



EUROPEAN UNION

EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



# „JOINT STRATEGY FOR THE GENERAL PRESERVATION AND USE OF CULTURAL, RELIGIOUS AND HISTORICAL HERITAGE, AS A BASIS FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF JOINT CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS TOURISM IN THE CROSS-BORDER REGION RUSE - GIURGIU “

[WWW.CHRISt-RO-BG.EU](http://WWW.CHRISt-RO-BG.EU)

V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme 2014-2020

Priority axis: 2, Specific objective: 1, Project name:

„Christian heritage in the Ruse-Giurgiu cultural corridor“

e-MS code: ROBG-302



EUROPEAN CULTURE CENTRE

**European Cultural Center**

21 Zahari Stoyanov Str., 7000 Ruse

tel. 082 821472; +389 899 362440



<b>I. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	4
Methodical framework. Product specifics. Definitions and concepts of cultural and religious tourism. ....	6
<b>II. CURRENT STATE ANALYSIS</b> .....	9
1.1. Review and evaluation of cultural, religious and historical heritage in the cross-border region. ....	9
1.2. Problems in the preservation and preservation of cultural, religious and historical heritage in the cross-border region.....	26
1.3. General characteristics of the cross-border region of Ruse and Giurgiu as a tourist destination for cultural and religious tourism.....	31



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



1.4. Tourist infrastructure.....	36
1.5. Tourist superstructure.....	39
1.6. Tourists flows. Tourist profile .....	46
1.7. Product supply and development potential .....	49
1.8. Human resources .....	55
1.9. Institutional framework .....	57
1.10. Expected trends related to tourist behaviour in the field of cultural and religious tourism	63
2. Factors for the development of cultural and religious tourism .....	67
3. Stakeholder analysis .....	75
4. SWOT analysis .....	77
5. Tree of Trouble.....	88
6. Comparative analysis between Ruse region and Giurgiu County, as well as the cross-border region of Ruse - Giurgiu with other European regions.....	93
7. PEST analysis - processes and trends in the development of cultural and religious tourism in the cross-border region ruse - Giurgiu.....	98
<b>III. STRATEGIC PART</b> .....	106
1. Defining a common vision and mission.....	106
1.1. Vision.....	105
1.2. Mission .....	108
2. Setting strategic objectives.....	109
3. Formulation of priorities, specific objectives, measures and activities .....	110
4. Defining a plan tactic to implement the strategy.....	120
5. Overall assessment of the resources needed to implement the strategy.....	121
6. Evaluation and control - definition of a system of qualitative and quantitative indicators for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the strategy.....	123
7. Definition of a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the strategy.....	126
8. Description of the necessary actions for implementing a partnership and providing information and publicity .....	130
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	138
<b>Applications:</b>	
1. Indicative financial framework for the implementation of a Common Strategy for Cultural Tourism in the cross-border region ruse-Giurgiu.....	141
2. Plan for monitoring of the integrated tourist product as a more sustainable cultural-historical and religious / pilgrimage tourist destination in the cross-border region Ruse - Giurgiu;	



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



3. Table for monitoring of Indicator Target Groups Achieved Value during the monitoring period 2023-2028 of the project Christ Heritage ROBG-302;

4. Questionnaire for clarifying and defining achievable goals by the S.M.A.R.T.E.R.



## I. INTRODUCTION

The strategy for the general preservation and use of the cultural and historical religious heritage to be the basis for the development of joint cultural and religious tourism in the cross-border region of Ruse-Giurgiu was drawn up by a team of the Association "European Cultural Center" in implementation of Contract No ROBG-456-122/ 15.11.2019 with the subject "Joint Strategy for General Preservation and Use of Cultural, religious and historical heritage, as a basis for the sustainable development of joint cultural and religious tourism in the cross-border region of Ruse - Giurgiu", within the framework of the project "Christian Heritage in the Cultural Corridor Ruse-Giurgiu" ("The Christian heritage along the cultural corridor Russe-Giurgiu"), e-MS code ROBG-302, funded under the Interreg Romania-Bulgaria Programme 2014-2020.

The main objective of the project ROBG-302 is to promote the cross-border region ruse-Giurgiu through the development of cultural/religious tourism based on sustainable use of the historical cultural and religious heritage of the region.

The project's expected contribution to the Programme is an increase in the expected number of visits to supported cultural and natural heritage sites and attractions, 3 integrated tourist products/services created, 1 common strategy, policies, or management plans for valorization (including awareness-raising) of cultural and natural heritage through its restoration and promotion to achieve sustainable economic goals.

The drafting of the document is necessary because tourism is a key sector in the development of the cross-border region and particularly tourism related to the use of cultural and historical religious heritage, as indicated in strategic and legislative documents at different levels of government. This potential has not yet been fully exploited. There are no developed common tourist products, including from the field of cultural and historical, and religious heritage. Unique objects transferring within the cross-border dimension are for the most part unknown outside local communities.

The creation of a common cultural and religious tourist product is the best way to make full use of the cultural and historical and religious assets of the region. Its development, improvement, and innovation will contribute to achieving sustainable economic growth and improving the social environment in the medium and long term. A systematic assessment of the extent to which the cultural and historical and religious heritage in the region is effectively committed to the economic development of the Ruse-



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Giurgiu Euroregion will help to fully exploit the existing potential. Restoration and adaptation to modern tourism standards are the necessary steps for the preservation of cultural and historical heritage and its use as a resource for the development of sustainable tourism.

The development of the strategy contributes to the creation of a clear long-term framework for sustainable preservation, management, development, and use of cultural and historical, and religious heritage in the Ruse-Giurgiu region through the development of cultural and historical, and religious tourism. The strategy will include a monitoring plan for integrated tourism products.

The strategy should ensure the continued competitiveness of the region as a tourist destination for cultural and historical and religious tourism, supporting the overall development of the tourism sector. It is a systematic approach to monitoring the sustainable use of resources related to cultural and historical and religious heritage in the region.

The new point in the strategy is to see the cultural and religious heritage of the Ruse region and Giurgiu county as a single whole and for the project to develop cross-border dimensions for the common cultural and religious heritage in the cross-border Euroregion ruse - Giurgiu.

Unlike the existing cross-border strategy to promote the tourist potential of the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu, **this joint strategy ROBG-302 is a thematic and specialized strategy under cultural and religious tourism.**

The development of the strategy contributes to the creation of a clear framework for the sustainable preservation, management, development, and use of cultural and historical, and religious heritage in the Euroregion.

The main task of the developed strategy is to ensure the continued competitiveness of the region as a tourist destination for cultural and historical and religious tourism, to support the sustainable development of the tourism sector, to take into account the expectations and intentions of all stakeholders to meet requirements for proper, realistic and stable positioning and market implementation of the integrated tourist product. The strategy contains a plan for monitoring the integrated tourist products made under the project.

Through the integrated tourist, products will be carried out in orderly and coordinated use of the sites with a common axis in the cultural and historical, and religious potential.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



- ⊕ Methodical framework.
- ⊕ Product specifics.
- ⊕ Definitions and concepts of cultural and religious tourism.

Cultural and historical tourism is one of the largest and most profitable sectors in tourism. Cultural and historical and religious attractions, rituals, rituals, and traditions are elements that attract tourists and at the same time contribute to the development of the economy and are attracted to capital.

For most of the 20th century, tourism and culture were seen as separate aspects of destinations. Cultural resources were part of the historical heritage of the regions, which are related to the education of the local population and are the basis for local and national identities. Tourism, on the other hand, was largely seen as a leisure activity. This gradually changes, as the role of culture in attracting tourists becomes more obvious.

Culture is used as an aspect of the tourist product and a strategy for presenting the destination. Tourism is integrated into cultural development and supports the preservation of heritage. This interaction between tourism and culture is seen as one of the most important reasons for promoting the direct link between these two elements. It is even more significant, given their growing importance to the economies of the world.

The relationship between culture and tourism can be considered two-way – in terms of benefits for each country.

The benefits for tourism from interacting with culture are:

- ⊕ improvement of the basic product;
- ⊕ improving the image of the destination;
- ⊕ increase in consumption and length of stay;
- ⊕ increase the satisfaction of tourists with a unique product;
- ⊕ stimulation of re-visit;
- ⊕ stimulating local and regional demand;
- ⊕ opening up new market segments.

The cultural benefits of interacting with tourism are:

- ⊕ realization of additional income;
- ⊕ expansion of the market and a new segment of visitors;
- ⊕ development of professional management of cultural resources;





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



- ⊕ better control over the use of cultural resources;
- ⊕ building a better cultural image among the local population

The widespread cultural, economic and social benefits stimulate the policy of promoting and creating a link between culture and tourism, i.e. the development of cultural tourism at the world, national and local level. Travelling to get acquainted with foreign cultures allows tourists and locals to meet the differences of each community.

Culture is important for tourism and the competitiveness of destinations. It is a major factor in attractiveness, not only in terms of tourism but also in attracting residents and investment. Culture is essential for building an image of the country. Cultural tourism is one of the key tools in developing a positive image of destinations internationally.

Tourism has taken an important role in the development of destinations around the world, and culture is a major asset to its development. The most successful destinations are those that can create an interaction between culture and tourism.

The criteria for developing a positive link between them are:

- ⊕ the durability of cultural assets;
- ⊕ degree of involvement of local communities;
- ⊕ possibility to deliver all goods and services in the given territory to satisfy the requirements of tourists;

As a baseline element in the methodology of this document, the definition of the [World Tourism Organization \(SOT\)](#) \* [Tourism and Culture is fully adopted | UNWTO](#)

Source: <https://www.unwto.org>

**"Cultural tourism is a type of tourist activity where the main motivation of the tourist is to learn, discover, experience, and consume movable and real attractions/products in a tourist destination. These attractions and products are associated with a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional characteristics of society, which encompass art, architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries, and the living culture of the community with its way of life, value system, beliefs, and traditions".**

The analysis and the strategic part are in line with the theme of the project "Christian Heritage in the Cultural Corridor Ruse-Giurgiu" and focus on the topic of how the use of cultural, religious and historical heritage



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



should be the basis for the sustainable development of joint cultural and religious tourism in the cross-border region of Ruse - Giurgiu.

The following subtypes of cultural tourism are covered:

1. Cultural and historical tourism, understood as tourism motivated by an interest in the material and intangible heritage and in one of its more specific subspecies - cultural and religious tourism.
2. Religious, understood as tourism to explore the religious-cultural heritage and familiarization with the history of cult, religious-historical, archaeological and architectural sites, with or without participation in religious festive events in the given place of worship or tourist destination; visiting religious sites and places, mainly motivated by the satisfaction of spiritual needs and travel, to worship holy places of faith or participate in religious rituals, regardless of the artistic value of the objects or events.

The scope of the topic does not imply an examination of other subtypes of cultural and historical tourism, such as a museum, archaeological, ethnic-folklore, etc. or other subspecies of cultural tourism - festival, event and creative tourism, culinary, wine, etc., but takes them into account in their potential context as a possible resource for the development of mixed forms of tourism.



## II. ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

### 1.1. Review and evaluation of cultural, religious and historical heritage in the cross-border region

The geographical position of the Ruse region and Giurgiu County is a prerequisite for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism and the development of the regional tourist product. The tourist potential of the regions studied is highly appreciated but is under-explored, developed and familiar to consumers.

Presentation of the potential of Christian heritage in the territorial scope of the two regions for the development of cultural-historical and religious tourism.

The analysis is based on the results of the discussions of realized meetings with Bulgarian and Romanian stakeholders, specialists and experts in the field of confesses and tourism (as well as from studies carried out within the framework of the project). The analysis focuses on the territorial scope for the development







EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the Bulgarian administrative region of Ruse, which geographically mainly overlaps with the territory of the Ruse Spiritual District, part of Ruse metropolitan and the Romanian district of Giurgiu, which overlaps geographically with the territory of the Giurgiu Diocese.

Located on both banks of the Danube, the two administrative districts are characterized by a diverse landscape, with wide plains and slightly hilly formations, rich flora and fauna, a wealth of ancient, medieval and late medieval temples and monasteries, as well as diverse historical monuments, of recent times, possessing architectural and artistic merits.

The administrative areas of the two countries are separated by a natural border - the Danube River, but it is a prerequisite for opportunities for river tourism. The two districts are united by the bridge over the Danube as a key point of the transport infrastructure and especially by the pair of cities on both sides: Ruse-Giurgiu, which contribute through their cooperation to regional and national development.

Giurgiu County and Ruse region have a valuable cultural heritage consisting of archaeological artefacts, historical monuments, monuments of art and architecture, folklore heritage, Thracian and Roman fortresses, monuments of medieval religious and secular architecture, fortified buildings, museums and museum houses, settlements of cultural and historical interest. This rich existing resource has not been brought to its appropriate levels of performance in front of potential tourists.

The tourist potential of the cultural heritage of the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu is extremely rich and diverse. It contains components, some of which, by their specificity, possess exceptional uniqueness. The need for a higher level of absorption of the existing heritage through the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism is evident.

The cultural and historical and religious heritage of the Euroregion and its development is necessary to set a major goal in the development of the local tourism industry, both because of the peculiarities and intrinsic interest it represents, as well as because of the continuous growth of tourism in the field of cultural and historical and religious destinations, related to knowledge of its past or heritage of other cultures and civilizations. Their potential in the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism, it is appropriate to make acquaintance among the inhabitants of the Euroregion about the positive effects of the development of cultural heritage and its economic dimensions and importance for regional economic development.

In several situations, tourist travel is the main motivation for recreation, but tourists can take advantage of staying in a particular destination and learn new things, satisfy their cultural curiosity by visiting historical ruins, museums and archaeological sites, participating in various festivals and cultural events, getting involved in the traditional life of the community, getting a unique experience. This turns cultural heritage into a basic tourist resource to increase tourist flow in the Euroregion.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The motives for choosing tourists for this specific form of tourism are many:

- personal or family education;
- satisfying curiosity;
- Search for the roots;
- the experience of cultural impressions;
- search for provocations for intellectual experiences;
- a desire to see such a community or to experience something completely different from everyday life;
- cultural interaction.

The satisfaction of motivation and interests is carried out by recourse to various forms of cultural and historical and religious tourism. Most of them have as a resource regional cultural heritage, as well as programs that combine different components of the material heritage. To become a sought-after attraction, this heritage should be developed through the course of sustainable development (maintenance, enrichment and relay to the coming generations), and also from the point of view of the tourist. The coverage of cultural and historical and religious heritage as a tourist resource contains cultural, scientific, moral and ethical responsibility. The importance of the individual components of cultural heritage is built on their proper public works, as well as the adjacent area.

Cultural and religious heritage as a tourist resource would benefit both the tour operator and the residents located around, both through the revenues that would be received and through various territorial and logistical works, which the locals are likely to benefit from. The benefits for tourists do not remain within the framework of cultural and spiritual enrichment. The well-managed and presented to the public cultural and historical heritage performs various essential social functions: getting to know local and national history; socio-cultural enrichment of the public; preservation and preservation of historical artefacts; education; In merging cultural activities with the monetization of various tourist activities, the subsequent economic result leads to sustainable development by achieving self-financing from fees, merchandising and other financial instruments. The potential of the Ruse-Giurgiu Euroregion has conditions for the realization of economic sustainability.

Cultural and historical heritage needs to be optimally developed. Thus, it is transformed into a tourist resource with the potential to influence diverse tourist circles. The development of a society that values the culture of rest, together with several social and mental factors, contributed to an increase in cultural and religious tourism worldwide, to its transformation into a mass phenomenon. The greatest contribution to



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



the boom in cultural and historical and religious tourism has the public with an affinity for historical monuments. Their attractiveness increases through their public works activities. This is rooted in the claims of the public, and also in the rigour of specialists in the field, requiring the protection from damage or destruction of the particular monument. Subject to the basic principles, the economic, cultural and social value of the monuments will increase, in several cases, a specific site or entire destination can not only survive, but also develop. Considering that the state of many historical monuments is often in question, the approach to optimal development is a tool for engagement in the preservation and restoration of cultural and historical monuments.

Restoration, preservation and presentation activities to the local community should be carried out with maximum responsibility, using authentic materials and documents for this purpose. Both suspected and common obstacles, such as the lack of close specialists, the preservation of authenticity, and problems related to available technologies and materials, should be taken into account and overcome. It is necessary to take into account important financial resources that are essential, taking into account those for ongoing maintenance, emergency conservation or the like.

The assessment of the cultural and historical and religious heritage in its essential share is not in the quantitative financial dimension when assessing the relevant goods, but in the spiritual, cultural and financial assessment of the essential intangible elements determining its importance to modern society. The defining role here is key intangible elements: uniqueness of the site, the cultural symbols of which it is a medium, its history and its creators, value, prestige and importance to the community, etc. The heritage needs to be explored kaleidoscopically, from different perspectives, so that its value potential in historical, artistic, cultural and spiritual significance is maximally reached.

Numerous ancient, medieval and Renaissance churches and monasteries are found in the cross-border Euroregion. Their historical and cultural wealth, as well as their location among beautiful natural areas, turns them into destinations with high potential for cultural and historical and religious tourism. In Ruse spiritual district there are four monasteries, the temples are 82, and in the Giurgiu Diocese there are 11 monasteries in force and there are 171 temples.

South of the Danube.

The most famous in Ruse are the churches "Holy Trinity" and "St. George", the monastery "St. Dimitar Basarbovski", the religious complex of the Ivanovo Rock Churches, the Monasteries "St. Marina" in the village of Karan Vrbovka and "St. Petka" at the village of Koprivets.

In the churches and monasteries, there are exceptional icons created by painters from the classical Bulgarian art schools, as well as monocytes, made by famous masters. Increased interest for tourists, and religious pilgrims, are miraculous icons and particles of relics of saints located in some of the temples. This applies,



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



for example, to the monastery "St. Dimitar Basarbovski" and the Church of St. George in Ruse. Another potential available to monasteries in the Euroregion and which relates to the development of religious tourism is healing springs and plasma, which are believed to drink from their water and wash with this water to bring miraculous healing. Healing spring – „ayazmo“, which is believed to cure eye diseases, is located in the monastery "St. Marina" in the village of Karan Verbovka.

The drawing power needs to visit is the type of religious sites, their historical antiquity and date, all factors influencing the visit of sites that are subject to cultural and historical and religious tourism. Early Christian basilicas from the 4th-6th century were the first form of cult Christian sites in the region. As archaeological sites, they are widely popular with tourists and are sought after and visited by a small number of tourists. To note, most of them have not been restored and promoted. Additional potential for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism is the rock monasteries, which are located in the Ruse Diocese, along the valley of the Rusenski Lom River. The Monastery of St. Dimitar Basarbovski, Ivanovo Rock Monasteries, a UNESCO site and among the top 10 visited destinations in Bulgaria, as well as the medieval town of Cherven. There is a symbiotic product reconciling elements of cultural and historical and religious tourism. Towering high in the rocks, with their medieval frescoes and monastic cells, the rock churches carved into the stone of the deep river canyon are highly attractive places for numerous tourists.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



## Diocese of Ruse



Among the emblem sites for the Ruse region with significant cultural and historical and religious value are:

### Ivanovo Rock Churches

Ivanovo Rock Churches is one of nine Bulgarian monuments listed in 1979 on the UNESCO World Heritage List. They are located 22 kilometres south of Ruse and are made up of a network of twenty small rock churches, chapels and cells dug at different heights in the rocks of the river canyon of Russenski Lom river. They are connected by a network of rock stairs and paths.

The first hermits carved their cells there as early as the XII century. And the frescoes from the 14th century testify to a highly developed artistic mastery characteristic of the picturesque school of the old Bulgarian capital Tarnovo.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Once upon a time, the rock churches were over 40, and the cells were about 300. They were inhabited by monks, many of them grammars and scribes, and Christians went there for worship. Bulgarian kings and boyars from the era of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (XII-XIV century) sent stonemasons to carve into the rocks new temples, and zographs to paint them with the holy images.

### Rock Monastery "St. Dimitar Bassarbovski"

During most of the era of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (13th – 14th centuries) Basarbovski Rock Monastery was an integral part of a monastery isyhasht complex that covers the canyon of the river Rusenski Lom and its tributaries Beli Lom and Cherni Lom. The isyhasht monks (from the Greek – isychia - silence, silence) carved their chapels and cells into the limestone cliffs. Away from worldly vanity, they live ascetically, in prayer and fasting. The purpose of their sojourn, in constant prayer, deprivation, and silence, is to see Jesus Christ in His original light—the one in which the Savior appeared on Mount Tabor.

The Basarbovo Monastery is dedicated to St. Theodore Tyrone and St. Theodore Stratilat. Ktitor of the monastery became Queen Teodora, who was the first wife of Tsar John Alexander and daughter of the Wallachki voivode Ivanko Basarab, founder of the first dynasty of Vlachia. Hence the name of the monastery. Ivanko Basarab, as a royal father-in-law, owned this land.

The rock churches and sketes/rock hermitages had a variable fate during the Ottoman invasion. Ottoman tax register from 1479 – 1480 testifies to "Basarba Monastery". The life of Saint Sofronius Bulgarian (Basarbovski), who lived in the 16th century as a monk, is mentioned in the Basarbovo Monastery, where the saint is passed away from violent death. After his burial, miracles begin to happen on his grave. In the third year, they opened his grave and found his body inertly and fragrantly. Its relics are located in Serbia.

The only saint from the Rousse region, born and known in the village of Basarbovo – St. Dimitri Basarbovski is famous since the 17th century. This is what Paisii Hilendarski testified about in "Slavyanobolgarskaya History". St. Dimitrius is a spiritual shepherd of the village of Basarbovo, who accepted monasticism in the Basarbovo Monastery. Paisii mentions his success in 1685.

Its relics were found wonderfully in the Rusenski Lom River, opposite the monastery. Through the relics of the saint, there are many miracles and healings.

On July 10, 1774, one of the many Russo-Turkish wars ended. The peace treaty was signed by Kyuchuk Kaynardzha. Russia is a winner. Under the treaty, Russia is given the right to patronize Orthodox Christians on the territory of the Ottoman Empire. General Saltikov must carry the relics of St. Dmitry Basarbovski to Russia. At the request of the Bulgarian with a noble title, Dimitar Mint, who served as an adviser and translator with the general, the relics were not taken to the distant Russian borders, but to neighbouring Vlachia and laid in the Metropolitan Church in Bucharest.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Ruse was built in 1632.

It was dug four and a half meters below the level of the yard due to the requirements of the Sultan's authority. The current appearance of the temple is after the Liberation. Two chapels were built through donations. One is dedicated to St. Patrick's Day. It has not functioned since 1979 and in 1983 it was converted and has a museum exposition for church art, icons and old printed books. The second chapel is dedicated to the holy brothers Cyril and Methodius. It was consecrated on March 16, 1886, by Metropolitan Grigory Dorostolian and Chervenski. The Cathedral of the Holy Trinity was declared a Monument of Culture of National Importance in 1983.

#### Monastery "Sveti Marina"

The Monastery "St. Marina" is located near the village of Karan Warbovka, Municipality of Two Mounds, Rusenska region and is one of the oldest Bulgarian monasteries that arose during the Second Bulgarian Kingdom. After the fall of Bulgaria under Ottoman rule, the authorities and the monks and Christians began. The monastery was burned down and levelled with the land, as well as other prominent Bulgarian saints, but the name of the holy Marina remained permanently in the minds of the people. The legend states that on a hot July day, during the harvest, the owner of the field – a Turk who left his blind twelve-year-old boy to sleep at one end of the field, and he went to work, the child woke up and went looking for his father. Running it stepped into the water. He drank from the water after he washed his face. Joyful, surprised and frightened, he ran towards his father, and when he made sure his children saw him, he was very happy. Without taking too long, he grabbed him and ran to the nearby village to share his joy and ask his inhabitants what Christian holiday they were celebrating and who is the saint who works miracles with this water? An old priest replied that he had heard from old clerics that the name of St. Patrick's Day had been known in the place in question. great martyr Marina, and that there is her "Agiazma" (a spring with holy healing water). The day is July 17, which is the day Orthodox Christians celebrate her bright memory. Thank you for St. Patrick's Day. Marina, the other person who gave the fields with AGUIASMATA, under oath, by going there sick, to have accommodation. The miracle spread not only to Bulgaria but also to Moldovlahia, Serbia, etc. Since then and today, the memory of St. Patrick's Day has been a great time. Marina's got it, and it's not forgotten.

#### St. Petka Church

The architectural project of the St. Petka Temple is the first bold and successful attempt to recreate one of the masterpieces of the First Bulgarian State – the Round Church (Golden Church) in Preslav, built by Tsar Simeon I. The church was built in the late 1930s near the only preserved gate of the old fortress of the city. The project was prepared by the Rouse architect Lyuben Dinolov. The construction began with the local master entrepreneur Nikola Ivanov Kolchev. The iconostasis was made in 1942 by the Rouse carving Georgi



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Genov. The icons are the work of Georgi Karakashev, Todor Yankov and Nikola Pinkoff. The frescoes are painted by Prof. Nikola Kojuharov, Tsanko Vasilev and decorator Petar Mihaylov. The unique church has been crumbling for years because of an unstable foundation. It is built on a finger-singed fortified urban moat. St. Paraskeva (St. Petka) is considered the patron saint of Romania. The relics of the saint are stored in the town of Varna. Iasi.

St. George's Church Ruse is a three-nave basilica with three altars: the central "St. George", the northern "St. Dimitri Basarbovski" and the southern "St. Nikolai Mirlikian Miracle Worker". Built between 1841 and 1842 on the ruins of a wooden church, burned in 1806-1812, St. George's Church is a copy of the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Ruse, but unlike it is not dug into the ground. In the church are preserved the icons of the old iconostasis, painted in 1842 by Zahari Tsanyov and Ioanniki Papavitanov from Tryavna. In 1928, the new iconostasis, the bishop's throne and the two singers were made by the artist-carving Ivan Travnitcki. In 1958, the iconostasis was replaced by a new one, the work of Professor Nikolay Kojuharov and the artist Tsanko Vasilev. St. George is a common defender of Ruse and Giurgiu. A fragment of his patron's relics is stored in the temple.

St. Paul of the Cross is a Roman Catholic church in Ruse, Bulgaria, the cathedral of the Diocese of Nikopol. The temple is dedicated to the founder of the Passionists - St. Paul of the Cross.

In 1892, the temple was completed and the style was neo-Gothic with a 31-meter belfry. The project is by the Italian architect Valentino Dell Antonio from Moena. The temple is decorated in the style "Bible for the laity". During mons. Henri Dulce, the Catholic cathedral in Ruse, is furnished with a beautiful carving of the altars and the necessary Gothic-style furniture, which was supplied by Bohemia. The beautiful artistic stained glass windows are made by the master painter Sandor from Budapest, Hungary. The temple is a rare example of Gothic architecture (brick Neo-Gothic) in Bulgaria.

In the cathedral is located the oldest preserved organ in Bulgaria, installed here in 1908 for 10 days by Mateki technique. The organ is of the German organ-building company Voit, Karlsruhe, and is one of the few survivors of the Second World War. It has a romantic sound and is the only one with a pneumatic tract in Southeastern Europe.

The Armenian Church "St. Mary" in Ruse was built in 1832 on the site of the burned church built in 1610.

A church was built in 1610 in the Armenian neighbourhood in Ruse. It is a wooden building, and at the back of its yard is located in the Armenian cemetery. The church was burned down and in 1832 it was half dug into the ground. Three tunnels were dug, taking out the city limits in the case of a possible Turkish invasion. The gates of two of them have been preserved. There are three apses on the central altar elevation.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



North of the Danube.

The territory of Giurgiu County is rich with its many churches and monasteries and their promotion can make the region a popular destination for tourists, lovers of cultural and historical tourism as well as tourists-pilgrims.

In Giurgiu County, 540 historical sites have been registered as part of the cultural heritage. They are registered with the Romanian National Heritage Institute, at the Ministry of Culture. The sites are located in the urban and rural areas of the district. Of these, 112 are religious Christian temples, 20 of which are of national importance, some church temples and monasteries are impressive for their architecture, painting and historical significance. Some of them are among the most important buildings in all of Romania. With their unique archaeological and ethnographic exhibits, they are part of the national cultural and historical and religious heritage. Tourist religious sites receive a large number of visitors during various Christian holidays, and temple holidays of churches and monasteries. The most popular destination for worship on the territory of the district is the Comana Monastery Complex, in the area of which are seven of the twenty sites of national cultural importance throughout the district.

Regarding religion and religion, it should be mentioned that in the city of Giurgiu, the Christian Orthodox religion, Roman Catholic religion, Baptist religion, Jehovah's Witnesses religion, Pentecost religion, and gospel religion are present.

The predominant places of worship belonging to the Romanian Orthodox Church, are the Episcopal Cathedral "Adormirea Maicii Domnului" ("Assumption of the Virgin Mary"), the Church of Buna Vestire, the Church of Înălțarea Domnului, the Church of Sfântul Gheorghe, the Church of Sfântul Haralambie, the Church Sfânta Treime Smârda, Sfântul Gheorghe Nou Church, Sfânta Maria Church and Sfântii Martiri Brancoveni Church, as well as two monasteries, the Sfântul Ierarh Nicolae "Sfântul" and monastery Mare Mucenic Gheorghe".

The places of worship of other Christian denominations should also be mentioned, respectively: The Church "Vizita sfinților Fecundare Maria", belonging to the Roman Catholic faith, the Filadelfia Pentecost Church belonging to the Pentecost denomination, the Baptist church "Sfânta Treime", belonging to the Baptist faith, Adventist house of prayer belonging to the religion of seventh-day Adventists, Romanian evangelical church and Hall of the Kingdom Jehovah's Witnesses.

Some of the more significant sites of cultural and historical and religious heritage in Giurgiu are:





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Comana Monastery - located in commune Comana

It is a place of worship, built by the ruler Vlad the Zeppelin, in 1461, on an island surrounded at that time by swamps. The place was reached by a wooden bridge.

The original wooden building did not last in time and was therefore reworked under the ruler Radu Sherban in 1588. The newly built monastery has the appearance of a fortress, in the form of a straight quadrilateral, with external walls and five towers that go beyond the firewalls, a church is erected in the fenced space.. It was plastered and painted from the inside, surrounded by cells outside.

It is believed that here is located the tomb of Vlad the Zeppelin, a remarkable ruler of the Romanian state, who was killed on the road between Bucharest and Giurgiu. Also buried here was the senior boyar Dragici Kantacusino, who died in Constantinople, and his son, Konstantin Dragici - thus creating a long-term connection between the Comana area and the Cantakusino family.

During the reign of Matthew Basarab, the monastery became one of the largest religious centres in Romania. The wealth of possessed power gives it great greatness.

During the battles against the Ottomans in 1657-1662, and the Russo-Turkish War of 1768-1774, the monastery was at the centre of the public's attention. However, the years that followed and his mismanagement left their mark on him, bringing destruction, degradation and squandering of the wealth and relics he had previously owned.

In 1932, based on the guidelines given by the famous Romanian historian and politician, Nicolae Yorga in 1919, a Mausoleum of the Heroes Fallen in the First World War was built in the courtyard of the monastery. The monastery is an active male monastery, and for several years an attractive Historical Museum in the open air has been working.

Comana combines a natural park with an ornithological observatory offering 10 different thematic routes, with starting points from Cullugareni, Comana, Mihai Bravu, Islaz, and Mugura-Zboyu. Casa Comana offers a spa and adventure park with various entertainment options - seven routes with different levels of difficulty - including archery and riding lessons, boating or kayaking, moto-paraglider flight, carriage rides, bicycles and funicular - "tyroline", the longest in Romania, for 120 meters. Near the complex, in 2011 a small workshop museum was opened, a special place in Romania dedicated to the old professions in the field of books, called the Paper Mill or the Paper Mill. The ten creative workshops are based on the crafts practised in the traditional Romanian village: weaving loom, processing of cane and reed-mace, forging, ceramics and woodworking, traditional cuisine, mill and bakery, but also handmade paper, manual printing and bookmaking skills.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Together with the attractive Open-Air History Museum, with artefacts related to Vlad Theepesh Dracula and his family and addition - a rich souvenir shop, which also offers products prepared by the monks – monastery wine, sweets and jams typical of the zone – all this makes Comana an undisputed leader for tourism in the region.

#### Church of St. Nicholas in Draganescu

St. Nicholas Church, Draganescu Parish is among hundreds of churches that have kept the flame of the Christian faith among the people for centuries.

The parish is located on the road between the town of Mihaileshty and Malu Spart commune and belongs to the Mehailesht commune and covers the villages of Draganescu and the Post office.

The church on the right bank of Arges was founded in 1870 by Petre Danescu and John Dumitrescu on the site of the current church.

The unique value of the place is given by the painted interior frescoes, made by Father Arseniy Boca, pastor and painter. It was Father Savian Bunescu who invited Father Arsenius to paint the church, providing the necessary conditions for the extraordinary work to materialize- painting of great theological, spiritual and catechetical significance, which also includes prophetic messages. During this period Father Arseniy lived in Draganescu, but also in Bucharest and Sinaia, often travelling daily.

A moment at a crossroads in the history of the parish was 1987 when part of the village of Draganescu was demolished to build the Mihaileshti Dam to create an artificial lake on the Arges River. Many villagers lost their homes and were moved to the village of Mihaileshty, and the church was on the demolition list. Two things help to preserve the place of worship. On the one hand, the director of the Regional History Museum in Giurgiu, Vasile Barbu, who was impressed by the frescoes, decided to list the church in the list of historical monuments of category C. On the other hand, Father Arseniy Boca performed a special prayer that the church should not be destroyed.

Father Arseniy Boca devoted 15 years to trying to create a "Sistine Chapel" of Romanian orthodoxy. The mantle of Prislop, with whom much of his fate is connected and where he was buried in 1989, has since been a place of worship for thousands of believers honouring him as a martyr and a miracle worker.

#### St. John Rusin Monastery - Slobozia Commune

This is a monastic monastery erected on the site of former old barracks, one kilometre away from Slobozia.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The church of the monastery stores some of the relics of St. John of Russia and particles from the relics of several saints, such as St. John of Russia. John Zlatoust, St. Nikolay The Miracle Worker, St. Nicholas Elefthrium, St. Polycarp of Izmir, but also part of the Holy Cross.

St. Panteleimon Church in Vedeia municipality.

St. Panteleimon Church – Vedeia, Vedeia Giurgiu 1720 was built as a wooden building. In 1845 the current building was built by apostolic Arsache – a doctor, politician and philanthropist, Prime Minister of Romania under the reign of Alexander John Kuza. It was built in memory of his son – he killed himself because of a romantic drama with his beloved – Jewish. Painted with icons by the famous Romanian artist Gheorghe Tatarescu, a disciple of Nicolae Grigorescu and a pioneer of neoclassicism in artistic painting in Romania. St. Panteleimon – patron of the church in the city of Vedeia is the patron saint of over 219 churches in Bulgaria.

Stone Cross - Kalugareni Commune, Kruča de Piatra

The monument from Kalugareni is reminiscent of the famous battle of August 13-23, 1595, when the Christian army of mountains, led by the army Mihai Vitiazu, defeated twice the larger Ottoman army, led by the great Vizir Sian Pasha, who intended to turn the territory into an area ruled by the Ottoman Pasha- „pashaluk“.

In 1682, the ruler Sherban Cantakusino erected an imposing stone cross, right where the battle was won

Over time, a village, now called Krucha de Piatra (Stone Cross), belonging to the municipality of Kalugareny, appeared near the monument.

In 1862, to protect the monument was placed was a chapel, with side windows and a leaded steel roof.

In 1993, on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the ascending of the ruler Mihai Vitiazu on the throne of the Romanian State, the old inter-war cross was replaced by a new, large-sized one.

The Cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary is the seat of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Giurgiu. Initially, the building was a parish church; an inscription from 1859 (written in Romanian Cyrillic) shows that the church of the same name was built underground on the site in 1806 since the Ottoman authorities did not allow churches to be built above the ground. The current church was built from 1840-to 1852. These stones were taken from the walls of Giurgiu's citadel, as noted in an 1832 document by General Kiselyov, who gave his approval.

The cathedral is spacious, with Byzantine shapes: straight lines and semicircular arches, thick walls, square columns, large windows and spherical towers. Built in a style characteristic of its time, it underwent significant changes in the first half of the 20th century. A new roof was installed and two wooden towers



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



were replaced with reinforced concrete. Two tympanons are built on the north and south sides to the right of the rear apse, as well as the frieze and architrave under the cornice. In the interior, people, the balcony and the pulpit have been replaced and wooden floors are laid in the sanctuary. In the nave and the antechamber above the stone, the base is placed granite floor.

In the thirties began a major restoration, as the old frescoes were made so much. In 1930 the belfry was renovated and a parish house was built. The original interior painting was made in oil, in the decadent style of Gheorghe Tatarescu, by the artist Nicolae Pitaru. The current frescoes, executed in a thick, non-Byzantine style, are the work of the artist Nicolae Stancu from 1939 to 1959, refreshed and restored between 1989 and 2005 by Ion Drejoi, his disciple. The Baroque iconostasis, dating back to the 19th century, was painted in Pitaru oil. The church in length covered three apses, including a dozen large icons, but was reduced to its current size in the summer of 1948.

In the years of its existence, the cathedral acquired a valuable collection of property donated by believers from Romania and abroad. For example, an icon with the Holy Trinity was donated by the widow of the Russian general in honour of the souls of her husband and his fallen comrades.

The Roman Catholic Church "Visiting the Virgin Mary" in Giurgiu is a historical and architectural monument. The place of worship serves as the seat of the Roman Catholic parish Visiting the Virgin Mary of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese in Bucharest. The Roman Catholic Church in Giurgiu was built between 1930 and 1933 with the support of the Belgian, Italian, French, German, Hungarian and Austrian communities who came to work in the port of Giurgiu. The current church began to be built in 1930 after the chapel building and the original parish house was demolished. On May 11, 1933, Archbishop Alexandru Theodor Cisar dedicated the new place of worship. The construction style is neo-Roman. The church has 3 bodies: an atrium, a central ship with a square tower and a pentagonal presbytery. The altar and chapel are made of wood.

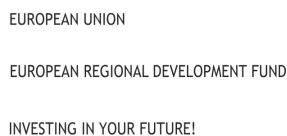
Giurgiu County has an important treasure trove of archaeological remains, historical monuments, monuments of art or architecture, as well as an invaluable folklore heritage, which testifies to the evolution and perseverance of these lands, to the development of culture and art. This whole cultural and historical fund represents a significant part of the tourist proposal and a component of the tourist image of the Giurgiu-Ruse region in the Danube region on the international market.

The district has historical monuments, of art and medieval, religious and secular architecture, built in a variety of architectural styles and distributed throughout the territory, representing valuable cultural potential.

In some religious buildings erected in stages, a combination of different styles can be observed, depending on the time during which they were built.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



## 1.2. Problems in the preservation and preservation of cultural, religious and historical heritage in the cross-border region

Modern tourist is looking for new ways and different techniques to increase the emotional value of a holiday. Tourists, and guests of the tourist destination, can have positive and negative impacts on the environment. The essential thing is to encourage positive tendencies and reduce negative ones.

Higher attainment of general education level and culture may be generally assigned to positive trends; preservation of cultural and historical and religious heritage. Negative effects are deterministic by changes in the cultural environment; the exploitation of cultural and religious systems; the destruction and lack of maintenance of cultural monuments and traditions; especially with the uncontrollable increase in tourist flow, etc. It should be said that the successful tourist management of cultural and historical and religious heritage is also essential due to the need to control the excessive overexposing of cultural traditions and norms.

Climatic characteristics play an essential role in tourism. The climate is a basic factor for the attractiveness of the destination, deciding on the time of taking a holiday, as well as the choice of the type of tourism and the cost of it. On holiday, the weather conditions at the destination are crucial for the satisfaction of the trip. Bad weather conditions, such as warm weather fronts, cold, heavy rainfall, storms and other atmospheric anomalies, have often unpleasant consequences for the perception of a tourist destination and the repeatability of visiting the destination.

No systematic studies have been carried out on the effects caused by the human factor as no assessment has been made of the impact of climate dynamics on cultural and historical and religious sites. The effects of tourist visits would be appropriate to analyse in such a way that the particular destination is authentically stored.

The importance of cultural and historical and religious artefacts, their credibility, as well as the preservation and conservation of resources, are basic conditions for the market imposition of the sites as tourist destinations. The evolution of modern cultural and historical and religious tourism raises both questions about reducing the negative results of the boom in visits to historical places of cultural and religious value, as well as how likely climate change would affect tourist destinations.

The cultural and historical sites and religious heritage and traditions are made up of the general historical and civilization context of the region. They bear the basic notions of the destination and contain the possibilities to transform the emblems of the region, bringing benefits to its inhabitants. In case of improper storage and irreversible transformation or damage, they are not subject to reconstruction, to recreate the originality of the object or tradition. By storing cultural and historical and religious resources, the local



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



community self-preserved, builds on them, creates the potential to build on what ancestors achieved. The rich and represented by the right means cultural and historical potential and religious heritage contribute to the specific economic benefits with the direct creation of jobs in cultural and historical and religious destinations.

Basic problems are reported, directly corresponding to the preservation of the identified cultural and historical and religious resources. These problems are typical for most of the designated places and objects.

The probability of fire is possible among the most serious problems and threats, as the causes are various: natural phenomena, arson due to carelessness or intentionality, non-compliance with rules and regulations, etc.

Climatic anomalies and natural upheavals have a detrimental effect on cultural and historical and religious sites and can damage or destroy them.

Landslides, sinking and self-collapse can be a problem. Moisture hazards worsen sites, causing mold, mildew and creating an environment for biological damage.

Tourists often leave a mark on their divisions next to the sites. Despite the increase in tourist culture and consciousness, problems cause the effects of waste creation, water consumption, electricity and road traffic, etc. The benefits generated by employment and income from local accommodation and entertainment are often disproportionate to the damage done. There are significant problems caused by vandalism, hooligan acts, self-expression through graffiti, etc.

Other factors related to the preservation of cultural and historical and religious sites and resources are those concerning their management. For example, aggravating the maintenance of sites, especially because of a shortage of funds. Direct activities on cultural and historical and religious sites related to their maintenance, especially where low-skilled personnel and inappropriate and non-compliant materials are used in conservation and restoration operations. Modification of urban plans or architectural ideas that would distort the impact or directly affect the sites

In general, the problems concerning the preservation of cultural and historical and religious sites are also characteristic of cultural resources. They, of course, have specific characteristics. A common problem is the sourcing of funds from the respective organizations.

When recreating ritual practices in cultural and religious celebrations, the specific threats lie in the authenticity presented by them in terms of recreating ritual practices traditionally. A vivid example in recent years is the conduct of the mixed cultural and religious practice of the famous Ice Horo of Yordanovden in the Bulgarian city of Karlovo, where the boundary between the religious custom of throwing the cross of



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Yordanov day into the water by an Orthodox priest and removing it from the water by youths is mixed with the custom of ritual male dance in the icy waters of the river before performing the ritual salvation of the cross. New elements are also involved in the ordinance through the participation of outsiders and others in the deep spirituality of the ritual, which commodifies the deep symbolism of the rescue of the Christian cross, and distorts and distorts the roots and essence of the confessional practice.

Due to the large number of cultural and historical and religious sites throughout the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu, there are problems with covering a large part of the artefacts and for the overall in-depth study in the region. There is a shortage of financial resources for the storage, conservation and restoration of some of the sites. Some of them, due to the volume of work required, others because they are "away" from the main roads. In part, the problems also come because of the transport infrastructure in places. The focus on the development of local tourism is not sufficiently clearly focused on the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism and there is no clear concept of a single focus on the development of existing potential. A remarkable exception and example is the Comana complex, on the model of which the overall idea of cultural and historical and regional tourism in the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu should be developed in perspective, in terms of satisfying the tourist interest, the interest of the local communities, the valorization and monetization of the tourist product.

#### PROBLEMS WITH NATURAL RESOURCES

The beneficial economic effect on the economy of the Ruse region and the Giurgiu Region as a result of the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism may contain problems for the natural environment and biodiversity. The impact assessment of planned future activities should be sought in correlation with the potential to offer sustainability of the tourist product, so that there is no damage to the natural environment over the surrounding natural resources, especially but not limited to unurbanised areas of cultural and historical and religious tourism.

The increase in the density of the tourist flow in a vulnerable natural environment is likely to contribute to a decrease in the quality of the natural environment and its flora and fauna. The clustering, especially at times of large religious events, of large groups of tourist pilgrims, sometimes able to reach the size of huge crowds, holds a dangerous potential for disrupting ecosystems from pollution, fires, and violation of the natural state of the landscape cover. For conservation, measurements of the medium capacity of natural resources are needed, calculating approximately the maximum number of visitors to be admitted simultaneously to one site so as not to damage the environment.

The use of personal road transport also affects the landscape. Even with a well-regulated bus system, an overwhelming majority of tourists usually rely on individual transport, as this is a prerequisite for



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



intervention in the natural environment - exhaust gases, unregulated parking on lawns, entry by cars into forbidden areas, etc.

The lack of a mechanism for continuous monitoring of tourism-related work is another biodiversity problem. This reduces the quality of decisions concerning tourist activities and products, usually at the expense of investors. Economic priorities take over the pursuit of habitat conservation.

As a result of global warming and sudden climate change, negative events can occur in the conservation of natural resources. Climate change leads to a change of tree species, and from there to the emergence of landslide processes, downpours, fires, winds, insect outbreaks, waves of droughts and massive mortality of forest species and inhabitants.

#### PROCEDURES FOR THE PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS SITES

Effective management of the preservation and preservation of cultural and historical and religious sites should essentially aim, through their use, to develop the tourist region.

Established practices by international standards are monitoring of tourist flow by sites; visiting fees; rules of conduct of tourists; standards in tour operator management.

For the preservation and preservation of cultural and historical and religious places, there need to be specific rules on tourist flow, the purpose being to prevent a change in the integrity of the sites. There are several main ways to reduce the negative influence of visitors to the sites. First of all is the management of the supply of tourist services by expanding the potential for visitation, with an extension of the visiting time /if possible and the area/ in which to work with visitors the site, and thus to take on more tourists per unit of time. Secondly is the management of the demand for services related to the way the sites are moved, by grouping in compact groups of up to 12-14 people, with a guide – thus arranging a way to limit the number of tourists and the tour guide can control their behaviour. Management of the potential of the site to absorb the increased tourist interest can be carried out by strengthening the site or its elements, or by developing additional facilities. Another way to reduce the negative impact of visitors on the site is to apply usage impact management, by reducing the types of use of the site either by diluting or focusing on use.

Management recommendations:

- building an integrated database of tourist flows, the current situation in the sites, the current potential of resources, etc.;
- analysis of the impact of climate change on natural and cultural and historical and religious resources and sites;



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



- monitoring and control of tourist flow, setting visitor fees;
- formation of human resources in the tourist area to help increase visitors and increase the recognition of the site;
- building rules when visiting any place and site – cultural and historical and religious;
- monitoring and preservation of cultural and historical and religious sites;
- conducting all kinds of regular surveys on the condition of the objects – from classically constructive to state-of-the-art, with 3D laser scanning;
- implementation of a video surveillance system;
- research and analysis to offer additional experiences;
- viability and a stable governance horizon;
- funding.

Tips on the opportunities offered by the tourism industry

- promotion of the region and advertising strategy;
- development of tourist tours for the development of the destination, tied to the cultural and historical and religious resources;
- development of long-lasting tourist products and services;
- promotion of tourist exhibitions and tourist fairs.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



### 1.3. General characteristics of the cross-border region of Ruse and Giurgiu as a tourist destination for cultural and religious tourism

The colourful landscape in the cross-border region of Ruse-Giurgiu is saturated with numerous Christian landmarks - active monasteries and parish temples, which are the main potential for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism. The places where it is served all year round are spiritually significant anthropogenic tourist resources and can be used all year round, which is a means of supporting the development of domestic and international tourism. The main tourist resources are the local museum collections, which are valuable with their various historical and archaeological artefacts, revealing the spiritual and material culture of the region.

To turn an ordinary natural and anthropogenic site into a tourist resource, it passes through various stages:

Pre-tourist stages. The object is in the stage of a simple, unused item. Sometimes it is visited only by locals, but it is not a real and significant tourist resource. Potential visitors get information about the place and the site from eyewitness accounts or the media but have no personal impressions.

Stages of valorization. The site is of interest and implies a tourist trip. Tourists realize a visit to the site and create a certain assessment. An advance assessment of the location shall be made by comparing it with different objects. New construction is carried out nearby, it is adjusted, it is modernized, and the existing facilities are optimized and expanded (eateries, accommodation, retail outlets, etc.).

Stage of operation. The place and the site are transformed into a "tourist resource" with the potential to meet the basic needs of tourists. Complex tourist service is provided, with the provision of multilateral tourist services - advertising and tourist information, accommodation, nutrition, sale of goods and services, etc.

The formally prescribed components of the natural and anthropogenic environment according to the consumption of the tourist product divide the groups of tourist resources into natural and anthropogenic. The main groups of tourist resources that are attractive to visitors are very dependent on their location, their proximity to large settlements, the built transport accessibility and tourist superstructure.

Tourist natural resources are places with objects and phenomena from the natural environment, carriers of their natural conditions and initial features.

Anthropogenic tourist resources are objects of unnatural artificial nature created by humans. They are similar to the natural use and construction of tourist products. A significant part of them was not deliberately



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



created to satisfy the tourist interest but was later transformed into a tourist resource. By origin, anthropogenic resources are divided into two groups: cultural-historical and artificial.

I. The group of cultural and historical anthropogenic resources shall include objects which have been formed in the distant or recent past:

- historical - monuments, battlefields, martial arts sites, ships, etc.;
- archaeological - excavations of fortresses, palaces, towers, temples, objects and artefacts;
- architectural - fortresses, palaces, houses, washers, bridges, streets, squares;
- ethnographic - crafts, workshops, folklore holidays and customs, clothing, culinary production, household items;
- religious, including cults - cemeteries, tombs, mausoleums, necropolises, shrines, tombstones, processions, baptistery, monasteries, temples, chapels, frescoes, ritual and cult vessels;
- cultural and cognitive - museums, galleries, treasuries, libraries, universities, science and technology centres.

II. The group of artificial ones are built solely to satisfy different tourist needs:

- entertainment and scientific knowledge - amusement and thematic/water, zoos;
- cultural - festivals, celebrations, exhibitions, performances, concerts;
- sports - competitions, sports pools, stadiums;
- historical - panoramas, reconstructions, historical parks;
- business - shopping centres, fairs, exchanges, world fairs, congresses.

Of basic importance for cultural and historical and religious tourism are the tourist resources generating targeted traffic with cultural and cognitive and/or religious incitement, along with a spiritual-cognitive direction and the search for an emotional experience. Such characteristics are acceptable to motivate visits.

The emerging trend is an increase in the desire for trips, acquaintance with temple construction, and residence in monastery and temple complexes to get to know the authentic norms and traditions in the habitation of the monastery.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Anthropogenic resources for religious tourism are cult holy places and objects – illuminated and/or blissful springs „ayazmo“, worship buildings and artefacts in them – holy relics, icons, ritual practices, frescoes, temple palace, etc. Temple monastery complexes and churches are at the same time works architectural and artistic. They are a wreath of the talent and work of various people – from self-taught master builders and zographs, to the most educated architects and engineers.

In the cross-border Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu, there is a diverse temple wealth - architectural and artistic.

Christian religious sites were built for utilitarian purposes, far from the idea of becoming tourist sites. But as places and sites of religious worship, some of them have long acquired elements of tourist places and sites. But another part of the existing Christian sites and places cannot be adapted and used for mass visits. Realistic consideration of such features explains the refusals of some Orthodox monasteries, regardless of their qualities, potential and significance, to deprive themselves of tourist visits, as well as from their use as tourist places because of their specific role. A mandatory condition for the existence of the tourist product is paralleling the interests of the stakeholders - the spiritual persons, the local community, and tourists - to coincide, and only then the religious site is subject to visits and acquaintances.

Sacred places for Christianity are natural formations - rivers, lakes, healing springs; caves, mountains, forests, deserts, etc. and anthropogenic - monasteries, temples, chapels, graves, bell towers, votives, erected memorial crosses, relics - particles of the Holy Cross of the Lord, powerful fooders, miraculous icons, etc.

According to the nature of the use, they are classified according to the following parameters: regional, national, international and world Christian saints (serving mass tourist visits), for cultural and historical cognitive purposes, for religious worship

Cultural and historical and religious tourism are treated as elements of the general approach to presenting the spiritual values of any country or region and realizing direct contact with the cultural and historical and religious heritage.

An essential anthropogenic resource for cultural and historical and religious tourism is the festive church events and the local customs and cultural traditions directly related to them. There are a variety of festive traditions, customs, and ritual practices, which are sometimes observed only in a certain region, settlement or ethnic group of a region, storing unique differences. Their successful combination with available anthropogenic resources can have a synergistic impact on the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism.

In many countries, travel for cultural and cognitive and religious purposes is a leading form of tourism. The length of stay in the cultural and historical and religious sites is determined by the classification of resources



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



in the destination. They are defined as international, national, regional and locally significant places and sites.

The length of residence is different: in internationally significant sites - from 5 to 7 days; in those of national importance - from 3 to 5 days; with regional from 2 to 3 days; for locally significant suggestive stay is from 1 to 2 days; in single sites, the stay is within hours.

In the realization of cultural and historical and religious tourism at the local level, fundamental value has the sum of regional anthropogenic resources, their degree of uniqueness and value. These main sites are a prerequisite for the creation of the tourist product and its offering and sale. A key factor in tourist trips with a cultural and historical and religious motive is the enduring sustainability in the demand for the product and its supply. It is essential to fill the existing market niche when creating the marketing mix of the destinations in the Ruse-Giurgiu euro region, focusing the consumer's interest on the unique places and sites of the cultural and historical and religious heritage of the Euroregion.

On the territory of the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu, there are unique anthropogenic resources of global, international, national and local importance. The saturation of the territory with objects from different cultural and historical and religious eras of Christian history (antiquity, middle ages, renaissance, modernity) is among the few similar spaces on our continent. This distinctive Christian heritage implies the development and determines the direction and horizon of the characteristics in the construction of a specific image in the general tourist branding of the Euroregion. The Euroregion has strong market potential and can be designated as a specific cross-border destination for cultural and historical and religious tourism.

## 1.4. Tourist infrastructure

### Tourist infrastructure

Ruse region is located in the northern part of Bulgaria, has a territory of 2 803 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 212 729 thousand people (according to data of the NSI, from 10.05.2021 to 31.12.2020), with eight municipalities.

The relatively easy access to any place in the territory of the region is an essential element in the development of tourism.

There are no specific data on how local and foreign tourists travel to the Ruse region. By estimates, most passengers arrive by car or bus, and a low percentage by train. The main transport disadvantage is the underdeveloped road network in Northern Bulgaria, respectively, in the direction of the Ruse district – the



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



main section of the Hemus highway along with the highway sleeve Ruse - Veliko Tarnovo are under planning for construction. The transport connection with Romania takes place on the Ruse-Giurgiu Bridge, where to the north in the direction of Bucharest there are two-lane lanes in each direction.

In addition, it offers direct air access to the area, and the nearest airports are in Bucharest - 47 mi away. and Varna - 200 km away. from the regional centre – Ruse. The former regional airport in the area of Strklievo village has a license for a flight deck for small aircraft. Efforts are being made to restore its active flight activity by serving domestic flights to the capital Sofia (up to about 1000 people are daily travelling between Ruse and Sofia by land transport).

River tourist traffic takes place on the Danube via cruise ships and this circumstance is relatively favourable for foreign guests. More than 10 are the cruise companies that operate the river cruises, and some of them have their programs travel through the region.

The existence of developed regional infrastructure, with good approaches to national and international infrastructure to serve tourist sites, significantly improves the scope of tourist opportunities and is a factor correlated with the final choice of destination.

The preserved cultural and historical and religious sites with an authentic spirit are a dream for the tourist. But to increase the downtime of visitors to the tourist destination, to increase their satisfaction, additional services and attractions should be provided. For the tourist it has long been not enough to see any landmark but wants to have impressive experiences, to snatch memories of his trip.

An essential unit for the development of tourism in tourist visitor sites is modern information provision. Still, tourist information centres are one of the main points made for some visitors. Such centres work and are in the National Network of Tourist Information Centers at the Ministry of Tourism - in the town of Ruse and the village of Ivanovo, as well as in the Lomvet Visitor Center in the village of Nissovo.

When visiting tourist sites, visitors can mainly rely on information from the Internet through their mobile provider. There are no wifi areas in the locations of the sites. It is possible to rent a car from Ruse. There is no mobile app and an electronic guide to the local cultural and historical and religious sites.

From an administrative-territorial point of view, Giurgiu County includes territory 3 526 km<sup>2</sup>, ss three cities - Giurgiu, Mihaileshty and Bolintin Valle, as well as 51 communes. These 54 administrative-territorial units also belong to 167 villages.

Giurgiu County has a population of 274,848 inhabitants (Source: National Statistical Institute of Romania, Giurgiu).



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



At the regional level, Giurgiu County is the least urbanized. Giurgiu County is a predominantly rural county, respectively with an agricultural function, with characteristics of a rural peripheral urban region, with about 50% of the employed population working in the agricultural sector. Its economy consists mainly of agriculture, industry and trade - as significant activities.

Half of the territory of the county is considered an area of exceptional influence, quality guaranteed by proximity to the capital. Industrial region are available, and Giurgiu municipality is located as one of the most important Romanian ports on the Danube River. Bucharest-Sofia-Athens and Bucharest-Istanbul routes pass through the district.

Road access is provided by rail connections provided by connecting lines in all 4 sectors, from Giurgiu station to rail network areas. Giurgiu Port is developed in three locations. Giurgiu County has a system of public roads consisting of national, county and communal roads. The proximity to Bucharest guarantees quick access to Otopeni and Baneasa airports. In the district, public transport services operate only in the Giurgiu municipality. In general, the network of roads and bridges in Giurgiu County needs modernization, repair, and rehabilitation. Express four-lane road connects the Giurgiu District Center on the Danube coast with the capital Bucharest, and the infrastructure is connected to the border points between Romania and Bulgaria. Giurgiu County is crossed by the pan-European railway line, which starts from Остенде (Belgium) passes through Berlin, Prague, Budapest, Bucharest, Giurgiu, Sofia, Istanbul or Thessaloniki and connects with Athens.

Rail transport in Giurgiu County was found to register ever less traffic. Among the factors influencing the values of rail transport in Giurgiu is worth noting: the temporary suspension of direct rail transport routes Giurgiu-Bucharest due to a collapsed railway bridge over the Arges River, on which new construction is to be made, and

the relatively short distance between the capital and the municipality, a distance that stimulates land transport by buses and minibuses. According to the Report of the World Bank, the administrative-territorial units of Giurgiu County are accessible, since the distance to entry into Bucharest can be taken within 40 minutes for the settlements located in the vicinity of Ilfov and for about an hour from the settlements around Giurgiu.

The functional area of the capital Bucharest stretches far beyond the borders of Ilfov County and from this location earns the cities of Mihaileshy and Bolentin Valle. In particular, the Giurgiu County area bordering the western part of Bucharest can benefit from improved infrastructure links. It is one of the most densely populated regions of Romania, as well as one of the most developed. In general, the Region of South Muntenia gravitates around Bucharest, and the Bucharest-Pitești, Bukurec-Ploiești and Bucharest-Constanta



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



highways give this region one of the most connected in Romania. This supports the development of tourism in the district and the cross-border region Giurgiu-Ruse.

### 1.5. Tourist superstructure

Despite the modest results so far, progress in the future development of the tourist flow in the Ruse-Giurgiu region can be assumed.

The types of reception structures for accommodation in Giurgiu municipality in 2014 were a total of 11 in number, and in 2018 they increased to 17 as follows: from 4 hotels in 2014, there were 7 hotels in 2018; there is only one hostel and one was built in 2018;

6 in cash in 2014, with 2 closed in 2018; tourist boarding houses did not have in 2014, while in 2018, there are already two created.

### Establishments of touristic accommodation with functions of tourist accommodation

	number				
Giurgiu County	2014	2015*	2016	2017*	2018*
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Hotels</b>	4	4	4	6	7
<b>Hostels</b>	1	1	2	2	2
<b>Motels</b>	6	6	4	4	4
<b>Accommodation on ships</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Agrotourism</b>	-	1	1	3	2
<b>Tourist Boarding</b>	-	-	2	2	2

\* revised data

In terms of tourist accommodation capacity according to the tourist reception structure, there were a total of 570 places in 2014, the largest increase was recorded in hotels, from 286 to 439 places and hostels, from



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



20 to 72 places, subject to regulatory ratios. Tourist boarding houses appeared in 2016, maintaining a constant number of accommodation: 45, and in 2017 several agrotourism boarding houses were registered and founded with a total of 57 available places, which decreased to 25 in 2018.

## Capacity and activity of tourist accommodation

Giurgiu County	2014	2015*	2016	2017*	2018
<b>Accommodation capacity</b>					
<b>Existing (places), of which:</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>809*</b>
- in hotels	286	286	286	415	439*
- in hostels	20	34	72	72	72*
- in motels	264	264	228	228	228*
- for motor ship	-	-	-	-	-
- in agro-touristic pensions	-	5	5	57	25*
- in touristic pensions	-	-	45	45	45*
<b>In operation (thousands places-days), of which:</b>	<b>210,6</b>	<b>213,8</b>	<b>225,4*</b>	<b>283,6</b>	<b>288,3*</b>
- in hotels	104,4	104,4	104,7*	137,1	153,6*
- in hostels	9,9	12,4	26,4*	26,3	26,3*
- in motels	96,3	95,6	76,1*	83,2	83,2*
- for motor ship	-	-	-	-	-
- in agro-touristic pensions	-	1,4	1,8*	19,3	8,8*
- in touristic pensions	-	-	16,5*	16,4	16,4*



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



<b>Arrivals (thousands), of which:</b>	<b>23,1</b>	<b>24,9</b>	<b>25,3*</b>	<b>27,9</b>	<b>26,9</b>
- in hotels	11,1	10,7	11,5*	12,2	11,4
- in hostels	1,0	1,4	5,3*	5,3	3,7
- in motels	11,1	12,6	7,1*	7,4	8,9
- for motor ship	-	-	-	-	-
- in agro-touristic pensions	-	0,2	0,2*	2,1	0,9
- in touristic pensions	-	-	1,2*	1,0	2,0
<b>Overnight stays (thousands), of which:</b>	<b>41,9</b>	<b>40,9</b>	<b>47,6*</b>	<b>54,1</b>	<b>48,0</b>
in hotels	17,0	12,1	13,1*	16,8	17,7
- in hostels	4,2	6,2	12,1*	11,9	4,9
- in motels	20,7	22,3	19,2*	20,3	19,7
- for motor ship	-	-	-	-	-
- in agro-touristic pensions	-	0,3	0,4*	2,3	1,0
- in touristic pensions	-	-	2,8	2,9	4,7
<b>Net capacity utilisation indices in operation (%)</b>	<b>19,9</b>	<b>19,1</b>	<b>21,1</b>	<b>19,1</b>	<b>16,7</b>

\* revised data

Overnight stays in tourist accommodation structures by accommodation type registered a total of 41.906 tourists in 2014, which increased slightly to 48.048 tourists in 2018.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The most sought-after were motels with 20,692 accommodated tourists in 2014 and 19,678 in 2018; followed by hotels with 17.010 in 2014 and 17.735 in 2018, but as a comprehensive finding, from a tourist and economic point of view, the situation unsatisfactory. In hostels, where mostly young tourists are accommodated, 4,204 nights were recorded in 2014 and 4,908 in 2018 - also slight increases. The only year in which visitors were registered in tourist villas is 2017. The tourist boarding houses accommodated 4.710 tourists in 2018, which indicates the interest in this type of location - on the one hand, due to lower costs, and on the other because of the desire to relax in a rural atmosphere.

The number of accommodations in the ruse region has varied in recent years, but the dynamics are not great, with the total bed capacity slightly fluctuating. According to data from The Regional Statistical Offices of Ruse, Territorial Statistical Offices, TSB North, as of March 18, 2020, in January 2020 there were 56 properties with a total capacity of 2,159 beds, of which 25 hotels with 1,144 beds.

Some trends should be noted. The increase in the provision of personal accommodation services through the Booking and Airbnb internet platforms implies not only more individual bookings and travel autonomy but also an expansion of the overnight basis. Many of the sites are still in the process of being registered, despite the changes imposed by the legislation. At the expense of a reduction of around 60% in bed-capacity accommodation over 10 seats, the base of four-star hotels over several years has almost doubled. The main bed base in the region is from objects with one or two stars – over 80 per cent, about 10 objects have three stars and only about 6 per cent have four stars. It is noticeable that total bed occupancy is guaranteed through more purchases of price-oriented nights, and in the market share by revenue - the increase comes from the sales of nights in the four-star hotels – over 40 per cent. There has been a drastic contraction in sales at three-star tourist sites. In general, adequate pricing is an international problem, but also locally there is a difficulty in reaching a desired average price per bed in different categories. Raising the price thresholds is difficult to achieve, but without this happening, it is impossible for tourist development in the ruse region. After all, the growth especially for foreigners, but also for Bulgarians buying four nights at the expense of three-star hotels is more than indicative.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



## ACTIVITY OF ACCOMMODATION BY STATISTICAL ZONES, STATISTICAL REGIONS AND BY DISTRICTS IN 2020

Statistical zones Statistical regions  <u>Areas</u> <b>Ruse</b>	Places of accommodation - number	Beds – numbers	Beds overnight - number	Realized nights - number		Stayed overnight tourists - number		Income from nights - BGN	
				Total	Total of foreigners	Total	Total of foreigners	Total	Total of foreigners
	57	2 255	678 208	90 357	16 586	54 937	10 400	4 165 724	991 852

Source: NSI from 09.03.2021

In addition to the traditional services - parking, internet and cable TV, etc., the hotels of the high segment also provide extended amenities for guests – room service, airport transfer, car and bicycle rental, spa and wellness centres, massages, fitness, pool, solar, etc.

The way to choose the place to stay is mainly internet-based platforms. Personal advertising and friendly recommendation are also strong communication channels. About 80 per cent of the capacity to stay in the area is concentrated in Ruse, and this sometimes brings tension to the hotel service in Ruse.

The average monthly occupancy of the bed base is about 25% - 26%. In the case of the four-star service, there is an increase in employment and it rises to 40%, due to the double increase in the bed base.

The tourist infrastructure next to the cultural and historical and religious sites in the settlements, and also around the monasteries in the Ruse region is reduced to nooks and areas for short-term recreation. In some of the rugged areas around the monasteries, there are marked hiking trails, hiking trails and eco paths. Except for the Comana Monastery Complex, where there is a hotel base, no accommodation is offered in or near the monasteries.

### Restaurant superstructure

The restaurant superstructure carries out the activity of the main and additional meals of tourists.

In Giurgiu County, there are about 165 active catering places (according to INSSE-Giurgiu) and there are newly created establishments among them, and there are dining options in motels and guesthouses. About two-thirds of the eateries are located in Giurgiu, and around the Monastery of Comana is offered along with accommodation and ready-made monastery food. Next to some of the tourist spots there is



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



constantly running water, sheds, gazebos and other amenities. Near some of the sites, there are shopping kiosks for food and beverages, and eateries serving food from the local cuisine. More than 720 places for eating and entertainment are registered in the Ruse region, and here as well as in Giurgiu County, the concentration is mainly in the city of Ruse, where 524 sites are registered (according to data of the NSI as of 01.06.2021) among which restaurants, fast food establishments, coffee shops are – a total of 396 and the others are drinking establishments and bars.

The commercial superstructure, which directly refers to cultural and historical and religious tourism occurs through the trade of souvenir goods of tourists, usually directly in or near the tourist place. In the monasteries of the Euroregion, there is almost no food offered, rarely - icons, church objects and souvenirs.

The situation of additional and the places where it is imposed - an entirely new tourist infrastructure and superstructure in the territory of the cross-border region will contribute to a higher level of development and revenue from tourist resources. This would directly affect tourism growth and increase the industry's share of the overall economic share of the Ruse-Giurgiu region.

## 1.6 . Tourist flow. Profile on tourists

Tourist flows are a set of tourist groups that head-on certain routes in special centres to spend a pleasant and useful leisure time making different trips.

There are four large areas in the world where tourist flows originate – Europe, the USA, Japan and Australia. They are called by specialists "the world of departures". They are already joined by China, as well as Russia, due to its large population, growing middle class and increased solvency. There are also small places where tourist flows are formed – Israel, and Canada.

However, Europe provides the most intense tourist flow – inside the continent and from the continent for other tourist areas. European nature is diverse, the continent is a cradle of ancient civilizations, on its relatively small territory, are located dozens of resource-rich countries, which stimulates tourist travel. The high level of economic development of the countries in Western Europe and the incomes of the population in them is also an incentive – they significantly exceed the world average.

The main reason for such trips is several factors, natural (sea, beaches, rivers, forests, mineral waters, etc.), and anthropogenic (cultural-historical and religious monuments and objects, works of art, sports and congress events, etc.).



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The tourist flow in the region is formed by several groups of tourists.

The main group forming the tourist flow is due to the national market of each of the two countries and it is structurally determinative for the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu. About 70% (75 698 thousand) out of a total of 107,066 visitors for 2018 and still as many – 70% (77,144) out of a total of 112,627 visitors for 2019 are Bulgarian citizens residing in the ruse region. Respectively, the realized nights by Bulgarian citizens for 2018 are 120 119 (from foreigners are – 63 502) and for 2019 there are 122 930 (from foreigners are – 57 522).

In Giurgiu County, there are 26,860 tourist visits in 2018, with 27,921 in 2017. The ratio between Romanian and foreign tourists for 2018 is as follows: Romanians 24 690 people or 91.92%; foreigners: 2 170 people or 8.08%. The nights for 2018 are 48 000, of which from foreigners – 4 700. In Giurgiu County for 2019, the registered visitors are 26 500 people, of which there are 1 900 foreign nationals. The realized nights for 2019 are 46 600, of foreign visitors there are 3 400.

The second largest group forming the tourist flow are foreigners, citizens of the European Union. For example, in both 2018 and 2019, about 50% of the nights spent by foreign nationals in the Ruse region are by Citizens of the European Union. Due to the strong reduction in domestic but especially international travel due to the co-operation of 19 crisis in 2020, the ratio is changing and in 2020 there are only about 17% realized nights spent by foreign visitors.

In the Ruse region for 2020, there were 54 937 tourists, of which 81% were Bulgarian citizens (44 537 people); the nights spent are 90 357, of which 73 771 (81.64 %) of Bulgarian citizens.

In Giurgiu County in December 2020 compared to the same period of the previous year 2019, arrivals to tourist reception rooms decreased by 92.0% and overnight stays decreased by 93.6%. This shows statistics on tourism made by the Statistical Institute of Giurgiu County. In Ruse County in December 2020 compared to 2019, visits decreased from 7129 to 2857 people, and the nights spent in total from 11 935 decreased to 5 100.

Most nights in the Ruse region in 2019 were realized by guests from Romania (up to 11 000), Germany (over 4 600), Italy (over 2 200), and France (more than 2 000). Most nights in Giurgiu County are realized by guests from Germany, Bulgaria, Italy, France

The third group are visitors from outside the European Union, with guests from Ukraine, Turkey, Moldova, and the United Kingdom from European countries, not members of the European Union most nights. Other tourists from other continents who made the most visits and nights were citizens from the United States, Israel, and Japan.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



A major share of foreign visitors to the area arrive for visiting cultural and natural sites, business trips, and an essential part of travel transit (such as Ukrainian, Russian, and Turkish citizens). It is not uncommon for visiting relatives and relatives.

Foreign visitors are essential for tourism revenues in the Ruse region, with a record 1.8 million euros in the record for visitors from abroad. 40% of the revenue is from accommodation. Despite their smaller number, due to longer stays, the revenue from these tourists is greater.

The routes of the intersection of tourist flow in space form the tourist centres, which have certain geographical coordinates (latitude and longitude). To become an attractive point, these centres must possess a certain set of natural and anthropogenic tourist resources. In addition, there must be several socio-economic and political conditions: the availability of free time for potential tourists, financial opportunities and a willingness to spend some of their money on tourism; political stability and the absence of military conflicts and acts of terrorism, and of course the availability of means of accommodation, nutrition and entertainment. In turn, tourist centres also have an economic and social impact on tourist flows.

Four main tourist streams, which were formed as early as the 1980s, differ (according to the classical classification of Moliner Monteciano). The concentration of tourist centres at short distances in the space at the regional level forms tourist geographical areas. The Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu does not fall into the sphere of some of the four main tourist streams, but among other tourist centres existing in the region may be part of a specific tourist zone together with the Bulgarian Black Sea coast, the region of the three old Bulgarian capitals, Bucharest and the central part of Romania with its many cultural and historical attractions.

### Methodological notes

Since 2012, Regulation No 692/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council on European tourism statistics and Regulation No 1051/2011 of the European Commission implementing Regulation No 692/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on European statistics on tourism as regards the structure of the quality reports and the transmission of data, statistical surveys of the activity of accommodation are carried out monthly.

The observations report categorized hotels, campsites, as well as short-term accommodations with more than 10 beds that worked during the current reporting period.

"Other places for short-term accommodation" means holiday and tourist villages, hostels, guesthouses, bungalows, holiday homes, chalets, homestays and apartments and other places for short-term accommodation.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Bedding is understood to be the maximum occupancy for each day of the month reported.

The amounts to be paid, excluding the cost of additional services, are added to the income from the accommodation.

Downtime, cyclicity and revenue. As overnight stays and nights increase, there is also an extension of the average stay. Overnight earnings on average for Bulgarian and foreign tourists are at an estimated cost of EUR 23 for 2018. In 2020 alone, 670 thousand Bulgarians passed through the Ruse-Giurgiu border. The relatively weak daily costs are due to the disadvantage of additional services offered by the destination as a whole.

Visits and the number of overnight and overnight tourists saw a slight increase from May to September. In winter, visits to the sites become difficult, especially outside the cities of Ruse and Giurgiu, including, but not limited to, worsening climatic conditions. The options for staying indoors and in mountain ski resorts are attractive. In practice, large amplitudes between high and low seasons are not pronounced.

River cruises on the Danube have an accelerated spread and bring tourists to port cities and adjacent regions. Here the emphasis is on presenting the destination, with the passengers usually about 200 people. In practice, this is not aggressively invading, intrusive tourism, with many visitors, so it enjoys a warm reception from local communities. The usual length of Danube cruises is between 9 and 25 days. Approximately 170 ships operate on the Danube, with main embarkation points in Passau, Vienna, and Budapest. About 85% move between Passau and Budapest.

The central axis of this type of cruise is cultural and historical tourism. The basic profile is formed by tourists over fifty years of age, possessing a decent socio-cultural level and purchasing opportunity. They have interests in classical music, art, and gastronomy. Germans and Americans predominate. Thematic cruises are for music, food and wine, art, culture, history, etc. Travel agencies sell almost all bookings to groups from the USA, Western Europe, and Japan. The season is from March to the end of October. The service includes all costs - accommodation by land and water, basic meals, entertainment, sightseeing visits, etc.

There is a dynamic in the behaviour of tourists - increasing their interests outside the usual program, and this requires flexibility on the part of tour operators to include in the packages different and diverse options.

For the cross-border region ruse - Giurgiu it is a challenge to fit in with the new opportunities. In recent years, the average number of ship passengers visiting the city of Ruse has been over 25 thousand. Few of the ships have overnight stays, and therefore an essential proportion of passengers visit the city in just half



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



a day. The great challenge for the Ruse region and Giurgiu County and the tourism industry, in general, is to offer a solution for realizing an increase in the stay of the travellers in the Euroregion.

Usually, the price of the package includes the excursion on the coast. The criteria are a set of various tourist attractions - preserved cultural and historical and natural attractions, various interesting events - festivals, holidays, etc.; availability of tourist infrastructure - a variety of places for dining and entertainment, added services, classified staff and level of service and price, etc.; accessibility through a proper and maintained transport network. Although the tourism services available in the Ruse region and Giurgiu County are at a level that corresponds to a small part of the listed criteria, appropriate packaging is needed for their presentation to the cruise organizers.

After the global tourism crisis, 2020, and somewhat 2021, are expected to see a smooth recovery and return to the front levels in 2022, and growth of 2-4% in the coming years. A good achievement would be to achieve sustainable growth and maintenance of overnight persons over a hundred thousand people per year, and in realized nights, reaching one hundred and eighty thousand people.

#### ACTIVITY OF ACCOMMODATION BY STATISTICAL ZONES, STATISTICAL REGIONS AND RUSE REGIONS IN 2019

Statistical zones Statistical regions  Areas	Places of accommodation - number	Beds – numbers	Beds overnight - number	Realized nights - number		Stayed overnight tourists - number		Income from nights - BGN	
				Total	Total of foreigners	Total	Total of foreigners	Total	Total of foreigners
<b>Ruse</b>	57	2 258	723 048	180 482	57 552	112 627	35 483	9 263 966	3 602 006

Source: NSI



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



## ACTIVITY OF ACCOMMODATION BY STATISTICAL ZONES, STATISTICAL REGIONS AND RUSE REGION IN 2020

Statistical zones Statistical regions Areas	Places of accommodation - number	Beds – numbers	Beds overnight - number	Realized nights - number		Stayed overnight tourists - number		Income from nights - BGN	
				Total	Total of foreigners	Total	Total of foreigners	Total	Total of foreigners
Russe	57	2255	678208	90357	16586	54937	10400	4165724	991852

Source: NSI

## ACTIVITY OF ACCOMMODATION BY STATISTICAL ZONES, STATISTICAL REGIONS AND BY DISTRICTS IN AUGUST 2020

Statistical zones Statistical regions Areas	Places of accommodation - number	Beds – numbers	Beds overnight - number	Realized nights - number		Stayed overnight tourists - number		Income from nights - BGN	
				Total	Total of foreigners	Total	Total of foreigners	Total	Total of foreigners
Russe	51	1 978	60 282	9 916	2 324	6 885	1 778	450 223	124 875

### 1.7. Product supply and development potential

The main importance for the development of the Ruse-Giurgiu Euroregion as a destination with a focus on cultural and religious Christian heritage is the creation of a specific focus in the marketing mix of product, price, image, distribution, promotion, communication, impressions, etc. strategies and tactics to achieve a sustainable tourism service in the cross-border Euroregion. The creation of this and the infrastructure, as well as the rules for the implementation of tourism, is a priority of the public sector. The priority of the private sector is the construction of a tourist superstructure adjacent to tourist resources, thus commercializing the tourist product. For the prosperity of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the cross-border Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu, it is essential to build it as a regional tourist destination. A



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



geographical axis of the destination can be considered the Danube, bringing together the space on both sides. As cultural wasps can be defined as Christian monuments with their parallel and time-intersecting spiritual-religious and cultural phenomena.

The promotion of cultural and historical and religious tourism will give a horizon for tourism to develop as a priority sector, with a focus on meeting the wishes of tourists and raising the local standard of living. The abundance of sites of Christian cultural and historical and religious heritage is not used for the time being and, apart from the monastery complex in Comana, is not properly offered in the space of the entire Euroregion. The competitive advantage of cultural and historical and religious tourism is that it almost always enters into collaboration with other tourist forms, opening up space for the promotion of small settlements of the region on an otherwise unthinkable scale. The lack of adequate positioning in the supply of cultural and historical and religious tourism, insufficient promotion and use of the opportunities of the existing heritage directly affect the level of interest.

Visitor offers for the promotion of cultural and historical and religious tourism are almost missing, and when they are available they relate only to the most famous sites.

The meaningful components of the tourist destination around which its codified image is based are:

- geographical concentration of tourist resources;
- the existence of a material base - tourist infrastructure and superstructure;
- personal image and attractiveness of a destination;
- a public and private sector with specific interests;
- the activity of local church authorities;
- marketing mix of the region;
- tourism and other industries;
- resources at the entrance – branch staff, investments, entrepreneurship, expectations of tourists, tourist flow, etc.;
- focal market niches;
- tourist goods and services;
- space for the construction of a complete tourist product;
- unity of supply and consumption of the tourist product within the destination;



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



- limited format reception option of the location to store the interest in the destination
- built life cycle of the existence of the destination as a result of the phases of its development.

The elements that determine the movement of the tourist flow to a particular right nation have the defining characteristics to transform a space and its objects into a tourist. In general, they are:

- justification and need for travel, adoption of a decision, a realization of spontaneous or planned travel;
  - cultural and historical and religious tourism as a tradition and inheritance with Christian pilgrimages is one of the most ancient forms of tourism in the world and the interest in it is great;
  - tourist resources, and especially their concentration, are a strong attractive motive for tourists and are an essential condition for travel; the Euroregion ruse - Giurgiu, with its variety of tourist resources, attracts several tourists, but the lack of substantial valorizing is obvious;
  - the desire for a deep psychological and emotional experience through contact with authentic objects increases against the background of the increasingly critical of artificial objects;
  - the designated tourist trip is a way to acquire different experiences and realize dreams;
  - raising the educational value of visitors reinforces curiosity about the different, the enrichment of cultural and historical and religious knowledge;
  - the availability of a limited resource freely (or not freely) time helps to make travel for cultural and cognitive and/or religious purposes;
  - accessibility to the visited tourist site is an essential element;
  - the level of transport communications has a direct impact on tourist trips; the lack of road infrastructure or its non-maintenance, the lack of signs with general and specific communication instructions to the sites are more than an obstacle – they are a motive for refusal of the visitor and creating an objective opportunity to make or thwart the trip;
  - increasing mobility leading to individually organised and/or disorganised journeys;
- a marked dependence on the established tourist superstructure in the tourist place, which makes the residence of visitors a full-fledged one.
- the preparation of the local community to be a tourist host; this element has to do with the staff and the economic security of tourism in the hosting space;



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



- satisfied visitors come again to repeat the sensations and discover new ones;
- the support of qualified staff with adequate education, performing service at the level of the visitors.

Some more significant highlights in the use of Christian heritage sites for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the cross-border region.

- in the separate area for cross-border cooperation in the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu there are favourable conditions for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism;
- it is imperative to promote a long-term tourist vision for a more substantial number of religious-cognitive journeys;
- several Christian sites have significant but untapped potential.
- the workload of cult anthropogenic resources is well below the level of their capabilities and has the potential for significantly more active utilization;
- there are opportunities for wider implementation of festive events tied to the religious Orthodox traditions of the population in the Euroregion;
- there are favourable opportunities for a natural combination of cultural-historical, religious and pilgrimage with other types of tourism;
- the passenger ports in Ruse and Giurgiu make it possible to guide tourists to visit the tourist places;
- the provision of a specialized tourist material base aimed at optimal service of tourist needs is a challenge;
- it is imperative to optimize coordination with tour operators to discover modern tourist products;
- it is necessary to turn to tour operators and travel agents from abroad to provide distribution of tourist products on international markets;
- improving the quality of the tourist service to ensure higher satisfaction and consumer protection is on the agenda;
- implementation of information sharing, effective interaction, single coordination, clear partnership arrangements for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the region between national and local administrative and church authorities, and non-governmental branch organizations in the field of tourism;



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The diligence of the structures in Bulgaria and Romania should be oriented towards the development of the image of the Euroregion as a place for the realization of cultural and historical and religious tourism.

A check of the tourist flow in the Ruse region shows that there is a strong concentration of visitors to the city of Ruse - over 90% of visitors and overnights. The main visitors are Bulgarian citizens – students and pensioners, organized by the travel agencies groups. About two-thirds of the main tourist activities take place in Ruse, and in the other settlements in the area, the tourist activities are complementary and are subordinate to the main centre of Ruse. Relatively underdeveloped family hotels are developed despite the availability of modern personal reservation systems Booking, Airbnb. Along with the city of Ruse, where, in terms of cultural and historical and religious tourism, visitors most often visit the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, St. Paul of the Cross Catholic Church and, less often, other sites, tourists visit especially the Basarbovski Rock Monastery "St. Dimitar Basarbovski", as well as the Ivanovo Rock Churches. All monasteries in the Euroregion are visited en masse and actively on the days of their temple holidays.

In Giurgiu County, along with visitors to the regional centre of the Episcopal Cathedral "Assumption of the Virgin Mary", the main place visited is the Comana complex, where near the monastery there is also a developed resort with over 50 seats, spa treatments and three villas for accommodation. In general, in the rest of the county, the situation is similar to that in the Ruse region.

The potential for the development of the entire destination lies in underdeveloped accommodation and nutrition throughout the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu. In the development of new routes for cultural and historical and religious tourism, with the accompanying tourist services in places and sites, for example, in the development of the supply of services of added value in the in and the surrounding stories and other sites, in the development of small tourist extra-urban accommodation and feeding structures - a type of family guesthouses hides an almost developed niche for development.

## 1.8. Human resources

In the field of human resources, the tourism industry in the general Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu is experiencing problems: staff shortages for purely demographic reasons; a high degree of turnover; out-of-the-box competition; other commercial sectors to employ more qualified staff. The tourism industry in the Euroregion is composed mainly of small or micro-enterprises with a staff of no more than 20 - 25 people. In the last few years in the accommodation and feeding structures in the Euroregion, the number of employees in the Bulgarian part is just over 2 000 people and well below 1000 in Romanian. Several hundred people are engaged in the field of culture and entertainment.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Travel companies find it difficult to recruit staff, and the big problem of finding highly qualified specialists is constantly on the agenda. The main difficulties are in finding and selecting chefs, receptionists with foreign languages, sales and marketing managers, food and drink, and maintenance technicians.

The quality of the tourist product offered in cultural and historical and religious tourism depends on the quality of the service of the tour guide - with qualified knowledge in the field of cultural and historical religious themes, as well as on the communication security of the tour service.

In cultural and historical and religious tourism, the tour guide works with visitors like faiths, with those from different branches of the religion or belonging to different confessions. He must know the history of religions, the foundations and the teaching of the religion concerned. It is imperative to have knowledge not only of its confession orientation but also of other religions, to search and show tourists the intersections in the confession spaces and the variety of cult practices. The tour guide should be familiar with and take into account in a religious context the differences between tourists.

In the work of the tour guide, this is directly applied in hotel accommodation, in food standards, for example during fasting periods of the year or weekly fasting, in church chants and biblical texts. The tour guide should instruct tourists on principled and specific requirements before visiting the tourist site regarding clothing, photography, silence, movement of visitors, etc.

The tour guide should be perfectly acquainted with temple architecture, Christian art - painting, stained glass, carving, church music, religious holidays and rites. It is of particular importance that when visiting the church places of worship - Orthodox temple, monastery, chapel, „ayazmo“, - the tour guide can know and take into account the differences in temple construction - the types of Christian temples - basilica, rotunda, centric, cruciate, as well as the separate parts - a work, a ship's part and an altar with their specific specificity, interior location and arrangement of church paraphernalia. It is necessary to have rich Liturgical knowledge of the holy judgments, garments, and books, to distinguish types of worship ings, st. mysteries and church ordinances and their perpetrators- deacon, predecessor, and bishop. During the pilgrimage to a monastery know the location of the monastic community building - main monastery temple and chapels, dining room, drawing rooms, rubber, residential wings, etc.

Each of the visited church sites carries its history - the year of construction, masters, priests, mural, icons, etc.

The specific Orthodox-Krayvedic information the tour guide should know perfectly. A guided tour is necessary to be theologically supported and presented at a level with the necessary terminology. In the Christian temple and monastery, the guide service in the service of groups is a mandatory component. The tour guide makes it easy for tourists to get to the tourist spot with its church specificity. At certain times, the tour guide is subordinate to the church guide and then only leads the group in his role as the organizer



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



of the trip. In temples and monasteries, where there is no church guide, the discourse is led by the tourist guide.

About fifty tour operators and travel agencies are licensed in the Ruse region. Almost all are located in Ruse. The essential part of the tourist services is provided on-site. More than twenty tour operators and travel agencies are licensed in Giurgiu County.

Tour operators and travel agencies sell tours abroad and holidays in Bulgarian and Romanian resorts as a priority. In the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu arrives with disorganized visitors for weekend tourism or a longer stay. The main resources of tour guides are concentrated in the cities of Ruse and Giurgiu. The proposed tours take place mainly in the two cities, the Basarbovo Rock Monastery and Ivanovo Rock Churches, and the Comana Monastery Complex. English, German, French and Russian are the main languages, along with Bulgarian and Romanian.

### 1.9. Institutional framework

The tourist policy for marketing and advertising and development of cultural and historical and religious tourism is oriented toward achieving the tasks of sustainable development. At its core, this is a system of institutional, legal, economic and market instruments, together with voluntary mechanisms for the targeted formation of tourist behaviour that fits into sustainable development tasks. The mechanisms for reaching the tasks of tourist policy are: institutional, with a structure of state and local management bodies and with clearly defined functions; legislation in the field of tourism and culture, consistent with the European legal framework; economic, covering tax, market, financial and credit and insurance tools; based on the forms of business arrangements with state institutions.

An overview of the general framework for tourism management and strategic planning of cultural tourism in the context of the current socio-economic situation of the Ruse-Giurgiu Euroregion helps to identify, through analysis of strategic documents, the objectives, priority areas and measures for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the cross-border region of Ruse-Giurgiu. The system of strategic documents for the development of tourism, and in particular cultural and historical tourism, consists of key documents at the national, cross-border and European levels:

- Resolution of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe CM/Res (2007) 12 on "Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe";



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



- Resolution of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe CM/Res (2013) 66 on an extended partial Council of Europe Agreement on cultural routes of 18.12.2013;
- EC Communication COM (2010) 352 "Europe – the world's leading tourist destination – a new policy framework for European tourism";
- Directive 2014/60/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe of 15 May 2014 on the return of cultural objects illegally removed from the territory of a Member State;
- Council of Europe Regulation No 116/2009 of 18 December 2008 on the export of cultural goods;
- Tourism Development Master Plan covering the period 2007- 2026;
- Strategy for sustainable development of tourism in Bulgaria 2014-2030;
- Masterplan for National Tourism Development 2007-2026 (Master Plan for National Tourism of Romania 2007 –2026)
- The 2018 National Tourism Development Strategy
- “National Sustainable Development Strategy of Romania 2013 –2020 –2030”
- New Trends in Romanian Tourism in 2018
- “Sectorial Strategy in the field of Culture and National Patrimony”
- “National Strategy for Eco-Tourism Development in Romania”
- “Masterplan for the Development of Balneary Tourism, phases I and II”
- Development Strategy of Giurgiu County
- GIURGIU STRATEGY OF GIURGIU COUNTY
- Strategic Plan for the development of cultural tourism in Bulgaria (developed in 2007);
- Concept for tourist districting of Bulgaria;
- National Development Programme: Bulgaria 2020;
- Strategic Plan for the development of cultural tourism in Bulgaria, adopted by Protocol No 40.8 of the Council of Ministers of 14.10.2009;
- Regional development strategy of Ruse Region for the period 2014-2020;



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



- Municipal development plan of Ruse Municipality 2014-2020;
- Municipal development plan of Ivanovo Municipality 2014-2020;
- Municipal development plan of The Municipality of Two Mounds 2014-2020;
- Municipal development plan of Borovo Municipality 2014-2020;
- Municipal development plan of Byala Municipality 2014-2020;
- Municipal development plan of Tsenovo Municipality 2014-2020;
- Municipal development plan of Vetovo Municipality 2014-2020;
- Municipal development plan of Slyko Pole Municipality 2014-2020;

The objectives and guidelines of the proposed strategy for the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu are considered in the context of some of the strategic documents valid for the Danube region, for each of the Countries Romania and Bulgaria, for the cross-border region between the two countries and specifically for the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu. More important among them are: EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Concept for Tourist Districting of Bulgaria; Assessment Criteria for National Tourism Development Strategies – Romania; Romania National Tourism Master Plan 2007 – 2026; Common strategy for sustainable territorial development of the cross-border area Romania-Bulgaria, under an international project with the participation of the Business Center for Support for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises – Ruse; ERGO masterplan of The Ruse-Giurgiu Euroregion – operational solutions and master-planing for integrated management of development opportunities, under the project of Ruse Municipality and Giurgiu Municipality; Investment profile of Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu, projected by Ruse Municipality and Giurgiu Municipality; Strategy for development, improvement and innovation of a joint cultural and historical tourist product; Integrated strategy for marketing and promotion of a joint cultural and historical tourist product: Transdanubia. Pearls - Network for Sustainable Mobility along the Danube. Regional tourism and mobility plan of Ruse Region, under the Project "Transdanub. Pearls"; Culture matters – cross-border cooperation for the management of cultural heritage (under the project "Memofisch" of the Bulgarian-Romanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and partners)

Public policies for the development of tourism and their management in Bulgaria and Romania are for the most part centrally managed. Strategic visions for tourism in both countries degree in tourist attractiveness all possible forms of tourism without prioritizing some sector.

A number of these strategic documents promote the participation of Bulgaria and Romania in joint packages of cross-border tourist products together with several neighbouring countries to create new tourist



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



locations. This is a tool for balanced development and optimization of the level positions in Romanian and Bulgarian tourist attractiveness and is a pretext for general marketing actions and their upgrade to regional branding.

In most regional development plans of municipalities and communes, despite the varying degrees of prioritisation, tourism is given hope as an economic sector with development potential. These opportunities are interpreted as an option to create a strong economic sector based on cultural and historical and religious tourism.

The tourism sector in Bulgaria is more developed overall and relatively less advocacy in Romania. According to one studio in IncomingRomania, in a comparative study of the ratio between the population of five Eastern European countries and the available bed base for tourist accommodation, Romania should make a big difference compared to other countries by ordering the number of hotel rooms and the number of tourists. In 2019, out of a total of 227,315 properties (rooms in hotels, b&Bs, hotel apartments, hostels, etc.), only 107,711 represent the hotel room classified from 1 to 5 stars, i.e. approximately 47%.

N	Countries	Population	Total accommodation spaces	Rooms in hotels (1-5 stars)	Number of tourists in 2018
1	Czech Republic	10.66 million	210.415	105.292	21.3 million
2	Hungary	9.67 million	99.870	61.539	12.5 million
3	<b>Bulgaria</b>	6.99 million	170.200	125.000	7.79 million
4	Poland	37.86	399.362	136.200	33.89 million
5	<b>Romania</b>	<b>19.4 million</b>	<b>227.315</b>	<b>107.711</b>	<b>13.30 million (estimate 2019)</b>

Source: IncomingRomania Sursa: EST Hospitality Research, INS Romania, Czech Statistical Office, Hungarian Central Statistical Office

In Bulgaria, the huge tourism capacities are concentrated in the Black Sea area, mountain ski resorts and several cities with cultural and historical resources, such as Veliko Tarnovo, the capital of Sofia and the city of Plovdiv, which was the European capital of culture in 2019. the capital Bucharest and Sibiu, which was also the European capital of culture in 2007, and also the seaside resorts. In addition to the developed resorts and tourist developed cities, there is a need to attract visitors to other areas to generate sources of revenue from economic activity - accommodation, meals, fees and other expenses from visits to tourist sites,



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



etc. in the Euroregion ruse - Giurgiu. The need for the development of significant cultural and historical and religious sites, their bright presentation, the provision of qualified staff, built and maintained bringing infrastructure, adjacent attractions and services are the basis of the analysis of activity and planning in the construction of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the Euroregion from the course of national strategic priorities in Romania and Bulgaria.

Cultural tourism adopts a modern definition by the World Tourism Organization at the 22nd session of the General Assembly, in the Chinese city of Chengdu in 2017, according to which:

"Cultural tourism is a type of tourist activity where the main motivation of the tourist is to learn, discover, experience and consume movable and real attractions/products in a tourist destination.

These attractions and products are associated with a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional characteristics of society, covering art, architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living culture of the community with its way of life, value system, beliefs and traditions."

The modern definition brings out a broader nature of modern cultural tourism, referring not only to monuments and objects but also to the style and habit of existence, creativity and in general the culture of everyday life.

The basic international documents concerning the realization of a joint tourist product for cultural heritage, with cross-border routes, are the two UNESCO Conventions: the Unesco Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 16.11.1972 and the Convention on measures to prohibit and prevent illegal imports, exports and transfer of ownership of CULTURAL VALUES of UNESCO of 17.11.1970.

In European Union legislation, the main documents concerning the implementation of joint cross-border routes and tourist activities in the field of cultural and historical and religious heritage are the European Cultural Convention of 19.12.1954; the Convention for the Protection of Europe's Architectural Heritage of 3.10.1985; the European Convention for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage of 16.01.1992; Directive of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe - 2014/60/EU of 15 May 2014 on the return of cultural goods illegally removed from the territory of a Member State and amending Regulation No 1024/2012 and Council of Europe Regulation No 116/2009 of 18 December 2008 on the export of cultural objects.

Account should also be taken of: substantive acts; requirements for States Parties; principles and objectives set about the international protection of cultural heritage. Account should also be taken of the international bodies implementing the protection, their composition and the powers and obligations of states appearing parties to the Conventions regarding their activities.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



In Bulgaria, the basic principles for the protection and development of culture are introduced in the Law on Protection and Development of Culture – State Gazette, issue 1/2014. 50 of 01.06.1999

In Romania, a series of laws and regulations have been adopted, which have been published and can collectively be found at <http://cimec.ro/legislatie/legislatie-culturala.html>. Among them, the most significant is Law No 422 of 18.07. 2001 on the protection of historical monuments, Law on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage of 2000, Law No 26 of 29 February 2008 on the protection of the intangible cultural heritage, Law No 55 of 15 May 2020 on certain measures to prevent and combat the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic

On the matter, there are several regulations and regulations in both countries, complementary and specific topics covering the perimeter of the legislative framework.

#### 1.10. Expected trends related to tourist behaviour in the field of cultural and religious tourism

The volume of market share of cultural and historical and religious tourism is directly dependent on the availability and quality of the tourist product and its use, and a clear direction for accelerated expansion is emerging. According to analysis, the world's market is about forty per cent, and not in the rare rate of growth, on an annual basis, jumps 12 per cent to 15 per cent.

Users are the same and their desires are different, and this requires differentiation and segmentation of information and communication to provoke interest and the decision-making process for travel. A toolkit is needed for the fine differentiation of the groups of users of the tourist product, for which a multi-directional analysis of factors should be used - psychological, demographic, geographical, cultural and depending on the value system, biases and beliefs, contemporary and historical notions and biting myths. The task is to help and appropriately direct the local tourism industry to precisely deterministic groups of tourists agreeing to pay for tourism based on cultural and historical and religious Christian heritage.

Today's tourist experiences a variety of claims about the location. At the same time as recreation gets more culture, experiences and nature. The Euroregion ruse - Giurgiu can offer a similar modern mix because there is the potential to offer a rich tourist mix of history, life, culture, and traditions.

Currently, the tourism industry in the Ruse-Giurgiu region focuses on the markets that are most likely to accept the available local tourist products. To grow the number of tourists, targeted efforts are needed on active marketing from tourist markets with resource and growth potential.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Defining markets, with the opportunity to take on tourist invitations are the basic structurally defining markets from Bulgaria and Romania and priority markets of tourists from Germany, France, and Italy.

The main factors that attract tourists to the region are the sights and the landscape. The essential grounds for residence in the area by Bulgarian and Romanian tourists are the family excursion, the holiday, as well as meetings with friends and relatives.

The definition of specific markets is extremely specific, as visitors coming on different occasions and from diverse destinations bring their grounds and attitudes for travel. Impressions are formed by the cultural and cognitive code of each of the tourists about the place, arrival time, media coverage and creatives, the time available for rest, and a new or repeated visit. For some tourists, the location may be more easily achievable, for others more difficult. The formation of visiting habits in a particular destination is a matter of tourist education and cultivating the relevant knowledge of the tourist about the destination.

The base market in the Euroregion accounts for 70% of all overnight stays and approximately as much revenue in percentage terms. The border situation of the areas and their connectivity through the Danube Bridge determine the degree of importance of the internal market underlying the Euroregion. Bulgarians and Romanians are key to the market because of the opportunities for short trips with denser saturation. The main mass is people from larger cities, close to the Euroregion.

Significant for the Euroregion are visitors from European countries and for day visits in the navigable season and tourists from Danube ship cruises.

According to the profile of tourists in the region, a segmented approach should be offered in the advertising communication of the destination. The efforts involve targeting narrow segments of users from the base markets who are interested in the Euroregion ruse - Giurgiu, tend to use tourist products based on the cultural and historical and religious Christian heritage.

In addition, specific types of users (with specific tourist interests) are identified in each segment. One of the types of users is the so-called cultural researcher and his profile is formed by the love of non-secession journeys and the potential to constantly take on new things from the culture, traditions and environment subject to the visit. Amateur, interested in the authentic experience, with options for active infusion into the lifestyle of the local culture and model of life, a fan of individual trips.

Another type of traveller is the one with creative interests, a variety of cultural researchers, but with an engaged interest in cultural events. Aimed substantially at the creative industry - museums, theatres, music and other types of art festivals, concerts, etc. Oriented mostly towards recreational, less to study and interest in cultural potential. Rest in a certain place and supplement the value of residence with visits to cultural and historical and religious heritage.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The main segments of strategic markets represent tourists craving experience and experience. They are usually a group - family, family friends, a company of friends looking to be together, sharing their time in search of new experiences, changing and sharing experiences. They crave the opening of new places, away from the usual tourist directions, the way they provide an escape from the overload and stress, giving their time to loved ones and themselves. They succumb to short journeys, but often also at short distances. Sometimes there are also organized tourist groups, which are a relatively small segment. They don't have a pronounced age profile or holiday style. They are usually contacted and love unique personal experiences. They are usually carriers of a living interest in cultural and historical and religious sites.

Students and students are an independent group, moving frequently in bulk. They use excursions offered by travel agencies and tour operators, being inquisitive in principle about history, culture, and religion. Take usually short trips, often not during the tourist season.

Different segments of tourists bring their preferences both in the manner of travel and in the way of the information perceived by the media, as well as in the way of planning vacations. The diverse information should be analysed and used when building the market in the mix of destinations in the Euroregion for marketing purposes in the relevant segments when the agenda so needs.

## 2. Factors for the development of cultural and religious tourism

Visiting the cultural and historical places is a function of many factors, among the main ones, are tourist preferences; the level of personal general culture and censorship; the information received in advance on the region and the place and its cultural and historical and religious heritage; the capabilities of the user pocket; mental and psychological attitudes, attitudes towards confession, traditions and lifestyle, etc.

The degree of completion of the infrastructure adjacent to cultural and historical and religious places and the level of tourist development are essential. This directly corresponds to the attractiveness of the tourist site and the entire destination. Many researchers seek to define exactly this concept, among them G. Golembki, according to Maria Grozeva, includes in it the tourist significance of the site or destination, the state of the environment, the protection of this environment and infrastructure accessibility. It is obvious that in the various activities related to the leap stimulating cultural and historical and religious tourism, many factors must be taken into account, some of them mentioned by the researchers Vasil Marinov and Petar Petrov in the studio "The challenges facing Bulgarian tourism on the threshold of the 21st century" in Problems of Geography in 2000,;1 the factors of the destination itself; 2. factors related to the regions and



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



countries generating tourist demand; 3. factors ensuring the link between destinations and genetic regions; 4. factors related to the large number of competitive destinations substituted from the point of view of tourists.'

Internationally, attitudes toward cultural and historical and religious tourism are the World Tourism Organization (100), the United Nations Educational, Science and Culture Organization - UNESCO, the Organization of World Historic Cities, the European Union and its cultural institutions, etc. None of these organizations' records generally valid statistical information on cultural and historical and religious tourism. At different intervals, studies are conducted on different occasions, but the results obtained serve specific objectives and tasks of the study.

Other factors contributing to the advancement of cultural and historical and religious tourism include the change in understanding of the value of cultural and historical and religious heritage, the amount of income and the leisure limit. The dynamics of existence imply compressed consumption of tourist experiences, and this implies a preference for concise tourist trips, a type of weekend with a short escape from the city or a combination of traditional vacations with short intensive visits to cultural and historical sites.

In 2018, every tenth enterprise in the European non-financial business economy belonged to the tourism industry. These 2.3 million enterprises have hired approximately 12.3 million people. Enterprises in sectors with tourism-related activities account for 9.5% of employees in the entire non-financial economy and 22.4% of those employed in the services sector. The share of tourism industries in total turnover and value-added by factor costs is relatively lower, with the tourism industry representing 3.9% of turnover and 5.8% of the added value of the non-financial economic economy of the Countries of the European Union.

In 2018 there is a 9% increase in tourists in Europe. The growth of tourists in southern Europe and the Mediterranean has been significant, and the number of tourists from China, the Arab world and the Americas visiting the region has increased. Central and Eastern Europe have seen a growth of 6%.

#### Tourism development in Bulgaria and Romania

In connection with the spread of the crown covid-19 virus, both globally and Europeanly, several quarantine measures have been imposed in Bulgaria and Romania. In many of the months of 2020, statistical surveys of the BCCP were not carried out due to the cancellation of international flights and the restriction of the passage across the country's land borders and the spread worldwide of the COVID-19 coronavirus. After the mass administration of vaccines in 2021 and the launch of medicines for treatment, the economic crisis, including that in the deeply affected tourism industry, is expected to quickly subside and the sector to recover and not only regain its previous levels but also to re-impose a trend towards constant annual growth as early as 2022 and the following years.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Until the emergence of the COVID 19 crisis, tourism in Bulgaria and Romania was growing sustainably.

According to data from the NSI, in 2018 the total number of tourist visits of foreigners to Bulgaria was 12,368,363 and the increase compared to 2017 was 4.4%. In 2019, the total number increased to 12,552,152, which is a nearly 1.5 per cent increase compared to 2018.

According to data from the National Statistical Institute of Romania, more than 13,268,756 people resided in tourist accommodation centres in Romania in 2019, compared to 12.8 million tourists in 2018. No less than 1.21 million were accommodated in Bucharest, which is a slight increase compared to the previous year.

While in Bulgaria the huge tourist flow is practically concentrated towards the Black Sea coast in the summer tourist season, in Romania, the capital Bucharest leads the ranking with over 2 million tourists who stayed in 2018, followed by Brasov (1.36 million) and Constanta (1.31 million). The top 10 include other areas such as Cluj, Mureşti, Sibiu, Prahova, Bihor and Suceava. The only major county to have seen a decline (-5.08%) for 2018 compared to the previous year was Timish, where about 378,000 tourists were staying, including 117,000 foreigners.

On the other hand, Teleorman registered only 10,609 tourists, of which 948 foreigners. The ranking was completed by Călăraşi (21,480 tourists), Giurgiu (26,860), Ōlt (32,318) and Sălăge (39,033).

### **Tourists in Giurgiu**

**Tourists in 2018 26 860**

**compared to 2017. 27 921**

**Difference: -1,061 / -4%**

**Source: INS**

**Tourists in 2018 Romanians / foreigners**

**Romanians: 24,690 (91.92 %) / foreigners: 2,170 (8.08 %)**

The main external markets for the Romanian tourist product are Germany, Israel, Italy, the USA, Hungary, France and the United Kingdom, and for the Bulgarian tourist product in recent years are Romania, Greece and Germany, followed by Turkey, Macedonia and Russia.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Essential questions when choosing a location are financial conditions, accommodation and service conditions, natural resources, hygiene, and sometimes even the vision of conditions. Peace of mind and reliable security, the potential for sightseeing are also among the important issues. More than three-quarters of travellers choose the online route and location.

The length of the holiday of foreign tourists in the summer season is six to seven nights at sea and in the country about five to six days. In other seasons, the stay is two to three nights, and because of holidays, vacation and ski season in January it is about four to five days.

### Potential of tourism in the Ruse region and Giurgiu County

Tourism is one of the priority sectors for the economy of both the Ruse region and Giurgiu County. The potential of the Euroregion in the field of natural and anthropogenic tourist resources is a combination of natural resources and cultural and historical and religious heritage, traditions and customs.

Taking into account the factors for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism is based on the cultural and natural resources in the Euroregion Ruse – Giurgiu, whose main perspective is to find, together with established locations, less known and represented, but valuable places, with the potential to develop as tourist sites.

The attractiveness of cultural and historical and religious resources is considered in terms of their transformation into tourist sites. The criteria include an assessment of the cultural and historical value such as physical condition, attractiveness, authenticity, level of risk associated with the given place and religious Christian site, its management policy, along with the official level of protection of the place and site. Another criterion is the assessment of operational value such as accessibility for visits and infrastructure assurance, as well as the popularity rating and image of the place and site.

The criteria were thus chosen also take into account the trends in the development of tourist behaviour, which is to increase the requirements of visitors for the quality, uniqueness, diversity of the tourist service and its attractiveness. Tourists require an increase in the quality of the country's technical infrastructure and the material and technical provision of tourist infrastructure, and the provision of specific services according to hobbies and interests is already considered part of the accepted standard. There is a trend in increasing the share of youth trips, including students, for visits to places and sites of cultural and historical and religious tourism, along with an increase in the role of communications in hotel and tour operator platforms in the direction of searching, discovering, planning and carrying out the journey. The trend for increasing travel by tourists in the third age is enduring.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The evaluation highlighted sites that are more or not so popular, tailored to factors such as historical resources and heritage, cultural resources, religion, and natural resources.

The available resources need to be evaluated from the perspective of the possible creation of a brand, giving an individual face to each tourist site in a different way from other sites. The indication of the potential and personalisation of the tourist resource should be carried out as a single process. The brand needs to unite different aspects: tourist experiences, emotion, infrastructure, financial cost, safety, and level of the cultural and historical and religious value of the site.

The branding of the territory and the sites raises the overall value by imposing standards in the requirements for applying a variety of techniques, for the opening of locations that meet the needs of individual tourists in specific spaces and remarkable sites. Branding is hardly the universal medical for any location. The key question is how to harness to work for the general interest of the available economic and institutional entities in the area to build and promote the brand.

In creating a brand in a territory, object or place, there are some similar characteristics and they must be respected. The toolkit of branding is necessary to carry the spirit of the given place, giving people to feel what makes it so unique, to the extent that it is an anchor for every tourist.

The vision in the formation of the brand or complex of brands should implement within itself the values of the community, along with architecture and infrastructure. The brand should represent and bear the unadulterated authenticity in the spiritual values inherent in the supported resources. Sometimes the imposition of individual brands on specific products and markets is probably justified because of specific activities related to visitors, products or resources.

Specific sites are emerging for inclusion in mass as well as in narrowly targeted market locations that have potential and have now developed or have the potential to develop as independent tourist attractions.

Cathedral "Holy Trinity" is located in the ruse. The temple was built in 1632.

Karanverbovski Monastery "St. Marina", next to the village of Karan Verbowka, Municipality of Dedya Mogili. The Karanverbovski Girls' Monastery is active and inhabited by a small number of adult nuns. The monastery church was built in 1890, and then the „ayazmo“ was shaped like a well.

Bassarbovski Rock Monastery "St. Dimitry Bassarbovski" is located in the valley of the Rusenski Lom River, near the village of Basarbovo and 10 km from the ruse. It started in the Second Bulgarian Kingdom, but for the first time, its name was mentioned in the Ottoman tax register from 1431.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Gramovetz Rock Monastery Complex, which is 4.5 km north of Koshov village. Next to the complex is built an eco path, which starts from the base of the rock. Due to its location, the complex can only be reached via a path, making the site difficult to reach. The complex is not managed and maintained organized.

Ivanovo Rock Churches complex is located near the village of Ivanovo. It was founded in the 1920s. Graffiti and inscriptions with important historical information are on the walls of the monastery premises. The site is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

St. George's Temple is located in the wide city centre of Ruse. Founded before 1640, in the beginning, there was a wooden church, and the new temple was consecrated in 1843. In the temple are preserved the icons of the old iconostasis, painted by masters of the Tryavna painting school in 1842.

St. Petka Temple is located in the wide city centre. The architectural project of the temple is the first bold and successful attempt to recreate the Round Church (The Golden Church) in Preslav, built by Tsar Simeon I. The temple was consecrated by Metropolitan Mikhail Dorostolian and Chervenski on April 30, 1944.

Cathedral "Assumption of the Virgin Mary" – located in Giurgiu. An inscription from 1859, written in Cyrillic, mentions that an underground church was built in the same place in 1806 since at that time Giurgiu was part of the Ottoman Empire, in which the authorities did not allow the construction of the above-ground churches. The current church was built between 1840 and 1852 after Giurgiu was returned to the borders of Vlachia.

The Comana Monastery - located in the municipality of the same name in Giurgiu County, Muntenia, Romania, is a religious building included in the List of Historical Monuments in Romania. The first site is managed and maintained organized.

The Monastery of Strumbu Geiseni – located in Geiseni municipality was founded in the 16th century and is mentioned in historical documents and diplomas from 1526 and 1605. as one of those elements that give us the "artistic foundation" of what can lead to exceptions.

The monastery dedicated to the Annunciation in Bolintin has stood at the crossroads since old times as a holy place of worship. The historian Petre S. Nasturel demonstrated, based on a note found in a Greek manuscript in the Holy Forest, that the Monastery of Bolintin also existed at the time of Basarab I, 1310 - 1352, as one of the oldest monasteries in The Lavashko. Among the rulers were: Vlad voivode (1436-1446), Vladislav II (1447-1456), Voievoda Basarab (1474-1477), Basarab the Younger (1477-1482), Neogao Basarab (1512-1521)



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The church "St. Panteleimon" in the Municipality of Vedeia, was established in 1845. It was built at the expense of Dr Apostol Arsake, in 1845. In 1874, the founder, towards the end of his life, brought the famous artist Gheorghe M. Tatarescu to complete the painting. of the temple.

There are some parallels between religion and brands. The set of terms is related to the semantic level. They carry their sacredness and uniqueness, which contain their natural immanent identity. In its natural primordial form, religious tourism is imbued with faith and contains the emotional path and is also the subject of a mix of marketing messages and branding.

The notes on the brand potential of specific religious places and sites suggest different options. One is the creation of a brand of the entire destination, engaged in cultural and historical and religious tourism or branding of different places and sites. Which of the two paths will be suitable is a topic of careful study, discussion and analysis of the benefits and likely advantages and disadvantages. The dialogue here is pre-imperial to the spiritual persons of Rousse Metropolitan and Giurgiu Metropolitan because they have the tasks of managing and managing a basic share of religious sites.

## 1. Stakeholder analysis

Interested parties are all entities with interests in the process of development of a tourist product with a cultural-historical and religious focus. Their views and interests need to be taken into account when drawing up a "Common Strategy for Cultural and Historical and Religious Tourism in the Ruse-Giurgiu Cross-Border Region" for the period 2022-2027. or maybe assigned to those who may be in correlation and the most effect of the implementation of the common strategy.

Building on pre-received information and analysis of stakeholders, the joint strategy builds on the view that it is key to identifying institutions, organisations, people and groups with specific interests corresponding to the long-term exploitation of cultural and historical and religious heritage in a tourist context. It is the possible role of diverse entities that guarantee the vitality of each new product in tourism.

For the determination of interested parties, the Standards for conducting public consultations of the Council of Ministers shall be used. A prepared list shall identify organisations and institutions with an attitude and/or likely to influence key policies and/or those over which the implementation of the same policies is likely to reflect.

As a function of the stakeholder analysis, according to the methodology for selecting key stakeholders, the relevant legal and natural persons are contacted:





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



GROUP	TYPE OF STAKEHOLDERS
Central authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works;</li> <li>Ministry of Tourism</li> </ul>
Religious institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bulgarian Orthodox Church</li> <li>Ruse Metropolitan</li> <li>Romanian Orthodox Church</li> <li>Giurgiu's Metropolitan</li> </ul>
Regional and Local Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Development Council;</li> <li>Regional Coordination Councils;</li> <li>The regional governors of the Ruse region and Giurgiu County;</li> <li>Municipal councils and administrations in the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu</li> </ul>
Civil societal structures (NGOs )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Associations for public benefit;</li> <li>Associations for public benefit;</li> <li>Associations of municipalities;</li> <li>Local initiative groups;</li> <li>Branch associations of the business;</li> <li>Employers' and social partners' organisations;</li> <li>Academia;</li> </ul>



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



GROUP	TYPE OF STAKEHOLDERS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel companies and associations;</li> </ul>
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel operators;</li> <li>Travel agents;</li> <li>Hoteliers;</li> <li>Restaurateurs;</li> <li>Local business tour guides, tour guides, animators.</li> </ul>
Natural parks and institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directorates of natural parks</li> </ul>

#### 4. SWOT analysis

The analysis aims to fit as much as possible in the context of the current social and economic situation of the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu, in line with the national regional development goals and priorities of Bulgaria and Romania, as well as with the strategic orientation of the regional policy of the European Union. It is consistent with the legal basis and institutional field for implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Thus, the analysis is organically implemented in the tasks defined by the strategic documents, key areas and tasks for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the Ruse-Giurgiu region.

For the needs of the project, a SWOT analysis shall be presented, by the guidelines for change in the surrounding business and social environment and in line with the relevant growth factors in the Euroregion. The task is to define the joint strategy for cultural and historical and religious tourism in the cross-border region of Ruse - Giurgiu 2022 - 2027, to take into account the supposed impact of the surrounding business and social environment and the possibilities of the Euroregion.

Accurate and practically targeted SWOT analysis is a condition for more accurate differentiation of strategic tasks, specific directions and events in the joint strategy for cultural and historical and religious tourism in the Euroregion region ruse-Giurgiu. In the preparation, the provisions of methodological guidelines of the



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration for updating the current regional development plans are taken into account.

The analysis is based on current data, taking into account the probabilities of their alleged development in the time horizon of the planned period from 2022 to 2027, based on conclusions and recommendations from the current evaluations and documents from the Municipal Development Plans of the local self-government authorities in Ruse Region and Giurgiu District. The specified factors with external influence are shown in the options and threats section, while those with internal influence find a place in the strengths and weaknesses section. The analysis took into account an increasingly ageing population and its reduction based on objective, continent-like demographic processes.

Particular account should be taken off and taking into account the emerging negative changes in the business and social picture as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the close-up in 2021 and 2022, based on the economic recovery measures taken, which foresees the subsequent phase of growth and development in the time horizon from 2022 to 2027.

1. Strengths :	2. Weaknesses:
<p>1.1. The presence of strategic opportunities for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism: historical places and attractions, buildings and religious facilities with several hundred years of history, architectural sites, museums, and institutions, with the possibility of realization of cultural events, festivals, and performances. Wide opportunities for combining with other tourist activities.</p> <p>1.2. Combination of cultural and historical and religious tourist sites and other natural and archaeological attractions in the region.</p>	<p>2.1. The persistent trend toward population decline in the Euroregion is an essential barrier to the operation of high-level tourist services.</p> <p>2.2. Danger of frequent congestion and blocking of transport links of the only connecting Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu on the Danube bridge transport artery.</p> <p>2.3. Most of the places and sites lack basic and ancillary services from the specialized infrastructure.</p> <p>2.4. Absence of specific information schemes and digital applications for cultural and historical and religious places and sites in the Euroregion Ruse – Giurgiu.</p>



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



<p>1.3.Extensive experience in cross-border cooperation between the administrative structures in the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu.</p> <p>1.4.The proactive management and available staff with experience and administrative capacity in ruse regional administration, Giurgiu Regional Council and the municipalities in the cross-border region of Ruse - Giurgiu is a prerequisite for the development of cultural and historical tourism in a new stage.</p> <p>1.5.Traditions in the organisation, historical experience and sustainable perspective in cooperation between regional administrations and municipalities in the Ruse-Giurgiu region are the basis for the implementation of the general strategy for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism.</p> <p>1.6.Established business opportunities in the field of cultural and historical and religious tourism such as the mindset of larger investors to invest in tourist infrastructure.</p> <p>1.7.Existence of established practical traditions in the development of cultural and historical tourism in the region.</p>	<p>2.5. Some of the cultural and historical and religious monuments are not possible to maintain and are not attractive for tourist visits.</p> <p>2.5. The locations for accommodation are concentrated exclusively in the two centres – Ruse and Giurgiu</p> <p>2.6. Lack or poor quality of accommodation and nutrition in places with opportunities for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism away from the regional centres. There are no sanitary and hygienic facilities in places and sites of tourist interest and with the possibility of development, no parking lots are built, and in separate locations electricity and water supply are problematic.</p> <p>2.7. Capacity shortage in administrative authority. Existence of inaccurate notions regarding the directions of tourist development.</p> <p>2.8. Low level of cooperation of the region with local authorities, economic and tourism operators and local community groups. The management of the tourist product is a complex process for which there are insufficient competencies in the region.</p> <p>2.9. Technical and investment shortage for growth of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the region.</p>
---	---



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



<p>1.8.Possibility to establish horizontal management in cooperation between stakeholders.</p> <p>1.9.Existence of developed road infrastructure, and through the Danube Bridge, on a direct cross-border artery.</p> <p>1.10.On the faces are places and sites of exceptional cultural and historical value, with diversity in the presented historical eras and architecture, as well as in the presented different currents in the Christian tradition.</p> <p>1.11. The price range of tourist products is characterized by low to medium-high values in the Ruse-Giurgiu region.</p> <p>1.12.Aware stakeholders of the importance of the cultural and historical product for the development of the destination in the region.</p>	<p>2.10. Depreciated and poorly maintained road infrastructure.</p> <p>2.13. Poor performance of the Euroregion in the field of cultural and historical and religious tourism. Weak advocacy of PR and advertising content, lack of promo on popular digital platforms.</p> <p>2.14. Lack of an organization tasked with stretching the Euroregion towards its growth in a cultural and historical and religious location. Few imposed or created tourist places and sites.</p> <p>2.16. Frequent lack of a guiding multi-language system for short information guidance and giving information in places and sites – signs, signs, etc.</p> <p>2.17. Low level of use of communication and information technologies in the operation of places and sites.</p>
3. Opportunities:	4. Threats:
<p>3.1.The increasing interest in cultural and historical and religious tourism from international and regional, national and local perspectives.</p> <p>3.2.Increasing interest in travel and recreation on a territorial and confessions basis.</p>	<p>4.1.The presence of the covid-19 global pandemic and as a result - a drastic decline in tourism.</p> <p>4.2.Terrorist and extremist threats.</p> <p>4.3.Abrupt and lasting climatic changes due to global warming – heat upheavals - droughts, storms and floods, hot flashes and strong frosts, rapid temperature amplitudes.</p>



<p>3.3.Realization of the potential for absorption of a significant financial resource under the Interreg VI-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme 2021-2027, as well as through the capabilities of other financial instruments, such as the Danube transnational programme and others.</p> <p>3.4.Increasing the number of passengers on cruise lines. Increasing passenger flow in the individual putty segment, increase in passengers on cheap air flights, as well as servicing infrastructure.</p> <p>3.5.Implementation of national, interstate and European policy in the field of the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism.</p> <p>3.6.Existence of a network of competing economic actors in the field of offering services in cultural and historical and religious tourism.</p> <p>3.7.Dynamics in behavioural attitudes and needs in tourists.</p> <p>3.8.Possibilities for developing and implementing financial and tax incentives</p> <p>3.9.Aid to economic operators operating in the tourist market to build tourist sites and sites by safety measures against the COVID-19 pandemic and to reduce the risk of</p>	<p>4.4.Helplessness of the institutions in the battle with the black market of cultural and historical values and property.</p> <p>4.5.An ever-increasing number of staff disappearing from the area due to underperforming remuneration, etc.</p> <p>4.6.Lack of predictability in the legislative base.</p> <p>4.7.The proximity of the capital Bucharest attracts tourists to make short tourist trips to Giurgiu County and to return to the opportunities offered by the tourist service in the capital.</p> <p>4.8. Increasing the costs of tourism entrepreneurs to adapt sites and attractions to safety measures as a result of COVID-19 and a real risk of bankruptcy of a large number of small entrepreneurs.</p> <p>4.9. Loss of cultural memory for the region.</p> <p>4.10. Total depopulation of settlements.</p> <p>4.11. Very high age threshold galloping demographic deficit.</p> <p>4.12. Weak earnings, low purchasing power and standard of living.</p> <p>4.13.Inconsistent macro-framework in political governance and economic liability.</p> <p>4.14. Aggravation of the investment situation.</p> <p>4.15. Deficit of attention from potential investors to capital investments in the area.</p>
--	--



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



bankruptcy through funds from the European Funds.

3.10. Absorption of external investments in tourist sites. Potential tools for economic and fiscal incentives.

3.11. The rise of communication digital technologies is a solution for the preservation of cultural and historical and religious heritage.

3.12. Preservation of the architectural appearance with building renovation and local regulations.

3.13. Cooperation with specialists for assistance through various means - consulting, institutional corporation, etc., for the preservation of the cultural and historical and religious heritage.

3.14. Events for the preservation of the cultural and historical and religious heritage in the region, attracting independent expertise, and the conservation actions are in line with the scientific opinions and with the organizational and financial assistance of the administration.

3.15. Using leading international experience in the conservation of cultural and historical sites.

3.16. Monitoring of social networks for the designation of the target tourist operators and partnership with them to

4.16. A desire for common generalised solutions rather than step-by-step and clear steps towards clearly profiled market focuses.

4.18. Increase in the prices of basic resources – energy, and water, and as a result – an increase in the prices of tourist services.

4.19. Lack of understanding among countries about the tourism industry.

4.20. Ignoring local communities, investors, local media, public and social partners.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



study tourist attitudes and behaviours and work on optimizing the organization.

3.17. Implementation of a modern formula for managed waste, in line with sustainable tourism.

3.18. If possible, creation and realization of organic production in the monastery regions and sites (possible partnership with branch producers of local produce and products).

3.19. If possible, creation and realization of organic production in the monastery regions and sites (possible partnership with branch producers of local produce and products).

3.20. Actions for the creation of recreation areas near the sites of cultural and historical and religious tourism – mines and small parks, the possibility of sports.

3.21. The investment model is based on the use of European funds after 2021. resources allocated to tourism development.

3.22. Use of digital travel and holiday applications based on narrow targeting, speed, low cost, and tourist feedback.

3.23. Establishment of a common economic vision for sustainability for the Euroregion, with the key link of



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



cultural and historical and religious tourism.

3.24. Career opportunities for specialists with theological education.

The extremely strong geographical location of the cross-border region of Ruse-Giurgiu, combined with the availability of a rich cultural and historical resources, outline the strongest strengths from the perspective of the common strategy, which is based solely based on existing assets of the region, together with the social and investment intentions generated as a consequence. The toolbox set by the European Union is an essential source for achieving strategic results. It is this toolkit that underpins the promotion of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the Ruse-Giurgiu region.

A strong country, which determines the specific directions for the realization of the strategic vision, along with the preparation of the paths for realization and clearing of errors, is a significant level of compliance of the father-of-the-house strategic materials with the European strategic guides, regulations, toolbox and respectively guidelines established by European legislation.

The shortage of critical investment resources for full infrastructure coverage of the territory is among the weaknesses for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism since according to the general strategy, the solution to much of the funding will be redirected to the authorities and to provoke entrepreneurial appetites, where care should be taken with the limits of acceptable compromises, account the establishment of pre-commissions for corrupt practices.

The implementation of the joint strategy for the common preservation and use of cultural and historical religious heritage should start with enlightening work due to the lack of experience required by entrepreneurs and regional communities, as regards the options for implementing the possibilities for building cultural and historical and religious tourism in a single network.

The norms for the establishment of infrastructure for the deployment of cultural and historical and religious tourism, established in European Union regulations, in the national laws of Bulgaria and Romania are regulated to a relatively different extent by a diverse series of documents, and this is an obstacle in their specific use in the realization of projects.

A fundamentally weak side, because this should be done regardless of this strategy, is the absence of concrete measures to involve investors and use the infrastructure to expand cultural and historical and religious tourism.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The opportunities are justified by the direct linking of entrepreneurs and local communities in fulfilment of their intentions, with the activities proposed by the joint strategy on the creation of modern infrastructure for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism. Modernising the infrastructure for the expansion of cultural and historical and religious tourism is a possible tool to overcome some of the socio-economic inequalities by increasing revenues and purchasing opportunities to raise the level of living standards in the Euroregion.

The demographic collapse and the overall sustained direction of population reduction in the Euroregion is also a major threat to the implementation of the joint strategy, and the creation of infrastructure, a key to growth, can be melted down due to additional factors such as the inability to draw public funds, loss of interest from entrepreneurs, etc.

## 5. Tree of Problems

Identification of problems related to the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism in Bulgaria and the possibilities for impact on the problems identified is an important unit in the analysis of the management of a tourist product.

To this end, the problem tree method, which is the arrangement of problems in a hierarchical order, is applied, looking for the causal link between them. If the problem is the cause – passes to the lower level, if the problem is a consequence – it is to the upper level.

The analysis should make an accurate distinction between the following three levels: problem, causes of the problem, and its consequences.

The global crisis caused by co-species 19 has a severe negative impact on the tourism industry anywhere in the world. Overall demand for tourist services has shrunk due to severely reduced demand, the industry is reducing supply, and the unemployment rate in the sector has increased. Potential options and opportunities for tourism development are reduced. In recent months there has been a return to tourist interest in the larger markets, which are the first to escape the consequences of the crisis, thanks to the richer resources available to them and the greater and rapid absorption of aid to the tourism sector, as well as thanks to their administrative capacity.

According to statistics reflected in the information space, international tourism is recovering at a much faster pace thanks to better economic conditions in the world.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Despite the co-species crisis, the situation, in general, is unfavourable in areas with less developed tourism industry and infrastructure, among which is the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu. Population migration from economically less developed areas continues to increase, depopulation increases, and the older population increases, which discourages entrepreneurs from investing their resources in these areas, and they direct their capital only to large regional centres.

The more important problems that can be identified and which hinder the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the Euroregion are:

Problems arise from the philosophy of managing regions in the country and their tourist business. In general, the policy of tourism management in the country is ineffective. The positioning of Bulgaria and Romania in the low price segment is attributed, on the one hand, to a lack of vision, overall policy and historical encumbrance in the process of development of the tourism industry as a whole, and on the other hand too strong mercantile interests, to the personal benefits of managers and heads of certain economic groups, which largely influences the philosophy of management of the tourist business, regardless of its subject matter, in particular cultural and historical and religious tourism. Against this background, the resources allocated under various programmes shall not be used fairly rationally and appropriately.

Problems arise from the low level of qualification and education of a part of the population. Some residents of villages have primary or primary education, others are illiterate and disinterested in their professional development.

Problems arise from poor infrastructure in the areas. In most of the villages, the road network is below the required level, in some places, there is no or no good sanitation, and the connection to the Internet is symbolic. It is natural for the young population to look for something else with more normal living conditions, where they will also get better opportunities for realization.

These and several other problems do not allow the potential of the Euroregion to be exploited.

The need for strategic planning in the development on a regional scale of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the cross-border region of Ruse-Giurgiu is also a necessity according to the survey conducted in the form of discourse with focus groups and its results in identifying the problematic facts and causal links for their birth.

The main problem is the low number of tourist visits. At this stage in the Euroregion, although concentrated in the two major cities, there is a relative availability of accommodation base, but there is a lack of adequate suitable and developed infrastructure, which is why the tourist flow is of low intensity. The problem of underdeveloped tourist sites is due to several reasons, such as the fact that cultural and historical tourism was not a priority industry; there is no strategy developed for the development of this industry; or sufficient



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



and targeted funding. Thus, the attractiveness of the territory drops, its tourist density remains relatively low, as remains low and its level of competitiveness.

The common Euroregion is recognizable among tourists mainly with single sites for cultural and historical and religious tourism, such as Bassarbovo monastery, Ivanovo rock churches and Comana monastery complex, but there is no common vision due to the lack of a unique product to be offered to them. The creation of a regional territorial brand with routes with a focus on cultural and historical and religious tourism aims to solve the problem related to the non-recognition of the Euroregion ruse - Giurgiu as a tourist destination. The goal is for tourists to connect the common Euroregion with something unique. One of the following problems is the untapped possibility of connecting tourist sites with each other and with such sites in the neighbouring region in the two countries. This is due to disinterest in the tourism industry from different administrative levels.

Tourism is multi-structural and is therefore influenced by various factors of the external and internal environment. Thus, the low level of tourist visits leads to further problems. Partial loss and lack of interest on the part of tourists leads to an increase in the number of transit visits, where no overnight accommodation takes place.

Across the country, there are demographic changes and there is a decrease in the number and ageing of the population in the Euroregion as a whole. There has been migration to larger cities and advancing immigration processes.

Young people don't have enough opportunities to make a realization. The vast majority of the staff employed in the field of tourism have low qualifications and poor language training. The low number of visitors is the reason for the inefficient use of tourist resources. This leads to insufficient jobs, poorly developed accommodation and entertainment, and low tourism revenues.

The general infrastructure is underdeveloped, there is a lack of good infrastructure in some of the tourist sites. There are restrictions related to funding for the construction of a strong tourist product, the preservation and maintenance of cultural and historical and religious sites. Outside Ruse and Giurgiu, the hotel and restaurants are based on the territory of the Euroregion, around the targeted places to visit are underdeveloped or underdeveloped. No permeable conditions have been created to attract investors, which would lead to economic growth in the tourism sector as a whole and an increase in the attractiveness of living in the area.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



**The goal tree method** makes it possible to cover a sufficiently substantial number of possible events that can be used to solve problems but does not ensure their quantification. This sequence of stages is related to the processes for defining the strategic objectives for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the cross-border region and modelling, as a complex part of coordinating the programme-targeted development of tourism in the cross-border region.

Target task tree





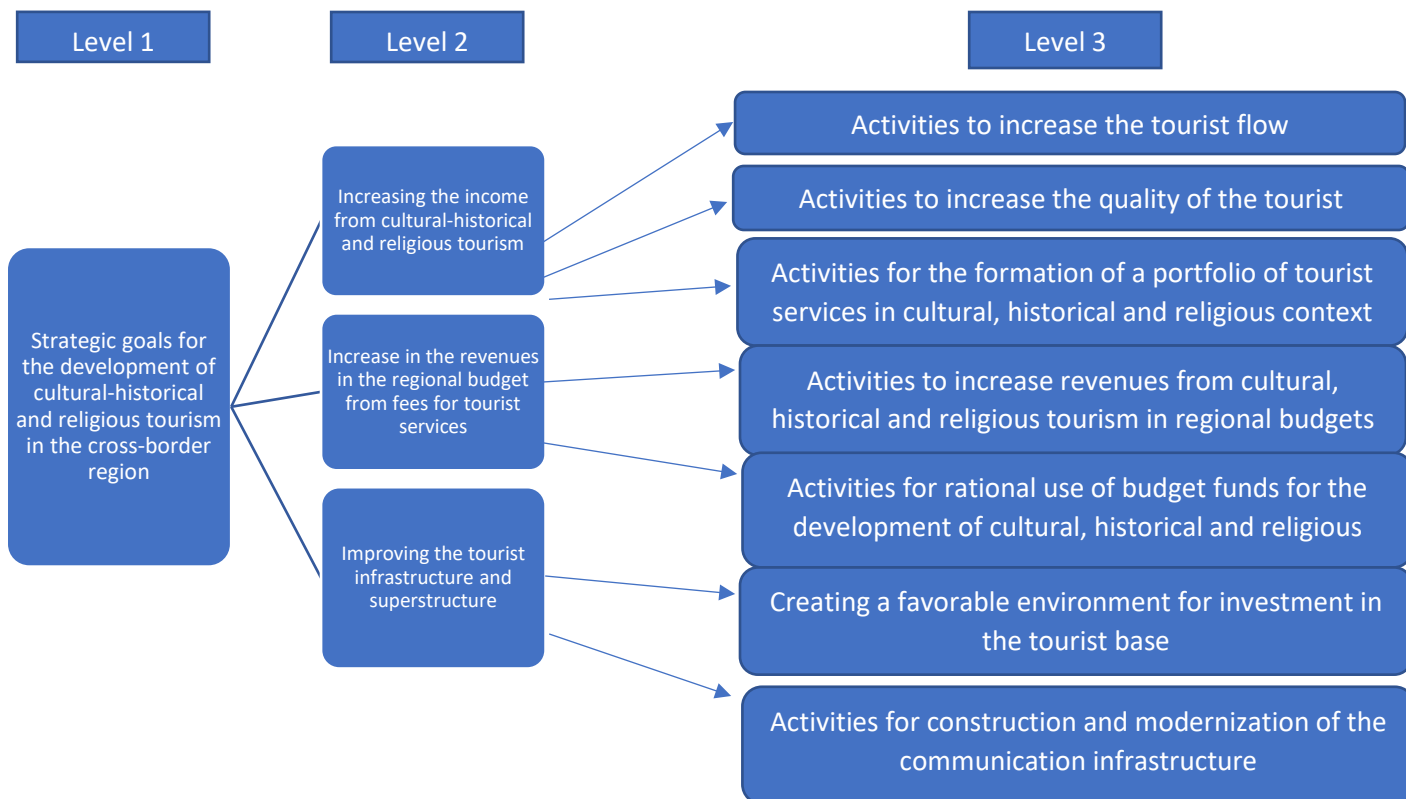
EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



To ensure quantitative comparison, comparative criteria must be found for each of the sub-objectives in the 'tree' and functional dependence on such a complex of manageable variables, the modification of which would be adequate for the modification of combinations of a particular group of events. If this is done, then it is possible to build a mathematical model for assessing the movement towards the sub-goal under review. If this can be done for each of the sub-purposes of the "tree", then a complex of micromodels will arise from which a model can be chosen to solve each problem under consideration. The construction of such a model is the finishing procedure of the targeted analysis.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



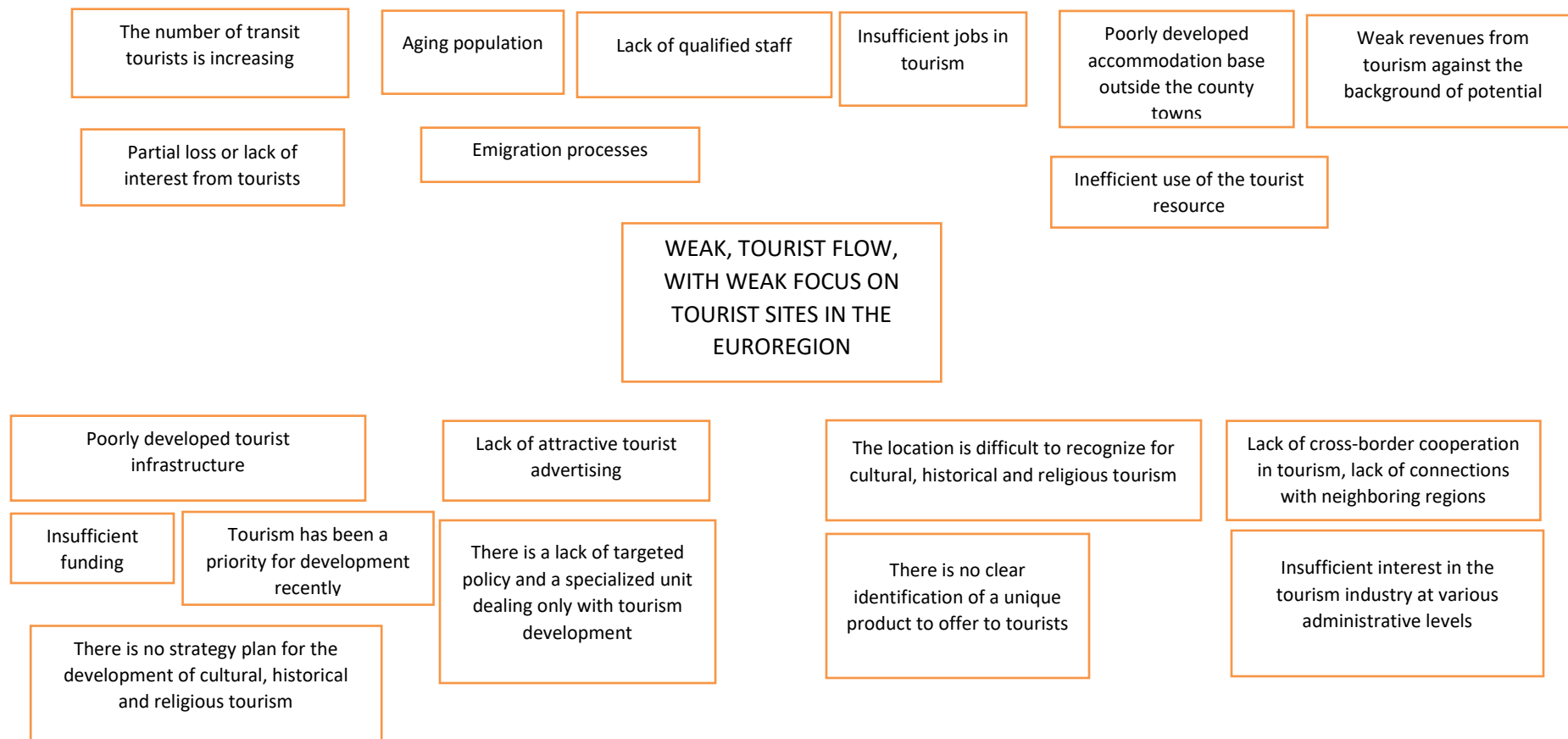
GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



## Tree of problems presented schematically



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



## 6. Comparative analysis between the Ruse region and Giurgiu County, as well as the cross-border region of Ruse - Giurgiu with other European regions

The Euroregion ruse - Giurgiu belongs according to its climatic factors to the Middle Climatic Region of the Danube Plain and is part of the temperate continental climatic subregion of the European continental climatic region. The characteristic of climatic elements is complex, which is associated with the presence of the summer-winter temperature contrast. Climatic conditions play a relatively unfavourable role, limiting the forms of tourism-related visitors, and creative and outdoor exhibition activities to a few months within the year.

Giurgiu County has limited natural and anthropogenic resources, but there are also those that to date is still underexploited.

The tourist potential of the district in terms of structure, importance and scope of the territory consists of three areas that combine most tourist attractions:

- Danube zone, with main attraction centre - Giurgiu Municipality;
- Hotarele - Comana - Kalugareni - Bulbucata area;
- Adunatsi Kopacheni - Mihaileshty district, along the Arges river route.

Tourist places with cultural and historical and religious signs are especially important since they testify both to the rich history of these places and the origin of many personalities from the political and cultural development of the country. Giurgiu hosts the technical innovations: Romania's first railway line between Bucharest and Giurgiu, on the first telegraph line over the Danube.

A necessity for Giurgiu, who has been connected throughout his past and present activity with the Danube, is to capitalize also through his anthropogenic resources, and not just to be a stopover or a starting point to Bucharest.

As a settlement the town of Giurgiu was documented in the early 15th century, in 1403, there is evidence of the history of the Giurgiu fortress erected by Mircea Stari as a point of resistance in the fight against the Turks. A clock tower with a height of 22 meters and a gazebo was erected by the Turks for observation in the 18th century. On the banks of the Danube, there are ruins of the fortress, built in the 15th century.

Giurgiu Fortress played an important role in the anti-Ottoman battles. The battles of 1461 related to the name of Vlad the Zeppelin made it possible to include the city in the historical tourist routes under the attractive tourist program for Count Dracula and the battles to save Christianity.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The village of Kalugareni has located 25 km from Bucharest, at the merger of Neylov and Kalnishte on DN 5 Bucharest – Giurgiu. This is where it took place, on August 31, 1593, the famous battle in which Michael the Brave won the battle against the Turkish army of Synan Pasha. At the bridge over Nayylov at Kaluguereni, there are memorial plates that are remembered for the event and depict 4 bas-reliefs: two represent the image of Mikhail the Brave, and the other two - the coat of arms of the Lavashko of that time. The monuments erected by Sherban Cantakusin in 1682, as well as this one from 1913, are reminiscent of the victory of Mihai Vityazul - The Brave.

Comana, located 25 km south of Bucharest, on the Bucharest -Giurgiu railway line, is important due to the many historical events and artefacts. Comana Monastery is a historical monument erected by Vlad the Zeppelin in 1462, built by Radu Serban in the 16th century and restored by Serban Cantacuzin in the 17th century. A princely house is added to the monastery complex. The lake and forest of the same name are a place for recreation and fishing and are a natural nature reserve. Interesting is the mansion Florești Stoenști, located 36 km west of Bucharest, on the Saber River. North of 100 is the church building, built in the same style as the villa of the mansion. Mironesti, Gosinari Municipality, is the area where you can see the ruins of the palace, erected by Konstantin Kantakusin in the 17th century and the church founded in 1699.

The Strategy for sustainable development of tourism in Ruse 2020 - 2030 provides strategic development guidelines concerning the general infrastructure of the region, the accommodation base, infrastructure and services for cultural tourism and eco-tourism, information services for tourists, staff and quality of service, institutional development and cooperation, marketing and advertising in the field of tourism, possible sources of funding for the measures set out in the strategy.

The location of the Ruse district and Giurgiu County is favourable in terms of the flow of foreign tourists due to the presence of river ports. River tourist traffic is carried out by passenger ships, with cruise companies operating on the Danube, but only a fraction of them involve passing through the territory of the region in their programs.

The comparative competitive advantages arising from the location of the Ruse Region and Giurgiu County are also determined by the proximity to major tourist destinations located along the banks of the Danube - Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest, Belgrade, as well as near them - Bucharest and other destinations along the upper and lower Danube and internally - sub-Balkan routes with a visit to Veliko Tarnovo and the sea destination - Varna and the whole of the Northern Black Sea coast. This allows for attracting additional tourist flows, but also creates strong competition. In this context, the possibility of integrated marketing of cross-border and interregional tourism products based on cooperation and shared benefits should be considered.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The natural resources in Ruse Region are distinguished by relative diversity. The combination of cultural and historical sites and nature creates uniqueness and offers advantages for the development of cultural-historical, religious, pilgrimage, eco and rural tourism. The natural features of the canyons along the Rusenski Lom River combined with the rock complex near the village of Basarbovo and the Ivanovo Rock Churches form a cultural and historical and religious ensemble that has formed a tourist route that has been established over the years.

Ruse Region offers protected cultural, historical and natural attractions, which, together with the development of new destinations, are an essential prerequisite for the development of tourism. You can see historical monuments from different eras, and visit national and international festivals and events. Some of these tourist resources remain relatively unknown to local and foreign tourists but are an element in the programs and visits of the domestic tourist flow in the region. Undoubtedly, the close distance between the individual sites allows the creation of thematic tours designed for visitors with different interests and tastes, and these characteristics should be perceived as the as yet untapped potential for attracting tourists. Among the more significant cultural and historical resources are the decline of; the Medieval town of Cherven; Religious and cultural heritage in the national archaeological reserve "Rock Churches at Ivanovo village under the auspices of UNESCO; The rock monastery "Dimitar Bassarbovski"; Cathedral "St. Trinity"; Pantheon of the Renaissance; Castel "Yarus" et al.

Various events of the cultural calendar are held near the sites or on the sites themselves, there is an opportunity for recreation in a park environment and this helps to diversify the visitor experience. In sites located outside the urbanized territory, the nearby attractions are connected with the natural and historical heritage. All this complements the tourist profile of the region as a destination for practising a variety of forms of tourism – cultural and historical, religious, rural, adventure and ecotourism tourism in all seasons.

Compared to several other European regions, the cross-border region ruse - Giurgiu is still in the process of realizing the tourist potential it can develop.

## 7. PEST analysis - processes and trends in the development of cultural and religious tourism in the cross-border region Ruse - Giurgiu

PEST analysis is a convenient tool for exploring the environment and trends in a region and is a toolkit for assessing the situation, opportunities and the horizon of population movement.





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Each change opens up potential threats to organizations. Semi-authorities, oriented and adaptable to change, generally enjoy economic prosperity as well.

The idea for PEST analysis belongs to Prof. Dr.Sc.(Econ.) Francis Aguilar used the term ETPS in his book "Scanning the Business Environment," published in 1967.

PEST is an analysis of the political, economic, sociocultural, and technological environment;

P (Political) - E (Economic) - S (Socio-Cultural) - T (Technological)

PEST analysis is used in general to assess the external environment. Pest analysis's task is to paint the macro frame - the essential reasons that govern the market.

PEST analysis is valuable to structures for three essential reasons:

- enables to detect of prospects or warns of coming threats;
- track the direction of development of the organisation given changes in the external environment;
- supports the taking of certain strategic decisions relating to business operations in current and new markets, as well as in the development of current new products.

## Political environment

The growth of cultural and historical and religious tourism is directly related to local, regional and national policies because culture is a dynamic system and is revealed through cultural policies, the management of cultural events and events, the attitudes of communities towards cultural values, etc.

The aim of the Member States of the European Union is to preserve the common cultural and historical and religious heritage, to promote European arts and creative industries. Several European Union policies support culture and religion, including in the areas of research, education, social policy, regional development and external relations. The EU framework policy is to promote political cooperation in the field of culture, history, and religion between national governments and with different structures of an international and regional nature, non-governmental organisations.

The main policies of the European Union in the field of culture are:





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



- financing of culture – including educational programmes (Erasmus+), audiovisual, cultural and creative sectors, Structural Fund for Culture, Cultural Heritage Research;
- digital culture – supporting media policies that empower European citizens to take advantage of interactive services and opportunities, giving them access to any content from anywhere in Europe;
- cultural heritage;
- a sign of European heritage, an EU initiative endorsed by Decision 1194/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe.

The national policy in Bulgaria and Romania in the field of culture is implemented at the national and local levels and parliaments and cultural ministries are responsible for the establishment and conduct at the national level, and at the local level, it is implemented by the regional administrations and municipal structures. The two Ministries of Culture in Bulgaria and Romania are the main executive structures defining and implementing the basic principles and objectives of the state cultural policy in each of the countries.

Views on cultural policy are consistent with the principles of cultural development adopted by the Council of Europe:

- ensuring freedom of expression;
- creating an environment for equal participation in cultural life, promoting and stimulating a culture of diverse ethnicities and religions;
- support of education in the field of culture;
- supporting intercultural communication and international cultural exchange.

The national policy of Bulgaria in the field of culture is the preservation of cultural memory and national historical heritage, the construction of an environment for growth and enrichment of diverse directions of cultural development as conditions for sustainable growth, and the development of efficient means of financing, the increase of the level of the normative device in the field of culture, maintenance in the preservation of cultural resources, digitisation of cultural and historical and religious content.

In Bulgaria and Romania, the current development of cultural policies contains attempts to reform the sector and mix state funding with market options. The basic objectives of the reforms in both countries are harmonised with the European Directives:

- decentralisation of the management and financing of culture;



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



- freedom in the formation of market-oriented actions of creators and cultural actors;
  - changes to the legislative framework for cultural management, helping to address upcoming social and economic challenges;
- deepening harmonisation with European Union laws;
- establishing administrative facilities for cultural development and integration within the EU;
- a real level playing field with guarantees between state, municipal and private cultural institutions;
- intensifying and increasing the importance of the non-governmental sector.

#### Economic environment

In the twenty-seven countries of the European Union, the total state expenditure on recreation, culture and religion amounts to EUR 162 billion. or 1.2% of GDP in 2019. The countries with the highest share of GDP for recreation, culture and religion are Hungary (3.0%) and Iceland (3.1%). Ireland (0.5%) and Bulgaria (0.7%). A major share of the total EU-27 expenditure is for cultural services, followed by restorative and sports services, media and publishing services and religious and other services to the community.





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



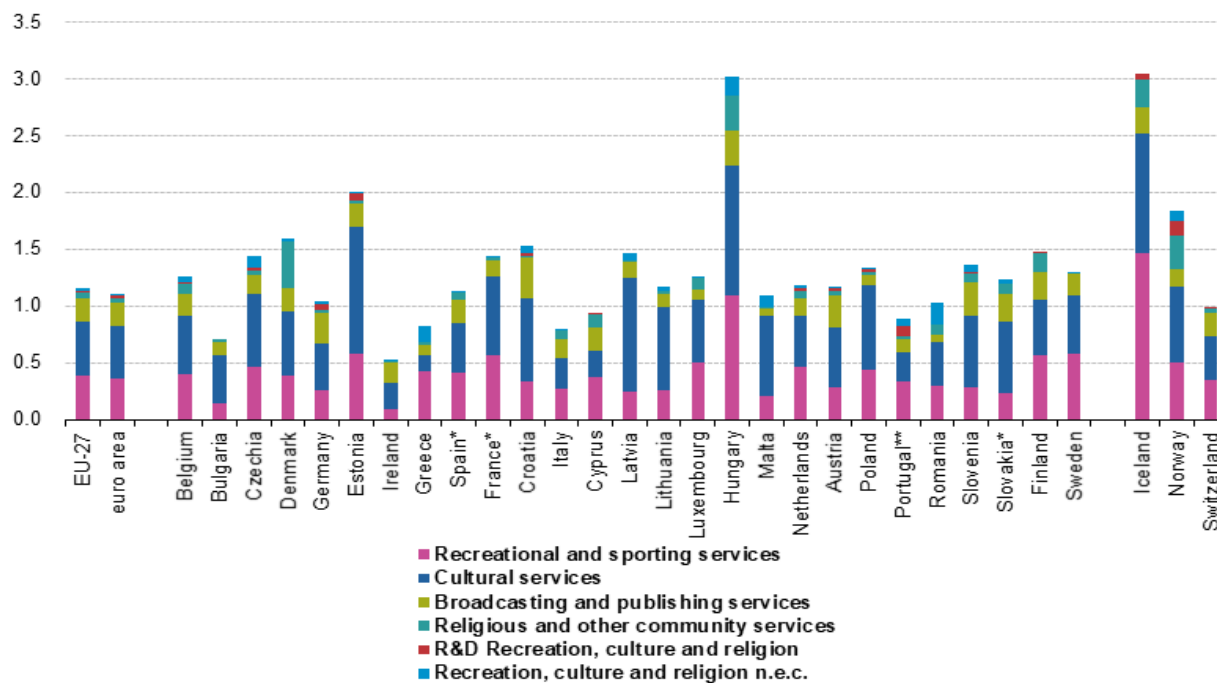
GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



### Total general government expenditure on recreation, culture and religion, 2019 (% of GDP)



\* provisional  
\*\* estimated

Source: Eurostat (gov\_10a\_exp)

eurostat

Source: Eurostat Statistics Explained

In 2019, EU household spending on leisure and culture accounted for 8.7% of their total expenditure (an average of €1,440 per capita). Scandinavian countries Denmark, and Sweden traditionally have the highest costs of recreation and household culture, the lowest are the spenders in Greece.

Source: Eurostat



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



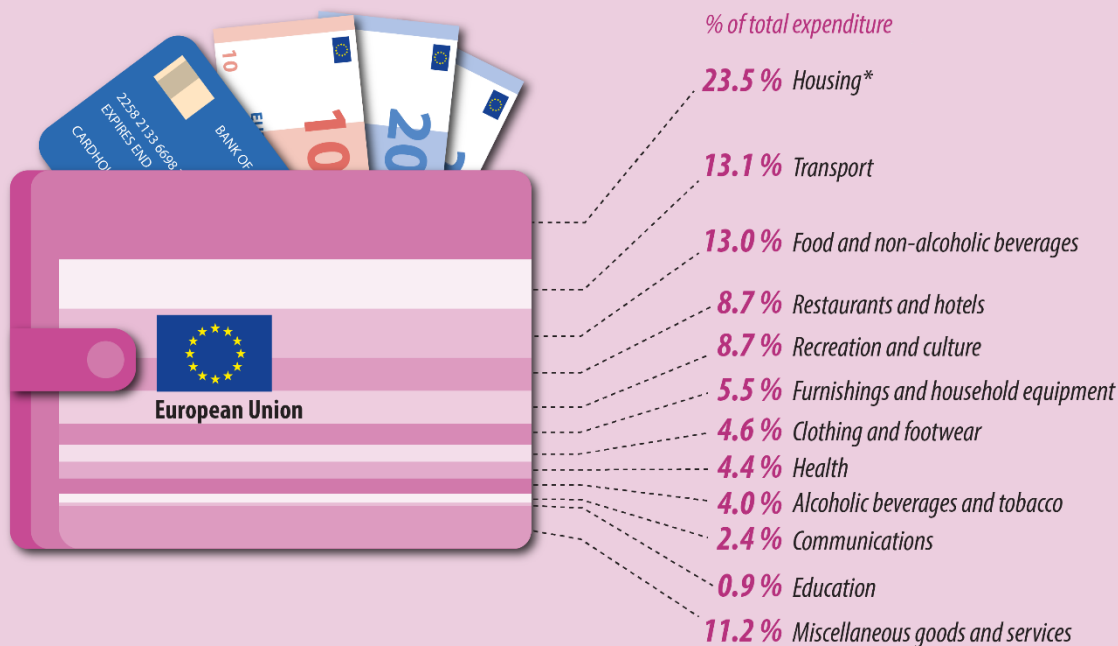
GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



## Household expenditure by consumption purpose in the EU (2019)



\*Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels

[ec.europa.eu/eurostat](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat)

According to Eurostat data for 2019, Romania spends about 1% of its gross domestic product on recreation, culture and religion – values approaching slightly the European Union average, and Bulgaria about 0.7% – lastly, together with Ireland. Household spending on leisure and culture is below the EU average. The Implementation Report for the State Budget of the Republic of Bulgaria for 2019 states that the expenditure on the Culture Group under the consolidated financial programme is 648.6 million euros. BGN reported mainly along the following budget lines: Republican budget, BNT budgets, BNR, and municipal budgets. Public spending on culture is to create sustainable growth of culture and art, preserve cultural and historical heritage, promote the achievements of Bulgarian artists and increase the competitiveness of the cultural product.

Social environment



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The positioning of new storylines for contemporary realities in European life and the focus on the vision that the function of the European Union is not only economic prosperity, but also a single cultural community with shared values, is recognised in the views of the European Commission in the New Narrative for Europe initiative. Culture has a fundamental role to play in shaping today's societies that form the European Union: "It is a key principle of the European project and will remain firmly rooted in our ideas if we are to achieve a truly inclusive, just and different union" says the 2014 document.

The 2021 New Narrative for Europe initiative shares:

"2. A new narrative for Europe – Europe: a wonderful place to live and achieve prosperity

2.1 In this context, the EESC proposes a new narrative for Europe that connects Europe's distant and recent past with the present and provides a vision for a future built on cross-border cooperation, strengthening links between Europe's citizens and building on values such as solidarity, social justice, intergenerational cooperation, gender equality, sustainable prosperity and a fair environmental and digital transition."

According to Eurostat, as early as two thousand and fifteenth years, more than sixty per cent of the inhabitants of the European Union had at least one contact in the year to activity related to culture. This reach has a serious impact on quality of life: it raises a sense of self-significance and co-community. In the ageing panel 16 - 29 years old, about 83 per cent of the young people surveyed participated in cultural activities, except the general direction being the young people from Bulgaria and Romania. Here on the panel 16-29 years old. only 50%, took part in cultural events.

In the 65-74 age panel, the average for residents of the European Union participation in at least one cultural activity has an average of 53% and there are serious dissonances here, with 80% in Denmark and Bulgaria and Romania at the bottom with 11%. The differences in participation in cultural activities between the age groups 16-29 years old. and 65-74 years old. among the inhabitants of Greece, Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria are several times. Those with higher education had twice as much participation in cultural activities as those with lower education. For people with lower - at least primary - education, there are significant differences in their participation in the life, with the Union average being only 42 per cent, but there are big differences, with the lowest indicators being those in Bulgaria with 11 per cent and the highest in Denmark at 76 per cent.

Financial revenues have a significant impact on participation in cultural events. And here the situation is almost identical, as the one with the educational level – in proportion to income increases participation. In countries, it is practically the same – from 76% in Denmark to 7% in Bulgaria. Individuals with maximum incomes participate in cultural activities about twice as many as those with the lowest. In the Scandinavian countries, the difference in the cultural share participation of the lowest and highest income individuals is almost inconspicuous – only 20%. The countries with the most drastic differences in participation



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



determined by revenue are Bulgaria – as many as eight times, followed by Romania and Croatia – four times. Respectively - Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia have the lowest shares among low-income individuals. For individuals with the lowest incomes, visits to movies and events are most often referred to as cultural activities, while for the highest-income individuals, priority is mainly visiting cultural attractions and events.

The widest participation in cultural events in the countries of the European Union is observed in people from cities – where more than half the inhabitants took part in cultural activity, except Bulgaria with 44% and Romania with 38%. In the cities of Scandinavia, out of ten people, nine have visited a cinema, event or cultural significance. In villages and small towns, the difference in participation in cultural events of 11% in Bulgaria increased to 83% in the Netherlands and Luxembourg. In some countries, this is likely due to problems with access to cultural institutions.

### Technological environment

The reach of cultural content in the digital age is at your fingertips to everyone. The ability to construct social experiences and systemic relationships is essential for the vitality of the product. The common digital market was constructed long before the internet and communication technologies were a major driver of growth and well before services were a major share of the European Union's economy.

Today, the main technological factor dictating standards and pace in the modern digital economy is social media and computer technology, taking over the mass cultural environment and that of cultural and historical tourism. Creative industries are imbued with the inter-influence associated with the massive invasion of television, the internet environment, telecommunications and computer technologies, as well as the potential that data storage technologies, large database analysis and related data unleash. The methods for disseminating and sharing information, the easiness of being available to cultural works, and the techniques with which the authors collaborate in the realization and joint creation and production are the product of the Internet age.

The cultural side of promoting knowledge and technology is significant because they are tied to people and the social and economic potential of industries for creativity and information, job creation, well-being and cultural engagement. In the building fabric of the creative economy stand the creative and cultural industries, mixing focus on art, culture, business and technology. The typing of these industries is the fact that they are, without exception, engaged and have cultural values in some form of intellectual property, which is the binding conceptual framework by which creativity is monetized.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



### III. STRATEGIC PART

#### 1. Defining a common vision and mission

##### 1.1. Vision

The vision of the Joint Strategy for the general preservation and use of cultural, religious and historical heritage as a basis for the sustainable development of joint cultural and religious tourism in the cross-border region of Ruse - Giurgiu is determined in line with the basic requirements established by the Strategic Planning Methodology of the Republic of Bulgaria and by the Romanian Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration to update the current strategic plans for regional and local development. In the process of drawing up the vision, standards in the preparation of strategic EU regulations as well as regional practices - Methodological Guidelines, 2010 were also taken into account.

The vision shows an image of the ideal status of the infrastructure and sites for cultural and historical and religious tourism, with reduced weak and pronounced strengths. It presents solutions on what it is desirable to look Euroregion towards the final of the period 2022-2027, in the realization of the views on cultural and historical and religious tourism set out in the joint strategy. Several principles are respected in defining the vision.

First principle: Comprehensive acceptance at the regional as well as municipal level of the perceptions of a sustainable transformation towards the equilibrium expansion of cultural and historical and religious tourism and its actual governance, including through the regional administrative toolbox.

Second principle: Celebrating the mutual share of the parties involved in increasing the benefits of implementing the joint strategy for cultural and historical and religious tourism.

Third principle: Academic and qualified argumentation for the direction of growth, the standards of comparison and the rhythm of realization on demands and actual market share for cultural and historical and religious tourism from the overall market share of tourist services.

As a consequence of the analysis of the needs and the results sought and taking into account the principles listed, the vision for the expansion of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the cross-border Euroregion ruse-Giurgiu is defined:

With the development and definition of several tourist routes on the territory of the cross-border Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu, specific awareness is ensured and the Euroregion is built as a favourite location for practising cultural and historical and religious tourism by developing an emotional bridge between places and visitors. The formation of tourist routes in individual market products merges the intensity and wins the support of all parties involved, and the economic and social benefit for local communities is optimized. The development of tourist routes in individual market products is built with respect for the



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



sustainable use of the environment, preservation and preservation of cultural and historical and religious heritage and biological wealth.

The vision for the development and further construction of the infrastructure of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu covers the views of all parties interested in future transformations. The vision contains a horizon for multilateral intervention and a common commitment to future transformations. The vision brings a motive for improvement related to the collective effort of all the participants involved, thus relying on a unifying method in discovering and implementing balanced and harmonious relations between the expansion of cultural and historical and religious tourism and the various local community groups.

## 1.2.Mission

The strategy for the common preservation and use of cultural and historical and religious heritage has been prepared as a joint document and is a methodology that establishes obstacles, to propose a model for the development of joint cultural and historical and religious tourism in the cross-border region of Ruse-Giurgiu. Thus, the parties identified the need to impose intensive economic dynamics in the sustainable use of cultural and historical and religious Christian heritage through the tourist toolkit as a motor for the prosperity of the cross-border Euroregion. The concept of the introduction of a common cultural and historical and religious product, bringing together in a single whole the cultural and historical and religious places and sites with the great historical and aesthetic value of the monuments, but also with the skilful policy of exhibiting and advertising these sites for tourism purposes.

It is necessary to present the historical sites as a link to the present and as a living past through contemporary exposure and their offering as a cultural and historical and religious product and a cultural and historical tourist commodity. An important point is to interpret this heritage in such a way as to provoke understanding and empathy among tourists - through concerts, festivals, scientific events and others around and in the preserved cultural and historical monuments. Such events take place in some places, but this activity should be expanded to enrich the image of the Euroregion to the world. International cultural events must be emphasised. Of course, the single strategic planning and the common joint action plan created in the project horizon will receive long-term sustainability only in strategic long-term operations and moves to be carried out by the regional and municipal administrative and other bodies that can operationally work and influence the management of the tourist toolkit and the cultural and historical and religious heritage.





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



To realize the vision for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism, the mission of the stakeholders is to respect the mandate and the potential for maintenance, on the part of the partner organizations, to exploit the development opportunities. Based on the specificities of the prerogatives and the potential of local public and private structures to influence the direction of growth of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the Euroregion for the implementation of the joint strategy, the present mission shall be defined:

Promoting an ahead-of-the-way, balanced development of the Ruse-Giurgiu cross-border Euroregion through sustainable and accelerated growth of cultural and religious tourism, with efficient cooperation and support from successful European cross-border regions, by selecting an appropriate structure.

The mission thus defined shall contain the leading involvement of regional authorities and stakeholders in the implementation of public and private policies and tasks. The mission extends the responsibilities and role of the Regional Administration in Ruse and Giurgiu and the authorities in the region to encourage and assist stakeholders in the development of public governance and to realize an impact in finding an agreement for ahead of social and economic growth with the successful implementation of the growth opportunities of cultural and historical and religious tourism.

## 2. Setting strategic objectives

The selection for the setting of the objectives was carried out based on the defining strategic documents at the European and national level, as well as based on regional strategic documents concerning the directly cross-border Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu.

In the selection of objectives, a cumulative result is deliberately pursued through the totality of an existing and future toolkit for the growth of cultural and historical and religious tourism. The objectives are determined by the snapshot and directions for the development of the business environment, relative to the positioning of the joint product in the tourist market, its market advantages, financial opportunities, management, profitability and public response.

The objectives observe the basic models for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism, and the intention is to contribute as many public and economic dividends as possible to all inhabitants of the Euroregion, without being detrimental to the natural environment and cultural and historical and religious sites.

The following strategic objectives further refine the vision and mission of the joint strategy:





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



First strategic objective: The joint strategy to predefine through cultural and historical and religious tourism the construction of a common territorial brand in tourism marketing for the Euroregion.

Second strategic goal: To build the tourist routes created as bright attractive destinations.

Third strategic goal: To build an interconnection between cultural and historical and religious tourist places by separating specific tourist corridors, with an increased level of tourist service and the addition of more services.

Fourth strategic objective: Increasing the level of tourist infrastructure throughout the territory of the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu.

### 3. Formulation of priorities, specific objectives, measures and activities

According to the strategic objectives, several priorities of the joint strategy are identified:

1. Building a common communication mode for launching the common cultural, historical and religious Christian heritage in the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu, which is the basis for attracting visitor interest.
2. General preservation, preservation and management of cultural and historical and religious heritage in the Euroregion.
3. Differentiation of the Euroregion Ruse – Giurgiu as an up-to-date single product and territorial tourist brand.
4. Compacting the tourist superstructure in the Euroregion.

To achieve the strategic objectives, the following specific objectives are envisaged:

1. The imposition of the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu as an attractive destination for the target markets of cultural and historical and religious tourism.
2. Implementation of cultural, Community, and spatial contact between the inhabitants and institutions of the Euroregion.
3. Portraying cultural and historical and religious tourism as a new product niche by presenting the created tourist routes and their real application and use in the tourist market.





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



4. Optimise the sustainable exploitation of cultural and historical and religious heritage.

5. Pushing pioneering initiatives to consistently post the destination as a new tourist brand.

6. Separation from the combined cultural and historical and religious heritage of the two countries, and presentation as a differentiated tourist service offering unique tourist routes in the area of the common destination.

7. Preparation of a work plan for risk allocation and presentation of the proposed routes belonging to the spatial range of the Euroregion.

### Indicators for achieving the objectives and priorities of the strategy.

The main indicators that will measure the achievement of operational objectives and priorities in the programme include:

#### 1-st priority:

- The development of the cross-border partnership, the realization of the strategic objective and the balanced development of specialized cultural and historical and religious tourism, with a massive advertisement of cultural and historical and religious heritage and natural places;
- a relevant share of the municipalities of the Euroregion by establishing a network for the active presentation of local tourist places and sites;
- communication positioning of the Euroregion as a tourist brand destination for cultural and historical and religious tourism;
- implementation of an information campaign to raise awareness of potential users;
- implementation of cross-border events in the field of cultural and historical and religious tourism.

#### Second priority:

- attractive presentation, care and socialization of unadulterated natural and anthropogenic features;
- expanding the potential of regional advantages in mixing the diverse tourist species in the Euroregion;
- increasing the number of new marketing ventures to present anthropogenic cultural and religious tourist resources;



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



- Organization of security and safety prerequisites for guests of the sites
- the unification of communication events between all stakeholders for the management and preservation of cultural and historical and religious sites as a tourist resource.

Third priority:

- strengthening the public capacity of the institutions in regional and local terms, for reconciliation and coordination in the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu;
- building a base for the development of the tourism sector, in the creation of current local tourist initiatives, e-services and trade;
- strengthening the reputation of the destination by building and maintaining the prominent qualities of the promoted tourist products at fair prices;
- increasing the level of labour engagement and income of those living in the region and improving living standards as local human resources are deployed;
- introducing a segmented marketing model to achieve a joint strategy for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism.

Fourth priority:

- create a modern update of the available tourist superstructure.
- newly built and modernized roads to reach the cultural and historical and religious places in the available places and sites with adjacent parking spaces and with infrastructure created and accessible to people with disabilities;
- a specific volume of newly created new sites - part of the infrastructure throughout the Euroregion and a specific number of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises for the realization of tourist services;
- number and total investment volume attracted to cultural and historical and religious tourism;
- expansion in practice for issuing certificates for raising the level and variety of local tourist services

Measures and activities to achieve the strategic objectives





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The realisation of the objectives of the joint strategy over the five years between 2022 and 2027 includes activities, including several measures containing strategic planning, management, control and evaluation.

The realization of the first strategic objective is to pre-order through cultural and historical and religious tourism the construction of a common territorial brand in tourism marketing for the Euroregion.

1.1. The territorial brand is a collection of impressions in the user's mind and includes everything consumers think and feel about a particular product or service. The brand as a name, character or symbol is used to identify products or services and to distinguish from competitors. The brand contains sensations and ideas associated by the user about the product, including in the absence of a direct desire to mine or use them.

Territorial branding needs to be based on the basic qualities of the destination: nature and landscape, people and bits, religion and culture, history and traditions. The brand is based on how its attributes have been accepted by visitors and the degree of emotion experienced. which is preferred against the background of relevant locations, leading to an economic and social positive from the growth of cultural and historical and religious tourism for the benefit of the environments and communities concerned. For the positioning of the territorial brand in the first place, an analysis of the situation, finding a clear focus, defining basic elements and constructing an "ideological body" of the brand, as well as subsequent publicity of its core values, is needed. Determining focus is done after conducting surveys in the base markets to generalize and refine tourist expectations. Secondly, integrated brand management with step-by-step consistency, subordination, with a distant horizon of arrangements for brand building, administration of brand characteristics and monitoring and control of the cultivation and deployment of the brand is necessary.

1.2. The management of the territorial brand needs to contain several main activities, in connection with obtaining up-to-date information, analysis and subsequent decision-making. The tools for obtaining the information are market research and measurements. The necessary first activity is to carry out market research once a year on a representative sample of potential tourists from the target markets - domestic and from third countries. The survey should monitor the dynamics of tourist visits, the position of tourists towards the destination and the economic dynamics of the local business every year.

A second activity is to carry out once a year a market survey of respondents living in the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu, to provide information on the existence of dynamics in terms of economic status and level of well-being.





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



A third activity is an assessment, analysis and, if necessary, adjustments in advertising campaigns and the communication strategy. Measuring investment growth in advertising campaigns and communication activities.

A fourth activity is to measure the level of the product. By comparing the prices of two otherwise comparable products – without a brand and with owning one, an expected difference will be obtained, which is due precisely due to the value of the brand.

A fifth activity is the measurements at the user level, the goal is by revealing the mental notions of users to detect the associative attitudes towards the brand. The approach measures knowledge and understanding of the brand on the one hand and the other, the image - the general associations of the brand. Measurement indicators look for the matches and differences between the pre-set objectives in the strategic documents and the results obtained in the studies.

The realisation of the second strategic objective for developing routes in recognisable and attractive destinations will be achieved through several main initiatives:

2.1. Development of tourist routes and introduction of integrated management of the established territorial brand in the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu.

## 2.2. Implementation of advertising events

Includes the advertising mix of communication channels and means of advertising the destination and selected routes, and through them, the specific places and sites within the territory are advertised. The appropriate communication channels and toolkit for advertising the destination as a whole, routes and sites are:

- advertising and information materials and PR publications in regional, and national media and those from the mainly deterministic potential markets from Germany, Italy and France; regular destination publications for the entire period of top development and routes; conducting tours with visits from journalists; reducing media channels to the most effective;
- presence at tourist exchanges and exhibitions in Germany, Italy, France and other European countries;
- internet marketing with personal messages and wish to subscribe to receive up-to-date news;
- presence in specialized magazines with travel articles with cognitive cultural and historical plots and advertising pages;



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



- advertising brochures and flyers – distribution in the area of sites on both sides of the Danube Bridge, in accommodation in the Euroregion.
- external advertising at points of the road network with intensive traffic;
- advertising in local media to stimulate domestic tourism;
- banners and articles on tourist sites: <http://christ-ro-bg.eu/>; [www.booking.com](http://www.booking.com); [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com), [www.airbnb.com](http://www.airbnb.com); [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com); [www.bulgariatravel.org](http://www.bulgariatravel.org), [www.roughguides.com](http://www.roughguides.com), [www.viator.com](http://www.viator.com), [www.romaniatourism.com](http://www.romaniatourism.com), etc.

2.3. Communication activities to support information exchange. They determinize the channels for promoting the tourist product and its recognition. The task of the communication events is to obtain information about the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu as a common recreation area with the potential for cultural and historical and religious tourism. The information is oriented towards the internal audience of stakeholders.

2.3.1. An appropriate channel for presenting the product is the introductory events for media and stakeholders to publicly state the destination and the message for the construction of the routes. In the special events for the media, the routes, and their strategy for growth are promoted. A walk on some of the routes and sites on Bulgarian and Romanian territory is planned.

2.3.2. Construction of an electronic content management platform using cloud technology, to collect and integrate, sort and multiply data about tourist products and services in the Ruse-Giurgiu region, giving access to the participants in the tourist business, independently presenting their services and sites, through the platform allows business and stakeholders to use its functional applications – reservations, It works both on the social network, with user-supported and minimal intervention from administrators.

2.3.3. Information calendar containing wherein the Euroregion, when what is there – events, holidays, celebrations, festivals, days of scoring and reverence, etc.

2.3.4. News, analyses, overview and specialized articles, interviews, comments, etc.

2.3.5. Developing social media channels Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Sotiras, Vbox7, WeChat, Pinterest, VK, Reddit, TikTok, where visitors share experiences and emotions, photos and video memories, events, and impressions of their travels around the region.





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



2.3.6. Maintaining social media profiles to maintain the information coverage of the tourist euro region. Creating brand ambassadors and their routes. – with familiar personalities from Bulgaria and Romania, and from the countries – potential main markets.

2.3.7. Social networking viral communication campaigns; paid content budget to reach a wide and target audience, especially in countries that target potential markets.

The implementation of the third strategic objective is to improve the tourist service and its quality, to expand the practical connectivity in the tourist region between and within the routes, and for this, it is realized:

3.1. Preparation and training of stakeholders in the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu for the current directions for offering cultural and tourist and religious products for accommodation, places of meals and tourist information centres. The training will contribute to the production of tourist packages, as well as with the techniques for their offering.

3.2. Regular submission of news to the industry in the tourist sphere for finding practical ways to overcome the lack of employees, ways to deal with unfair competition, licenses, copyright and television rights, the creation of market approaches, etc. Regular submission of information about the status of the brand – once a year, and based on a price strategy - preparation of future tour operator package.

3.3. Increase in the qualification level of the annual events – cultural and historical and religious events, which are an element of the tourist mix in the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu.

Obtaining information about the world trends in cultural and historical and religious tourism by participating in the congress, seminar events and access to a variety of training for upskilling is a guarantor for the development and conduct of local cultural and religious events, celebrations, anniversaries in their modern form. The presence of touring exhibitions and exchanges, and participation in specialized branch training with specially invited lecturers from the practice and university lecturers is an important channel for obtaining and accordingly implementing leading achievements and practices. The combination of innovative practices and procedures, the exchange and experience of the contractors of activities on how the processes happen are essential for gaining confidence from the contractors that they will be successful in their work with foreign colleagues.

3.4. Optimization of possible channels for obtaining information from possible investors in the field of cultural and historical and religious tourism.

The need to increase competencies and experience to improve accessibility to information from possible investors in the field of cultural tourism implies that the emissary of the targeted organizations should be



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



trained in national and international symposiums on topics related to optimising the approach to access to information from possible investors in the field of cultural and historical and religious tourism.

The implementation of fourth strategic objective is to increase the level of material and tourist infrastructure in the territorial space of the brand and its tourist routes by implementing events to overcome existing problems.

4.1. Activities for the conservation of the sites are included in the activities for the protection of biodiversity in the surrounding nature; protection of protected areas; preservation of archaeological finds; work for periodic inventory through a specialized system and in case of theft, replacement, smuggling export; implementation of up-to-date conservation techniques; road safety signs; separate places waste facilities; research and certification of places and sites; ensuring safe access to tourist sites; installation of boards for instructors about the behaviour of the tourist; installation of video cameras; security of the sites; digitisation of funds; updating of inventory documents and registers of cultural and historical and religious values; compliance with the procedural requirements for storage, fire fighting requirements, etc.

In the development of tourist routes, lists of cultural and historical and religious assets, tangible and intangible, should be applied to the territory of Ruse Region and Giurgiu County for each site of the routes and exactly what activity is needed under this measure.

The successful implementation of the measure requires very good coordination in the activities carried out by stakeholders.

4.2. Investments for restoration and storage are events where basic work is to fulfil the conditions laid down by regulatory regulations concerning the preservation of movable cultural goods, including requirements for temperature levels, humidity, illumination, sanitary and hygienic; conservation, restoration; photo- and video capture; digitisation of movable cultural and historical and religious values; building a basis of virtual catalogues; carrying out operational conservation and renovation actions at the sites; constructive reinforcement; archiving of customs; collecting and documenting historical and religious stories, customs, myths and legends concerning places and sites shared by local people; carrying out archaeological research on the ground; management of allowed in the site; moderate socialisation and exposure to visitors to the protected area.

4.3. Investments to promote visibility are events involving the placing of signposts and information boards; placing maps for the area; construction of central lighting; paving of an asphalt road to the sites and, where not possible, providing acceptable access; placing of billboards; appropriately selected places for the placement of the accompanying information plates, and visibility and readability of the text information; appropriate lighting; detailed guidance on getting to the places and objects in the pages of the organizers.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



4.4. Investments in expanding the accessibility of sites are among the main one's challenges concerning the convenient and rapid reach of not a small number of places and sites in the Euroregion. The events for the construction and rehabilitation of leading and accompanying infrastructure require a large-scale investment resource for the construction of roads, streets, separate parking spaces and pedestrian areas, lighting, service bathrooms, etc.

#### 4. Defining a planned tactic for implementing the strategy

The tactical plan should use communication specialists during the development of the strategy and help build models for public relations at the level of town halls in the territory of the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu.

Implementation of policies for management of routes in the tourist destination.

Stimulating cultural and historical and religious tourism from local communities.

Including visitors in the story of the spirit and bits of the host community.

Construction and presentation of a territorial brand, not the Euroregion.

Continuous information exchange, general coordination in the actions of the Bulgarian and Romanian partners for the realization of the joint vision for the construction and growth of the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu as a destination for cultural and historical and religious tourism.

Continuity of information flow in local and national media and traceability and study of the results of information to analyse and improve process management

Regular monitoring and supervision of the implementation of recommended activities depending on the requirements and context of tasks

Illumination, plasticity, dynamics and adaptability to transformations in the current environment, to the attitude of growing local and external markets

Essential to the representatives of the local administrations, which have made a significant contribution to increasing the tourist phenomenon

Reconstruction and restoration of monuments, cultural and historical religions and artistic sites in the Russe region and Giurgiu County.

Rehabilitation of buildings and spaces of artistic value.





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Restoration, and expansion of the infrastructure for access to places and sites of tourist interest.

Construction, restoration and modernization of accommodation and catering, expansion, enrichment and compaction of tourist offers to depend on the destination and the cultural and historical and religious attractiveness.

Introduction of training programs for employees in the HORECA sector, accompanying the mobility of workers, facilitating business attitudes and cooperation with universities and leading companies in the field of tourist service, offers for internships, consultations, support, and mentoring in the field of the tourism workforce.

Disclosure and presentation of cultural and historical and religious heritage with a focus on the territorial brand.

Establishment of common Bulgarian-Romanian cultural and historical and religious routes and their adequate adaptation to the market.

## 5. Overall assessment of the resources needed to implement the strategy

The presentation of information on the implementation of the events identified shall be described in a plan drawn up to implement the joint strategy, its structure taking into account the strategic objectives set. To achieve the strategic objectives, events in the plan are identified. The implementation of the programme is based on the resources at its disposal as well as on the potential to influence stakeholders.

The framework for financing the activities of the strategic plan of the joint strategy for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu for the period 2022-2027 is indicative. It is based on the financial information collected and a preliminary analytical and expert assessment of the means necessary for the implementation of a large part of the actions formulated following the objectives set for expected results and possible sources of funding.

There has been a valuation of planned events, which form the predominant relative share of all planned events. The necessary amount of financial resources for administrative activities secured within the available budgets of the responsible institutions concerned and for events, the implementation of which relates to relevant business income has not been determined.

As the financial information collected does not cover all the interventions envisaged, the results submitted give a conditional assessment of the necessary financial resources. An important clarification is that the



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



financial information collected is indicative, based on identified financial resource needs and is characterised by a certain degree of uncertainty. This may indicate the lack of sufficient clarity on future national and European funding and the possible dynamics of key economic indicators for the duration of the 2022-2027 plan.

In the course of the monitoring and evaluation process, it is necessary to monitor the implementation of the financial parameters of the planned activities and, where necessary, to carry out reasoned corrective actions. The allocation of the indicative total financial resource for operational purposes is shown in Table 1.

Because the planning and implementation are in practice from the start of a new programming period, financial resources and the indicative volume of funds cannot be deterministic in the limit. Thus, for maximum flexibility of implementation, alternatives are provided for specific events in the funding toolbox.

#### FUNDING – indicative table

The financial table presenting the financing in the indicative form shall be drawn up at the level of the events, indicating the financial parameters sought for the implementation of the joint strategy. The parameters for the implementation of the strategic leadership are in the order of EUR 16,185,000.00. The eligibility requirements for beneficiaries from the current European and national funds, with international funding mechanisms, have been taken into account. Against the background of the planned funding, some observations should be adopted:

The joint strategy is situational in the context of an initial programming period, in the presence of a very unknown and ongoing global viral pandemic caused by COVID 19 for more than a year. In this situation, the financial needs are rather absolutely indicative, taking into account rather traditional operational financial instruments and legal frameworks.

The implementation plan for the joint strategy and the indicative financial planning does not have a timeline for the conduct of coordination procedures.





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The joint strategy implementation plan and indicative financial planning lack actions from a specific operational programme because there is insufficient information.

With a view to financial security and optimal guidance of the funds for the implementation of the developed joint strategy, there needs to be an examination of the potential for securing finances.

The sources of funding can come from the local central budget - national and international (mainly European) funds. National and external public funds - national and European operational programmes; public-private partnerships

## 6. Evaluation and control - definition of a system of qualitative and quantitative indicators for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the strategy

Evaluation of performance is not an end in itself. Before introducing tools such as mission, vision, strategy, objectives and indicators, public sector organisations need to be aware of the objective and why they use performance assessment. There are various possible reasons for this: performance can be measured to establish what works and what doesn't work. In this case, the rationale for this is to study the process and learn lessons. Measuring implementation could also help management achieve a more effective organisation. The rationale for this is that management and performance data could be used in this case to achieve a more optimal allocation of resources. Finally, the evaluation could be used to increase the accountability of public organisations for their implementation. The objectives set out in the table are most often mentioned in the context of performance assessment, with the main objective being to improve implementation: The experience of European countries shows that today the performance assessment is no longer motivated solely by the objective of evaluation, control and punishment. The reasons for introducing a performance assessment are already 'multifunctional' and include accountability to a control body, a high level of transparency, a better decision-making process (e.g. in decisions relating to budget allocation, better implementation of priorities), setting target values for the following year, improving internal governance and generally improving efficiency and efficiency.

### 8 objectives of management and evaluation of the implementation

<b>Evaluation</b>	How well does my organization do in carrying out its tasks?
<b>Control</b>	How do I know my subordinates are doing the right thing?
<b>Budget</b>	To what programs, people or projects should my organization direct public funds?



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



<b>Motivation</b>	How can I motivate employees, middle management and stakeholders to do the things necessary to improve performance?
<b>Advertising</b>	How do I convince politicians, legislators, stakeholders, journalists and citizens that my organization is doing well?
<b>Noting</b>	Which achievements deserve to be celebrated as a success?
<b>Improvement</b>	What exactly should be done differently to improve performance?

Source: Robert D. Behn, "Why should performance be measured? Different objectives require different measures", Public Administration Review, September / October 2003, vol. 63, No. 5.

Practice also shows that performance assessment is a continuous learning and improvement process to form an evaluation culture in which different steps become part of the organisational culture and the day-to-day process of carrying out the organisation's activities. The aim is to assist administrative leaders in implementing this culture in their organisations.

Conditionally, the monitoring is divided into external and internal, with external monitoring being carried out by a team with leadership from the administrations of the Russe Region, the Giurgiu District Council and the municipalities of the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu. Here is observed the resource allocation, the spending of the finances, the performance of the tasks, the deadlines for implementation, force majeure, imperative changes, inclusion of pressing modifications, and the assessment of the real development of the implementation of the joint strategy.

The baseline criteria adopted for objective assessment are justified, applicability, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact.

The evaluation process consists of three steps – preliminary, intermediate and final evaluation.

The preliminary evaluation shall aim at optimising the level of the strategy concerning its overall feasibility, the estimated resources for the implementation of the tasks identified, the efficiency of the methodology for implementing the plan, as well as the taking into account the level of European and national, regional and regional policies in the cultural and historical and religious tourism sector and the coordination of the joint strategy with the established programmes at European, national and local level.

The interim assessment shall be sensible in the case of planning documents. It is a key mechanism for the systematic review of the effect of their implementation after the start of the period of their operation, where an assessment of the progress in the realization of the achievement of the objectives is carried out.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



At different stages of the evaluation phase, the objectives and evaluations are not the same and the key questions that await answers vary by the type of assessment received.

Subsequent evaluation is based on the determination of accurate, measurable and neutral standards and plays an essential role in a clear interim and ex-post evaluation for the implementation of the joint strategy. Taking into account the actions implemented according to the specified requirements and criteria is a basic obligation in the preparation of the final report on the implementation of the joint strategy.

## 7. Definition of a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the strategy

The monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Strategy shall be carried out to achieve effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation of the measures and activities covered by it. The monitoring process requires the collection of quantitative and qualitative data for the implementation of the relevant activities. The monitoring system aims to provide the competent national, regional and local authorities in the Ruse-Giurgiu region, as well as all stakeholders, with regular information on progress towards achieving the objectives and results set. The main objective is to identify deviations or risk zones in the implementation of the activities set out, thereby improving the implementation of the joint strategy and facilitating the further development of the implementation process.

The monitoring aims to monitor the implementation of the joint strategy and the components to be monitored are the allocation of the implementation of specific projects over time, allocation of the financial implementation of the joint strategy, and assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation of the joint strategy.

The evaluation of the implementation of the joint strategy shall be carried out by comparing the results achieved with the baseline data and the baseline scenario. In addition to objective technical and economic results, it is also necessary to take into account non-quantifiable results as well as indirect results.

With the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation mechanism, the Regional Administration of Ruse, Giurgiu District Council and the municipalities of the region will achieve greater efficiency in identifying a problem or idea and insight into the related circumstances and context and transforming the original idea into a strategic vision and values, as well as

(c) carrying out the monitoring and evaluation of the progress made in the implementation of the projects of the joint strategy and the achievement of its intended results.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The monitoring of the Strategy may be conditionally divided into internal and external.

External monitoring is carried out by the operational team under the leadership of the heads of the Regional Administration of Ruse, the Giurgiu District Council and the municipalities of the region. It focuses on the allocation of available resources, the spending of the allocations, the implementation of the tasks, the observance of time limits, the occurrence of unforeseen circumstances, the proposition of appropriate changes, the making of timely adjustments, and the establishment of actual progress in the implementation of the Strategy.

Internal monitoring shall be introduced as a recurring activity of members of the operational team designated by joint managers involved in the implementation and implementation of the common strategy.

External monitoring is outsourced to external experts and organisations. It creates additional certainty as regards independence, openness, objectivity and transparency in the assessment of interim and final results. In carrying out external monitoring, it is essential to involve all stakeholders and target groups targeted by the common strategy.

Evaluation is a mandatory element and is part of the process of implementing the joint strategy.

Depending on the objectives of the evaluation, whether they are for the improvement of planning, verification of implementation, or for achieving more accountability, the time point for carrying out the assessment shall be determined, and it shall be, in advance, intermediate and subsequent.

The assessment shall be a periodic verification of the conformity, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the joint strategy following the pre-defined objectives. It shall be based on ongoing reports drawn up during implementation, but may also include further studies by external observers.

The main objective of the evaluation is to improve the experience in the general planning and implementation of coordination, which is why the main objectives of the evaluation in the joint strategy are related to planning, implementation and accountability. Evaluation is important to identify trends, track progress, learn lessons, synchronise actions with changing conditions, respond to new challenges, ensure accountability and, last but not least, develop learning capacity.

The mechanism for updating the Strategy

The general strategy for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the Euroregion ruse - Giurgiu is a long-term document with an implementation period of 5 years and concerns the period 2021 -2027, which determines the need, in the course of its implementation, to systematically update it as a result of an ongoing evaluation.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The mechanism sets the parameters for updating the main document, and updating the joint strategy as a result of the dynamic processes and changes occurring in the social and business processes in the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu.

The mechanism aims to support a chosen common structure for managing the joint strategy for the management and regulation of update procedures, as a consequence of the proposals made in the interim evaluations of the joint strategy, as well as the result of desired updates on a proposal from stakeholders.

#### Methodology for updating the joint strategy

There is a need to mark a specific method of proposing changes to the joint strategy. Two different procedures are distinguished:

Update procedure when the initiator of the updated proposal is from the heads of the general structure for the management of the joint strategy in the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu:

- accumulation of the necessary information, consultation by stakeholder experts;

- working teams shall be drawn up a work proposal and shall be agreed with the joint management by signing the documentation relating to the proposal;

- the drafted work proposal for an update shall be disseminated;

- where necessary, workshops and debates shall be held to discuss the proposals submitted and their documentation;

- obtaining information from stakeholders on opinions, coordination and changes to support proposals submitted for a decision;

- a final version of the update submitted, motivated by the heads of the joint strategy;

- adoption of a decision by the management bodies of the partner structures;

The updated strategy thus needs to be complemented by the newly adopted documents and the relevant meeting minutes.

Procedure for updating the joint strategy, in case of an updated proposal made by the stakeholders strange:

- the update initiative shall be submitted at a workshop between the common structure for the management of the joint strategy with stakeholders;



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



the heads of the common structure for managing the joint strategy shall submit to the management bodies of the partner organisations a proposal to update the joint strategy;

the proposal should reflect justifiably the desired changes, with reasons for imposing the changes;

the proposal is discussed by the management bodies of the partner bodies, and the possible initiation of the update procedure shall be voted;

working teams shall develop the updated joint strategy.

In updating the joint strategy, no matter whose proposal is the proposal, publicity and cooperation in the procedures for updating the joint strategy play an important role, where operational teams from both Parties provide:

the implementation of the public consultation on the updated documentation in the implementation of the joint strategy for the remaining period. The working teams shall draw up the discussion materials and their members to attend the meetings;

the working teams shall make the publications for the sites of the partner organisations as well as the materials concerning public discussions, which shall be published no later than 14 days before the date of discussion;

Once the updated documents have been confirmed by the management bodies of the partner organisations, the heads of a common structure for managing the joint strategy shall ensure that they are published on the websites of the partner organisations.

### Description of the necessary actions for implementing a partnership and providing information and publicity.

#### I. Communication plan of the strategy and actions

##### 8.1. Objectives of the communication plan

The communication plan set out the long-term objectives:

- the plan to support the promotion of the idea of the Euroregion as a destination for cultural and historical and religious tourism;





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



- the plan to help increase overnight stays in the Euroregion ruse - Giurgiu, by attracting potential tourists practising cultural and historical and religious tourism;

In addition to the objectives listed, the communication plan also implies short-term objectives, which relate to specific activities concerning their achievement. These include these measures to inform comprehensively all audiences about the possibilities for cultural and historical and religious tourism and pilgrimage in the Euroregion. All information should be presented to help the potential tourist have an informed travel choice. The short-term objectives are thus defined as follows:

- prompting the desire and activity of tourists and pilgrims to visit the cultural and historical and religious sites in the Euroregion;
- inclusion of wider groups of visitors from third countries;
- enhancing the recognition and facilitation of visitors' access to tourist places by presenting detailed information about the type of sites, the intensity of their cultural and historical significance and their religious significance; the richness of Christian rituals, customs, holidays and traditions in common Euroregion;
- ensuring a favourable media environment and communication on the promotion of the Euroregion as a tourist destination.

## 8.2. Basic principles.

The communication plan shall take into account the following basic principles:

- submission of information with clearly understandable and accessible messages;
- defining the messages, taking into account the diversity of target audiences, along with the specificities of the different activities;
- accessibility to awareness at its many levels.

### 1.3. Groups subject to the communication plan

The communication plan accurately specifies the target groups of visitors on which the implementation events will be focused. The method of communication must be closely regulated for each group, taking





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



into account its information needs, and the practice of obtaining and receiving information. Activating the potential tourist in the direction of a particular destination plays an essential role in the decision-making mechanism. The motivational sign also affects individual sectors of the target audience and hence the use of a variety of techniques and ways of communication.

The group of tourists can be divided into the respective categories of categories:

- active tourists - having more complete information about the tourist products offered and visiting relatively frequent places and sites subject to cultural and historical and religious tourism.
- passive tourists are potential tourists, relatively less

Travellers who do not have enough information about the opportunities offered by cultural and historical and religious tourism. In this case, a specific and attractive approach is required in offering the information to provoke interest in the direction of the given destination.

- tourists looking for strong emotional experiences - wanting to remember their journey with an unforgettable experience, looking for vivid and energizing emotional memories. The information on the de-destination needs to be in line with the available alternative and innovative nearby tourism options.
- tourists interested in unknown and little-visited destinations are those who head to poorly promoted places and their surroundings to see and communicate with the locals, to explore and explore their lifestyle, customs, culture and way of life.
- socializing visitors are a segment pursuing socialization, meeting and communicating with Christians from another parish - Orthodox clerics and local believers.
- cognitive visitors belong to another belief, bringing knowledgeable interests and having a desire to get acquainted with the local cultural and historical and religious attractions.
- weekend visitors are focused on a one- or two-day trip and realize one or two nights in a monastery or adjacent accommodation on weekends at the end of the week for rest, relaxation, and entertainment.
- believer visitors with purposeful spiritual interests, relatives of spiritual persons, groups of Christians from other parishes, people who came for mental unloading purposes, people with professions to support church activity, students, visitors for educational and practical purposes, tics, donors, theologies, etc.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The group of pilgrims encompasses Orthodox pilgrims - visitors with Orthodox resistance to the faith, expressing worship of God's greatness by inclusion in church worship. This requires detailed awareness of the group, served on another spiritual level, and it is necessary to address the spiritual needs of believers.

The group of external audiences consists of representatives of mass media, leaders of public opinion and in business, and such visitors, having no direct relation to tourism, but which should be interpreted as possible mediators for the arrival of other tourists. The information to the group should be precisely segmented and give a specific idea of the preferred destinations for cultural and historical and religious tourism. Here it is essential to present and introduce the peculiarities of the presented places and objects, as well as the intangible spiritual heritage. Segmentation of actions related to media types should be carried out because information access levels are not always equal between them. Local information means having direct channels to an essential part of possible tourists and often having a higher degree of trust. So there needs to be a balance in the activities of the plan in the presentation of news and quality of services.

The general public, as part of this target group, is awaiting information on the entire region. This information, although at first glance not very difficult to provide, requires systematic, widespread dissemination and ensuring the quality expected of the public in its dissemination.

The group of internal audiences includes:

- representatives of the two local churches
- employees of the ministries of regional development and tourism in Bulgaria and Romania;
- representatives of regional and local authorities Ruse - Giurgiu;
- non-governmental organizations operating in the field of tourism;
- travel agencies and tour operators, as well as pilgrimage centres to the Bulgarian and Romanian Orthodox churches

Here, the audience requires that the information is served at a high professional level. The idea is to strengthen the active information role in the implementation of the communication plan.

The submission of detailed information about the cultural/historical and religious Christian heritage to the target group of internal audiences is key, and therefore it needs to be received in a diverse and specific



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



way. This group must have information corresponding to its direct necessity. Tour operators and travel agencies, pilgrimage centres are among the main groups of the communication plan because they are major intermediaries in travel decisions. The level of the tourist product is based on the preparation, variety of services with higher service and the work of tour operator agencies. Therefore, tour guides in agencies must have consistently high knowledge of theology, Christian history and other religions, and know religious teaching. The centre of activity with them is to provide voluminous and detailed information aimed at filling their information hunger.

Along with the listed target groups, there is a category for differentiation according to the age of the visitors. Adult tourists are most often served in tourist trips, regardless of whether they are foreigners, compatriots, foreign or domestic. There are also learners, such as pupils or students, differentiated by age according to the different study periods. The next group are families with children, such as tourists, with parental burden due to the age of the children.

A specific group are visitors with special needs and needs - tourists with physical disabilities, with special educational needs, socially disadvantaged, etc. In defining the communication mix and the measures for the presentation of the cultural-historical and religious Christian heritage, these specifics need to be monitored and updated with due care.

8.4. Information channels and communication means, which may be included in the communication plan:

- national and regional TV channels and programmes;
- Local and regional radio stations
- Internet – local and national editions;
- local and national daily newspapers, weekly newspapers, magazines, and specialized publications;
- external advertising;
- Internet advertising;
- publications with information content
- participation in specialized tourist exhibitions;

8.5. Proposal for communication activities and tools





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The redisplay for the implementation of different ideas and events and their implementation will lead to the implementation of the objectives of the joint strategy set in the different time horizons, as well as the tasks under the presented communication action plan. Here are some of the key events:

Construction of a regional product brand, designating the Euroregion Ruse – Giurgiu as a modern destination for cultural and historical and religious tourism;

Tell local stories by creating content based on historical sources, local stories, and local myths and legends. Creating myths and legends about places and sites, using local real events from the past.

Production of audiovisual works. To win visitors, it is necessary to have audiovisual products – audio and video promotional materials, presentation films, audio and visual videos showing the cultural and historical and religious heritage of the Euroregion ruse - Giurgiu, its Christian traditions, religious holidays, traditions and customs, as well as various tourist or pilgrimage routes, to obtain a higher level of awareness of potential visitors for cultural and historical and religious tourism.

Create a dedicated YouTube channel in connection with the mass use of video content. This allows users to receive and perceive content and messages more and more easily. The parallel use of this promotion channel, among other content distribution and sharing platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, etc., will help target the dissemination of targeted information, according to destination promotion;

Production of information and advertising content on media branded with the logo of the tourist brand

The effect of information and advertising materials - brochures, leaflets, souvenirs, folders, advertising banners, as well as souvenir products is that in proper selection they are used many times in everyday life. The information and advertising materials should be at least in Bulgarian, Romanian and third languages.

Broadcasting of advertising spots on specialized and general information websites, on radio and TELEVISION stations channels, and advertising materials in print editions.

To increase and density of accommodation in the Euroregion, it is necessary to cycle advertising campaigns when combining a mix of communication channels. Advertising campaigns will build lasting links of familiarity among potential visitors, and users of the tourist product to the Euroregion as a known and close destination, to create a positive setting and interest in places and places of worship and create sustainable positive attitudes and perceptions of the Euroregion as a place to spend leisure time.

Creation of a multilingual web page <http://christ-ro-bg.eu/>, which represents the material and intangible cultural and historical and religious heritage of the Euroregion Ruse – Giurgiu.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



For the proper implementation of the communication plan, it is imperative to build a web page that presents significant sites and destinations for visiting the cross-border region between Ruse and Giurgiu. The content should be in Bulgarian, Romanian and English to reach a wider range of audiences and potential users.

#### Presentation on social networks for sharing

Taking advantage of the capabilities of the most advanced communication tools in the face of social networks to present cultural and historical and religious heritage is among the most essential actions for the implementation of the communication plan. A condition to be fulfilled is to be defined as the successful implementation of the plan. The majority of users receive the vast majority of information about the existence of goods and services through social networks.

#### Development of a specialized travel guide

The guide contains and offers practical tourist content, and guides visitors for all their stay in the Euroregion.

The content offers information but is not limited to this, an exhibition of the tourist tour sites, containing a short history and up-to-date information, a list of the sights around the site, the points for accommodation and meals, transport directions, presentation of religious practices and traditions, customs, festivals, holidays and the dates in which they are noted. The manual must be issued in at least three language versions.

#### Conducting an information campaign

The increase in overnight stays in the cross-border Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu is based on an appropriate information campaign accompanied by relevant events. To present the tourist product, it is necessary to lay down a compressed event plan, with the main task of awakening the public and media interest of potential tourists and pilgrims in both countries, as well as beyond. The idea is to present tangible and intangible cultural and historical and religious heritage with bright and remaining events in memory. Such events are traditional and non-traditional tourist exhibitions, information days to present cultural and historical and religious tourism in the cross-border Euroregion, briefings, press conferences for displaying a particular tourist product, concerts indoors and concerts celebrating certain holidays and customs, festivals, etc.







EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



## 8.6. Measurement and evaluation

The measurement of effects on the target groups as a result of the implementation of the communication plan shall be determined based on the implementation of indicators such as:

- number of original content materials created;
- number of broadcast materials with audiovisual content;
- number of printed advertising materials made and distributed;
- number of unique visitors on the website;
- number of popular tourist guides;
- number of persons who have received information and promotional material;
- number of followers on social networks;
- number of posts and number of distributed advertisements and videos;
- number of published advertising articles, publications, press releases;
- number of organized information events;
- number of events involved;
- several media partnerships agreed.

For the successful implementation of the advertising and information campaign, the calculation between the value of media coverage and the budget allocated to the respective communication campaign shall be applied. It is determined to be a good result when there is an increase in value in the project ratio. The cost of media coverage is calculated by the average of the ad.



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



In the framework of the project "Christian Heritage in the Cultural Corridor Ruse-Giurgiu", two cross-border meetings were held in Bulgaria and Romania between representatives of the Bulgarian and Romanian Orthodox churches, specialists in the field of religious tourism, tour operators and travel agencies. One web page, mobile application, and several short videos are created; 2 information boards in Bulgarian, English, and Romanian, are located on the project sites - Orthodox temples. The project specialists propose diversification of religious heritage in the cross-border region with a proposal to create three tourist routes for cultural and historical and religious tourism in the Euroregion.

## Conclusion

In the implementation of the project "Christian Heritage in the Cultural Corridor Ruse-Giurgiu" this development presents a Strategy for the development of cultural and historical and religious tourism in the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu.

The strategy combines thematic fields, presenting the vision, objectives, naturalists for the development of the cross-border Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu as a tourist destination for cultural and historical and religious tourism, to help the general preservation and use of Christian heritage.

A situational analysis has been carried out with the possibilities for promoting the cross-border areas of Bulgaria and Romania with their cultural and historical resources.

The increase in tourist flow to the territorial scope of the cross-border region as a tourist destination for religious tourism is extremely necessary for its wider realization. Therefore, the strategy is particularly important for the implementation programme and the proposal for a communication action plan for the realization of operational objectives and priorities, the developed concept for the development of tourist routes for religious tourism in cross-border areas with the presentation of their common characteristics, themes and types. The focus is on the priority development of the cross-border region as an impressive spiritual tourist destination for sustainable cultural and historical and religious tourism.

Through cooperation between the Russe region and Giurgiu District, a common single map of the cultural and historical and religious tourist sites in the Euroregion ruse - Giurgiu should be created, with the inclusion of tourist routes. This will increase the promotion and advertising of tourist places.





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



The current Strategy for Cultural Historical and Religious Tourism is an unfolded picture (network) that covers various aspects of the development of modern specialized types of tourism such as cultural and historical and religious. Tourist trips expand their circle, and the directions and tourist destinations to which tourists are directed are extremely diverse. In these realized trips for the traveller the spiritual and acquaintance with the local confession culture is leading, it is motive, purpose, the satisfaction of interests and a dream come true of the trip. For the local population, tourism contributes to improving well-being, quality and living conditions, stimulates investment in infrastructure, supports the drying up and use of tourist resources, improves the business environment, stimulates economic growth, and promotes small settlements, one of the drivers of regional development and creates communication links at different levels - local, regional, national, international.

This Strategy is useful for the local tourism business, the regional public administration, the professionals engaged in the process of implementing the tourist service, and the scientific specialists in the field of tourism, for all who are interested in this problem.

The strategy for religious tourism is aimed at all stakeholders for the practical realization of cultural and historical and religious tourism and expansion of the acquired tourist potential in the territorial scope for cross-border cooperation.





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



#### Applications:

1. The indicative financial framework for the implementation of the Common Strategy for Cultural Tourism in the cross-border region Ruse-Giurgiu;
2. Plan for monitoring of the integrated tourist product as a more sustainable cultural-historical and religious / pilgrimage tourist destination in the cross-border region Ruse - Giurgiu;
3. Table for monitoring of Indicator Target Groups Achieved Value during the monitoring period 2023-2028 of the project Christ Heritage ROBG-302;
4. Questionnaire for clarifying and defining achievable goals by the S.M.A.R.T.E.R.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Period 2022-2027	Own and local public financing			External public financing						Private financing		Total
Measure	Local budget	State budget	Total share	Central budget	Tot al share	EU funds	Tot al share	Other sources	Tot al shar e	PPP / other private financings	Tot al shar e	
			(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)	(%)
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: To develop the routes as recognizable and attractive destinations of the cross-border region Ruse - Giurgiu												€ 650,000.00
Measure 1.1. Development of brands on the four tourist routes and introduction of integrated brand management in the cross-border region (TGR) Ruse - Giurgiu	€ 100,000.00	€ 100,000.00	100%		0%	€ -	0%		0%		0%	€ 200,000.00
Measure 1.2 .: Implementation of advertising activities	€ 70,000.00	€ 70,000.00	93%		0%	€ -	0%		0%	€ 10,000.00	7%	€ 150,000.00
Measure 1.3 .: Implementation of communication activities	€ 140,000.00	€ 140,000.00	93%		0%	€ -	0%		0%	€ 20,000.00	7%	€ 300,000.00



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Period 2022-2027	Own and local public financing			External public financing						Private financing		Total
Measure	Local budget	State budget	Total share	Central budget	Tot al share	EU funds	Tot al share	Other sources	Tot al shar e	ppp / other private financings	Tot al shar e	
			(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)	
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: To increase the quality of existing services, develop new ones and create functional connectivity in tourist areas												€ 1,935,000.00
Measure 2.1 .: Stakeholder training		€ 75,000.00	25%		0%	€ 225,000.00	75 %		0%		0%	€ 300,000.00
Measure 2.2 .: Periodic information of the tourism industry	€ 20,000.00	€ 30,000.00	100%		0%	€ -	0%		0%		0%	€ 50,000.00
Measure 2.3 .: Improving the organization and improving the quality of the annual festivals, competitions and other cultural events, part of the tourist routes	€ 1,500,000.00	€ -	100%		0%	€ -	0%		0%	€ -	0%	€ 1,500,000.00



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)





EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Period 2022-2027	Own and local public financing			External public financing						Private financing		Total
Measure	Local budget	State budget	Total share	Central budget	Total share	EU funds	Total share	Other sources	Total share	PPP / other private financings	Total share	
			(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)	
Measure 2.4 .: Improving the system for access to information of potential investors in the field of cultural tourism		€ 25,000.00	29%		0%	€ 60,000.00	71 %		0%		0%	€ 85,000.00
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: To improve the quality of the physical and tourist infrastructure on the territory of the three tourist routes												€ 13,600,000.00
Measure 3.1 .: Investments for site protection	€ 300,000.00	€ 200,000.00	42%	€ 300,000.00	25 %	€ 300,000.00	25 %		0%	€ 100,000.00	8%	€ 1,200,000.00
Measure 3.2 .: Investments for recovery and storage	€ 400,000.00	€ 400,000.00	22%	€ 1,200,000.00	33 %	€ 1,200,000.00	33 %		0%	€ 400,000.00	11 %	€ 3,600,000.00
Measure 3.3.:Investments to promote visibility	€ 100,000.00	€ 100,000.00	25%	€ 300,000.00	38 %	€ 200,000.00	25 %		0%	€ 100,000.00	13 %	€ 800,000.00



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE!



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA



Period 2022-2027	Own and local public financing			External public financing						Private financing		Total
Measure	Local budget	State budget	Total share	Central budget	Total share	EU funds	Total share	Other sources	Total share	PPP / other private financings	Total share	
			(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)		(%)	
Measure 3.4 .: Investments in improving the accessibility of sites	€ 300,000.00	€ 300,000.00	8%	€ 1,000,000.00	13%	€ 6,000,000.00	75%		0%	€ 400,000.00	5%	€ 8,000,000.00
TOTAL	€ 2,930,000.00	€ 1,440,000.00		€ 2,800,000.00		€ 7,985,000.00		€ -		€ 1,030,000.00		€ 16,185,000.00
SHARE OF THE GENERAL BUDGET	18.10%	8.90%		17.30%		49.34%		0.00%		6.36%		100%

#### References and sources:

A common strategy for sustainable territorial development of the Romania-Bulgaria cross-border region.



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



## Plan for monitoring the integrated tourist product as a more sustainable cultural-historical and religious/pilgrimage tourist destination in the cross-border region of Ruse - Giurgiu



Successful project implementation needs timely monitoring.

To measure the result of the realization of an idea and how much qualitative improvement its funding brings and in perspective sustainable development for the region it is necessary to use economically measurable indicators that would offer a direct view of positioning the idea in the current reality. analysis.

The sustainability of national tourism is an important economic sector in the national economy of the two countries partner in the project **Christ Heritage ROBG-302** Romania and Bulgaria and a logical consequence is products and



[www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu)



development of the destination and the cultural-historical and pilgrimage religious tourism in the cross-border region Ruse-Giurgiu.

The proposed algorithm for traceable monitoring of indicators by economic indicators consists of a work process with **5 phases**:

<b>Phase 1</b>	Preliminary analysis at the level of program documents.
<b>Phase 2</b>	Coalition talks with stakeholders.
<b>Phase 3</b>	Detailed monitoring/tracking of the time frame with 3-time directions: current, medium-term and long-term status.
<b>Phase 4</b>	Coordination with the stakeholders of the outlined goals and analysis in group sessions of the different stages of realization - optimal variant, realistic and minimum/basic / variant.
<b>Phase 5</b>	Survey of the internal motivation of stakeholders by groups and its change over time, including through the active use of online surveys and workshops with stakeholders in digital format.

The attached Annexes for monitoring of project indicators are part of phase 1.

The other phases described above, from 2-5 inclusive, the forms are made under Activity: Establishment of a network of stakeholders for the development of cultural and religious tourism in the cross-border region Ruse - Giurgiu.

They are also available on the project's website [www.christ-ro-bg.eu](http://www.christ-ro-bg.eu) with the title of the document: **Methodology for working with stakeholders under the Christ Heritage ROBG-302 project.**



### Applications:

- ⊕ **Monitoring table of Indicator Target Groups Reached Value during the monitoring period 2023-2028 of the Christ Heritage ROBG-302 project;**
- ⊕ **Questionnaire for clarifying and defining achievable objectives by the S.M.A.R.T.E.R. method.**

Interreg V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme 2014-2020  
Priority axis: 2, Specific objective: 1, Project name:  
"Christian Heritage in the Ruse-Giurgiu Cultural Corridor"  
**Christ Heritage ROBG-302**  
<http://christ-ro-bg.eu>



## Table for monitoring the Indicator Target Groups Reached Value during the monitoring period 2023-2028 of project **Christ Heritage ROBG-302**

Target Groups	<u>Target Value</u>	Target Groups Reached Previous Periods	Target Groups Reached So Far Percentage	2023 Target Value Reached	2024 Target Value Reached	2025 Target Value Reached	2026 Target Value Reached	2027 Target Value Reached	2028 Target Value Reached
<b>Interest groups including NGOs</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10.00%</b>						
<b>Enterprise, excluding SME</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>						
<b>General public</b>	<b>35 000</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0.03%</b>						
<b>Local public authority</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20.00%</b>						
<b>Regional public authority</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>50.00%</b>						





Interreg V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme 2014-2020  
Priority axis: 2, Specific objective: 1, Project name:  
"Christian Heritage in the Ruse-Giurgiu Cultural Corridor"  
**Christ Heritage ROBG-302**  
<http://christ-ro-bg.eu>

### Questionnaire to clarify and define achievable objectives a topic:

**D1: Establishment of tourist centres for integrated promotion**

**D2: Creation of a website for the promotion of the Cross-Border Region Ruse Giurgiu and the cultural and religious goals in the region, including tourist routes**

**D3: Creation of educators' workshops in which to disseminate cultural and religious information**

**D4: Establishment of shops within the churches included in the cultural and religious routes**

**D5: Creating exhibition-type events in churches**

*THE SMARTER method is an excellent approach for setting achievable goals because it covers all possibilities and leaves no room for misunderstanding. Sample checklists in economic practice have proven effective in working with people, and setting and achieving objectives, as the resulting response makes it possible to set goals that all participants will feel motivated to achieve. This checklist is appropriate, both to be completed individually and by a group together during a working session on the subject.*

**S.M.A.R.T. methods** – The 5 steps for setting the objectives

&

**S.M.A.R.T.E.R.** – The 7 steps for setting the objectives

The **S.M.A.R.T. method** is used for business management. specific, meaningful, achievable, relevant and time-bound objectives.

**S.M.A.R.T.E.R.** is 5+2 steps: to evaluate and recalibrate your approach Measurement and readjustment is crucial to achieving everything in life. The objectives achieved need to be continuously measured and monitored to be achieved and achieved optimally.

The 7 steps to adjust the	S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Objectives
<b>Step #1: "S" – Specific</b>	You need to specify your goals. You need to put a real and accurate figure on them. Make them measurable. No specifics, no real purpose, just some vague direction. You need to specify details if you want to achieve anything at all. When writing your goals, be as specific as possible.
<b>Step 2: "M" – Meaningful</b>	The objectives need to be meaningful. You need to attach a strong enough meaning to your goals, other than to be specific to them. So, next to your specific goal, write down what that goal means to you.
<b>Step 3: "A" - Achievable</b>	Goals need to be achievable. When setting goals, especially when they are short-term (within 1 year), make sure they are achievable.
<b>Step 4: "R" – Relevant</b>	The objectives need to be adequate. The children must be in harmony and harmony, as well as match your core values.
<b>Step 5: "T" – Time-Bound</b>	Goals need to be time-bound goals. You should set an exact date when you plan to achieve these goals. Focus on goals that are at 3-month intervals.
<b>Step 6: "E" – Evaluate</b>	Goals need to be ensured that your goals are assessed. By evaluating your goals every day, you will be much more likely to achieve them.
<b>Step 7: "R" - Readjust</b>	You need to adjust your approach over and over again. Resetting doesn't mean you need to throw away your goals and start all over again. This means you need to try different approaches until you find yourself getting closer to your goals. If you don't constantly and daily rate, you can't measure your progress.



Write a clear description/idea of the purpose

.....

- ☐ Before you think about how to make the SMARTER goal a goal, write the goal you have in mind. At this stage, it can be messy and ambiguous, but in answering questions the idea is formulated more clearly.

An initial description of the purpose:

## 1. Specific

Make the target specifically

- ☐ Without specificity, the goal is much more desired than an actual goal.

Focus questions:

- ※ What do we want to achieve?
- ※ Why is this goal important?
- ※ Who's involved?
- ※ Where is he?
- ※ Which resources/constraints are involved?

Description of the (specific) objective

**Example:** .....

## 2. Meaningful

Determination of indicator(s) for tracking progress

- ☐ Your goal needs to be measurable so that you can track progress, stay motivated, and recognize when you've achieved it.



The measurable objective should address issues such as:

- ※ How much?
- ※ How am I going to know when it happened?
- ※ How is the target measurable?

**Example:** .....

### 3. Achievable

Ensure that it is in the realm of realistic possibility

- ☐ Need for proof that the goal is achievable given your specific circumstances.

An achievable goal will usually answer questions such as:

- ※ How can I achieve this goal?
- ※ How realistic is the objective based on other constraints, such as financial factors?
- ※ How's the target?
- ※ Can you afford to do that?
- ※ Do you have the resources you need?

**Example:** .....

### 4. Relevant

Determine how the goal relates to something bigger

- ☐ Guarantee that the goal matters to you and that it is aligned with other relevant goals.

You must answer the following questions to ensure that your goal is relevant:

- ※ Is pursuing the target worth it?
- ※ Is this a good time?
- ※ Am I the right person to reach that goal?
- ※ How is this objective related to other purposes?
- ※ How does the goal matter?

**Example:** .....



## 5. Time-Bound

### Set a deadline

- ☐ The final piece of smart mosaic is the goal to be tied to time. Each goal needs a target date; a deadline to work for. It is important to give yourself a realistic deadline to achieve the smaller goals needed to achieve your ultimate goal.

To make your goal time-bound, you need to answer the following questions:

- ✖ When is the deadline for achieving this goal?
- ✖ What can I do in six months?
- ✖ What can I do in six weeks?
- ✖ What can I do today?
- ✖ How is it time-bound to achieve the goal?

**Example:** .....

## 6. Evaluate

### Summary review

- ☐ In this section, you'll review the information below with the task force on the topic. Once discussed, you/the group need to approve or reject what has been proposed as an action plan to achieve the desired goal.

How is the target-specific:

How is the target measurable:

How is the destination:

How the goal matters:

How is the time-bound goal:

## 7. Readjust

### Willingness to readjust my previous approach

- ☐ Approval by vote after reviewing in summary by you/working group



They will be submitted for approval:	YES	NOT	Result in %
Make the target quantifiable			
Determination of indicator(s) for tracking progress			
Ensure that it is in the realm of realistic possibility			
Determine how the goal relates to something bigger			
Set a deadline			

**On the topic under question, the following**

**Comments :**

**Special opinion:**

**Recommendations:**

**The participants have registered with PRESENT LIST OF PARTICIPANTS dated ..... 2022 for  
the ChristHeritage ROBG-302 project event.**