

The implementation of the project „Virtual Maritza – Merich Cuisine“ is completed

The implementation of the project „Virtual Maritza – Merich Cuisine“, № CB005.1.23.017, funded under the Interreg-IPA CBC Bulgaria–Turkey Programme 2014-2020 is completed on the 20th of June, 2018. The project started in March 2017 and has a total duration of 15 months. In the period 21.03.2017 - 20.06.2018, the project partners - RMA "Maritza" (Lead Partner) and Rice Paddy Commission in Merich (Partner 2) worked for the successful preparation, organization and implementation of the following activities:

Activity 1: Field surveys in Haskovo

The implementation of this activity ensured the implementation of the two main project surveys in Haskovo region - Survey "Traditional recipes of Haskovo region" and Survey "Local places with traditional cuisine in Haskovo region". For the successful performance of the activity, the Lead Partner engaged an external contractor under PRAG who performed both surveys according to the planned schedule of the project - by 20.09.2017.

The results of the activity are:

- Survey "Traditional recipes of Haskovo region" with focus on the collection of information and other relevant data on traditional regional culinary culture and traditional cuisine for all 11 municipalities in Haskovo region. The collected information presents the traditional Bulgarian cuisine in Haskovo region, presents 48 traditional recipes from Haskovo region and brief information about customs and traditions for some recipes.

- Survey "Local places with traditional cuisine in Haskovo region"- covers the food establishments listed in the Register of catering establishments in Haskovo region identified as: restaurants, fast service establishments and coffee shops. The most popular traditional meals offered in the establishments in Haskovo Region are researched and systematized. Local places with traditional cuisine are established in Haskovo Region - Local place "Sakar Mountain", Local place "Upper Thracian Plain" and Local place "Eastern Rhodopes".

- Map "Local places with traditional cuisine in Haskovo region" in electronic version which presents the three local places in the region - Local place "Sakar Mountain", Local place "Upper Thracian Plain" and Local place "Eastern Rhodopes" with the typical dishes identified for each area.

- Map "Local places with traditional cuisine in Haskovo region and Merich region " in electronic version.

For the successful implementation of the action, the partners held a working meeting in May 2017 in Edirne, Turkey.

Activity 2: Field surveys in Merich



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The implementation of this activity ensured the implementation of the two main project surveys in Merich - Survey "Traditional recipes of Merich region" and Survey "Local places with traditional cuisine in Merich region". For the successful performance of the activity, the Partner 2 engaged an external contractor under PRAG who performed both surveys according to the planned schedule of the project - by 20.09.2017.

The results of the activity are:

- Survey "Traditional recipes of Merich region" with focus on the collection of information and other relevant data on traditional regional culinary culture and traditional cuisine in Merich region. The collected information presents the traditional cuisine in Merich and is associated with history, customs and traditions, presents 67 traditional recipes from Merich region and brief information about customs and traditions for some recipes.

- Survey "Local places with traditional cuisine in Merich region" - covers the food establishments in Merich region identified as: restaurants, fast service establishments and coffee shops. The most popular traditional meals offered in the establishments in Merich Region are researched and systematized.

- "Local food establishments for traditional cuisine in Merich region" in electronic version.

For the successful implementation of the action, the partners held a working meeting in May 2017 in Edirne, Turkey.

Activity 3: Video cooking - Haskovo and Merich traditional recipes

The implementation of this activity ensured the development and recording of videos with traditional recipes from the regions of Haskovo and Merich. For the successful performance of the activity, the Lead Partner engaged an external company according to PRAG who developed and captured the videos according to the planned schedule of the project - by March 20, 2018.

The results of the activity are:

- 10 developed and captured videos for traditional recipes from Haskovo region (each with a minimum duration of 15 minutes) for the purpose of the Virtual Chef web portal

- 10 developed and captured videos for traditional recipes from Merich region (each with a minimum duration of 15 minutes) for the purpose of the Virtual Chef web portal

- 10 developed and captured videos for traditional recipes from Haskovo region (each with a minimum duration of 2 minutes) for the purposes of smart application Haskovo and Merich cooking

- 10 developed and captured videos for traditional recipes from Merich region (each with a minimum duration of 2 minutes) for the purposes of smart application Haskovo and Merich cooking.



For the successful preparation and implementation of the activity, the partners held a working meeting in December 2017 in the office of RMA "Maritza" in Bulgaria.

Activity 4: Web platform "Virtual Chef" and "Haskovo & Merich cooking" application

The implementation of this activity has ensured the development of specific ICT tools and applications aimed at supporting the presentation of the project's products and the presentation of the project - "Virtual Chef" web platform www.virtual-chef.eu and Smart Application "Haskovo & Merich cooking" in Google Play. For the successful performance of the activity, the Lead Partner engaged an external contractor under PRAG, who developed the platform and the application according to the envisaged schedule of the project - until 08.06.2018.

The results of the activity are:

- Virtual Chef web platform www.virtual-chef.eu - a common platform for the regions of Haskovo, Bulgaria and Merich, Turkey in Bulgarian, Turkish and English, presenting their traditional dishes. The platform offers an on-line forum where all stakeholders and project partners have the opportunity to work on a network, share information on the project and its progress, good practices, information on interesting places and destinations on both sides of the border, traditional cuisines, the potential of the cross-border region for the development of culinary tourism, etc. The platform has a separate section devoted to the presentation of the project (partners, objectives, activities, results, news, etc.), which is of great importance for the dissemination of project results and awareness of EU and IPA funds.

- "Haskovo & Merich Cooking" smart app available for free on Google Play, which presents the traditional recipes from Haskovo and Merich in quick and easy cooking as well as some traditions and customs related to these recipes.

For the successful implementation of the activity, the partners held a Project meeting in May 2018 in Merich, Turkey.

Activity 5: Haskovo & Merich Cooking Festival

The implementation of this activity ensured the implementation of the Festival "Haskovo and Merich cooking". For the successful implementation of the activity, Partner 2 engaged an external contractor under a tendering procedure who organized and held the festival according to the planned schedule of the project - until 20.06.2018.

The "Haskovo and Merich Cooking" Festival was held in Merich, Turkey on May 10, 2018 with more than 40 participants. The festival presented the products related to traditional cuisine of Haskovo and Merich (surveys, map, long and short videos, virtual Chef web platform, smart application Haskovo & Merich Cooking). The traditional recipes from the cross-border region of Haskovo and Merich were presented during the festival, and the participants had the opportunity to taste the traditional dishes from the two regions. The Memorandum for Cooperation for Sustainable Development of Tourism in



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Haskovo and Merich was signed at the festival. Partner 2 provided materials for the festival - 1 banner and a package of branded materials for each participant (cooking apron, magnet, notebook and pen).

Activity 6: Information and Publicity in Bulgaria

This activity provided the necessary tools to promote the project and project funding provided by the European Union under IPA II. The Lead Partner fulfilled the following activities in Haskovo:

- 1 initial press conference in Haskovo, held on 29 May 2017 in the office of RMA "Maritza"
- 7 press releases in the local / regional media in Haskovo
- Information board for the project, installed in the office of RMA "Maritza".

Activity 7: Information and Publicity in Turkey

This activity provided the necessary tools to promote the project and project funding provided by the European Union under IPA II. The Partner 2 fulfilled the following activities in Merich:

- 1 final press conference in Merich held on 10 May 2018;
- Printing a Recipe book with traditional cuisine "The culinary delights of the border region Haskovo - Merich" in Bulgarian and Turkish in 1000 copies
- 7 press releases in the local / regional media in Edirne
- Information brochure for the project in 500 copies
- Information board for the project installed in the partner's office.

For the successful completion of the project, the partners held a working meeting in June 2018 in the office of RMA "Maritza".



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