



JOIN US!

in the DEVELOPMENT,
PROMOTION &
PRESENTATION
of our **BEAUTIFUL**
REGION OF SHARRA
to the **WORLD**

Project:
Fostering Rural
and Environmental
Tourism through
Smart Tourist Information Centres / FRET-STIC



Project implemented by
CeProSARD,
RDA South and
Municipality of Tetovo

“This brochure has been produced with the assistance of the European Union in Kosovo. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of CeProSARD and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union in Kosovo.”

‘The Member States of the European Union have decided to link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.’

ABOUT THE FRET-STIC PROJECT

The OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT is development, promotion and presentation of local and regional tourism through innovative approaches and systems for improved rural and environmental experience.

The SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES are:

- Establishment of networked Smart Tourist Information Centres (STIC), with capacity in collecting, utilizing and creating knowledge on the potentials of tourism in Sharra;
- Enhanced comprehension and presentation of tourism potentials of the cross-border region, using contemporary e-systems and mutual cooperation.

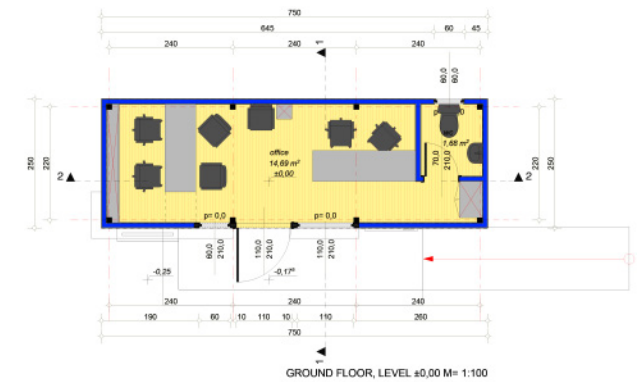
STIC location in Tetovo:

KP No. 1796, Tetovo-1

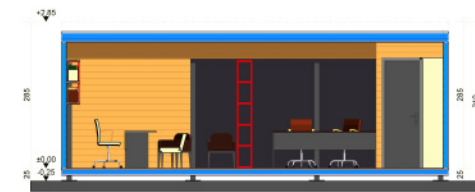
STIC location in Prevala, Prizren:

P-71813012-02375-12 GORNJE SELLÉ

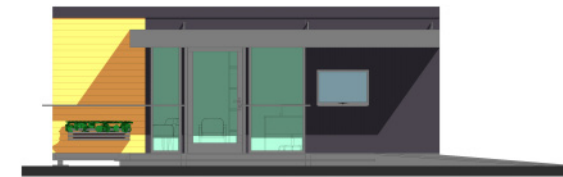
STIC



SECTION 1-1 M= 1:100



SECTION 2-2 M= 1:100



FRONT FACADE M= 1:100



SIDE FACADE 1 M= 1:100



TARGET GROUPS & FINAL BENEFICIARIES

The key target groups and final beneficiaries include the Tourism Information Centers, local authorities, agencies for regional development, agencies for tourism and culture, SMEs, clusters of tourism, chambers of commerce, CSOs.

How are they interrelated?

- Existing **Tourism Information Centers (TICs)** are upgraded into Smart TICs (STICs) by employment of generic business processes that allow enhanced service to clients and at the same time data collection through human interaction. The centers in the target region are networked through a STIC Platform that provides information services to tourists through Automated Info Desk (AID), or human interaction. The Platform will enable exchange of information among the STICs regarding the tourist preferences and overall tourism trends, while simultaneously feed the Tourist Information System (TIS) for enhanced business intelligence.
- **Local authorities** are empowered with information and knowledge to facilitate the creation of an enabling environment for tourism development. The FRET-STIC project provides them tools to aid the private entities and thus build relationships of mutual trust and realistic expectations. Finally, increased number of visitors and enhanced tourism sector contribute towards a more sustainable, inclusive and balanced economic development of the region.
- **Regional authorities, agencies for tourism and culture** similarly to the local authorities receive the necessary relevant information for planning and supporting the regional development. CRD Polog will benefit platforms 'feeding' its TIS with additional relevant data. The benefit is beyond mutual, as the relevance of the information and knowledge provided through the TIS increases jointly with increase of data provided.

- **SMEs** will obtain up-to-date information generated through TIS and STIC Platform on updated tourism demands for the cross-border region. Similarly, **start-ups** and **individual entrepreneurs** can identify new business opportunities. As such, the private is able to raise their capacities and engage strategically in creating products, expand their markets and contribute to their increased business turnover.
- **Businesses, clusters and chambers** in the cross border region, have the opportunity to network among each other and with governance entities, to build new partnerships leading to creation of new, and fostering of existing business initiatives.
- **CSOs** may benefit from the knowledge created through all these systems, in relation to information made available for research, transparency and preparation of projects and initiatives that will aid the [tourism] industry and the society on plethora of views, ex. design of curricula, gender balance, social inclusion, etc.

GET INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT, PROMOTION AND PRESENTATION OF OUR BEAUTIFUL REGION TO THE WORLD

Your municipality, region, business, organization, association is the inevitable part of the puzzle.

Email: info@rdcpolog.mk

PROJECT RESULTS

1. Networked Smart Tourist Information Centers, running a mutual platform based on standardized business processes and on existing Tourism Information System concepts;
2. Designed business processes to effectively and efficiently serve tourists through STICs, as well as collect data on their behavior and preferences. Trained staff on both sides of the region to perform on STICs;
3. Created digital matrix on mapped tourism infrastructure and events in Sharra region, including marked/unmarked pedestrian trails, signaling, lodging, eateries, other POIs and events. The digital matrix is to be used on the Inter-regional Tourist Online Platform (iTOP) to create tourism products for the cross-border region;
4. Created materials and contents for promotion of the cross border tourism of Sharra;
5. Trained TIC's staff on smart serving/collecting data on tourists, as well as tourism products created from the matrices.

ACTIVITIES

The action is designed to harvest the potential of cross-border tourism in innovative ways. It employs **TWO SETS** of central activities which create 'technological disruption'.

FIRST, in the way tourists are informed and decisions are made in cross-border tourism.

It includes establishment of new or 're-designed' tourist information centres (TICs) into Smart TICs. It is a bottom-up approach and involves: consultancy and design of centralized platform - the backbone of STIC, identification of spatially smart - fit for STICs - locations, construction of basic facilities, deployment of user interfaces and communication channels, training of involved stakeholders for back-end and front-end use of the system.

SECOND, on the way tourism products are designed, presented and offered to tourists.

It includes creation of a matrix of events and POIs of all types, which are then fed and integrated into Inter-Regional Tourism Online Platform (iTOP).

The aforementioned two sets of activities are featured by crucial and complementary sub-activities necessary for the successful outcome of the action, such as strategy-building via wide consultation and coordination, networking and expansion of the value chains; and instruction program for public entities in utilization of new toolkits, and their familiarization with, and within new business processes.

THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION IS ORGANIZED IN FIVE ACTIVITY CLUSTERS

Activity cluster 1: Establishing networked Smart Tourist Information Centres (STIC) with sampled business processes

- Activity 1.1 - Spatial positioning and construction of two STICs - in Tetovo and in Prizren, and transformation of two TICs into Smart TICs - in Popova Sapka and Prizren

The municipalities' are erecting a network of Smart TICs that offer an important community service, provide information on things to see and do, where to stay, shop and eat to visitors of the Sharra, covering South region in Kosovo, and Tetovo - together with whole Polog - in Macedonia. The reception visitors receive at STICs will contribute their overall experience, and will often shape their perceptions of the visited towns, Sharra and the CBC region as a whole.

- Activity 1.2 - Creation of optimized, generic business processes installable on any TIC regardless of its location and any other context - allow optimized service for tourists, while observing the aspect for implicit data collection

Optimized BPs work on AID (Automated Info Desks) or through a human interaction, i.e. TIC employee-Tourist. On one hand they provide information to clients (tourists), and on the other hand allow collection of tourist data - specifically on their preferences and demands. The tourist servicing information is provided through the STIC Platform, while at the same time feeding the system new data.



Activity cluster 2: Designing standardized business processes - and training programs - to better understand and serve tourists

- Activity 2.1 - Creation of the STIC Platform is a stand-alone web application that makes use of newly created business processes to collect data on tourist preferences, and at the same time to service tourist requests

The STIC provides two modes of servicing: through human interaction, rendering a trained STIC staff to reply queries/collect data with a sampled generic BP; and through electronic means of communication, in most basic form through AID - a touch screen computer with intuitive graphical interface that allows self service.

- Activity 2.2 - Automated Info Desks (AID) - hardware platforms installed in the STICs


The AIDs are an easy-to-use self-servicing point for the tourists placed within the STICs. In addition to AIDs, each STIC is equipped also with a workstation, used by employees for the same purpose, i.e. of tourist informing.

- Activity 2.3 - Master Classes in tourist servicing - a pool of 4 mentors - public employees, can train new-comers that will work in STICs, or employees of other municipalities in the cross-border region

The mentors with broader education and skills in psychology and social media marketing better understand tourist preferences and are able to better design marketing strategies targeting tourists.

- Activity 2.4 - Training Program for tourist servicing for the public servants employed in STICs

The training programs for STIC employees, deliver schooling on: adoption of new, generic BPs in daily work, servicing of tourists, data collection from tourists, use of STIC Platform, POIs in the cross-border region, psychology of customer service.



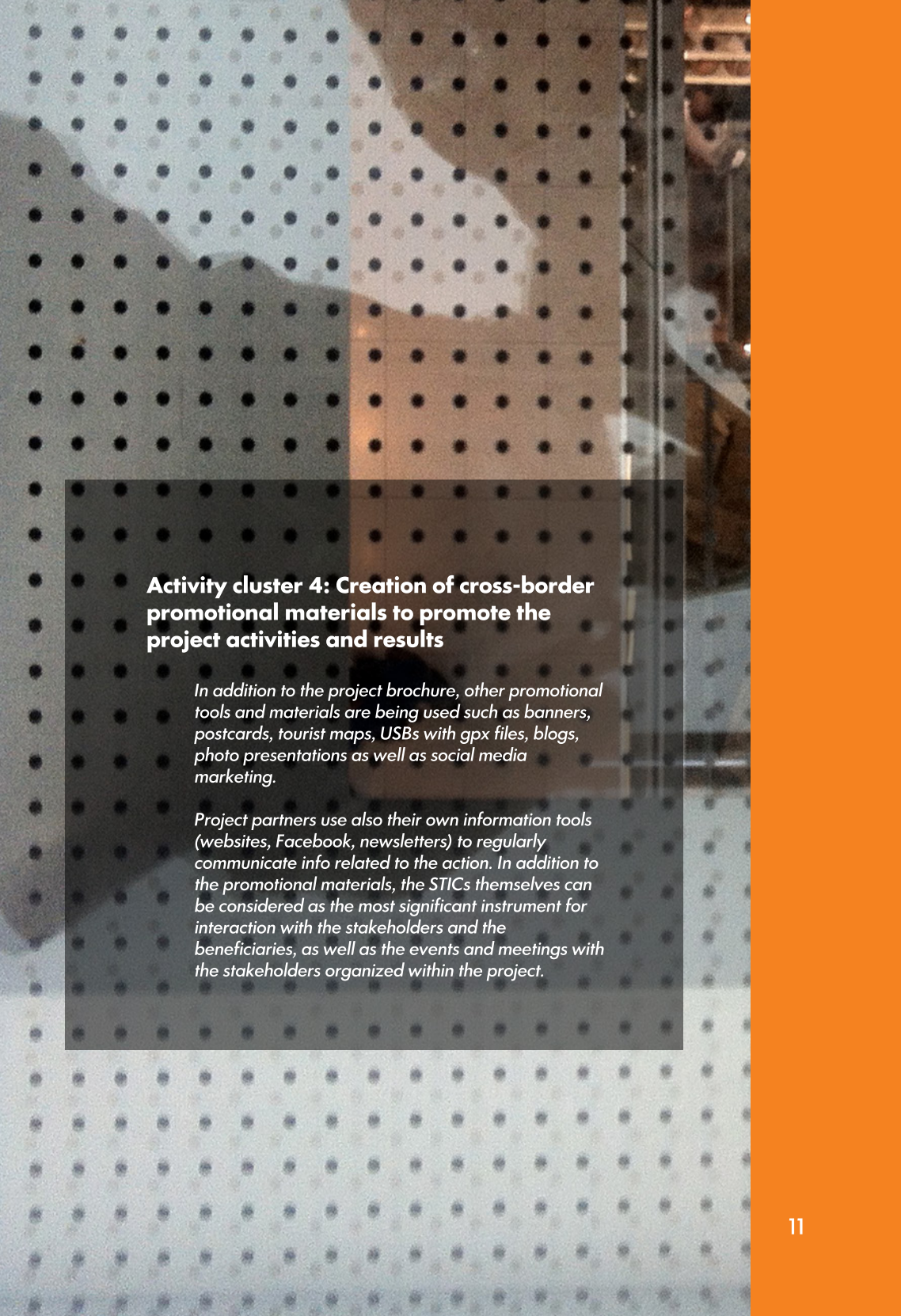
Activity cluster 3: Digital mapping of infrastructure and events related to rural tourism in cross-border region of Sharra

- Activity 3.1 - Mapping of potentials - infrastructure and events / Creation of the Digital Matrix - provision of data for POIs and events of all kind: trails, cultural heritage, lodging, eateries, any other POI of significance, festivals, concerts, traditional events, etc.

The matrix boasts metadata on the social, cultural, economic and the environmental impact on all these potentials for the targeted cross-border areas. The by-product of the matrix is a coefficient significance system that allows certain values to be assigned to a potential, which can vary in time to reflect the Real relevance, based on discrete client input, like reviews, ratings, etc.

As such, the matrix is a management tool, for a sustainable destination management, a monitoring system, allowing data collection to monitor performance of each POI - and as a whole - in time, and finally an information tool useful for policy makers, tourism enterprises and other stakeholders.

The matrix has a visual depiction and enables combining of different data sets, depending to the context of use.



Activity cluster 4: Creation of cross-border promotional materials to promote the project activities and results

In addition to the project brochure, other promotional tools and materials are being used such as banners, postcards, tourist maps, USBs with gpx files, blogs, photo presentations as well as social media marketing.

Project partners use also their own information tools (websites, Facebook, newsletters) to regularly communicate info related to the action. In addition to the promotional materials, the STICs themselves can be considered as the most significant instrument for interaction with the stakeholders and the beneficiaries, as well as the events and meetings with the stakeholders organized within the project.

Activity cluster 5: Joint cross-border events on sharing and promoting the results of the action

- Activity 5.1 - Final Conference - to inform the public about the project results, impacts and future activities

The target audience shall include SMEs and research institutions, policy and decision makers, clusters, scientific and industrial experts across the two countries. The event includes distribution of promotional materials produced within the project.

- Activity - 5.2 Consultation meetings - to encourage active participation of the key stakeholders in the region in the FRET-STIC project.

Four consultation meetings organized with the stakeholders from both countries during the project implementation are aimed to communicate the planned activities and outcomes of the FRET-STIC, the synergy with other project in the region and on planning the future actions with particular consideration of the feedback received from the participating parties.



PARTNERS

CeProSARD is CSO established in 2008 with main focus of work in environmental protection and sustainable development. Our team of professionals in environment, agriculture, technical sciences and economy has an in-depth knowledge and experience to carry out the most complex and challenging tasks in these fields. For more than ten years we work intensively on development and implementation of projects on local, national and international level in close cooperation with the key stakeholders in the country and abroad.

RDA South is one of five Regional Development Agencies in Kosovo established by the end of year 2008, with the aim to coordinate the cooperation among various regional stakeholders towards accelerated socio-economic and regional development of southern region. RDA South covers the municipalities of Prizren, Dragash/Dragaš, Suharekë/Suva Reka, Mamushë/Mamuša/Mamuša, Malishevë/Mališevo and Rahovec/Orahovac. Its vision is “Economic Region South as an area where the strategically planned sustainable development, cooperation and successful partnerships have led to increased competitiveness of economy based on region’s strengths and favourable environment for investments”.

Municipality of Tetovo as the biggest municipality in the Polog Planning region comprises 20 settlements, almost all of them rural. It is located in the central fertile and densely populated Polog basins and neighboring heights in the west picturesque region of Sharra Mountain. The city of Tetovo and the region are inhabited by several ethnic communities and have historically acknowledged great economic and strategic significance. The region is recognized by its diversity of remarkable natural beauties, cultural features and traditions. The strategic goals of the municipality include improved business climate, support the development of rural tourism, protection of the environment, improved rural infrastructure including raised knowledge and access to information in rural areas through networking and joint action of relevant stakeholders.

This action takes on an approach initiated and promoted by Centre for Development of the Polog Planning Region (CDPPR) and is in synergy with number of other complementary activities initiated by the Centre. The Polog Planning Region is comprised of nine municipalities (including Municipality of Tetovo) from the Macedonian part of the cross-border region of Sharra, therefore adding to the significance of the action in the target cross-border area.

Duration of the project:
16 May 2018 - 15 May 2020 (24 months)

Project implemented by:

