



**Working Meeting: Tourism Development in the Prespa/Ohrid Region,
13 April 2005, Pogradec, Albania**

TRANS-FRONTIER INSTITUTION BUILDING PROJECT FOR THE PRESPA/OHRID REGION
2003-2005
TOWARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EUROREGION

Working Group Report

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I. Background

On 13 April 2005 the EastWest Institute (EWI) within the framework of its 'Trans-frontier Institution Building Project For the Prespa/Ohrid Region 2003-2005: Towards the Establishment of the Euroregion' hosted the second working group meeting on Tourism Development in the Prespa/Ohrid region in Pogradec, Albania.

The initiative for this meeting is the result of recommendations by the Prespa/Ohrid Economic Task Force established in the framework of the ongoing project by the East West Institute to institutionalize cooperation in the Prespa/Ohrid Euroregion and by the Prespa /Ohrid Tourism Working Group established in February 2005 in Bitola.

The meeting was predicated on the first working group meeting held on 09 February 2005 in Bitola that brought together private tourist operators, academics, local development agencies, civil society and donors to discuss the development of a framework for cross border cooperation on Tourism in the Prespa/Ohrid region.

The main goals of the meeting was to further cooperation in three strategic areas of Tourism development

- Marketing/Website
- Training/Standardization
- Products/Tours



II. General Conclusions

The meeting started with an overview of latest initiatives in the field of Tourism in the Prespa/Ohrid region. Johannes Busse, from the EastWest Institute, gave a short account of a seminar on cross border tourism development he attended in the Polish/German border region and concluded that a good deal of expertise can be transferred from this region to the Prespa/Ohrid region. Gabriela Scheiner, from the Cultural Triangle of Prespes, briefly talked about a recent proposal submitted by the Cultural Triangle of Prespes in collaboration with the NGO Tourism & Environment and the Municipality of Pogradec to the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Hellenic Aid. The proposed project entails among others a four week summer academy for cross border tourist guides and a two week Summer Work Camp for young people dealing with the maintenance and restoration of the environmental and cultural



heritage of the region. Thomas Thasellari, from the Tourism Office of the Municipality of Pogradec, told the participants about the latest tourist information material on the Korca Region and a DVD on Pogradec elaborated by his office, as well as several advertising campaigns and the participation of the municipality in various European tourism fairs. Gjergji Naçi, from the Regional Development Agency of Korca, announced the publication of a Korca City Guide by the RDA and Anica Palazzo, from the GTZ Ohrid, gave a short overview of her organization's activities in the coming period.

Subsequently the group discussed the participation in the tourism meetings. Given the absence of many participants present in the first meeting it was criticized that many tourism stakeholders are not active enough and wait for ready-made improvements instead of initiating positive change themselves. The relevant tourism stakeholders must be involved in the elaboration of issue specific tourism proposals, nevertheless, and need to be identified and actively encouraged to participate in the working group meetings in the future.

In order to indigenize the organization of the working groups and divide the responsibility for this among several people it was decided to appoint local organizers for each working group. The appointed organizers will be responsible for identifying and involving the relevant stakeholders in their subject area.

- Dimitar Georgiev volunteered for organizing the Product working group. Relevant stakeholders include Art Historians, Artisans, Museum Directors, Tour Operators, Municipalities etc.
- Gabriela Scheiner assumed responsibility for the Training Working group with University professors and the Tourism Community in general as stakeholders.
- For the marketing working group the RDA Korca was suggested as organizer but as the director was not present no decision could be taken. Relevant stakeholders would include festival organizers with websites, municipalities with websites, regional development agencies and universities.

Anica Palazzo offered to help with the overall coordination of the different working groups.



Finally the participants decided that the next working group meetings (decentralized) should take place in the middle of May before the entire group would meet again in June for a best practice transfer workshop on cross border tourism development in the Czech-German border region in Ohrid. Working group members should come prepared for this workshop and bring along readily developed tourism material, development suggestions etc. Lastly it was emphasized that the central government support to tourism development is crucial. One prominent example is the inactive border crossing between Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia at Morkova Noga, which inhibits tourism development in the Prespa area gravely.



III. Agenda

- 10:45** **Arrival at Hotel Enkelana, Pogradec**
- 11:00** **Introductory Notes:**
Johannes Busse, Project Manager, EastWest Institute
- 11.30** **Latest Developments in Tourism Development**
Johannes Busse, Project Manager, EastWest Institute
Thomas Tasellari, Municipality of Pogradec
Anica Palazzo, Coordinator, GTZ
Gjergji Naçi, Representative, Regional Development Agency, Korca
Gabriela Scheiner, Director, Cultural Triangle of Prespes
- 12:00** **Open Discussion:**
Tourism Working Groups on:
- Marketing/Website**
Training/Standardization
Products/Tours
- 14:00** **Lunch in Hotel Enkelana**
- 15:00** **Departure of Participants**

IV. List of Participants

Marketing

Mr.	Gjergji	Naçi	Regional Development Agency	Korca	aurelrda@abissnet.com.al
Mr.	Johannes	Busse	EastWest Institute	Ohrid	jbusse@ewi.info
Mr.	Thomas	Tasellari	Tourism Department, Municipality of Pogradec	Pogradec	thtasellari@yahoo.com
Ms.	Teri	Macbride	Tourism Department, Municipality of Pogradec	Pogradec	pa2albania@yahoo.com
Mr.	Naum	Gegprifti	Tourism & Environment	Pogradec	turizmidhemjedisi@yahoo.co.uk
Mr.	Mladen	Altiparmakov	Ecovast		makvast@yahoo.com



Training

Ms.	Gabriela	Scheiner	Cultural Triangle of Prespes	Agios Germanos	ctprespa@acn.gr
Ms.	Marija	Dojranska	EastWest Institute	Ohrid	mdojranska@ewi.info
Ms.	Izabela	Potega	Cultural Triangle of Prespes	Agios Germanos	ctprespa@acn.gr
Ms.	Juliette	Lehu	Cultural Triangle of Prespes	Agios Germanos	ctprespa@acn.gr

Products

Mr.	Dimce	Georgiev	Tour Operator	Ohrid	villarvstica@yahoo.com
Mr.	Nikola	Kiselinov	Tourism Agency Biljana	Ohrid	biljanatours@hotmail.com
Ms.	Victoria	Momeva- Altiparmakovska	Ecovast	Bitola	makvast@yahoo.com

Overall Facilitation

Ms.	Anica	Palazzo	GTZ	Ohrid	gtzohrid@mt.net.mk
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