

D4.2.2 Smart Action Plan preparation

For the preservation, valorization and management
of the gastronomic heritage of Ravni kotari
(Zadar County)

CONTENT

1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. TAKE IT SLOW	1
1.2. METHODOLOGY	3
2. SCOPE OF THE RAVNI KOTARI AREA	6
2.1. UNDERSTANDING THE ATTRACTION BASIS OF RAVNI KOTARI.....	9
2.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE POLICY INSTRUMENTS	10
2.3. DEFININFG KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES – SWOT ANALYSIS	14
3. GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND CORRESPONDING MEASURES OF THE ACTION PLAN.....	16
4. ACTION PLAN TABLES.....	18
5. CONCLUSION	22
6. LIST OF PROJECTS.....	23

1. INTRODUCTION

Today's tourism represents one of the main generators of the economy, whose accelerated growth stimulates the economy through its multiplicative effects. But today's tourism also causes a number of problems in the areas where it takes place. Therefore, it is extremely important to manage tourism development in destinations with high quality, to have clear guidelines for where the destination wants to go and the ways in which it will achieve this. In order to create a high-quality action plan, a "bottom-up" approach was used and the local community was involved in all stages of development, encouraging their awareness of the real and potential impacts that tourism has on the space and culture in which it takes place. Through a series of research conducted on different stakeholders, but also on the area itself, its tourist potential, the basis for the adoption of this plan was created. At the same time, stakeholders' awareness of the importance of developing slow, smart tourism through innovation and sustainable destination management was raised. The biggest contribution to this action plan was achieved through participatory meetings with Ravni kotari stakeholders, especially selected LCPs, who provided us with valuable information and directed us in the desired direction in order to valorise the valuable cultural and natural heritage of Ravni kotari in quality and acceptable way.

1.1. TAKE IT SLOW

This action plan represents one of the deliverables that was achieved within the framework of the TAKE IT SLOW project. The goal of this project is to establish, manage and promote the Adriatic region (Italy and Croatia) as a smart, integrated, sustainable, accessible, year-round, green and slow tourist destination in the Mediterranean. The starting point for achieving this goal is found in the wealth of tangible and intangible heritage, natural and cultural heritage both on the coast and in the hinterland, which needs to be valorised and made available to both tourists and the local population. At the same time, it is extremely important to respect the principles of sustainability

and protection of heritage from negative influences that threaten it with the development of tourism, primarily through the use of innovation, smart specialization and smart solutions in the development of tourism.

In order to achieve this goal, 11 partners under the leadership of Dubrovnik-Neretva County were included in the project. TAKE IT SLOW has as its goal the development of a partnership platform based on the cooperation of the scientific, private and public sectors, a strategic framework, methodology and monitoring system, marketing and promotion of the tourist destination.

Through the project, a process of workshops on ecological certification was carried out and certificates were awarded to stakeholders from the area of Ravni kotari, as well as networking of stakeholders through a series of events and workshops. Also, the level of awareness of the wider community about the importance and potential of the hinterland as a space that, with its attractive power, helps the coastal destinations in the vicinity to relieve the burden from the pressure of mass tourism, was raised. Special attention was paid to education about smart specialization in tourism and the possibilities of implementing digital solutions in the development of tourist products (optimizing visits, creating virtual and augmented reality, etc.). Since the gastronomy of Ravni kotari (as an intangible heritage) was selected as a topic of interest within the selected area, data gathered from previously realized projects were collected and a cycle of workshops was organized, through which the chefs of the best restaurants in the area were educated about the richness of the gastronomic offer of Ravni kotari and the possibilities of reinterpreting it through modern attractive dishes. In this way, a synergistic effect of the results of previous projects implemented in this area (CUHaCHA) and the outcome of the TAKE IT SLOW project was achieved. The final goal of the project is to design and test a gastro-cultural route in the pilot area of Ravni kotari.

1.2. METHODOLOGY

The “bottom-up” approach chosen required the involvement of a broad base of stakeholders. This action plan was created on the basis of scientific research conducted by the University of Zadar (within and outside the TAKE IT SLOW project), a series of workshops with local stakeholders, assessment of natural and cultural heritage as a basis for the development of smart, slow and green products. A broad multidisciplinary approach represents a basis for the development of this action plan, in order for it to encompass a wider range of activities and to gain the support of the community in the adoption and implementation of strategic policies, measures and related activities since they, directly and indirectly, feel the effects arising from it.

The development of the action plan, in accordance with the Manual for the Development of Action Plans (UNIZD), consisted of the following steps:

Analysis of previous scientific and professional research that has as its subject the cultural and natural heritage of Ravni kotari, the development of tourism and similar related activities

An overview of previous activities and results from other projects related to Ravni kotari and Zadar County

Evaluation of the state of natural and cultural heritage in the project area, assessed by key stakeholders and target group as part of the project deliverable 4.1.4

Contributions from local and regional stakeholders obtained through LCP workshops, focus groups and hybrid meetings

Analysis of policy documents to determine identified problems, needs, goals and measures related to sustainable and innovative tourism based on cultural and natural heritage

The creation of the document is based on the results of project activities, examples of good practice and the new financing framework for the period 2021-2027, and proposed policy instruments (D4.1.6) that contribute to strengthening the tourism value chain

Checking the planned activities and values with relevant stakeholders and aligning the Action Plan with their recommendations

In order to achieve a quality, comprehensive, realistic and applicable document, the Smart Action Plan is aligned with these five principles:

The principle of accuracy and completeness – ensures the use of reliable, verifiable and comparable data for the preparation, creation, reporting and monitoring of the implementation and effects of strategic planning acts. The data are hierarchically and time-aligned, while the logic of the intervention is clear and justified.

The principle of efficiency and effectiveness – ensures the definition of appropriate comprehensible, evaluable and measurable indicators for all levels of set goals. Expected results, outcomes and effects are achieved at optimal costs, and the cost-benefit ratio is acceptable.

The principle of responsibility and focus on results – recommends the body in charge of implementing the acts of the Action Plan to ensure adequate conditions, resources and political support for achieving the desired results, outcomes and effects. It is necessary to monitor and analyse data on implementation. All procedures are flexible, adaptable and corrected if necessary.

The principle of partnership – when designing and implementing the Action Plan, a partnership must be ensured with the main stakeholders and competent bodies of local and regional self-government units, including economic associations and social partners, the academic and scientific community, civil society organizations, society and the interested public.

The principle of transparency – defines clearly explained and relevant problems and challenges that the public body tries to solve through strategic planning, and which are measurable using relevant indicators.

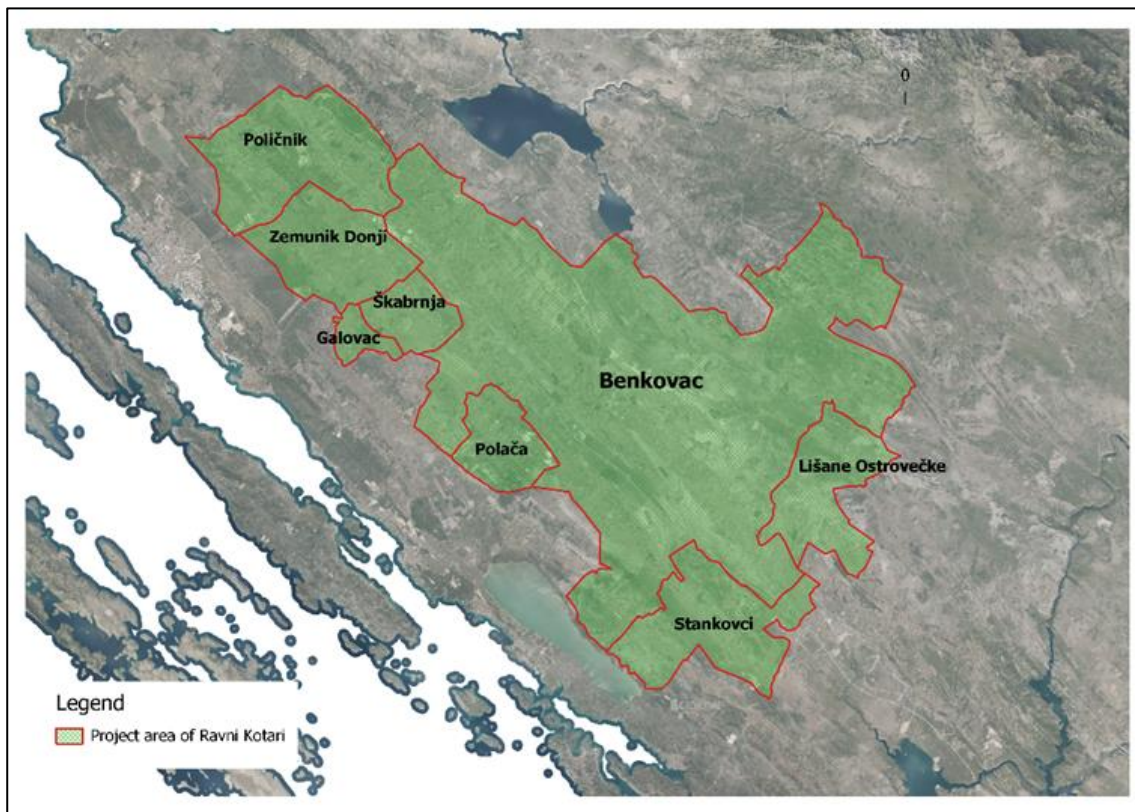
Each of these principles is equally important and is applied simultaneously in all stages of the creation and implementation of this document. This document is prepared for a period of 3 years until 2025.

2. SCOPE OF THE RAVNI KOTARI AREA

The selected area of Ravni kotari represents the hinterland of the highly developed touristic coastal area of Zadar County (Zadar and Biograd riviera). It is most often defined as: “Ravni kotari are a geographical area in Croatia located in northern Dalmatia. Administratively, they are mostly located in Zadar County, and in a smaller part, in the southeast, in Šibenik-Knin County.” (https://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ravni_kotari). Ravni kotari have no administrative boundaries, but are a geographical-spatial entity “between Bukovica in the northeast, the Zadar-Biograd coast in the southwest, and the river Krka and Prukljansko Lake in the southeast.” (<https://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=51998>).

For the purpose of the Action Plan, it was necessary to choose an administrative unit that has its own clearly defined scope and stakeholders from the public and private sectors who will be able to implement and monitor the plan. Therefore, the spatial coverage defines it through the scope of the Ravni Kotari Tourist Board, which was founded on April 29, 2019 in Stankovci (<https://hrturizam.hr/osnovana-turisticka-zajednica-podrucja-ravni-kotari>), and at the founding assembly, one city and six municipalities joined the Ravni Kotari Tourist Board: the City of Benkovac, the Municipality of Lišane Ostrovičke, the Municipality of Polača, the Municipality of Stankovci, the Municipality of Zemunik Donji, the Municipality of Škabrnja and the Municipality of Galovac. The Ravni Kotari Tourist Board are precisely that key stakeholder that can implement the activities foreseen in this plan, based on the authority given to it by the Act on Tourist Boards and the Promotion of Croatian Tourism (NN 52/19; NN 42/20), which defines destination management companies “as an organization that brings together stakeholders from the public, private and civil sectors for the purpose of strategic and operational management of the destination and realization of the common, previously agreed upon vision”.

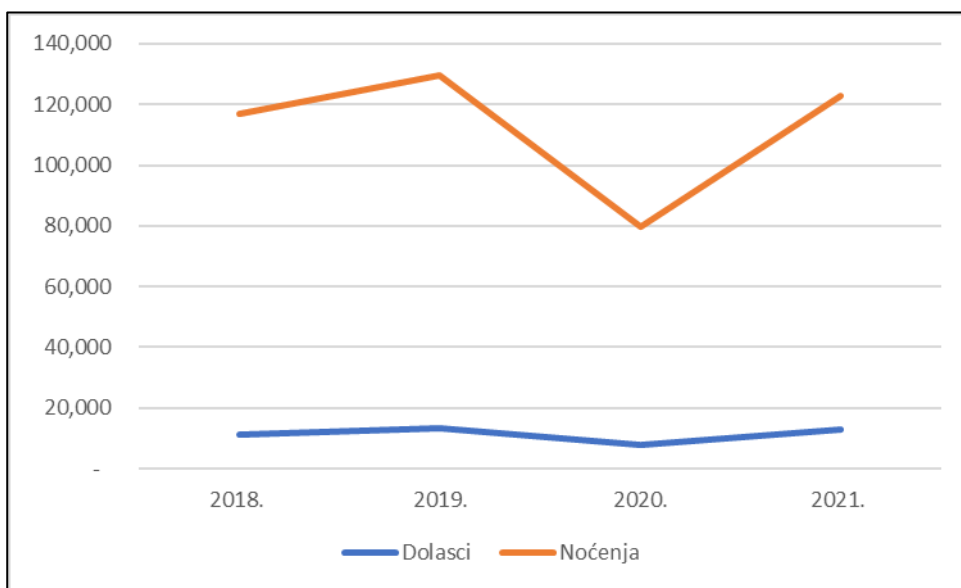
Image 1. The area of the Ravni Kotari Tourist Board



Source: Geoportal

The area of Ravni kotari represents a destination in the first phase of tourism development in accordance with Buhalis' model of the life cycle of destination development (Buhalis, 2000), and in this phase it is necessary to recognize the cultural and natural heritage of the area and ways of its sustainable, smart valorisation in green, smart and slow tourism products.

Graph 1. The number of tourist arrivals and overnight stays from 2018 to 2021 in the area of the Ravni Kotari Tourist Board (arrivals – blue, overnight stays – orange)



Source: Author's processing according to the data of the Ravni Kotari Tourist Board

As can be seen, except in the year of the pandemic (in which a below-average drop is recorded, which is lower than the average drop in the country), the area of Ravni kotari records an upward trend in tourist arrivals and overnight stays in the accommodation facilities they have at their disposal. Accommodation facilities are mostly in private accommodation and are most often categorized with 3 stars. It is precisely in this initial phase that it is extremely important to recognize the potential of cultural and natural heritage for the development of tourism and to devise a sustainable concept of tourism development, in order to create a quality foundation for the development of tourism in the destination. In the observed area, the share of the area intended for tourist activity is below 1%, and at the same time, there is a dispersion of tourist activity through the area in the form of holiday homes. There were only 7 agrotourisms in this area, which is an extremely small number. There is one diffuse hotel in the area that also offers food services and two more providers that offer wine tastings and food services. There is no single database of restaurants located in this area, and searching the Internet, excluding pizzerias and fast food

restaurants, it was found that less than 10 restaurants represent the basis for the development of gastro tourism in this area.

2.1. UNDERSTANDING THE ATTRACTION BASIS OF RAVNI KOTARI

The attraction base of Ravni kotari is defined through a review of previous strategic documents, scientific and professional papers and research conducted in this area, but the basis for this was an analysis of the state of natural and cultural heritage in the project area, evaluated by key stakeholders and the target group as part of the project activity 4.1.4. The area of Ravni kotari has intangible cultural heritage under the protection of UNESCO: “Ojkanje musical expression from the area of Dalmatian hinterland” and “The art of drywall construction”, which can be relatively easily integrated into the tourist offer (Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia, n.d.). According to the Register of Cultural Goods, there are 43 localities in this area that are under some form of national protection. The non-recognition of intangible heritage as valuable in this area can also be seen in the fact that not a single element of intangible heritage is protected in this area, although according to research by the University of Zadar, the Benkovac fair, traditional dishes and a number of other elements are recognized as valuable by the local population. The existence of rich cultural heritage in the area of Ravni kotari is not enough in itself. Without the belonging of the local community to the cultural heritage and its involvement in the presentation and interpretation, the cultural heritage deteriorates and disappears. Therefore, the elements of involvement of the local community in the cultural heritage are extremely important in order to preserve the cultural heritage for future generations and to present and valorise it through tourism.

According to the stakeholders, heritage itself is not sufficiently valorised, and the legal framework that protects and manages it, as well as the proprietary and legal relations that are a prerequisite for its valorisation and protection, are rated as relatively low. Stakeholders in the destination rate relatively high the potential of heritage at the national level, but at the same time recognize the lack

of experts for heritage management in the destination. The local population is also unaware of the potential of cultural heritage that this area has.

Based on the recognized shortcomings and problems in management, but also the strengths that the destination has and the opportunities that are offered to it, this Action plan is aimed at solving the problem of recognizing the cultural heritage in the destination, especially focused on gastronomy, raising the level of knowledge and awareness of all stakeholders in the destination of recognition of the heritage that Ravni kotari possess. At the same time, this plan is aimed at the sustainable and smart development of tourist products that develop on that heritage, with a special emphasis on gastronomy and the creation of slow tourist products whose source is the eno and gastronomic heritage of the area.

2.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE POLICY INSTRUMENTS

1. One of the outputs of the TAKE IT SLOW project is the design of five aligned and widely applicable policy instruments (D4.1.6) that contribute to the greatest possible extent to the strengthening of the tourism value chain focused on research, preservation and heritage management. These five policy instruments have been set up in such a way as to encompass an extremely wide area of cultural and natural heritage management and to be applicable to the individual progress of each of the partners in the pilot area, as well as to the entire area of the coastal part of both coasts of the Adriatic Sea and, accordingly, a unique Italian-Croatian tourism product based on cultural and natural heritage. Policy instruments are crucial for planning and managing local and regional development, as they can ensure the balanced development of the region. Well-chosen policy instruments lead to effective management of the region, including the management of natural and cultural heritage, as well as the inclusion of the local population in the decision-making process in order to

improve the quality of life and acceptance of the interventions made by the local and national government and self-government. The policy instruments are:

2. Revenue management – cultural and natural heritage requires funds in order to be preserved, improved, valorised, digitalized and offered to the local population and the tourist market. Therefore, this instrument was chosen because it is the most efficient way to collect funds for investments in heritage. It is extremely important with this instrument that the income itself must never jeopardize or ignore the principles of sustainable management of it. This instrument predicts consumer behaviour at micro market levels and optimizes product availability, exploiting price elasticity to maximize revenue growth and thus profits. In the context of Ravni kotari, this instrument was chosen because gastronomy is one of the extremely important segments of cultural heritage, it can relatively easily generate income and profit through its valorisation, but at the same time there is a threat of degradation and commodification of its heritage in order to meet the specific demands of the tourist market. It is often precisely with the gastronomic heritage that its protection and preservation are forgotten (digitalization, recording, transmission by a living human treasure, reinterpretation, etc.), but is considered as a given.
3. Policy planning – planning is a development framework in which all goals, plans, programmes and strategies need to be coordinated with each other at all levels of management (from local, county, regional, national) to the EU strategic framework. Although national and European policies cannot be influenced, it is necessary to direct one's own policies towards sustainable development and protection of cultural and natural heritage. Policy planning was chosen as a relevant policy instrument regarding the management of natural and cultural heritage because it is important that regional and local development strategies include and value heritage as a resource for the development of sustainable tourism. The field of nutrition is one of the most important issues in sustainability policies, which recommend reducing the length of distribution channels for food products, i.e. encouraging the use of foods produced as close as possible to the place of consumption and preferring

local recipes and local cuisine, while at the same time it is necessary to strive to optimize the use of food, in order to continuously work on reducing the amount of waste generated during the preparation, consumption and disposal of uneaten food as an element of waste management.

4. Collaborative and participatory approach – is the kind of approach in which every member of the community, regardless of their position, and every organization in the community, has their voice and their share in decision-making, either personally or through a representative. In the management of gastronomy, as a segment of the cultural heritage of Ravni kotari, every individual can contribute, either through preservation, valorisation, sustainable management or marketing of the gastronomic offer on the tourist market. It is therefore important to involve all stakeholders, local community, farmers, family farms, restaurateurs, tour guides, travel agencies, schools, universities, tourism industry, tourist boards, local government and self-government, etc. Everyone’s perspective must be considered as equally valuable and must be discussed and respected in the sustainable management of a destination’s heritage. This policy instrument was chosen as relevant because public participation in decision-making on the use and management of heritage increases the acceptance of interventions.
5. Site-specific visitor strategies – are general plans for achieving one or more long-term or general goals under conditions of uncertainty. Strategies are important because the resources available to achieve goals are usually limited. These strategies were chosen as relevant policy instruments because it is important to manage attractions and visits to achieve sustainability. For example, a large number of visitors reduces experiences and destroys heritage, so it is important to have a strategic framework for managing natural and cultural heritage in order to reduce the possibility of its devastation. Ravni kotari, as it was previously stated, are a destination in the first phase of the development cycle of tourism, and currently this policy is not a priority in the observation of the destination. However, precisely in the initial stages of the destination’s development, it is important to design a

high-quality visitor strategy so that in the following stages of increased pressure on the destination, degradation does not occur. This approach is thinking in advance about possible consequences and remediating them before they happen. Here it is important to think about gastronomic culture as an intangible heritage whose characteristics enable implementation in different localities, thus facilitating the implementation of sustainable destination management. When planning tourist routes based on gastronomy, it is extremely important that they do not endanger other segments of the heritage that they include and that the concept of sustainability is applied to all elements of the route, from transportation, visiting localities, tasting food and drinks to education visitors and including the local population in the offer.

6. Monitoring and adaptive management – this instrument foresees systematic monitoring and adjustment of heritage management in accordance with the findings. Adaptive management takes a systematic, experimental approach to managing specific areas and problems, including planning and managing tourism in selected areas, whether protected or not. Monitoring and adaptive management allow us to adapt heritage management to changes in the environment, while monitoring specifically is used to monitor the implementation of agreed plans. The implementation of gastroculture in the overall tourist offer of Ravni kotari and Zadar County, as well as Croatia as a tourist destination, is a long-term process that needs to be monitored and adapted to trends in gastronomy, but also to tourist motivations and ways of tourist travel. Incorporation of monitoring into plans is often not emphasized enough, therefore in this document we emphasize the need for systematic monitoring as a basis for adapted management in accordance with external and internal factors and changes that occur.

2.3. DEFINING KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES – SWOT ANALYSIS

In order to determine the fundamental challenges that are expected in the implementation of this action plan, a SWOT analysis of the situation was made in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses in the sustainable management of gastronomic heritage in this area, and the threats and opportunities from the environment in the implementation of this plan.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality local food products in the area of Ravni kotari and Zadar County • Various influences on gastronomy throughout history • Ravni kotari have a long tradition of agricultural production • Bukovica has a long tradition in animal husbandry and the production of agricultural products (garlic) • The local population's interest in preserving the gastronomic heritage • Continuous growth in the quality of wine production in the area of Ravni kotari • Growth of tourist movements • Proximity to coastal destinations with a relatively large number of tourist arrivals and overnight stays • High-quality connection of the destination by road and air transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A relatively small number of catering facilities in the area • Lack of entrepreneurial competencies among the local population • Low level of familiarity with the cuisine of Ravni kotari in the coastal destinations of Zadar County at the national level • Seasonality of the tourist offer • Low level of tourism development of the destination and relatively poor structure of accommodation facilities in the destination • Relatively low level of expertise of local staff on the gastronomy of Ravni kotari • Seasonality of the tourist offer in the destination • Orientation to mass tourism • Low level of diversification of tourist offer • Low level of awareness about the importance of cultural and natural heritage • Poor waste disposal and the occurrence of illegal landfills • Unresolved proprietary and legal relations • Relatively low level of desire of the local population to get involved in tourism
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A growing interest in gastrotourism products on the world tourist market • A strong trend in healthy eating • The possibility of using EU funds • Increased interest in enrolling in vocational schools related to the gastronomic culture • Improvement of scientific and professional research in gastronomy at the local, national and world level • Strengthening the participatory approach in policy planning • Cross-border cooperation and promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative demographic trends in the area • Unresolved proprietary and legal relations • Low-quality legally regulated system of control and management of tourist movements • Poor connection by public transport with tourist destinations on the coast • COVID-19 pandemic • Anthropogenic and natural risks for natural and cultural heritage • Threat of war

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large number of restaurants in destinations on the coast that are interested in expanding the assortment with dishes and wines from Ravni kotari • Growth in demand for rural tourism areas after the COVID-19 pandemic • The possibility of including Ravni kotari in routes at the county level, especially gastro routes • The possibility of using funds from the Croatian Tourist Board for joint tourist boards and underdeveloped areas • The potential for the development of various specific forms (cyclo, agro, hunting market, adventure, etc.) of tourism in which gastro tourism can be marketed • The possibility of developing ecological food production in the area of Ravni kotari • The possibility of using social media and IT technologies in promoting the gastronomic culture of Ravni kotari | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in legislation on the use of GMO food products |
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The SWOT analysis shows that although there are opportunities and strong strengths in the agricultural production of the area, there is still no flywheel that would turn this area into a gastronomic oasis in the hinterland of the coasts and thus contribute to the development of this area, but also reduce the pressure of tourists on coastal destinations. Therefore, within the framework of this plan, gastronomy is considered as a cultural heritage that is a key element of the tourist offer, and in this area, it is recognized as a possible instigator of tourism development.

3. GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND CORRESPONDING MEASURES OF THE ACTION PLAN

This chapter provides an overview of the general objectives recommended for the slow, sustainable and smart development of projects in the field of cultural heritage, based on gastro heritage and gastro tourism for the next programming period.

The strategic framework of the Smart Action Plan encompasses three general strategic objectives:

RESEARCH, INVENTARISATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE GASTRONOMIC HERITAGE OF RAVNI KOTARI

Motivated by the research of intangible heritage, especially the gastronomic heritage of Ravni kotari, with the aim of gaining knowledge about nutritional values, health benefits, but also the historical circumstances of creating a diverse gastronomic heritage of this area, this goal was set in order to achieve the best effect through the triple helix model in the development of innovative tourism products based on new insights. Strengthening research, in addition to improving interpretation, will also contribute to the preservation of this heritage, its inventarisation and, ultimately, the valorisation of gastronomic heritage for tourism purposes. This heritage should be sustainably and responsibly managed and inventoried, and the living treasure, i.e., the people who protect it in the community, should be protected.

VALORIZATION OF THE GASTRONOMIC HERITAGE OF RAVNI KOTARI INTO SUSTAINABLE, SMART TOURIST PRODUCTS THROUGH PROCESSES OF SMART SPECIALIZATION

Valuable heritage is a prerequisite for the development of a quality tourism product based on it. This goal contains an innovative approach that will ultimately lead to the introduction of menus based on the (re)interpretation of the gastronomic heritage of Ravni kotari in restaurants in the area of coastal destinations nearby, i.e., in Šibenik-Knin and Zadar counties, and then at the national level. At the same time, the goal is to increase the number, but also the quality of restaurants in the

area of Ravni kotari, and by the end of this period it is predicted that at least one restaurant in this area will have a Michelin recommendation, as an indicator of quality and innovation. In order for this process to be carried out in accordance with the principles of sustainability, it is necessary to devise a management system that will define the desired number of catering establishments and visitors in the area. In order to achieve this objective, it is necessary to continuously work on improving the knowledge and entrepreneurial skills of tourism workers. Within the framework of this objective, active work will be done on the implementation of the principles of sustainability in the entire value chain and the continuous growth of the number of certified producers in the area. Ultimately, the constant diversification of tourism products according to specific forms of tourism that are complementary to gastro tourism will be encouraged.

NETWORKING FOR SUSTAINABLE AND SLOW TOURISM BASED ON GASTRO CULTURE

As cooperation at all levels is the basis of the preservation and valorisation of heritage, networking of all stakeholders is necessary for the development of sustainable tourism based on gastronomic heritage. This is extremely important from the aspect of using the strengths that the pilot area has in the production of high-quality agricultural products, and the orientation of the pilot area towards ecological production. Building a network of stakeholders will contribute to the quality of heritage management and help create sustainable value chains, while a participatory approach is highly desirable in policy planning. Likewise, cross-border cooperation is extremely important for the promotion of common Adriatic heritage and the development of sustainable tourism models. Therefore, this objective is linked to a policy instrument that deals with cooperation and stakeholder involvement in planning and will be measured by the number of stakeholders involved or the cooperation established.

The testing of the measures provided for each of the general objectives will be carried out through ex-ante evaluation, that is, the relevance, complementarity, coherence, usefulness, sustainability and equality of the defined activities will be measured.

4. ACTION PLAN TABLES

OBJECTIVE 1. RESEARCH, INVENTARISATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE GASTRONOMIC HERITAGE OF RAVNI KOTARI												
Measure 1.1. Improvement of research and inventory of gastronomic heritage in the project area												
Activity	Related policy instrument	Indicator	Measure unit	Starting value 2019	Target value 2022	Target value 2023	Target value 2024	Target value 2025	Implementation holder(s)	Amount	Source	Execution deadline
1.1.1. Improvement of research and gastronomic heritage	Monitoring and adaptive management	Research activities	Number of projects	0	1	2	2	2	Regional coordination for EU projects, local self-government units, scientific institutions, SMEs and family farms in the area of Ravni kotari	EUR 50.000	EU funds, national sources, local self-government units' budget	Continuously
1.1.2. Inventory of gastronomic heritage	Policy planning	Heritage database	Number of protected gastronomic heritage	0	0	0	1	2	Local self-government units, Ministry of Culture	EUR 10.000	National sources, residence tax, local self-government units' budget, EU funds	Continuously
1.1.3. Interpretation of gastronomic heritage and creation of value chains	Site-specific visitor strategies	Created value chain	Number	0	1	2	5	7	SMEs and family farms in the area of Ravni kotari, Ravni Kotari Tourist Board	EUR 30.000	National sources, local self-government units' budget, EU funds	Continuously

OBJECTIVE 2. VALORIZATION OF THE GASTRONOMIC HERITAGE OF RAVNI KOTARI INTO SUSTAINABLE, SMART TOURIST PRODUCTS THROUGH PROCESSES OF SMART SPECIALIZATION

Measure 2.1. Valorisation of the valuable gastronomic heritage of Ravni kotari

Activity	Related policy instrument	Indicator	Measure unit	Starting value 2019	Target value 2022	Target value 2023	Target value 2024	Target value 2025	Implementation holder(s)	Amount	Source	Execution deadline
2.1.1.1. Designed system of valorisation and development of gastronomic tourism in Ravni kotari	Site-specific visitor strategies	Number of visitors	Number	13.302	12.000	15.000	18.000	23.000	Ravni Kotari Tourist Board, local self-government units	EUR 10.000	National sources, residence tax, local self-government units' budget	Continuously
2.1.2. Improving the quality and innovation in the tourist offer	Revenue management	Contribution of tourism to GDP ¹	%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5%	Croatian Chamber of Crafts, scientific institutions, SMEs, Ministry of Tourism	EUR 150.000	EU funds, SME funds, national sources	Continuously
		Number of restaurants that have introduced a gastronomic offer based on the heritage of Ravni kotari	Number	N/A	1	5	8	10				
		Number of restaurants with MICHELIN recommendation	Number	0	0	0	0	1				

¹ This data is defined at the county level and is not an applicable indicator in the pilot area at the moment, the introduction of the measurement system by 2025

Measure 2.2. Sustainable and responsible management of the gastronomic tourism of Ravni kotari through smart specialization processes												
Activity	Related policy instrument	Indicator	Measure unit	Starting value 2019	Target value 2022	Target value 2023	Target value 2024	Target value 2025	Implementation holder(s)	Amount	Source	Execution deadline
2.2.1. Improving the implementation of sustainability principles in value chains	Monitoring and adaptive management	Number of certified ecological products	Number	0	3	6	10	15	Local self/government units, scientific institutions, SMEs	EUR 20.000	National sources, SMEs and family farms' funds	Continuously
2.2.2. Diversification of tourist products and services in the field of gastronomic heritage	Revenue management	Contribution of tourism to GDP ²	%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5%	Regional coordinator for EU projects, local self-government units, SMEs and family farms in the area of Ravni kotari, Ravni Kotari Tourist Board	EUR 50.000	EU funds, investment by a private entrepreneur	Continuously
		Number of products	Number	N/A	1	2	3	6				
2.2.3. Training for managerial and entrepreneurial skills in tourism	Revenue management	Number of jobs in tourism in the total number of employed persons ³	%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7%	Local self-government units, scientific institutions, SMEs	EUR 6.000	EU funds (ESF), SME funds and local self-government units' budget	Continuously

² This data is defined at the county level and is not an applicable indicator in the pilot area at the moment, the introduction of the measurement system by 2025

³ This data is defined at the county level and is not an applicable indicator in the pilot area at the moment, the introduction of the measurement system by 2025

OBJECTIVE 3. NETWORKING FOR SUSTAINABLE AND SLOW TOURISM BASED ON GASTRO CULTURE

Measure 3.1. Creation of networks for the development of sustainable tourism

Activity	Related policy instrument	Indicator	Measure unit	Starting value 2019	Target value 2022	Target value 2023	Target value 2024	Target value 2025	Implementation holder(s)	Amount	Source	Execution deadline
3.1.1. Strengthening the networking of all stakeholders in sustainable gastronomic tourism – the economy, the local population through local action groups, NGOs and cultural societies, representatives of local government and self-government units	Collaborative and participatory approaches	Number of involved stakeholders	Number of stakeholders	N/A	60	100	140	170	Local self-government units, Ravni Kotari Tourist Board, county tourist board	EUR 3.000	Local self-government units	Continuously
3.1.2. Stimulating cross-border cooperation with the countries in the ADRION region	Supported cross-border cooperation networks	Number of collaborations	Number of collaborations	N/A	1	1	2	3	Local self-government units, Ravni Kotari Tourist Board, county tourist board	EUR 50.000	EU funds	Continuously
3.1.3. Enhancing the promotion of CB natural and cultural heritage	Collaboratory and participative approaches	Number of cross-border cooperation networks	Number of collaborations	N/A	N/A	1	2	2	Regional coordinator, Croatian Tourist Board and network of tourist boards	EUR 50.000	EU funds	Continuously

5. CONCLUSION

This plan provides guidelines for the improvement of research, protection and valorisation of the intangible cultural heritage of the Ravni kotari area, especially in the segment of gastronomic heritage. This heritage has been shown through research to be one of the most valuable and at the same time insufficiently valorised potentials of Ravni kotari in the development of tourism in this area, but also in the promotion of the area through the gastronomic offer in the more developed touristic coastal destination.

According to the specific objective of the project within which it is being created, the Smart Action Plan is closely related to the five policy instruments defined in the TAKE IT SLOW project. They include all value chains that create smart sustainable tourism products based on recognized natural and cultural heritage through the concept of smart specialization. Therefore, a strategic framework based on smart specialization is the basis for the creation of this document. In the area of Ravni kotari, LCP and the scientific community recognized gastronomy as an important resource base within the framework of intangible heritage, and therefore this plan refers to it.

In its essence, the plan pays the greatest attention to the inclusion and participation of all stakeholders in the process of its adoption and implementation. The basis of this plan is the encouragement of innovation and the principles of sustainability in the development of value chains in the area of Ravni kotari gastronomy. Through the implementation of three defined strategic objectives, an improvement of the offer of gastronomic tourism and its development in the direction of smart, sustainable and slow tourism is expected, which will represent the basis and one of the segments for the creation of a unique cross-border tourist product.

This plan is adopted for a period of three years and is revised every year in accordance with the conducted analysis of the situation and the measurable indicators based on which the plan is monitored.

6. LIST OF PROJECTS

Thematic Unit	Name	Description	Project Leader	Sources of Funding	Duration
Sustainable tourism	TAKE IT SLOW	The TAKE IT SLOW project was designed with the aim of managing and promoting the Adriatic as a sustainable, green and smart European tourist region through the establishment of a value chain in tourism according to the principles of smart specialization. It is based on the research of the way of life as a combination of tangible and intangible, cultural and natural heritage in cooperation with scientists and the local community as a great source of knowledge. The Adriatic Sea is surrounded by numerous small communities on islands, coastal and inland rural areas whose lifestyle has remained authentic, in harmony with the environment and based on traditional knowledge and skills. Therefore, the project will develop solutions for the management of micro-tourism destinations in order to encourage local communities to deal with the impacts of the tourism industry, but at the same time preserve natural and cultural heritage and lifestyle.	Dubrovnik-Neretva County	EU co-funding 3.764.695,71 EUR	01/06/2020 - 30/06/2023

Sustainable tourism	BOOST 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revitalization of natural and cultural heritage in the area of Ravni kotari • Prepared documents <i>Heritage in smaller rural areas</i> and <i>Catalogue of best practices</i>, the purpose of which is to promote sustainable tourism, sustainable tourism offer with an innovative approach and the natural and cultural heritage of the Zadar area • Organizing a study visit and a journalist study visit with the aim of promoting rural areas • Creation of two project ideas on sustainable tourism for the next programming period 	TECNOPOLIS Science and Technology Park	EU co-funding 597.325,00 EUR	01/06/2022 - 30/06/2023
Cultural heritage	Made in land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a territorial brand in cooperation with local communities • Promotion of tangible and intangible cultural heritage through marketing plans and IT tools • Prepared cross-border strategy for sustainable economic and territorial development of the hinterland and action plan • Implementation of 3 pilot activities (Eco museums, Information centres, Brand) 	Marche Region	EU co-funding 2.218.069,31 EUR	01/01/2019- 30/06/2022
Rural development	AgroSTEM – Strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations through a specialized training programme for the transfer of knowledge in the field of STEM and rural development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquired computer equipment for the needs of conducting educational activities for CSOs and for holding workshops intended for children, youth and family farms from the area of Ravni kotari • Acquired equipment for field teaching and laboratory aids for the purpose of using fast field methods and innovative tools in agriculture 	Association for Rural Development Ravni Kotari	EU co-funding 1.833.056,40 HRK	05/2021 - 05/2023

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education for CSOs and workshops for children, youth and family farms from the area of Ravni kotari with the aim of popularizing STEM in rural areas 			
Rural development	eLabHauSE	<p>The eLabHauSE.rur project is an initiative that will serve as a mechanism for improving competitiveness and encouraging social entrepreneurship in rural areas through the creation of “think tanks” and encouraging cooperation and synergy between different disciplines and stakeholders. They will serve as a source of knowledge, innovation and creativity to integrate opportunities through the new EU Bauhaus for social entrepreneurship in rural areas.</p>	La Unión de Cooperativas Asociación Gallega de Cooperativas Agrarias (AGACA)	EU co-funding 199.707,14 EUR	01/05/2022- 01/05/2024
Strengthening digital competences	AGRI's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of agricultural entrepreneurship as a model of sustainable agriculture Develop precise agriculture in Europe to respond to the growing need for food and promote a new model of agriculture towards a more sustainable model Empower adults with digital and entrepreneurial skills in the agri-food industry to become actors of a sustainable future and at the same time become more competitive actors 	BIGBOSS PROJECT	EU co-funding 187.595,00 EUR	01/11/2021 – 01/11/2023
Contribution to the development of tourism and preservation of cultural and natural heritage	CUHaCHA	<p>The main goal of the “CUHaCHA” project is to strengthen and preserve the identity of the common culinary heritage of the programme area and contribute to the development of tourism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of cross-border cooperation in order to strengthen the tourist offer and make it more diverse 	Agency for Rural Development of Zadar County - AGRRA	710.946,94 EUR	15/08/2020 – 14/08/2022

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better management and promotion of culinary heritage as part of the tourist offer • Development of common paths of culinary heritage in cross-border cooperation to strengthen and diversify the tourist offer • Culinary heritage monograph • Training of service providers to ensure better management of culinary heritage • Setting up traditional kitchens to promote the culinary heritage of this area 			
Sustainable tourism	RURAL SPOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine a system of relevant general and specific indicators of sustainable tourism development and test it in a pilot rural area • Design and create databases for collecting data for calculating indicators and methodology for measuring, monitoring and evaluating the sustainable development of tourism in rural destinations • Determine the threshold values of the indicators, which represent the minimum and maximum of the desirable values of the indicators • Create a model of variables influencing tourism in rural areas and devise a methodology for reducing their negative impacts on tourism in rural areas 	University of Zadar	University of Zadar 100.000,00 HRK	01/11/2021- 31/09/2023
Social inclusion and health	Benkovac fair – infrastructure improvements and valorisation	<p>The goals of the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial – to use the potentials of the spatial significance of the city of Benkovac through the preservation and sustainable use of spatial resources 	City of Benkovac	21.671.011,15 HRK	-

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social – to strengthen the role of the city of Benkovac as the centre of social life in Ravni kotari and Bukovica and to increase the standard of living of the citizens • Economic – to increase the capacities in the area of the city of Benkovac for the development of small and medium entrepreneurship in order to encourage social inclusion and integration in the labour market 			
Improving the quality of life in rural areas	Home of Culture Benkovac	The goal of the project is to ensure and improve the quality of social life of all residents through the renovation and commissioning of the Home of Culture Benkovac and the design of programmes and content that will take place there. The project will influence the development and improvement of social and cultural life in the city, will create additional jobs, influence the development of tourism, create conditions for additional education of residents, and thereby improve their competitiveness on the labour market.	City of Benkovac	32.924.847,65 HRK	07/2019 - 05/2023
Contribution to the development of tourism and preservation of cultural and natural heritage	Development of thematic routes of old ancient and medieval cities in the area of the City of Benkovac – from the sea to Velebit via Ravni kotari and Bukovica	The specific goal of the project is to stimulate the development through the restoration, valorisation, presentation and interpretation of cultural heritage on the way from the sea to Velebit through Ravni kotari and Bukovica, and the development of a network of bicycle and pedestrian paths in the service of this interpretation, and to build and restore cultural and tourist-recreational infrastructure.	City of Benkovac	4.888.933,97 HRK	10/2020 - 10/2022