



ACTION PLAN
FOR THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE OF CENTRAL MACEDONIA, THROUGH THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE REGIONAL OPERATION PLAN

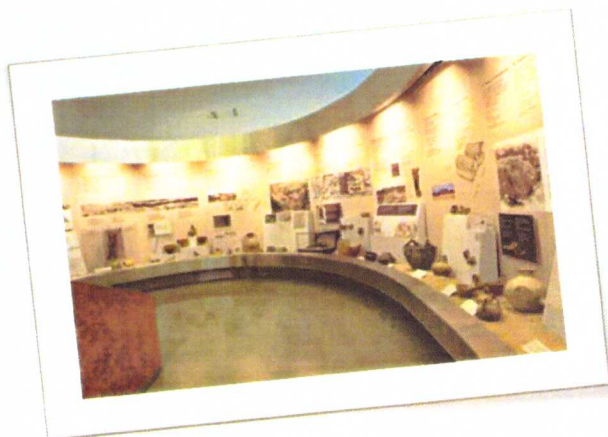
Intangible Heritage



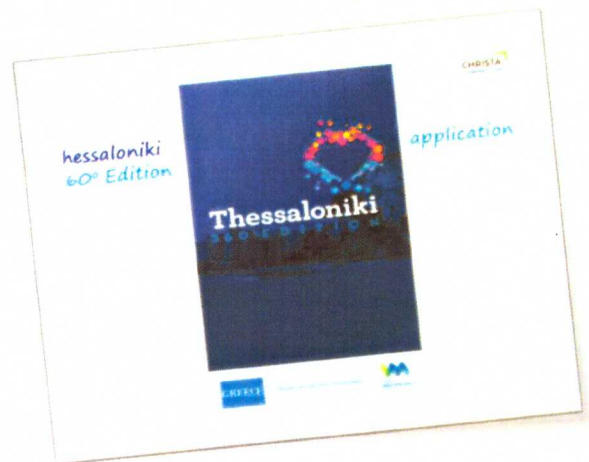
Industrial Heritage

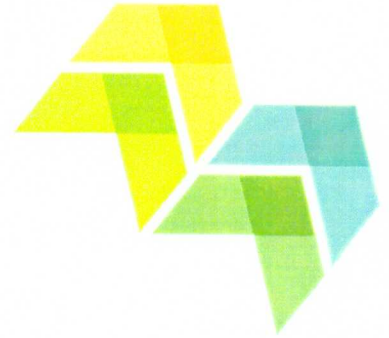


Interpretation Facilities



Innovation and Digitisation





Executive Summary

“Culture and Heritage for Responsible, Innovative and Sustainable Tourism Actions” (acronym: CHRISTA) is a project of the Interreg Europe Programme 2014-2020 and is implemented under the Specific Objective 4.1 “Improving natural and cultural heritage policies”. The Pafos Regional Board of Tourism is the lead partner organization of the CHRISTA project. The Region of Central Macedonia is one of the ten (10) project partners and aims to improve the Regional Operational Programme of Central Macedonia by modifying the existing measures of Thematic Priority 6, which deals with the “Environmental protection and efficient use of resources”.

CHRISTA’s overall objective is to protect and preserve natural and cultural heritage assets and deploy them for the development and promotion of innovative, sustainable and responsible tourism strategies, including intangible and industrial heritage, through interpretation and digitisation, with capitalisation of good practices, policy learning, policy implementation and capacity building.

The common challenges that the project partners aim to tackle through the CHRISTA project are:

- Natural & Cultural Heritage assets are valuable treasures, sometimes in danger and in need of proper conservation, preservation and/or restoration
- These assets can be deployed for the purposes of sustainable and responsible tourism development, namely cultural tourism, heritage tourism and ecotourism
- The tourism potential of these assets may facilitate the preservation and restoration efforts, if performed in a sustainable and responsible way
- Innovation can contribute greatly towards improving cultural and natural heritage policies for sustainable and responsible tourism development.

In this context, each partner developed an Action Plan for the improvement of their chosen policy instrument towards the upgrade and promotion of cultural and natural assets and innovative applications. The Region of Central Macedonia has developed the following Action Plan as a result of the good practices exchange in project workshops, meetings and study tours throughout the project implementation.

In the first part, the Action Plan describes the current situation and features of the Region of Central Macedonia in general as well as the main cultural and natural assets of the Region.



In the second part, the Action Plan describes the policy instrument to be improved, i.e. the Regional Operational Plan of Region of Central Macedonia and more specifically the Thematic Objective 6 which concerns the “Conservation, protection, promotion and development of natural and cultural heritage”. There is also a description of the Local Actors who are involved in the project, their role and contribution to the project through the stakeholder meetings and throughout the project implementation in general.

The third part of the Action Plan presents the activities that took place during the project for knowledge transfer, good practices exchange and study tours among partners in order the four (4) thematics of the project to be discussed and developed further. The project’s activities were focused in the following thematics towards the direction the development and management of sustainable tourism:

- Preservation and improvement of the cultural assets of the Region
- Economic and social development
- Protection and improvement of the citizens’ quality of life
- Improvement of the regional tourism product

Through the constant interaction among the project partners and in accordance to the four (4) thematics, the Action Plan of the Region of Central Macedonia was developed including three (3) main actions as described in the final part of the Action Plan and also below.

Brief Description of the Area’s features

The Region of Central Macedonia is the second most populous in Greece after Attica with a population of almost 1.9 million which represents the 17.5% of the total country’s population in 2016. Comparing to the EU, is not considered a high density Region. However, in national level, is much populous than the average national rate. Great variations regarding the population density are found among the regional units of the Region.

The Region of Central Macedonia is of a unique natural and cultural heritage region, such as antiquities and monuments from all historical periods, architectural and industrial heritage, forests and landscapes, parks, etc. Thus, their preservation and promotion is significantly important for the improvement of quality of life of residents and visitors, as well as for tourism development



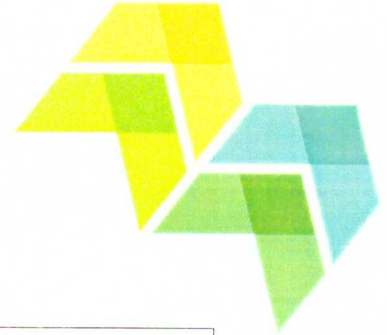
Description of the Policy Instrument – Regional Operational Plan of the Region of Central Macedonia

The policy instrument to be improved through the project “CHRISTA” is the Regional Operational Programme of the Region of Central Macedonia.

The vision of the Region is to become “a dynamic developing region of international scope with distinct identity, competitive and innovative production base, quality environment, strong social and territorial cohesion” ([5] [ROP Central Macedonia](#)). Towards this direction and along with the Region’s tourism features that show a strong tourism profile with great potentials in further developing this sector, as well as alternative tourism, the Region of Central Macedonia is interested in improving its ROP and Thematic Objective 6 (TO6) which deals with environmental protection and efficient use of resources, including the protection and promotion of cultural heritage.

SWOT Analysis

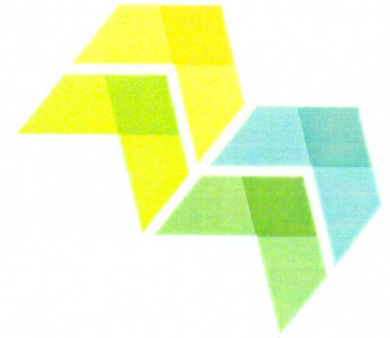
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong political will for development of thematic tourism • ICT infrastructures to support thematic tourism • Significant resources (physical, religious, healing, cultural, ski resorts etc.) • Specialised staff • Reasonable price levels • Raising demand • Existence of important transport network • Good chartered flight connections with key markets – sources • Increased demand for the tourism product "sun and sea" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited cultural routes • Loss of traditional character • Lack of collaboration between public administration and other tourism stakeholders • Decrease of population of remote areas • Unemployment • In some cases, low quality tourism services and lack of professionalism • Difficulty in developing tourist activities during periods of low demand (December - March)
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous technological development and development in digital media communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased competition from the Balkans and other European destinations



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination identifiability in the overseas countries and Europe • Positive demand for the product "Sun and Sea" • Secure travel destination • Good geographic target • Developing new forms of tourism according to seasonal needs • Organizing international events • Presence of an important transport network • Promoting new interventions aiming at opening up the market • Reducing bureaucracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional demand controlled from the Tours Operators • Environmental degradation due to of mass tourism • Stagnation in overseas markets and its inability to substitute Western Europe from new markets markets • Continuous and more pressing marketing actions to attract tourists • Reducing «repetitive tourists» • General Economic Crisis • The risk of the country becoming expensive destination, for monetary purposes
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Proposed Actions

Action	4I	Experience and idea transfer from CHRISTA Project partners and experts
1. Creation of Panoramic View 360o Application KENTRIKI MAKEDONIA - CENTRAL MACEDONIA version, installed on Smartphone phones and tablets	- Heritage Interpretation Facilities and - Innovation and Digitisation	- Sibiu County Tourism Association (Romania) <i>for the Interpretation Facilities</i> - Pafos Regional Board of Tourism (Cyprus) <i>for Innovation and Digitisation</i>
2. Valorisation and Promotion of the intangible cultural heritage of the Region of Central Macedonia	Intangible Cultural Heritage	- Municipality of Burgas (Bulgaria) - Sibiu County Tourism Association (Romania) and - Pafos Regional Board of Tourism (Cyprus).
3 Museum is Everywhere	Heritage Interpretation facilities	- Sibiu County Tourism Association (Romania)



ANNEX 1 – Action Plan

Produced by each region, the **action plan** is a document providing details on **how** the lessons learnt from the cooperation will be exploited in order to improve the policy instrument tackled within that region. It specifies the nature of the actions to be implemented, their timeframe, the players involved, the costs (if any) and funding sources (if any). If the same policy instrument is addressed by several partners, only one action plan is required.

Part I – General information

Project: CHRISTA Index Number: PGI00057

Partner organisation: REGION OF CENTRAL MACEDONIA

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant): N/A

Country: GREECE

NUTS2 region: EL52

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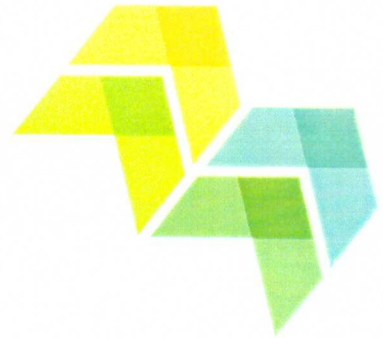
phone number: +30 2310 403074

Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:

- Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
- European Territorial Cooperation programme
- Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed: Regional Operational Programme of Central Macedonia



Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

ACTION 1: Creation of Panoramic View 360o Application KENTRIKI MAKEDONIA - CENTRAL MACEDONIA version, installed on Smartphone phones and tablets

1. The background (please describe the lessons learnt from the project that constitute the basis for the development of the present Action Plan)

The Action constitute a result of the good practices presented in the 3rd and 4th thematic workshop of the CHRISTA project titled "Heritage Interpretation facilities for Cultural Tourism" and "Innovation and Digitization", respectively. In particular, the proposed Action is based on the good practices presented by the Sibiu County Tourism Association (Romania) regarding the interpretation facilities and by the Pafos Regional Board of Tourism on innovative and digital media.

The Sibiu County Tourism Association presented as a good practice the historical-ethnographic Astra Open Museum, which covers a 142-hectares area and includes more than 300 traditional buildings. The museum uses various interpretation means, such as thematic tours focused on architecture, interactive workshops for art and crafts transfer to visitors, events focused on traditional costumes, narratives and interaction with the intangible cultural heritage, educational workshops, lectures, educational activities including short experiential games and workshops. Free printed brochures are provided to each visitor groups such as students and families. It was mentioned that within the presentations that take place in the Museum different ethnological approaches are encouraged regarding the exhibits. An important comparative advantage of the Museum is that it also attracts groups not only for its actual use but also for other social activities.

The Pafos Regional Board of Tourism, within the framework of the 4th thematic workshop, presented the Archaeological Park of Kato Cyprus which could be considered as an open space museum. The aim of the Pafos Regional Board of Tourism is to improve the park with informational technological means for the visitors. Actions to be taken in this direction include: a) development of a video clip presenting the findings of the Archaeological Park and the island's history b) development of mobile application which will provide information about the various archaeological monuments inside the park. The application will also provide the opportunity to the visitors to choose a route depending on their time available and c) presentation of the archaeological exhibits of the archaeological Park through interactive touch screens. In addition, an application will be used to enable Park operators to collect real-time data on visitors. Taking into account this information, forecasts can be made about the needs of tourists and then these results can be used for improving the policy instrument.

Within the framework of the Regional Tourism Promotion Programme of Central Macedonia, the Region proposes the use of innovative and user-friendly ways of navigating and promoting the cultural, historical and tourist stock through digital and illustrative means. The main concept of the Action is that the users can navigate to the Region's attraction places through their digital devices. The Action includes the development of



Panoramic View -360 for smart-phones and tablets. The application will cover all the Regional Units of the Region of Central Macedonia.

2. Action (please list and describe the actions to be implemented)

The Action concerns all the Regional Units of the Region of Central Macedonia, (apart from the city of Thessaloniki for which there is a previous application, the Panoramic View 360th Thessaloniki Edition).

Within the Action, a special Panoramic View -360°- application will be developed for the Region of Central Macedonia. The main concept of the Action is that the user can navigate to the Region's attraction places through their digital devices. For this purpose, at least 150 special photospheric (aerial photographs) as well as ground-level photographs need to be taken and processed for the development of the application. In addition, information for the region will be collected and briefly presented.

This application is an imaginative and yet simple way of highlighting the cultural and historical heritage and tourism attractions of Central Macedonia through a special Panoramic View -360o application for smartphones and tablets.

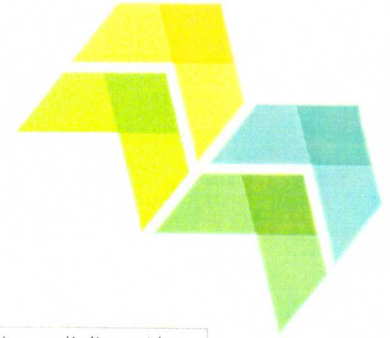
Indicative points of interest for the visitor-user of the application that will be included are: Natural landscapes, Museums (archaeological, folklore etc.), Historical monuments, Cultural sites, Points of tourist interest, Area map, Theaters Cinemas, Transport (KTEL-OSE-Air-Coastal-Urban), Services-Hospitals-Police, etc.

Points of interest will be displayed on each Regional Unit's Map, enabling the potential visitors to explore the points of interest of their choice.

High-resolution ground-level and aerial photographs will be taken in favorable weather conditions.

In particular, the mobile application will include the following categories:

- **View Location:** View the location of the user on the map (if it has gps) and filter out viewpoints by category of display content (where feasible).
- **What to see:** The users should be able to find the Region's attractions on the map, see where they are and how to visit them. In addition, they can be informed about their history with the corresponding texts.
- **Map:** In addition to the points of interest map (which will use internet for uploading graphics), an offline map could be also used.
- **Photos:** The user will be able to navigate in an electronic album with pictures from the Region including a short description.
- **Routes:** With the help of an offline map main routes will be integrated into the application, offering a small tour to the visitor. In the tour text there will be links that will lead the user to the attractions section.
- **Free Wifi Hotspots:** With the help of an offline map, it will be possible for the visitor to be informed for free wireless internet access points.
- **Tourist Info:** This section will include travel information (ships, buses, airports, hotel associations- ren. rooms etc.). In addition, there will be emergency telephones



(hospitals, police stations, pharmacies, MME banks, etc.), enabling direct dialing. Also, there will be general weather information as well as the current weather forecast.

- **Going out - shopping:** This section will provide information about a variety of leisure activities and places (theaters, cinemas, etc.). There will be also information about products and places where they can be bought.
- **What to eat - drink:** In this section there will be information about Macedonian cuisine, food in general and places where one can visit for food.

The above mentioned are the main features suggested for the application. Throughout the development of the application, more features might be added or replaced.

3. **Players involved** (please indicate the organisations in the region who are involved in the development and implementation of the action and explain their role)

Several stakeholders were involved during the project implementation, participating in the Local Stakeholder Groups and providing information through questionnaires for the development of the Action Plan. All these stakeholders will also provide information for the development of Panoramic View -360°- regarding sites, points of interest etc. as described above.

4. Timeframe

The Action will be completed within 7 months.

5. Costs (if relevant)

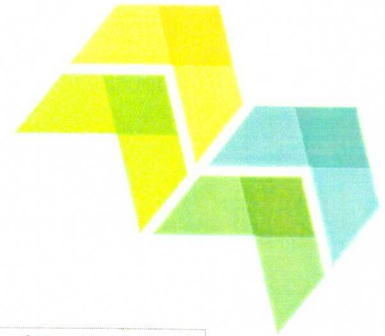
The cost of the application includes:

- a) The creation of Panoramic View -360°- Kentriki Makedonia - Central Macedonia Edition and the free distribution from the respective Google Play apps and Apple AppStore.
- b) Maintenance of the application, as well as future updates for two (2) years, including upgrades of the application, which are estimated to up to 4 updates per year and include enrichment of information / maps / photographs etc. These upgrades can be made anytime during the year and do not include additional innovations or important specialized functions.
- c) All the photographic material to be used for the application (aerial and ground-level) will be also used in future applications and all the photos will be stored to a separate electronic file for the promotion of the tourism product of the Region of Central Macedonia "

The total cost of the Action is estimated at € 30,000.00 including VAT.

6. Funding sources (if relevant):

The Action will be funded by the Tourism Promotion Programme of the Region of Central Macedonia.



ACTION 2: Valorisation and Promotion of the intangible cultural heritage of the Region of Central Macedonia

1. The background (please describe the lessons learnt from the project that constitute the basis for the development of the present Action Plan)

This Action is based on the good practices presented at the CHRISTA 1st Thematic Workshop on Intangible Cultural Heritage by the project partners. During the 1st workshop, all partners presented the most significant actions regarding the intangible heritage. The good practices that are relevant to the Region of Central Macedonia were those of the Municipality of Burgas (Bulgaria), the Sibiu County Tourism Association (Romania) and of the Pafos Regional Board of Tourism (Cyprus).

In particular:

The Municipality of Burgas supports and promotes the local community, which is the most important actor for the continuation and dissemination of intangible cultural heritage. It also supports actions enabling the participation and raising awareness of community in intangible cultural heritage. In addition to the local community, local authorities also play important role in preserving intangible heritage in any way.

The Sibiu County Tourism Association has so far highlighted many assets concerning the Romanian intangible cultural heritage and attempts are made in various ways to become known to the wider public.

The Pafos Regional Board of Tourism promotes the world-famous Mediterranean diet as well as the basket craft, an art that has long history.

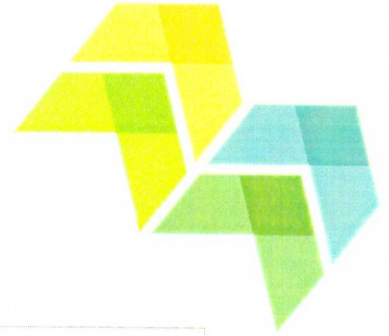
Thus, the Region of Central Macedonia, based on the above mentioned good practices, proposes a series of activities to promote the rich cultural heritage of Central Macedonia.

2. Action (please list and describe the actions to be implemented)

The Action includes pilot actions for the valorization of the intangible cultural heritage and its integration into regional tourism activities. The objective of this Action is to valorise the intangible heritage of Central Macedonia and to use it as means of tourism development and more specifically the development of creative tourism in order the Region to achieve all-year round tourism in Northern Greece, the development of cultural brand and the promotion of community's social cohesion. The Action will also contribute to the promotion of gastronomic tourism, increase of tourist traffic, sustainable development, revitalize traditional arts and professions and gradually improve economic inputs from tourism.

The Action includes the following:

- Recording best practices internationally / Recording the intangible heritage of Central Macedonia / Recording of Organizations that can contribute to the narrative / Creation of aggregators with cognitive / big data systems
- Study including specific proposals for the valorisation (digital and physical) of the cultural reserve and its integration into tourism
- Improvement of existing cultural identity and enhancement of all assets to support the upgraded narrative



- Development of Microsite on the existing website (thematic – creative tourism in northern Greece - immerse in northern Greece)
- Promotional and context enrichment actions
- Planning and digital imaging of cultural routes within the Region, involving cultural stakeholders, civil society actors, tourism and business operators
- Audiovisual productions to promote cultural events
- Pilot implementation in one area

3. Players involved (please indicate the organisations in the region who are involved in the development and implementation of the action and explain their role)

Several stakeholders were involved during the project implementation, participating in the Local Stakeholder Groups and providing information through questionnaires for the development of the Action Plan. All these stakeholders will also provide information for the valorisation and Promotion of the intangible cultural heritage of the Region of Central Macedonia. This information concerns all assets of intangible cultural heritage such as customs, crafts, art, music, dance, traditional outfits, traditional economic activities etc.

4. Timeframe

The Action will be completed within 12 months.

5. Costs (if relevant)

The total cost of the Action is estimated at € 150,000.00 including VAT.

6. Funding sources (if relevant):

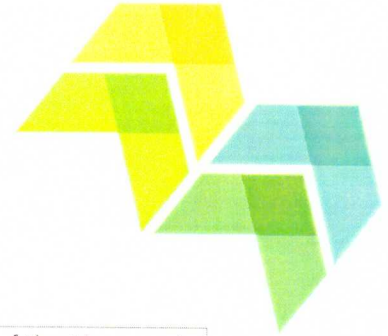
Public Investment Program

ACTION 3: Museum is Everywhere

1. The background (please describe the lessons learnt from the project that constitute the basis for the development of the present Action Plan)

The Action constitute a result of the good practices presented in the 3rd thematic workshop of the CHRISTA project titled "Heritage Interpretation facilities for Cultural Tourism". In particular, the proposed Action is based on the good practice presented by the Sibiu County Tourism Association (Romania) regarding the interpretation facilities.

The Sibiu County Tourism Association presented as a good practice the historical-ethnographic Astra Open Museum, which covers a 142-hectares area and includes more than 300 traditional buildings. The museum uses various interpretation means, such as thematic tours focused on architecture, interactive workshops for art and crafts transfer to visitors, events focused on traditional costumes, narratives and interaction with the intangible cultural heritage, educational workshops, lectures, educational activities including short experiential games and workshops. Free printed brochures are provided to each visitor groups such as students and families. It was mentioned that within the presentations that take place in the Museum different ethnological approaches are



encouraged regarding the exhibits. An important comparative advantage of the Museum is that it also attracts groups not only for its actual use but also for other social activities. With the proposed Action, the Region of Central Macedonia, considers cooperation with the Museums of Thessaloniki based on the above mentioned good practices and proposes the development of a handy application in the form of an intelligent digital tour guide which will directly connect the Museum with both the city of Thessaloniki and the wider area of Central Macedonia. The objective of the action is to improve the tourist experience and increase the tourist flow in the area for the development of cultural tourism and the expansion of the tourist season.

2. Action (please list and describe the actions to be implemented)

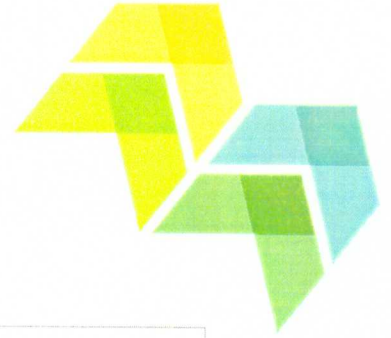
The planned action on the development of an intelligent digital guide, enables the development of an original direct connection between the Region of Central Macedonia and selected Museum/s of Thessaloniki. The Action concerns the development of an interactive application with differentiated content depending on the user's location:

- a) Outside the premises of the selected Museum/s (tour of the city of Thessaloniki or the wider area of Central Macedonia) or
- b) Inside the selected Museum/s

Through the application, the most important exhibits of the selected Museum/s will be digitally located at the point where they were discovered by offering the users - residents and visitors the experience of discovery and knowledge, encouraging them to visit the Museum/s where they are physically exhibited. Accordingly, the visitors of the Museum/s are guided in selected exhibits with short, easy-to-read texts and by creating an interface with the discovery point of the exhibits. People are encouraged to walk around the city and other areas of Central Macedonia. The information that will be received by users inside and outside the selected Museum/s will be audiovisualised and available in at least 12 languages (Greek, English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Serbian, Russian, Turkish, Bulgarian, Hebrew and Chinese), covering the needs of tourists from new 'emerging' tourist markets. The application design also includes an Integrated Content Management System (CMS) with which the content of the program will be updated and enriched.

The application within the museum/s requires the procurement of about 100 ibeacon devices which will identify the application users in order to receive/send information about the exhibits located in each device's coverage area.

The Action also aims to increase the selected Museum/s' extroversion and will link them to the DIAVLOS service of the National Network of Research and Technology (GRNET), which through a live streaming platform allows the live broadcasting of events taking place at the selected Museum/s. Its aim is the real-time presentation of the cultural and scientific events taking place in the selected Museum/s, in order to promote and disseminate the activities of the Museum/s and the Regional Authority to the wider audience. For a good quality of video transmission over the internet, the minimum required data transmission speed is 1GB/sec, which can be secured through optical fiber, which will start from the selected Museum/s and end at a GRNET hub.



The implementation of the action requires:

- The long-term dark fiber rental from the Museum/s to the nearest GRNET hub.
- The provision and installation of equipment for connection, filtering and routing of the GRNET network to the existing network of the selected Museum/s.
- The installation of access points for the provision of fast wifi to the visitors of the selected Museum/s. The access points will be placed in the venues where the events take place, as well as in the open spaces of the selected Museum/s.
- The procurement of 3 IP cameras to ensure the online presentation of events. The cameras will be placed in the venues where the events will take place.
- The procurement of a Network Attached Storage (NAS) of at least 72TB for the storage of the recorded events and their storage in the archives of the selected Museum/s.

3. Players involved (please indicate the organisations in the region who are involved in the development and implementation of the action and explain their role)

The Museums of Thessaloniki were involved during the project implementation by participating in the Local Stakeholder Groups and providing information through questionnaires for the development of the Action Plan. The Museums will play important role in the implementation of the Action, as they need to closely cooperate with the Region of Central Macedonia for the digital guide to be put into use. They will also provide information and material. This information concerns historical documents and data, exhibits, exhibitions, art, crafts etc.

4. Timeframe

The Action will be completed within 24 months.

5. Costs (if relevant)

The total cost of the Action is estimated at € 508,000.00 including VAT.

6. Funding sources (if relevant):

Public Investment Program

Date: 26.06.2018

Signature: _____

Stamp of the organisation (if available): _____

