leads from Békés – Dánfok towards the settlement Doboz on the left dike of the river Kettős-Körös to Szanazug at the junction of the Black and white arms of the Körös.





Szanazug is a pleasant resort with accommodation, dining and lots of spare time facilities. It's worth to visit the study path in Szanazug, with the stronghold of Samson. The rivers provide good conditions for bathing, water sports and resting. It is possible to turn back from Szanazug to Békés-Dánfok by canoes.

Route: Békés Port of Small boats – left-side-dike of Kettős-Körös towards Doboz – bridge of Doboz - Doboz, study path – fortification of Sámson – Szanazug – back to Békés by canoes.

4. In traces of Wenckheim earls (Gyula – Mályvád – Szanazug – Póstelek - Gyula)

The route goes along Élővíz-canal on the red marking. From the barrage the route goes to Gyulavári, where the **Almássy-Wenckheim** castle can be visited. After this, the next stop is the 2nd biggest forest of the Great Plain, Mályvád. Through this 1000th nature reservation area, the route leads to Szanazug, a resort for summer spare-time. It's worth to go through the study path leading to Samson fortress. After Papholt-forest the route leads to Doboz, where another castle of the Wenckheim counts is standing. The next stop is Póstelek, where the ruins of the **Széchenyi-Wenckheim** castle can be visited. The route from here goes back to the town of Gyula.

Route: Békéscsaba – Doboz, Wenckheim castle and crypt – Póstelek, ruins of Széchenyi-Wenckheim castle – Gyula, Gyulavári Wenckheim-Almássy castle - Békéscsaba

Vagy: Gyula – Szabadkígyós, ruins Wenckheim castle and crypt – Békéscsaba – Doboz, Wenckheim castle and crypt - Gyula, Gyulavári Wenckheim-Almássy castle

5. Nature and history (Békés – Tarhos – Vésztő – Bélmegyer – Mezőberény)

This route leads from the inner city of Békés to Tarhos that is famed of the Music pavilion and musical life founded by the Wenckheim family. Its park is locally protected area, with valuable trees, and a rich world of birds. (The castle is only be visited by the approval of the Mayor's Office at the Municipality of Békés.) After WWII, in 1946 a music school organised by György Gulyás opened in the castle that made the name of Tarhos nationally famous. After Tarhos, the next stop is Vésztő-Mágor, where prehistoric settlements, monastery from the Árpád-era, ruins of later churches came to light. A well-illustrated study path presents the





life of the once man of the region Sárrét. The area belongs to Körös-Maros National Park. On the route of the red marking, the way can be continued to Fáspusztá, of which old oak forest is also protected by the national park. This forest connects Fáspusztá to Bélmegyer. The spotted oak-trees and old pear-trees spotted in the area provide mystic and fabulous scenery. The red and green routes leads to Mezőberény from here. At the **Medvefejes (bear's head) lake** hundreds of migratory and nesting birds can be seen. This lake is the living place of lots of protected species, which can be watched from an observing tower.

Route: Békés – Tarhos – Vésztő – Fáspusztá – Bélmegyer – Mezőberény - Békés

6. Békéscsaba round trip

The natural environment can be visited through this 25 km-long trip around the county seat. Beside many hundreds years of tree-methuselah the remnants of the past can be seen – the boom pump, left and living cottage houses, fields, haystacks. The two old poplar trees near Békéscsaba, were meeting points of the people working on the fields. It is worth to visit these protected giants int he way. At around halfway the ruins of the monumental Széchenyi-Wenckheim castle and its beautiful park can be adored. Most of the trip leads us along the green line of Élővíz-canal that connects Békéscsaba with Gyula and Békés.

Route: Békéscsaba – Bandika-tree, Cimbora-tree – Ógerlai holtág – Póstelek – Élővíz-canal – Békéscsaba

7. Squirring in Sárrét by bike or on foot (from Dévaványa to Biharugra)

The Great Plain Blue Route leads the tourist through the regions of Kis-Sárrét and Nagy-Sárrét. In Békés county it sets out in Szarvas where the Körös-Maros National Park worth a visit with its visitor centre and study path in Anna-park, presenting the typical flora and fauna of South-Great Plain and the region of Körös and Maros rivers. The route leads on the Historic Memory Path towards the once centre of Hungary. The botanical garden of Szarvas is another sight to be visited, founded in the 19th century and where there are 1600 tree and bush species. From the ferry through Túrkeve, on the dike of Hortobágy-Berettyó the blue route goes on to the nature reserve area of Ecsefalva. From the centre of Ecsefalva, through





the pussta of Réhely, the route leads to the Station of Bustard-protection of Dévaványa. Here the breeding of bustards can be visited, with the help of professionals and the 5-km-long study path of the National Park. From here the blue route continues to Körösladány through Dévaványa and Simasziget and reaching the bridge of Sebes-Körös, it goes on the dike to Fokköz, where tourists can have rest and accommodation at Vidratanya to set out fresher towards the Historical Memory Site of Vésztő-Mágor presenting the ruins of the prehistoric settlement. The Wenckheim family had a wine cellar here, now set as museum. In the statue park the famous writers and poets of the development of the Great Plain can be seen.

Going forth there are the settlements of Vésztő, Okány and Zsadány and then Vátyonpuszta, with its 8 km long study path showing the typical wet-woody-plain habitats. The following settlements are Geszt and Biharugra, where the Tisza-castle and Arany János memorial house, as well as the second biggest artificial fishery-pond-systems can be visited. The area is under Ramsar Treaty. The Bihari Madárvárta (Birdwatchers Retreat of Bihar) provides accommodation and dining facilities.

Route: Szarvas – Dévaványa-Ecsegpusztá – Vésztő-Mágor – Vátyonpuszta – Geszt – Biharugra

8. From Körös to Maros (The big circle in Békés County) – route on bicycle in Békés

The route starts from the ruins of **Széchenyi-Wenckheim castle in Póstelek towards Békéscsaba**. From Körös to Maros () – on the route of on Bicycle in Békés. The route starts from the ruins of the Széchenyi-Wenckheim castle in Póstelek towards **Békéscsaba**. In this town it is worth visiting the Munkácsy Mihály Museum which was named after the famous painter who spent his childhood and young ages here. Beside the museum the painter's memorial house, furthermore the baroque – classicist buildings of the downtown and the greatest lutheran church in Central and Eastern Europe. From here we head for **Szabadkígyós**, to the charming Wenckheim castle which was designed by the nationwide famous architect of the XIX century, Miklós Ybl. After walking through the nature trail of Kígyósi Plain we are going to **Gyula**. This town was the hometown of the father of the





Hungarian Opera and the composer of the national anthem, Ferenc Erkel. Beside his memorial house, there are several historical tourist attractions that can be found in this popular town. The castle of Gyula is the only one gothic brick-castle which was not ruined in Central-Eastern Europe. The 19 pools of the famous Spa provide pleasant relaxation for all age-groups both inside and outside. The park of the Spa is also an excellent place for relaxation. The atmosphere of the spa is an appeal in itself. For those who are interested in culture there are many museums and exhibition rooms as well.

From Gyula we can go to **Elek**, where German heritage is still alive today in the gates of the settlers from Germany in 1724. In the nearby of **Lökösháza** the Breda castle built in Italian Palladio style and its beautiful park worth a visit. From here the route leads further to Battonya and **Mezőhegyes**, where the famous stud farm was founded by baron Joseph Csekonics in the end of the XVII century. For the Viennese Court, he bred the outstanding horse types of Nonius, Englis half-breed, Furioso and Gidrán. That is why the name of Mezőhegyes melted with the equestrian culture. From here, the route goes further to **Tótkomlós**, where the Slovak country house and the high standart Rózsa bath are worth visiting. Not far from here, the greatest lake of the saline areas of the Great Plain can be found. On the area of the strictly protected **Kardoskúti Fehértó**, way of life and migration of particular bird species can be observed from the towers of the Körös-Maros National Park mainly in spring and autumn. Indigenous domestic animals can be visited even with the help of professional guides. **Orosháza and Gyopárosfürdő** provide unique bathing opportunity as well. Near Orosháza a farm can be found with folk museum, domestic animals, accommodation and dining facility. From here the route leads to **Szarvas**. The Körös-Maros National Park, the study path in Anna-liget, the botanic garden, the Historical Centre of the Country and the natural values (cypress swamp trees) of the backwater of the Körös cannot be missed here. From Szarvas we can go to **Kondoros**, where the Tsarda of Kondoros commemorates the once country life. Every year, the Days of Outlaws form the memory of Sándor Rózsa are organised here. Through **Mezőberény to Gyomaendrőd** it is possible to have a bath in the river Hármas-Körös, then, to visit the Reserve of the bustards near **Dévaványa**, the great bird species of the plain areas. From here the next stop is





Füzesgyarmat of which thermal bath provides facility for some relaxation for biking on to the capital of Sárret, to Szeghalom. According to Anonymus, the ancestors of the Hungarians wanted to cross the river Körös. After the bridge of the Sebes-Körös between **Szeghalom** and **Véztő**, the restplace **Vidratanya** can be found with accommodation and dining facilities. The next stop is **Véztő-Mágor**, bordered by the backwater of the Körös River. An excavation of an ancient, six thousand years old culture, the ruins of a monastery of the XIth century can be visited here. After Véztő the bikers get to the settlements of Okány, Zsadány and then **Biharugra**. Through visiting the bird life of the fish ponds of Biharugra and Begécs and walking on the study path of Kisvátyon authentic picture of the natural history of the Kis-Sárret can be obtained. In **Geszt**, the Tisza castle and the memorial house of János Arany can be found. Near **Mezőgyán**, in Eperjes plain, the most eastern village of Hungary is worth to visit. Going through Sarkad the route leads to the oldest settlement of the county, **Doboz**. At the confluence of the rivers of White and Black Körös, at the beech of **Szanazug** provides good conditions for having rest and recreation. On the left side dyke of the river Kettős-Körös the route leads to **Békés**. Its inner town and the Music Pavilion in the castle of **Tarhos**, the route ends through Gerla at the starting point of the **Castle of Póstelek**.

9. Geocaching, Nordic Walking and Questing facilities

In the green belts, the inner-cities and parks of the three mid-Békés towns (Békés: Erzsébet park; Békéscsaba: Széchenyi park; Gyula: Csigakert) and along Élővíz-canal there are certain routes for 'treasures' to discover. The quizzes can be taken from the Tourinform offices. These routes are suggested to classes and group of youngsters.

- Geocaching: Based on GPS-coordinates, the geoboxes hidden in nature or in town provides exciting adventure and discovery in natural and cultural environment as well.
- Nordic Walking: Sport of the conscious walking, when the body, the steps and the movements can be controlled. It equals the load of weight, suitable for those doing sitting work, or suffering from back-, spine-, knee-, waist- and joint aches, hypertension, depression, or for those who like nature and outdoor sports summer and winter.



- Questing Treasure-hunt: It is a new form of discovering a place (natural or cultural) or find its specialities through the help of a prescribed witty poem, which can be obtained from Tourinform offices.
- Fighting the dragons on the Körös-rivers: For classes and team-buildings it is a challenging facility, when 20 persons sitting in a boat must build a team in just some minutes. Everyone is needed for reaching the aims and it's most efficient if the oars are pulled in the same rhythm, to which the drummer gives the pace. The steersman keeps the boat in one direction. The Kayak-Canoe club of Békés provides the dragon boats and the steersman.

10. Borderless tours – by canoe on the rivers White and Black Körös

The Körös rivers girded by willow trees connects the two countries with spectacle but sometimes challenging conditions for those taking part in water tours or biking on the dikes. At the beginning of summer – end of May, start of June – the Black arm can be exciting due to the stone reefs, riffles in the mountainous section of the river, at the feet of the Codru Moma. After the extending of the Schengen-borders, the routes can be achieved on both rivers.

Route 'Negra': This route starts in the springing area of the river Black (Fekete-)Körös, in the settlement of Beius, at Szanazug it joins the White-Körös and goes on to Gyomanedrőd, collects the river Sebes-Körös, and together as Hármás-Körös flows to river Tisza followed by calming nature all the way through.

Route:

1. day: 1. Belényes (Beius) – Sólyom (Soimi)
2. day: Sólyom – Tenke (Tinca)
3. day: Tenke – Feketegyarmat/Feketebátor (Batar)/Feketetót (Taut)
4. day: Feketegyarmat- Nagyzerind (Zerind)
5. day: Nagyzerind – Sarkad
6. day: Sarkad – Békési Kishajó-kikötő



The route can be continued:

7. day: Békési Kishajó-kikötő – Köröstarcsa
8. day: Köröstarcsa – Gyomaendrőd
9. day: Gyomaendrőd – Békésszentandrás
10. day: Békésszentandrás – Kunszentmárton
11. day: Kunszentmárton – Csongrád (Köröstorok)

Route 'Alba': Rowing can be started at Borosjenő (Ineu) or even at Halmágycsúcs (Varfurile) and through Kisjenő (Chisineu Cris) the border can be crossed at Gyulavarsánd (Varsand) From Szanazug the route goes on the river Kettős-Körös till Csongrád, the junction of the Körös

The route can be started from the 1st or 7th points:

1. day: Halmágycsúcs (Varfurile) – Honctő – when the weather is good
2. day: Honctő – Almás
3. day: Almás - Körösbökény (Buteni)
4. day: Körösbökény – Borossebes (vár)
5. day: Borossebes – Monyoró
6. day: Monyoró - Borosjenő
7. day: Borosjenő – Kisjenő
8. day: Kisjenő - Gyula
9. day: Gyula – Békés-Dánfok

The route can be continued:

10. day: nap: Békési Kishajó-kikötő – Köröstarcsa
11. day: Köröstarcsa – Gyomaendrőd
12. day: Gyomaendrőd – Békésszentandrás
13. day: Békésszentandrás – Kunszentmárton
14. day: Kunszentmárton – Csongrád (Köröstorok)



IV.2. Tourism routes in Arad county

IV.2.1. The Mures-valley

1. Canoe trip on Mures

- **Distance:** 230 km
- **Duration:** 5 days

Tourism objectives:

- Karstic area of Kaprevár (Căprioara)
- Folks Museum and castle, botanic garden – Soborsin
- Castle in Soimos
- Monastery of Máriaradna – Lippa
- Turkish bazaar – Lippa
- Monument of Paulis

Routes: Zám (Zam) – Soborsin (Săvîrşin) – Bărzava – Lippa (Lipova) – Arad – Pécska (Pecica) – Nagylak (Nădlac) – Csanád (Cenad)

Note: it can be achieved also by bicycle between Lippa and Arad on cca. 30 km, on the following route: Lippa (Lipova) – Temesújfalu (Neudorf) – Zábrány (Zăbrani) – Angyalkút (Fântânele) – Arad.

2. Arad – Pécska (Pecica) by canoe and bicycle

Distance: 27 km

Duration: 1 day

Tourism objectives:

- Monastery in Bodrog
- Monastery in Bezdin
- Nature reserve of water lilies, Bezdin
- Floodplain forests

Routes: Arad – Bodrog (Bodrogul Vechi) – Pécska (Pecica)



Note: On the way back bicycles can be used based on contacting the Mures floodplain Nature Park.

IV.2.2. Zarand mountains

This modest mountain area with peaks of around 800 m hides lots of easily tekked routes. We can go on foot, with the help of a guide, for better acquaintance.

1. Round trip: Világos (Siria) – monastery of Feredeu – Világos (Siria)

Markings: blue cross till Cazanului-ridge, then the yellow strip

Distance: 16 km

Duration: 5 – 5,5 hours on foot

Tourism attractions:

- Monument of the end of Hungarian war of independence 1848-49, Siria
- Ruins of the castle of Siria
- “Ioan Slavici és Emil Mántia” memorial house
- Convent of Feredeu
- Monastery of Feredeu

2. Solymosvár (Șoimoș) – Solymos Völgye (Șoimoșului) – Főgerinc – Băilor Valley – Kaszolya (Căsoaia)

Marking: yellow triangle

Distance: 15 km

Duration: 4 – 4,5 hours on foot

Tourism attractions:

- Museum of Lipova
- Orthodox church, Lipova
- Turkish bazaar, Lipova





- Lipova Bath
- Franciscan monastery with the calvary, Máriaradna
- Castle in Soimos
- Statue park, Căsoaia

Note: this route can be combined with the following one.

3. Világos (Şiria) – Kaszolya (Căsoaia)

Marking: blue circle

Distance: kb. 15 km

Duration: 5 - 6 óra

4. Györök (Ghioroc) – Capra peak – Gurgului ridge – Convent Feredeu

Marking: blue strip till Capra peak, then red strip on the ridge and downwards till the blue circle.

Distance: 14 km

Duration: 5 – 5,5 hours on foot

Tourism attractions:

- Tram Museum (Green Arrow) – Ghioroc
- Museum for Vine and Wine – village of Miniş – Ghioroc
- Museum for Apiculture – Miniş
- Ghioroc Lake

Note: this route can be combined with route 1.

5. Heart of Zarand – along the dwelling houses

Marking: blue cross

Distance: km

Duration: 2 days



www.kozepbekes.hu;



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www.korosoknaturpark.hu

Route: Konop (Conop) - Stranasa - Tauţ-tó (Lacul Taut) – Vészalja (Văsoaia)

IV.2.3. Fehér (White)-Körös

1. Mill canal by bike

Duration: 2 days

Distance: 130 km

Tourism attractions

- Zugău dam
- Museum - Buteni
- Castle at Ineului
- Museum of hunting, Chisineu Cris
- Élővíz-canal (Gyula – Békéscsaba - Békés)

Route: Körösbökény (Buteni) – Birza (Bîrsa) – Áldófalva (Aldeşti) – Bokszeg (Bocsig) – Apatele (Mocrea) – Csigérszőlős (Seleuş) – Nadab (Nădab) – Székudvar (Socodor) – Gyulavarsánd (Vărşand)

2. By canoe on Crisul Alb

Duration: 2 days

Distance: 82 km

Tourism attractions

- Castle at Ineu
- Chisineu Cris
- Protected area – Socodor

Route: Borosjenő (Ineu) – Körös-Kisjenő (Chişineu-Criş) – Gyulavarsánd (Vărşand)) – Gyula – Kenuval

3. Mount Gaina – the south corner of Bihar

This route leads to the highest point of Arad county, that is altogether the southeast area of the Bihar mountains. The ridges stretching one after the other offer amazing spectacle. The Gaina roof is on the border of the two counties, Arad and Hunedoara, while some distance away, the Stone of Arad is at the junction of Bihar, Arad and Alba counties.

Marking: blue strip

Distance: 22 km

Level difference: kb. 800 m

Effort level: 5

Duration: 6 – 7 hours

Accessibility: all year round, with tour guide.

Route: Nagyhalmágy (Halmagiu) – Kishalmágy (Halmagel) – Gaina ridge – Stone of Arad (1429 m) – Gaina peak (1486 m)

The marked tourist route leads from Halmagel through the settlement Sarbi. At the settlement named Bancesti there are houses without inhabitants, or some of them are used in the summer months only. However, the gardens indicates the former tenants, as the apple and pear trees are still yielding richly. A short walk Northwest from Gaina roof leads us to the Stone of Arad (1429 m) at the junction of the three counties, Bihor-Alba and Arad; Northeast one can get to Gaina peak (1486 m). North from the ridge the Bihor mountains, to the West the Codru Moma, towards South-west the Zarand mountains offer breathtaking spectacle. East from the ridge, the area of Móc is stretching.

From Halmagel along Lucsoara brook the Gaina mountain can be reached by car as well.

Tourism attractions:

- Women's fair on Gaina ridge – two hundred years ago, every year this Romanian feast attracts masses of people. The date is on the closest weekend to the day of St. Iliu, the 20th, July.





- Last working watermill in Halmagel. Wheat, corn is ground by the power of water of the brook Halmagel and with wooden equipments.
- on the western side of the road between Luncsoara and Luncacesti, a fabulous waterfall offers attracting spectacle. It's worth to get out of the car and admire the power of water leaving round holes in the stones.

4. Village tour in Gaina mountains

This route goes through the busy tenants' villages. The houses and yards are in order, the people here are dealing with agriculture.

Marking: yellow circle

Distance: 24 km

Level difference: 500 m

Effort level: 4

Duration: 6 – 7 hours

Accessibility: All year round, tour guide is suggested..

Route by bike or on foot: Nagyhalmágy (Hălmagiu) – Zarándbánya (Bănești) – Keresztespatak (Cristești) – Páfrányos (Brusturi) – Mermesd (Mermești) – Bogyafalva (Bodești) – Kisles (Leștioara) – Halmágy (Hălmagiu)

There is proper quality asphalt road suitable for biking as well. People in the mountain villages are friendly, they gladly host visitors. Northwest from Brusturi it's worth taking a walk in the beech-forest with tree matuselahs above 100 years old draw our admiration. Some trees are worth to be taken pictures with – so camera is useful here. The routes to the forest there are houses, cottages with lots of trees in their gardens.

IV.2.4. Codru-Moma mountains



www.kozepbekes.hu;



www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu

www.huro-cbc.eu; www.hungaryromania-cbc.eu



1. Mountain trip

- **Marking:** yellow strip
- **Distance:** cca. 10 km
- **Duration:** 3 – 4 hours
- **Accessibility:** all year round
- **Route:** Menyháza (Moneasa) – Medvés-hegy (P. Ursului) – Dezna castle ruins – Dezna

2. Roundtrip around Monasea

- **Marking:** yellow point, round trip
- **Distance:** kb. 12 km
- **Duration:** 4 - 5 hours
- **Accessibility:** all year round
- **Útvonal:** Menyháza (Monasea) – Gaudeamus kunyhó – Tinoasa-tető – Meghieşul-völgy – Menyháza (Moneasa)

3. Bat Cave, Monasea Menyháza

- **Marking:** blue strip
- **Distance:** kb. 3 km
- **Duration:** 45 – 60 minute
- **Accessibility:** all year round

IV.2.5. Arad and its surrounding

1. Round trip of the grapes of Arad in the wine region of Minis

Duration: 2 days

Distance: 120 km

Tourists sights:



www.kozepbekes.hu;



www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu

- Castle, Solymos (Soimi), Lippa (Lipova)
- Turkish bazaar, Lippa (Lipova)
- Monastery of Mariaradna, Lippa (Lipova)
- Castle of Baraţca
- Grape and Wine Museum, Ménes
- Tram Museum
- Castle of Vilagos (Siria)
- Ioan Slavici and Emil Mantia Museum

V. Basis of the marketing communication in the project 'Active Tours'

For the sake of popularization of the Körös Valley, proper marketing communication is inevitable for the project period and the sustaining years. The marketing tools in the project period will be realized in their whole extent, for the period after the project ends, suggestions can be defined. First of all, state assessment, positioning, aims, target groups are necessary. The determinations below can be recommendations for the managers of the project, the partnership and the tourism providers of the two counties.

V.1. SWOT analysis of the project

Through SWOT analysis the marketability of the programme packages and its connected services in the project 'Active Tours' can be examined. Of the structure of the four elements those tasks can be found out, that are strategically the most important ones

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
(Inner factors, existing positive givens)	(Inner factors, existing negative givens)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing demand for active sport/rehabilitation, which the project is able to serve • Proper collaborating partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the aging tendency of the population the spare time activities can be changed (decreased), and so the demands for trekking.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active inclusion of the civil sphere can be realised. • Among the natural givens the project emphasise the water sport facilities: kayak, canoe, rowing, dragon boats • Recreation programmes based on healing and thermal waters as spare time activities are available • In the field of infrastructure various opportunities are included: horse riding, biking, trekking routes • Intactness of further settlements are used in the project excellently. • Due to the lack of big industries the air is clean and unpolluted that insures natural and healthy medium for active spare time. • Proper experiential background, references and human-capacity • Secure financing and strategic background due to the municipalities • Good conditions for applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of project elements (water tours, excursions) is seasonal. • The economical and social differences of big and small settlements effect the use of tours and its realisation • Inner differences are significant, so the realisation of certain tour elements are limited (e.g. different water levels) • The service providers are of lack of capital. (it is more difficult to generate multiplicative effect) • Due to economic recession, the number of accessible solvent tourists is decreasing. • There is still no elaborated and unified image of the area in which the project could be positioned. • Due to the lack of „Hungaricums” the active tour elements can hardly been connected to gastro tourism. • Inner roads are mainly in bad state of repair. • Railway traffic does not reach the small settlements. • Accommodation facilities of small settlements are low.
<p>OPPORTUNITIES (External factors, fields to be exploited)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making civil sector more active: 	<p>THREATS (External factors, negative facts to be avoided)</p>

<p>organising individual sport programmes or tours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development potential in tourism is significant, so the sustainability of the project and its operation is important centrally as well. • The role of active tourism is becoming more important in European and global aspects, the conscious lifestyle emphasize the role of sports. • Supporting of tourism and active tourism within it is growing. • Economic problems bring domestic tourism in advantageous situation. • European sources support the development of rural networks. • Through the building of bypass and relief roads the noise and air pollution is decreasing • Increasing use of the Internet in the fields of marketing, information, reservations (quick and flexible management) • Establishing free beaches with tourism services can provide further spare time facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut-off or decrease of domestic and EU supports can stop long-term development opportunities of the project • Presence of black economy limits the free movement of capital • Due to competing rivals the area can lose its competitiveness, with which the tour elements provided by the project could be less demanded. • Orientation of the tourism interest is growing towards Transdanubia and the mountains, through which the orientation of tourists moves against the area. • If recession lasts long in world economy, it impacts solvent demand • Damaging public safety • Public transport is seasonally overcrowded • Deteriorating of water quality, active sport facilities in the project are limited. • Weather conditions influence the use of tour elements.
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V.2. Aims and methods of marketing activity of the tourism programmes in the project

The tourism development project „Active Tours” aims to realise the touristic utilization of natural and local cultural givens in the area of the four towns, Békéscsaba – Gyula – Békés – Arad in accordance with the principles of protection of the nature, cultural traditions, the sustainability of developments.

The destination to be developed is significantly defined by the quality, complexity, uniqueness of the offered services, the tourism capability and the standard and capacity of background infrastructure. The efficient usage of potential and available resources a coordinated marketing activity can deliver to reach the targeted objectives most successfully. Through unified marketing communication it can be insured the segmented target market be accessible, the popularity and the positive image of tourism packages be carried out. In the competition of market economy, the role of marketing has become more and more significant, in the present situation of competitors the more efficient mediation of advantages and values are inevitable beside unique supply.

Main objectives of the marketing activity in the project

- *Informing and drawing attention:*

Promotion on the unknown, less promoted active tourism facilities, the drawing of attention of the existing and potential target group for the outstanding attractions and natural and cultural values.

- *Growing the acquaintance of the area concerned in the project:*

Surveying of and continuous information on the unknown or less known water and bicycle tour routes is important, in national and international level. Beyond surveying natural values unique, cultural traditions should be built in the routes.

- *Unified image:*



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www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu

www.huro-cbc.eu; www.hungaryromania-cbc.eu



Transferring consciously built out, unified colour, form and values is dedicated to the target group of guests, for realising the close accord between the expected and experienced quality. Promotion tools elaborated in this marketing strategy serve this aim: internet surface on websites concerning the areas (www.kozepbekes.hu, www.imm-arad.ro), brochures, logo, slogan, roll-up posters, T-shirts, hotel cards.

- *Image building:*

The unified image and the active programme packages and connecting services must have positive influence, emotion in the target group for realising the frequent visits in the destination.

The aims above can be reached through consciously planned and carried out marketing activity, that is based on the 4+3 P parts of the marketing mix, according to the ones below:

1. Product policy

The product offered is compound, colourful, varied tourism programme package, which consists of such active tour elements, that intends to reach the segmented target group. In this way, programmes will be available for water tours, trekkers, bikers, and student groups, those coming for class trips and team buildings, families and friends and those interested in cultural values. The product elaborated in the project supplies facilities for active rest according to different needs, interests and complexity. During elaborating the programme packages, the aim was that the complexity of the different parts can be based on each other, not to generate competition among the different areas, rather it result synergy and cooperation between the settlements. The offered tourism programme package contains many-layered service elements, with different quality levels. Standard is significantly influenced by the external givens of the certain settlement or area, like geographical given, the water level of Körös, the infrastructure (e.g. road network – trekking, biking, cars, waterways, airways -, accommodation), weather conditions, local habits and traditions, hospitality.



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www.korosoknaturpark.hu

2. Price policy

Results of the project „Active Tours” must be provided for five years after the project ends, so it is important to establish financial elements as well. Primary objective is that the costs emerging in case of the certain programme elements must be covered by participation fees, entrance fees.

The pricing strategy the expectable impacts must be considered:

- The price level offered defines the accessible target groups
- The different target groups can cause different intensity of demand
- Differentiated prices will help to access certain target groups and lessen seasonality
- It influences product image considerably
- Proper rate of price and value must be provided.

Pricing strategy:

At the planning of the prices the organisations concerned must be measured, that everyone finds his need in the price offered.

Further important momentum is that the optimum of the price-value rate of the programme packages should be secured for contributing the accessibility of segmented target groups through solvency.

Each programme package turns up with different pricing, depending on which cost ratio the use of sport tools has, or what human resource the organisation and implementation of the routes demand.

Each target groups can be differentiated by other discounts (e.g. student discount, family discount)

Pricing of the competitors must be considered.



The supply of other complementing services can be realised on market pricing (e.g. selling gifts, room renting fees, use of the port, accommodation service, boarding service)

3. Place policy

Selling network serves the aim that the product offered and the service connected should reach the target group the most efficient way. The direct or indirect channel of sales is to be reaching both the organised groups and the individuals.

Although, the rate of individual travels is growing, the organised programme packages have outstanding role in active tourism, especially because the routes concern more areas with different locations. The connecting programme facilities and offered services need the schedule on time and human resource. The significance of group and organised tours is proven that the members of the target groups evidentially travel in groups, that also need a kind of organisation. Besides, the inland travels also the foreign guests are coming, of which mobilisation also needs the organised method.

In the process of organisation, the tour, travel and programme organisers provide help by offering the programmes. The offers must be electronic, according to the expectation of our age, so the accessibility on Internet is basic. Exchange banners (logo and link on the website of organisations mutually) strengthen the marketing function further, with which the accessibility of potential guests is growing.

Significance of internet public sites is also inevitable today, especially among the youngsters, so it is important to count with them.

Alternatives of marketing channels:

- Direct sales:
 - By the organisations that organise the tours.
 - Through showing up at exhibitions, fairs, organised events
 - Direct marketing specified on target groups, in letter, e-mail, telephone, personal search
 - Internet advertisements, online booking through own website



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- Publishing brochures recommending tours
- Direct sales:
 - By tour, programme organisers, travel agencies
 - Involving Tourinform offices
 - Cooperation with civil organisations
 - Including educational institutions
 - Through involving twin-towns, mutual offer of each other's tourism product
 - Online sales by agencies
 - Offers through the cooperation of connected providers
 - In case of positive image, informal mediation, offers for each other.

4. Promotion policy

The applied marketing communication has to support the elaborated „Active Tours” project and within that the offer of certain programme packages, their use and the continuous information on them. It is important, that in the area of Mid-Békés and Arad, the popularisation of the active tourism destination in the triplet of sport – culture – tourism is realised. Outstanding attention is needed for making natural and cultural values acquainted, the standard of accessible services, the value of unique attractions, the competitive advantage created. Aim of communication is to generate a positive emotional connection, to start a motivation engine, with which supply can be created. In general, aim is that a positive and advantageous image be created on the target area visited by solvent tourists.

Steps of promotion programme

- Defining the objectives of communication
- Defining message towards the segmented target groups
- Choosing communication channels
- Decision on the promotion mix, that include potential market influential activities:
 - Unified image

- Advertisement
- Sales promotion
- Personal marketing
- PR
- Individual image

Combined use of the elements insures the most optimistic cost-input, as the best efficiency of targets can be reached in this way. Unified image has important role here, as the different apparitions must have unified quality standard, directions and shape of appearance. Certain elements must be appeared in unified image: colour, shape, logo, slogan, and message. Concerning KBC and Arad the promotion activities have to be coordinated and published mutually, in cooperative way.

Unified image

Different elements of content and form create the differences, the uniqueness, the milieu and atmosphere fitting to the area. The establishment of these elements must be carried out based on unified standards, so that they match the objectives and the expectations of the target groups. We differentiate content and formal components:

- Of content: slogan, name, philosophy, style, atmosphere, milieu
- Formal: logo, colour, form, design, e-design, brochure, promotional material, clothing, accessories, gifts

The image established, which is part of the strategy is suitable for the separate or common popularisation of each destinations of the project, the offer of tourism programmes.

Advertisements

The advertisement determines three objectives:

- information
- conviction
- reminding



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through what kind of tools the above aims will be transferred is formulated during the media planning. Selecting of the tools will be determined through cost-efficiency and quality, the reading, visiting, affinity data, statistics on turnover.

- Media advertisements:

Two types can be differentiated:

- Paid advertisement in any media (written form)
- PR-article, where introduction, description of activity, informing or quiz will be published.

It is useful to choose thematic newspaper, catalogue, magazine, which the selected target group favours – e.g. brochures dealing with nature, trekking, tourism

These can be matched with papers of connected topics, like health and sport

Brochures introducing and popularizing the area and the tourism of the destinations concerned e.g. regional papers, areal tourism brochures can also be important.

Television advertisements:

This is the most expensive form of advertising. However, such forms can be found, with which these high costs can be optimized:

Sponsoring programmes specified in topics, like the ones dealing with consciousness, environment protection and informing, or line-ups for children.

Dedications of prizes, as supporter

Television ads can still be realised with local companies (Csaba TV, Gyula TV, Békésmátrix, Arad TV)

Audio advertisements:

It includes materials through the broadcasting of radios. It has special auditors, but frequently it works as background-noise. It is more cost-efficient than television ads, and the local radios reach the local target group efficiently. Interview, talk-shows are also possible in local radios.

Outdoor advertisements:



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The posters located in settlements draw locals' attention for tour programmes and connected services. If the aim is the broadening of the scope, other areas must be targeted, considering if inlanders or foreigners are intended to be reached.

Tour programmes planned for certain date and time, it is possible to be informed in Tourinform offices and other tourism service providers.

Printed advertisements:

This includes the dissemination of the brochures, catalogue, map, tourism book, event calendar, postcard, leaflet prepared in unified image, at tourism service providers. According to date, festivals, events, exhibitions must be considered significantly, when campaigns can be started. Tourinform offices, travel agencies, accommodations, culture centres and schools have important role in this.

In the frames of the project, brochures of practical use in three languages will be published in 15.000 issues. The brochure will present the routes, programme packages, maps, tour organisers, accommodations and restaurants. The brochure aims to give a help for the trekker to discover natural values of the Körös Valley and get acquainted with the interesting, spectacle landscapes, active spare time locations and cultural values.

Electronic online advertisements:

Both visual, and audio elements are represented here, one of the most current tool of advertisements that provides the widest scope in the world of the internet. On the website of the Lead Partner and the partner from Arad (www.kozepbekes.hu, www.imm-arad.ro), the description of the routes is realised in separate menus in both Hungarian and Romanian language.

Special tools of advertisements:

As connected tool of advertisement, it has less scope, but parallel, it insures the facility of unique appearance, like guide books for education paths, newsletters, nature-friend brochures,



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pens, promo-gifts. In this project gifts will not be prepared, but in the future they will be possibility.

Direct marketing tool

Its point is that it can create direct relationship with the target groups, it transfers unique and special offer for them.

- Direct mail:

Offering programme packages, touring facilities, offered services directly for the organisations concerned in this field, like nature friend clubs, associations, foundations, tourism organisations, schools. Its advantage is that the connection can be personal and direct, and can be fitted more to unique demands.

- Online advertisement tool:

Through the help of the Internet, guests can be reached through a website of attractive appearance, in interactive, even targeted ways. With forums, certain topics can be emphasized, with which the value of information, the interest and popularisation in the offered programme package can be raised.

- Personal sales:

Its key figure is the person contacting the potential guest, who has outstanding role in interpersonal convincing process. Personal sales and informing on the spot has outstanding role. In this way information points, visitor centres, or even Tourinform offices can be established, of which aim is to give the widest and most exact information on the tour packs concerned. A quality label can form competitive advantage through it orient the guest by choosing the service provider and strengthens the unified image as well.

Public Relation (PR)

PR is such an interactive communication activity, of which aim is to establish and sustain mutual trust between the organisation offering the programme package and the environment



and build the reputation of the organisation and the offered product offered by it (active tours)
– keeping the unified image.

- **Inner PR:** it means continuous communication and relationship within the organisation.
- **External PR:** maintaining relations with the environment like guests, locals, media, civils, and connecting partners. The tools of this are the following:
 - Public, civic relations, forums, lectures, open days.
 - Through sponsorship, discounted participation fees in certain programme packs for disadvantageous or accentuated target groups.
 - Through event marketing, targeted and organised actions, like professional lectures, participation on environmental quizzes for children, exhibitions, festivals, fairs,
 - Media, press releases, publications, press conferences.

Sales promotion

Main objective is to enhance demand with quick actions or supply of discounts. Sales promotion can refer to three areas below:

- Motivation of guests:

Can be applied with price discounts, even with organised programmes, free entrance (connected to prize-winning actions) coupons, special complementary services, VIP-programmes, joint actions with service providers, organised competitions, gifts, which all serve the growth of turnover, satisfaction, image-building.

- Stimulation of sales channels:

For the sake of generating more turnovers, the motivation of sales partners is important e.g.: through introducing commission, elaborating joint promotion activities.

- Motivation on point of sales:

Through elaborated unified image and communication tools, guests must be motivated for more frequent choice of programme packages.



5. Human resource - People

In the branch of tourism the human resource, as anthropogenic factor has outstanding role, as the employers of organisations or service providers contacting the existing and potential guests are most important mediums of the programme packages offered and the services connected. Providing quality in the market competition has outstanding role, so in line with the objectives, the building and keeping of qualified, positive workload matching human expectations is a primary task.

Depending on the part-elements of programme packages, such tour guides, professionals must be available, who has versatile knowledge on the cultural and tourism attractions of the area and are able to introduce them to foreigners.

As the project „Active Tours” includes crossborder programme elements, due to the foreign target market the knowledge of a foreign language is expected. Because of the family and young age group, it is suggested to employ such workers who have pedagogy skills and love children. Due to the special character of the product, that it is service, it is also expected that the employers have the generally human values as well, like being attentive, courtesy, personal hygienic, placidity.

The other form of the human factor is the inhabitants of the certain settlement. It is important, that the locals turn with positive attitude to tourists, as hospitality is extremely important factor of the tourism image in an area. In spreading healthy lifestyle and sport-conscious approach, it is important to involve the inhabitants too beside the employers, for making the importance of the triple unit of sport-tourism-culture be conscious in wider circle.

In this project the lead partner has human resource available for the task and has such partner group (trekking organisations, tourism providers, guides) which can provide its services in appropriate quality.

6. Tangible elements, packing



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Tangible elements is first and foremost the environment, in which the service is offered and used, so the location where the transaction is carried on. Further, tangible element is every part that ease the achievement of the service or even its communication.

A service is intangible; it cannot be measured or evaluated before producing and offering it. In this sense, packaging cannot be mentioned, as services cannot even be stored. Packaging must be interpreted in a different way. In this case, it is meant, how certain attractions and services can be connected to each other, and offered as tour routes or programme packages.

The supply of tour routes will be introduced with accommodations, restaurants and other services.

7. Positioning

During positioning service packs, the task is to measure the compound and market positions of the competitors and define its own position according to this. It is an aim that the defined position be made conscious in the existing and potential guests and this provide a standard supply, accessibility and a good relationship.

For the target groups defined by market segmentation the project „Active Tours” offers differentiated prices, to which active spare time and sport facilities are provided close to nature. Compared to the existing tours the difference is that the new ones connect movement-sport-nature and the facilities given through culture. Wide facilities of sports are involved in tourism packages, strengthening that players of different target groups get touring opportunities: on land (trekkers, bikers) and on water (kayak, canoe, boat). Pricing and compound of the offered packages will be located in the middle field.

The marketing plan has strategic approach, so it founds a future development and emphasizes the directions of marketing activities, and their principles. Starting from strategic view, the strategy elaborates the lifespan, promotion and sustainability of service packs, so risks in spontaneous, short term development sections must be considered.



V.3. Marketing communication for the project „Active Tours”

Elaboration of the tour packs directs to the tourism-aimed use of the target area of the project, so the four towns and the natural values and cultural heritage of their connecting area, considering sustainability. The intention by introducing the surveyed values is that the attention of wider public be drawn towards natural and cultural givens, in the way that the components of healthy lifestyle, active life and sport be represented based on the elements of active rest. The aim is that the environment-conscience, love for nature and facilities for sporting opportunities of the inhabitants grow.

During the project, the coordinated development-cooperation of the four towns concerned contributes the coordination of the varied groups of services connecting in the view of content and physical ways, so that the effects strengthening each other can be exploited properly.

The unified, attractive service packs aims to reach the competitiveness of the area and so contribute to improving the economic and social state of the settlements, the stop of the disadvantageous demographic tendencies.

Tourism and within this the active tour elements to be established in the project, transfer the impacts below:

- Strengthening local SMEs / growing the chances of their profitability, invigorating economic activity through more booking and greater use of services.
- Improving the quality of life through the extension of supply of the active spare time facilities by informing on and evaluating the natural, cultural givens.
- Spreading environment conscious and responsible human example toward the sustainable development of the area, for the protection of the natural values.
- Cooperation in the three fields: public, private and civil sector, improvement of the involvement of private capital, strengthening unique interest views.
- In elaborating the programme packs, the integration of elements of geographical/areal givens, the existing and to-be-developed infrastructure are significant factors, but the following factors are expected demands:





- Insuring sustainable development through the use of locally found natural and cultural givens and the preserving of these values.
- In the programmes packages, attractions of adventures will be built in, with which the settlements of the area can be more attractive.
- Identifying and emphasizing the uniqueness and differentiating characters of the area.
- High standard service for the segmented target groups
- Building out the background conditions of connecting services and their continuous development for the sake of sustainability.
- Providing the ability of broadening the supply of programme packs for decreasing seasonality.

When elaborating the programme packages, it was achievable that uniqueness and differentiation be provided. In special expression, the USP (Unique Selling Proposition) must be presented, providing market competitive advantage. Uniqueness must be emphasised in the way that it influence the whole marketing activity.

In the tourism sector, the growth of environmental and health-conscious is represented as a new approach, but this must be paired with the active tourism elements in the way that it strengthen the triple unit of sport-culture-tourism. The uniqueness of each programme packages is hidden in the fact that they involve physical activity. Depending on target group, different effort levels are offered, to which different sport equipments are added. For tourists in need of outdoor activities and natural values different active sport elements offer tourism adventures, depending on training.

Uniqueness in a programme package is provided by the sights of the area and settlements (natural and cultural) can be accessed on foot, by bike or by water equipments based on demands, and in many cases, the involvement of other kinds of routes will be realised (geocaching and questing).

Justification and activities of promotion



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Promotion policy get the customers know that the product exists, it wakes up demand and desire for the product. It is based on the experience that it is not enough for the maximal investment return (little invested money, big profit), if there is demand, the product is good, it is accessible at proper distribution points, and the shop is open even on weekends. It is also necessary, that the product get into the mind of potential customers. This is motivated by sales promotion (advertisements, personal selling, and some parts of PR). For this the following is needed:

- Institutional background of the advertisement market (agencies, advertisers, auditors, etc.)/analysing effect of advertisement
- Interpreting the active tourism facilities of the area in brochures, promotional recommendations, marketing elements.
- Ways, methods of reaching potential inland and foreign tourists

Are the players of the sales channel.

V.3.1. Target group – target market – positioning: experimental adventures and active wellness

After the tour programmes to be established marketing activity is inevitable, as it has been presented in the paragraph above. For this, the definition of the target group is important. The target groups defined in the marketing concept of Mid-Békés area elaborated by Platán Media Kft., the tourists in the categories of experimental adventurer and Active wellness are valid still today, both in Arad and Békés counties.

Main messages for potential guests and tourists are the following:

- Undiscovered („Discover it for yourself!” and „Get it know!”)
- Special adventures, new, unknown experiences, adventure and opportunity for sensing the new and unusual
- Nomad rest in an interesting area
- Thermal waters, spas
- Friendly people





- Versatile cultural environment
- Favourable prices

Method of segmentation (forming groups)

In establishing market segments, givens and loadability of natural and cultural environment must be considered primarily. During the measurement of the needs of the selected target groups, customer-oriented and purposeful development will serve the involvement of nature- and environment-friendly approach in the programme packages and will reach tourists' satisfaction.

Three basic factors of segmentation:

- way of the use of natural areas for the purposes of tourism a
- lifecycle of customers
- geographical limits.

Theoretical basis of segmentation:

I. Use of natural areas for the purposes of tourism

1. Excursionist:

Seeks refuge in nature from the frequently overdriven everyday. They not always have the proper responsibility, due to which the protection of natural values can be injured. The easy-going excursionist intends to access the destination by car, with which noise, road-damage and pollution is caused. They may not know visitor centres, exhibition spots or study paths, visiting of these can be random. The fact of travelling may depend on the weather, mostly spontaneous choice of the environment. They don't get informed beforehand, the choice of the location is provided by former experience or an idea. The choice of the restaurants is also random. Tourism services, sport or other programmes are not really chosen in this segment.

2. Occasional green tourist:

During the visit, the use of the tourism product of natural environment is not primary, but if it is possible, they visit the tourism centres and educational paths. In general, short, half-day visits of 1-2 hours are characterized; they mostly travel to many places on round-trips, not as





frequent customers. They can be attracted by experience and spectacles – e.g. PR events, but they are important target group for having interest towards basic natural and cultural values. Weather is important, as they travel in good conditions, typically individually or with family – not in organised form.

Services typically sought:

1. famous visitor centres, exhibition rooms, walking paths
2. look-out towers, fountains, waters/lakes, spectacle plant or animal species, cultural and ethnic relics.
3. peculiar natural landscape
4. local character in hospitality is preferential need.
5. high infrastructural need: boards, sign-posts, paths, rest places, free brochures.

3. Active green tourists:

Primary aim of the segment is the outdoor spare time, trendy sport sin nature or other free time activities. In choosing destination the supply of active sport facilities and its diversity are important factors. Typically they stay one or some days. In centre of interest there are adventure tours, outdoor sports – trekking in nature. Important demand is recreational facility – walking tours, biking, water tours, riding, mountain or rock climbing. New or extreme sports are also favourable in this group.

Services typically sought:

- They like sport and outdoor activities in peculiar and spectacle natural environment, clean air and special landscape units.
- They have the need for more information on the values, sights and customer facilities of the given area,
- Pre-informing is typical, mainly from Internet, brochures, travel books or booklets.
- They favour package offers, even with comfortable and rural accommodations.



- Group consumption is typical both in organised and in individual form.

4. Ecotourist:

The aim of this segment is to get acquainted with and understand the natural and ecological values of the area. The recognition of traditional culture of nature is treated as part of the quality life by them. They stay in the destination for a longer period of life in order to get to know it. Sometimes they build deeper relationship with the local people and even further sometimes they get involved in local work. This group of tourists consists of families and friends. With conscious purchase the local products and services are consumed. They think they are responsible for keeping the values of nature in its state. Their commitment is expressed by charity or voluntary work.

Services they are looking for:

- Special resources: flora, fauna, rocks, minerals, etc. Special attractions are not so important.
- Traditional or area-specific hospitality, accommodation and catering. If needed they are fine with sleeping in tents.
- Learning, knowledge broadening
- They collect all information about the given area beforehand

5. Ecotourist:

They regularly make excursions in nature and like the pleasure activities regardless of season and weather. Sustainable approach, conscious environment and respect of nature are all part of their daily life. They are interested in holiday from 1 up till several days.

Services they are looking for:

- Voluntary work in saving environment and nature
- Special accommodation is not important, they are happy to spend the nights in tents.
- During walking in nature, they contribute to saving nature, e.g.: waste collecting, cleaning paths, renovating or re-painting the tourist signs onto trees.



They easily find their ways by using maps and compass. They prefer individual tours.

Demographical factors – lifespan

1. Students

They do not have their own earnings. They are the age of 10-26 and they rely on somebody else. Their holidays are influenced by personalities of others and the activities. The place itself is only on the second place in the rank. Being together with others is more important than the services and activities. Students at the age of 10-16 travel with parents or other responsible person, while students at the age of 16-26 usually travel on their own.

- Pupils of elementary and grammar school: they go to class trips, study travels or participate in other educational events. Potentially the importance of forest schools can be / should be emphasized for this group of people.
- University students: the fault of the school is crucial. Students of natural science travel with special interest. Students of other faculties travel because of loving nature and looking for freedom.

2. Youth without children

It includes the singles or couples between the ages of 18-35. They look for new waves, try their power in mental and in physical ways. They quite often follow the new, trendy directions. Friends and colleagues actively spend their spare time together. In the event of weekend holidays they frequently visit vine gastronomy places and choose village tourism.

3. Families

Organised daily life, building and keeping existence are the main features of this segment. They would like to break out of daily routine but they also search programmes with their children. Family-friendly programmes and events for children are important factors.

4. Mid-and old-aged without children.

The decision is made by their own needs because they do not have children who influence them. At this age the group members re-find themselves and separateness. Beside the fact that they are looking for novelties in their age is definitive. Therefore, comfortable, safe destinations and services are chosen. Purposes of their travel are relaxation and recreation. Thus they prefer quiet, still environment and nice landscape in order to get acquainted with new things.

III. Geographical segments:

1. Domestic Tourists:

- Village communities and small towns (they come from rural environment): natural environment is the matter-of-course. For this group of people the events make the place more attractive.
- Big cities, Budapest: the biggest population is coming from big cities. For them fresh air, the variety of natural environment, gardening, animal husbandry are all experience. We need to take into consideration that nowadays, traditions are mixed with trends, urban features with rural ones and one nation's specialities with others'. Those coming from big cities are looking for real traditional things and would like to know the intact.

2. Foreign Tourists:

Close to the borders, we should treat tourists arriving from the other side of the border can also be hosted. We can expect large number of tourists, to whom beside products and services of ecotourism there are other attractions like vine yards, gastronomy, village tourism. Brochures in foreign languages help the communication. Close to the border use of languages of the neighbouring countries is a must. Foreigners like to meet heritage of nature, observe its values, and take part in voluntary camps for saving nature.

Domestic target market



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The travelling activity of the Hungarian inhabitants in European comparison is low in 2010, but it has grown 1,3% last year. In the first term of the last year, 23 % took part in domestic tourism, at least one occasion of longer travels. Compared to the same period of the year 2009 the travels decreased 1-2 %, but the willingness for spending decreased 4 %. One-third of the consumption came from the population of Budapest and 28 % of it concentrated in the Balaton region. It can be concluded that the weekend travels (1-3 nights) were the most popular ones. 77 % of the Hungarian population has not travelled even for a weekend for touristic purpose. The reason of this is financial (47 %), its secondary reason (20%) is health-problem. Expectedly, 16 % of the population, who could not travel in the first term, will complement it later

Foreign target market

In 2010's number of guests, the rate of foreigners was 46,4 % in national level, in guest nights it was 49,2 %. Incoming tourism was significant in the region of Budapest – Mid-Danube area, where 79,7 % of the guest nights were spent by foreigners. Rate of the foreign guest nights was above 30 % in the regions of the Western Transdanubia (44,0%), at lake Balaton (38,2%), and at the Northern Great Plain (31,2).

Number of foreign guest nights shows high territorial concentration. In 2010, 84,4 % of the foreign guest nights was registered in the three most popular regions: in Budapest – Mid-Danube area (56,1 %), at lake Balaton (16,4 %) and in Western Transdanubia (11,9%).

Introduction of current target markets

Criteria during market segmentation:

1. Description

From the view of the depth of devotion to tourism, sustainable development and ecological approach, the potential target market is the excursionist or the green tourist. From the every day burden the target group is seeking relaxation, reformation in nature. While excursionist must be taught for proper protection and respect of natural values, the occasional green tourist knows and respects the advantage of these. Beside ad hoc visits, study paths, exhibition



rooms, visitor centres can have active role in the programme packages, as there is interest in their active utilization. There is demand for basic information service, like marked tour routes, sign posts, info boards, rest places and brochures. Visual elements can have significant role, as there is significant interest in the experience and spectacle elements (special landscape units, historical past). In this sense, through target-oriented events, they can be involved in tours more actively and can be made as returning guests in the future. The use of restaurants must be secured for this target group as well, but primarily as potential and ad hoc facility.

2. Headcount in group

Most ideal groups are of 5-15 headcounts in forming groups. When active and sport elements are involved, coordination, safe travel and touring can be supervised well both in organised and in individual participation.

In case there is a need for more group members, appointing of more coordinating persons is suggested.

3. Age group

The segmentation on age groups to be involved in the programmes is suggested to prepare according to effort level, duration and load-ability of the routes. According to effort level, duration and load-ability the routes are different complexity, for fitting best to the physiological background, skills and for the material and spare time opportunities. Tour routes are prepared for students of 16-26 years of age, youngsters without children (18-35 years), families with children (25-45 years) and mid-aged or elderly (above 45 years) in the Active tours project.

4. Geographical limits

Target market is especially presented in the South Great Plain region, which can be narrowed to the inhabitants of the area and the cross-border area. The project Active Tours is based on the mutual cooperation of the two areas: Mid-Békés Centre and Arad, of which significant aim is the popularisation and protection of natural and cultural values of the areas with active participation.

5. Defining duration





Duration of tours depends on two elements: firstly the age group of the participants and the effort levels of these tours. The duration can be changed according to the following: some hours, 1-day (from morning till evening), some days (2-4 days), one-week, longer period according to individual needs

6. Determining seasons

Programme packages are prepared basically in seasonal way: from April till September. Considering the compound of the target market, before and after the concerned season, there is no demand for active tours.

7. Introduction of market segments established:

- **Grouping tours according to effort level:**

- In the scale from 1 to 7 the grouping between effort levels is also segmenting factor. Target group of the lighter tours differs from those needing more physical power, stamina and preparation.

- **Defined market segment:**

Tour routes can be suggested for defined market segments, through different communication.

- Youngsters, students (12 – 22 years)
- Family circle (parents - children)
- Groups of friends (based on personal relationships)
- Companies at workplaces (group cohesion)
- Amateur, (active ports communities)
- Pensioners' groups

Banchmarking

It is such an analysing and planning tool, which makes it possible to compare the concerned products and services with the best ones of competitors. For this, the following questions must be answered:

- Why is a tourism attraction good and successful?
- Defining certain example from the country or from cross border area.



- How can target group be attracted and activated?
- Drawing attention and suggestion on the good and successful elements and building them in the Tourism Marketing Strategy.

It was realised in the introduction of the tour organisations that there is no such unified and complex active tourism supply that extends the whole of Arad and Békés counties and involves the cross border tourism programmes. Tour organisations works independently from each other, their collaboration is occasional and rare.

Through the results of this project – with the quality and quantity of the purchased equipments, the extension of tour possibilities and with the 15 active tourism programme packages – we carry out a stopgap-task. The unified tour programmes, the dragon boats, geocaching, questing, biking and canoeing facilities, the piers will provide unique supply in the area.

In wider sense, such competitors can be mentioned which provide unique supply in their own area, so they have exemplifying effect, and not competition. Some examples:

- In traces of Jász Kun Captains
- Active marketing programmes in Őrség
- Wine routes in Arad county

V.3.2. Marketing communications in the project period

Communication principles – requirements

In the communication of project results, it is realised through the following aims:

1. Drawing needs and demands
2. Drawing attention
3. Changing the approach towards health, nature and environment
4. Advertisements
 - a. Printed media
 - b. Audio advertisement
 - c. Audio-visual
5. Personal recommendations



6. PR, as public relations

Operative, short-term communication aims:

- Main media tools in the project period:
 - 8. Promotion leaflet on the project implementation
 - 9. printed, colourful brochure in 3 languages
 - 10. Electronic media, website prepared on own image plan
 - 11. Roll-up boards
- Advertisements
- Appearance in professional events (pl. Travel Exhibition 2012)

Long-term communication aims:

- Presence in the travel book of the Körös Valley Active Tourism
- Marketing supports during future projects;
- Direct Marketing according to the educational institutions of the area
- Personal promotion for professional organisations, tour clubs,
- Political lobby

Way of reaching target groups

Use of different media tools for reaching the defined market segments:

- Youngsters, students (12 – 22 years)
- Family members (parents - children)
- Groups of friends (based on personal relationships)
- Groups of workplaces (cohesion of groups)
- Amateur, active sporting activities
- Pensioners

Marketing communication tools used in the project period

- **Advertisements**



www.kozepbekes.hu;



www.imm-arad.ro;



www.korosoknaturpark.hu

www.huro-cbc.eu; www.hungaryromania-cbc.eu

Information on the project has appeared through television, radio and printed media – primarily to the local inhabitants.

Costs: 5000 € / 5-5 paid advertisements in Arad and in Békés counties

- **Colourful representative brochure**, for the potential and incoming tourists and managers of travel agencies. Most of the European travels are realised in individual organisations, but this will be successful for an area, if it can provide whole information for the potential tourists 5-5000 issues of brochures will be prepared in the project in Hungarian, English and Romanian language.

Costs (editing, printing): 26.500 € / 15000 issues.

- **Leaflet: for giving information on the project in travel agencies and point of sales for those interested.**

A promotional brochure introducing the project and the partnership in general has been prepared.

Cost: 2000 € / 2000 issues.

Roll-up boards: the moveable, mobile boards can be used in several outdoor and indoor programmes. The structure of these boards contains many photos and few descriptions, short expressions that introduce the image and the values of the area to be emphasized. They can be easily set up, portable, needs small space. During the project 2-2 boards will be prepared in Békés and Arad counties

Cost: 2900 € / 4 roll-up boards

- **Website that** emphasizes interactivity instead of the presentational character. The websites of the lead partner in the partnership – the municipal association – and the partner of Arad (CNIPMMR) will be upgraded with the detailed introduction of the routes, the descriptions of the area, and suggestions for accommodation, sport tools, booking facilities.



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During the project the websites of www.kozepbekes.hu and <http://www.imm-arad.ro/activetours/index.php> will be developed.

Cost: 10000 € / 2 websites

- **Event organisation for professionals**

It is important that the professionals be informed on the developments. Therefore, more professional meetings are planned for introducing the developments and presentation facility on other kinds of meetings. In this project more special programmes will be organised till the end of the projects – like two study trips in Arad and Békés counties and the discussion and dissemination of the tour operators concerned.

Cost: 1200 € / 2 study trips

- **Direct-marketing tools**

It is inevitably important to establish such database from the existing addresses, relationships, data, which can be the basis of an efficient direct-marketing activity (Database marketing).

Direct-marketing is the most important tool for contacting the members of the target group and to provide personally targeted messages to them, which are more efficient than the ones not targeted ones. The way of transferring these messages is more and more e-mail instead of the traditional postal letters. The establishment of the database is continuous; there is a guestbook on the pages www.kozepbekes.hu and <http://www.imm-arad.ro/activetours/index.php>, and there is newsletter service, with which interactive communication can be realised among potential tourists

Cost: it is included in the cost of upgrading the website.

V.3.3. Further possible marketing channels in the sustaining period.

- **CD-ROM**, that introduces the area in interactive form. This can have a function of a representative gift for the guests, delegations, and representatives of twin-towns. This



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marketing element has been prepared by the association and the project partner of Hungary. The partner from Arad prepared a CD-ROM of the entrepreneurs' database, of which presentation is further possibility.

- **Meetings outside of the area - introduction „Roadshows”**

Through our partners we have got wide relationship that is suitable for the popularisation outside of the target area. Besides getting the area known with an important target group, the roadshow is the starting point of learning, experiencing process for the leaders of the area.

- **Indirect marketing tools („Below the line”): Public Relations, sponsorship**

Actually, the ones above are included in this group.

Besides those, however, it is definitely important to join to the existing events (Sausage festival, Town Hall nights, Music days of Békés-Tarhos, Music nights of Szabadkígyós, Castle Nights of Gyula, Days of Madzagfalva, Csaba Expo) due to sponsorship.

It is also important that a kind of unified image to the outer world be presented of the events of Mid-Békés Good examples are Days of Arts in Zemplén, the Open Theatres in Szeged, Valley of Arts in Kaposcs with the emphasis of tours and walking in nature, like Körös – the place of active tourism

- **Presentation on social portals**

For youngsters the source of information is more and more the Internet. Within this, the social portals are popular, like facebook, twitter, iwiw – youth can be reached through these. Blogs are also popular ways of self-expression, and information, and the transfer of message as well. It is inevitable today that an event has an Internet profile as well.

- **Use of logos**

With the logos among the image plans, the equipments purchased can be indicated, which means a kind of trademark connected to the project results.



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- **Preparing promotional gifts**

There is a plan for T-shirt among the image plans, with connecting logos, that is suitable for producing such things by the sustaining institution – even caps, pens, notebook, other touring equipments.

- **Hotel card**

The small-sized cards at accommodations provide information on tourism facilities in short and efficient ways. The popularisation of the results of the project Active Tours is possible in the future.

Cost: not planned in the project.

- **Political lobby-activity**

Political lobby activity is basic marketing tool in case of a town or an area. In the view, where marketing is not else than the validation of market-oriented, competition-viewed territory-political concept, it is evidential.

Unfortunately, however in today's practise these two activities – if they are used in towns of areas – are rigidly parted.

Political lobby-activity, in most cases, is occasional, ad-hoc and unorganised. However, it is one of the most efficient tools, through which the situation of the area could be improved. Everywhere in the world, in every government, lobbying exists. This cannot be disdained, is not immoral and not at all to be confused with corruption.

Cost: not planned in the project.



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V.3.4. Demand for human resource in the project and the sustaining period

Two employees were planned to help implementation, but as their budget lines were rejected, the leader of the agency has been doing the tasks – administrative, and the ones connected to the project. This is demanding for one person, so employing another person would be useful. In the sustaining period, the necessary human resource depends on the marketing aims of the elaborated tourism programmes. In case of usual programme and tour organising, employment of two persons at the agency is suggested

VI. Planned budget of the active tourism routes, their market pricing

For the municipal association as owner the project Active Tours does not generate income, the market prices are based on cost-prices. For the groups from the schools and kindergartens of the area, the owner does not count renting fee for the use of the equipments, but the additional costs – like the fees of the tour guide, trailer, and steersman – must be paid by the recipient. The association uses the equipments not by gaining income.

For all of the equipments, there is an agreement, according to which each town can receive all of the equipments for 7 days a month. On the use of this limit, the municipalities can decide they can give their unused time-share to each other. In the time not used, equipments are used by handlers. The association placed the equipments in the tree member-towns according to the agreement above:

- Békés: 2 dragon boats, 10 canoes, 74 life vests, 84 rows, 3 GPS-tools
- Békéscsaba: 12 bicycles, 2 canoes, 6 life vests, 6 rows, 3 GPS-tools
- Gyula: 10 bicycles, 10 pairs of Nordic Walking sticks, 3 GPS-tools.



The Kayak-canoe Club is the handler of the canoes, dragon boats and their accessories and they are responsible for the maintenance and proper store of the boats. GPS tools are also handled by the club. The equipments in Gyula are managed by the Tourism Nonprofit Kft.

In case of the use of the tools the owner and the recipient signs a minute on giving and receiving, that defines that the recipient is obliged to provide proper use of the equipments in the cases of damaging, and stealing.

When using the equipments the following cost-prices can be emerged:

- Fee of steersman in case of dragon boats: 2000 Ft/hour
- fee of transportation: cost of fuel and driver's fee
- Driver's fee: 1000 Ft/every hour started
- Fee of tour guide: 4000 Ft/group for half day, 7000 Ft/group for whole day
- Fee for the use of the pier: 200 Ft/person
- Slipway fee: 2000 Ft/occasion

In general, in case of the following spare time facilities is necessary to add costs:

1. commission of a tour guide
2. Transport of equipments, if the place of departure differs from the storage.
3. Maintenance, fixing costs of the equipments

In the brochure advising tours the accessibility of tour organisers, representatives of clubs, tour guides will be indicated at each route. This brochure gives help for those organising programmes individually and the local tour-clubs as well to connect them guests whom they also target to reach.

VII. Conclusions





It is clear from the above mentioned, that the project financed from the Hungary – Romania Crossborder Cooperation Programme fills the gap in the area, and provides regional basis for active spare time as a more and more powerful tendency in the society. In addition, it provides unified image in Arad and Békés counties, the improvement of popularity of Körös Valley, the long-term possibility of development. The project contributes to the improvement of living standards of the inhabitants, the decrease of migration, indirectly the sustaining of workplaces, as it attracts more tourists, visitors to this region. The results of the project can be reached by everyone, without sexual, ethnical, racial, religious, social identity



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Annex- Image designs of brochure, website, roll-up boards presenting the programme packages

- Roll-up boards
- Brochure (cover – inner pages)
- Logo plans
- Plans for hotel cards
- Plans for T-shirts
- Website menu and design
- Promotion material (cover and inside, in Hungarian and Romanian)

The content of this Békés-Arad Joint Tourism Marketing Strategy does not necessarily represent the official position of the European Union.