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The fourth meeting of the ERASMUS+ project participants in Skrad, Croatia (06/27/2022. – 06/28/2022)

We are gradually approaching the end of the project and another project phase, quite important and substantial, which includes three of the four declared project outputs, namely, the development of a European model and methodology for destination management and auditing, the creation of training courses on destination management and auditing, as well as training methodology. As all these activities are coming to an end, the fourth blended project meeting of ERASMUS+ KA2 "Cooperation for Innovation and Exchange of Best Practices" KA202 Strategic Partnership Program Project No. 2020-1-CZ01-KA202-078343 "Innovation and Continuing Education in Destination Management" was held in Croatia (Skrad) on 27-28 June 2022.

The meeting was attended by partners from the Czech Republic (Prague), Poland (Krakow), Turkey (Aydin), Bulgaria (Sofia), Croatia (Skrad), and Latvia (Riga).

The Baltic International Academy was represented at the meeting by Marina Gunare and Inta Buka.

This time our objectives were:

- 1) an overview of activities under development, namely, Destination Management and Audit training courses, and training methodology, the European Model and Methodology for Destination Management and Audit.

The work on the development of training courses in Destination Management and Audit as well as training methodology was coordinated by the Latvian partners in close cooperation with the grant holders (Czech Republic) and interaction with other partners, therefore the presence of the work already done was assigned to the Latvian and Czech teams.

The presentation of the training course materials on destination management and audit, as well as the training methodology, was made by Marina Gunare, the head of the division "Tourism and hotel business" and the professor of the Baltic International Academy. Afterward, all the participants of the meeting decided to add some blocks to the already developed material and to start the preparation of a guide for destination management and audit to be completed by August 31, 2022.

The Czech colleagues presented the European model and methodology for destination management and audit, which it was decided to complement with the materials prepared by the partners from Bulgaria and to complete this block of the project by the end of August.

- 2) Conducting a focus group and discussion of the developed European model and methodology for destination management and audit with representatives of the tourism industry and other stakeholders.

Representatives of public and private structures of Croatia directly related to the design and implementation of the tourism development strategy were invited to the meeting and were presented with the developed European model and methodology for destination management and audit. For each item of the model and methodology comments were received, as well as an opinion on the feasibility of the inclusion of the relevant sections. In general, the developed model and methodology were evaluated more than positively, all included sections caused great interest and heated discussions with examples from real life. The focus group also noted that the implementation of the developed model and methodology would have

a significant impact on the development of the tourist business, evaluation of the results achieved in a certain period, and planning its further development.

Special attention was paid to the implementation of the developed model and the need for additional training of stakeholders in the implementation of the developed European model and methodology for destination management and audit, which confirms the need for additional training of those working in the field of destination management and audit, as well as planning, evaluation, and forecasting of further development of the industry.

- 3) Review and planning of upcoming project activities, namely, training activities for project participants in Prague (Czech Republic), multilateral meetings in partner countries, and the final meeting in Prague (Czech Republic).

Colleagues from the Czech Republic spoke in detail about what activities remain in the project, and how these activities should be carried out. Particular attention was paid to the training activities for project participants in Prague and multilateral meetings in the partner countries. Within the framework of the discussion, the exact dates of the training activities for the project participants and the final meeting in Prague were set.

- 4) Preliminary preparation of information on general and financial documentation for the final project report (project dissemination information (project website, social media account, newsletter, timesheets, preliminary financial reports, etc.)).

As a result of the discussions, it was decided to review once again the posted and sent out material on the progress of the project, supplement the information on the website and social network with new materials, as well as to conduct a check on the use of allocated funding for the project.

In addition, it was proposed to supplement the activities on the dissemination of the project results with a special issue of an internationally recognized scientific journal, in which it was decided to include articles of each of the partners on the activities they supervised. Preliminary publication of the special issue was planned for the middle - end of September.

- 5) Visiting the Primorsko-Goranska zhupania (seaside and mountain), national nature park, administrative center, and nature museum to assess the current state of the destination by the developed methodology and procedures;

At the end of the meeting, the participants were able to visit different Primorsko-Goranska zhupania destinations and get acquainted with the kinds of tourism that are the most popular in the region (sports, health-improving, health resorts, fishing, hunting, mountaineering, including speleotourism and mountain climbing (alpinism), itinerary: hiking, skiing, water, biking, motor, and car tourism, entertainment, and event tourism), as well as to assess the prospects for the development of new types of tourism, the attractiveness, and accessibility of both mountainous and coastal regions of Primorsko-Goranska zhupania.

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[Link to the meeting's agenda:](#)

https://bsa.edu.lv/wp-content/docs/international/2022/Agenda_fourth_meeting_ERASMUS_KA202.pdf