DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF A CROSS-BORDER NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE-FRIENDLY ECONOMY IN ROMANIA AND BULGARIA
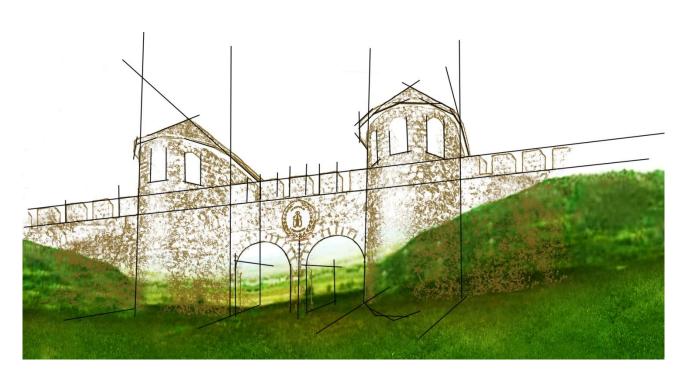
Executive Summary

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CONTENTS

I. CURRENT STATUS OF THE CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE SUSTAINABLE USE

The term „heritage" is extremely broad, and successive generations always have attached value, significance, quality, authenticity and especially perennity to its objective.

Thus, the natural „Heritage" represents the ethical decision and the responsibility of a society to hand down a healthy environment as well as its complex and complicated biological components[1]. Viewing nature as a „heritage" source is important, as it attaches the environment to the concept of cultural heritage, defined as the expression of the various ways of life a community has developed and passes down from generation to generation, including traditions, practices, objects, artistic expressions and values[2]. To the European Council, „cultural heritage" is the expression of protecting and promoting ideals and principles. It translates value systems, beliefs, traditions and life styles into material representations and includes visible and tangible traces from the antiquity up to the recent past.

Heritage makes us think of the past; at present it is deeply related to the way we are using "the past" as an unlimited resource, a source of reinvention and a social force[3]. Moreover, while all legacy forms are not universally appreciated, the heritage is considered an essential source of both personal and collective identity, a significant element of self-respect.

A sustainable approach of the cultural and natural heritage in the Romanian-Bulgarian cross-border area is relevant to the future of the many spectacular objectives and elements that make it up, an important source of development for the whole area. The cultural heritage offers locals and tourists a wide variety of historic and architectural monuments, legends and folklore, museums, churches and monasteries, all protected by law or recognized by the local community. There is hardly a county or district without cultural heritage objectives.

In Romania, the Romania-Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Operational Programme 2014-2020 identifies 268 cultural heritage items of both national and international interest, as well as local history and art museums, local monuments, birthplaces, valuable churches or legends in all cities, towns and villages. Similarly there have been 88 objectives identified in Bulgaria; one of the most important cultural sites of the region are the rock-hewn churches of Ivanovo, included on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Valuable elements with a common origin are found in both Romanian and Bulgarian border areas and have a significant cultural potential for mutual use: ancient Greek, Dacian, Byzantine and Roman cities in Dobrudja and the Danube cross-border area.

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[1] Maltese Authority of Environment and Urban Planning
[2] International Council for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), 2002
[3] *The globalization of archaeology and heritage: a discussion with Arjun Appadurai. J. Social Archaeology,* 1, 35-49. (2001).

The natural heritage[4] boasts a large biodiversity, an array of protected sites and diverse natural landscape. The level of protection of these area varies from nature parks to Natura 2000, 232 sites, from biosphere reserves (Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve in Romania) to UNESCO sites (Rusenski Lom Nature Park in Bulgaria).

Moreover, the Black Sea Coast, both in Romania and Bulgaria, is rich in protected areas: marine habitats, sand dunes and bars, estuaries, gulfs and lagoons, wetland, reefs, sea caves, cliffs and protected costal areas. In the spirit of this *Strategy* there are also many valuable areas and landscapes not protected by law, but are tourist attractions, such as Danube or Black Sea coast landscapes, hill country deciduous forests, etc.

Although the cultural and natural heritage, as reflected by current approaches, is not part of the sustainability and sustainable development debate, the conservation and management of natural and cultural heritage and associated lore and skills can make a significant contribution to all stages of sustainable development: environment sustainability, inclusive social development, inclusive economic development, peace and security, particularly if guided by the three governing principles of sustainability, human rights and equality[5].

In this context, a resource and heritage-friendly economy begins with the interest the business environment takes in the development, sustainability and finally the sustainable development of the business and the local communities it interacts with. The business environment and economic activities that capitalize on the cultural and natural heritage play a significant role in ensuring its integrity, quality and authenticity – key requirements for a community or a region to develop sustainably. To take such a leading role, the business environment should understand and voluntarily adopt measures of sustainable use of the heritage on which their business is based, cooperate with the other interested participants – stakeholders (public authorities, heritage resource owners or legal managers, protected area custodians), direct participants in the heritage use (other private parties like non-governmental organisations, tourists/users/end-users of their services and products integrating heritage resources) and, most of all, the local community.

Related to these principles, in order to design a strategy that reflects the actual situation of the Romania-Bulgaria cross-border area, the business environment of 15 counties and districts was analysed, their perceptions as to the cultural or natural heritage directly or indirectly underlying their economic activity, how they address the sustainable heritage use, their current strategies or future involvement availability.

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[4] *Cohesion Policy Support for Local Development: best practices and and future policy options*, DG Regio, CCI n. 2009.CE.16.0.AT.081, Final Report
[5] *Toyama Proposal on Heritage and Sustainable Development*, 40th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, UNESCO World Heritage

It was also reviewed how the business environment was connected to local communities, stakeholders and "end-users" of their heritage-oriented economic activity by sector (tourists, clients, etc.) or whether they were aware of how significant heritage objectives were for their business. The analysis was performed on four economic sectors with highest impact on the heritage, namely tourism and related sectors, agriculture – grazing – fishing – silviculture, architecture – urbanism – constructions and energy generation from renewable sources. Notable results included:

- Most of the analysed companies consider their business only complies with laws currently in force, with no interest for the cultural and natural heritage.
- Most companies that took part in the case study (57%) consider they have experience in heritage use.
- The aesthetic – environmental – landscaping value, the possibility of cutting a nature trail or developing a tourism product, the existence of an infrastructure and the nutritional value of local food are the main reasons participating companies chose heritage use as a business resource.
- About 30% of the companies are willing to get involved in designing a protection and development plan for the cultural and natural heritage.
- Rewarding company involvement in the sustainable heritage use is an effective incentive measure for many companies.
- Monitoring technology and innovation offers is the main company strategy for a sustainable heritage use.
- The actual involvement in heritage use implies an interest in using local work force and/or products as well as cooperating with the civil society for spreading the concept.
- Detailed information on the managed heritage objective is the main way to promote it.
- To be effective, heritage use mainly requires communication with the local communities and heritage administration, as well as the creation of a local or regional forum.

A similar analysis was made on the stakeholders in order to learn how the owners, managers or custodians of the heritage in the Constanta – Dobrich area cooperate with the business environment, and how they perceive the effects of economic activities on the heritage.

In general, stakeholders are familiar with the concepts of sustainable heritage development and use, however, there is no such item as sustainable heritage use on the current agenda of any entity. The present priorities of all entities are focused on safeguarding the heritage, raising funds and initiating third-party funded projects, mainly privately held companies. The main priority of the local authorities is to secure investments for the primary infrastructure or to increase the aesthetic appeal of their localities.

However, local or regional development strategies include projects and objectives related to the "cultural heritage", "environmental protection" or "biodiversity

conservation" without insisting on a strong relationship with the business environment for correlating the actions of concerned parties with a view to a sustainable heritage use. At the same time there is a constant concern to create viable and functional contacts with either private or non-governmental entities to ensure the heritage use.

This Romanian-Bulgarian international and cross-border context has substantiated and structured *The development strategy of a heritage-friendly economy*, so that the intended measures become relevant for the wide range of institutional and private actors who cooperate on the sustainable heritage protection, conservation and use.

II. VISION FOR DEVELOPING A CROSS-BORDER CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE-FRIENDLY ECONOMY IN ROMANIA AND BULGARIA

The development vision for a heritage-friendly economy in Romania and Bulgaria encompasses the notions of *heritage, enterprise, end-users* and the interaction between them and other *institutional and private parties*; this interaction has deeply changed for the last 10 years along with the progressive and subtle societal changes.

In this context of global, cross-border and local societal changes, the vision put forward by *The development strategy of a heritage-friendly economy in Romania and Bulgaria* is the following:

Until 2022, the cultural and natural heritage in the Romanian-Bulgarian cross-border area will get a new significance for the business environment that manages it: cultural and natural heritage is an essential vector of the individual and collective identity of a local community, an inexhaustible resource for development and reinvention. It is only its sustainable use that will ensure its integration into the social and economic processes of the local development or environment, so that it becomes a direct contributor to local welfare for generations to come.

The sustainable use will ensure the quality, authenticity and integrity of the heritage, generating a succession of opportunities to raise its profile: business opportunities, investor attraction, social opportunities to occupy labour force and develop an inclusive society, attraction of talent and creative industries that will reunite the community in exploring culture and nature, connection to the fundamental values of an environment given back to the community, urban and open space regeneration.

This approach puts cultural and natural heritage in a new perspective in a new perspective that includes the local community, heritage owners and managers, tourists as economic actors, users and consumers of products and services provided by the business environment. This new dimension invites the business environment to integrate the inclusive social problems, the equity, the environment protection and new business stimulation into the conventional heritage use, leading to an economy that protects cultural and natural resources without compromising future generations' access to them.

III. PRIORITIES AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

Priority	Objective
I. Romanian-Bulgarian cross-border business environment proactively approach the cultural and natural heritage by **reinterpreting its significance**	I.1 To **raise awareness** of businesses on the heritage significance and the importance of its sustainable use I.2 Involvement of the business environment in **changing the perception**, mentality and heritage-specific value chain participation in promoting a sustainable heritage use I.3 Promotion and volunteer adoption of a **measuring and rewarding system** for companies that implement measures of sustainable heritage use.
II. To promote new **business models** leading to heritage-friendly economy	II.1 **Increasing management capacity** of the business environment to adopt and implement a sustainable heritage usage II.2 **Sustainable heritage use** by applying inclusive social measures, generating new business and promoting environmental protection II.3 Measures to preserve the authenticity, quality and integrity of the heritage
III. **Bring together all heritage actors** in a sustainability crucible – mediating role in the business environment	III.1 **Stronger participation** in the decision making process on the sustainable heritage development and use III.2. Development of an **informal platform** for information, cooperation and management of the cultural and natural heritage by comlanies – „Friends of the heritage"

IV. STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING A CROSS-BORDER CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE-FRIENDLY ECONOMY IN ROMANIA AND BULGARIA

Terms

Stakeholder
Party interested in the good mangement of the cultural and natural heritage, applying valid laws, protecting and preserving the heritage, ensuring sustainability. The stakeholders covered by the project are primarily the managers/owners or custodians of heritage objectives, as well as cultural, environement and tourism NGO's, universities and research organisations, local public authorities.

Actor
Relevant party involved in protecting and managing the cultural and natural heritage, whose activity can determine an alteration to the state of the heritage: economic actors (companies, end-users like tourists, consumers/clients of food and forest products, etc.), institutional actors, stakeholders, local community (as a collective entity), the press.

Value Chain (VC)
For every heritage objectives or economic sector level, VC consists of stakeholders (managers/owners/custodians), companies whose activity is directly or indirectly related to the heritage objective, the local community and end-users (tourists, consumers, etc.). Depending on objectives and interests, VC can be inititated not only by companies, but also by any member of the chain.

Economic Sectors
The project focuses on the business environment of four critical economic sectors for their effect on the heritage: (1) tourism and related activities; (2) agriculture, grazing, fishing and silviculture; (3) architecture, urbanism, constructions; (4) energy generation from renewable sources.

The development strategy of a heritage-friendly economy consists of the projects and actions that will allow attaining the objectives and, progressively, the vision put forward by the *Strategy*, along with integrating the preference of the business environment and stakeholders in theRomanian-Bulgarian cross-border area.

Overview of *Strategy* implementation actions and projects

PRIORITY I. ROMANIAN-BULGARIAN CROSS-BORDER BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT PROACTIVELY APPROACH THE CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE BY REINTERPRETING ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Objective I.1. To raise awareness of businesses on the heritage significance and the importance of its sustainable use

The awareness will allow the transition from a unilateral view, focused on the means and interests of the business environment, to a perception that brings together the ideas, practices, experience and goals of all the parties involved in the use, protection, preservation and management of the cultural and natural heritage. It is expected to

take many years for the mentality to change, so it can comprehend and formalise the complexity and interdisciplinarity of such perception.

The impact of this objective goes beyond the business environment and thus will affect other interested parties, who will broaden their perspective and change their point of view once they understand straight from the source what the others' genuine needs, interests, acomplishments, etc. are.

Implementation projects and actions

I.1.1 Information activities to raise businesses their awareness of the significance of the heritage to various stakeholders and actors (local community, managers/owners, beneficiaries/end-users, etc.), and of the context and impact of the sustainable heritage use.

Possible themes: the heritage objective as a welfare source at the community, proximity or cross-border area, for the institutional actors and academic world; the value chain of economic sectors affecting the heritage, mutual actions to build trust and cooperation relationships, mutual plans, concerted involvement in decision making; sustainable development, in general and the implications of sustainable use of a heritage objective, in particular; training/mutual information of concerned parties: business environment, stakeholders and local community, local or cross-border, as the case may be; networking of economic and institutional actors involved in the protection and use of a heritage objective; national, cross-border, international legal framework; public and private financing sources for heritage-related projects and initiatives, local or cross-border; consultance and assistance for heritage-related projects and initiatives.

In addition, themes may include a range of supporting tools for the sustainable economic use, elements to expand the specialised knowledge of company managers and employees in order to raise their market share and attract more tourists, consumers and clients.

I.1.2 Raising the business environment awareness about how important heritage is to other aspects as well, in order to facilitate a productive trust relationship: activities to *facilitate the relationships between the business environment and the other economic and institutional actors* who cooperate in the sustainable use of the heritage, by highlighting other parties' heritage-related actions (companies, stakeholders, press, etc.); *incentivising* stakeholders to include the business environment as a target group for their strategies, focusing on the practical aspects of their own initiatives/actions/regulations, etc. that are beneficial for business; the incentives will establish a two-way communication channel and will anhance the role played by the business environment in the economic use of the heritage.

Objective I.2. Involvement of the business environment in changing the perception, mentality and heritage-specific value chain participation in promoting a sustainable heritage use

This objective will allow the participation of all value chain members, including end-users and local communities, to solve problems (a new paradigm); the business environment or end-users will no longer be seen as "an issue", but a "solution source".

Implementation projects and actions

I.2.1 Relationship between business environment and local community and proximities

- Promote an active involvement of the business environment in the life of communities and proximities, participation in the civic life related to the heritage objective (events, contests, school activities, scientific research, experiments, etc.) when required by initiators or by their own initiative.
- Initiate their own actions or get involved in the stakeholders' action of raising public awareness and getting a large support in minimising indifference, neglect and lack of interest regarding heritage protection
- Locals – proximity and local community: establishing a two-way exchange by using heritage-related local knowledge and activities and integrating local needs into business plans.
- Indirect support for the local community by supporting job creating companies in a context of heritage-based economic growth– correlated with proposal II.2.2, *a business of local businesses*.
- Business environment participation in *local or broader actions to acknowledge or manage the heritage*, by showcasing their own experience, opinions, individual actions or by attracting partner firms, demonstrating an approach beyond instant exploitation and one-way benefits.

I.2.2 Relationship between business environment and end-users (tourists, consumers, users)

The relationship between *the business environment and the end-users* is considered to be of utmost importance for the business, for the heritage-related activity, as it can lead to changing the way it can be sustainably used.

- Involvement of end-users in the *sustainable use* by acquiring heritage-related products or services, for example trips, bird watching, food, architecture services, construction services, etc.
- Monitoring end-user satisfaction by research, evaluation and long-term tracking will provide an easier understanding of the way users perceive and react to the connection between the acquired/consumed product/service and the heritage objective.

- Bring to end-users' attention the regulations applying to the heritage objective via the company/heritage objective website, flyers, media.
- Bring to end-users' attention the financial involvement of various companies in protecting or preserving the heritage objective.

I.2.3 Relationship between business environment and stakeholders (managers/owners/custodians)

The relationship between *the business environment and stakeholders* is perceived to be necessary for promoting a sustainable heritage objective use.

- Periodically invite stakeholders to inform the business environment about the effects of the economic activity (mainly positive: jobs, common projects, revenue) and good practice examples.
- Encourage interested companies to publish an annual report: initiatives, projects, benefits, risks, as experienced in the economic activity with/through the cultural or natural heritage.
- Stimulate cooperation with the *universities - students* link, apart from business and administration aspects; it is seen as having potential to legitimise business environment initiatives, induce innovation, and strengthen the mediaton role of companies, for example: student internship, cooperation to prepare teaching aids pertaining to a specific heritage objective.

Objective I.3. Promotion and volunteer adoption of a measuring and rewarding system for companies that implement measures of sustainable heritage use

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The system takes into account the fact that in order for the company and its heritage objective to become sustainable in the long run and for the heritage to benefit the whole context of its use, there has to be a balance between the economic benefits, the gain of the local community and the environment.

Implementation projects and actions

I.3.1 The framework for evaluating the extent to which companies provide a sustainable heritage use, as a means of encouraging friendly behaviour and tracking the impact of the economic activity on the heritage. There will be a common framework, so it can be applied cross-border as well. This system has the ability to stimulate companies to apply the initiatives stipulated in the environmental and cultural permits.

Natural Heritage
(1) Direct interaction with the heritage: *inter alia* end-users' satisfaction level (consumers, users); lectures, information sessions, etc. on sustainable heritage topics in which the company participated; number of actual collaborations along the value chain;

number of damages, etc. sustained by the heritage objective; number of advertisements on/near the heritage objective; direct investments in the heritage objective, etc.

(2) Inclusive social values: jobs held by people living in that locality/area; jobs held by youth and women; indirectly generated jobs.

(3) Economic development: number of economic activities near the heritage objective or based on the products/services of the company; number of firms that collaborate for a better sustainable use; market value of neighbourhood area, renting value of neighbourhood area.

(4) Environmental protection: promotion campaigns involving the company; additional measures taken by the company besides those required by law.

Cultural Heritage

(1) Direct interaction with heritage: *inter alia* end-users' satisfaction degree, lectures, information sessions, etc. in which the company participated; ; number of actual collaborations along the value chain; number of vandalism occurrences, thefts, etc. sustained by the heritage objective; number of advertisements on/near the heritage objective; direct investments in the heritage objective, etc.

(2) Inclusive social values: jobs held by people living in that locality/area; jobs held by youth and women; indirectly generated jobs.

(3) Economic development: number of economic activities near the heritage objective; number of firms that collaborate for a better sustainable managemnt; market value of neighbourhood area, renting value of neighbourhood area.

(4) Local Development: stakeholders' investments in the company that made a material or non-material contribution; heritage-induced or heritage-related investments.

I.3.2 Encourage interested companies to publish an annual report – initiatives, projects, benefits, risks encountered in the economic activity pertaining to the cultural or natural heritage. The report may become a pledge to the sustainable use of the heritage, an instrument of communication with financial backers, collaborators and value chain.

PRIORITY II. TO PROMOTE NEW BUSINESS MODELS LEADING TO HERITAGE-FRIENDLY ECONOMY

Objective II.1. Increasing management capacity of the business environment to adopt and implement a sustainable heritage usage

It is important that the business environment develop its understanding and internal capacity regarding the heritage interaction and use, so that relevant plans and strategies do not depend on external consultancy, which has limited access to local information and knowledge, offering to a lesser degree day to day implementation.

II.1.1 Assistance offered to companies in adopting a more heritage-friendly activity and introducing sustainable use measures.

This proposal can become a **business support service** offered by the chambers of commerce and industry and/or employers'/business associations. The approach to the service and its theoretical content cand develop along with the stakeholders of the cultural and natural heritage. The service will be at primary level, providing information and guidance; a higher support level will depend on the potential and interest of the chambers of commerce and industry, employers'/business associations or the entities to implement the *Strategy*. In order for the companies to find solutions irrespective of their needs, it is recommended they cooperate with the stakeholders, including agreeing on a local signposting mechanism in case companies need a higher service level.

II.1.2 Training the business environment for entrepreneur competencies specific to a sustainable heritage use

It is designed for companies interested in developing competencies and abilities which will allow them to initate, manage and promote work methods/products/services to ensure an increased heritage protection, in agreement with the principles of sustainable use.

The project "A heritage-friendly cross-border economy in Romania and Bulgaria" offers interested entities a five-module curriculum, as follows:
- Product. The importance of the product in sales stages
- Improvement of negotiation and communication abilities
- Planning. Strategy or time waste
- Marketing. The importance of the marketing plan in co-opting partners
- Management of small and medium-sized businesses

The five modules will deal with entrepreneurial knowledge, competencies and abilities that will enable companies to approach their economic activity in a more innovative and heritage-friendly way. They will be common and relevant to both the Romanian and Bulgarian business environments.

II.1.3 Using the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to support the sustainable heritage use - an essential channel for monitoring the market, especially the market demand , an effective multifaceted communication with all age groups and types of end-users, an important marketing instrument.

Promotion of specialized ICT applications for various economic activities, such as:
- Tourism management, at operator level or related activity (hotel and restaurant)
- Management and monitoring of client relations

- Interior and exterior systems to monitor the heritage objective physical conditions: temperature, humidity, pollution, visitors flow, legislation, local/regional initiatives, etc. The results may be made public, so that the end-users, most likely tourists, become aware of their own imprint on the heritage objective. This kind of monitoring also allows the constant evaluation of the heritage supportability capacity and of the changes of supportability indicators.
- Information and interaction with end-users – tourists, consumers of food or forest products, etc., allowing the company to adjust the supply to the real market demand and its fluctuations, to the average profile of the specific (not general) user of the heritage objective, to their preferences and tastes.
- Online education

Objective II.2. Sustainable heritage use by applying inclusive social measures, generating new business and promoting environmental protection

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Heritage can be considered to be managed sustainably if the business strategy specifies social values (business opportunities outside the company, income for families), economic development (further generated business, incubation) or local development (revitalising heritage neighbouring area, increasing/stabilizing the value of neighbouring properties, etc.). This connection implies a permanent cooperation along the whole heritage-related value chain, which leads to altering perceptions about the other party involved, defining key mutual objectives, identifying problems and solutions based on the various viewpoints legitimising the cooperation, enabling a better understanding by including more diverse actors and easy implementation through the support of all the parties that participated in the initiatives/projects since their start.

Implementation projects and actions

II.2.1 Promote alternative models for approaching the economic activities that can provide a sustainable heritage use: circular economy, social economy, community economy, collaborative economy, green economy, etc. This initiative allows access to information about alternative approaches to economic activities, integrating social, economic or environmental protection aspects and larger programmes and initiatives initiated by local or international public structures; the latter can also integrate new management models and lead to business strategies that can make the economic activity a solution, rather than a problem, for the heritage.

II.2.2 "Business of local businesses"
- Promote creation of mini-clusters consisting of businesses that are directly or indirectly tied to the heritage objective. Besides representatives of the business environment, mini-clusters can also include other representatives of the value chain. They can be promoted along the value chain of each activity in the four sectors of the *Strategy* and/or for each heritage category, or even for a single interesting heritage objective. These mini-clusters can also be initiated at at cross-border level for heritage objectives relevant to both sides of the border,

such as the Danube and its protected areas, the Black Sea or cross-border areas with a common Romanian-Bulgarian history, such as Dobruja.

- Attractive places attract business, investors, artists, talents, etc – the heritage objective/objectives can be made attractive by public or private/public investments and stimulating connections with new actors, mainly from creative industries, thus opening replication and multiplication perspectives to other target groups.

II.2.3   Promote environmental protection by the heritage-related company products/services and by the involvement of the end-users (tourists, consumers, etc.). This measure can be applied in any stage of the heritage-related product/service throughout its life cycle, via messages that emphasise the sustainable heritage use.

The initiatives regarding the products/services offered by the heritage-related companies can be structured into internal strategies/plans to influence consumption behaviour and environmental action, such as:

- Promote an effective use of natural and primary resources or minimising used amounts by rethinking product/service production flows.
- Recycle and reuse equipment, recyclable materials, etc.
- Replace non-renewable with renewable resources.
- Promote technologies that decrease the amount of, or completely exclude non-renewable resources.
- Participate in public or governmental environmental protection actions.
- Participate in compensating the local community in case they cannot exploit their natural resources, while a company can (for example stone quarries in tourist areas, springs, commercial fishing, agriculture, tourism).

II.2.4 Centre the company image and brand on the heritage objective or include it in messages relevant to the heritage objective and/or sustainable use practices. Promotion of heritage objectives should be done in an effective, honest, complete and engaging[6] way, and messages should mobilise the local conscience, understanding and support to sustainably protect, preserve and use the heritage.

That measure can add value to the heritage objective by attracting end-users sensitive to the involvement of companies in sustainable activities and by increasing the revenue from heritage use for the whole value chain. This way the heritage image related to the economic activites can become an instrument of local or regional development.

II.2.5 Social inclusive dimension of the sustainable heritage valorisation

- Encourage hiring employees that reside in the heritage locality, for example by exemption from local taxes, tax brackets depending on the number of local employees, local job subsidy fund.
- Inititate and co-organize local job fairs focused on the heritage objective(s) use.

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[6] Managing Tourism at World Heritage Sites: a Practical Manual for World Heritage Site Managers, Arthur Pedersen, World heritage manuals, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2002

Objective II.3. Measures to preserve the authenticity, quality and integrity of the heritage

The Romanian and Bulgarian business environments and stakeholders believe that the best measures to preserve the heritage authenticity, quality and integrity are achieved by promoting the respect for local culture, participating in events that showcase local tradition and elaborating projects that place the heritage in a distinct value chain.

Implementation projects and actions

II.3.1 Definition and promotion of "local"

The notion of "local" includes the integrity of local culture, using the local workforce, using local products, services, knowledge and competence.
- Use local products and services and encourage their use by producer groups, fishermen associations, employers' associations and public authorities by accessing European funds where possible or organizing local product fairs. Local products and services may refer to food, construction, repair and maintenance companies, services, promotion, printing, etc.
- Encourage seniors (pensioners, craftsmen, etc.) to help keep the local sustainable connotation by organising small free of charge production/service shops; these shops can bring back retirees to their social and professional life and offer a more diverse range of authentic local products and services (senior day centres).
- Create *local groups* that use local lore, traditions, legends, practices relevant to the heritage objective – recreating the natural connection between the heritage and everyday life of the local community.

II.3.2 Investment projects
- Measures to minimise the natural risks of heritage destruction and degradation, public and private-public investments in heritage protection and preservation.
- Measures to reduce anthropogenic and technogenic damage, fire, waste pollution, soil-water pollution, vandalism, theft, etc.

II.3.3 Promote projects to restore the value chain relevant to a heritage objective or a group of geographic objectives in the same area, including cross-border, that benefit similar related value chains:

Tourism and related activities
- Establish and capitalize on investments such as "Wine road", "Roman emperors' road", etc.
- Public-private partnership to organize cultural, historical events – reenactment on heritage or company sites, etc.

Agriculture, grazing, fishing and silviculture
- ▪ Organize and promote regular local product fairs in the proximity or within the protected area.
- ▪ Promote the area identity by reuniting specific elements: legends and related heritage, places, food and recipes, etc. Create an identity-based local brand after reinforcing the connection between the distinctive identity and locality/area.

Architecture, urbanism, constructions
- ▪ Local architecture and urban aesthetics regulations to ensure a coherent aesthetic and functional approach, true to the spirit of the heritage or protected area. Consult interested parties and promote regulations to ensure a sustainable heritage use.

PRIORITATEA III. BRING TOGETHER ALL HERITAGE ACTORS IN A SUSTAINABILITY CRUCIBLE – MEDIATING ROLE IN THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Objective III.1. Stronger participation in the decision making process on the sustainable heritage development and use

An active participation of the business environment in decision making implies understanding all parties, designing plans and strategies, implementing and evaluating their effects; it means to know who has the best expertise, who and how will benefit economically, socially, culturally and psychologically.

Implementation projects and actions

III. 1.1 Build a consensus as to heritage showcasing, support decision implementation and business environment involvement. Surpass all barriers of trust and understanding other parties' missions. Heritage is part of a heterogenous complex of multiple function ecosystems. Just as the heritage is affected by these ecosystems, so can neighbouring areas benefit from the heritage-generated products and services. This two-way connection implies that the heritage managing entities (value chain) should cooperate in decision making, and the other way round, promote the integration of ecosystems into all heritage planning and use stages. The consensus on heritage measures will facilitate decision making and implementation. Moreover, consensus building entails developing adequate heritage-related strategies and projects, balanced relationships with the other value chain members and creating synergic heritage actions.

III.1.2 Local, regional and cross-border strategies should include social and economic measures relevant to heritage development, concrete actions dedicated and recommended to the business environment, based on their success stories. Local, regional and cross-border strategies are designed and accepted by local and regional authorities; the business environment in both countries has the opportunity to step in and put forth proposals during public consultations required by decision-making

transparency laws. Cross-border undertakings will be approached by integrating them in the local strategies in the relevant cross-border area, for example Black Sea coastal locations or localities that can have mutual activities based on the heritage on their territory (for example Silistra – Ostrov).

Objective III.2. Development of an informal platform for information, cooperation and management of the cultural and natural heritage by comlanies – „Friends of the heritage"

Mutual interests = mutual language = mutual projects

Implementation projects and actions

III.2.1 The goal of the informal information, cooperation and management platform is to facilitate communication and sharing of good practice, principles, etc. by the business environment – *in extenso* all interested cross-border parties.

Sustainable heritage use means the participation of as many informed actors as possible in heritage dedicated actions; it also takes a strong political will to ensure their participation and consensus. It is a continuous process which requires periodic impact verification, followed by a revision of tools and methods. The connections between industry and the other actors are weak, most of the time. A communication platform to ensure regular and open two-way exchanges could be the most important strategy in order to proceed to a sustainable heritage use. This platform could make a major contribution to the implementation of the whole *Strategy for a heritage-friendly economy in Romania and Bulgaria* based on the mutual understanding it would promote, the consensus it could build and further mutual initatives and projects.

We also put forth the creation of a **virtual platform** based on the project's website; it will allow an optimal usage of resources from various disciplines and sectors, identification of major problems, access to high quality documents.

The virtual platform may include the following sections:
- Legal framework – international, national, regional and local; documents or links to databases in Romanian, Bulgarian and English.
- Concept of sustainable heritage use, success stories.
- High capacity of companies to initiate and implement measures of sustainable heritage use – information, training, etc.
- Result monitoring and research partnerships
- Library – electronic resources (strategies, laws, local regulations, Urban Zoning Plan/Local Urban Regulations)
- Forum
- Links to relevant sites, websites of heritage objectives on the Romanian-Bulgarian border.

III.2.2 Business environment involvement in financing investment or non-investment heritage projects:

- Agree to create an adequate stimulating mechanism of financial cooperation with other interested parties, especially stakeholders. It will be case specific and tailored to the actual situation, needs, interests and possible constraints imposed by public funding.
- Fund-raising for non-profit projects from the business environment as well as employees and families (love money). Donations should be strictly directed to concrete projects and initiatives, which should be shown in detail – fund-raising is successful when contributors are transparent and assume well defined roles.

V. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING SYSTEM

The implementation of the *Strategy for a heritage-friendly cross-border economy in Romania and Bulgaria* involves agreeing on, organizing and carrying out coherent activities, correlated on all plans in order to achieve the vision of the *Strategy* between 2017 and 2022.

The system extends the elaboration stage and adds complexity, owing to the effort of implementation entities, local partners and the capacity of the business environment to receive messages, change their attitude, take concrete actions and move on to a heritage-friendly economy. It also implies correlating the actions of parties interested in the *Strategy*, namely stakeholders and other institutional or non-governmental actors: coordinating material, human and financial resources to obtain a synergy leading to a greater local impact. All these are key factors in the success or failure of the *Strategy*.

1. *Strategy* implementation process
1.1 Inception and preparation
1.2 Application
1.3 Secure resources to manage the *Strategy* and implement development projects and actions.

2. Monitoring the Strategy will take place on two levels:

2.1 Local and cross-border strategic plan, determined by the situation and evolution of the relationship between the business environment and heritage, their outlook and heritage-oriented actions, collaboration with the other actors, etc.; strategic elements considered when elaborating the *Strategy*, to be tracked along the implementation in order to maintain its relevance.
2.2 Plan of the *Strategy for a heritage-friendly an economy in Romania and Bulgaria* by monitoring the implementation of the main development projects and actions.
acțiunilor de dezvoltare prioritare.

VI. PARTNERSHIP FOR A HERITAGE-FRIENDLY ECONOMY, A FRAMEWORK FOR PROMOTING THE CONCEPTS

European and national principles of local development recommend that integrated, sustainable development strategies - be they local or national, sectorial or general, virtually of any nature – should be implemented via relevant partnerships, to ensure participation of as many as possible (if not all) interest and initiative groups targeted by those specific strategies.

Only so can objectives, measures and projects address all needs and requirements, facilitate a concrete, motivated involvement in strategy implementation. They can also contribute to strengthening the ties between various segments of society, which in turn will identify with the whole context of the *Strategy*.

The direct involvement of the community, interest and initiative groups targeted by the strategies also allows sharing knowledge, experience, projects and thus make good use of the local resource potential, as well as creating a synergy.

The *Strategy for a heritage-friendly economy in Romania and Bulgaria* is interesting not only to the business environment, but to the whole spectrum of institutional and private actors that revolve around the cultural or natural heritage, be it cross-border, local or regional; it can also apply to a single particular heritage objective, which is visible and recognized by its impact on the area development.

The partnership suggested to implement the *Strategy* is recommended and voluntary. Its ideal structure represents all (or most of) the interest and initiative groups targeted by the strategy: implementation entities, stakeholders and local community, as well as representatives of the business environment and end-users, mainly tourists.
This structure would strike a balance between interests, opinions and expectations regarding the heritage; it would also allow for coherent and complementary efforts and projects to boost one another.
In addition, it adds an essential aspect, namely it lets partnership members identify with the very *Strategy*. That can lead to good results and a vision the members can identify with, because it represents them and can be turned into actual objectives and outcome. This way, through their own projects, partnership members can support the implemention of the *Strategy*, they can complete or diversify the implementation tools and make a significant contribution to attaining their goals.

Inviting the local press, bloggers, social networks that are focused on promoting the cross-border area will ensure the transparency and visibility of the efforts made to implement the *Strategy*, the initiatives and projects, the support of the population and third parties, such as financial institutions, the civil society emotionally or professionally disinterested in protecting, preserving and managing the heritage, etc.

Initiated at cross-border, regional or local level, the partnership has the same goal: implementing the *Strategy for a heritage-friendly economy in Romania and Bulgaria.*

During the implementation stage, the partnership can gradually consolidate by assuming the traditional role of a developing partnership:

- They analyse, approve, alter or make up, as the case may be, progress monitoring reports regarding the implementation of the *Strategy* and of high priority projects.
- They analyse and decide on the *Strategy* revision proposals and project priority order.
- They propose and track the development objectives set by the *Strategy*
- They analyse and decide on the planning of informative measures or high priority projects.

To strengthen the partnership, its members can also get involved in organising, co-organising or displaying implementation measures – projects and actions.

The partnership can be approached gradually, as actions get more concrete and partners more involved.

Starting as a nexus type partnership, established during pilot stages in Constanta county, Romania and Dobrich district, Bulgaria, and later at cross-border level, it can later expand by updating its initial structure, so that members' diversity, relevance, expertise, and experience are put together to implement the *Strategy*.

The partnership can be formally established by a flexible, regulated partnership agreement which can be extended or restricted, depending on the implementation progress. The partnership will be focused on implementing the *Strategy* and will be accompanied by a public involvement statement, published locally.