

Interreg



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NEXT Black Sea Basin

BSB00884

SUSDEST-NET

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A - Project identification

A.1 Project identification

Project id (automatically created)	BSB00884
Name of the lead partner organisation	Δήμος Καβάλας (DIMOS KAVALAS)
Name of the lead partner organisation in English	Municipality of Kavala
Project title	Sustainable Destinations Black Sea Network
Project acronym	SUSDEST-NET
Programme priority	Blue and Smart Region
Specific objective	RS01.1: Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies
Project duration in months	30

A.2 Project summary

Please give a short overview of the project and describe:

- the common challenge of the programme area your project is tackling;
- the overall project objective and the expected change your project will make to the current situation;
- the main outputs and results your project will develop and who will benefit from them;
- the planned approach and why transnational cooperation is needed;

The SUSDEST-NET project addresses common challenges in the Black Sea Basin region, which includes Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, and Turkey. This area faces issues such as over-reliance on tourism, leading to environmental degradation, pollution, and unsustainable resource use. Climate change, economic disparities, and insufficient infrastructure further exacerbate these problems. Additionally, a lack of coordinated policies and governance structures results in fragmented efforts to manage tourism sustainably.

The overall objective of SUSDEST-NET is to promote ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) sustainability principles for 5 tourism destinations in the area who will establish their Destination Management Committees (DMCs). The project aims to transform these destinations into sustainable, competitive, and attractive areas, supporting the blue economy and enhancing the region's profile, deriving from the adoption of sustainable practices, improving environmental quality, social equity, and economic viability. This will attract responsible tourists, boost local economies, and preserve the region's natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

The project will develop a common sustainable tourism policy and strategy, providing a harmonized framework for guiding sustainable tourism practices. This includes creating a versatile training

package with modules, case studies, and practical exercises on sustainable tourism practices, delivered through e-training sessions. AI tools such as the AI Recommendation and Monitoring System (AIREMS) supporting sustainability of destinations and a Sustainable Destinations Observatory will provide real-time data and insights to monitor and recommend sustainable practices. The Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) platform will facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration among stakeholders.

Pilot implementations will design and implement prioritized actions from sustainability plans using the RADAR methodology, serving as practical examples for other regions. A sustainability awarding scheme will recognize destinations' excellence in sustainable tourism, and targeted marketing campaigns along with participation in an international tourism fair will promote sustainable destinations in the region.

The SUSDEST-NET project adopts a holistic approach to sustainable tourism. DMCs will oversee the implementation of sustainable practices, leveraging advanced technologies like AI tools and digital platforms for continuous improvement. The SDEC platform will foster a community of practice for stakeholders to exchange ideas and co-create solutions. Pilot implementations will demonstrate the feasibility and benefits of sustainable practices, encouraging wider adoption.

Special attention is paid to the active involvement of local communities and stakeholders, ensuring that sustainability initiatives are inclusive and meet the needs of all stakeholders. The project will be managed by a clearly defined structure, and at its conclusion, the partners will form the SUSDEST-NET network to ensure the durability and transferability of project outcomes. All outputs will be available online for any interested party.

Transnational cooperation is essential for addressing shared environmental, social, and economic challenges in the Black Sea Basin. By working together, project partners can leverage diverse expertise, share best practices, and develop innovative solutions effective across different contexts. This cooperation ensures broader impact and contributes to the region's overall sustainability.

The project is innovative in several ways. It adopts a holistic approach to sustainability by integrating ESG principles into all aspects of destination management, addressing environmental, social, and governance dimensions comprehensively. SUSDEST-NET leverages AI and digital platforms for real-time monitoring and recommendations, representing a significant advancement over current practices. The development of a common sustainable tourism policy and strategy promotes transnational cooperation and consistency. The SDEC platform integrates interactive and collaborative features, fostering a community of practice.

In conclusion, the SUSDEST-NET project addresses the urgent need for sustainable tourism in the Black Sea Basin by promoting innovative solutions and transnational cooperation. By integrating ESG principles, leveraging advanced technologies, and fostering collaboration, the project aims to transform tourism destinations into sustainable and competitive areas. These efforts will enhance the region's profile, support the blue economy, and contribute to a more resilient and smart Black Sea region.

A.3 Project budget overview

Programme funding			Contribution					Total project budget
Funding source	Funding amount	Co-financing rate (%)	Automatic public contribution	Other public contribution	Total public contribution	Private contribution	Total contribution	
Interreg Funds	1.274.147,15	90,00%	0,00	141.571,95	141.571,95	0,00	141.571,95	1.415.719,10
Total EU funds	1.274.147,15	90,00%	0,00	141.571,95	141.571,95	0,00	141.571,95	1.415.719,10
Total project budget	1.274.147,15	90,00%	0,00	141.571,95	141.571,95	0,00	141.571,95	1.415.719,10

A.4 Project outputs and result overview

Programme Output Indicator	Aggregated value per Programme output indicator	Measurement Unit	Output	Output Title	Output target value	Programme result indicator	Baseline	Result indicator target value	Measurement unit
Jointly developed solutions	1,00	solutions	Output 1.1	Common Sustainability Strategy	1,00	Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations	0,00	1,00	solutions
Organisations cooperating across borders	6,00	organisations	Output 1.2	Project partnership – SUSDEST-NET network (A1.11)	6,00	Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion	0,00	6,00	organisations
Public events across borders jointly organised	1,00	events	Output 1.3	International conference for results presentation and capitalisation (C.7.3)	1,00				

B - Project partners

Partners overview

Number	Status	Name of the organisation in english	Country	Organisation abbreviation	Partner role	Partner total eligible budget
1	Active	Municipality of Kavala	Elláda (EL)	KAVALA	LP	264.678,62
2	Active	UNION OF BULGARIAN BLACK SEA LOCAL AUTHORITIES	Bulgaria (BG)	UBBSLA	PP	232.592,74
3	Active	Democritus University of Thrace-School of Management Science and Accounting-Special Account for Research Funds	Elláda (EL)	DUTH	PP	251.196,62
4	Active	Chisinau City Hall	Moldova (MD)	PMC	PP	223.245,22
5	Active	Limanu Municipality	România (RO)	LM	PP	222.738,04
6	Active	Uskudar Urban Services Trade and Industry Joint Stock Organization	Türkiye (TR)	KENTAS	PP	221.267,86

B.1 Lead partner	
Partner number	1
Partner role	LP
Name of the organisation in original language	Δήμος Καβάλας (DIMOS KAVALAS)
Name of the organisation in english	Municipality of Kavala
Organisation abbreviation	KAVALA
Department / unit / division	Mayor's Office
Partner main address	
Country	Elláda (EL)
NUTS 2	Anatoliki Makedonia, Thraki (EL51)
NUTS 3	Thasos, Kavala (EL515)
Street, House number, Postal code, City	Kyprou Str. 10 65403 Kavala
Homepage	www.kavala.gov.gr
Address of department / unit / division (if not applicable fill in the same information as above)	
Country	Elláda (EL)
NUTS 2	Anatoliki Makedonia, Thraki (EL51)
NUTS 3	Thasos, Kavala (EL515)
Street, House number, Postal code, City	Kyprou Str. 10 65403 Kavala
Legal and financial information	
Type of partner	Local public authority
Legal status	Public
VAT number (if applicable)	EL997582067
Is your organisation entitled to recover VAT based on national legislation for the activities implemented in the project?	No
Other identifier number	N/A
Other identifier description	N/A

Legal and financial information			
PIC (from EC Participant Register) *MANDATORY		950974712	
Contact			
Legal representative		Mr. Theodoros Mouriadis	
Contact person		Mrs. Io Chatzivaryti	
Email		iochatzivaryti@gmail.com	
Telephone no.		+306974476511	
Co-financing			
Source		Amount	Percentage
Interreg Funds		238.210,75	90,00%
Partner contribution		26.467,87	10,00%
Partner total eligible budget		264.678,62	100,00%
Origin of partner contribution			
Source of contribution	Legal status of contribution	Amount	% of total partner budget
KAVALA	Public	26.467,87	10,00%
Total			
Sub-total public contribution		26.467,87	10,00%
Sub-total automatic public contribution		0,00	0,00%
Sub-total private contribution		0,00	0,00%
Total		26.467,87	10,00%
State Aid			
State aid criteria self-check			
Criterium I: Is the partner involved in economic activities within the project?			
1. Will the project applicant implement activities and/or offer goods/services for which a market exists?		No	The project applicant will not implement activities and/ or offer goods/ services for which a market exists

State aid criteria self-check	
Criterium I: Is the partner involved in economic activities within the project?	
2. Are there activities/goods/services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view to making profit (even if this is not the applicant's intention)?	No There are no activities/ goods/ services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view of making profit
Criterium II: Does the partner and/or any third party receive an selective advantage within the project?	
1. Does the project applicant plan to carry out the economic activities on its own i.e. not to select an external service provider via public procurement procedures for example?	No The project applicant does not plan to carry out the economic activities on its own
2. Will the project applicant, any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience gain any benefits from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business (i.e. not received in the absence of funding granted through the project)?	No The project applicant as well as any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience will not gain any benefit from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business. In any case, all outcomes of the project will be uploaded on internet and made available to any interested party for free
Result of State aid criteria self-check:	No risk of state aid

B.1 Project Partner 2	
Partner number	2
Partner role	PP
Name of the organisation in original language	Асоциация на Българските Черноморски Общини
Name of the organisation in english	UNION OF BULGARIAN BLACK SEA LOCAL AUTHORITIES
Organisation abbreviation	UBBSLA
Department / unit / division	N/A
Partner main address	
Country	Bulgaria (BG)
NUTS 2	Severoiztochen (BG33)
NUTS 3	Varna (BG331)
Street, House number, Postal code, City	Preslav 4 9000 Varna
Homepage	www.ubbsla.org
Address of department / unit / division (if not applicable fill in the same information as above)	
Country	Bulgaria (BG)
NUTS 2	Severoiztochen (BG33)
NUTS 3	Varna (BG331)
Street, House number, Postal code, City	Preslav 4 9000 Varna
Legal and financial information	
Type of partner	Interest groups including NGOs
Legal status	Public
VAT number (if applicable)	103133943
Is your organisation entitled to recover VAT based on national legislation for the activities implemented in the project?	No
Other identifier number	N/A
Other identifier description	N/A

Legal and financial information			
PIC (from EC Participant Register) *MANDATORY		969558457	
Contact			
Legal representative		Mrs. Mariyana Ivanova	
Contact person		Mrs. Elena Simeonova	
Email		assistant@ubbsla.org	
Telephone no.		+359887290377	
Co-financing			
Source		Amount	Percentage
Interreg Funds		209.333,46	90,00%
Partner contribution		23.259,28	10,00%
Partner total eligible budget		232.592,74	100,00%
Origin of partner contribution			
Source of contribution	Legal status of contribution	Amount	% of total partner budget
UBBSLA	Public	23.259,28	10,00%
Total			
Sub-total public contribution		23.259,28	10,00%
Sub-total automatic public contribution		0,00	0,00%
Sub-total private contribution		0,00	0,00%
Total		23.259,28	10,00%
State Aid			
State aid criteria self-check			
Criterium I: Is the partner involved in economic activities within the project?			
1. Will the project applicant implement activities and/or offer goods/services for which a market exists?		No	The project applicant will not implement activities and/ or offer goods/ services for which a market exists

State aid criteria self-check	
Criterium I: Is the partner involved in economic activities within the project?	
2. Are there activities/goods/services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view to making profit (even if this is not the applicant's intention)?	No There are no activities/ goods/ services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view of making profit
Criterium II: Does the partner and/or any third party receive an selective advantage within the project?	
1. Does the project applicant plan to carry out the economic activities on its own i.e. not to select an external service provider via public procurement procedures for example?	No The project applicant does not plan to carry out the economic activities on its own
2. Will the project applicant, any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience gain any benefits from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business (i.e. not received in the absence of funding granted through the project)?	No The project applicant as well as any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience will not gain any benefit from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business. In any case, all outcomes of the project will be uploaded on internet and made available to any interested party for free
Result of State aid criteria self-check:	No risk of state aid

B.1 Project Partner 3	
Partner number	3
Partner role	PP
Name of the organisation in original language	Δημοκρίτειο Πανεπιστήμιο Θράκης-Σχολή Διοικητικής Επιστήμης και Λογιστικής-Ειδικός Λογαριασμός Κονδυλίων Έρευνας (ΕΙΔΙΚΟΣ ΛΟΓΑΡΙΑΣΜΟΣ ΚΟΝΔΥΛΙΩΝ ΕΡΕΥΝΑΣ DPTH)
Name of the organisation in english	Democritus University of Thrace-School of Management Science and Accounting-Special Account for Research Funds
Organisation abbreviation	DUTH
Department / unit / division	School of Management Science and Accounting
Partner main address	
Country	Ελλάδα (EL)
NUTS 2	Anatoliki Makedonia, Thraki (EL51)
NUTS 3	Xanthi (EL512)
Street, House number, Postal code, City	V. Sophias Str. 12 67132 Xanthi
Homepage	www.duth.gr
Address of department / unit / division (if not applicable fill in the same information as above)	
Country	Ελλάδα (EL)
NUTS 2	Anatoliki Makedonia, Thraki (EL51)
NUTS 3	Thasos, Kavala (EL515)
Street, House number, Postal code, City	Agios Loukas 1 65404 Kavala
Legal and financial information	
Type of partner	Higher education and research organisations
Legal status	Public
VAT number (if applicable)	EL999975749

Legal and financial information			
Is your organisation entitled to recover VAT based on national legislation for the activities implemented in the project?		No	
Other identifier number		N/A	
Other identifier description		N/A	
PIC (from EC Participant Register) *MANDATORY		999659109	
Contact			
Legal representative		Professor Georgios Broufas	
Contact person		Assistant Professor Dimitrios Chatzoudis	
Email		dchatzou@af.duth.gr	
Telephone no.		+306974529418	
Co-financing			
Source		Amount	Percentage
Interreg Funds		226.076,95	90,00%
Partner contribution		25.119,67	10,00%
Partner total eligible budget		251.196,62	100,00%
Origin of partner contribution			
Source of contribution	Legal status of contribution	Amount	% of total partner budget
DUTH	Public	25.119,67	10,00%
Total			
Sub-total public contribution		25.119,67	10,00%
Sub-total automatic public contribution		0,00	0,00%
Sub-total private contribution		0,00	0,00%
Total		25.119,67	10,00%
State Aid			

State aid criteria self-check	
Criterion I: Is the partner involved in economic activities within the project?	
1. Will the project applicant implement activities and/or offer goods/services for which a market exists?	No The project applicant will not implement activities and/ or offer goods/ services for which a market exists
2. Are there activities/goods/services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view to making profit (even if this is not the applicant's intention)?	No There are no activities/ goods/ services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view of making profit
Criterion II: Does the partner and/or any third party receive an selective advantage within the project?	
1. Does the project applicant plan to carry out the economic activities on its own i.e. not to select an external service provider via public procurement procedures for example?	No The project applicant does not plan to carry out the economic activities on its own
2. Will the project applicant, any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience gain any benefits from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business (i.e. not received in the absence of funding granted through the project)?	No The project applicant as well as any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience will not gain any benefit from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business. In any case, all outcomes of the project will be uploaded on internet and made available to any interested party for free
Result of State aid criteria self-check:	No risk of state aid

B.1 Project Partner 4	
Partner number	4
Partner role	PP
Name of the organisation in original language	Primaria Municipiului Chisinau
Name of the organisation in english	Chisinau City Hall
Organisation abbreviation	PMC
Department / unit / division	N/A
Partner main address	
Country	Moldova (MD)
NUTS 2	Chişinău municipality (MD10)
NUTS 3	Chişinău municipality (MD100)
Street, House number, Postal code, City	Stefan cel Mare si Sfânt Boulevard 83 2012 Chisinau
Homepage	https://www.chisinau.md/en
Address of department / unit / division (if not applicable fill in the same information as above)	
Country	Moldova (MD)
NUTS 2	Chişinău municipality (MD10)
NUTS 3	Chişinău municipality (MD100)
Street, House number, Postal code, City	Stefan cel Mare si Sfânt Boulevard 83 2012 Chisinau
Legal and financial information	
Type of partner	Local public authority
Legal status	Public
VAT number (if applicable)	N/A
Is your organisation entitled to recover VAT based on national legislation for the activities implemented in the project?	No
Other identifier number	1007601009484
Other identifier description	Fiscal Code

Legal and financial information			
PIC (from EC Participant Register) *MANDATORY		882984987	
Contact			
Legal representative		Mr. Ion Ceban	
Contact person		Mr. Roman Vitiuc	
Email		rvitiuc@gmail.com	
Telephone no.		+ 37379922188	
Co-financing			
Source		Amount	Percentage
Interreg Funds		200.920,69	90,00%
Partner contribution		22.324,53	10,00%
Partner total eligible budget		223.245,22	100,00%
Origin of partner contribution			
Source of contribution	Legal status of contribution	Amount	% of total partner budget
PMC	Public	22.324,53	10,00%
Total			
Sub-total public contribution		22.324,53	10,00%
Sub-total automatic public contribution		0,00	0,00%
Sub-total private contribution		0,00	0,00%
Total		22.324,53	10,00%
State Aid			
State aid criteria self-check			
Criterium I: Is the partner involved in economic activities within the project?			
1. Will the project applicant implement activities and/or offer goods/services for which a market exists?		No	The project applicant will not implement activities and/ or offer goods/ services for which a market exists

State aid criteria self-check	
Criterium I: Is the partner involved in economic activities within the project?	
2. Are there activities/goods/services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view to making profit (even if this is not the applicant's intention)?	No There are no activities/ goods/ services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view of making profit
Criterium II: Does the partner and/or any third party receive an selective advantage within the project?	
1. Does the project applicant plan to carry out the economic activities on its own i.e. not to select an external service provider via public procurement procedures for example?	No The project applicant does not plan to carry out the economic activities on its own
2. Will the project applicant, any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience gain any benefits from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business (i.e. not received in the absence of funding granted through the project)?	No The project applicant as well as any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience will not gain any benefit from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business. In any case, all outcomes of the project will be uploaded on internet and made available to any interested party for free
Result of State aid criteria self-check:	No risk of state aid

B.1 Project Partner 5	
Partner number	5
Partner role	PP
Name of the organisation in original language	Primaria Comunei Limanu
Name of the organisation in english	Limanu Municipality
Organisation abbreviation	LM
Department / unit / division	N/A
Partner main address	
Country	România (RO)
NUTS 2	Sud-Est (RO22)
NUTS 3	Constanța (RO223)
Street, House number, Postal code, City	Castanului no 32 907160 Limanu
Homepage	www.primarialimanu.ro
Address of department / unit / division (if not applicable fill in the same information as above)	
Country	România (RO)
NUTS 2	Sud-Est (RO22)
NUTS 3	Constanța (RO223)
Street, House number, Postal code, City	Castanului no 32 907160 Limanu
Legal and financial information	
Type of partner	Local public authority
Legal status	Public
VAT number (if applicable)	4671688
Is your organisation entitled to recover VAT based on national legislation for the activities implemented in the project?	No
Other identifier number	N/A
Other identifier description	N/A

Legal and financial information			
PIC (from EC Participant Register) *MANDATORY		877007750	
Contact			
Legal representative		Mr. Mihai Feodorof	
Contact person		Mrs. Camelia Sgubea	
Email		achizitii@primarialimanu.ro	
Telephone no.		+40751586414	
Co-financing			
Source		Amount	Percentage
Interreg Funds		200.464,23	90,00%
Partner contribution		22.273,81	10,00%
Partner total eligible budget		222.738,04	100,00%
Origin of partner contribution			
Source of contribution	Legal status of contribution	Amount	% of total partner budget
LM	Public	22.273,81	10,00%
Total			
Sub-total public contribution		22.273,81	10,00%
Sub-total automatic public contribution		0,00	0,00%
Sub-total private contribution		0,00	0,00%
Total		22.273,81	10,00%
State Aid			
State aid criteria self-check			
Criterium I: Is the partner involved in economic activities within the project?			
1. Will the project applicant implement activities and/or offer goods/services for which a market exists?		No	The project applicant will not implement activities and/ or offer goods/ services for which a market exists

State aid criteria self-check	
Criterium I: Is the partner involved in economic activities within the project?	
2. Are there activities/goods/services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view to making profit (even if this is not the applicant's intention)?	No There are no activities/ goods/ services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view of making profit
Criterium II: Does the partner and/or any third party receive an selective advantage within the project?	
1. Does the project applicant plan to carry out the economic activities on its own i.e. not to select an external service provider via public procurement procedures for example?	No The project applicant does not plan to carry out the economic activities on its own
2. Will the project applicant, any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience gain any benefits from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business (i.e. not received in the absence of funding granted through the project)?	No The project applicant as well as any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience will not gain any benefit from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business. In any case, all outcomes of the project will be uploaded on internet and made available to any interested party for free
Result of State aid criteria self-check:	No risk of state aid

B.1 Project Partner 6	
Partner number	6
Partner role	PP
Name of the organisation in original language	Üsküdar Kent Hizmetleri Ticaret ve Sanayi Anonim Şirketi
Name of the organisation in english	Uskudar Urban Services Trade and Industry Joint Stock Organization
Organisation abbreviation	KENTAS
Department / unit / division	Project Directorate
Partner main address	
Country	Türkiye (TR)
NUTS 2	İstanbul (TR10)
NUTS 3	İstanbul (TR100)
Street, House number, Postal code, City	Mimar Sinan Mah. Çavuşdere Cad. 35 İç Kapı No: 15 34672 Uskudar - Istanbul
Homepage	https://uskudarkentas.com.tr/
Address of department / unit / division (if not applicable fill in the same information as above)	
Country	Türkiye (TR)
NUTS 2	İstanbul (TR10)
NUTS 3	İstanbul (TR100)
Street, House number, Postal code, City	Çavuşdere Str. 35 İç Kapı No: 15 34672 Uskudar - Istanbul
Legal and financial information	
Type of partner	Local public authority
Legal status	Public
VAT number (if applicable)	TR0010420750
Is your organisation entitled to recover VAT based on national legislation for the activities implemented in the project?	No
Other identifier number	505111-0

Legal and financial information			
Other identifier description		Trade Registration Number	
PIC (from EC Participant Register) *MANDATORY		870660361	
Contact			
Legal representative		Mr. Nazim Akkoyunlu	
Contact person		Mrs. Nilay Özger	
Email		nilay.ozger@uskudarkentas.com.tr	
Telephone no.		+902165313000	
Co-financing			
Source		Amount	Percentage
Interreg Funds		199.141,07	90,00%
Partner contribution		22.126,79	10,00%
Partner total eligible budget		221.267,86	100,00%
Origin of partner contribution			
Source of contribution	Legal status of contribution	Amount	% of total partner budget
KENTAS	Public	22.126,79	10,00%
Total			
Sub-total public contribution		22.126,79	10,00%
Sub-total automatic public contribution		0,00	0,00%
Sub-total private contribution		0,00	0,00%
Total		22.126,79	10,00%
State Aid			
State aid criteria self-check			
Criterion I: Is the partner involved in economic activities within the project?			
1. Will the project applicant implement activities and/or offer goods/services for which a market exists?		No	The project applicant will not implement activities and/ or offer goods/ services for which a market exists

State aid criteria self-check	
Criterium I: Is the partner involved in economic activities within the project?	
2. Are there activities/goods/services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view to making profit (even if this is not the applicant's intention)?	No There are no activities/ goods/ services that could have been undertaken by an operator with the view of making profit
Criterium II: Does the partner and/or any third party receive an selective advantage within the project?	
1. Does the project applicant plan to carry out the economic activities on its own i.e. not to select an external service provider via public procurement procedures for example?	No The project applicant does not plan to carry out the economic activities on its own
2. Will the project applicant, any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience gain any benefits from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business (i.e. not received in the absence of funding granted through the project)?	No The project applicant as well as any other operator not included in the project as a project partner or the target audience will not gain any benefit from its project economic activities, not received in the normal course of business. In any case, all outcomes of the project will be uploaded on internet and made available to any interested party for free
Result of State aid criteria self-check:	No risk of state aid

C - Project description

C.1 Project overall objective

Below, you can see the Programme specific objective your project will contribute to (chosen in section A.1.).

RS01.1: Developing and enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies

Project overall objective

Please define the overall objective of the project.

- Make sure that it clearly contributes to the selected programme specific objective and field of action (please see Part I Section 5 Priorities and Specific Objectives).
- The overall objective should describe the broader goal of the project for the benefit of its target group(s) and should point to the results (change) to be achieved by the project.

Jointly contribute to a more competitive and smart Black Sea region by supporting the blue economy and especially tourism by:

- Promoting the sustainability of tourism destinations
- Facilitating the transformation of partners' areas to sustainable tourism destinations using Artificial Intelligence, thus leading to improving their competitiveness and attractiveness and
- Networking to ensure experience exchange, ensuring lasting effects and transferability of outputs and results

C.2 Project relevance and context

C.2.1 What are the common territorial challenge(s) that will be tackled by the project?

Please describe why your project is needed in the programme area and the relevance of your project for the programme area, in terms of common challenges addressed.

The “Blue Economy” stands out as an important step in the conceptualization and realization of sustainable development (SDG 14). As it is well known, sustainable development is a definition that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Considering the unique characteristics of the Black Sea region, the blue economy is strongly dependent on the established maritime sectors, such as transport, shipbuilding, fisheries/ aquaculture and TOURISM.

It is recognized that tourism in the project area has a very positive impact on employment & income, as it is one of the fastest-growing sectors with high growth potential. The tourism industry constitutes today an important source of revenues for most Black Sea countries. Therefore, one of the main challenges the Black Sea Basin faces is the over-reliance on tourism, which has led to environmental degradation, increased pollution, and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources.

At the same time, sustainable development is a global priority that motivates both governments, institutions and society in general to adopt new practices. With the establishment of the Sustainable Development Goals in the United Nations 2030 agenda, a new perception regarding business practices has been formed. More and more large institutions are adopting sustainable development principles, applying ESG criteria related to their environmental, social and corporate governance performance.

Particularly in tourism, sustainability starts becoming a criterion for destination choice. In the sustainability report for 2021 of an international, well known, tour operator the following findings of a global survey in 2021 among 29000 travelers were (*):

- 81% of travelers surveyed say they want to stay in sustainable accommodations
- 73% are more likely to choose an accommodation if it has implemented sustainable practices.
- 72% think companies should offer more sustainable choices.
- 61% say the pandemic made them want to travel more sustainably in the future.

All the above demonstrate that the adoption and implementation of sustainable practices is an urgent viability factor for the tourism industry and cannot be ignored

Unsustainable tourism practices not only harm the environment but also lead to socio-economic challenges such as inequality, cultural erosion, and loss of local identity. Over-reliance on tourism can result in seasonal employment, which does not provide stable income for local communities. Furthermore, unchecked tourism development can cause conflict between tourists and local residents over resource use, leading to social tensions.

Adopting ESG sustainability practices can address these issues by ensuring that tourism development is inclusive and benefits local communities. For example, fair labor conditions and respect for human rights can improve the quality of life for workers in the tourism sector. Involving local communities in tourism planning and decision-making processes ensures that their needs and perspectives are considered, leading to more equitable and socially sustainable outcomes.

Moreover, transparent and ethical operations in tourism management build trust between tourists and stakeholders, enhancing the destination's reputation. Sustainable resource management helps preserve natural and cultural heritage, making destinations more attractive to environmentally conscious travelers. These practices not only support the long-term viability of tourism but also contribute to the overall resilience and competitiveness of the region's economy.

However...

When travelers decide on their trip, they first choose a destination and afterwards they select accommodation. They first answer the question "WHERE TO GO" and subsequently "WHERE TO STAY". This means that the effort towards sustainability initially falls on the shoulders of the destinations and then on the businesses, though these two efforts are not independent.

The conclusion is that stakeholders of tourism destinations, especially local authorities, are directly and urgently facing the challenge of sustainability that allows their areas to enhance their profile and competitiveness, improve their attractiveness, and effectively support the blue economy in their regions.

Hence, the major common challenge that the project tries to confront is to promote the concept of ESG sustainability to destinations in the project area and create the conditions for, and facilitate their sustainable transformation, thus supporting the blue economy and contributing to a more competitive and smart Black Sea region

(* Report available upon request

C.2.2 How does the project tackle identified common challenges? Is there something new about the approach? If yes, please describe it.

Please describe the solutions that will be developed, adopted and/or implemented during the project lifetime in order to tackle the identified common challenges. Describe also in what way the approach goes beyond existing practice in the sector/programme area/participating countries, if the case.

The SUSDEST-NET project addresses the common challenges identified by promoting the concept of ESG sustainability for destinations and creating the conditions for their sustainable transformation. The project will develop, adopt, and implement innovative solutions that go beyond existing practices, fostering a more competitive and smart Black Sea region. 5 destinations will be chosen by an equal number of partners to establish their Destination Management Committees (DMCs), use the tools developed by the project and start their journey to sustainability

Solutions Developed, Adopted, and Implemented:

1. Common Sustainable Tourism Policy (A1.1):

Development of a common policy framework that aligns with international sustainability standards (ETIS, GSTC) and addresses the specific needs of the region. The policy goes beyond existing fragmented approaches by providing a comprehensive and harmonized framework for sustainability.

2. Training Package on Sustainability and Sustainable Destinations – Training (A1.2):

Creation of a versatile training package that includes modules, case studies, and practical exercises

on sustainable tourism practices. The training, based on the training package, will be delivered through joint e-training sessions for DMC members and stakeholders.

3a. AI REcommendation and Monitoring System (AIREMS) supporting sustainability of destinations and Sustainable Destinations Observatory (A1.6):

Development of an AI tool to monitor and recommend sustainable practices for tourism destinations. The Observatory will provide real-time data and insight, helping destinations make sensible decisions and track their sustainability performance. The use of AI for sustainability monitoring and recommendations is a novel approach in the region.

3b. Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) Platform (A1.11):

Creation of an online platform combining Open Educational Resources (OER) and a Living Lab. The platform will facilitate knowledge sharing, collaboration, and innovation among stakeholders. Innovation: The SDEC platform goes beyond traditional knowledge sharing methods by integrating interactive and collaborative features

The use of AI and digital platforms for sustainability monitoring, recommendations, and knowledge sharing represents a significant advancement over current practices. These technologies provide data-driven insights and facilitate continuous improvement, enhancing the effectiveness of sustainability efforts.

4. Sustainable Destination Strategy and Plans (A1.5)

Based on Destinations' Baseline Assessments and Needs Analyses (A1.4) conducted by each partner, development of a common Sustainable Destination Strategy leading to individual plans for each destination taking into account each destination's specificities

5. Pilot Implementations (A1.7):

Design and implementation of prioritised actions from the sustainability plans in each destination using the RADAR (Results, Approaches, Deployment, Assessment and Refinement) methodology. These actions will serve as practical examples and models for other regions.

6. Sustainability Awarding Scheme (A1.8):

Design of an awarding scheme to recognize and promote excellence in sustainable tourism. The scheme will include criteria, scoring systems, and levels of achievement (e.g., bronze, silver, gold).

7. Joint Promotion of Sustainable Destinations (A1.10):

Conduct targeted marketing campaigns and participate in an international tourism fair to promote sustainable destinations in the Black Sea Basin region.

Moreover

- Special attention is paid to the active involvement of local communities and stakeholders in the sustainability process (A1.3). By fostering collaboration and co-creation, the project ensures that sustainability initiatives are inclusive and meet the needs of all stakeholders.
- The coordination of the project will be implemented based on a specific management structure with clearly defined duties and responsibilities
- At the end of the project, the partners will form the SUSDEST-NET network that will be the owner of the project outcomes and ensure their durability and transferability. All outputs and deliverables of the project will be uploaded on internet and made available to any interested party

Conclusion:

The SUSDEST-NET project tackles the identified common challenges in the Black Sea Basin region by developing and implementing innovative solutions that go beyond existing practices. By integrating ESG principles, leveraging advanced technologies, promoting transnational cooperation, and engaging stakeholders, the project aims to create a more competitive and sustainable tourism sector in the region. These efforts will contribute to the overall resilience and long-term viability of the tourism industry, supporting the blue economy and enhancing the attractiveness of the Black Sea Basin as a sustainable tourism destination.

C.2.3 Why is transnational cooperation needed to achieve project objectives and results?

Please explain why the project objectives cannot be efficiently reached acting only on a national/regional /local level and/or describe what benefits the project partners/target groups/ project area/programme area gain in taking a transnational approach.

Sustainability is a global concern and the relevant challenges are common for all countries. Thus, a transnational approach, combining cultures, experience and expertise from different countries is always feasible and leads to more integrated results

On the other hand, tourism is a transnational and interconnected sector, and the challenges facing the industry, such as climate change, environmental degradation, resource depletion, as well as social and governance issues do not respect national boundaries. Therefore, cooperation among countries, regions, and local communities is necessary to develop and implement effective solutions to address these challenges.

Taking a transnational approach can bring several benefits to the project partners/ target groups/ project area/ programme area, including:

- Sharing of best practices: Transnational cooperation allows for the sharing of best practices and knowledge exchange among partners and stakeholders, leading to the development of more effective and innovative solutions.
- Increased visibility and competitiveness: A transnational approach can increase the visibility and competitiveness of the project area, as it promotes the region as a sustainable and responsible tourism destination, attracting more tourists and boosting the local economies.
- Increased capacity: Cooperation among partners and stakeholders can lead to increased capacity and expertise in sustainable tourism practices, enabling them to better respond to future challenges and opportunities.
- Improved governance: Transnational cooperation can help improve governance and policy coordination among partners and stakeholders, leading to more effective and coordinated policies and actions.

The project's objectives cannot be efficiently reached by acting only on a national/ regional/ local level because, as mentioned above, the tourism industry is a complex and interconnected sector that involves multiple stakeholders, including tour operators, local communities, tourists, and policymakers. Effective solutions require collaboration and cooperation among all these stakeholders, which can be facilitated through transnational cooperation.

In the SUSDEST-NET project, the cross-border cooperation is based on joint development, implementation, staffing & financing. Therefore, in case of lack of transnational cooperation, the following outcomes could not (or only to some extent) be achieved:

1. Common Sustainable Tourism Policy. Policy paper recommendation (A1.1) and Common

sustainable destination strategy. Strategic objectives – KPIs (A1.5)

The sustainable tourism policy and the destination strategy would not be common. Deriving benefits from enhancing cooperation, expanding market reach, sharing resources efficiently, improving visitor experiences, better crisis management, and joint international marketing would be lost

2. Training package on Sustainability and Sustainable Destinations (A1.2)

The training package would not include a transnational dimension and the trainees could not fully understand the extroversive orientation of the project and they would not provide effective support to the destinations that want to start their sustainability journey

3. AI REcommendation and Monitoring System (AIREMS) supporting sustainability of destinations – Observatory (A1.6) and Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) platform (OER + Living Lab) and best practice repository (A1.11)

The application would not take into account the specificities of different countries and cultures. Moreover, the SDEC platform and the best practice repository would focus on one country only and, therefore, could not contribute to transnational knowledge and experience exchange. These are KEY reasons that the transnational character of the project is necessary for

4. In pilot applications (A1.7 – Output 2) the COMMON methodology for applying the AIREMS application would not be developed and the implementing organisations would not exploit transnational experience exchange

5. SUSDEST-NET network: Obvious failure. Negative effects in long lasting effects and transferability (Output 3)

6. The international character of the conference for results presentation and capitalisation would not be ensured and its success would be limited (Output 4)

7. No opportunities for development of connections and further collaboration opportunities would be provided and the operation of the "SDEC" platform would not be effective or fully exploited (A1.11)

The benefits of transnationality for the partners, the target groups and the project/ programme area are the effectiveness of all the above outputs/ deliverables and the deriving results

Overall, transnationality ensures the achievement of the overall objective of the project that is to "JOINTLY contribute to a more competitive and smart Black Sea region -and not only one single country- by supporting the blue economy and especially tourism..." (see C1)

C.2.4 Who will benefit from your project outputs?

In the first column of each row, please select one of the pre-defined target groups from the drop-down list. In the second column, explain in more detail exactly who will be involved in the activities proposed in your project. For example, if you choose the category local public authority, you need to explain which specific authority and in which territory.

Target Group	Specification
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Target Group	Specification
Local public authority	<p>Target groups Public authorities from the participating destinations responsible for tourism management, environmental protection, and community development.</p> <p>How They Benefit:</p> <p>The Common Sustainable Tourism Policy (A1.1), the Common Sustainable Destination Strategy (A1.5) and the Sustainable Destination Plan (A1.5), provide a comprehensive framework for integrating sustainable destination practices into local regulations and strategies.</p> <p>The Training Package on Sustainability and Sustainable Destinations (A1.2) will equip local authorities' officials with the knowledge and skills to implement and oversee sustainable destination initiatives effectively.</p> <p>The AI REcommendation and Monitoring System (AIREMS) supporting sustainability of destinations and the Sustainable destinations observatory (A1.6) will provide authorities with real-time data and insights, enabling informed decision-making and effective monitoring of destination sustainability performance.</p> <p>The Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) platform (A1.11) will offer a space for local authorities to engage with stakeholders, share best practices, and develop joint initiatives, fostering a community of practice around sustainable destinations.</p> <p>Local authorities will observe the impact of prioritized sustainability actions through pilot implementations (A1.7), providing valuable lessons and inspiration for scaling up these initiatives within their jurisdictions.</p> <p>Joint promotion activities (A1.10) will enhance the international visibility of local destinations, attracting more tourists and boosting the region's profile as a sustainable destination.</p> <p>Overall Impact: The project will empower local public authorities to lead the transition towards sustainable destinations. By providing tools, knowledge, and support, the project will help create more resilient, sustainable, and attractive tourism destinations, benefiting the environment, local communities, and the tourism industry.</p>
Regional public authority	Similarly and in a manner analogous to the local public authority
National public authority	Similarly and in a manner analogous to the local public authority

Target Group	Specification
Higher education and research organisations	<p>Both sustainability and artificial intelligence, that the SUSDEST-NET project deals with, are topics at the cutting edge of research and technology and occupy a large part of the activity in universities and research institutes. Those institutions benefit from the project in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Research Opportunities: The SUSDEST-NET project provides an opportunity for researchers to investigate and analyze the impacts of sustainable practices on destinations. The project data, including case studies and best practices, as well as their methodology, can be provided for research purposes and may be used for diploma or postgraduate theses- By getting involved in the project, academic and research institutions develop tighter links with the society and bring closer students and researchers to the tourism industry operators- Collaboration: The project stakeholders involve a wide range of organizations, including research institutions, NGOs, and local authorities at transnational level. This creates opportunities for collaboration and networking during and beyond the project implementation period, which can lead to new research partnerships, joint initiatives, and knowledge exchange.- Practical Experience: Through the pilot implementations, higher education and research institutions can gain practical experience in implementing sustainability practices in real-world setting, which they can pass on to their students or researchers.- Dissemination: The SUSDEST-NET project outputs, including AIREMS and SDEC, case studies and best sustainability practices, can be used by higher education institutions to enhance their teaching and learning material and disseminate knowledge on sustainability practices to their students

Target Group	Specification
Business support organisation	<p>Business support organizations in the participating destinations, including chambers, tourism associations, and business development agencies, will benefit from the project as follows:</p> <p>They will gain access to the Common Sustainable Tourism Policy (A1.1) and the Common Sustainable Destination Strategy (A1.5), will provide a comprehensive framework to guide businesses in adopting sustainable practices, helping organizations to offer better support and guidance to their members.</p> <p>Through the Training Package (A1.2), they will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to educate and assist local businesses in implementing sustainable destination initiatives.</p> <p>Business support organizations can use real-time data and insight provided by AIREMS and the Observatory to advise businesses on best practices and areas for improvement.</p> <p>The Education/ Collaboration platform SDEC (A1.11) will offer a collaborative space for business support organizations to engage with other stakeholders, share best practices, and develop joint initiatives</p> <p>Business support organizations will have the opportunity to observe the impact of prioritized sustainability actions through pilot implementations (A1.7). This will provide valuable lessons and inspiration for promoting these practices among their members.</p> <p>Joint promotion activities (A1.10) will enhance the visibility of businesses involved in sustainable tourism, attracting more tourists and boosting the profile of sustainable destinations.</p> <p>Overall Impact: The SUSDEST-NET project will empower business support organizations to play a pivotal role in the transition towards sustainable destinations. By providing tools, knowledge, and support, the project will help them enhance their services, support local businesses in adopting sustainable practices, and contribute to the overall sustainability and attractiveness of tourism destinations. This, in turn, will benefit the local economy, environment, and community well-being.</p>

Target Group	Specification
General public	<p>This target group includes local residents, tourists/ visitors and community members</p> <p>They benefit as follows:</p> <p>Improved Quality of Life: The implementation of sustainable destination practices will lead to cleaner environment, better-managed natural resources, and enhanced public spaces. Citizens will enjoy improved air and water quality, reduced pollution, and preserved natural and cultural heritage, contributing to a higher quality of life.</p> <p>Increased Awareness and Education: Through the training package (A1.2), public awareness events (A1.3) and the SDEC platform (A1.11), the general public will gain awareness and knowledge about sustainable tourism and its benefits.</p> <p>Enhanced Community Involvement: The project includes activities (A1.3, A1.10, A1.11, communication actions) engaging the public in the decision-making process and the execution of sustainability initiatives ensuring that the voice of citizens is heard and considered,</p> <p>Economic Opportunities: The promotion of sustainable destinations can boost local economies by attracting more tourists who value sustainability. This can create new job opportunities, support local businesses, and generate income for residents.</p> <p>Better Tourism Experience: Tourists, as part of the general public, will benefit from a more enjoyable and responsible tourism experience. This not only enhances the travel experience but also encourages repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth.</p> <p>Overall Impact: The SUSDEST-NET project will directly and indirectly benefit the general public by fostering sustainable destination practices. By improving environmental quality, raising awareness, involving the community, creating economic opportunities, and enhancing the tourism experience, the project will contribute to the overall well-being and satisfaction of citizens. This holistic approach ensures that the benefits of sustainability are widely distributed and appreciated by all members of the community</p>

Target Group	Specification
Other	<p>National, regional or local development agencies:</p> <p>The target group involves national, regional, and local development agencies responsible for planning and promoting economic and social development initiatives.</p> <p>They benefit as follows:</p> <p>They gain from the Common Sustainable Tourism Policy (A1.1), the Common Sustainable Destination Strategy and the individual plans (A1.5), integrating sustainable tourism into regional and national plans.</p> <p>The Training Package on Sustainability and Sustainable Destinations (A1.2) will equip agency staff with the skills to support and oversee sustainable tourism initiatives effectively.</p> <p>The AI Application (AIREMS) and the Observatory (A1.6) will provide real-time data and insight, aiding agencies in making informed decisions and tracking initiative impacts.</p> <p>The Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) platform (A1.11) will facilitate engagement with stakeholders, sharing best practices, and developing joint initiatives.</p> <p>The agencies will observe the impact of prioritized sustainability actions through pilot implementations (A1.7), using these as models for scaling successful initiatives.</p> <p>Involvement with the SUSDEST-NET network (A1.11) will connect agencies with a broader network of stakeholders, fostering cross-border cooperation and knowledge exchange.</p> <p>Joint promotion activities (A1.10) will enhance the visibility of sustainable tourism initiatives, attracting further support and strengthening agencies' capacity to drive sustainable development.</p> <p>Overall Impact The SUSDEST-NET project will empower development agencies to promote sustainable destinations as a key component of economic and social development. By providing tools, knowledge, and support, the project will help these agencies create more sustainable, resilient, and attractive tourism destinations, benefiting the environment, local communities, and the broader economy.</p>
Other	<p>As SMEs are not included in the target groups of the programme, they are involved in activity A1.9: "Private Sector Support" as beneficiaries</p>

C.2.5 How does the project contribute to wider strategies and policies?

Please indicate to which strategies and policies your project will contribute and briefly describe in what way.

Strategy	Contribution
EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region	<p>The project partnership includes, among others, partners from the Greek eligible region, Anatoliki Makedonia, Thraki (EL51) which belongs to the area impacted by the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR)</p> <p>The general objective of the EUSAIR is to promote economic and social prosperity and growth in the region by improving its attractiveness, competitiveness and connectivity. Its four thematic areas/ pillars are (*):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Blue growth2) Connecting the region (not directly relevant to SUSDESTNET project)3) Environmental quality4) Sustainable tourism <p>The SUSDEST-NET project is relevant and contributes to EUSAIR as follows:</p> <p>Pillar 1: The overall objective of SUSDEST-NET is to “Jointly contribute to a more competitive and smart Black Sea region by SUPPORTING THE BLUE ECONOMY and especially tourism...” which directly fits and contributes to EUSAIR's 1st pillar. Relevant activities: The entire project</p> <p>Pillar 3: The sustainability of destinations has 3 core dimensions, Environment, Society and Governance. It is self-evident that the project contributes decisively to maintaining and improving the quality of the environment in the project area. Relevant activities: A1.1, A1.4, A1.5, A1.6, A1.7, A1.9, A1.11</p> <p>Pillar 4: The core of the SUSDEST-NET project is sustainable tourism, which aligns perfectly with EUSAIR's fourth pillar. The project aims to enhance the sustainability of tourism destinations across the Black Sea region, promoting economic growth while preserving cultural and natural heritage. Relevant activities: The entire project</p> <p>(*): https://www.adriatic-ionian.eu/about-eusair/ (last access 26 May 24)</p>

Strategy	Contribution
EU Strategy for the Danube Region	<p>The project partnership includes, among others, partners from Moldova (MD), Bulgaria (BG) & parts of Ukraine, affected by the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)</p> <p>EUSDR addresses a wide range of issues; these are divided among 4 pillars & 12 priority areas (PAs) (*). The priorities to which the SUSDEST-NET project contributes are:</p> <p>PA2 – Sustainable energy. The project promotes energy efficiency in tourism facilities through the implementation of sustainability practices and the use of AI tools for energy monitoring and management. Relevant Activities (RA): A1.5/ 6/ 9</p> <p>PA3 – Culture and tourism. The core objective of SUSDEST-NET is to enhance the sustainability of tourism destinations, preserving cultural heritage while promoting economic growth. RA: The entire project</p> <p>PA4 – Water quality. Similar as PA2</p> <p>PA5 – Manage environmental risks. SUSDEST-NET enhances the capacity to manage environmental risks through AI monitoring systems and pilot implementations, focusing on mitigating impacts of tourism on the environment. RA: A1.5/ 6/ 7</p> <p>PA7 - Knowledge society. The project fosters a knowledge society by developing and sharing best practices, conducting training, and creating a collaborative platform for knowledge exchange. RA: A1.2/ 3/ 9/ 11</p> <p>PA8 – Competitiveness. By promoting sustainable destinations and supporting the private sector with guidelines and training, the project boosts the competitiveness of tourism destinations in the Black Sea region. RA: The entire project</p> <p>PA9 – People and skills. SUSDEST-NET enhances skills through educational workshops, training programs, and e-learning modules for DMC members, stakeholders and the private sector. RA: A1.2/ 3/ 9/ 11</p> <p>PA 10 - Institutional capacity and cooperation. The project strengthens institutional capacity and fosters cooperation across borders through its transnational character and the establishment of the SUSDEST-NET Network. RA: The entire project</p> <p>(*) https://danube-region.eu/ (last access 27.5.24)</p>

Strategy	Contribution
Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea	<p>The project partnership includes, among others, partners from Moldova (MD), Bulgaria (BG), Turkey (TR) and Ukraine (UA), all affected by Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea (CMA)</p> <p>The Agenda is a sea basin initiative to enhance regional cooperation for achieving a SUSTAINABLE Blue Economy in the Black Sea (*). The main challenge faced by the Agenda is to ensure environmental protection and sustainability in the exploitation of coastal and marine resources across the Black Sea.</p> <p>One of the 3 Agenda's general Goals set to help generate sustainable growth in coastal regions is: "A competitive, innovative and sustainable blue economy for the Black Sea" Priority 1 under this Goal is to "Foster innovative business models, stimulate research and innovation, and sustainable growth and up-to-date jobs"</p> <p>SUSDEST-NET supports the Agenda's goal by promoting sustainable tourism, aligning with Priority 1. The project fosters innovative business models through the sustainable tourism policy and strategy (A1.1, A1.5) and stimulates research and innovation via AI tools for sustainability (A1.6), pilot implementations (A1.7) and knowledge sharing platform (A1.11)</p> <p>Additionally, the project contributes to sustainable growth and job creation through training and workshops on sustainable tourism management (A1.2, A1.3, A1.9, A1.11), It ensures environmental protection through baseline assessments (A1.4), sustainable destination strategy and plans (A1.5) and sustainability monitoring and observatory (A1.6). Moreover, the Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) platform enhances knowledge sharing and regional cooperation (A1.11).</p> <p>By integrating these approaches, SUSDEST-NET significantly contributes to the Common Maritime Agenda's goals for a sustainable blue economy.</p> <p>(*) https://black-sea-maritime-agenda.ec.europa.eu/ (last accessed 26 May 24)</p>

Strategy	Contribution
	<p>The overall objective of SUSDEST-NET project is to: Jointly contribute to a more competitive and smart Black Sea region by supporting the blue economy and especially tourism by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Promoting the sustainability of tourism destinations ...- Facilitating the transformation of partners' areas to sustainable tourism destinations using Artificial Intelligence leading to improving their competitiveness and attractiveness and- Networking to ensure experience exchange, ensuring lasting effects and transferability of outputs and results <p>Under this overall objective, the project contributes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- UN 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals that call for action by all countries to promote social equity, sound governance and prosperity while protecting the planet (https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals)
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- United Nations Global Compact as a non-binding United Nations pact to get businesses and firms worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies, and to report on their implementation (www.unglobalcompact.org)- Black Sea Synergy (BSS), that encourages cooperation between the countries surrounding the Black Sea, and offers a flexible forum for developing practical region-wide solutions to address regional and global challenges (https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/black-sea-synergy_en)- Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) for the Black Sea which aims at advancing a shared vision for a productive, healthy, resilient, sustainable and better valued Black Sea by 2030 (http://connect2blacksea.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Black_Sea_SRIA_Final.pdf)- EU strategy for Sustainable Tourism adopted by European Parliament on 25 Mar 2021 (https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0109_EN.pdf)

C.2.6 How will your project create synergies with EU strategies or other BSB projects or other projects, programmes or initiatives?

Project or Initiative	Synergy
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Project or Initiative	Synergy
<p>Project/ Initiative Name: European Tourism Indicators System</p> <p>Acronym: ETIS</p> <p>https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funded-projects/sustainable/indicators_en</p>	<p>Developed by the European Commission, ETIS is a system of indicators suitable for all tourist destinations, encouraging them to adopt a more intelligent approach to tourism planning. In practice, it is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- A management tool, supporting destinations that want to take a sustainable approach to destination management- A monitoring system, easy to use for collecting data and detailed information and to let destinations monitor their performance from one year to another- An information tool (not a certification scheme), useful for policymakers, tourism enterprises and other stakeholders. <p>SUSDEST-NET project will use the tools provided by ETIS during its implementation and especially in activities A1.4: Destinations' Baseline Assessments and Needs Analyses and A1.5: Sustainable Destination Strategy and Plans.</p> <p>Moreover, the project aspires to contribute to up-scaling of the ETIS framework by introducing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The AI Application supporting sustainability of destinations (AIREMS)- The Sustainable destinations observatory- The Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) platform combining the attributes of an Open Educational Resource and a Living Lab
<p>Project/ Initiative Name: GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM COUNCIL</p> <p>https://www.gstcouncil.org/</p>	<p>The Global Sustainable Tourism Council® (GSTC) establishes and manages global standards for sustainable travel and tourism, known as the GSTC Criteria. There are two sets: Destination Criteria for public policy-makers and destination managers, and Industry Criteria for hotels and tour operators. They are the result of a worldwide effort to develop a common language about sustainability in tourism. They are arranged in four pillars: (A) Sustainable management; (B) Socioeconomic impacts; (C) Cultural impacts; and (D) Environmental impacts. Since tourism destinations each have their own culture, environment, customs, and laws, the Criteria are designed to be adapted to local conditions and supplemented by additional criteria for the specific location and activity. The destination sustainability criteria of GSTC will be used by the SUSDEST project complementarily with EU's ETIS (see above) in the Destinations' Baseline Assessments and Needs Analyses (A1.4)</p>

Project or Initiative	Synergy
<p>Project/ Initiative Name: Network of European Regions for Sustainable and Competitive Tourism</p> <p>Acronym: NECSTouR</p> <p>https://necstour.eu/</p> <p>Programme: 2007 - 2013 Black Sea Basin ENPI CBC</p>	<p>NECSTouR is the Network of European Regions for Sustainable and Competitive Tourism. Based in Brussels, it develops Interregional Projects to improve Tourism Governance in Europe.</p> <p>The network facilitates the exchange of best practices, policy development, and cooperation among members to promote sustainable tourism strategies and improve destination management</p> <p>Since 2007 it has undertaken a unique journey, representing today more than 70 organisations around Europe and connecting Regional Tourism Governance with European levels of government, EU financial instruments, Academic Organisations (Universities and Research Institutes) and Private Sector</p> <p>The SUSDEST-NET project acts complimentary to NECSTouR as it promotes its objectives and values to the Black Sea Programme area where NECSTouR is practically absent</p> <p>Furthermore, during its implementation, SUSDEST-NET will exploit NECSTouR's very large database of good practices related to sustainability of destinations</p>
<p>Project/ Initiative Name: Creation of a black sea network for sustainable tourism development in Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia</p> <p>Acronym: BS - TOURISM NET</p> <p>https://keep.eu/projects/15806/CREATION-OF-A-BLACK-SEA-NET-EN/</p>	<p>The main objective of the project was to establish and operate a cooperative and self-supporting BS Network for sustainable tourism comprising data and information providers, policy and decision makers and tourism industry.</p> <p>BS - TOURISM NET and SUSDEST-NET share a common goal of promoting sustainability. They can create a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to sustainability in tourism, with SUSDEST-NET focusing on sustainable destinations</p>

Project or Initiative	Synergy
<p>Programme: 2014 - 2020 INTERREG VB Mediterranean</p> <p>Project/ Initiative Name: Integration of sustainability labels into Mediterranean tourism policies</p> <p>Acronym: LABELSCAPE</p> <p>https://keep.eu/projects/23469/Integration-of-sustainabili-EN/</p>	<p>The overall objective of the LABELSCAPE was to develop mechanisms for integrating sustainability labels in wider tourism policies, and provide support for destination-based initiatives in the certification process, capitalising on the existing certification initiatives.</p> <p>The SUSDEST-NET project creates synergies as it promotes sustainability, familiarizes the public with its concept and promotes tourism destinations' sustainability, thus supporting tourism and contributing to blue and smart sea basins</p>
<p>Programme: 2014 - 2020 INTERREG VB Mediterranean</p> <p>Project/ Initiative Name: New shape and drives for the tourism sector: supporting decision, integrating plans and ensuring sustainability</p> <p>Acronym: ShapeTourism</p> <p>https://keep.eu/projects/21367/New-shape-and-drives-for-th-EN/</p>	<p>Shapetourism improves the tourism knowledge framework, providing analysis and operational tools to pinpoint an integrated methodology to shape and drive tourism sustainable growth. It supports policymakers and private operators to achieve: attractiveness, growth and sustainability, taking into account the major challenges of global competition.</p> <p>Both ShapeTourism and SUSDEST-NET projects face the same challenges and share a focus on sustainability. They could benefit from complementary tools and resources. There are synergies between them as they could create a more cohesive and impactful approach to promoting sustainable practices in the tourism industry in the two Sea Basins (Black Sea and Mediterranean)</p>

Project or Initiative	Synergy
<p>Programme: COSME</p> <p>Project/ Initiative Name: TOURINN-ACT</p> <p>Acronym: TourINN-act</p>	<p>TourINN-act aims to boost the uptake of digitalisation and innovation by tourism SMEs through specific transnational cooperation and capacity building actions and the provision of financial support to minimum 60 tourism SMEs from different countries in the form of vouchers, developing new organisational models for the management of tourism spaces and innovative solutions for the modernisation of the tourist experience, improving the fruition of the tourist offer and making SMEs more sustainable and profitable in the medium-long term.</p> <p>SUSDEST-NET project underlines the sustainability dimension and the methodology for destinations that will be applied will be used as a roadmap for other destinations to start their sustainability journey</p>
<p>Programme: 2014 - 2020 INTERREG V-A Spain - Portugal (Madeira - Açores - Canarias (MAC))</p> <p>Project/ Initiative Name: Evaluation and proposal of strategy and development of tools for the conversion of the islands of the collaborative space as Smart Tourist Destinations</p> <p>Acronym: SMARTDEST</p> <p>https://keep.eu/projects/20368/Evaluation-and-proposal-of-EN/</p>	<p>The SMARTDEST project aims to address the impact of tourism-related mobilities on the social and economic fabric of European cities. It focuses on inclusive and sustainable growth in tourist cities, addressing challenges like congestion, housing affordability, and community resilience.</p> <p>As it promotes destinations' sustainability, SUSDEST-NET project has more or less similar objectives as SMARTDEST, addressing common challenges in a totally different area. It can gain experience and knowledge from the outputs of SMARTDEST and contribute to upscaling its outcomes</p>

Project or Initiative	Synergy
<p>Programme: 2014 - 2020 Interreg Europe</p> <p>Project/ Initiative Name: Delivering Efficient Sustainable Tourism with low-carbon transport Innovations: Sustainable Mobility, Accessibility and Responsible Travel</p> <p>Acronym: DESTI-SMART</p> <p>https://keep.eu/projects/18835/Delivering-Efficient-Sustai-EN/</p>	<p>DESTI-SMART focuses on integrating sustainable mobility with accessibility and public transport in tourism destinations. The project aims to improve transport policies and practices to enhance the visitor experience while reducing the environmental impact of tourism.</p> <p>As transportation is a key element of sustainability in terms of pollution and effectiveness, DESTI-SMART's results are directly exploitable by SUSDEST-NET project</p>
<p>Programme: Horizon 2020</p> <p>Project/ Initiative Name: DESTINATIONS - CIVITAS Initiative</p> <p>Acronym: DESTINATIONS</p> <p>https://civitas.eu/projects/destinations https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/689031</p>	<p>DESTINATIONS aims to demonstrate innovative mobility solutions in six European tourist destinations. The project focuses on sustainable urban mobility, enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors, reducing environmental impacts, and promoting the use of cleaner transport options.</p> <p>The above description of DESTINATIONS project in the framework of CIVITAS Initiative (City -Vitality – Sustainability) demonstrates its direct relevance with the SUSDEST-NET and the correlation and synergies between both projects' results</p>

Project or Initiative	Synergy
<p>Initiative Name: Global Reporting Initiative / GRI Standards</p> <p>Acronym: GRI</p> <p>https://www.globalreporting.org/</p>	<p>GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) is an independent, international organization that helps businesses and other organizations take responsibility for their impacts, by providing them with the global common language to communicate those impacts.</p> <p>The GRI Standards are the most common sustainability standards representing global best practice for reporting publicly on a range of economic, environmental and social impacts. They are a modular system comprising three series of Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The GRI Universal Standards- The GRI Sector Standards- The GRI Topic Standards. <p>The sector standards cover Oil and Gas, Coal and Agriculture, Aquaculture & Fishing and Financial Services sectors, while standards for Mining and Textiles & Apparel are under development</p> <p>As the tourism sector is not included in the GRI Sector Standards, nor is planned to be developed in the upcoming years, complementarity of the outputs of SUSDEST-NET project is fully justified</p>
<p>Initiative Name: Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive</p> <p>Acronym: CSRD</p> <p>https://finance.ec.europa.eu/capital-markets-union-and-financial-markets/company-reporting-and-auditing/company-reporting/corporate-sustainability-reporting_en</p>	<p>The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) - (EU) 2022/2464 entered into force on 5 Jan 23, requires companies to report on the impact of corporate activities on the environment and society, and concerns approximately 50000 big enterprises or SMEs listed in regulated markets, of all sectors, all over Europe</p> <p>From its side, the SUSDEST-NET project concerns destinations that are not included in the scope of CSRD, thus acting complementary to it</p>
<p>Project/ Initiative Name: EU Ecolabel</p> <p>https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/circular-economy/eu-ecolabel_en</p>	<p>The EU Ecolabel is the official European Union voluntary label for environmental excellence. Established in 1992 and recognised across Europe and worldwide, it certifies products and services having a reduced environmental impact throughout their lifecycle. The label is awarded to products that meet strict environmental and performance criteria.</p> <p>The EU Ecolabel and SUSDEST-NET project share common sustainability goals. By partnering, SUSDEST-NET can provide tourism destinations with educational, credibility, networking and marketing opportunities to adopt sustainable practices and their businesses to be aware and achieve EU Ecolabel certification</p>

Project or Initiative	Synergy
<p>Initiative Name: The European Green Deal</p> <p>https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en</p>	<p>This is a comprehensive plan by the European Union to make Europe climate-neutral by 2050. In practice, the plan sets out a roadmap to transform the EU's economy by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promote renewable energy, improve energy efficiency, protect biodiversity, and support sustainable agriculture.</p> <p>The project SUSDEST-2 contributes to and creates synergies with Green Deal as it specifies this roadmap to ESG sustainability for tourism destinations in Black Sea programme area</p>
<p>Interact Interreg C</p> <p>https://www.interact-eu.net/ https://www.interact-eu.net/project-life-cycle-and-more/project-life-cycle/capitalisation or https://www.interact-eu.net/library/166</p>	<p>Interact has developed the output entitled "Capitalisation Management Toolkit" including the following sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Overview and Structure infographic- Capitalisation Toolkit 2.0 - Programming- Capitalisation Toolkit 2.0 - Monitoring and evaluation- Capitalisation Toolkit 2.0 - Implementing- Capitalisation Toolkit 2.0 - Communication - dissemination of achievements <p>SUSDEST-NET project will exploit the toolkit by using it as a guide for the efficient and effective implementation of its communication and capitalisation activities</p>
<p>Miscellaneous</p>	<p>The specific projects mentioned above are just a sample of all projects/initiatives related to Destinations' sustainability. There is a vast number of projects funded or being funded by the EU or national authorities related to sustainability in tourism. The SUDEST-NET project is complementary and related to those projects, either by using lessons learnt during their implementation, by adding outputs, knowledge and experience focusing destinations or both. The network foreseen in SUSDEST-NET intends to contact the other projects' administrators and examine the potential of collaboration and interaction</p>

C.2.7 How does the project build on available knowledge?

Please describe the experiences/lessons learned that your project draws on, and other available knowledge your project capitalises on (BSB projects or other projects, programmes or initiatives). If relevant, please specify the projects to be capitalised and which project partner(s) have been involved.

There is a significant amount of knowledge and research available regarding sustainability and sustainable destinations in Europe and globally, ranging from government policies to corporate practices and individual actions.

The experiences and lessons learnt from previous initiatives provide valuable insight into what works and what doesn't work in promoting sustainable tourism practices. In addition, these initiatives have identified key barriers and challenges that need to be addressed to promote sustainable tourism

effectively.

Specifically, the main sources of knowledge that will be exploited in the SUSDEST-NET project implementation are the following:

1) European Tourism Indicator System for sustainable destination management (ETIS): The project utilizes the ETIS framework for assessing and monitoring sustainable destinations' performance. ETIS provides a comprehensive set of indicators that help destinations measure and improve their sustainability. The partners will apply ETIS indicators in their baseline assessments and monitoring processes to ensure consistency and comparability across destinations.

https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/tourism/eu-funding-and-businesses/funded-projects/sustainable/indicators_en

2) Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC): Complementarily with ETIS, the project draws on the criteria and guidelines provided by the GSTC for sustainable tourism. GSTC standards for destinations are widely recognized and provide a robust framework for developing and implementing sustainable destinations' practices. The Common Sustainable Tourism Policy (A1.1) and Common Sustainable Destination Strategy (A1.5) will align with GSTC principles to ensure international relevance and applicability.

<https://www.gstccouncil.org/gstc-criteria/gstc-destination-criteria/>

3) The Black Sea Sustainable Rural Tourism Programme. This is a community based, regionally integrated, social enterprise venture that will continuously improve livelihoods, promote entrepreneurship, support sustainable economic actions and preserve social, cultural and environmental heritage. The Programme provides situational analyses and partner development in Ukraine, Turkey and, as of the summer of 2018, Georgia. It will expand to include rural communities in Moldova, Bulgaria and Romania

<https://tourism4sdgs.org/initiatives/black-sea-sustainable-rural-tourism-program/>

4) Sustainable Travel International (STI): STI is a non-profit organization that works to promote sustainable tourism practices and responsible travel. They offer a range of resources, including destination assessments, consulting services, and educational programs

<https://sustainabletravel.org>

5) United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO): The UNWTO is a specialized agency of the United Nations that promotes responsible, sustainable, and universally accessible tourism. They offer a range of resources, including reports, guidelines, and initiatives focused on sustainable tourism

<https://www.unwto.org/>

6) Sustainability Standards of Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is an independent, international organization that helps businesses and other organizations take responsibility for their impacts, by providing them with the global common language to communicate those impacts. The GRI Standards are the most common sustainability standards representing global best practice for reporting publicly on a range of economic, environmental and social impacts. They are a modular system comprising three series of Standards:

- The GRI Universal Standards
- The GRI Sector Standards
- The GRI Topic Standards.

Although GRI's sector standards do not cover tourism, the methodological approach will be a useful insight for the SUSDEST-NET project methodology for designing destinations' sustainability strategy and plan, especially in terms of reporting

<https://www.globalreporting.org>

7) Sustainability standards of the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) that are designed to help organisations disclose material sustainability information to investors in a way that is comparable and decision-useful. They cover a range of sustainability issues, such as climate change, water management, human rights, labor practices, and supply chain management
<https://www.sasb.org/>

The above mentioned is only a small sample of the available knowledge, information and experience available about sustainability in general. However, the SUSDEST-NET project will contribute to this knowledge by providing innovative tools related to sustainable destination transformation and management

C.3 Project partnership

What is the rationale of the partnership composition and how are partners complementary to each other? Please describe 1– the structure of your partnership and explain why these partners are needed to implement the project and to achieve project objectives; 2– the partners competence in the thematic field concerned; 3– the contribution of each partner to the project; 4– the lead partners competences and experiences relevant for managing a cooperation project.

The SUSDEST-NET project partnership comprises six partners from five countries (BG, GR, MD, RO and TR), each bringing unique expertise and competencies to achieve the project's objectives. The partnership is structured to include partners directly related with destinations except for PP3 that is a university having a role of technological partner and mainly undertaking the development of the new technology applications

Each partner except for PP3 will choose/ define a destination to start its sustainability journey and be transformed into a sustainable destination

All the partners:

- Have high level of experience and competencies in the thematic field of the project, complementing each other, namely in sustainability issues and use of modern technologies and are able to access target groups and beneficiaries to disseminate information and outcomes. Minor limited lack of knowledge in the very specific solutions promoted by the project, that may appear in some of the partners, are addressed by the joint e-training course that will be organized (A1.3)

- Are committed to objectives compatible with the project's overall objective Its thematic field is incorporated in all partners' general objectives as defined or implied in their founding documents. This commitment was obvious during the project preparation phase in which all partners participated actively

- Have strong connections, networks and prior successful collaboration with target groups addressed by the project, on regional or national level. Decision makers are either directly included in the partnership or can be effectively reached by the project partners, even indirectly

- Have strong experience in the implementation of transnational projects and are aware of the fundamental regulations applying in EU funded projects. They have adequate financial and technical capacity and resources and all of them are taking and/or have taken part as leaders or partners in previous projects

Specifically:

LP1. Municipality of Kavala (KAVALA) – Greece

Kavala's experience in sustainable urban development and tourism management makes it an ideal lead partner. The municipality has successfully managed various EU-funded projects, demonstrating strong project management capabilities. LP1 will coordinate the overall project implementation, ensuring effective coordination and communication among partners. The municipality's experience in engaging stakeholders and implementing sustainable tourism initiatives makes it well-equipped to lead the project, ensuring its successful execution and long-term impact.

PP2: Union of Bulgarian Black Sea Local Authorities (UBBSLA) – Bulgaria:

PP2's extensive experience in cross-border cooperation and regional development projects provides

valuable insights into stakeholder engagement and transnational collaboration. The Union unites 20 municipalities bordering the Bulgarian Black Sea Coast having that are important target group of the project.

PP3: Democritus University of Thrace – School of Engineering (DUTH) – Greece:

As an academic institution, PP3 is the "technological" partner of the project and brings research-based knowledge and expertise in developing new technology tools in combination with sustainability and destination management as well as training.

PP4: Chisinau City Hall (PMC) – Moldova:

As the local authority of the capital city of Moldova, PP4 has taken part in various sustainable development projects and this makes it well-suited to contribute to the project's objectives.

PP5: Limanu Municipality (LM) – Romania

is a coastal municipality administering Vama Veche and 2 Mai, with proven experience in sustainable tourism, cultural heritage and environmental protection. It has implemented EU-funded projects and employs qualified staff in project management and destination development.

PP6 is a municipal subsidiary in Istanbul dedicated to sustainable urban development and social value creation. It has solid experience in tourism and F&B services, digital transformation, and community engagement, with highly qualified staff and strong experience in management and sustainability.

Contribution:

All the partners will actively participate in all the activities of the project and, mainly in the following?

- LP1 (KAVALA): A1.1, A1.3, A1.4, A1.5, A1.7, A1.8, A1.9, A1.10, A1.11
- PP2 (UBBSLA): A1.1, A1.3, A1.4, A1.5, A1.7, A1.9, A1.10, A1.11
- PP3 (DUTH): A1.2, A1.3, A1.6, A1.11
- PP4 (PMC): A1.1, A1.3, A1.4, A1.5, A1.7, A1.9, A.10, A1.11
- PP5 (LM): A1.1, A1.3, A1.4, A1.5, A1.7, A1.9, A1.10, A1.11
- PP6 (KENTAS): A1.1, A1.3, A1.4, A1.5, A1.7, A1.9, A.10, A1.11

Also, all the partners contribute essentially in project management and communication actions

All the above justify that the partnership combines skills and competences of relevant institutions necessary to address the issues faced by the project and achieve effectively its overall and specific objectives

C.4 Project work plan

Number
1

Work package 1

Objectives

Please define one concise project specific objective that will be achieved by your project through the implementation of the work package. The specific objective should be:

- realistically achievable during the project lifetime;
- specific;
- be verifiable and measurable.

Promoting the sustainability of tourism destinations and contribution to a more competitive & smart Black Sea region demonstrating the following specific achievements:

- Establishment of 5 Destination Management Committees (DMCs)
- Common sustainable tourism policy
- Training package on sustainable destinations. Training of at least 48 individuals
- 20 workshops for stakeholders awareness
- Presentation package for public awareness – 500 citizens aware of sustainable destinations
- 5 destinations' sustainability assessment and needs analyses
- Common sustainable destination strategy – 5 destinations' sustainability plans pilot implemented
- AI Recommendation and Monitoring System (AIREMS). Sustainable destinations observatory
- 3 tourism sustainability e-guides
- 20 seminars and 20 workshops for private sector support
- Digital campaigns promoting 5 sustainable destinations
- Joint participation in a tourism fair
- SDEC platform and best practices depository
- SUSDEST-NET network

Please define one or more communication objective(s) that will contribute to the achievement of the project specific objective and include reference to the relevant target group(s). Communication objectives aim at changes in a target audiences awareness and behaviour.

Objectives:

- Strengthen public awareness of the EU action, increase the visibility of the Interreg VI-B NEXT Black Sea Basin Programme and create a consistent image of the EU support in all participating countries
- Raise awareness of sustainability and the necessity and benefits of sustainable transformation of destinations among all target groups
- Promote the Common Sustainable Tourism Policy (A1.1), the Common sustainable destination strategy (A.1.5), the AIREMS (A1.6) and the SDEC platform and observatory (A1.11)
- Facilitate transnational experience exchange between partners (6) & other stakeholders (number indefinable)
- Involve and encourage stakeholders and the public to support sustainable destination practices
- Ensure durability and transferability

Target audience:

Public authorities, business support organizations, higher education and research institutions, professional organisations, relevant government agencies, NGOs, SMEs, general public/ citizens/ tourists/ visitors

Activities

Activity 1.1	
Title	Establishing of Destination Management Committees (DMCs) - Common Sustainable Tourism Policy - Policy Paper
Start period	Period 2, 5 - 8
End period	Period 2, 5 - 8
	<p>The objective of this activity is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Establish Destination Management Committees (DMCs) in each selected destination.- Develop a common sustainable tourism policy- Draft a policy recommendation paper <p>Activity description</p> <p>1) Establishing of DMCs Each partner (except for PP3 that is the "technological" partner) will establish a DMC with 9-11 members each. Partners, local authorities, tourism operators, environmental experts, community representatives, and policymakers will be represented in each DMC The DMCs will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of sustainable tourism practices within their respective regions and ensure alignment with regional, national, and transnational sustainable tourism goals. The LP will draft the operating manual of the DMCs to ensure efficient and effective functioning. These manuals will cover meeting schedules, decision-making processes, roles and responsibilities of members, and mechanisms for stakeholder engagement. Also, clear communication channels among DMC members and with external stakeholders to facilitate information sharing and collaboration will be included. If necessary, partners can adapt the content of the manual to their own specificities</p> <p>2) Common Sustainable Tourism Policy:</p> <p>Representatives of all partners will cooperate to develop a common Sustainable Tourism Policy, taking into account the results of consultations occurred during the activity A1.3. This common policy will address key areas such as environmental protection, resource efficiency, cultural heritage</p>

Activity 1.1	
Description	<p>preservation, community involvement, economic sustainability and suitable governance. This policy will be the basis for the common sustainable destination strategy that will be developed in activity A1.5</p> <p>3) Policy recommendation paper Based on policy mentioned above a policy paper providing detailed recommendations for its implementation will be drafted. This policy paper will be reviewed and validated by the Steering Committee to ensure it reflects the collective vision and priorities and will serve as a guiding document for all DMCs, providing a cohesive framework for sustainable destinations in the Black Sea region. The paper will be continuously reviewed and updated throughout the project implementation and officially presented to the local and regional policy makers during the regional and international conferences for results presentation and capitalization</p> <p>By establishing DMCs and developing a Common Sustainable Tourism Policy, this activity lays the foundation for coordinated, sustainable destinations development across the Black Sea region, fostering environmental stewardship, cultural preservation, social responsibility and effective and ethical governance contributing to economic growth and competitiveness</p> <p>Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Composition of 5 DMCs- DMC Operating manual- Common Sustainable Tourism Policy- Policy Recommendation Paper <p>All partners will actively take part in all phases of the activity A1.1</p>

Activity 1.2	
Title	Joint Sustainability Training
Start period	Period 2, 5 - 8
End period	Period 2, 5 - 8

Activity 1.2	
	<p>An online, synchronous, 40-hour training course will be organized to deliver the training package content effectively. This course will cover the theoretical and practical aspects of sustainable tourism management and the use of AI tools developed in the project.</p> <p>Each project partner will select at least 8 representatives (8 x 6 = 48 in total), following an open call that includes partner staff, DMC members and external stakeholders.</p> <p>The course will include live sessions with expert trainers, interactive workshops, and group discussions. Participants will engage in practical exercises and problem-solving tasks, enhancing their learning experience.</p> <p>By developing a comprehensive training package and conducting joint e-training, this activity will build the capacity of DMC members and other stakeholders, ensuring they are well-equipped to implement and promote sustainable tourism practices.</p> <p>Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training package in synchronous and asynchronous versions - Training course evidence (list of participants, video recording) <p>PP3 will develop the training package and provide the training and all partners will participate in joint training course</p>

Activity 1.3	
Title	Stakeholder Engagement and Community Involvement
Start period	Period 2, 5 - 8
End period	Period 2, 5 - 8
	<p>Objective: To effectively engage stakeholders and communities in sustainable destination concept and</p>

Activity 1.3	<p>supported. The active participation of stakeholders and the public will enhance the effectiveness and impact of the SUSDEST-NET project, leading to long-term benefits for the environment, local communities, and the tourism sector.</p> <p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Comprehensive stakeholder maps for each partner region.- 20 (4 x 5) stakeholder engagement workshops with documentation of discussions and consultations.- Presentation package for public awareness about sustainability in English, translated into BG, GR, RO, and TR.- Reports from regional public awareness events, including participant feedback and engagement metrics. <p>All partners except for PP3 will implement the actions 1, 2 and 4 mentioned above PP3 will develop the presentation package in English PP2, PP3, PP5 and PP6 will translate the presentation package into their languages</p>
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Activity 1.4	
Title	Destinations' Baseline Assessments and Needs Analyses
Start period	Period 3, 9 - 12
End period	Period 3, 9 - 12
	<p>Objective: To assess the sustainability level of each participating destination against the criteria of the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS)(*) taking into account the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)(**) criteria when necessary</p> <p>Activity Description:</p> <p>Assessment Framework: Each participating destination will be assessed</p>

Activity 1.4	
	<p>and sustainability monitoring systems (AIREMS) in Activity A1.6.</p> <p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Comprehensive baseline assessment reports for each participating destination (5) including identified needs and gaps in sustainability practices. <p>All partners (except for PP3) will conduct Baseline Assessments and Needs Analyses of their corresponding destinations</p> <p>(*) https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/21749 (last access: 27May24)</p> <p>(**) https://www.gstcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/GSTC-Destination-Criteria-v2.0-with-SDGs.pdf (last access: 27May24)</p>

Activity 1.5	
Title	Sustainable Destination Strategy and Plans
Start period	Period 3, 9 - 12
End period	Period 5, 17 - 20
	<p>Objective:</p> <p>To develop a comprehensive strategy and sustainability plans for each participating destination, ensuring a coordinated and effective approach to sustainable destinations transformation in the Black Sea region</p> <p>The activity includes the following tasks:</p> <p>1) Common sustainable destination strategy: A common sustainable destination strategy will be developed for the entire project area. This strategy will integrate the common sustainable tourism policy (A1.1) and the results of the Destinations' Baseline Assessments and Needs Analyses (A1.4). The strategy will set clear strategic objectives aimed at enhancing the sustainability of tourism destinations. Corresponding KPIs will be established to monitor and measure the progress and impact of the strategy.</p>

Activity 1.5	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- General sustainability plan with common specifications for all destinations.- Specialized sustainability plans for each destination, including specific KPIs and datasets for public and private sector use. <p>All partners (except for PP3) will contribute to the development of the common strategy and conduct the specific sustainability plan of the corresponding destination (tasks Nr1 and 3) PP3 will draw up the common specifications (task Nr 2)</p>

Activity 1.6	
Title	AI REcommendation and Monitoring System (AIREMS) supporting sustainability of destinations. Sustainable destinations observatory
Start period	Period 3, 9 - 12
End period	Period 8, 29 - 30
	<p>Objective: To develop and implement advanced AI tools and an observatory to support and monitor the sustainability of tourism destinations in the Black Sea region.</p> <p>The activity includes the following tasks:</p> <p>1) Development of AI Recommendation and Monitoring System (AIREMS): The AI Recommendation System will provide tailored recommendations for improving sustainability in tourism destinations. It will analyze data from various sources, including environmental, social, and economic indicators, to identify best practices and improvement opportunities and recommend solutions. The recommendations will be personalized for each destination, addressing local specificities and challenges effectively. The AI Monitoring System will continuously monitor the sustainability performance of the destinations. It will utilize advanced machine learning algorithms to analyze real-time data and generate insights on key</p>

Activity 1.6	
	<p>online tutorials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Black Sea Sustainable Destinations Observatory in operation <p>PP3 will develop the AIREMS and Observatory and all partners will test them in pilot implementations (A1.7)</p>

Activity 1.7	
Title	Pilot implementations
Start period	Period 5, 17 - 20
End period	Period 6, 21 - 24
	<p>Objective:</p> <p>To implement prioritized actions from the sustainability plans developed in A1.5 for each destination, using the RADAR (Results, Approach, Deployment, Assessment, and Refinement) methodology introduced by European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM).</p> <p>Activity Description:</p> <p>Prioritization of Actions:</p> <p>Each partner will review the sustainability plan developed for their destination in A1.5 and prioritize the actions based on urgency, impact, and feasibility. From this list, the three highest-priority actions will be selected for detailed design and implementation.</p> <p>Designing Actions Using RADAR Methodology:</p> <p>The RADAR methodology will guide the detailed design of the selected actions. The steps involved are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Results: Define the desired outcomes and impact of each action. Clearly state the goals and success criteria, ensuring they align with the overall sustainability objectives of the destination.- Approach: Develop a clear and coherent plan for each action. Outline the strategies and methods to be used, considering best practices and innovative approaches to achieve the desired results.

Activity 1.7	
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Deployment: Detail the steps for implementing the actions. This includes assigning responsibilities, setting timelines, and allocating resources. Ensure that all stakeholders are engaged and their roles are clearly defined.- Assessment: Establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation process. Set up key performance indicators (KPIs) and regular review points to track progress and identify any issues early.- Refinement: Based on the assessment, refine and adjust the actions as needed. This iterative process ensures continuous improvement and adaptation to changing circumstances. <p>Implementation of Actions: Each partner will implement the three prioritized actions in their respective destinations according to the design mentioned above. This will involve close coordination with local stakeholders, ensuring their active participation and support. The implementation process will be documented meticulously, capturing lessons learned and best practices.</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation: Regular monitoring and evaluation will be conducted to assess the progress of the implemented actions. Feedback from stakeholders will be crucial for understanding the impact and effectiveness of the actions. This information will be used to refine and improve the actions continuously.</p> <p>Knowledge Sharing and Dissemination: Each phase of the partner's pilot implementations will be monitored by the other partners for experience exchange reasons. Online meetings of the partners; working groups will be organized to discuss the results, challenges, and best practices.</p> <p>Deliverables: Detailed action plans for the three highest-priority actions for each destination in the end of the design phase and after their implementations (2 x 3 x 5 = 30 in total).</p> <p>All partners except for PP3 will conduct pilot implementations</p>

Activity 1.8	
Title	Sustainability awarding scheme
Start period	Period 5, 17 - 20
End period	Period 5, 17 - 20
Description	<p>Objective: To design and implement a sustainability awarding scheme that recognizes and promotes sustainable tourism destinations in the Black Sea region through a Sustainable Destination Label.</p> <p>Activity Description:</p> <p>1) Sustainable Destination Label - Awarding Scheme Design</p> <p>The first task is to develop the awarding scheme for the Sustainable Destination Label. This scheme will include the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Criteria: Establish clear and comprehensive criteria for the Sustainable Destination Label, aligning with ETIS standards and the common strategy developed in A1.5- Scoring: Develop a scoring system to evaluate destinations against the established criteria.- Levels: Define different levels of achievement for the Sustainable Destination Label, such as bronze, silver, and gold. These levels will motivate destinations to continuously improve their sustainability practices.- Process: Outline the process for applying, evaluating, and awarding the Sustainable Destination Label. This process will include application submission, documentation review, on-site assessments, and final evaluation by an expert panel.- Forms: Create standardized forms and templates for the application and evaluation process. These forms will ensure that all necessary information is collected and assessed systematically. <p>Label Design: Design a visually appealing and recognizable label for the awarded destinations. The label will be a symbol of excellence in sustainable tourism and will be prominently displayed by awarded destinations.</p>

Activity 1.8	<p>2) Sustainable Destination Label - E-brochure: The second task is to develop an e-brochure to promote the Sustainable Destination Label and provide detailed information about the awarding scheme. The e-brochure will include; An overview of the Sustainable Destination Label, its purpose, and its significance in promoting sustainable tourism in the Black Sea region as well as criteria and scoring, application process (step-by-step instructions), benefits of the label and success stories The brochure will be uploaded on every online presence of the project and promoted in the communication activities</p> <p>The label will be awarded for first time to the destinations successfully taken part in the pilot implementations, during the international conference for results presentation and capitalization. After the project end, it will be managed by the SUSDEST-NET network</p> <p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sustainable Destination Label awarding scheme with criteria, scoring system, levels, process, forms, and label design.- E-brochure providing detailed information about the Sustainable Destination Label and the awarding scheme. <p>LP1 will design the awarding scheme and PP4 will create and upload the e-brochure</p>
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Activity 1.9	
Title	Private Sector Support
Start period	Period 6, 21 - 24
End period	Period 6, 21 - 24
	Objective The private sector plays a crucial role in the tourism

Activity 1.9	
	<p>Participants in 2 and 3 will be registered in the events following open calls</p> <p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Designed e-guides on tourism sustainability and sustainable destinations in English and translated into BG, GR, RO, and TR.- Conducted seminars introducing the e-guides and providing training on sustainable tourism practices.- Thematic workshops addressing specific topics and challenges in sustainable tourism. <ul style="list-style-type: none">- PP2 will draft 3 sustainability guides in English (general, accommodation, F&B sector)- LP, PP1, PP2, PP4 and PP6 will translate the 3 guides into their languages- All partners except for PP3 will conduct 4 seminars and 4 workshops each

Activity 1.10	
Title	Joint Promotion of the Sustainable Destinations
Start period	Period 6, 21 - 24
End period	Period 7, 25 - 28
	<p>Objective:</p> <p>To enhance the visibility and attractiveness of sustainable tourism destinations in the Black Sea region through targeted marketing campaigns and participation in international tourism fair. The activity will be coordinated by the communication officer appointed by PP2.</p> <p>In the activity the following tasks are included:</p> <p>1) Targeted Marketing Digital Campaigns The first task is to design and implement targeted marketing digital campaigns to promote the sustainable destinations identified in the project. These campaigns will aim to raise awareness about the unique offerings and sustainability efforts of each destination, targeting potential tourists, travel agencies, and other stakeholders. The marketing campaigns will be developed in</p>

Activity 1.10	
	<p>campaign PP6 is responsible for the organization of the joint participation in the fair. All partners will participate</p>

Activity 1.11	
Title	Knowledge sharing and networking. Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) platform (OER + Living Lab) and best practice repository. SUSDEST-NET
Start period	Period 3, 9 - 12
End period	Period 8, 29 - 30
	<p>Objective: To enhance knowledge sharing and networking among stakeholders through the development and implementation of the Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) platform, combining an Open Educational Resource (OER) and a Living Lab framework.</p> <p>Description:</p> <p>The following tasks are included:</p> <p>1) SDEC - Joint Requirement Analysis: The first task involves conducting a joint requirement analysis to identify the needs and expectations of all stakeholders, ensuring ensure the SDEC platform addresses the diverse needs of the tourism sector.</p> <p>2) SDEC - Platform Design (OER Curation and Living Lab Framework Development): Based on the requirement analysis, the platform will be designed to combine the attributes of an Open Educational Resource (OER) and a Living Lab. The OER component will curate and provide access to high-quality educational material on sustainable tourism, while the Living Lab framework will facilitate collaborative innovation and real-world testing of sustainable destination practices.</p>

Activity 1.11	
Description	<p>3) SDEC Platform Development: The platform will be developed using modern web technologies to ensure it is user-friendly, scalable and accessible. The development process will involve integrating OER content and establishing interactive features for the Living Lab. The platform will support multiple languages to cater to the diverse audience in the Black Sea region.</p> <p>4) SDEC Testing: Before the official launch, the platform will undergo rigorous testing to ensure its functionality, usability, and performance. Stakeholders will be invited to participate and provide feedback or identify any issues. This process will help refine the platform and ensure it meets the needs of its users.</p> <p>5) SDEC Administrator: An administrator will be appointed by PP3 to manage the SDEC platform and be responsible for maintaining, updating content, managing user accounts and providing technical support to users.</p> <p>6) Creation of the Network - MOU: To formalize the collaboration among partners, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be drafted to outline the roles and responsibilities of each partner, establish guidelines for collaboration, and set the foundation for a sustainable network of stakeholders.</p> <p>7) Creation of the SUSDEST-NET Network - Strategy and Action Plan: A comprehensive strategy and 3-year action plan will be developed to guide the activities of the SUSDEST-NET network. This plan will outline the objectives, key activities, timelines and performance indicators for the network.</p> <p>Deliverables: - Developed and tested SDEC platform with OER and Living Lab components in operation. - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Strategy and action plan for the SUSDEST-NET network.</p> <p>All partners will actively participate in tasks Nr1 and 2 - PP3 will develop, test and administrate the SDEC</p>

Activity 1.11	
	platform and draft the MOU and strategy and action plan of the network - All partners will sign the documents and participate in the SUSDEST-NET network

Outputs

Output 1.1	
Output Title	Common Sustainability Strategy
Programme Output Indicator	11116104: Jointly developed solutions
Measurement Unit	solutions
Target Value	1,00
Delivery period	Period 8, 29 - 30
Output Description	Common sustainable destination strategy (A1.5), which will provide a harmonised framework for guiding sustainable tourism practices. It will be supported by AI REcommendation and Monitoring System (AIREMS) & Observatory (A1.6) and Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) platform (OER + Living Lab) & best practice repository (A1.11), creating a holistic approach to sustainable tourism.
Output 1.2	
Output Title	Project partnership – SUSDEST-NET network (A1.11)
Programme Output Indicator	118784: Organisations cooperating across borders
Measurement Unit	organisations
Target Value	6,00
Delivery period	Period 8, 29 - 30

Output 1.2	
Output Description	This output includes the 6 partners from 5 countries that compose the project partnership, representing the participating destinations and contributing to all project activities. At the end of the project, the partners will establish the SUSDEST-NET network, which will own and ensure the sustainability of results and outputs. The network's strategy and action plan will be developed by PP3 and approved by the Steering Committee, ensuring long-term collaboration and impact.
Output 1.3	
Output Title	International conference for results presentation and capitalisation (C.7.3)
Programme Output Indicator	1111584: Public events across borders jointly organised
Measurement Unit	events
Target Value	1,00
Delivery period	Period 8, 29 - 30
Output Description	In the end of the project, PP5 in cooperation with the other partners will organize an international conference to present and capitalise on the project outcomes. In this conference, addressing all target groups at international level, international guests (partners included) will share their experience in sustainability of destinations and the consequent benefits. Also, further capitalisation ideas will be exchanged and relevant supporting policies will be proposed to policy makers

Investments

C.5 Project Results

What do you expect to improve or change following the implementation of the activities and the delivery of the project outputs? Please take a look at the programme result indicators and select those that you will contribute to.

Result 1	
Programme result indicator	P11_RCR104: Solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations
Measurement unit	solutions
Baseline	0,00
Target value	1,00
Result description	<p>Solutions supporting sustainability of destinations taken up by organisations</p> <p>Common sustainable destination strategy (A1.5), supported by AI REcommendation and Monitoring System (AIREMS) & Observatory (A1.6) and Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) platform (OER + Living Lab) & best practice repository (A1.11)</p> <p>The solution will be actively adopted by organisations during the project (pilot implementations and visibility actions) as well as after its implementation under the aegis of the SUSDEST-NET network and will be uploaded on internet for further use without any cost</p> <p>The result is related to the output 1.1</p>

Result 2	
Programme result indicator	P11_RCR84: Organisations cooperating across borders after project completion
Measurement unit	organisations
Baseline	0,00
Target value	6,00

Result 2

Result description

SUSDEST-NET Network in operation

In order for durability, transferability and springboard and multiplier effect to be ensured, the partners involved in the project will form the SUSDEST-NET Network. The aim of the network will be the ownership and further capitalisation of the project results and outputs. Specifically:

- The exchange of knowledge and experiences
- The continuous spread and promotion of the outputs to other organisations in the partners' regions (transferability, multiplier effect)
- The expansion of the project beyond its implementation period and on a wider geographical area (transferability, multiplier effect, sustainability)
- The continuous contact and the creation of links between the network's members in other fields of cooperation (springboard), always aiming at contributing to a more competitive and smart Black Sea region

This result is related to the Output 1.3

C.6 Project Time Plan

	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8	After End
WP1		[Orange bar spanning Period 2 to Period 8]							
A1.1 Establishing of Destination Managem...		[Orange bar]							
A1.2 Joint Sustainability Training		[Orange bar]							
A1.3 Stakeholder Engagement and Communit...		[Orange bar]							
A1.4 Destinations' Baseline Assessments ...			[Orange bar]						
A1.5 Sustainable Destination Strategy an...			[Orange bar spanning Period 3 to Period 5]						
A1.6 AI REcommendation and Monitoring Sy...			[Orange bar spanning Period 3 to Period 8]						
A1.7 Pilot implementations					[Orange bar spanning Period 5 to Period 6]				
A1.8 Sustainability awarding scheme					[Orange bar]				
A1.9 Private Sector Support						[Orange bar]			
A1.10 Joint Promotion of the Sustainable...						[Orange bar spanning Period 6 to Period 7]			
A1.11 Knowledge sharing and networking, ...			[Orange bar spanning Period 3 to Period 8]						
1111584								[O1.3]	
11116104								[O1.1]	
118784								[O1.2]	

C.7 Project management & Communication

In addition to the activities as described in the work plan, you need to foresee adequate provisions for project management, coordination and internal communication.

C.7.1 How will you coordinate and manage your project?

Please describe how the project management on the strategic and operational level will be carried out, including the set-up of management structures, responsibilities and procedures, as well as risk management. Please also explain how the internal communication within the partnership

The aim of the management and coordination activities is to have a project well managed, coordinated and controlled which achieves its general and specific objectives without problems or delays. This will be achieved through a specific management structure, continuous contact between the partners, regular meetings and a group of coordinators, financial managers & controllers on project as well as on partner level.

The project is managed by a steering committee (SC) composed by:

- The project coordinator appointed by the LP1 and responsible for the overall, day-to-day management & coordination and data protection (GDPR)
- The local coordinators (5) appointed by the other partners
- 6 members, one per partner, preferably the partners' financial managers.

Substitutes of all the above will be appointed. All partners are committed to appoint SC members who speak English fluently and are adequately skilled in order to effectively meet the project's requirements.

The SC meetings will be regularly held, approximately every 6 months, in different partners' regions or online. The last meeting will be held during the international conference in Romania. Occasional online meetings are possible. Consensus is the main principle for decision making

Within the SC, a Technical Sub-committee (TC) and a Quality Control Committee (QCC) will be created, each one consisting of the project coordinator and one representative of each partner. The communication officer appointed by PP2 will participate in TC

Working groups, task forces and advisory groups to coordinate the day-to-day running of activities, to fulfil specific tasks, etc may also be established after a SC decision

The minimum tasks of the SC include (inter alia):

- Planning of the project activities on a semi-annual basis according to the project application form
- Monitoring & validation of project progress, verifying that its implementation is in line with activities and outputs defined in the approved Application Form
- Validating the quality of main outputs and the progress towards achieving set objectives;
- Monitoring of project finances (budget & expenditure)
- Review of the management performance and the quality
- If applicable, decisions on required project modifications to be requested for approval from the programme authorities

Its operation will be governed by the following technical manuals that will be developed by the LP1

- SC internal regulation
- Reporting and Financial Procedures
- Risk Management

- Quality Control, Project Monitoring and Internal Evaluation
- Internal Communication
- Gender Equality Plan
- Data Protection

At project level a project coordinator and financial manager will be appointed by LP1. At partners' level, a local coordinator and a local financial manager solely responsible for the part of the project implemented by the respective partner is appointed. Also, a communication officer will be appointed

Project coordinator's duties (project level)

The project coordinator should be experienced so as to ensure the thematic coordination of the activities and able to act as a driving force of the project, mobilising the partnership in order to achieve its objectives. He/she is responsible for the project's overall organisation and successful implementation. His/her main tasks include -inter alia- the day-to-day management and progress control, the preparation of the SC meetings, the continuous communication with the local coordinators and the programme bodies and the compliance with the GDPR. He/she will provide guidelines for the activities' implementation (when necessary) and focus on a partnership approach, with a time-frame perspective, this being the key for the achievement of the project's objectives. The coordinator must be able to cope with the technical, administrative, financial aspects of the project and its related communication issues. Several years of experience in the management of EU funded projects will be one of the key criteria for the selection.

Local coordinators' duties (partner level)

Each partner except for the LP will appoint a local coordinator, solely responsible for the part of the project implemented by the respective partner. There will be direct communication channels between the project coordinator and the local coordinators. In the local coordinators' duties is included the regular formal reporting as well as the submission to each regular SC meeting of draft internal overall evaluation reports for the respective partner's up-to-day activities

Main internal communication channels are physical or online meetings, phone, e-mails, common google drive for files exchange and chat group in a message platform (e.g. viber, whatsapp etc)

The LP1 will be responsible for the communication and the collaboration with the MA/JMS, through the project coordinator.

In case of crisis, the levels of confronting are: local coordinator, project coordinator, SC, collaboration with programme authorities.

C.7.2 Which measures will you take to ensure quality in your project?

Describe the planned approach and processes and responsible partners. If you plan to conduct any type of project evaluation, please describe its purpose and scope.

As mentioned in C.7.1, in the framework of the SC a Quality Control Committee (QCC) will be created consisting of one representative from each partner. The duties of the QCC and the other quality control and evaluation operations are:

- 1) Drawing up a risk management plan

Risk management plan is a key element of quality. The QCC will draw it up to identify and manage

potential risks that may impact the project. This will include risk identification, analysis and mitigation strategies. Regular monitoring and evaluation of the project will be conducted to ensure that risks are identified and addressed in a timely manner.

The following risks will be examined and mitigation plans will be drawn up

- Risks related to the partnership
 - > Partner dropping out. Partner leaves the project
 - > Partner not dutiful
 - > Failure to achieve outcomes and results. The completion of the project activities does not achieve effectively the expected outcomes and results
 - > Difficulties in activities implementation. Problems surfacing during the implementation cannot be easily solved
- Risks related to the timeline and budget
 - > Non-compliance with the timeline
 - > Budget overruns
- Risks related to communication and other risks
 - > Lack of effective communication between partners
 - > Issues related to project communication
 - > Lack of interest and/or commitment of stakeholders:
 - > Political changes affecting the project:
 - > Force majeure

For each risk, the following elements should be included in the analysis and plan

- Nature of the risk
- Impact (effect – review)
- Likelihood (high, medium, low)
- Mitigation measures
- Entity in charge

The risk management plan will be submitted to the SC, included in the respective technical manual and communicated to everyone involved in the implementation of the project

2) Drawing up of the Gender Equality Plan of the project (see C.7.6 - Equality between men and women)

3) In public tenders for the main external expertise and services, the provision of a quality certificate by the candidates will be added as a requirement

4) Quality control of the deliverables

Every time a deliverable is produced, the QCC examines whether it meets the requirements and the relevant specifications, controls the completeness and correctness of the deliverable and draws up a quality control report. If full compliance is found, the report is submitted to the SC

In case of non-conformities, a consultation between the QCC and the partner producing the deliverable takes place for corrective actions to be undertaken. After those actions, a new examination of the deliverable occurs and the new quality control report is submitted to the SC. Representatives of partners whose deliverables are examined by the QCC, do not take part in the process

5) Internal evaluation of the project activities.

Based on the results of the quality control, QCC will conduct and submit to the SC regular meetings evaluation reports for the activities implemented in the previous semester. Additionally to the QCC observations, the following information will be taken into account for several activities:

- A1.2: Educational workshops and training

Evaluation by the attendees in the joint training course (questionnaires)

- A1.3: Stakeholder Engagement and Community Involvement

Feedback from stakeholders taking part in consultation and attendees in regional awareness conferences (questionnaires)

- A1.7: Pilot applications:

Evaluation by the people involved in pilot implementations (interviews and feedback collection). Additionally, by the other partners' staff who will monitor the implementation process (questionnaires)

- A1.9: Private Sector Support

Feedback from SMEs obtained support (questionnaires)

- A1.10: Promotion of the sustainable destinations

Online marketing analytics

- A1.11: Knowledge sharing and networking – SDEC platform

Feedback from the users, recorded in the platform (questionnaire)

- International conference for results presentation and capitalisation

Evaluation by the attendees (questionnaires)

All questionnaires mentioned above will be designed by the QCC and distributed to the questionees or uploaded (online surveys) by the respective partner. The recipient of the questionnaires is the QCC which processes their results and composes the respective evaluation report to be submitted to the SC

Special forms for quality control reports and evaluation reports will be drawn up by the project coordinator

All the above will be included and analysed in the technical manuals (see C7.1)

- Risk Management

- Quality Control, Project Monitoring and Internal Evaluation

The project coordinator is responsible for the proper operation of the QCC and the evaluation process

The external evaluation is carried out according to the process foreseen in the programme regulations (various levels of controls, external evaluators appointed by the programme authorities etc)

C.7.3 What will be the general approach you will follow to communicate about your project?

Please describe which are your project communication objectives and how will ensure the visibility of your project results. Which tools, methods will be used to reach out the target audiences?

All partners pay major attention to the communication of the project, understanding that it is a cornerstone for the involvement of the target groups and, consequently, the achievement of the project's objectives.

The general aim of the communication activities is to strengthen public awareness on the European Union action, increase the visibility of NEXT BSB Programme and create a consistent image of the EU support in all participating countries.

The core communication strategy of the project is to communicate the project to all target groups (see C2.4) and stakeholders:

(a) in the partners' regions and, especially, to the tourism stakeholders and policy developers & decision makers

(b) Internationally through the project's digital presence, the international capitalisation conference and the SUSDEST-NET network

Under this strategy, the main objective is to

- Raise awareness of sustainability and the necessity and benefits of sustainable transformation of destinations among all target groups
- Promote the Common Sustainable Tourism Policy (A1.1), the Common sustainable destination strategy (A.1.5), the AIREMS (A1.6) and the SDEC platform and observatory (A1.11)
- Facilitate transnational experience exchange between partners (6) & other stakeholders (number indefinable)
- Involve and encourage stakeholders and the public to support sustainable destination practices.
- Ensure durability and transferability

The main formal communication channels will be social media, internet, regional mass media, direct mail & tailored events, while, informally, there will be close and continuous communication among the partners and stakeholders, as well as the direct communication with beneficiaries that, through their participation in the project, will contribute effectively in the sustainability of their destinations. By their participation of the project the partners' destinations will start their journey towards sustainability and become role models and multipliers in the programme area. The operation of those channels will be described in a communication toolkit that will be developed by the communication officer

Activities of the project directly related to communication are (in parentheses the involved partners):

- A1.3: Stakeholder Engagement and Community Involvement (all)
- A1.9: Private Sector Support following open calls (all)
- A1.10: Promotion of the sustainable destinations (all)
- 5 press conferences after the SC meetings (LP1, PP2, PP3, PP4, PP6)
- 3 project promotional campaigns in traditional media (all)
- 6 e-newsletters (PP2)
- Regional conferences for results presentation and capitalisation (LP1, PP2, PP4, PP6)
- International capitalisation conference (organisation of PP5 in cooperation with all the others)
- Project promotional material (USBs and posters) (all)
- 3 thematic articles (PP3)
- SUSDEST-NET - MOU and Strategy/ Action plan (all)
- Digital presence of the project (project and partners' websites and social media sites) (all)
- 5 infographics (PP4)

In addition to traditional media, the project will use digital communication methods and tools such as:

- Project and partners' websites and social networks
- USB flash drives promoting the project
- E-newsletters
- Thematic articles
- Infographics
- Digital evaluation questionnaires for the various actions (online surveys)
- Live streaming of the project public events (conferences, workshops, presentations)

The above activities will be specialized in details with the "SUSDEST-NET communication plan" that will be approved by the SC. For the effective implementation of this plan, a communication officer will be appointed

The project will follow all the relevant guidelines issued by the European authorities and the principle of non-discrimination will be fully respected. Special attention will be paid to the beneficiaries' selection procedure that will be carried out following an open call (A1.9)

All the project outcomes will be uploaded to the project's digital presence sites and made available to any interested party. Their availability will be announced through all communication channels mentioned above. Non-discrimination and data protection principles will be fully respected.

Through the communication activities:

- All target groups get aware of destinations' sustainability and its urgent importance, as well as of the project and its objectives, content and expected results and benefits.
- Tourism stakeholders are invited to take part in the consultation and the public events
- Potential beneficiaries (private sector) are encouraged and motivated to apply the solutions promoted by the project
- The decision makers become able to develop documented and duly justified policies to promote destinations' sustainability
- All target groups are informed about solutions tested, the results and outputs of the project and their availability
- The general public gets aware of the NEXT BSB Programme and the project activities and benefits

C.7.4 How do you foresee the reporting procedures for activities and budget (within the partnership)?

Please describe the reporting processes for complying with deadlines for reporting as foreseen in the Guidelines and grant contract).

The designing of the reporting procedures foreseen for the activities and budget is based on the obligations deriving from the Grant Contract, the Partnership Agreement and the Guidelines for Grant Applicants and is characterised by a bottom-up approach, meaning that it starts with individual components (at Partner level) and builds up to the larger system (Partnership/ project level).

More precisely, every 4 months of the implementation period, each Project Partner is foreseen to prepare a report conforming to the model identified in Annex IV of the Grant Contract and a control report as specified in Article 4.6 of the Partnership Agreement. The reports, which will describe the technical (narrative) and the financial part of the project, will be submitted to the Lead Partner as it will be determined by the Implementation Guidelines of the Programme.

The Lead Partner, as the part in charge of the coordination and implementation of the overall project, except for the partner report, is foreseen to prepare the project report, where the information regarding the activities implemented and the expenditure incurred will be consolidated. The project

report, which will provide an analytical insight of the project's technical and financial implementation will be submitted to the Programme Authorities in order for the Lead Partner to be entitled to request further payments.

The SUSDEST-NET project, having very clear management and coordination structures, identifies from the beginning the duties of each Partner in terms of reporting, respecting the guidelines and obligations foreseen by the Programme documents. More precisely:

- The local coordinator of each partner (except for the LP) will be the one responsible to prepare the technical/ narrative part of the reports (internal and partner reports) that will be submitted to the Lead Partner. In the reports, the implementation of the foreseen activities, difficulties encountered and the level of achievement in terms of outputs and target groups will be described.
- The financial manager appointed by each partner will be responsible to prepare the financial part of the reports (internal and partner reports) that will accompany the narrative report and will be submitted to the FLCs and the LP1. The financial manager will closely and on a regular basis monitor the financial performance of the respective partner, checking the eligibility of the expenditure made and the procurement procedures followed. He/She is the person that contacts the local control points and ensures that the control reports are in line with the Programme's instructions
- The project coordinator (described in C.7.1), appointed by the Lead Partner, will be responsible to prepare the reports of the Lead Partner (internal and partner reports), collect the reports of the other Partners (internal and partner reports) and consolidate the information in the project report that will be submitted to the Programme Authorities. In the project report all the information requested by the Programme will be provided.
- During the SC meetings each Partner will report the activities and expenditure implemented and will discuss with the project coordinator about possible changes in the timeplan or budget that need to be made.

Taking into consideration that the verification of the Partners' reports by the FLCs and the project's report by the Programme Authorities is a rather time-consuming process, and with main aim the acceleration of the procedure, the Partnership will ensure the timely preparation and submission of the reports by taking the following measures:

- As mentioned in C.7.1, a google drive account, dedicated to the project will be created. All the deliverables produced by the Partners will be uploaded and classified to this account, which will act as an archive providing a full overview of the project and the implemented activities. The Partners, FLCs and Programme Authorities will be given access the google drive which will be updated on a monthly basis.
- During the first week of each month, the Partners will be requested to submit an internal report to the Lead Partner where the activities implemented in the previous month will be described thoroughly as well as the payments and expenditure made. The report template that will be used by the Partnership will be based on the model provided in the Grant Contract. This intra-partnership reporting method will facilitate the monitoring of the implementation both on Partner and project level, preventing any problems or delays, and will save time at the end of each reporting period (4 months) when the partners will only have to consolidate information they already have instead of preparing it from the start.

As it can be identified by the above-mentioned methodology, the project ensures the proper and on time delivery of the reports,

C.7.5 Cooperation criteria

Please select the cooperation criteria that apply to your project and include a brief explanation. Please note that the joint development, joint implementation and joint financing criteria are mandatory.

Cooperation criteria	Description
Joint development	<p data-bbox="451 389 1414 568">The project partnership was formed on a shared vision and mutual interest in promoting sustainable practices in the Black Sea region. The partners represent diverse backgrounds and expertise, including organisations related to destinations (Local authorities) except for the PP3 that is a university undertaking the advanced technologies applications in the project</p> <p data-bbox="451 613 1414 792">The project development process involved extensive consultations with all partners to ensure that their ideas, priorities, and actions were integrated into the project. The partnership worked collaboratively to identify the key challenges that tourism and especially the tourism destinations face in the Black Sea region and to design a project that addresses those challenges.</p> <p data-bbox="451 837 1414 1016">All partners were actively involved and contributed to the development, integration and elaboration of the project idea. 4 partnership meetings were organized online, an open communication channel (whatsapp group) and a common google drive were created and continuous communication between all partners occurred.</p> <p data-bbox="451 1061 1414 1352">The entire content of the proposal was discussed in details while the key issues were the precise formulation and wording of the overall, the specific and the communication objectives as well as the activities. The project proposal and budget were periodically jointly reviewed and updated whenever it was necessary. It was agreed that the budget should be as balanced as possible and all the partners' duties predefined precisely and in details. The final version of the project proposal and the budget was agreed by all partners before its submission to JEMS</p> <p data-bbox="451 1397 1414 1487">The partners' collaboration was based on the spirit of good collaboration and made the joint development a key strength of the proposal ensuring project success and lasting impact</p>

Cooperation criteria	Description
	<p>The project activities will be carried out by the partners in a cooperative way, ensuring clear content-based links and coordinated by the LP1. Specifically, the following activities will be jointly implemented</p> <p>A1.1: Establishing of Destination Management Committees (DMCs) - Common Sustainable Tourism Policy - Policy Paper (all partners)</p> <p>A1.2: Joint Sustainability training PP3 will develop the training package and provide the training where all partners participate</p> <p>A1.3: Stakeholder Engagement and Community Involvement (all partners)</p> <p>A1.4: Destinations' Baseline Assessments and Needs Analyses (all partners except for PP3)</p> <p>A1.5: Sustainable Destination Strategy and Plans (all partners except for PP3 who will develop the common specifications)</p> <p>A1.7: Pilot implementations (all partners except for PP3)</p>
Joint implementation	<p>Yes</p> <p>A1.9: Private Sector Support (all partners except for PP3)</p> <p>A1.10: Joint Promotion of the Sustainable Destinations (all partners except for PP3)</p> <p>A1.11: Knowledge sharing and networking. All partners will jointly conduct requirement analysis and design the SDEC platform All partners will take part in SUSDEST-NET network</p> <p>Management and Coordination It will be carried out jointly by the common SC and its sub-committees mentioned in C.7.1 and C.7.2 with the participation of all the partners</p> <p>Communication - Activities will be carried out according to the approved project proposal and a communication plan agreed by all partners - Promotional campaigns will be implemented on a symmetrical basis - The final international conference will be organized by PP5 in cooperation with all the partners - All partners will use promotional material with common design (USBs, Posters)</p>

Cooperation criteria	Description
Joint staffing	<p>Yes</p> <p>During the project implementation, no functions will be duplicated within the partnership. For example, there is one coordinator at project level, one overall project financial manager and one project communication officer, Project management functions as well as quality control and evaluation will be carried out at project level by the Steering and sub-committees. Moreover:</p> <p>All partners' staff contributed actively to project preparation</p> <p>Joint staffing applies in ALL the activities, either as direct involvement of the staff or as coordinating and supervising. Despite restrictions of the project about the staff costs (20% of the other direct costs), there is no partner whose staff is uninvolved in relation to the project.</p> <p>Even tasks carried out by external experts, they are controlled and approved by the respective tender committee appointed by the respected partner and consisting of partners' staff</p>
	<p>All partners contribute to the activities' implementation using a part of their budget as justified below. In the following list the budget (direct costs except for staff – rounded numbers) of each partner per activity is presented, while the national contribution is 10%. Apparently, joint finance is ensured</p> <p>The following activities will be jointly financed:</p> <p>A1.1: Budget of LP1: 3500€ Budget of each other partner: 1000€</p> <p>A1.3: Budget of LP1, PP4: 11000€ Budget of PP2, PP5, PP6: 11500€ Budget of PP3: 7500€</p> <p>A1.4: Budget of each partner (except for PP3): 14000€</p> <p>A1.5 Budget of each partner (except of PP3): 28000€ Budget of PP3: 3500€</p> <p>A1.7: Budget of each partner (except of PP3): 14000€</p> <p>A1.8: Budget of LP1: 7000€ Budget of PP4: 1000€</p> <p>A1.9:</p>

Cooperation criteria	Description
<p>Joint financing</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>Budget of LP1, PP4, PP6: 17500€ Budget of PP2: 26500€ Budget of: PP5: 16000€</p> <p>A1.10 Budget of PP1, PP2, PP4, PP5: 10000€ Budget of PP6: 30000€</p> <p>A1.11: Budget of each partner (except of PP3): 4500€ Budget of PP3: 48000€</p> <p>- Communication activities > LP1: 17800€ > PP2: 24300€ > PP3: 11300€ > PP4: 35450€ > PP5: 49560€ > PP6: 17800€</p> <p>- Management and coordination > LP1: 77836€ > PP2: 47347€ > PP3: 29836€ > PP4: 37417€ > PP5: 24912€ > PP6: 34027€</p> <p>- Overall project budget (staff cost and office & administration included) > LP1: 264678€ (19 of the total budget) > PP2: 232592€ (16%) > PP3: 251196€ (18%) > PP4: 223245€ (16%) > PP5: 222768€ (16%) > PP6: 221267€ (16%)</p> <p>Average budget per partner: 235953€ Standard deviation: 16435€ Coefficient of variation: 7% indicating that there are no significant variations among partners' budgets</p>

C.7.6 Horizontal principles

Please indicate how your project contributes to horizontal principles and provide a short explanation.

Horizontal principles	Type of contribution	Description of contribution

Horizontal principles	Type of contribution	Description of contribution
Sustainable development and environment protection	positive effects	<p>The sustainability of a tourism destination is pivotal in promoting its sustainable development by integrating comprehensive economic, environmental, and social strategies. This holistic approach not only elevates the immediate tourist experience but also ensures the long-term health and attractiveness of the destination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Economically, it diversifies income by fostering eco-tourism and supports local employment and enterprises, ensuring economic benefits are retained within the community.- Environmentally, the project advocates for efficient resource management, pollution reduction, and supports conservation efforts aimed at preserving vital natural habitats.- Socially, it emphasizes the protection of local cultures and actively involves communities in the tourism planning process, thereby enhancing the quality of life and fostering social equity. <p>Moreover, sustainable tourism increases a destination's global competitiveness by attracting eco-conscious travellers, enhances resilience to environmental changes, and guarantees long-term viability without damaging natural or cultural assets.</p> <p>Additionally, ESG Sustainability aligns with and actively contributes to the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically, the SUSDEST-NET project, which focuses on promoting sustainability in tourism destinations, contributes comprehensively to all SDGs without exception.</p> <p>The project also stands out for its environmentally friendly approach to implementation, which has a minimal environmental impact and a negligible carbon footprint, further underscoring its commitment to sustainability principles.</p> <p>By promoting sustainable practices, the project not only adheres to global sustainability standards but also serves as a model for integrating environmental stewardship, economic responsibility, and social equity into the tourism sector</p>

Horizontal principles	Type of contribution	Description of contribution
Equal opportunities and non-discrimination	positive effects	<p>The project focuses and promotes sustainability that has equal opportunities and non-discrimination as a basic criterion under the pillar of Society in the ESG model. That means that the adoption of sustainability practices by various organisations, promotes the human right for diversity, equality and inclusion on a structured and effective manner</p> <p>The project is a typical people-to-people action</p> <p>All the beneficiaries will be selected following open calls for expression of interest and selection processes. Furthermore, all the activities related to public awareness and/or the communication and results presentation, will be elaborated in a way ensuring equal opportunities and non-discrimination. Additionally, all deliverables and outputs will be uploaded to the project website and made available free of charge to all interested parties, in a non-discriminatory way, provided that the principle of personal data protection is fully respected</p> <p>Moreover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- All the venues for meetings and events will be accessible by people with disabilities.- The presence of the project on the internet will ensure accessibility of information for the visually impaired (use of large characters) and other disabled people. The international standard Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG Ver2.0) will be applied where applicable- Specific invitations to events will be sent to minorities in the relevant project regions- The GDPR (EU)2016/679 will be fully respected <p>Overall, the project provides all the guarantees for respecting the equal opportunities and non-discrimination principle fully complying with the UN SDG nr. 10: "Reduced inequalities".</p>

Horizontal principles	Type of contribution	Description of contribution
Equality between men and women	positive effects	<p>The project focuses and promotes sustainability that has equality between men and women as a basic criterion under the pillar of Society in the ESG model. That means that the adoption of sustainability practices by the destinations and various organisations, promotes the gender equality on a structured and effective manner</p> <p>Specifically for the project:</p> <p>In the preparation of the project 11 staff members/ associates of all the partners took part, among which 6 were women and 5 were men</p> <p>In addition, during the project implementation, absolutely no activity violating the principle of gender equality is foreseen. On the contrary, a minimum of 40% of each gender will be selected to participate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- As members of the Destination Management Committees (DMCs) (A1.1) and attendees of the DMC members' joint e-training (A1.2)- As staff members of the destinations taking part in the pilot implementations (activity A1.7), that will be involved in the whole process. Although those people will be appointed by the destinations, the partners in cooperation with them, will make the necessary arrangements for the respect of the 40% quota <p>In addition, a 40% quota for each gender will be applied to the Steering Committee composition</p> <p>Apart from the above rules, in the beginning of the project, the Quality Control Committee will compose a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) establishing priorities, concrete objectives and specific measures that will be implemented to improve gender equality during the implementation period. After its approval by the Steering Committee, the GEP will be distributed to all partners to be followed throughout the project. The plan will also apply after the completion of the project during the operation of the SUSDEST-NET network</p>

C.8 Long-term effects and durability

Projects should have a long-lasting effect in the territories and for the relevant target groups. Please describe below how this will be ensured.

C.8.1 Ownership

Please describe who will ensure the financial and institutional support, including maintenance, for outputs developed by your project.

Institutional sustainability - Ownership

The SUSDEST-NET network that will be created, will be the owner of the project's outputs and deliverables, mainly responsible to exploit its results after its completion and in a wider area, according to its Strategy Paper and Action Plan that will be conducted. Apart from the partners that are committed to take part in the network, other stakeholders will be invited to participate on a voluntary basis.

It is pointed out that all partners and the network have full Intellectual Property Rights to all the outcomes of the project. Every partner's premises will operate as an antenna of the network and a staff member from each partner will be appointed as the person in charge of this antenna. This person might be supplemented by volunteers supporting the work of the antenna (e.g. university students working on their theses). The management structure of the network will be identified in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that will be developed by PP3 and signed by the partners and its other members during the international conference for results presentation & capitalisation, Members that will not be present in this conference will be able to sign the MoU digitally

All partners, without exceptions, include in their founding acts and are committed to objectives compatible with the project's overall objective. Therefore, the operation of each antenna is automatically integrated in the respective partner's work

Financial sustainability

The financial sustainability of the SUSDEST-NET Network is based on its members' symbolic financial contribution (when necessary) and mainly contribution in kind. The regular operational costs of each antenna (staff and administrative costs) will be embodied into the respective costs of each partner. The network (through its partners) will claim financial support from national or transnational funds in order to implement follow up activities and contribute to a more competitive and smart Black Sea region by supporting the blue economy and especially tourism by promoting the ESG sustainability concept to all the tourism stakeholders (overall project objective)

Nevertheless, the financial figures of the network and its antennae will arise from the Action Plan of the network that will be conducted during the project

Political sustainability

In the framework of activity A1.1, a policy recommendation paper will be presented and advocated to policy makers, to integrate in their policies the sustainability of tourism destinations in their jurisdiction. This policy paper will be presented during the regional and international capitalization

conferences

Moreover, the SUSDEST-NET network, as the owner of project's outputs and results and through its antennae, will continuously support destinations' sustainability policies. Ways that the network can achieve this, are:

- Engagement with policymakers to ensure that project outputs and results are integrated into policy frameworks, legislation, plans, codes of conduct, methods, and other relevant documents
 - Advocacy campaigns to highlight the importance of the project's outcomes
 - Provision of ongoing support and training to policymakers, stakeholders, and practitioners to ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to integrate the project's outputs and results into their activities
 - Monitoring and evaluation of the project's impact over time, mainly through the AIREMS (AI Recommendation and Monitoring System) and the Black Sea Sustainable Destinations Observatory (A1.6). This can help identify areas where further improvements are needed and provide evidence of the project's effect, which can be used to sustain its outputs and results.
- Use of the Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) platform combining an Open Educational Resource (OER) and a Living Lab

C.8.2 Lasting effects

Some outputs should be used by relevant groups (project partners or others) after the project's lifetime, in order to have a lasting effect on the territory and the population. Please describe how your outputs will be used after the project ends, and by whom.

Durability of project outcomes is a critical dimension of the overall objective of the project that is to: "Jointly contribute to a more competitive and smart Black Sea region by supporting the blue economy and especially tourism by...

...

- Networking to ensure experience exchange, ENSURING LASTING EFFECTS and transferability of outputs and results "

Destinations' sustainability is by definition a perpetual and endless process. The main structures ensuring lasting effects of the project are the SUSDEST-NET network and the Destination Management Committees. Especially the SUSDEST-NET network, being the owner of the project's outcomes, will work on exploiting them after the project and/or out of its area, according to its Strategy Paper/ Action Plan. Moreover, all outcomes will be freely available for any interested party through the project website and the network.

Outcomes and Their Long-Term Use:

- SUSDEST-NET Network (A1.11): Established through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and a comprehensive strategy and action plan, the network, will ensure the continued collaboration and coordination among project partners and stakeholders. The network will oversee the maintenance and operation of key project outputs, such as the AIREMS, the Observatory, and the SDEC platform. By fostering ongoing cooperation and knowledge exchange, the network will help scale up successful initiatives and promote best practices across the region.
- Common Sustainable Tourism Policy (A1.1) and Common Sustainable Destination Strategy (A1.5): After the project ends, public authorities will continue to use these documents to guide their destination plans ensuring their long-term application and adherence to sustainable practices.

- Training Package (A1.2): It will be made available online and promoted through the SDEC platform. Interested organisations will use it to educate new staff and stakeholders on sustainable destination practices ensuring continuous capacity building and knowledge transfer beyond the project's duration.
- The AIREMS and the Observatory (A1.6) will provide ongoing real-time data and insights into the sustainability performance of tourism destinations. The continuous use of these tools will ensure that destinations remain on track with their sustainability goals.
- Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) Platform (A1.11) managed by the SUSDEST-NET network will remain active as a collaborative space for stakeholders to share knowledge, best practices, and innovations in sustainable destination management.
- The Pilot Implementations (A1.7) of prioritized sustainability actions will serve as models for other destinations. The lessons learnt and best practices documented during the project will be shared through the SDEC platform and the SUSDEST-NET network, encouraging other destinations to adopt similar approaches.
- The Sustainability Awarding Scheme (A1.8) will continue to recognize and promote destinations that excel in sustainable tourism practices. The scheme will be managed by the SUSDEST-NET network, ensuring its ongoing operation and impact. By providing incentives and recognition, the awarding scheme will encourage continuous improvement and commitment to sustainability among destinations.

Ensuring Lasting Effects:

Integration into Policies and Plans:

The project outputs will be integrated into local and regional policies, ensuring their continued use and relevance. This will be achieved through close collaboration with public authorities and the incorporation of project outputs into official development plans and regulations.

Ongoing Management and Support:

The SUSDEST-NET network will provide ongoing management and support for key project outputs, such as the AIREMS, the Observatory, and the SDEC platform. This will ensure that these tools remain functional, updated, and widely used.

Capacity Building and Knowledge Transfer:

Continuous capacity building and knowledge transfer will be facilitated through the SDEC platform and the SUSDEST-NET network. Regular training sessions, workshops, and webinars will be organized to keep stakeholders informed and engaged.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

The AIREMS and the observatory will be used to continuously and evaluate the use and impact of project outputs. Regular assessments will be conducted to identify areas for improvement and ensure that the outputs continue to meet the needs of stakeholders.

Scaling Up Successful Initiatives:

Successful pilot implementations and best practices will be promoted and scaled up through the SUSDEST-NET network. This will involve sharing success stories, providing technical assistance, and facilitating peer learning among destinations.

By implementing these strategies, the SUSDEST-NET project will ensure that its outputs have lasting effects on the territory and the population, contributing to the sustainable transformation of tourism destinations in the Black Sea region.

C.8.3 Transferability

Some outputs that you will deliver could be adapted or further developed to be used by other target groups or in other territories. What will you do to make sure that relevant groups are aware of your outputs and are able to use them?

Transferability of project outcomes is a critical dimension of the overall objective of the project that is to:

"Jointly contribute to a more competitive and smart Black Sea region by supporting the blue economy and especially tourism by...

...

- Networking to ensure experience exchange, ENSURING lasting effects and TRANSFERABILITY of outputs and results "

The transferable outcomes (outputs/ deliverables) of the project are:

Common Sustainable Tourism Policy (A1.1) and Common Sustainable Destination Strategy (A1.5): These documents provide a comprehensive framework for sustainable destination management that can be adapted and adopted by other regions and organizations. By aligning with international standards and best practices, these policies and strategies offer universally applicable guidelines that can be customized to local contexts.

Training Package on Sustainability and Sustainable Destinations (A1.2):

The training package is designed to be versatile and widely applicable. It includes detailed modules, case studies, and practical exercises that can be used by other regions, organizations, and sectors. By making the training package available online through the SDEC platform, it ensures easy access and adaptability.

AI REcommendation and Monitoring System (AIREMS) supporting destinations sustainability and the Observatory (A1.6):

The AI tools and the Observatory provide real-time data and insights that are relevant to any tourism destination seeking to enhance sustainability. These tools can be adopted by other regions and integrated into their existing systems, facilitating data-driven decision-making and sustainability monitoring.

Sustainable Destination Education and Collaboration (SDEC) Platform (A1.11):

The SDEC platform, combining OER and a Living Lab, serves as a collaborative space for stakeholders to share knowledge, best practices, and innovations in sustainable destination management. The platform's resources and framework can be accessed and utilized by other regions and organizations.

Pilot Implementations (A1.7):

The pilot implementations provide practical examples and models that can be replicated in other regions. The detailed documentation of the implementation process, lessons learned, and best practices will be shared through the SDEC platform, enabling other destinations to adopt similar approaches.

Sustainability Awarding Scheme (A1.8):

The sustainability awarding scheme can be adopted by other regions to recognize and promote excellence in sustainable tourism. The criteria, processes, and templates developed during the project will be made available for use by other organizations and regions.

Measures to facilitate transferability:

- All the above-mentioned outcomes will be uploaded on the project's presence sites on the internet and made freely available to any interested party inside or outside the project area for further use
- The SUSDEST-NET network with the assistance of the DMCs' members will be able to promote the tested solutions provided by the project and support beneficiaries out of the project in order for them to apply those solutions
- In the communication activities and especially during the promotional campaigns and the regional and international conferences, the solutions created in the project (policy, strategy and plans, AIREMS, Observatory, SDEC platform) will be promoted and the potential users will be encouraged to receive and use the transferable outputs of the project
- The intensive dissemination of the results will familiarize a wide range of stakeholders with the necessity of adoption and use of the project outputs and will encourage and motivate them to act accordingly
- The destinations taking part in pilot implementations can act as role models in their areas and transfer the results and outputs
- The University taking part in the project (PP3) will integrate the solutions produced by the project in its syllabus in order to create opportunities for diploma or postgraduate theses and further research
- The continuous operation of the SUSDEST-NET network through its antennae is the most effective transferability channel. Transferring of outputs and results will be one of its main objectives referred in its Memorandum of Understanding and Strategy/ Action Plan. The existence of the network will be intensively promoted in the 3rd promotional campaign and the regional and international conferences
- Potential risks affecting transferability will be identified in and mitigated according to the project risk management plan drawn up by the Quality Control Committee (see C.7.2)