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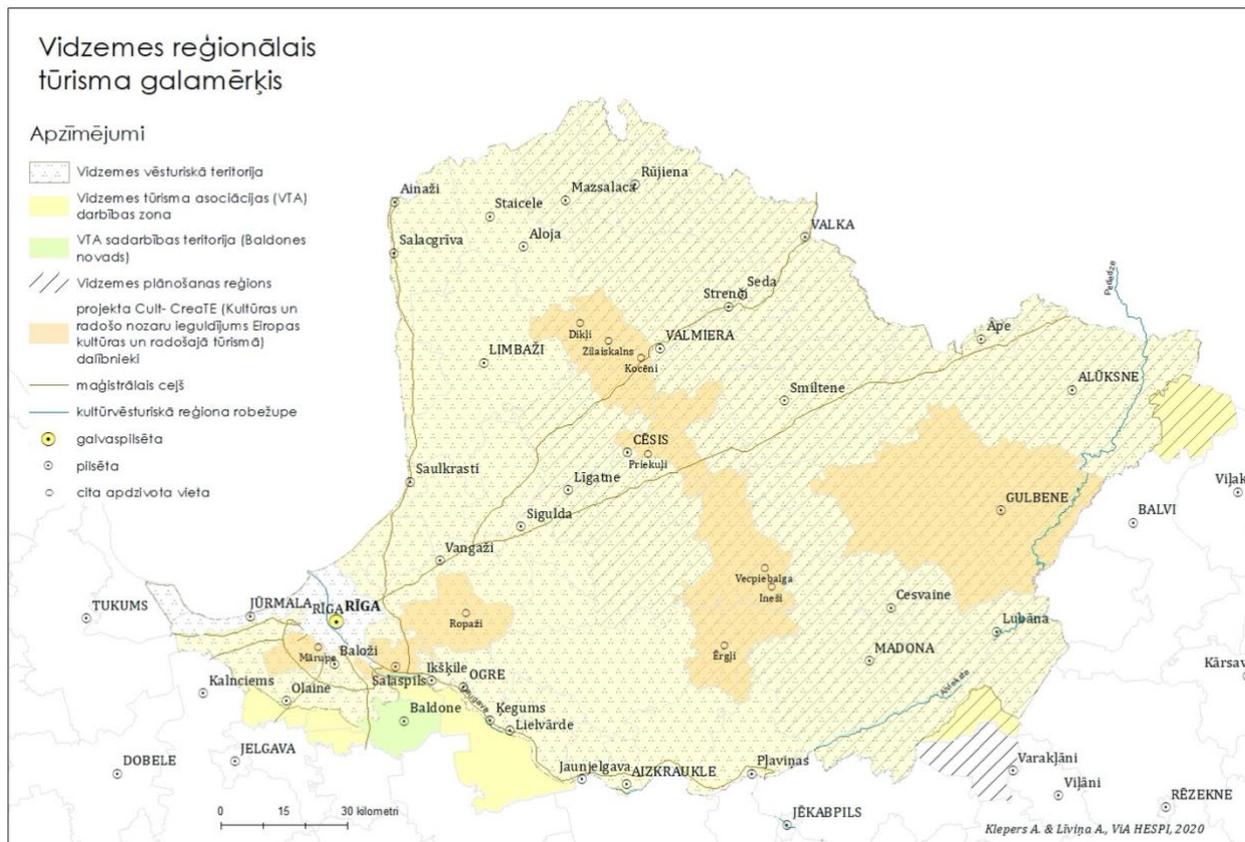
European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

***Action Plan** for Vidzeme Tourism Association*



VIDZEME TOURISM
ASSOCIATION

May 2021



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May 2021



Interreg Europe Programme

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To achieve this goal, Interreg Europe offers opportunities for regional and local public authorities across Europe to share ideas and experience on public policy in practice, therefore improving strategies for their citizens and communities.

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Cult-CreaTE Project

The potential of Cultural & Creative Industries (CCIs) in developing new Cultural & Creative Tourism (CCT) products and services for Growth & Jobs, is being advanced by the Cult-CreaTE project with policy change in 8 regions.

Common challenges are:

- The contribution of CCIs to CCT has not been given the attention it deserves to date. Cultural tourism needs CCIs to partially reinvent itself and attract the new generations. CCIs are also an indispensable source of innovation for other types of sustainable tourism, typically 'Creative Tourism'.
- Creative Tourism is considered a new generation of cultural tourism by involving the tourists themselves and the locals in the creation of the tourist products (co-creation).
- CCIs are in a strategic position to promote smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in all EU regions and cities, and thus contribute fully to the Europe 2020 Strategy and beyond, through their deployment for CCT.
- While some EU regions have been very good at tapping into this extraordinary potential as a way to promote socio-economic development, it however, appears that many others have not been making most of this potential.
- Synergies between sustainable tourism and CCIs can enhance the visibility and promotion of CCT. These synergies can contribute to the promotion of sustainable tourism destinations, an attraction of new investment and creation of new employment opportunities, particularly for youth and in lagging regions.

The overall objective is to redeploy CCIs for the development and promotion of CCT strategies, with sustainability, innovations, capitalisation, policy learning, policy implementation and capacity building.

Main outputs are action plans, with implementation and monitoring of improved policy instruments in 8 destination regions, communication and dissemination tools for policy learning and capacity building, contribution to EU policies and EU2020 targets. The beneficiaries are public authorities and their stakeholders.

Cult-CreaTE Project Partnership



Cult-CreaTE
Interreg Europe

Cultural and Creative Industries contribution to Cultural and Creative Tourism in Europe



Lead Partner



REGIONE DEL VENETO



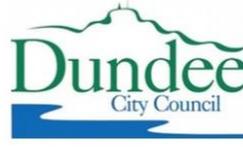
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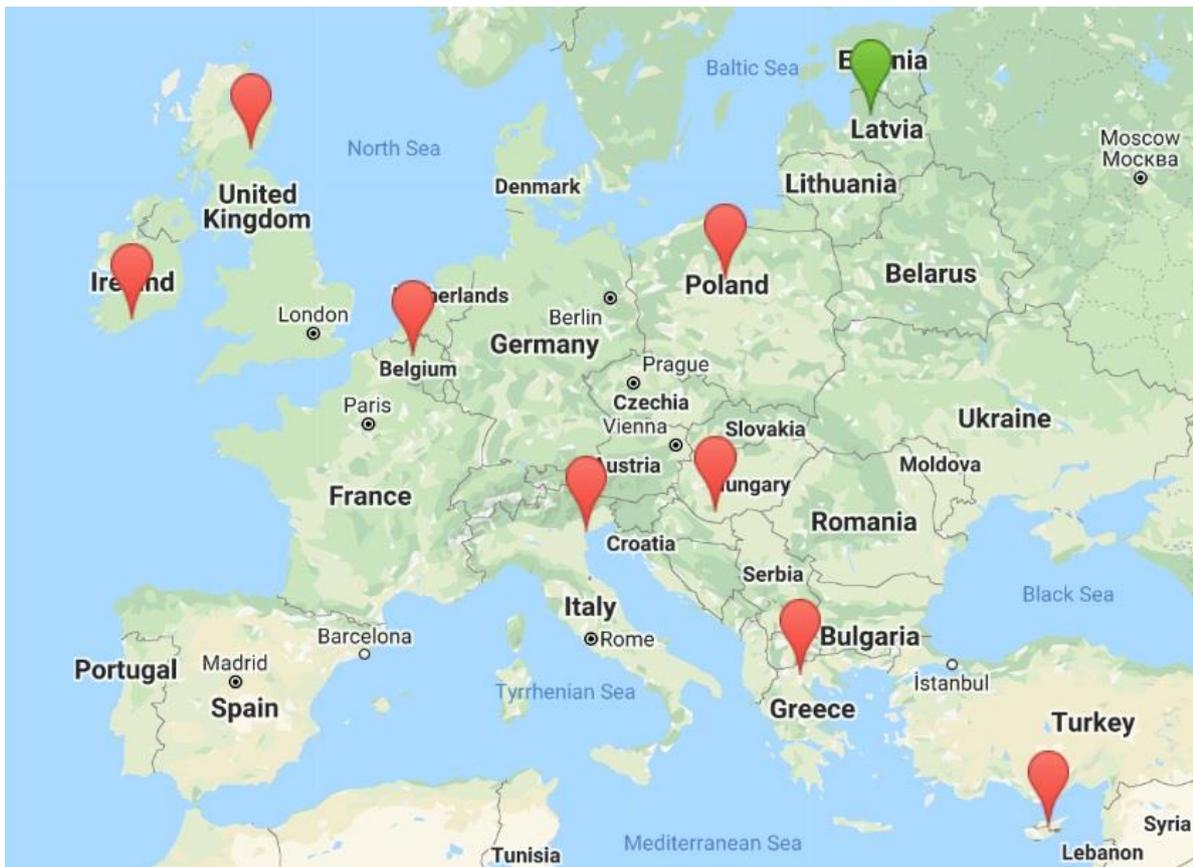


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Cult-CreaTE deploys Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) for the development and promotion of Cultural and Creative Tourism (CCT) strategies

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VIDZEME
TOURISM
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Action Plan

Foreword



Foreword by Raitis Sijāts, Chairman of the Board, Vidzeme Tourism Association

Vidzeme Tourism Association has in recent years experienced the growing cross-sector development trends between tourism and creative industries, and the positive effect of these synergies on both cultural and creative tourism (CCT), and culture and creative industries (CCI). As well as the positive impact, as seen in statistics, of these synergies on the predominantly small businesses of the sector in the Vidzeme Region, their economic and social effects.

Vidzeme – and Latvia – is rich in cultural heritage, and specifically rich in cultural traditions still kept and the people keeping them. Traditional handicrafts, music and dance traditions, development of new arts & handicrafts products, high level of arts' education and general understanding of culture – these are alive and vibrant. The Project Cult-CreaTE gives us the opportunity to learn from the good examples of the CCI and CCT development from our European partners' experiences, and to use some of these experiences here in Vidzeme with an added value, especially focusing on growth of SMEs within the sector.

The Strategy on integration of CCIs for advancement of CCT developed within the Cul-CreaTE Project will create grounds for developing a new model and structure of VTA work by adding culture and creative industries to its scope of work, and building CCI/CCT synergies for further development of the sector and its SMEs.

We are very thankful to our stakeholders and all the CCI & CCT contributors who helped us to develop the Project, the Strategy and all our future plans.

I wish the greatest success and fulfillment of plans.

Raitis Sijāts

Chairman of the Board

Vidzeme Tourism Association, Lead Partner



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Executive Summary



The Vidzeme Tourism Association Action Plan (AP)

Action Titles

Action 1 Title: SME Business Development and Visibility: CCI's Forge Creative Tourism Via Co-Creation Days (New Project)

Action 2 Title: Development of CCI & CCT Network to Facilitate SME Growth, Competitiveness, Development of New Skills and Knowledge (Improved Governance)

Action 3 Title: Improving Policy Instrument – Upgrading VTA Tourism Strategy for CCT and CCI Synergies (Structural Change)

Monitoring Procedures in Phase 2

Monitoring Procedures are designed for each Action to be measured separately, with Action 1 and Action 2 contributing to Action 3 – the Policy Instrument. Concrete monitoring process indicators are given below in “Monitoring Procedures”.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Vidzeme Tourism Association (VTA) Strategy 2020 - 2025 upgrade is part of the EU-funded collaboration project's *Cult-CreaTE* actions and outcomes. The new Strategy upgrade is based on development of the VTA Tourism Strategy (2018), identification of needs and contribution from the Project stakeholders in Latvia, and learnings and good practices from the *Cult-CreaTE* Project partners in Europe.

The Project stakeholders have been involved throughout the project at all stages. At the beginning, questionnaire was sent to Latvian partners and answered - on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, good experiences, suggestions regarding synergies between CCIs and creative tourism, and necessary policy instruments. Lessons were learnt from the European Project stakeholders. To complete the process, a questionnaire was sent via tourism information centres to creative industry and creative tourism companies and to other involved stakeholders on the necessary actions to increase synergy between creative industry and creative tourism offers.

In parallel with the process of evaluation and work with the local stakeholders and partners, assessment of the existing best practices of the *Cult-CreaTE* project's European partners took place for best practice learning and takeover. Particularly, there was inspiration from partners in Nicosia (Greece), Algarve (Portugal), Dundee (UK) and Cork (Ireland), and Pécs-Baranya (Hungary).

We adjusted these practices to our ideas, local needs and scale – with many micro enterprises and SMEs scattered in sometimes scarcely populated areas or small towns. We took the holistic approach of the partners when creating our AP – including a very practical approach of establishing CCI & CCT events, creating a place for trade and business development (analogue and digital), building up the network and professional meeting places.

Within the Strategy development a study and survey were carried out to measure CCI and CCT activity in Vidzeme. An (obvious) conclusion was that – also in parallel to the Partners' experiences – the best results for economic, business, and social growth are in places where various types of players are involved: policy instruments in place, entrepreneurs, municipal institutions and support, local heritage institutions, business incubators, possibilities for training & education.



Vision and Goals

Vision

To develop Vidzeme into a vibrant creative tourism destination by linking together culture and creative industries entrepreneurs and creative tourism businesses. To develop competitive SME environment with CCIs and CCTs as a front-runner region in Latvia, based on lessons learnt from the Cult-CreaTE project. To implement practically the notions of slow, sustainable and creative tourism.

Goals

- To upgrade our Policy Instrument – VTA Tourism Strategy – to set the framework for future with CCI development as the basis for CCT growth in the region.
- To develop working CCI network as an addition to the existing CCT network, by widening it; to bring businesses together by networking and training instruments; to facilitate CCI and CCT SMEs growth by forging their cooperation and professionalism.
- To establish a programme of hands-on events for exposure of local CCI products and creativity (Co-creation Days), for practical networking and professional growth, for co-creation and development of local & regional creative tourism on the basis of the CCI offer.

Action Titles / Headings

The VTA has envisaged three Actions within its AP, as listed below.

Action 3 (Improving Policy Instrument – Upgrading VTA Tourism Strategy for CCT and CCI Synergies) is the overarching Action, as it sets a new path for VTA's work, adding and embracing CCIs to its ongoing work with tourism, and cultural and creative tourism in particular, and adding a focus on SME development. Actions 1 (SME Business Development and Visibility: CCIs Forge Creative Tourism Via Co-Creation Days) and Action 2 (Development of CCI & CCT Network to Facilitate SME Growth, Competitiveness, Development of New Skills and Knowledge) add real and practical contents to Action 1 by Network development and SME Business development in CCIs and CCT.

Action 1 Title: SME Business Development and Visibility: CCIs Forge Creative Tourism Via Co-Creation Days (New Project).

Action 2 Title: Development of CCI & CCT Network to Facilitate SME Growth, Competitiveness, Development of New Skills and Knowledge (Improved Governance).

Action 3 Title: Improving Policy Instrument – Upgrading VTA Tourism Strategy for CCT and CCI Synergies

Monitoring process

The overall indicator stipulated in the approved Project Application for Vidzeme Tourism association is 12% growth of the number of visitors.

Indicators for the three proposed actions are:

Action 1: SME Business Development and Visibility: CCI's Forge Creative Tourism Via Co-Creation Days. Two events (Co-Creation Days) are created, co-financing raised for 2 events from 2 sources, 4 new services/products developed and created;

Action 2: Development of CCI & CCT Network to Facilitate SME Growth, Competitiveness, Development of New Skills and Knowledge (Improved Governance). Established network with at least 50 members, at least 8 network activities carried out.

Action 3: Improving Policy Instrument – Upgrading VTA Tourism Strategy for CCT and CCI Synergies. VTA strategy supplemented with an additional chapter on Creative industries and Creative Tourism.

In parallel to the Strategy document itself there are VTA activities working towards influencing other policy documents in Latvia and with international partners, measured by recommendations delivered, instruments created, and meetings held.

Actions 1 and 2 are monitored by VTA, by stakeholder reports, by reports and surveys of the network members; by additional reports from LIAA Business and Creative Industries' Incubators and Tourism Information Centres.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The VTA has chosen, after careful consideration, the below mentioned sources of inspiration for its Action Plan – three Actions (in Table below). The overall conclusion is to use the good practices of the Cult-CreaTE partners and model them for the situation and circumstances in Vidzeme and VTA. From the examples of partners' work, a holistic approach has been taken: to build partnerships with the CCI and CCT sectors, municipal and state institutions, heritage institutions, etc; to use the resources in place to build up more resources, new projects, new collaborations. The profile of VTA conditions a three-step approach to new developments: usage of own resources and these of the partners; raising support from collaboration partners, such as LIAA, municipalities, stakeholders; building new projects and raising additional funding locally and regionally. The VTA recommendation for development is to build on the Cult-CreaTE project experiences and outputs for further development also beyond the Project.



Action Title	Type	Source/ Good Practice transfer	Partner	CCIs involved	CCT Product
1. SME Business Development and Visibility: CCIs Forge Creative Tourism Via Co-Creation Days	New Project	New ways of tourism product development - CCT based on CCIs for SME competitiveness. Creative Dundee Cork Craft month	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Pécs-Baranya, Hungary Dundee, UK. Cork, Ireland	Wide spectrum of Arts & Crafts	At least 4 new crafts, creative tourism and gastronomy products & services
2. Development of CCI & CCT Network to Facilitate SME Growth, Competitiveness, Development of New Skills and Knowledge	Improved Governance	Creative Tourism development by CCI SMEs - LouléCriativo	Commission for Regional Development and Coordination of Algarve, Portugal	All CCIs invited with relation and potential to CCT	Coordinated CCI and CCT network built
3. Improving Policy Instrument – Upgrading Vidzeme Tourism Development Strategy for CCT and CCI Synergies.	Structural Change	Business model of the Nicosia Tourism Board for CCT development based on CCIs and SME competitiveness	Nicosia Tourism Board, Cyprus ECTN, Belgium	Wide spectrum of arts & crafts, creativity SMEs in relation to CCT and with potential to CCT	Upgraded Strategy document and detailed planning

Action Plan (main part)

Interreg Europe action plan template

Produced by each region, the **action plan** is a document providing details on **how** the lessons learnt from the cooperation will be implemented in order to improve the policy instrument tackled within that region. The minimum information to be provided per action includes the way the action is linked to the project, the nature of the activities to be implemented, their timeframe, the stakeholders involved, the costs and funding sources. If the same policy instrument is addressed by several partners, only one action plan is required. The action plan should also include actions that may have already been initiated in phase 1.

The action plan should also include actions that may have already been initiated in phase 1.

Part I – General information

Project: Cult-Crea-TE

Partner organisation: Vidzeme Tourism Association

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant):

Country: Latvia

NUTS2 region: Latvia

Contact person: Raitis Sijāts

email address: raitis.sijats@gmail.com

phone number: + 371 29175314



Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact: programme programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Investment for Growth and Jobs <input type="checkbox"/> European Territorial Cooperation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other regional development policy instrument
Name of the policy instrument addressed: Tourism Development Strategy of Vidzeme Region 2018-2025	

The Strategy content will be enhanced and updated with an additional section referring specifically to measures for contribution of CCIs to CCT product & service development, as well as the ways to incorporate and deliver the envisaged outcomes. The Action Plan elaborated will enable achieving the priorities defined in the Strategy.

Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

ACTION 1 (New Projects)

Title: SME Business Development and Visibility: CCIs Forge Creative Tourism Via Co-Creation Days

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

The recent trends of sustainable tourism and the pandemic crisis have created a new trend of Near-Tourism and Slow Tourism in Europe and also in Latvia. When the traditional travel for famous foreign destinations has become almost impossible, people explore their local travel destinations. This quite often shows a situation of comparatively limited services and products for the consumption of these travellers, as well as presents a chance and possibility for development of new and fresh offers within culture and creative industries to facilitate cultural and creative tourism. Co-creation Days provide learning, better understanding of culture, history, heritage and arts in general, as well as serves as a tool of social empowerment and strengthens local businesses. In the co-creation process also the involved enterprises and organisations learn new solutions based on collaboration and innovation. In addition, travellers, especially family travellers, are looking for new hands-on experiences, new knowledge and excitement. This can be provided by co-creation of their own pieces of art or crafts at local workshops, studios or events.

The inspiration for the Co-Creation Days lies with several elements of good practices by Cult-CReaTE partners, among them Creative Dundee (<https://creativedundee.com/about/>) and Festival del Viaggiatore di Asolo (<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/3740/festival-del-viaggiatore-di-asolo-traveller-festival-in-asolo/>). However, taking into account the present challenges in tourism created by the pandemic, the most focused inspiration is the Good Practice set forth by Interreg Europe Policy Brief “New ways of tourism product development during pandemic - CCT based on CCIs for SME competitiveness – Cultural and Creative Tourism revitalisation under Covid-19 by the cooperation of Municipality of Pécs and Chamber of Commerce and Industry” (Hungary): (<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/4627/new-ways-of-tourism-product-development-during-pandemic-cct-based-on-ccis-for-sme-competitiveness/>). The goal of the (#PécsisOpen) campaign was to mobilize SMEs active in local tourism to support SME competitiveness, to develop package deals and safe programmes for visitors. The collaboration between the Municipality and the local Chamber of Commerce and Industry resulted in more than 90 SMEs, including CCI, involved in the action.

When creating the Action, we were also inspired by the holistic approach of LouléCriativo <http://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/4876/creative-tourism-development-by-ccis-smes-loulecriativo/>, taking on its approach to extend CCT activities in the low season, using the extensive heritage of crafts skills, bringing together CCT and CCI SMEs with local communities and visitors. LouléCriativo provided a focused vision of the need to involve several development pillars.



2. Actions

The Action to be implemented within the Project is **SME Business Development and Visibility: CCI Forge Creative Tourism Via Co-Creation Days**. The main reasons for developing the concept of the Action are the following:

- Prolongation and extension of the tourism season and creation of new CCI and CCT experiences in the region for travellers.
- Creation of new cultural & creative tourism products based on tangible and intangible cultural heritage as well as on contemporary design, and better collaboration between the involved parties.
- Diversification of the offer of cultural & creative tourism products and promotion of regional travel, regional creativity gems – both new and heritage.
- Facilitation of the local CCI & CCT businesses, empowerment of local actors and raising local SME Competitiveness.
- Development of active co-creation with local communities, visitors, tourists and thus creating wider interest and understanding of heritage and arts.
- Usage of new digital tools to develop local SMEs, to forge their collaborations, to raise the promotion level of local SMEs.

The Action supports realisation of the VTA Policy Instrument – improvement of the Strategy, and is part of its practical implementation. By this Action the Policy Initiative (PI) practically involves local stakeholders and local municipalities, presenting a project as “playground” for CCT development by forging CCI development and participation. This will entail Project PI (VTA Strategy), local PIs such as municipal strategies, national PIs such as Latvian Investment and Development Agency (LIAA) support instruments, including LIAA Business Incubators in Vidzeme Region.

The Co-creation Days will be carried out in collaboration with Latvian Cult-CreaTE stakeholders. The initial places for the Action are: Vecpiebalga Manor with its creative heart of Porcelain Factory; The Daugava River Museum; Manor of Kocēni; Gulbene History and Art Museum with its established tradition of bringing CCI and CCT actors together, including SMEs, as well as international players.

The principle of co-creation – the visitors being creative and benefiting from the knowledge & skills of the local creatives, creating their own pieces of arts or crafts – will tie in with promotion of local tourism and CCI & CCT collaboration, growth, and competitiveness. Due to large “crowding” of events in the high season, the Co-creation Days are planned in Shoulder Season, before or after the high season summer to generate additional visitors/tourism flow, generate new patterns of visitors' habits, facilitate local SMEs to be open, creative and collaborative beyond the traditional season. As in Pécs example of Good Practice, “the aim of these events is not only to boost the tourist traffic, but also to create new values and traditions”. The beyond-season will add new drive to SME development and competitiveness, as many of the CCI SMEs currently earn only during the high season. The activities will also provide incentives to collaborate, and by this closer collaboration will stimulate SMEs and their



income and competitiveness. New digital will help to re-orientate businesses (SMEs) towards new sales channels, to digital communication and promotion.

The planned time of the Co-creation Days is the months of May and September.

The Action **SME Business Development and Visibility: CCI's Forge Creative Tourism Via Co-Creation Days** consists of two main sub- actions:

- Opening of the creative industries and creative tourism businesses (SMEs) for visitors during Co-Creation Days in the region. During the Co-Creation Days, visitors are invited to create their own piece of art or craft-work or to co-create an event by active engagement; the local CCIs promote their products on social media platforms to be available not only at the events, but online too.
- Co-Creation Days is a meeting and sharing place for the creative industries and creative tourism businesses - SMEs. Additional tailored activities are designed according to the needs of the local collaboration partner. Activities will be devised in collaboration with LIAA and their local Business Incubator branches, as well as in collaboration with the Incubator for Creative Industries: for example, creating and using new digital tools for communication, promotion and sales in order to develop local SMEs.

The activities involve: pooling of resources, fundraising and coordination; planning of events and activities, logistics planning; this requires raising competencies, implementation of event, post-assessment of the event, feedback to involved SMEs and other participants.

CCIs involved include: arts, design, audio-visual activities, photography and crafts (pottery, porcelain, weaving, wood, metal, glass, casting of wax candles, etc), local museums, music/dance, gastronomy, creative events & camps. The strengthened CCI involvement will in turn enforce CCT growth.

Results to be measured and evaluated within Action 1: Co-creation Events – places of events, workshops; partners involved - at least 2 events created; co-financing raised – at least 2 events, 2 co-financing sources; SMEs and other players involved; products and/or services further developed and created: at least 4 new products and/or services. Visitors to the events; co-participants of the creative events and creative tourists (12% growth); post-event surveys and suggestions by visitors. Digital tools and digital visibility: sources in social media, internet, local printed media. Culture and creative tourism development based on CCIs – SME profile and project development.

3. Players involved

Vidzeme Tourism Association – initiator of action and coordination.

CCI & CCT stakeholders, SMEs – main involved parties.

Local municipalities and TIC – supporting role by promoting the Co-creation Days; co-financing of local activities.



Latvian Investment and Development Agency, LIAA Business and Creative Incubators - supportive role by promoting and marketing the Co-creation Days; development of contents for workshops; co-financing.

4. Timeframe

Spring 2021 – Autumn 2022

Activity	March 2021 - August 2021	September 2021 - December 2021	January 2022 - June 2022	July 2022 - November 2022
1. Preparation activities of the Co-Creation Days				
2. Implementation of Co-Creation Days	Progress depends on epidemiologic restriction in the region and the country. Partial substitute of physical Co-Creation Days can be digital Co-Creation Days.			
3. Post-event assessment/ feedback of the Co-Creation Days				

Costs (if relevant)
4500,- EUR

Funding sources (if relevant):
Own resources; Co-financing from involved municipalities; LIAA – workshops and training events.

ACTION 2 (Improved governance)

Title: Development of CCI & CCT Network to Facilitate SME Competitiveness, Growth, Development of New Skills and Knowledge

1. The background

The Action has been developed based on the findings of the Cult-CreaTE Project: stakeholder meetings, questionnaires, in-depth interviews, surveys and statistical analysis. A survey carried out within the Project, with over 50% of respondents CCI & CCT representing SMEs, shows the need for network development and targeted growth, employing various instruments. Traditionally the stakeholders of VTA have been tourism-related partners. The CCI and CCT sectors have, with a few exceptions, been operating quite separately. Current developments locally and internationally – EU and Baltic Sea Region development priorities, world-wide initiatives such as UN Sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the International year of creative economy for sustainable development – all set a framework and define the need for bringing CCIs and CCT together, for CCT development based on CCIs. Our Action supports specifically SDG 8: "Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all "in relation to SME development within CCT and CCIs, and a local and regional approach.

As a change in VTA structure, the network development with CCIs had been proposed as an instrument for integration of CCI & CCT entrepreneurs and building up SME business capacities.

The Action has been inspired particularly by the Project partner Creative Dundee (<https://creativedundee.com/about/>) and its success to “encourage an environment that inspires new collaborations to emerge; to lead collaborative projects which generate local, national and international opportunities and – to support strong creative ecology”. This creative ecology involves strong CCI contribution to CCTs. The Creative Dundee good practice Creative Concierge has been of inspiration, but in the case of VTA transformed according to the size and resources of the VTA partner municipalities – where the concierge function would be attributed more to the municipal, institutional and SME partners. There the network development of the CCIs would be of utmost importance for them to become an agent for CCT competitiveness via CCI involvement.

Business model for SMEs will be built by facilitating mutual collaboration within network via common events, tailored training events, maintaining a database and coordination by VTA, information campaigns; Co-Creation Days events.

When creating the Action, LouléCriativo (Portugal) case had been taken as a good example for development of multi-sector networks, including CT and CCI SMEs, handicraft masters, local tourism representatives, municipalities and other stakeholders:

<http://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/4876/creative-tourism-development-by-ccis-smes-loulecriativo/>

By bringing SMEs together, the overall competitiveness of SMEs in the particular region will be facilitated, as they will work with more collaboration and produce more outputs. An example of a concrete case of business model: in organising a painting “plein-air” workshop, local creative tourism, artists, hospitality, catering, transport SMEs are involved. The painting workshops plan to additionally involve local ceramics, museums, porcelain workshops to be visited, with co-creation possibilities. Thus, a new chain of collaboration based on business is built and SME growth, competitiveness and business skills are fostered.

2. Actions

The Action will be carried out to improve governance by VTA and regional development in Vidzeme by creating instruments and a feasible model for facilitating SME and other stakeholder collaboration within cultural and creative tourism and creative industries; for sharing and learning; for development of new sustainable CCT products and services, based on CCIs. As the basis, a CCI and CCT network working together for creative tourism based on culture and creativity will be developed on the basis of the existing VTA network and the work carried out to date.

The Action supports the VTA Policy Instrument and is one of the basic elements to fulfil and improve the PI.

The Action includes:

- Network and functioning data, communication and marketing system improved, elements created where necessary.
- Co-learnings & Good practices from Cult-CreaTE partners and stakeholders, multiplication of the best good practices and learnings.
- Scaling business development models for CCIs & CCTs; creating feasible learning models and using them for training, professional growth and network building.



- Facilitating new product and service development within CCI & CCT.
- Facilitating SME competitiveness by forging establishment of new business-based collaboration patterns, new products and outputs, also beyond the regular tourism season.

VTA will undertake the creation of the new Vidzeme network of CCIs related to cultural tourism businesses, based on the existing VTA network and involving new members.

Following activities will be carried out by the network:

- Taking part in Vidzeme Co-Creation Days;
- Taking part in regular VTA meetings and networking in real life and online;
- Taking part and contributing to tailored SME development workshops and trainings in real life and online;
- Sharing good practices – conducting workshops, maintaining a database.

Results to be measured and evaluated within Action 2:

CCI SMEs and other CCI & CCT players involved in the network – at least 50;

Network activities developed – themes, number, relevance in business development – at least 8; Network feed-back to VTA, network participation on regular basis; new services and products arising from the network collaboration – at least 8; new SMEs and SME activity developed; new digital tools and communication – at least 2. Culture and creative tourism development based on CCIs measured by VTA activities/ events/ surveys.

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)

Vidzeme Tourism Association – provides a Network coordinator

CCI and CCT stakeholders, SMEs – potential members of the network who will benefit from implemented activities under this Action

LIAA and Business Incubators – knowledge support via training, workshops

Cult-CreaTE stakeholders – good practices support, part of network.

4. Timeframe

January 2021 – May 2022



Activity	March 2021 - June 2021	July 2021 - August 2021	September 2021 - December 2021	January 2022 - May 2022
1. Formation of the network				
2. Collaboration with key involved parties				
3. Use of existing and new digital tools and communication				
4. Network activities and development of new projects				

5. **Costs** (if relevant)

Network coordinator 9600,- EUR

Network events 4200,- EUR

6. **Funding sources** (if relevant):

Own resources – VTA;

Financial support for training from LIAA, Business Incubators;

Co-financing from local partner municipalities;

Programmes like LEADER, COSME;

Latvian State Cultural Capital Foundation.

ACTION 3. (Structural change)

Title: Improving Policy Instrument – Upgrading Vidzeme Tourism Development Strategy for CCT and CCI Synergies

The background

In the present situation when innovation, economic and social growth are increasingly dependent on successful cross-sector collaboration, there is a recognised need to upgrade VTA Tourism Strategy 2020–2025 with a section referring specifically to measures for contribution of CCIs to CCT product development, and ways to incorporate CCIs and deliver new valuable results. Culture and creativity are significant attraction point for domestic and foreign tourists, CCI businesses constitute a growth sector and contributor to economic and social development. Synergies between CCIs and CCT also stimulate the development of innovative, competitive and alternative tourism services and products.



Adding of the CCI facet as a development impetus for the CCT will have the following effects in terms of SME development:

- Increase of competitiveness, professionalism and business skills; visibility of local arts & crafts businesses; fostering the continuity of crafts trades and skills; new product and service development (Action 1);
- Training, exchange of good practices, network building, database building (Action 2);
- Impact by VTA PI on other policy instruments and initiatives up- and down-stream: VTA Strategy contributing to Vidzeme municipal CCI/CT strategies; VTA Strategy contributing to Vidzeme Planning Region strategies; to LIAA and Ministry of Culture initiatives; to NDPC and other wider regional initiatives (Action 3).

Action 3 is based on the transfer of established good practice from **Business model of the Nicosia Tourism Board for CCT development based on CCIs and SME competitiveness** (Cyprus). The mission of the Nicosia Tourism Board is the tourism development of the Nicosia district and the improvement of the competitiveness of SMEs CCIs through CCT development. This best practice shows the significance of a common network for planning activities. Another example of best practice that shows the crucial role of policy planning documents is the **European Cultural Tourism Network AISBL** (Région de Bruxelles-Capitale / Brussels Hoofdstedelijk Gewest), a partner of the Cult-CreaTE project. This best practice shows that it is crucial to update and develop strategy with latest trends in integration of CCI and CCT based on evidence in research findings and academic articles. ECTN notes that it is important to “enable knowledge transfer from the academe to the tourism industry regarding past good practices and experience in applying CCIs to CCT SMEs, the potential of incorporating CCI practices to the provision of local tourism products.” This best practice also emphasizes the necessity of cooperation between academics and industry:

[\(https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/4647/research-results-of-cct-based-on-ccis-for-transfer-into-policy-making/\)](https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/4647/research-results-of-cct-based-on-ccis-for-transfer-into-policy-making/)

2. Actions

Upgrading the Tourism Development Strategy (for CCT and CCI Synergies) is the VTA policy instrument for ensuring development of structural change within CCI & CCT sector collaboration in Vidzeme and Latvia, and the development of overall synergy and business growth of CCI and CCT SMEs. The Strategy will create the basis for developing a new model and structure of VTA work by adding culture and creative industries to its scope of work, and building CCI & CCT synergies for further development of the sector SMEs.

Actions 1 and 2 are part of the practical fulfilment of the Policy Instrument. It is relevant to stress that Actions grow out directly from the Cult-CreaTE project experience/ knowledge/ good practices' contributions, as well as bottom-up initiatives within the SME development of the VTA scope of work and geographic area. Action 3 will ensure CCI contribution to the development of cultural tourism, local SME development by closer integration and synergy.

The Strategy development is based on the following inputs:

1. Contributions, feedback and communication between VTA and its stakeholders: SMEs, municipalities' representatives, culture places, national and international partners.



2. Stakeholder meetings, webinars, workshops.
3. Cult-CreaTE partner contributions and learnings from the Project.
4. Best practices of the Cult-CreaTE partners and other EU projects.
5. Mapping and statistics.
6. New project development with stakeholders; new model/ services/ product development for CCI & CCT SMEs.

Structural changes will be ensured by establishing the scope for VTA development within the next five years embracing CCIs; creating new models of synergy, learning and good practices for CCIs and CCT; facilitating the creation of new business models and new services and products; as well as setting a collaboration framework with national and international partners.

In terms of PI links to funding, VTA is an NGO funded by its members' fees and funding from various collaboration projects. Therefore, activities can be implemented on a spectrum from minimum to maximum, depending on the success in project fundraising. Within Cult-CreaTE Project the basic scope of planned Actions is covered; with additional funding coming in from other sources and partners, the scope of activities can be expanded. The Strategy itself is not an instrument for funding, it is the basis for development scope and potential, extending the mandate of VTA towards CCIs and SME development.

Results to be measured and evaluated within Action 3:

New VTA and network initiatives and new projects developed; best practices from Cult-CreaTE project implemented within Vidzeme; stakeholder mapping and surveys implemented; new CCI & CCT products and services developed. Meetings with policy development institutions in Latvia and wider region; policy initiatives developed for stakeholders – Ministry of Culture, LIAA, NDPC, etc. Concrete projects, based on Strategy, initiated and carried out. These measures are overlapping in all three Actions.

3. **Players involved**

VTA partners on local level – municipal partners who develop their new strategies – will take further the ideas inscribed in the improved VTA Strategy and implement them in their PI; national level stakeholders such as Ministry of Culture, LIAA, Vidzeme Planning Region, will be involved in further developing the ideas and policy instruments on regional and national level. VTA has a close cooperation with international stakeholders, such as NDPC and Priority Area Culture of EUSBSR, therefore new initiatives will be suggested and promoted.

SMEs: consultancy on their needs and support for CCI & CCT development.

Research and academic institutions: consultancy.

The CCI & CCT Strategy will focus on empowering CCIs for CCT development, on facilitating cross-sector collaboration, CCI and CCT SME growth via collaboration and learning, and societal participation through co-creation.

Timeframe



Upgrading VTA Strategy for CCT and CCI Synergies January 2021- April 2021.

Activity	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021
1. Analysis of current situations and trends in sector				
2. Identification of main priorities, goals, actions				
3. Identification of outcomes, measurement				
4. Approvement by VTA Council				

4. **Costs** (if relevant)
Own resources approximately 6400,- EUR

5. **Funding sources** (if relevant):
Own resources.

Monitoring Procedures in Phase 2

The overall indicator stipulated in the approved Application for Vidzeme Tourism association is 12% growth of number of visitors.

This will be monitored by VTA reports and surveys of their stakeholders and members of VTA network. Yearly statistical information will be analysed as well.

Indicators for three proposed actions are:

Action 1: SME Business Development and Visibility: CCI's Forge Creative Tourism Via Co-Creation Days. 2 events (Co-Creation Days) are created, co-financing raised for 2 events from 2 sources, developed and created new 4 services/products.

Action 2: Development of CCI & CCT Network to Facilitate SME Growth, Competitiveness, Development of New Skills and Knowledge (Improved Governance). Established network with at least 50 members, at least 8 network activities carried out.

Action 3: Upgrading Vidzeme Tourism Development Strategy on CCI contribution to CCT development: Incorporating CCIs. VTA strategy supplemented with an additional chapter on Creative industries and creative tourism.

In parallel to the Strategy document itself there are VTA activities working towards making an impact on other policy documents in Latvia and with international partners, measured by recommendations delivered, instruments created, meetings held.

Actions 1 and 2 are monitored by VTA based on stakeholder reports, reports and surveys of the network members; by additional reports & communication from LIAA Business and Creative Industries' Incubators and Tourism Information Centres. Yearly statistics information is available for analysis.

Date: 05.05.2021

Name of the organisation(s) :

Vidzeme Tourism Association

Signatures of the relevant organisation(s):

Mr. Raitis Sijāts, Chairman of the Board



BACK COVER

CCI and CCT SMEs
Creativity
Growth
Co-creation
Involvement
Sharing Heritage & Arts & Crafts



www.interregeurope.eu/cult-create

Cult-CreaTE
project
deploys Cultural
and Creative
Industries (CCIs)
for the
development
and promotion of
Cultural and
Creative Tourism
(CCT) strategies

