

Management and Sustainability Plan for Gradiška LIC



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I.

PREPARING AND PLANNING

1.1. Introduction and methodology

The management and sustainability plan of the Gradiška Landscape Interpretation Center, with a map of the pilot area and an itinerary of the thematic route, is an analytical-planning document aimed at defining the Organization and Business Model of the Center for Interpretation of Landscapes in Gradiška (hereinafter: Center)

By the Center we mean a tourist and organizational platform that a cluster of stakeholders from the city of Gradiska (the *so-called Link-Lab*) establishes as part of the INTERREG project **ADRILINK – Adriatic Landscape Interpretation Network**. The main goal of the project is to develop a network of interpretation centers dedicated to the valorization of landscapes through technologically and organizationally innovative and sustainable tourist facilities created by the local communities themselves. In addition to its leading partner, the Municipality of Jesi (Iesi, Italy), the project brings together 10 project partners whose landscape interpretation centers will be tied up in a unique destination network. This will be achieved through the establishment of a common digital platform, a single strategic development framework and a series of thematic events at the location of each partner.¹

The principles of ADRILINK cooperation are also embedded on the level of project activities related to Gradiska. Based on the principles of sustainable, community-based tourism and participatory planning, the local interpretation platform wants to profile the Gradiska area as a destination that is sustainable in ecological (green tourism), economic (profitable tourism) and social aspects (tourism aligned with the wishes and needs of the local community).

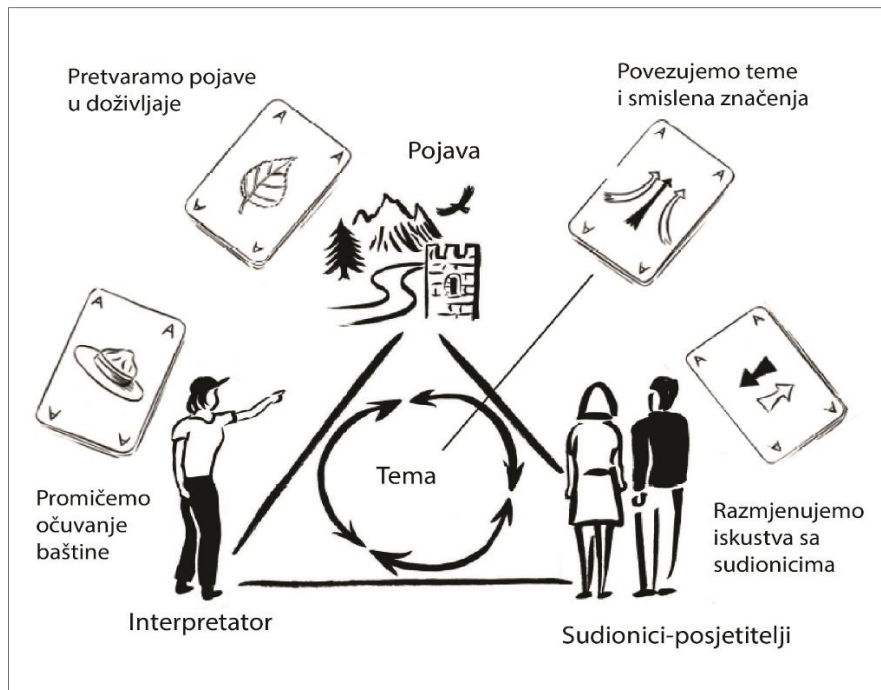
To this end, during the drafting of this document, a consultative process was implemented, covering three cycles of one-day and multi-day workshops and presentations (June 2021, February 2022, March 2022), as well as several operational meetings with key stakeholders in the preparation and implementation of the Plan.

Furthermore, as its title suggests, the document is largely based on the concept and method of interpreting heritage. According to one of the basic definitions, **the interpretation of heritage** is the art of presenting cultural or natural heritage not through dry facts, but through the creation of meaningful meanings and messages derived from the immediate experience of certain elements of presented heritage (persons, customs, localities, things, etc.). For practical interpretation, a useful methodical tool is the so-called "AS up your sleeve" (Iva Silla), i.e., "AS in the sleeve". relying on three principles: **Authenticity, Creativity and Participation**. The first refers to the need for the economic use of heritage to be designed in an original way, which will preserve that heritage, not destroy it. The second implies that for the emergence of a quality cultural and tourist product, not only a good idea (creativity) is enough, but also a difficult process of its development and testing in practice. Lastly, participation marks the aspiration to create tourist programs and interpretations that will evoke interaction with visitors

¹ More on: <https://adrilink.adrioninterreg.eu/>, access: 4. 3. 2022.

and their reaction and thus turn them into guardians of the heritage we present. The model of "4 aces" by interpreter Thorsten Ludwig, shown in the photo below, also speaks schematically about all this.

Photo 1. Presentation of interpretation model T. Ludwig (editing by Luka Jakopčić)



II.

ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL AND INTERPRATION CONCEPT

2.1. Vision, mission, and strategic goals of the Centre

The Gradiška Landscape Interpretation Centre will be guided by the vision of turning the gradish area into a destination for sustainable tourism aligned with the needs of the local community and its visitors. His mission, i.e., his mission. the tasks are the creation, presentation, and coordination of thematically and organizationally rounded (eco)tourism products, based on the cultural and historical and natural heritage of the Gradiska area. In this context, the main objectives of the Centre are:

- 1) Development of thematically, spatially, and marketing-integrated tourist products (tour, attractions, experiences, etc.)
- 2) Creating a platform for cooperation and education of local tourism stakeholders and the interested public
- 3) Ensuring the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of the Gradiska tourism model

2.2. Interpretation Center as a Community

The Landscape Interpretation Centre is conceived as a community of stakeholders interested in developing and offering their products and services and exchanging and investing their own knowledge and skills. The Centre, therefore, is not a legal entity and an entity with an address and a physical seat, but a collaborative platform of physical and legal persons. At its heart, as the chief gatherer and spreader of information, is man, i.e., man. individual stakeholder of the collaborative platform. In such an imaginary Centre, supporting cooperation between stakeholders is the main prerequisite for its functionality and sustainability. As a community, the Centre is characterised by three interconnected degrees of joint stock relations:

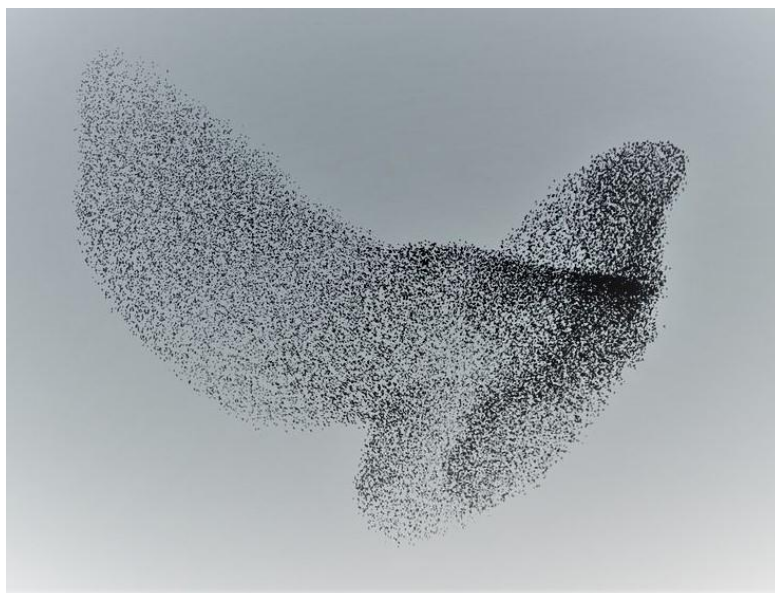
1. The attitude of stakeholders towards other stakeholders
 - > Intersectoral approach (e.g., private entrepreneurs and public institutions such as TO and others)
 - > Exchange of knowledge, information, and skills
 - > Familiarity with the offer and activities
 - > Mutual promotion to third parties (e.g., visitors)
2. The attitude of stakeholders towards one's own
 - > Lifelong learning
 - > Sustainable Business Management (focus not only on financial, but also social and environmental sustainability)

- > Aspiration of creativity and innovation (e.g., in product design and promotion)
- 3. Stakeholders' relationship with the local community and heritage
 - > Engagement and responsibility
 - > Respect for rights and obligations under the collaborative platform
 - > Protection and promotion of historical and natural heritage
 - > Audience development through inclusive tourism and experiences
 - > Using environmentally friendly materials and business methods

From such defined relationships arises a dispersed, point center that gives the visitor the impression that in each location, when meeting with each individual stakeholder, it is located "in the center", "in the right place", "in the right place", "on the common Aventure"; that each site of the interpreted area is equally important and integrated with the others. The Center as a community that, through its business and collaborative model, lives on values that it promotes acts as a **marketing tool**, since it invites visitors to actively engage and connect with the area they visit. This ultimately leads to the identification of the visitor with the destination and the creation of a sense of authenticity and belonging (one of the most sought-after added values of modern tourism).

Some of the concrete ways of joint stock cooperation are presented in 4.4, while as a conclusion of the conceptual description of the center as a community it is worth highlighting the principle illustrated in Photo 2.

Photo 2. Symbolic visualization of the collaborative platform as a flock of birds in flight

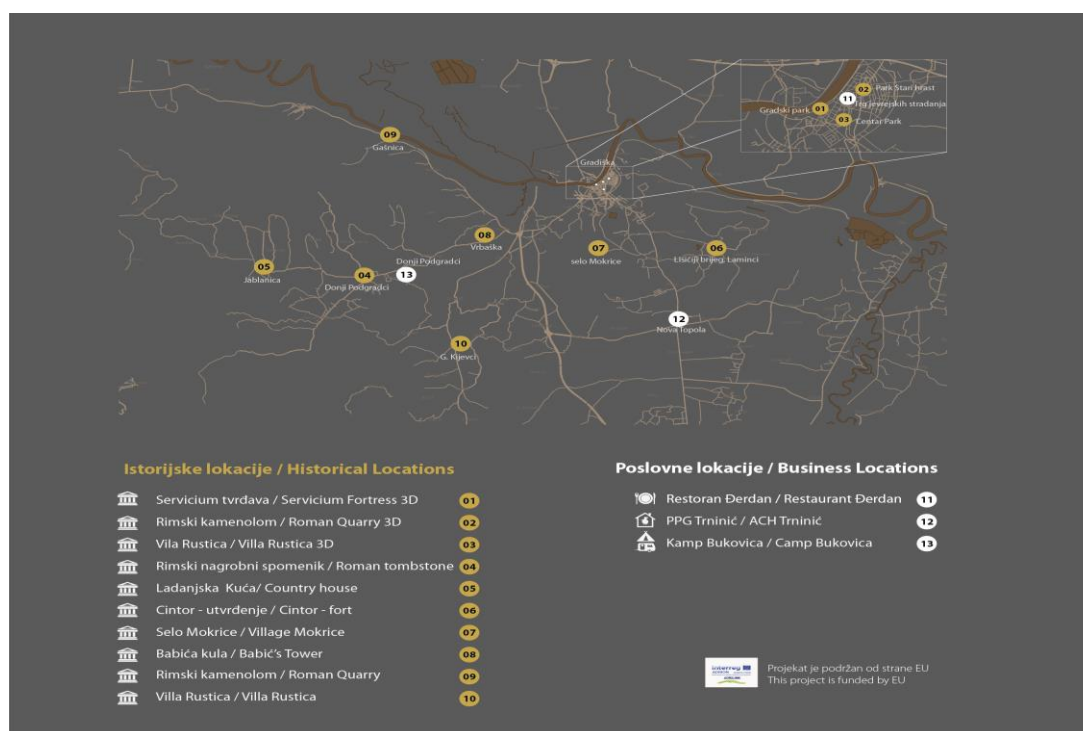


2. 3. Concept of thematic routes

The detailed implementation plan, the document preceding the Management and Sustainability Plan, designed three thematic routes: **City AVENTure, Medena AVENTure, Green AVENTure and City AVENTure**. The routes are named and conceived according to their cultural and geographical ambience, the profile of the hosts present and the type of target guests. The first consists of a shorter pedestrian-urban route, while the other two pass through the rural landscape and are best suited for cycling tours.

From the point of view of visitors, the goal is that each of the routes can be *self-guided*. For this purpose, it is foreseen to equip it with signposts and information and interpretation boards (especially in the case of the longer "Honey" and "Green" trails). Guidance support will also be provided by the project mobile application. From the point of view of the bidders, i.e. hosts, the aim is to enable more levels of involvement in thematic routes, and therefore in the collaborative platform of the Interpretation Center. In other words, different aspects of communicating along the trails simultaneously serve for 1) a more complete and secure visitor experience; 2) the involvement of the bidder in the theme of the trail, and therefore the Centre, on the extent to which it suits the individual tenderer.

Photo 3. Virtual view of AVENTure destination – Gladiator AVENTure (Holoscope d.o.o.)



Depending on the degree of interest and adaptation to the theme of the route, an individual bidder (stakeholder) would be given the opportunity to include their locality or tourist content in it. In this way, the attention of the visitor would be attached to the bidder in question, and

in addition he would be given a place in promotional materials and activities related to the construction thematic routes.

As a rule, interested stakeholders would have the opportunity to join the route by having an info-board associated with the content they offer. The preconditions for this would be that the interested entity:

- 1) Offers proven quality content (demonstrably certificates, categorization, customer reviews, product/service presentation, etc.)
- 2) It can offer content compatible with tourist needs (e.g. accommodation, catering, agro-products, souvenirs, traditional crafts, etc.)
- 3) Be familiar with the content of thematic routes and the work of the Center for Interpretation of Landscapes and willing to join its free and public collaborative platform

This would be verified by signing a **collaborative memorandum – Stakeholder Memorandum** that would serve as a framework for cooperation between the Stakeholders of the Centre, defining their rights and obligations (e.g., participation in periodic meetings, designing joint projects, mutual promotion, etc.).

Unlike info-boards, interpretation boards and the status of the place of experience would be intended for a smaller number of stakeholders or localities, since the route cannot carry too many points with a greater amount of information (communication congestion, time extension of the tour, maintenance costs, etc.). Interpretation tables and the status of the place of experience should therefore be assigned based on a more strictly regulated procedure. This means, subjects who, in addition to the criteria defined above, would also meet the following:

- That they are interested in fitting into the content of thematic routes, either through the adaptation of the existing offer (e.g. making themed souvenirs, dishes, etc.) or through the development of new facilities (e.g. opening accommodation facilities decorated in the Roman style, designing thematic presentations, etc.)
- That they are registered to carry out the thematic activity they want to offer

Meeting the criteria would result in the achievement of **AVE standards**. With it, stakeholders of the interpretation platform could verify the quality of the offer they are developing, and it would eventually become of use to visitors of thematic routes, as a sign of quality.



Photo 4. Summary of the route character hierarchy and their functions

Vrsta znaka/poruke	Obeležja	Uslovi za stjecanje znaka i s njim povezanog statusa
Putokaz	Upućuje na smjer kretanja rutom	N/p
Mala info-tabla	Informiše o pojedinoj zanimljivoj lokaciji duž rute	Kvalitet i turistički potencijal sadržaja; pristupanje saradničkoj platformi Centra
Interpretacijska tabla	Kompleksniji slikovno-tekstualni prikaz neke lokacije; pripovjedna kopča rute	Kvalitet i turistički potencijal sadržaja; pristupanje saradničkoj platformi Centra; razvoj tematskih sadržaja; registrovana djelatnost
Mjesto doživljaja	Tačke žive interakcije domaćina i gostiju, tematskih programa, događanja i sl.	

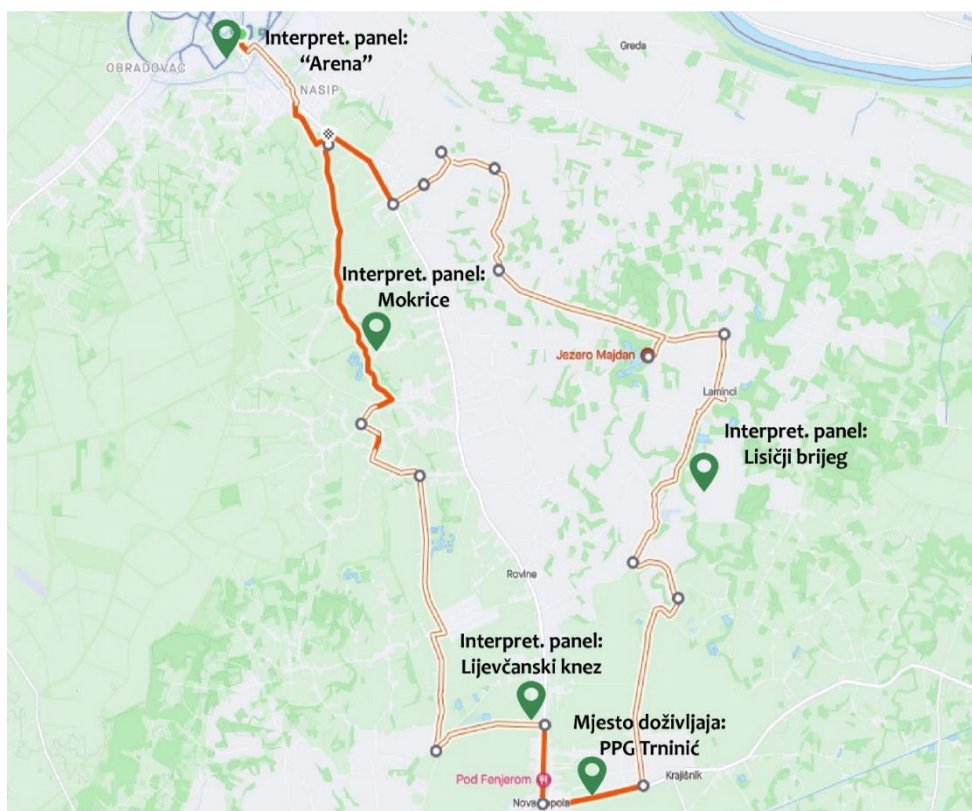
III.

ITINERARIES AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE CENTER

3.1. Honey AVenture

The "honey" route lijevče-polje (length: 33 km) is tame, without altitude difference, surrounded by fields, groves, and villages where we can find several beekeeping lands. For safety and atmosphere bypassing the main traffic station, the route circularly connects Gradiska, Liskovac, Dubrava, Rovine, Rogolje, Nova Topola, Krajišnik, Lamince, Brestovčina and again Gradiška. The central place of the experience on its route is the family landlord of the Trninić family, the owner of the famous apiaries "Queen".

Photo 5. Map of Honey AVenture (background: Horror)



3.2. Green AVEnture

The second thematic route through the construction area is in the Rajon Potkozarja. It is 35 km long and leads between meadows, forests, and numerous orchards. Due to the hilly terrain, it is physically somewhat more demanding than Medena and we could also classify it in the domain of active tourism. Both its starting and end points, i.e., its starting point, fit into this profile. sub-kosar camp Bukovica and its guests.

Photo 6. Green AVEnture map (map background: Strava)



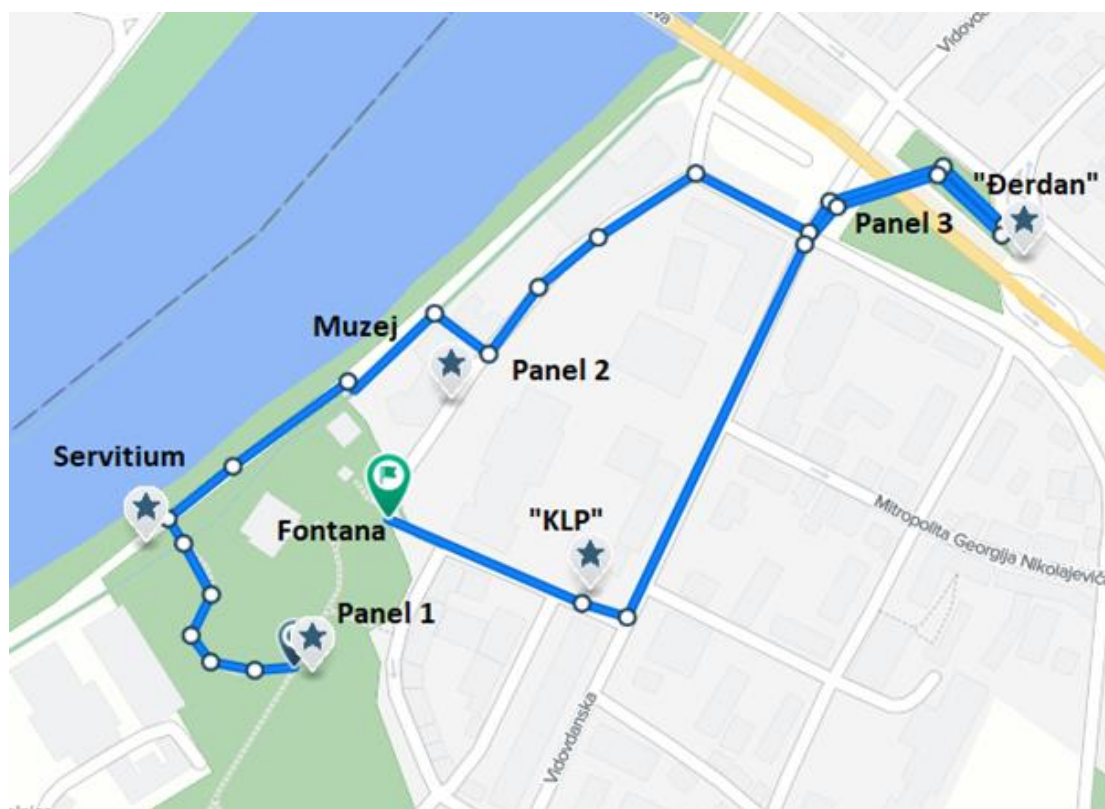
3.3. City AVEnture

The third thematic route is a one-kilometer-long city walk, primarily intended for visitors in transit, as an integral part of larger package holidays and generally for all those looking for a few hours of activity in Gradiška. The route passes through the city park and the center, encompassing its main sights and existing cultural and tourist capacities. As a place of experience, the renowned city restaurant "Djerdan" is positioned, located in the immediate

vicinity of the border crossing. From it, the route returns to the city center. Substantively, the route represents the history of ancient Gradiska, connecting it with modernity.²

In this sense, it should also be pointed out that the city's AVEntura exists in virtual form in addition to the "analogue" version. Namely, within the framework of the previously described AVEnture App, an educational and entertaining game for small and large was developed, according to the principle of augmented reality.

Photo 7. City AVEnture map (Background: Bikemap)



²The final route of the route is largely due to the proposals of Mr. Bojan Vujinović, for which the author's team thanks him.

3.4. Cooperation and sustainability

In the previously drafted document Detailed implementation plan of the Centre where the description of the itinerary shows and (possible) ways of concrete operational cooperation between individual stakeholders. In this document, the Management and Sustainability Plan will be further clarified by looking at them in several problem areas: business, creative development, marketing and promotion, and communal problems related to the development of the Center, i.e. the development of the Center. his offers. The latest in the series, the issue of operational cooperation, is concerning the process of organizational revival of the collaborative platform. It is also important to note that each of the proposals presented below (as, after all, those made in the previous parts of the document) can also be articulated in the form of concrete project proposals according to different sources of financing.

3.4.1. Business cooperation

To be functional, the Centre's platform should not be just to find order at any annual or biannual meeting. Practical connectivity will be most easily achieved through continuous joint actions and programmes. For example, the entire AVENTURE offer should be bound by a discount voucher system. The token of these vouchers would be the coins and a card for the benefits **ADRILINK LOVERS CARD**. The system would work as follows:

- 1) Upon arrival in Gradiska or *online*, the visitor purchases an ADRILINK LOVER CARD, a card for obtaining benefits during the trip; from the proceeds from the sale of the card (e.g. 10 KM/kom), the centre's programs would also be financed³
- 2) With the presentation of the ADRILINK LOVER CARD, the visitor receives one coin for every 20 KM spent at the entity-member of the collaborative platform
- 3) Since each coin is worth KM 2 KM, the visitor may reduce the price of the product or service of any other platform member; at the same time, the rule applies to them that they issue one coin for every 20 KM of the final invoice; the largest number of coins / tokens (10) would be achieved by visitors who would visit all interpretation or multimedia panels and play an AVENTURE mobile game. Such a fully realized tour of the construction area would be called **Gladiator AVENTURA**
- 4) The round of consumption and obtaining discounts on this principle could be repeated depending on the wishes of the visitor (a restriction may also be introduced if necessary)

In addition to contributing to the financial stability of the Centre, the system would also be the daily "connective tissue" of its members, as well as a potentially PR-interesting business model.

3.4.2. Creative (program) cooperation

For a system like ADRILINK LOVER CARD to successfully come to life, the collaborative platform would have to achieve a certain critical number of members. This, in turn, is perhaps the easiest to achieve by periodically organizing presentations of current and potential collaborative programs, project proposals, etc. For example, on these occasions it would be

³ In the future, work should also be done to obtain a local SIM card with data traffic together with the card.

possible to discuss the ongoing needs of the members of the platform (several concrete examples for places of experience: equipment for the gladiator park Bukovica, bicycles for rent, a rerna or a vending machine for PPG Trninić programs; the arrangement of the numismatic setting of the association "Denarius"; a coin making in "Djerdan", the creation of websites of entities, etc.).

Another element of creative collaborative meetings could be to reflect on business ideas such as jointly launching new products (e.g. gradiška *Conditum Viatorium*, a refreshing beverage for passengers-AVENTuriste). The third element would be the popularization of the platform according to potential new members, including domains in which one might not expect interest in inclusion in the tourism platform (e.g. service cosmetic and hairdressing activities, dental offices, etc. can also develop services inspired by ancient times). In this way, the collaborative platform would, from the point of view of visitors, build the attractiveness of the *loyalty* club, while, from the point of view of the bidders, i.e. local communities, has grown into a platform that improves the local business and social climate as a whole.

In the domain of creative cooperation, an important role would be played by the city's cultural institutions, as well as associations, e.g. the already prominent "Denarius", then cultural and artistic societies ("**Kolovit**", etc.), civil and voluntary associations (e.g. **NGO "Most"**), sports clubs and associations (e.g. **cycling club "Challenge"** and the SRD "Amur"). Furthermore, there are professional associations, especially the Association of **Beekeepers "Amorfa"**, whose small number of members have already expressed interest in joining the collaborative platform.

Photo 8. Training tours



3.4.3. Marketing and promotion

If other segments of this plan come to life satisfactorily, this element will be largely organically carried out "on the tail" of the growth of the popularity of tourist programs, tourist-promotional activities (example culinary AVEnturas) etc. However, the destination development program from the ground up cannot count on this development with certainty. For this reason, it is of great importance that the city **Tourism Organization** integrates as much as possible into its regular activities (production of promo materials, publication on online channels, fair propaganda, etc.) as much as possible the content related to the construction AVEnturistic offer.



Also, based on market analyses (also available in this document) and ready-to-implement itineraries, it would benefit to launch a more active campaign of study visits by potentially interested representatives of tour operators and agencies, as well as visits by potential brand ambassadors in new media (bloggers, digital travel writers, influencers). In this segment, a large role

could be played by domestic agencies the construction agency **Sidro Tours**. The promotional significance that the partner **ADRILINK** platform can bring to the destination should not be ignored, ranging from its digital channels to the possibility of organizing pilot tourist and study visits by project partners.

Of the classic advertising methods, space should be leased for AVEnturistic *billboards* in the border crossing zone and in a few other frequent locations along the Banja Luka Road. In perspective, it will be necessary to work on the possibility of placing an advertising info-pole along the route of the highway west of the city, that is, to initiate the lease of advertising space under the jurisdiction of the highway.⁴

Finally, the tourism organization is the most suitable carrier of activities of monitoring and providing information about individual providers of tourist and related services, especially those in the status of a place of experience. Visitors and associates-members of the platform should always be able to find promo materials and up-to-date technical information regarding other members of the platform, i.e., in the tourist info office. AVEnturistic offer.

3.4.4. Utility issues and infrastructure

The last, but not least, field of cooperation between the members of the platform, as well as other stakeholders, is related to the state of the municipal infrastructure necessary for the quality implementation of tourism programs. Furthermore, in section 2.9. ("Heritage resources and environment"), communal issues are in many ways intertwined with the question of the quality of tourist facilities.

⁴ An example of good practice in this domain is, for example, bina Istra.

In this regard, this collaborative element should first encompass ongoing coordination. For example, periodic tours of the routes of thematic routes, to check the condition of traffic, interpretation, and other infrastructure, as well as the state of the surrounding environment (wild dumps, etc.). This could be done in conjunction with members of the BK Challenge. Furthermore, consulting with the needs of the tourism sector when drawing up plans for utility actions, annual asphalt programs, construction of water supply, sewerage, etc. Finally, informing the tourism sector (e.g. tourist office) about works or other emergencies that could affect the conduct of tours of thematic AVENTuras and other tourism programmes in the city urban and rural area.

On another level, various proactive measures could also be worked out within this element. For example, in section 2.5, we talked about the problem of wild landfills located along the Route of Honey AVENTure. In cooperation with the tourism sector and the Centre, the competent institutions could promote certain smaller parts of the city (e.g., Krajišnik, Laminci) into pilot areas of sustainable waste management. In these zones, green pilot projects would be designed and implemented, which could later be extended to the entire city, while providing tourism programs with a clean ecological environment. In this context, a significant role could be played by the Association "Most", which directs a significant part of its activities towards the promotion of ecological values.

Another potential utility measure concerns the introduction, i.e., publicly available wi-fi network to the border crossing zone.⁵ This would allow potential visitors to be communicated digitally immediately upon entering Gradiška and BiH (the network itself could be called "AVENTure Gradiška", "AVENTure Public Wifi", etc.)

3.4.5. Operational cooperation

For all the above levels of cooperation to work, a central coordination mechanism is necessary. As this collaborative platform develops sustainable tourism in the wider area of the city, it is operationally coincided with the activities of the city's **Department of Agriculture and Rural Development**. Namely, addressing the issue of tourist development of the Gradiška rural area, the project of establishing the Landscapes Interpretation Center for of further elaborates the system of measures that the Department already implements and supervises, e.g., within the meaning of the provisions of the Ordinance on the fulfillment of conditions for the provision of tourist services in the countryside. So far as proposals related to the planning of destination development, the establishment of quality systems (AVE standard) and collaborative platforms can be integrated into the existing regulatory and enforcement framework as a kind of superstructure.

Considering all this, the Department will be an entry institutional point for all those entities interested in getting involved in the work of the collaborative platform, all stakeholders that want to be a part of LIC. In addition, it will be the coordinating body of the process of reviving the platform, that is, a kind of its "supervisory board" after the platform comes to life operationally.

⁵ Mr. Gordan Shurlan's idea.

The idea, therefore, is not that the Department should be given another complex administrative task, but to provide initial impulses for launching its own forces of the collaborative platform and later controlling and removing any "short circuits" in its work.

To launch the collaborative platform, the Department will:

- 1) In cooperation with the ADRIlink project team, will continue to actively involve all interested stakeholders in LIC Stakeholder agreement
- 2) Verify the process of selecting the coordination of the collaborative platform and perform the transfer of the platform's executive functions to the elected members of the coordination
- 3) Consider the proposals of this and other professional ADRIlink studies, by highlighting the possibilities and criteria for the development of innovative and thematic tourism products within the LIC collaborative platform

Ultimately, after the implementation of steps 1 and 2, that is, the operationalization of steps 3, the structure of the LIC collaborative platform will have functional sustainable management model.

Management and Sustainability Model of Landscape Interpretation Centre in Gradiška

