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### VIII Newsletter

Dear readers,

We are proud to present the eighth newsletter of the ADRIATIC ROUTE project!

This newsletter will talk about the Final Conference of the project held in Ioannina on March 29, 2015, the last meeting of the Project Steering Committee, as well as the Region Epirus participation at the International exhibitions held in Berlin and Tel Aviv.

Have a nice reading!

### Adriatic Route project in a nutshell

- The **Adriatic Route for Thematic Tourism** project has been financed in the framework of IPA Adriatic CBC Programme 2007/2013 – Measure 3.3 Communication Networks
- The **total budget** is equal to euro **1.784.484,22**
- Adriatic Route project started in **October 2012** and will end in **September 2015**
- **Five Countries** are involved for a total of **6 Project Partner**

For more details, have a look at our project web site [www.adriatic-route.com](http://www.adriatic-route.com) and follow our Social Profile on Facebook [Adriatic Route Project](#) and Twitter [@AdriaticRoute](#) !





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### Final Conference on "Smart Solutions for the promotion of thematic tourism in the region of Epirus"

The Final Conference organized by the Region of Epirus entitled "Smart Solutions for the promotion of thematic tourism in Epirus», was held with great success on Tuesday, March 29, 2016 in Hotel Du Lac in Ioannina in the framework of the project "ADRIATIC ROUTE - Adriatic Route for Thematic Tourism".



The purpose of the conference was to present and seal this great initiative to enhance and promote alternative forms of tourism in the Adriatic region, with emphasis in the area of Gastronomy and the Information and Communication Technology.

Greek and foreign partners who honored the event with their presence, presented through interesting lectures, the individual actions and applications as well as the results of the project, holding steady interest in the packed conference center.

The first part of the conference began with Vice Governor of Epirus for culture and cultural events, Mr. Konstantinos Siaravas, who welcomed the participants, and the presentation of the project "Adriatic Route" by Ms. Vicky Igoumenidou, member of the project team.





Then the audience watched Ms. Lisa Dovico member of the project team for the province of Padua, which analyzed the Green Paper talking about possible future actions. Mr. George Yannis, Professor of NTUA-Transportation, analyzed the Combined Transport Systems in Tourism, while Mr. George Tassos, Hotelier-Representative of SETE presented intelligent solutions for alternative tourism in the Region of Epirus.



The first part ended with the speech of Mr. Konstantinos Papanikolaou from Comitech A.E., who also presented the online platform WEB-GIS, one of the main deliverables of the Adriatic Route project.

After the break, the conference ended with speeches by Mr. George Stroggiopoulos, Director of the Region of Epirus, on "Adriatic and Smart Specialization in Epirus" and Ms Caterina Dauria, external collaborator of the Region Marche, which presented the Development Model Thematic Tourism in the Region Marche. The final part of the event, dealt with the signing of a Memorandum between the project partners to jointly promote tourism in the Adriatic.



Later the same day, the last partners' meeting of the project took place. Mrs Vicky Igoumenidou welcomed everybody and presented the agenda of the meeting that included many technical issues and steps that are required for the successful closure of the project. Later, a short discussion with questions and clarifications followed. LB thanked all partners for a great cooperation and wished all, to continue their cooperation to the future as they have already set up the basis for the capitalization of the results and output of this project.



### ITB Berlin, March 9-13, 2016

In the framework of the project "ADRIATIC ROUTE - Adriatic Route for Thematic Tourism", the Epirus Region project team participated in the International Exhibition of Berlin (ITB Berlin), which was held on March 9-13.



The project team managed to show how Adriatic Route Project made possible the development of a coordinated and joined effort for the promotion of thematic tourism, considering the current tourism trends and the changes in consumers' habits. The team also highlighted the importance of new tourism products at European level, and the advancement of sustainable tourism.



Region of Epirus invested for another year in the increase of tourists from Germany and its neighboring countries. The number of trade visitors reached 120,000 and is indicative of the great interest shown in this international exhibition, which is considered the largest in the world.



The new and hopeful element resulting from the ITB Berlin, is the increase in bookings in Greece, due, to some extent, to the problems that exist in the Middle East and in Muslim countries. At the same time though, an intention to redefine destinations within Greece from the East (affected by refugee flows) to other regions is established. This trend was also evident taking into consideration the interest shown by the visitors of the Epirus kiosk, which is an additional incentive for our tourism entrepreneurs to claim a larger share from the German tourism market.



In light of past experience, but also in the light of new data, the Region focused on the promotion of Epirus as a four seasons destination in combination with its gastronomy and agricultural products.



Specifically, the participation of the region of Epirus was composed by three sectors, the purely tourist - informative, the promotion of the agricultural products of Epirus and the “Epirotic Breakfast”, and the presentation of the outcomes of the European program of Epirus Region “Adriatic Route for Thematic Tourism”, a project aimed at the enhancement and promotion of alternative forms of thematic tourism in the Adriatic region. One of the applications of the program was first presented at the International Exhibition in Berlin and concerned the display devices of Epirus tourist attractions, through virtual reality.



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Moreover the Adriatic Route team presented the Virtual Tour for Epirus Region developed by Comitech S.A. Among others, the Virtual Tour includes digitally processed photography, high quality 360 degrees panoramic photos, and the process of their integration into a virtual tour application that allows visitors to browse and explore the region as if being there!



Also, in the Region's kiosk, meetings were held between tourism entrepreneurs from Epirus with tour operators, as well as a workshop with tour Bloggers. The kiosk of Epirus was visited by the Deputy Minister of Tourism Mrs. Elena Kountoura, who was able to "see" Epirus through modern technology, the General Secretary of the Greek Tourist Organization Mr. Dimitris Trifonopoulos, the President of the Greek Tourist Enterprises Association (SETE) Mr. Andreas Andreadis etc.





### International Exhibition I.M.T.M. Tel Aviv

Highly successful was the participation of region Epirus in EOT's kiosk, during the International Fair IMTM in Tel Aviv. The exhibition lasted from 09.02.2016 until 10.02.2016 at the Exhibition Center «Israel Trade Fairs & Convention Center» and the turnout was impressive. The stand of the Region of Epirus during the exhibition was visited by tourist offices, tourism professionals, journalists, opinion makers, tour operators, operating in Israel, who distributed informational and printed material of the Adriatic Route project, co-financed from IPA ADRIATIC CBC PROGRAMME.

The stand of Region of Epirus, was represented by the project's implementation team, consisting of Kalampoka Eleni, Igoumenidou Vicky, Mary Stergiou and Christodoulou Konstantino, while Mrs. Alega Matsa, represented the Jewish Community of Ioannina. The stand also consisted of entrepreneurs and Association representatives / Committees of Tourism / Tourism Epirus: Ms. Elsa Exarchou, Vice President of the Association of Travel Zagoria and Business and market manager of the Municipality Zagori Tourism, Mr. Harris Exarchou from Mikro hotel Papigo 1700 hotel & Spa, Mr. Achilles Papaefthymiou from Alpine Zone company, Mountain Activities outdoor recreation, Ms. Ellie Barmpagianni from Grand Forest Metsovo hotel, Mr. Sam Koudounis from the hotel Association of Ioannina Prefecture and Mr. George Pouloupoulos, from Trekking Hellas Ioannina.



B2B meetings were held, for the mission of Epirus region with tourism professionals, to develop partnerships that could create growth opportunities for both countries. The Fair was attended by the General Secretary of EOT Mr. Dimitri Tryfonopoulos, who toured the premises of the exhibition, visited stands of Greek participations and met with Israel's Minister of Tourism. The Region of Epirus participation was part of a coordinated extroversion effort, trying to expand the tourism market from Israel. It is worth noting that this effort has paid off since the Epirus region is a tourist destination and presents readability as a tourism brand name.