



INTERREG EUROPE

“Sustainability of the Land-sea System for Ecotourism Strategies”

2ND SEMESTER

REGIONAL POLICY ANALYSIS

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION VARNA

-PROGRESS VERSION-





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Executive summary

The analysis of policy presents the official review of the Bulgarian partner. The purpose of this document is to evaluate and individuate the regional existing policies concerning the issue tackled. The document is developed with the aim to achieve a mutual knowledge of the different states of play in the Bulgarian North East region and to arise a common understanding for the recommendations on the policy instrument targeted. The policy analysis brings to the detailed knowledge of the local state of play and the mutual sharing of key issues, approaches, and concepts.

At the end of this stage, the partners decide the kind of “knowledge exchange” expected for the set of policy instruments based on the wide investigation in progress and procedures. These procedures will be developed in compliance with a practice-collection framework of valuable experiences and practices and will include a focus on the “context peculiarities”.

A wide range of public and private stakeholders - mayors, tourism development experts, ecologists, regional coastal protection experts, users, auditors, regulators, academics, national and regional policy makers will be involved and engaged in the development process. Together with the Bulgarian partner, they will participate at the inter-regional learning process to overcome the consequences of landslides and flood in Varna region.

Overall at the end of the project, the policy analysis and all project documents will represent a summary of the main issues raised from stakeholder submissions during the project lifecycle regarding the issues tackled. In response, the project documents and the analysis itself will bring an added value for the further development of policy recommendations.

Moreover, the creation of institutional competencies and skills for the development of a sustainable coastal system, able to preserve natural habitats and to support the development of regional eco-tourism strategies received during the project activities is one of the assets from the process of interregional learning, based on the exchange of experience and knowledge.

1. Territorial context of Varna region.

Regional administration Varna has a significant experience in policy management working together with all institutions in the region, yet it needs to develop more its institutional competencies concerning coastal and landslide management, spatial planning, tourism and especially in ecotourism development.

The goal is to analyse the local state of the art in order contribute to the capitalization of human activities in the land-sea system in order to support the future activities for ecological, economic and social objectives which will be part of the development in the region. When establishing ecotourism strategies, the Bulgarian partner shall also take into account the coastal negative characteristics such as landslides and flood exposure, but also the land-sea interactions and the environmental, economic and social aspects of the regions with the aim to promote ecotourism strategies.

In accordance with them, at a later stage in the development of future ecotourism activities and projects shall aim to contribute to sustainable development of Bulgarian coast, but also for the entire land sea system. Bulgarian partner shall also ensure that the relevant stakeholders and authorities will be engaged in the development.



Varna is the third largest city in Bulgaria and the largest city and seaside resort on the Bulgarian Black Sea Coast. Varna region is one of the 28 administrative regions in Bulgaria. It is located in North Eastern Bulgaria, NUTS2, corresponding to the general classification of territorial units for statistical purposes. Varna region includes parts of South Dobrudza, the most eastern parts of Fore-Balkan and Stara Planina mountain. It borders with Burgas region on its south side, with Shumen district on the west side, and with Dobrich district on the north side, on its east side is located the Black Sea. The Varna city occupies 238 km² on verdant terraces (Varna monocline of the Moesian platform) descending from the calcareous Franga Plateau (height 356 m) on the north and Avren Plateau on the south, along the horseshoe-shaped Varna Bay of the Black Sea, the elongated Lake Varna, and two artificial waterways connecting the bay and the lake and bridged by the Asparuhov. There are 12 municipalities on Varna district territory – Avren, Aksakovo, Beloslav, Byala, Varna, Vetrino, Valchi dol, Devnya, Dolni Chiflik, Dalgopol, Provadiya, and Suvorovo. It has 3 822,2 m² territory or 3,5% of the whole Bulgarian territorial area. The population density is 123,7 m², higher than the one in the country. The populated areas in Varna region are 159, and the number of towns is 10 and municipalities are 12.

The level of urbanization (share of the population in towns) is 83,5%, which is higher than the average in the country measured at 73,1%. The urbanized territories take 6,8% of the whole area of the region, higher than the average measured for the country – 5,0% and the average percentage for the Northeast region – 5,43%.

The protected areas in the region are barely 1% of its territory which is lower than the average for the country (5%). The arable land per capita is 4,3 decares which are lower than the average for the country – 6,2% decares per person.

The Varna regional coastline includes the territory from Golden Sands resort to the north and to the city of Byala to the south. The Bay of Varna includes the territory from St. George ridge to the north to the Galata ridge to the south. A 391.km of the coastline of Bulgarian Black is situated in Varna region. The total beach area is 6 317 000 m². The Varna beach is sandy beaches (D50 = 0.2-0.5 mm) with sediment accumulation – 173.7 km (44%). The foreshore slopes are with a 0-5 m depth. The coast is constantly exposed to landslides and erosion.

The Bay of Varna has the following characteristics. The bay coastline has a length of 15 km with eastward orientation. The waves from Bulgarian Black sea has directions NE, E & SE and predominantly NE & E which also affect the coast. The segmentation coefficient is also significant about 1.67. The composition of the earth is eroding; includes marl, limestone, clay, and sandstone. The landslides are affecting the coastal line and it is negatively affected by them. The source of beach grade sediment is formed by updrift erosion & riverine input. The foreshore characteristics are with average foreshore ration of 0.02. The sand and rock covered the cliff (up to a depth of 17 m) as well as the silt and mud are beyond with 17 m depth. The terrain is plateau-hilly and in its southern part – mountainous. There are some plateaus in the region – the Franga plateau with height 356 m attitude, Avren plateau 322 m attitude and the eastern parts of Provadiya plateau, as well parts of Kamchia mountain and the valleys of the Kamchia and Provadiyska rivers. Along the valleys of the rivers Kamchia and Provadiyska the terrain is flat. The Black Sea coast from its north side starts with the beaches of the resorts “Golden



Sands” and “St.st. Konstantin and Helena” where the forest slopes of the Frangen plateau terraced down to the sea and reach the beach. To “St. St. Konstantin and Helena” resort the coast is more inland, Varna bay is between Cape Galata and Cape Saint George. The sand strips are along the seaside and they reach the estuary of Kamchia river. South, towards Kamchiya mountain the shore rises again and the forest slopes of East Stara Planina mountain go down right next to the sea.

The shelf is submerged platform which is with various width and slightly inclined to the east. The underwater terrain includes sea terraces at different depths on which different size swells had been formed. Less old swells in the seaside part form relatively wide area of for water usage (from 70m to 200m).

The natural conditions and resources are various. Marls, sandstones, limestones, clays, sands, and varieties of all the –fore mentioned can be found in the region from the Paleolithic and Neolithic ages. A big part of them is used in the cement and chemical manufacturing for building and glass production. Rock-salt is obtained at Solna mine rail station which is close to Provadiya, manganese ore can be extracted in the villages of Ignatievo and Rudnik. There is iodine rich mineral water in the region of Varna and Kamchiya valley. Natural gas is obtained from the shelf close to Cape Galata.

The climate in the region is mild, highly affected by the Black Sea. Especially near the coast, the climate is milder (with the average t° of $13,5^{\circ}\text{C}$ rising from north to south). The breeze circulation “sea - land” influences in radius 10 km along the seaside and acts 90 days a year (during the summer). The good airing of the coastal territories is a prerequisite for cleaner air. The mean winter temperature is 1.9°C , and the mean summer temperature is 22.4°C .

Almost all rivers which flow through the region flow into the Black Sea or through the Beloslav lake. Varna region is rich in subsoil and karst waters coming from Devnya springs. The astonishing variety of the lithological features of the sediments which form the Varna region and its structural characteristics determined the presence of different type of subsoil waters and some horizons. The waters connected to several water horizons have importance for the agriculture. The fresh subsoil waters being durable in the volume are exceptionally important for the region as they can be used for household and agricultural needs.

There is a regular monitoring of the sea water quality according to the requirement of the Bulgarian legislation and the European directive – 76/160/EES. In the aquatory, there are 5 purification stations for wastewaters having a total volume of $2\,052\,117\text{ m}^3$.

The presence of huge, open water area – sea, lakes, manmade also considerable area of forests, local steppe and dune area, provide the suitable condition for a concentration of diverse biological species. There are predominantly Euro-Siberian species but also some species from Pontian fauna. The diversity of fauna in the protected territories is mainly connected to Via pontica – the second biggest European migration way of waterfowl birds, birds of prey and songbirds. There are two wetlands having international conservation status “Korine” – “Varna-Beloslav lake complex” and natural reserve “Kamchiya”. The rock formations of Provadiysko and Royazhko plateaus are not only beautiful landscape but they also shelter for considerable populations of birds of prey having international conservation status.



2. The landslide in Varna region

The responsibility for preventing the impact lies with the representatives of many stakeholders - government bodies, local authorities and local authorities, non-governmental tourist organizations of the tourist business and the local population.

The quality of the regional tourism is affected by the landslide phenomenon. Several serious active landslides have affected the regional development infrastructure. The use of natural resources has become unsustainable and the state of the nature of the basin is deteriorating in terms of the respective territory. The landslides influence on the tourist resources: a load of the natural resource, housing, workload of anthropogenic resources, causing environmental and the negative impact of tourism environment and on the socio-cultural environment.

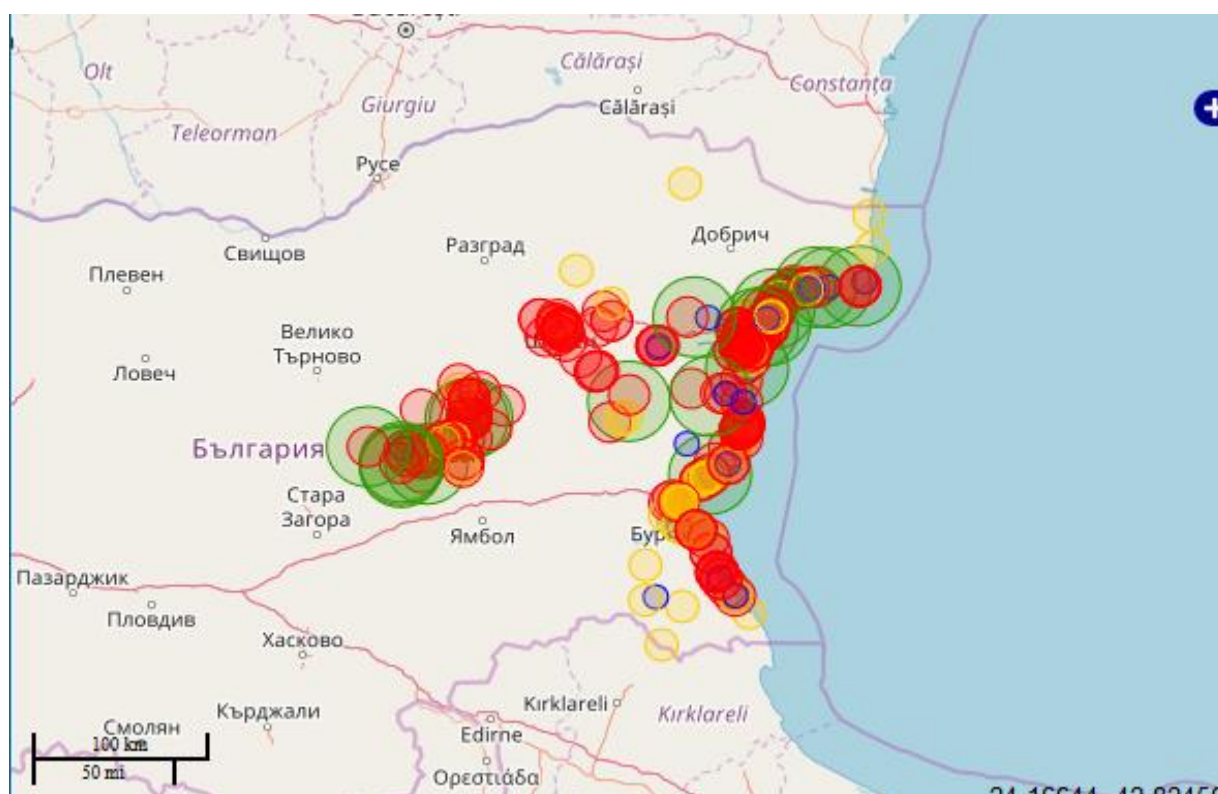


Figure 1. Landslides in Varna region

On the territory of the Varna region, there are registered some of the biggest ancient and modern landslide processes. They cover almost the entire coastal zone: to the north of Varna to Kranevo (Frangen landslide complex, including the Cirque "Long Yar", "Golden Sands", "Aladzha Monastery", Vinnitsa and Varna), in Varna city (Vazrazhdane residential area and Botev residential area), south of Varna (Galata, Fichoza, Sakamata dere, Pasha dere, Rodni Balkans, Kamchia - camping Romantika, Byala), as well as in the town of Provadiya (Provadiyska river), Staro Oryahovo, Novo Oryahovo. The shore is terraced by landslides. The morphology of the Franga Plateau is closely related to the most extensive landslide complex on the Bulgarian coast. Between Galata Cape and the Kamchiya River Valley, the shoreline is hilly-terrace on the slope, which is cut from the gullies and saturated with numerous small landslides.



Modern abrasive and accumulating processes are occurring on the shore - with the accumulation of mobile sea and river beds. One of the main reasons for the activation of landslides is the intensified urbanization along the coastline, consisting of additional loading with static and dynamic loads on the slopes; felling slopes; increasing water infiltration; obstruction of surface and underground runoff; construction of buildings and facilities not in accordance with the engineering-geological and hydro-geological conditions; lack of sewerage network; leakages in the water supply network, poor exploitation and poor maintenance of the drainage, anti-shrinkage, water-suppression and anti-abrasion facilities and others.

The coastal protection scheme used for prevention of landslides is built by 339 built hydro-technical facilities at the seashore: pilot anchored wall, Pilots along the edge of the skier, vertical drainage shafts with horizontal boreholes, anti-erosion reinforced concrete frames and nets anchored with soil nails at the alley's head First - unique solution for draining a multi-layered slope without this would lead to the desertification of the vegetation in the seafood, as was the danger of the original project. The proposed infrastructure is a solution to adapt the dynamics of the effects, yet the problem with the landslides still remain complex and it has an urban pressure which leads to very extensive damages related to not only economic losses but also to the natural losses. The natural losses are irreversible and the most important the tourist value is also damaged. The consequences lead to a bigger problem such as environmental degradation, scarcity of water, loss of biodiversity and negative effects to the climate change. The pressure for the surrounding environment is increasing rapidly. It's a high priority issue to preserve the landscape and surrounding nature. They are strategic objectives with important values and should be preserved for tourism development in the territory and in order to strengthen the tourism sector.

Compared to the previous years, landslides have negative effects on the tourism flows and there is a decrease in arrivals and presences during summer seasons. Landslides produce problems of environmental aspects and frighten the natural habitats and the biodiversity of the region. Landslides problem has also economic aspects - the total number of companies which willing to invest and presence has decreased compared to the previous periods. Varna region is reaching high rates of unemployment and decreasing of the tourist income as well as negative influence on the investment capacity. The progressive damages from the landslide process on the coastline have broken the natural surrounding area and the landscape. Even today, with the great coastal protection infrastructure the original the natural heritage is still in danger.

It is needed to create conditions to reduce the adverse impact on the environment, the cultural heritage and the tourism activity in the identified areas with significant landslide risks in Black Sea coastal region. It addresses all aspects of coastal landslide management, taking into account the characteristics of the particular environmental area by ensuring a high level of conservation.

The coastal protection facilities especially the coast should be performing in very close interaction with ecological planning. There must be a strike balance between the urban environment and the natural environment, not allowing either continuous urbanization of the seashore, or anthropogenic overload, provoking degradation of the environment. The natural possibilities should be preserved and at the same time to support the necessary integration



between coastal landslide management. We need to overcome the lagging behind the functional ecotourism development with technical landslide prevention infrastructure in full compliance with difficult geological conditions.

3.1. The economic context:

The balance of region territory represents agricultural lands, which cover 60.0% of the whole area, 28.1% of forests, 6.8% of urban zones, 2.3% of roads and ports, 1.9% of water areas and 0.9% of mining extraction. From a largely agricultural country with a predominantly rural population, Bulgaria had transformed into an industrial economy with scientific and technological research at the top of its budgetary expenditure priorities. In the services sector, tourism is the most significant contributor to economic growth, generating 10% of GDP in the region.

Varna region has a diverse structure of its economy. Major sectors are port operations, shipping, shipbuilding, ship repair, tourism, chemical industry, machine building, textile industry production, food and drink industry, furniture manufacturing, construction, and agriculture.

The development of the Varna region as part of the Black Sea region and coastal zones of the EU, is subject to special attention and with several key European documents that is of particular importance Directive 2008/56 / EC, placing the foundations of the Integrated Maritime Policy, which aims at uniting the priorities in the field of transport, fisheries and aquaculture, tourism here security safety, risk management, environmental protection, development of the science and innovation.

Varna is situated strategically on the Black Sea Coast. The city of Varna has been a major economic, social and cultural centre for almost three millennia. Varna city is the maritime capital of Bulgaria and also main maritime administrations are headquartered in the region. Commercial shipping sector is one of the developed economic sectors in the region The maritime shipping facilities are being relocated inland into the west coast on Lake Varna and Lake Beloslav lakes and canals, while the bay remains a recreation area; almost all the waterfront is parkland. Due to the highly developed sea tourism and the numerous summer resorts in immediate proximity, Varna is called the Sea Capital of Bulgaria.

3.2. The tourism industry

The tourism industry is a priority sector for the economy of Varna region with wide-range of impact on its economic growth, employment and social development. It's a powerful strategic sector in fighting economic decline and unemployment in the region. Moreover, the strategic direction of the tourism is rapidly changing due to recent refugee and terrorism crisis that Europe has experienced, which led to a stagnation of domestic tourism sector in West Europe and changing consumption patterns. Due to the changes, Eastern Europe and Bulgaria itself has experienced a growth in the tourism sector. Bulgaria has been chosen as a preferred destination by consumers not only because of the natural landmarks but also for security reasons.

Varna region has some of the most attractive natural and anthropogenic tourist resources in Bulgaria the country. The natural conditions and resources in the area create an



environment for development of tourism sector. The sea and coastline offer great opportunities for practicing water sports and bathing. The rocky stretches and sandy beaches are incredible alternate with a variety of thermo-energetic and bioclimatic conditions. The forest massifs and forest parks in suburban areas along the coast and inland are rich. Anthropogenic conditions and resources for the development of recreation and tourism include modern culture and cultural heritage, real cultural values, archaeological sites, architectural monuments, objects of culture, art, religion, folklore, ancient crafts, festivals, exhibitions, contemporary art, gastronomy, wine culture and fishing, etc. The potential of the area in the sphere of natural and anthropogenic tourism resources is characterized by the unique combination of natural resources (beaches, mineral waters) and cultural heritage and traditions. The natural and anthropogenic conditions and resources define good opportunities for the development of a multi-annual polyvalent tourism product - sea, spa, wellness and wellness, cultural, ecological and rural. To the favourable tourist conditions and opportunities of the area should be indicate the good links between landslides prevention.

Recently, Varna is becoming a famous place for tourism. The share of tourists from Slavic countries is rapidly rising each year. All stakeholders are working together to develop a coherent and purposeful tourism sector in Varna region based on a partnership between the public sector, state and municipal institutions, the private sector and non-governmental organizations that generate jobs, creates broad opportunities for entrepreneurship development, long-term economic and social benefits, increases revenue from tourism, leading to an increase in the efficiency and competitiveness of the Varna region. The sector, in fact, represents an important part of the local economy. It stimulates investment in infrastructure, secures revenue in state and municipal budgets, the friendly intercultural environment in Varna city and generally contributes to improving the living conditions of the local population. At the same time, tourism has adverse cultural, environmental and social impacts. It is necessary to consider it as a priority for development.

The significant potential for the development of maritime tourism is due to temperate climate, wide beach stripes, fine sand. To this can be added also the natural landmarks in the surrounding natural area reveals new opportunities for strengthening health. These precious natural resources are a prerequisite for sustainable tourism.

In the recent years, there was also an infrastructural renovation of the Black Sea alley made by Municipality of Varna financed by European funds. Moreover, new modern hotels and hotel chains have bases in Varna's beach resorts. The development of alternatives of the tourism industry in the region is one of the key positions that the region has. With a tendency to offer balneological and SPA programs, further, extend the services and the demand, Varna regional developed the also the cultural and religious tourism. The inclusion of mineral water in combination with other physical factors (physiotherapy, physiotherapy, reflexology with massages, some non-traditional methods, etc.) can not only supplement sea treatment but in some cases have some advantages. The mineral springs in the region provide an excellent opportunity for tourism as they combine the favourable weather conditions and balneology along the seaside and extension of the tourist season.



The cultural or religious sites of interest, as well as rural tourism, are also developed. In addition, the new emphasis is put on health tourism. To this can be added also the abundance of fruits and vegetables - direct production, which reveals new opportunities for strengthening health. The numerous valuable landmarks – part of the natural and cultural heritage along the seaside and in the region, as well as the historical, cultural and entertaining places in Varna town also provide a unique opportunity.

The rich network of protected natural territories has a significant potential for the development of ecotourism and other forms of alternative tourism. For the flora protection, there has been created a natural park “Golden sands” and the reserves – “Kamchiya”, “Varbov dol”, “Kriv dol”, “Kalfata”, “Kazashko” and “Valchi proud” located in Eastern Stara Planina mountain.

Figure 1. Landmarks in Varna region divided according to their location in different municipalities

Municipality	Landmarks
Avren	- Natural reserve “Kamchiya”; - Subsidiary of astronomic observatory; - Ethnographic house museum village of Avren; - Remains of cave monastery; - and more;
Aksakovo	- the phenomenon “Pobiti kamani”;
Beloslav	- Gorna and Dolna Kapladzha caves; - Waterfall “Orlov kamak” in Armira river;
Byala	- Antique and late antique fortress located on Cape “St. Atanas”;
Varna	- Aladzha monastery “St. Trinity”; - Museum of Nature and Science; - Planetarium, aquarium, dolphinarium; - Sea garden with an alley dedicated to Bulgarian national heroes and historic-archeological places;
Dolni chiflik	- Reserve “Longoza”; - Remains from Roman fortress near the village of Grozdevo;
Devnya	- Magical spring (one of the thirty karst springs in the municipality); - Architectural and archeological reserve “Marcianopolis”; - Museum of Mosaics;
Dalgopol	- Natural reserves “Kalfata” and “Varbov dol”; - Waterfall “Kuza-skoka”; - Natural landmark “Chudnite skali”;
Provadiya	- The gorge of Provadiyska river; - Medieval fortress “Ovech”; - Mineral spa bath (one of its kind in the country salt bath); - and others;
Suvorovo	- City historical museum and the third biggest mosque located in North Bulgaria;



The most important step for the achievement of sustainable development of tourism at local, regional, national and international level is to provide a tourist practice that satisfies the interests and enhances the welfare of the local population while preserving the natural and social-cultural resources of the local environment for future generations.

The municipalities in Varna and Regional administration Varna, in their role as major territorial administrative structures, must play a decisive leadership role in the process of developing and implementing sustainable tourism development programs. At the same time, unless it is planned and managed responsibly, tourism may be affected by adverse unfavorable environmental and social impacts on the surrounding nature.

4. Regional policies

With reference to the analysis of the Region and in consideration of the ongoing landslide conditions of the territory has reduced the effectiveness of Varna as a tourist destination and damaged the existing natural area. Nevertheless, the Bulgarian coast has a rich coastal morphological structure and a favoring diversity of the territory. Preserving the coastal line and its landscape as a cultural heritage is a future tourist asset for regional development.

The process largely depends on the administrative capacity of the engaged stakeholders as well as with the used opportunities and sources for the tourism planning and development process in the region. The strategic planning at the regional level requires serious financial resources on the part of administrations. The effective planning of financial assets and the natural potentials of the region are one of the key factors.

The national legislation and policies for the tourist development and the preservation of the coastal areas are addressing the social –economic development, but yet not the preservation of the land-sea eco-system and its sustainable fruition as a factor for socio-economic development. Another important aspect is the interventions foreseen, and therefore measures that should take into account should be linked with possible landslide prevention instruments together with the existing instruments for tourism development and the sources of financing.

To support the tourism development, it is therefore mainly from the financial resources from the Operational program “Regions in Growth”. National Program “Regions in Growth” ERDF 2014-2020, Priority Axis 06 “Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency.”

Among the strategic activities of the Operational program is to preserve, conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage of national and international relevance through the development of holistic and integrated approaches. The priority axis 06 create conditions for protection and promotion of cultural and natural heritage and increasing competitiveness of Bulgarian tourism, boosting economic activity on local and regional levels and new business initiatives. Within PA 6 the support for the implementation of integrated tourism products based on the cultural heritage of national and world importance. The program measures promote the surrounding natural heritage and developed cultural sites, thus should also complying measures for prevention of the risk of landslides and floods. What is more, OPRG 2014-2020 supports infrastructural measures for the conservation, promotion, and



development of cultural heritage of national and world significance and will support small-scale tourism infrastructure which in our territory could be in relation with landslide prevention.

Important measures under Operational Program are also result-oriented towards the realization of the main strategic objectives laid down in the Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in Bulgaria with Horizon 2030, which will result in adequate realization of the unused potential of the cultural tourism and in its sustainable development, taking into account the advantages of the diversity, uniqueness and authenticity of the resources in order to achieve balance between the development of the cultural tourism and the conservation of the resources.

In particular, the OP Regions in growth 2014-2020 resources will be used consistently with the objectives identified in the unexplored potential of the eco-tourism, the environment and protection of natural richness and natural heritage and yet not in line with related to cultural and natural heritage, arising from natural disaster situations such as landslides.

The impact sought is in the direction of preserving the environment in order to achieve economic and social development and cohesion in landslide prevention in the region. By taking measures for risk prevention and security protecting of the coastal systems, enhancing the quality of ecosystem management and ecosystem resources in the Black Sea will lead to the development of the ecotourism, the creation and promoting common ecotourism products in the Black Sea region;

As a part of the strategic plan, Regional strategy for development 2014-2020 is the main regional policy document which has specifically related tourism priorities and measures. The strategy has the aim of involving the municipalities in the region, the local institutions and all stakeholders in the process of regional development and to define appropriate measures that could achieve the strategic goals. Priority 1.3. is one of the priorities related to the tourism development and place a strong emphasis on improving the quality of the tourism. Priority 1.3 Diversification of tourism supply and the inclusion of natural and cultural wealth throughout the area:

- Specific objective 1.3.1. Activating the development of tourism in the whole territory of the area.;
- Specific purpose 1.3.2 Create a specific regional tourist production the basis of cultural and natural wealth.;

The Priority 1.3. is essential for enriching the tourist product in the area that is still unilaterally oriented to pure maritime tourism in some part of Varna region. The natural and cultural heritage in Varna region is very rich and this is one of the strongest comparative advantages at all of the Bulgarian regions in Bulgaria. The environment and the natural biodiversity in Varna and the region give opportunities for more active integration with tourism sector. This priority is binding with priority axis 4 of the OP Regions in Growth 2014 - 2020 "Regional Tourism". The regional strategy goal for diversification of the tourist product with specific types of tourism and with active inclusion of the hinterland tourism resources will help to overcome the seasonality of recreational sea tourism. The specific objectives in this priority 1.3 are aimed at implementing measures and actions for real diversification of tourist activities. The distant hinterland diversification of the tourist supply will be based on the rich cultural



heritage and development of the cognitive tourism, supported by other recreational tourist activities in the territory of offshore municipalities.

On the basis of the regional strategy and its priorities, the 12 municipalities in Varna region has developed the municipality regional development strategies and adopted measures for diversification of the tourism sector.

The annual program for development of tourism in the Municipality of Varna is in line with the Regional Strategy for Regional Development in Varna region for 2014-2020, with the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism in the Republic of Bulgaria 2014-2030, with the European Union's policy in the field of tourism by 2020, as well as local tourist resources and needs. The program of the municipality for the development of tourism has been prepared on the basis of the Law on Tourism, by systematizing the objectives, measures, and projects, whose realization will lead to the establishment of sustainable development and management schemes for tourism activities of the Municipality of Varna. In the Tourism Development Program, realistic goals are set which can be realized with the identified available and potential financial, physical and human resources. The main objectives of the Annual Tourism Development Program are to increase the attractiveness of Varna Municipality and its establishment as a tourist destination in Bulgaria, the European Union countries and other major foreign markets, increasing the attractiveness of the municipality's total tourist product through infrastructure development, servicing tourism, enrichment of the cultural life in the municipality and construction and maintenance of tourist sites. The program is with the main aim to involve public administration, essential tourist association and professional private sectors and business sector from Varna region in the joint work on its implementation of the programme that will improve the joint action of the municipality and the active business in forming a common policy and actions for development of the sector in the context of the National Tourism Development Strategy for improving the infrastructure serving tourism, preserving, improving security and expanding tourist product and advertising Varna as tourist destination.

The strengths of the regional and municipality strategies lead to initiatives and projects, which can be financed by national operational programs, Horizon 2020 programs, Interreg program that contribute to the regional development according to the strategic guidelines and priorities outlined in the regional planning document. In particular, the municipalities can use the financial resources from national and European funds if the initiatives are identified in the regional strategy and in line with the strategic goals of the regional territory. Therefore, to achieve this goal one of the key priorities it is also essential to work closely with the policy makers and governmental structures:

Ministry of tourism has a main priority to create the necessary conditions for stable tourism growth in the Republic of Bulgaria and to carry out the country's tourism policy in a lawful and advisable way. The institution strives for the country's tourism development based on the foundations of sustainable production, increased productivity and competitiveness, that is based on advanced technologies, innovation, and modern industrial policies. The institution develops both traditional sectors and sectors with potential for future global growth in order to create sustainable industrial clusters. The development of tourist destinations is directly related



to the environment, cultural identity, social interaction, security and welfare of local communities. The institution strives to create a less bureaucratic, investment-friendly environment, with simple and transparent procedures for tourism business and effective management for the benefit of entrepreneurs. The ambition of the Ministry of Tourism is to make Bulgaria an all-year-long destination whose development is based on the principles of sustainability - optimal use of resources, respect for the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, ensuring reliable economic activity and an even distribution of socio-economic benefits. Ministry of tourism works for positioning Bulgaria as a tourist destination with clearly identifiable national identity, authentic culture, and nature, occupying a leading place among the tourist destinations in Central and Eastern Europe. The strategic goal is to strengthen the competitiveness and efficiency of the tourism sector in Bulgaria through the optimal use of available natural and anthropogenic resources, in line with market requirements and consumer expectations for sustainable tourism development.

The National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism in the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2014-2030 aims at defining the direction of development of the Bulgarian tourism in accordance with the changes in the environment and the attitudes and characteristics of the tourists and to provide a reliable basis for sustainable destination development. The strategic framework sets out objectives and actions, the realization of which is based on the possibilities for financing overcoming the regional landslides and erosion issues under operational programs.

The strategic framework reflects the Strategic Tourism Roadmap developed under the initiative of the Ministry of Tourism, which aims. Creating and managing an attractive and highly competitive tourist destination requires a well-planned institutional environment that supports and allows for development. From this point of view, the quality of strategic planning and strategic tourism documents are key factors for improving the competitiveness of the destination. s to outline the Ministry's strategic priorities.

Based on a public procurement the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism in the Republic of Bulgaria has been updated and has been developed an Action Plan to it. A public discussion took place between 28 April and 28 May 2017. The documents were examined at a meeting of the National Tourism Council, held on July 22, 2017. A coordination procedure under Art. 32, para. 4 of APPSA and their adoption by the Council of Ministers. Forthcoming coordination procedure under Art. 32, para. 4 of ORMCA (Organic rules of the Ministerial Council and its Administration) and their adoption by the Council of Ministers.

The National Tourist Council (NTC) is a governmental consultative body under the authority of the Minister of Tourism. It aims to assist in the implementation of the national tourism policy. The members of the National Tourist Council follows to approve the national funding support for tourism marketing including the annual program for national tourist advertisement, to coordinate the implementation of the national tourist advertisement, to make analysis s of the implemented promotional activities and appraisalment of the efficacy of tourist seasons, to make recommendations on designed concepts and programmes for tourism development, as well as proposing measures for improving the control in tourism sector with respect to raising the overall quality of the whole range of tourist services in Bulgaria.



Moreover, giving an opinion on draft regulations with regard to the provision of tourist activities in order to discuss the issues related to tourism development such as infrastructure, foreign investments in tourism, fulfillment of charter programs, consumer protection.

However, a sustainable approach requires broad and committed participation in decision-making and practical implementation by all those involved in the final outcome and following the right legislation acts such as:

The Tourism Act regulates the social relations associated with the implementation of governance and control in tourism, the interaction of the State and municipalities in the implementation of activities related to tourism, as well as the participation of not-for-profit legal entities and natural persons in the said activities.

The Ordinance № ПД-02-20-1 of 19th June 2014 on the conditions and procedure for entering and maintaining a register of landslide areas on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria, the areas with abrasive and erosion processes along the Black Sea and the Danube coast and their monitoring. This Ordinance regulates the functioning, submission, introduction, and receipt of information from a register of landslides on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria, of the areas with abrasive and erosion processes along the Black Sea and Danube coast and for monitoring them. The registrar is an information system with periodic an up-to-date electronic database providing information on the landslide areas on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria and on the areas with abrasive processes in the Black Sea and erosion processes on the Danube coast. The information from the register is used by the central and or territorial authorities of the executive branch, institutions and citizens in connection with the formation of a policy in the field of geo-protection activity, spatial planning, and investment design, issuance of preliminary permits under Art. 96, para. 3 and 4 of the State Territory Act the prevention, limitation and/or liquidation of damages from unfavorable geodynamic processes and others, as well as planning of the disaster protection at municipal, regional and national level.

The activities for the registration and monitoring of the landslide areas on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria, incl. the abrasive and erosion processes on the Black Sea and Danube coasts, as preventive measures for prevention of accidents and damages are carried out by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works through state-owned geo-protection companies. The terms and procedure for entering and maintaining the register under para. 2, as well as for carrying out the activities under para. 3 shall be determined by an ordinance of the Minister of Regional Development and Public Works. The coordination between the different agencies for limiting landslides on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria, incl. the abrasive and erosion processes along the Black Sea coasts and the prevention of accidents and damages are carried out by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works through the State property act, the Ordinance № 12 of 3.07.2001 for the design of geo-protection constructions, buildings, and facilities in landslides



The Environmental Protection Act regulates the social relations with regard to protection of the environment for the present and future generations and protection of Human health, conservation of biological diversity in conformity with the natural biogeographic characteristics of Bulgaria, the conservation and use of environmental media, the control and management of factors damaging the environment, the exercise of control over the state of the environment and over the sources of pollution, the prevention and limitation of pollution, the economic organization of environmental protection activities, the rights and the obligations of the State, the municipalities, the juristic and natural persons in respect of environmental protection.

The Law on Protection of Biodiversity regulates the relations between the state, the municipalities, the legal and physical persons for the conservation and sustainable use of the biodiversity in the Republic of Bulgaria. Biodiversity is the diversity of all living organisms in all forms of their natural habitat, the ecosystems and the processes that take place in them. Biodiversity is an integral part of national wealth and its preservation is a priority and an obligation for state and municipal authorities and citizens.

The Protected Areas Act aims at preserving of the protected territories as national and universal human wealth and property and as a special form of protection of the local nature, contributing to the development of culture and science and to the wellbeing of society.

Strong linkages between legislation regarding landslide prevention, tourism, and environmental management are important. Because of importance have links regarding not only the extensive use of the landscape but also the development of tourism sector has the potential to affect and be affected by. With respect to the environment, many linkages exist legislation and policy. The Bulgarian policy aims to enhance the multifaceted nature and to strengthen the linkages between tourism and other sectors of the economy and the environment. This is particularly significant in the region where tourism relies on environmental resources and there is a critical link between landslide prevention and tourism management.

5. Key issues for Varna region.

The regional natural diversity in the Varna and its territorial context with different characteristics, opportunities, and needs requires going beyond the already regional developed policies. It calls an alternative approach that that meet the Region's specific needs. Its natural diversity is an asset to develop the tourism sector while benefitting from the alternatives tourism forms. The character of region lays the foundation for sustainable and inclusive growth. The most important of these is the achievement of sustainable development of tourism at local, regional, national and international level.

Tourism has been focusing on assisting the industry at a regional level to respond to and rise the aforementioned challenges. In this highly competitive environment, it is imperative that the tourism sector is tailored to meet the needs of customers but also the natural surrounding area. With the consideration, under the current circumstances, the Region should provide a tourist practice that satisfies the interests and enhances the well-being of the local population. It is important that regions where tourism relies on environmental resources to preserve the natural heritage. A crucial step is strengthening the link between tourism and the landslide prevention management and planning. An integrated approach to examining physical, socio-economic and institutional aspects of tourism is one method of achieving strategic planning for



sustainable tourism. In order to ensure sustainability with growth in the region the tourism strategies or the action addresses the following issues:

- Optimizing the landslide prevention at local levels;
- Enhancing and contributing to cultural heritage preservation of natural sites at the local level;
- Developing a diversity of actions, tourism products/attractions to minimize exposure to major landslide threats to tourism activity.

However, because of the multi-faced reasons that lead to the landslide in the region and affect the potential of the region there is the need for planning of policies to become more closely integrated into overall policy and planning framework in the region. In this process, cross-institutional collaboration is important to ensure a more coherent, integrated and comprehensive approach. Reliable policy instruments must be established for the region. Good landslide prevention and tourism planning and policy management require a framework of effective coastal management.

With regards to the effectiveness of the environment, the **operational program “Regions in Growth”** represents a platform for coordinated joint actions of all the interested parties in the municipality. The development of the actions is based on the basic principles of tourism development at the long-term economic efficiency with long-term environmental tolerance and social compatibility. It is necessary to ensure a high level of landslide prevention actions. Environmental sustainability must be compatible with ecological balance, biodiversity and biological resources in the region. The territory development must be economically efficient and should contribute to raising the standard of living of all people and maintaining it with the culture and natural values affected by it. The guiding principles of the tourism planning should be tailored to landslide prevention management and consistent with the basic values of nature as well as with the specifics of the development of tourism in the respective territory. As a part of an integrated coastal zone management, the tourism strategies is an important element. The tourism activities should and the land use form should be zone according to the general landslide conditions. Hotel infrastructure and tourism developments, for example, relegated to areas separate from natural protected zones and landslide areas. Another important aspect is the allocation of the public touristic path and public access to beaches.

The natural attractions are the main drawing factors, Varna's strong and distinctive history has nevertheless left the cultural legacy that still remains also the relatively important role in the region. In this regard, cultural heritage tourism is an important vehicle for conserving and enhancing the cultural assets of the region. Developing the tourism on an environmentally sustainable basis limited from the landslides in the region and the capacity of the environment and encouraging environmental conservation is the further step which will result in the adequate development of social and physical infrastructure.

The importance of ecotourism should not be underestimated. The ecotourism offers a value of local and natural communities, generates economic activity, jobs and export revenues.

It is critical to coordinate and support the process of development of the sector and landslide prevention with a particular focus on improving regional tourism structures, improving the supply and quality of tourism experiences, increasing consumer demand for



regional ecotourism sector and improving the nature areas in order to deliver positive outcomes for local communities and to improving our tourism product. It is recommended to improve the attractiveness of the ecotourism destinations of our regions.

Regional authorities can offer financing incentives to attract tourism investment and submit project proposals to EU funding programmes in landslides restoration and recreation tourist attractions and landmarks.

Regards to the improvement of the policy instrument and its measures will lead to strict supervision and control of the institutions in order to guarantee the preservation of the heritage. As a result of the policy instrument improvement, integrated eco-touristic products could be financed, based on smart and sustainable infrastructural solutions with a clear vision for improvement of the environment and in the same time not threatening the natural and cultural heritage.

The improvement of the policy in the could be achieved through improved governance and new projects supported, by:

- Linking preservation and promotion of cultural and natural heritage projects with plans and methodologies for protection of the coastal zones;
- Risk assessment through mapping and developing of monitoring tools, related to cultural and natural heritage;
- Measures for early warning and prevention;
- Creation of green jobs in tourism.

It is essential to involve a wide range of stakeholders including local communities in the development of all aspects of the sector, from the initial stages of developing the strategy through planning and delivery initiatives. All stakeholders need to address and strengthen the role of the tourism sector as vehicles of economic development. By strengthening the relationship between and regional governments and the private sector other sectors of the economy would be assured.