Preparation for implementation of an Area Based Development Approach (ABDA) in the Western Balkans

Baseline Study and Strategic Plan for development of Prespa Region
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Preparation of a Proposal for an Area Based Development in the Western Balkans
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# CONTENTS

Introduction

1 Countries and administrative regions covered
   1.1 Applied ABD selection criteria

2 Geographical area covered by the plan
   2.1.1 Macedonian municipalities
   2.1.2 Albanian municipalities
   2.1.3 Land structure of the cross-border area
   2.1.4 Natural-geographical resources of the region

3 Description on the current situation
   3.1 Description of the current situation showing disparities, shortcomings and potential development
   3.1.1 History of cooperation within the region
   3.2 The general socio-economic context of the geographical area
   3.2.1 Population
   3.2.2 Population density
   3.2.3 Net migration rate
   3.2.4 Gender
   3.2.5 Ethnic composition of the population
   3.2.6 Education
   3.2.7 Trainings
   3.3 Economic drivers
   3.3.1 Alternative Tourism
   3.3.2 Agriculture
   3.3.3 Trade
   3.3.4 Wood processing industry
   3.3.5 Renewable energy sources and green industry
   3.4 Performance of the main economic sectors
   3.4.1 Agriculture
   3.4.2 Food processing sector
   3.4.3 Textile and apparel Industry
   3.4.4 Construction Industry
   3.4.5 Tourism sector
   3.5 Environment and waste management
   3.5.1 Environment
   3.5.2 Waste water and solid management
   3.6 Rural economy
   3.6.1 Developed sectors other than agriculture
   3.6.2 Barriers for creation of employment opportunities
   3.6.3 Micro business formation
   3.7 Description and gap analysis of the provision of services in rural areas
   3.7.1 Services by the government
   3.7.2 Electricity
   3.7.3 Telephone and Internet
   3.7.4 Sewage and water supply
   3.7.5 Infrastructure need- Road infrastructure inside and outside the municipalities
   3.7.6 Cultural and Natural Heritage
   3.7.7 Build environment in villages
   3.7.8 Human potential and local capacities for local governance
3.8 The main results of previous activities and operations undertaken with Community and other bilateral or multilateral assistance, the financial resources deployed
3.8.1 UNDP
3.8.2 GIZ
3.8.3 USAID
3.8.4 European Commission
3.8.5 World Bank
3.8.6 OSCE

4 Strategic Framework for development of Cross–Border Region Prespa

4.1 Strategic Planning Process
4.2 Vision
4.2.1 A sustainable approach to Regional Development
4.3 Priority areas
4.4 The Strategy
4.5 Strategic goals and objectives per priority area
4.5.1 Priority Area: Environment
4.5.2 Priority area: Agriculture
4.5.3 Priority area: Economic Development and Tourism
4.5.4 Priority area: Social cohesion
4.5.5 Priority area: Regional infrastructure
4.5.6 Priority area: Energy Efficiency

5 Action Plan Framework
5.1 The Actions

6 Publicity and visibility

7 Annexes
7.1 Annex 1: Natural – geographical resources of the Region
7.2 Annex 2: Strategic planning workshops
7.3 Annex 3: Stakeholders’ questionnaire
7.4 Annex 4: Meetings of representatives
7.5 Annex 5: University education
7.6 Annex 6: Natural and Cultural Resources
7.7 Annex 7: Strategic Matrix Table
7.8 Annex 8: Projects Description
This programming document was developed for the cross-border region of Prespa and it consists of The Baseline study, Strategic and Action Plan for development of the cross-border region. The Baseline study assesses the current socio-economic situation, disparities and potentials for development within the region while the Strategic and the Action Plan present the strategic framework of jointly defined and agreed solutions by the regional stakeholders through applying the ABD approach.

The applied ABD approach was used to discover the most characteristic problems and challenges that the Region faces and to identify measures and actions that will help to overcome the development difficulties and limitations.

Prespa cross-border region is one of the cross-border areas of the Western Balkans which was selected by the SWG Board. It occupies the territory of two countries: Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania and covers the region of South-West Macedonia and South-East part of Albania. Two municipalities from Macedonia (Resen and Ohrid) and one County from Albania (Korce) are constituents of this region.

The region holds important natural resources, fairly good physical and communal infrastructure and some level of homogeneity of economical, social and other performances. Beside these characteristics, the region experiences depopulation due to poverty reasons, weak performance of socio-economic sectors, and underdeveloped governmental structures and provision of services. Additionally, the region confronts the threat of marginalization in the context of national and regional development and is deficient in terms of distinguished image and identity.

The complex problems of Prespa region are clustered and elaborated into two main objectives: capacity building of local and regional structures and poverty reduction. The first problem refers to challenges related to exclusion and marginalization of the Region in order to identify potentials which will provide foundation for sustainable - interior development. The second addressed problem refers to challenges related to the intimidating poverty situation closely connected to the problems of the transition of the societies and economic reforms and the weak performance of the socio-economic sectors. These challenges are sought in order to provide solutions to improve the livelihood.

The following economic drivers have been identified in the Region: 1) Alternative Tourism – including Rural tourism, Lake tourism, Mountain tourism, Cultural tourism, Sport/recreational tourism, Religious tourism; 2) Agriculture; 3) Trade; 4) Wood processing industry; 5) Renewable energy sources and green industry.

The nucleus of the economic activities in the Prespa cross-border area consists of few economic sectors: agriculture, food processing industry, textile industry, construction industry and tourism. They have been developed to the main characteristics of the area, such as climate, geographic position, history of economy and cooperation and the capacities of human resources.

The Strategic and Action plan presents a framework of recommendations and realistic solutions for sustainable and joint development of the cross – border region of Prespa. The aim of the solutions is to develop the inner capacities of the cross – border area, the abilities of the local structures and the key stakeholders. The document also aims to support regional/local authorities to work together across national borders to develop an integrated approach to regional issues. Ultimately, these cooperation have to expand the responsibility of the stakeholders for development of the essential conditions for making the Region more attractive and open for investments.

SUMMARY
The Strategic Plan intends to define, group and direct actions towards securing balanced and sustainable development of the territory by the accomplishment of three fundamental goals:

- economic and social cohesion;
- protection and management of natural resources and the cultural heritage; and
- balanced competitiveness of the area.

The Strategic Plan has six priority areas which were identified by the Regional Stakeholders Group:

1. Environment
2. Agriculture
3. Economic growth and tourism
4. Social cohesion
5. Regional infrastructure
6. Energy efficiency

Each priority area has its strategic goals and their corresponding objectives and activities. They are highly correlated and interdependent, thus complying with the multi-sector nature of ABD.
The Baseline study and strategic plan for development of the cross-border region of Prespa is a programming document that assesses the current socio-economic situation, disparities and potentials for development within the region, through applying the ABD approach. The document was developed for the cross-border region of Prespa and it consists of seven chapters. The first chapter presents the applied Area Based Development (ABD) criteria. The second chapter introduces the geographical cross border area of Prespa. The third chapter gives a quantified and qualitative description of the current situation within the region, assessing the situation of the socio-economic sectors, showing disparities, shortcomings and potentials for development. The fourth chapter outlines the framework of the Strategic Plan for Development of the targeted area. It includes the description of the overall strategic planning process, the Vision of the strategic plan, the chosen priority areas, the potential and critical needs for development and the SWOT analysis. It also includes strategic goals and objectives for each priority area. In addition, this chapter gives an overview of the stakeholder structure. It describes the structure of stakeholder – working group and its mandate for consultations and adoption of the strategy and the support during the process of its implementation. The fifth chapter presents the Framework of the Action Plan, describing the actions and identifying priority start-up measures, elaborated as project ideas with defined potential beneficiaries, the eligibility criteria and the monitoring indicators. The sixth chapter outlines the publicity and visibility measures for implementation of the strategy. It recommends the requirements needed to ensure that the document is publicised and describes actions which are foreseen to inform potential beneficiaries of the possibilities offered by the Strategy. The seventh chapter contains the Annexes.

Prespa cross-border region is one of the cross-border areas of the Western Balkans selected by the SWG Board for identifying the potentials of cross-border cooperation. It occupies the territory of two countries: Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania and covers the region of South-West FYROM and the South-East part of Albania. The region possesses significant natural resources, relatively good physical/communal infrastructure and some level of homogeneity in there, economical, social and other performances. Since the commencement of the democratisation process in both countries (early nineties of the previous century) the cooperation and internal connections between the people and the entities have intensified. Despite these features, the region suffers from depopulation due to poverty reasons, underdeveloped performance of socio-economic sectors, and underdeveloped governmental structures and provision of services. In addition, as it can be seen later in the document, the region is facing the risk of marginalization in the context of national and regional development and suffers from lack of distinguished image and identity.

ABD approach was employed to further discover the above mentioned problems and to identify actions for addressing them while preparing this document. It is also used as a tool that can help to prevail over development barriers and restrictions. According to the definition, ABD targets “specific geographical areas in a country characterised by a particular complex development problem, through an integrated, inclusive, participatory and flexible approach”.

Methodological approach applied was based on A consolidated and adapted methodology for an area-based development approach in cross border areas of the Western Balkans - Gert Guri, Fabien Santini. The methodology employs the following main steps: Area Delineation; Baseline assessment; Strategy and Action Plan; Strategy Implementation and Monitoring and on-going improvement of the process. Several information sources were considered while implementing the methodology:
official national statistical data, secondary sources (reports, strategies, scientific references etc.) and unpublished basic data provided by local governments. The structure and content of the final document were adapted in accordance to the requirements defined in Guidelines for the elaboration of ABD programming documents – Kaj Mortensen.

The complex problems of Prespa region addressed through the ABD approach are grouped and elaborated into two main objectives: capacity building of local and regional structures and poverty reduction. The first problem refers to challenges related to exclusion and marginalization of the Region in order to identify potentials which will secure basis for sustainable interior growth. The second addressed problem refers to challenges related to the threatening poverty situation which is a result of the transition of the societies and economic restructuring along with the weak performance of the socio-economic sectors. These challenges are sought in order to provide solutions to improve the livelihood.

The goal of this document is to develop an action plan based on the analyses of the Baseline Study and the Strategic Framework, that will provide realistic solutions for sustainable and joint development of the cross-border region of Prespa as an integrated area. These solutions have to develop the capacities of the local structures and key stakeholders and through mutual collaboration to participate in the process of drafting, adopting and implementing the regional development strategy. In the end these solutions should develop higher responsibility of the stakeholders for development of the basic conditions for making the Region more attractive and open for investments and secure better livelihood for its citizens.

The Strategic Plan has six priority areas which were identified by the Regional Stakeholders Group:

1. Environment
2. Agriculture
3. Economic growth and tourism
4. Social cohesion
5. Regional infrastructure
6. Energy efficiency

Each priority area has its strategic goals and their corresponding objectives and activities. They are highly correlated and interdependent, thus complying with the multi-sector nature of ABD.

1 Countries and administrative regions covered

1.1 Applied ABD selection criteria

The region Prespa was selected by the SWG Board for application of the ABD methodology and development of the Strategic document as one of the seven regions identified in the Study: Identification of potential rural cross-border target areas for the implementation of an area-based development approach in the Western Balkans, carried out by the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies and the Faculty of Agriculture - University of Belgrade.

The analytical application of cross-border analysis of proposed rural regions and delimitation of territory was developed in three steps:
• The proposed rural cross-border target areas were cross-checked again in order for them to be reassessed in terms of existence of similar development challenges and co-dependence in the use of specific assets, such as natural resources. Beside the general analysis of the Region of Prespa, a separate analysis of the proposed municipalities that composed the Region was done. The originally proposed area of Prespa consists of the municipality of Resen in FYROM and the County

More details on the applied methodological approach can be found in the Drina-Sava programming document- Introduction page.
of Korce in Albania. The region is much wider but the central part of the proposed area was the lake of Prespa and its surroundings. The analysis showed that the factors of interconnection and interdependence of the natural resources had to be considered during the process of definition and delimitation of the area due to the following.

The region of Prespa is a transboundary area shared by Albania, Greece, and the FYR of FYROM. It is a high-altitude basin consisting of two interconnected lakes, Great Prespa (259.4 km²) and Small Prespa (47.4 km²), located at approximately 850m alt. The lakes are surrounded by forested mountain regions in which three National Parks (Galicica, Pelister and Prespa) have been established. These National Parks secure the existence and further development of their unique and inextricable complex eco-system. Two of the National Parks are located on the territory of FYROM and one is located on the Albanian side. Beside FYROM, the National Park of Prespa is located in Albania and Greece as well. The borders of the National parks on the side of FYROM spread out from the territory of the proposed Municipality of Resen into the territories of two other municipalities – Ohrid and Bitola (Galicica National Park covers part of the territory of the Municipality of Ohrid and reaches the banks of Ohrid Lake, while Pelister National Park goes beyond the territory of the Municipality of Resen, covering part of the territory of the Municipality of Bitola).

In addition, the water basin of the Prespa Lakes is connected with the neighbouring Ohrid Lake through a system of underground water.

Therefore, the Region from Macedonian side has to be considered beyond its core – the lake of Prespa. The main natural resources are tightly connected and dependant to each other.

Taking into consideration the cohesiveness of the natural resources of the proposed area, the share of these resources with the neighbouring municipalities, the political initiatives along with the ABD principles of inclusion and the integration of all relevant subjects into the developmental efforts, the proposed Region was revised and the Municipality of Ohrid was added to the cross-border region. Consequently, a new, consolidated list of municipalities that create the cross-border areas was compiled. The list consists of Municipalities of Resen and Ohrid from Macedonian side and the entire County of Korce from the Albanian side.

The introduction of the Municipality of Bitola, Municipality of Struga (FYROM) and the Municipality of Prespa (Greece) to the Region as municipalities that share common values is considered for the future.

- At this stage, the delimitation of the Rural cross border area was also done in accordance to additional factors: population⁴, existence of good infrastructural links, the lack of political tensions or other forms of impediment.
- A comparative analysis of the selected national regions was also done. The Region was analysed based on defined set of regionally specific indicatorsthat took into consideration the regional characteristics/resources and development opportunities/challenges. Based on these criteria, the newly proposed Region of Prespa was ranked and compared to the rest of the regions.

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⁴ A number of 350,000 inhabitants have been informally used as optimal limit at this stage of development of the cross-border region. The above number provides relatively solid basis for easier and effective management of the developmental processes at the beginning and identification of the needed human resources to carry out these processes within the region. Based on the common challenges for development, inter-dependence of the neighboring communities, etc., this number could be reduced or increased later on.
### Summarised common criteria considered in selection of the regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strong economic links, based on well-integrated regional economy and compatible economic structure</th>
<th>Proximity of attractive markets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographic situation characterised by potential in human capital (less outmigration, better educational attainment)</td>
<td>Opportunities for growth, both in agriculture and other rural/urban economy sectors (tourism, other primary sector activities, manufacturing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homogeneous characteristics of natural resources: agricultural land, biodiversity, agri business and farm structure</td>
<td>The possibility of improving environmental protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-developed physical infrastructure</td>
<td>Existence of typical products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of institutional capacity of local governments and CSOs</td>
<td>Necessity of renewing of social connections among border population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cross-border region of Prespa is specific in the following aspects. It has a wealth of natural resources, basic economic activities, certain level of qualified labour force and some experience in cross border cooperation at institutional level. These common characteristics can be used as preconditions for development of the region.

The natural resources are comprised of the unique and complex eco-system of lakes and natural parks and they present the core of the main natural resources in the Region. This eco-system is interconnected and interdependent. Any activity undertaken in the national parks or the lakes reflects its consequences or results on the entire eco-system and territory. Part of the Lake Prespa that belongs to FYROM has a status of natural monument while the entire Lake of Ohrid is declared as a world heritage protected by UNESCO. The ranges of mountains that are positioned around the Lake of Prespa have been declared as national parks.

Most important, the natural resources of the Region are common and present all over the Region and as a potential they have high competitive values.

At the same time, these resources present a common challenge that needs joint efforts for integrated protection and development. The region suffers from underdeveloped performances for utilization, management and protection of its resources.

Taking into consideration the essential principles of ABD, the following procedures were considered in preparation of this document:

- The **participatory planning process** was employed while developing the strategic document. This procedure was used in order to secure a joint document – a product of all municipalities and other key stakeholders representing the private and civic sector from the region. Four meetings with local stakeholders were organized. The first meeting was organized with in order to present the Project and to create local groups which will become part of the Regional Stakeholders Group. Four separate meeting with representatives from all three sectors were organized in Resen, Ohrid, Pogradec and Korce. The following three meetings were organized as part of the strategic planning process (two meetings in Korce and one in Resen). The meetings were attended by 30 representatives: half of them were local governments’ representatives, 18% private sector representatives and 32% participants representing civil society (Annex 1).

- The **principle of integrated approach** helped to produce a comprehensive document which combined interests, priorities and challenges of structures and stakeholders representing different economic sectors and various social groups. The work of each thematic – working group was supported by stakeholders belonging to civil society, local administration and
business and stakeholders coming from the environment or entrepreneurs during the strategic planning process. Such approach secured that the complex interactions between sectors, factors and actors in a given area were taken into account. Local stakeholders actively worked in the six thematic-working groups. The groups were formed in accordance to the development potentials and the identified priority areas: Working Groups for Environment, Agriculture, Economic growth and tourism, Social cohesion, Regional infrastructure and Energy efficiency. Regional stakeholders were actively involved in the process of potentials’ assessment of the region by taking part in the survey and drafting the final document.

• The principle of inclusive processes ensured that all the components of the document have regional character instead of local, sector or individual aspect. The analysis of the situation, SWOT, the visioning, priority areas, strategic goals and development projects reflect the regional potentials and opportunities and aspirations. In cases where there was deficit of current and verifiable data, proxy-indicators, results of survey and qualitative information collected through study visits were employed to address the lack of quantitative data in some sectors and municipalities.

• Systematic blend of bottom-up and top down approaches were utilized during the process. Bottom – up approach secured that the local actors such as local population, economic and social interest groups, representative of public and private institutions) participated in the planning process and the selection of priorities. Top-down approach secured the link and harmonization of this document with the national or regional development strategies and other strategic documentation.
2 Geographical area covered by the plan

The Prespa cross-border area is placed in the Western Balkan, occupying the territory of two countries: FYROM and Albania. It covers the region of South-west FYROM and South-east Albania. To the north it borders Struga municipality (in FYROM), Valamare Mountain, to the west the County of Berat and the County of Gjirokaster; to the south it borders Greece and Gramos Mountain and to the east the Baba mountain, Pelagonija valley and Bigla mountain. Region borders and delineation of the municipalities is presented on Map 1 and Map 2 respectively.

Map 1: Borders of Prespa cross-border area

Source: Own elaboration

Map 2: Delineation of the municipalities in Prespa cross-border area

Source: Own elaboration

In the Macedonian part there are 2 municipalities participating in the Prespa cross-border area: Municipality of Ohrid and Municipality of Resen. These municipalities are part of two national regions: Ohrid is part of the South-western planning region, and Resen is part of the Pelagonia planning region.

The Albanian part of the Prespa cross-border area consists of Korca County. Korca County is situated

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5 The Local Government in Republic Albania is organized and functions at two levels, first level: Units of local government and second level: County (Qark in Albanian). First level consists of urban and rural municipalities. Urban municipalities are units of local government with more than 20.000 inhabitants (Bashkia in Albanian) and rural municipalities are basic units of local government in rural areas (Komuna in Albanian). There are 65 urban municipalities in the country, while the number of cities/towns (qytete) is 74. The number of rural municipalities is 308, while the number of villages (fshatra) is 2.962. Second level is consisted of Counties, which are led by their own local authorities (Regional Councils) and are divided into Districts (Reth in Albanian). Albania is divided into 12 counties, which consist respectively of 3 districts, numbering 36 Districts in total. Central government is organized in two levels as well. The first level is the entire territory of the country. The second level is consisted of prefectures (Prefektura in Albanian) numbering 12 in total.
in the Southern-eastern part of Albania. To the north it borders the Elbasan Region and FYROM, to the south the Gjirokastra Region, to the east Greece and to the west the Berat Region. The Korca Region includes 4 administrative divisions: Korca District; Pogradec District; Devoll District and Kolonja District. Table 1 gives review of the region municipalities, its population and density.

Table 1: Municipalities in the Prespa cross-border area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating municipalities</th>
<th>FYROM (MK)</th>
<th>Albania (AL) County of Korca</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ohrid</td>
<td>Korce District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resen</td>
<td>Devoll District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kolonja District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pogradec District</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Population (number of inhabitants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FYROM (MK)</th>
<th>Albania (AL) County of Korca</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70814</td>
<td>257576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population: 328,390</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Area (km²)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FYROM (MK)</th>
<th>Albania (AL) County of Korca</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1122.93</td>
<td>2259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total area (km²): 3381.93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Statistical Office

2.1.1 Macedonian municipalities

Municipality of Ohrid belongs to the Southwest planning region of FYROM occupying part of Ohrid-Struga valley, Lake Ohrid and part of Galicica National Park. To the north it borders the Municipality of Debarca; to the south it borders Albania; to the east - the Municipality of Resen and to the west it borders the Municipality of Struga. It has an area of 383.93 km². The land area occupies 204 km², while the water area occupies 179.93 km². The climate of the municipality is Continental with some Mediterranean influence coming through the Mountain of Galicica.

Municipality of Resen is placed in the southwest FYROM and covers an area of 739 km², divided into 562 km² of land and 177 km² of water. The core of the Municipality of Resen is the Valley of Prespa. It lies at an altitude of 850 m with peaks over 2600 m high. Municipality of Resen borders Albania to the south, to the west it borders Bitola Municipality, to the north it borders Municipality of Demir Hisar, while to its west side it borders the Municipality of Ohrid. The municipal climate is continental with Mediterranean influence through the gorge throat to the southwest of the Small Prespa Lake and through the mountain saddles Prevtis to the south-western part of Mala Prespa. Detailed review of the municipalities is provided in Table 2.

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6 http://www.rda-korca.org/?q=en/korcaregion
Table 2: Detailed preview of the Macedonian municipalities of the cross-border area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipalities</th>
<th>Ohrid</th>
<th>Resen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>383.93 km²</td>
<td>739 km²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total area</td>
<td>1122.93 km²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>54609</td>
<td>16205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td></td>
<td>70814</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Settlements:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal seat</th>
<th>Ohrid</th>
<th>Resen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban settlements</td>
<td>1 urban settlement: Ohrid</td>
<td>1 urban settlement: Resen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rural settlements**


Source: Municipality websites and state statistical office

2.1.2 Albanian municipalities

The Albanian part of the Prespa cross-border area consists of Korca County that is situated in the Southern-eastern part of Albania, with a territorial extension of about 3697 km². The Korca County is bordered to the north by the Elbasan Region and FYROM, to the south by the Gjirokastra Region, to the east by Greece and to the west by the Berat Region.

The Korca Region includes 4 administrative divisions:

- Korca District, 1752 km² or 46.3 % of the area
- Pogradec District, 725 km², or 19.2 % of the area
- Devolli District, 429 km², or 11.8 % of the area
- Kolonja District, 805 km², or 21.3 % of the area

Review of Albanian districts is provided in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3: Districts of County of Korca with number of towns, communes and villages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cities</th>
<th>Towns</th>
<th>Communes</th>
<th>Villages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korca</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolonja</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devolli</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pogradec</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: R.D.A. Korca

Table 4: Settlements in the districts in the Albanian part

http://www.rda-korca.org/?q=en/korcaregion
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Capital</th>
<th>District Population (2010)</th>
<th>Area (km²)</th>
<th>Municipalities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Devoll District</td>
<td>Bilisht</td>
<td>33,785</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>Bilisht, Hoçisht, Miras, Progër, Qendër Bilisht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolonjë District</td>
<td>Ersekë</td>
<td>14,318</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>Barmash, Çlirim, Ersekë, Leskovik, Mollas, Piskal-Novoselë, Qendër Ersekë, Qendër Leskovik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korçë District</td>
<td>Korçë</td>
<td>138,898</td>
<td>1,752</td>
<td>Drenovë, Gorë, Korçë, Lekas, Libonik, Liqenas, Maliq, Moglicë, Mollaj, Pirg, Pojan, Qendër Bulgarec, Vithkuq, Voskop, Voskopojë, Vreshtas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pogradec District</td>
<td>Pogradec</td>
<td>70,575</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>Buçimas, Çërravë, Dardhas, Pogradec, Proptisht, Trebinjë, Udënisisht, Velçan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>257,576</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,711</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Statistical Office

Korçë District is placed in the southeastern part of Albania in Korçë County. It borders Pogradec District and the Republic of FYROM to the north, Greek prefectures of Florina to the east, Devoll District to the southeast, Kolonjë District and Përmet District to the southwest, and Gramsh District and Skrapar District to the west. The centre is Korçë, which is the biggest and most developed city in the County of Korca, and one of the most developed cities in Albania.

District of Pogradec is placed in the eastern part of Albania. It borders FYROM to the east, District of Korca to the south, District of Gramsh to the west and District of Librazhd to the north. Its centre is Pogradec, which is a big touristic site and developed urban settlement in the region.

Devoll District is placed in the southeastern corner of Albania. It borders the Greek prefectures Florina and Kastoria to the east and southeast, the district of Kolonjë to the southwest and Korçë to the west and north. The centre is Bilisht- a small urban settlement.

Kolonje District is placed in the south-east part of Albania. It borders Korçë to the north, Greece on the east and south, including the prefectures of Kastoria and Ioannina and the District of Permet to the west. Its centre is Erseke, which is among the smallest urban settlement in the region.
2.1.3 Land structure of the cross-border area

The land composition of the target area is mostly covered with forested land, pastures and meadows, while the arable land and the permanent crops occupy a small part of the region.

Map 3 and Map 4 give visual picture of the land composition of the region.

Map 3: Land composition of the Macedonian part of the cross-border area

Map 4: Land composition of the Albanian part of the cross-border area
The territory that belongs to FYROM is mostly covered with forested land, pastures and meadows. The lakes comprise most of the water area which represent around 20% of the entire territory. The territory of Albania is mostly covered with mountains and forested land, pastures and meadows. The presence of arable land and permanent crops is bigger in comparison to the Macedonian side of the region. There is also a presence of semi-natural vegetation and artificial areas that occupy small part of the region. The average altitude is around 1000 m with peaks above 2000 m. The lakes consist most of the water area which is less than 10%.

2.1.4 Natural-geographical resources of the region

This part provides a brief overview of the most characteristic natural – geographical resources and the climate of the target area. More thorough description of these resources can be found in Annex 1.

Ohrid-Struga valley is divided into two parts: larger - Struga Field and smaller - Ohrid Field. Ohrid Field belongs to the territory of Municipality of Ohrid. The valley is located in the southwest of Ohrid. It borders several mountains that are mostly of limestone composition.

Prespa Valley is divided between three countries – FYROM, Albania and Greece, occupying the territory of the Municipality of Resen on the Macedonian side.

Pelister National Park is located in the south-western part of the FYROM, encompassing an area of 17,150 ha. It is located on the northern side of the Baba massif at altitudes between 900 and 2601m and it spreads on the territory of Municipality of Resen with part of its south –western slopes.

Galicica National Park is located on the mountain range between the Prespa Lake and Ohrid Lake, on the territory of mountain Galicica covering area of 25 000 ha. To the south it borders Albania, to the west the Park borders the shoreline of Lake Ohrid. In the Albanian part of Prespa cross-border area there are two National Parks: Prespa National park and Drenova Fir.

The Prespa National Park in Albania includes the entire Prespa basin in Albania, an area of 277.5 km². It was established in 1999 for the restoration and protection of the important land and water ecosystems in the Big and Small Prespa region. “Drenova Fir”, 10 km far from Korca city, is situated on the crest of Morava Mountain 1400m.above sea level, with an area of 1380 hectares. The park is rich in water sources like those of Shen Gjergji, Plakes, Plllices etc., which are attractive sights and important resource for tourism. The park has high competitive values for development of ecotourism, winter sports, alpinism and excursions.
Lake Ohrid is the deepest lake in the Balkans and the seventh deepest lake in Europe, with a maximum depth of 288 m (940 ft) and average depth of 155 m (508 ft). It covers an area of 358 km² (138 sq mi), containing an estimated 55.4 km³ of water. It is 30.4 km long by 14.8 km wide at its maximum extent with a shoreline length of 87.53 km, shared between the FYROM (56.02 km) and Albania (31.51 km).

Prespa Lake consists of two lakes: Great Prespa Lake and Small Prespa Lake. It is a triangle of the Macedonian, Albanian and Greek border. Great Prespa Lake covers an area of 284 km², with a 54 m maximum depth and altitude of 853 m and it is among the cleanest lakes in the world. 65% of the total surface of the lake belongs to FYROM, 18% to Albania and 17% to Greece.
3  Description on the current situation

3.1  Description of the current situation showing disparities, shortcomings and potential development

3.1.1  History of cooperation within the region
The Prespa cross-border area has a rich history; dating from prehistoric period. The life in the region has been functioning and changing through a period of different civilisations. Looking at the region, it can be seen that it represents a whole unit- an environment that provides conditions for living and development. The life in this area of the region dates back from the prehistoric times and there are a lot of artefacts and locations that are witnessing the life of the different civilisations living here. Here, through this region, passes the old-Roman road 'Via Ignatia', which was a powerful and very meaningful connection between Thessaloniki and Durres since the ancient roman period. This road has constituted the backbone of communication and development through the history. On this road lies the triangle Korca-Bitolja-Ohrid, a powerful trade region during the medieval period and the Ottoman Empire, connecting the Empire with the Western Balkans and Europe.

After the World War II the connections among the people from the cross-border region were interrupted with the establishment of socialist regimes and due to ideological differences. The interruption of communication and cooperation was done especially due to self isolation of Albania during the period of Hoxha dictatorial regime. This isolation lasted until 1991, when the regime was replaced by a democratic system, and the country started to re-establish the old and to build new relations with the bordering countries. First signs of re-established cooperation can be seen after 1991. Some of them were the attempts and mechanisms to establish more effective cross-border cooperation which was implemented through various programs and supported by national governments, local governments and international community's presented through different forms of aid programs. Nowadays there is an active cross-border cooperation program under IPA 2007-2013. More information about this program can be found under section Programs of the European Commission in the cross-border area.

3.2  The general socio-economic context of the geographical area

3.2.1  Population
The statistical data used in this part is from 2001 national census for Albania and 2002 national census for Macedonia.

Local authorities do not possess any new statistical information, which can be considered as official.

The analysis of the demographic data will be elaborated at a municipal level for the Macedonian part and district level for the Albanian part of the region.

The population in the municipalities in the Macedonian part (Ohrid and Resen) constantly decreases, while in the county of Korca the situation is opposite- the number of citizens increases, even though these fluctuations are not big. The only exception is the district of Kolonje where some fluctuations are noticeable. The number of population increases until 2009, when some decrease is noticeable. However the situation improves in 2010 when the number increases again.

The lack of fluctuations in the population's number demonstrates a somehow stable economic sector, which goes against the trend of other cross-border areas affected by the population decrease.

The data related to the number of population is presented in the table and chart below:
3.2.2 Population density

The population density of the area was calculated for the period of 2007-2010. The highest density rates are noted in the Korca District, where the population in 2010 is reaching its highest peak, while the lowest density rates are noted in the District of Kolonje, where the density rate in 2010 reaches its bottom line.

The Eurostat and OECD Methodologies classify areas with population density under 150 inhabitants per km² as rural areas. According to these methodologies the region can be classified as predominantly rural with the exception of the District of Korca. However, the indicated density population for the district of Korca is due to the fact that most of the population there lives in the city of Korca (over 100,000 inhabitants). The rest (around 30,000 inhabitants) live in the rural settlements. Figure 2 gives graphical view of the population density in the region.

Figure 2: Graphical presentation of the population density

Source: own elaboration

---

The information below depicts the evolution of population growth (i.e. annual percentage change) in all municipalities of the target area. Negative growth rates appear to have increased in past years, particularly for Districts of Kolonje and Korca and in the municipalities of Ohrid and Resen. In recent years the only major negative change was noted in Ohrid, while the others are facing with smaller negative annual change. Overall, the target area is experiencing a negative population change in the past four years, which is a result of the lower increase of the population between two successive years.

There is an assumption that the decreasing rates in the Municipality of Ohrid are a result of high negative net migration rates. Figure 3 gives graphical view of the annual change of population.

3.2.3 Net migration rate

Based on the data found, the net migration rate was calculated for the period of 2007-2010. The data for the Macedonian part shows that in Municipality of Ohrid the number of people moving out is higher than the number of people moving in. In Municipality of Resen the situation is the opposite. Official data related to net migration rate for the Albanian part of the region was unavailable. Due to similar characteristics of both parts of the region, it is assumed that the situation is the same. People from the Albanian part migrate mostly in Greece and the other countries in Europe because of economic reasons. The only difference is that the people migrating outside the country might not be statistically registered as emigrants because they have temporary jobs outside the country. These movements of population are mostly a result of the fact that the country was largely spared from the severe fallout of the 2008-2009 World financial crises.

---

*Figure 3: Graphical presentation of the annual change of the population (2008-2010)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ohrid</th>
<th>Resen</th>
<th>Korca</th>
<th>Kolonje</th>
<th>Devoll</th>
<th>Pogradec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>-0.4387</td>
<td>-0.3855</td>
<td>0.3285</td>
<td>0.32648</td>
<td>0.32996</td>
<td>0.32762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>-0.4389</td>
<td>-0.3501</td>
<td>0.24258</td>
<td>-0.9001</td>
<td>1.89784</td>
<td>0.1647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>-0.5319</td>
<td>-0.1171</td>
<td>-0.0367</td>
<td>-0.0349</td>
<td>-0.0385</td>
<td>-0.0369</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: own elaboration*

---

9  [http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3235.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3235.htm)
Figure four presents the net migration rate per municipality in the period of 2007-2010.

**Figure 4: Net migration rate per municipality (2007-2010)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ohrid</th>
<th>Resen</th>
<th>Korca</th>
<th>Kolonje</th>
<th>Devoll</th>
<th>Pogradec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>-211</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>-397</td>
<td>109</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>-313</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Statistical Office

3.2.4 Gender

The Prespa cross-border region is characterized with balanced presence of both genders – males and females.

The gender distribution in the region is the following:

**Figure 5: Graphical presentation of the gender ratio**

The total number of males in the region is higher than the total number of females for about 0.835%. The gender structure and their difference (considering percentage of males over females) by municipalities and districts are showed in the table and in the chart below:
Table 5: Gender and difference males over females per municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Kolonje</th>
<th>District of Devoll</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difference in percent- males over females</td>
<td>-3.34%</td>
<td>0.77%</td>
<td>0.73%</td>
<td>2.61%</td>
<td>1.34%</td>
<td>3.51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: state statistical office

Figure 6: Graphical presentation of gender per municipality

The data for the gender distribution shows that in the Albanian districts the males dominate, but that difference is not very high. It is more noticeable in the districts of Pogradec and Kolonje, where the number of males is higher than the females for 3.51% and 2.61% respectively. This provides an opportunity for future development of some sectors of the heavy industry, but the industry which will not harm the nature such as construction etc.

In the Macedonian part the situation differs from that on the Albanian part. The number of females in the Municipality of Ohrid is higher than the number of males for 3.34%. In the municipality of Resen the male population slightly dominates with difference of 0.77%. This opens an opportunity for development of the light industry, such as the services sectors (catering services, educational institutions, textile sector etc).

3.2.5 Ethnic composition of the population

The ethnic composition of the population can be seen for the Macedonian part only. There was no available statistical information for this issue for the Albanian part, most likely because the State Statistical Office does not process such data on regional level. Ethnic composition of the region is provided in Table 6.
Table 6: Ethnic composition of the population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic composition of the population (in % of the total population)</th>
<th>Ohrid</th>
<th>Resen</th>
<th>Korca</th>
<th>Kolonje*</th>
<th>Devoll*</th>
<th>Pogradec*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Macedonians</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>76,07%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanians</td>
<td>5,3%</td>
<td>9,13%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turks</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10,68%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vlahs</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0,44%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roms</td>
<td>0,1%</td>
<td>1,09%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbs</td>
<td>0,6%</td>
<td>2,44%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Statistical Office.

There are six ethnic groups living in FYRM. Most populated are the Macedonians, representing 85% of total population living on this territory. Second most present ethnic groups are the Albanians with 5.3% and third are Turks representing 4% of total population. There are also Vlahs, Roma and Serbs living in this area but these minorities are represented with less than 2% of total population.

The Albanian part is also an ethnically diverse area. This statement was generated during the participatory planning process and discussions with local government and NGO representatives. They have confirmed the existence of different ethnic groups such as Vlahs, Macedonians, Roma and Greeks. However, their statements cannot be confirmed with official data.

Generally speaking, although there are many different ethnic groups in the cross-border area, in each of the both countries the domestic ethnic group is the most present. It should be also mentioned that these minorities in the cross-border area are not underprivileged in terms of equal opportunities related to labour market, social and cultural services. The lack of inter-ethnic or religious tensions within the region can be seen as an opportunity for cross-border cooperation.

3.2.6 Education

The situation of the education in the Prespa cross-border area is presented by the available official statistical data.

Albania and FYROM have very similar educational systems, but the compulsory of educational level is different. Both countries have four level educational system composed of pre-school, primary school, secondary school and university. In Albania, the primary education is compulsory, while in FYROM the secondary education is also compulsory. Such disparity can create long term challenges at the level of literacy, knowledge and skills of the population within the region. Due to the legislation, Macedonian citizens will have higher education than those from the Albanian part of the region. This can create problems in terms of competitiveness of the labour force.

The number of educational institutions by level of educational is presented for Macedonian municipalities only, in the Table 7.
Table 7: Educational institution per educational level, per municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>number of educational institutions (2009-2010)</th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Devoll</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
<th>District of Kolonje</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pre-school</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>primary school</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>secondary school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>university</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: state statistical office.

Information over the educational characteristics is presented in the section below, where detailed description of each educational level is provided.

Table 8 gives overview of the number of student enrolled in the schools in year 2009-2010.

Table 8: Number of enrolled students (2009-2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>number of enrolled students (2009-2010)</th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Devoll</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
<th>District of Kolonje</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pre-school</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>primary school</td>
<td>5174</td>
<td>1342</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>secondary school</td>
<td>2734</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>university students</td>
<td>2039</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: state statistical office.

Regarding the population education level from the census, Table 9 shows the resident population by educational attainment.

Table 9: Number of resident population by educational attainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of resident population by educational attainment</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Kolonje</th>
<th>District of Devoll</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>78232</td>
<td>9184</td>
<td>21042</td>
<td>36072</td>
<td>13681</td>
<td>4548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>2597</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>1232</td>
<td>22617</td>
<td>5319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upper vocational</td>
<td>17330</td>
<td>2375</td>
<td>3785</td>
<td>9805</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upper technical</td>
<td>7840</td>
<td>953</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>3282</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University and post-university</td>
<td>6557</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>2612</td>
<td>4163</td>
<td>894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No diploma</td>
<td>17416</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>4153</td>
<td>9793</td>
<td>5088</td>
<td>3212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>129972</td>
<td>15718</td>
<td>31331</td>
<td>62796</td>
<td>45549</td>
<td>13973</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The situation shows that there is a difference in the level of education of the population on the Albanian and the Macedonian part. Most of the population on the Albanian part (60.27%) has attended primary school, while on the Macedonian part almost half of the population (46.93%) has diploma in secondary education. This shows that the Macedonian part of the area has labour force with higher qualifications. The number of the population with university diploma prevails on the Macedonian part. Following is the analysis of these data.

### Primary education

The provided data in table 13 shows that the municipalities in the Macedonian part of the region have the proper educational institutions for this level of education. The data of the same issue was unavailable for this section for the Albanian part of the region. It is an assumption that there is at least one primary school per municipality. However, due to the discussions held with the stakeholders during the participatory planning process information gathered showed that there is at least one primary school in every municipality (urban or rural). Based on this information the general data is that primary educational level exists and it is well distributed in the entire region. However, all these institutions need to be reconstructed or upgraded in order for the students’ conditions to be improved. Table 15 shows that 54.37% of the total population living within the borders of the cross-border area have attained primary school. In the Macedonian part the attendance of the primary school over the total population is 30.63%, while in the Albanian part this percentage is almost double (60.27%).

Table 14 shows that in 2009 9.16% of the total population was enrolled in primary school. No such information was obtained for the Albanian part. Considering the fact that primary school in Albania is compulsory; it is assumed that most of the younger population, which have the age adequate for primary school education, has been enrolled in the educational system.

### Secondary education

The data provided for the secondary education shows that the municipalities in the region have the proper institutions for this level of education. However, the infrastructure capacities of these schools have to be improved. Due to unavailable data for the secondary educational level for the Albanian side of the region, the assumption is that in each urban settlement there is at least one secondary educational institution. These schools also need reconstruction in order to improve the conditions for the students. According to table 15 the percentage of secondary school attainment in the cross-border region is 26.37%. On the Macedonian part the attainment is 46.93% over the total population, while in the Albanian part the attendance of the secondary school is 21.26%.

Table 14 shows that in 2009 4.66% of the total population on the Macedonian side was enrolled in secondary school, while on the Albanian part no such data was available. Considering the fact that only the primary school is compulsory in the Albanian part of the region, it is assumed that less population enrols in secondary school there.

### University education

There is a presence of state and private universities in the region. They may have strong impact on the regional economy. The detailed list of universities is provided in Annex 5.

According to table 15 the percentage of university and post-university attainment over the total population is 5.34%. On the Macedonian side the university and post-university attainment is 8.5% of the total population living on this side, while on the Albanian part the attainment is 4.56% over the total population. The percentage of enrolment in this level of education on the Macedonian side is 3.69% over the total population, while for the Albanian part no such data was available.

### Trainings

The stakeholder’s answers in the survey (Annex 2) indicate a need for training both for the employed and for the unemployed citizens. Beside the universities the region has some capacities that provide trainings and support for the local businesses, which operate as training and development agencies.
There are two organizations—one is placed in Ohrid and the other is placed in Korca. Both of them provide similar services such as help for businesses with credit applications, providing consultancy services, building and training human capacities. These training organizations provide a potential for developing the human capital in general and social capital in particular.

3.2.7.1 **ESA Ohrid**
Enterprise Support Agency (ESA) - Ohrid was founded in 1998 with the support of the British Know How Fund and the Municipality of Ohrid and it has been working with many customers in the region.

ESA- Ohrid’s objective is to contribute to the ongoing economic development in the region of Ohrid and FYROM through provision of training and consultancy services support. The agency provides tailored trainings to different businesses in the spheres of management and specific trainings for the labour force. Besides the training, ESA provides services in: preparation of business plans, organization of commercial exhibitions, organization of trade missions, preparation of regional profiles, providing business information over the Internet, organizing marketing campaigns, conducting business counselling needs of SMEs, participation in a larger number of projects related to SMEs. By providing the needed assistance for the stakeholders, this organization can support and contribute in future economic development of the cross-border region.

3.2.7.2 **Korca- RDA (Regional Development Agency)**
The Regional Development Agency (R.D.A.) Korce is a non-profit organization that provides training and consultancy for businesses and NGOs. It was established in April 1998 as an element of the Civil Society for helping, supporting and promoting:

- The capacity building of potential Civil Society and businesses
- The SMEs’ regional development.
- The compilation and implementation of different projects and programs on economic, social and cultural development of the region.
- The encouragement of cross-border cooperation in establishing the Prespa/Ohrid region.

The RDA offers trainings on different topics for businesses and NGOs, development of studies and implementation of assessments- surveys.

3.3 **Economic drivers**
Economic drivers on every economy represent the industrial sectors that have the main contribution and influence towards market development and increasing of population wealth. These are usually sectors that provide the biggest incomes and employment rates. Regarding the targeted area the following economic drivers have been identified.

3.3.1 **Alternative Tourism**
The alternative tourism can become one of the main economic drivers in the region if the wealth of natural, cultural and human resources is taken into consideration and is engaged in integrated manner in the process of joint development of touristic products and services. Alternative tourism is a process which promotes a just form of travel between the members of different communities. It seeks to achieve mutual understanding solidarity and quality amongst participants (Holden, 1984, p.15; cited in Smith and Eadington, 1992, P.18). It is thought to consider the small developments or attractions for tourists which are set in villages or communities and organized by them. These are seen as having a fewer negative effects- social or cultural, and a better chance of being acceptable to the local people than mass tourism. Such tourism can be referred to green tourism- eco-tourism, sustainable tourism, adventure tourism, rural tourism, agro- tourism etc. Within these types of tourism local available resources such as local accommodation infrastructure, local entertainment, local arts, local travel and places (places to be seen) as well as local food and local beverage products play vital role.
3.3.1.1 Rural tourism

Even though the region has several well developed urban areas, the most frequent settlements are the rural communities. More than half of the population lives in villages and most of the life takes place in rural areas. The figures show that rural settlements dominate in both countries. Such constellation offers an opportunity for development of the rural tourism. These rural regions are rich in history culture and tradition, recognizable with unique architecture and clean environment. Moreover the rural settlements can offer a variety of new and undiscovered traditions as well as healthy and delicious local cuisine. The hospitality of the local population can contribute towards development of such type of tourism. Finally, the results of the stakeholder survey indicate rural tourism as a very potential segment for development.

3.3.1.2 Lake tourism

The area includes two lakes- Ohrid Lake and Prespa Lake, which are not polluted and could offer a great opportunity for development of lake tourism, such as sport fishing, kayaking, swimming, diving etc. The Lake tourism developed the family based tourism since most of the facilities (hotels, restaurants, tsc.) are family based. The settlements around these lakes have developed their own tourist infrastructure at some level, depending on the size of the settlement. However, no matter the fact that in the bigger settlements the tourist infrastructure is more developed, they all need further development and reconstruction, as well as improved service provision in order to offer better conditions for the tourists.

The statistical data referring to touristic infrastructure and overnights was available for Macedonian part only. It is the following.

Table 10: Number of hotels, restaurants and tourists overnights per municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Kolonje</th>
<th>District of Devoll</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>number of hotels</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>number of restaurants</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tourist overnights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>41552</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>961211</td>
<td>43507</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>104836</td>
<td>36156</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>951254</td>
<td>28204</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>542657</td>
<td>20985</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: state statistical office.

Despite the lack of data for the Albanian part, such infrastructure exists and it can be seen in some of the municipal strategic documents. There are hotels and restaurants in the Albanian part and most of them are built in the recent years. However, there is a need for construction of additional touristic facilities (especially in areas with lakes and national parks). The improvement of the quality of the touristic services is essential for the both parts of the region.

This kind of tourism has some relations and can be complemented with the mountain tourism. The closeness of the mountains to the lakes in the Prespa cross-border region can be a great potential for using this kind of relation lake tourism-mountain tourism.
3.3.1.3 Mountain tourism

The target area is abundant with mountains and offers great opportunities for development of mountain tourism. All four national parks are located on mountains. Each mountain in the region has natural capacities and conditions for development for this kind of tourism but Mountain Galicica, Mountain Pelister and Gramos Mountain are especially suitable for this purpose. This area can offer development of mountain tourism activities such as: hiking, climbing, mountain biking etc. All National Parks have already built some infrastructure for this type of tourism in terms of hiking cottages, biking and hiking trails. Nowadays, National Parks Galicica and Pelister are building signalization for these trails. The Mountain areas are not very populated and as such can offer peace, clean air and environment and their natural and cultural resources can offer tourist enjoyment. The low level of population density can be seen as a weakness regarding provision of effective touristic services as well. Therefore, the people who live in the neighbouring rural settlements have to be involved in the provision of services and support of tourists. Additional services and support can be provided by people and entities from urban settlements, taking into consideration the fact that they are located at the base of the mountains or close to them.

3.3.1.4 Cultural tourism

Cultural tourism has a big potential for development, having in mind the richness of history, traditions and historical sites within the region. The region possesses cultural sights dating from prehistory until today. The region has more than 500 well preserved religious objects out of which more than 80 have cultural and artistic values. In addition there are 6 important museums and theatres and a variety of cultural products such as: Ohrid Summer Festival, Resen Artistic Colony, Korca Beer Festival etc. Taking into consideration the fact that there are well-preserved and protected historical sites, artefacts, museums and cultural institutions, different cultural touristic products can be developed and offered to tourists.

This cross-border area is abundant in historical and cultural resources. All these resources make this area one of the culturally richest places on the Balkan region. They date starting from the prehistorically period until now and offer great potential for development of the cultural tourism. The main cultural resources are listed in the part Cultural heritage.

3.3.1.5 Sport/recreational tourism

This kind of tourism has also a big potential for development. The area is rich with mountains that can provide opportunities for development of different kinds of sport, such as: mount biking, hiking, winter sports etc.; while the lakes can offer a potential for development of water sports, such as: swimming, kayaking, canoeing, sailing etc. These sports can become attractions in the area and strong touristic assets and activities. Proper utilization and development of basis for improvement of infrastructure for these sports can significantly improve the image of the region as touristic and contribute in attracting tourists, thus increasing their number. Municipality of Ohrid has a sport facility which consists of a football stadium equipped with infrastructure for athletic sports, sports hall for basketball and handball and an open air swimming pool with Olympic standards. Moreover, Municipality of Ohrid has some experience in hosting more serious sport events. Municipality of Korca has also sport facilities such as football stadium, sports hall for basketball etc. The clear presentation of the proneness of the region can motivate the villagers and the touristic service providers to offer touristic services during the whole year.

In addition, considering the favourable climate and clean environment, as well as the existence of some sport infrastructures in terms of sport fields (football playgrounds, basketball playgrounds etc.) swimming pools, and accommodation (hotels, motels), this can also offer touristic services to professional sport clubs, preparations and recreation. In order to make this possible the sport facilities have to be modernized and reconstructed and additional infrastructure have to be created. Finally, through joint efforts, this region can present itself as a region that can host some of the sport events with regional character.

10 In 2008, Ohrid hosted the European Handball championship for women
3.3.1.6 **Religious tourism**

This region is probably one of the richest regions in terms of cultural heritage of the entire territory of Western Balkans. The area is rich with religious monuments that have a status of national monuments protected by law. These religious monuments can also offer a historical overview of the Christian religious art in terms of architecture and fresco-and icon painting.

There are extraordinary Islamic architecture heritage (Mosks, Tekques) in all of the urban settlements of the region. Islamic religious monuments date mostly from the Ottoman period.

The city of Ohrid is under protection of UNESCO as a cultural monument and has a huge number of archaeological and historical sites of great value that belong to different historical periods: ancient, medieval, ottoman and modern. Ohrid is especially abundant in religious monuments. More than 40 religious structures are protected by law. Municipality of Resen offers significant number of orthodox churches (more than 200). Most of the medieval churches are protected by the law. The main characteristics of this potential are the great architecture and extraordinary fresco painting.

Korça County also offers a variety of religious monuments from Christian and Islamic culture. Most of these resources are protected but they need additional reconstruction and existence of visitors’ infrastructure, because in some municipalities visitors’ infrastructure is not available. In Pogradec there are: St. Marina’s Monastery in the village of Liëngë, Paleo-Christian church and mosaics in the village of Lin and Byzantine church in the village of Lin.

Korçë has been an important religious centre for Orthodox Christians for centuries. As the seat of the Orthodox metropolitan bishop, Korca is abundant mainly in churches that are protected by the law and that can offer a greater experience for the tourists that are visiting Korca for religious and cultural purposes.

The region offers a great opportunity for development of religious tourism by organizing tourist visits of these monasteries – religious routes. The religious tourism can maximize its potential if it is combined with the cultural tourism, mountain and rural tourism.

3.3.2 **Agriculture**

The agriculture is one of the most present economic activities through the entire region. The agriculture has a long historical presence and tradition and most of the people in this economic sector have basic skills for agricultural production. The significant presence of agricultural activities is due to climate conditions, geographical position of the region, as well as presence of arable land and fertile soil. As the result of particular climate conditions, the people from the region are traditionally oriented to fruit production (mainly apple, cherry, plum and strawberry production). There is also a considerable production of potatoes and onion in the Albanian part of the region.

The region of the County of Korça is placed in the surface area of an agricultural land, the second in Albania by size. This makes the agriculture one of the most important sectors in the region’s economy. The agriculture in the County of Korça produces over 30 % of the total revenues in the agricultural sector in Albania. The Macedonian side does not have the capacities of the County of Korca, yet the Valley of Prespa is the bigger producer of apples in FYROM. The existing plantations of apples are mainly used for processing of apple sauce and juices.

The region is also known for its honey production. More than 8,000 kg of honey is produced annually on both sides of the region. The honey production resulted with establishment of several Beekeepers Association (Ohrid, Resen, Erseka).

The region also produces cereal grain, wheat, corn, alfalfa and forage (over 4000 ha). These crops are used for livestock breeding.

The region has also capacities for livestock breeding, considering the presence of mountains and pastures and water resources. With the region’s vast pasture land, the quality of the region’s livestock production is high. However, the farms here, that are either small family-run farms or individuals, produce a small amount of products, insignificant in comparison to state level, because they can’t
supply the demand (data for agriculture shown in section 3.5. Rural economy and quality of life- part Agriculture and production of food).

Other dimension of the agricultural production which can be developed is the production of organic food. The overall region does not face big pollution of the environment, which is essential for development of this sector. Furthermore, in conversation with the stakeholders it was discovered that The soil is not degraded with pesticides and other artificial fertilizers. The current division and property of the land does not provide solid condition for intensive agriculture but it contributes to the achievement of standards in production of healthy and organic food.

One of the main challenges of the agricultural sector in the target area is the division and property of the agricultural land. The land is divided among small farmers and this leads to low productivity and creates obstacles for specialization, for farming of market-oriented products and for introduction of modern agricultural technology.

The farmers are not market oriented and are not organized into associations. They have certain agriculture skills but they need additional capacity building in application of new agricultural methods, and in improvement of their basic entrepreneurial skills.

The agricultural products have certain advantages over foreign imports due to clean agricultural environment, competitive prices etc. The potential of agriculture can be increased if some of the challenges, such as division and property of land, applied technology, usage of modern methods for farming and new mechanization for farming and harvesting are introduced and conditions for enrolment of new entities in agriculture are achieved.

There is also a potential for development of this sector by unification of the region's small farmers into associations that would create a possibility for modernization and mechanization of the agricultural sector. This would increase the productivity and the competitiveness of both Macedonian and Albanian products.

In order to increase the competitiveness of the apple production sector in the Region, trees with table apple have to be planted in the area in order to replace the existing apple trees – apples for processing of apple sauce and juices.

In order to start an organic production in the regions the farmers have to be trained so they can start the implementation of specific methods and technologies for farming and yielding crops and conversion of the land.

In parallel with this organic production and healthy food a trade sector has to be established and supported. Healthy and organic food can become one of the brands of the region and contribute towards strengthening its image and identity.

3.3.3 Trade

Both Korca and Ohrid are important trade centres located in a major trade route between Greece and the rest of the Balkan countries. Nowadays the trade still represents one of the main activities of the population that lives here. However all merchants that are active in this area are mostly small, family-owned trade business. The products that are most commonly traded are agricultural products, textile and other local products. The capacity of the quantity for trading does not allow expansion of the trade between the two parts of the region. Therefore it remains low. This economic sector is dependent on the regional transportation infrastructure and administrative procedures regarding customs. If road infrastructure is improved and administrative procedures are eased, the trade can enhance its potential in terms of quantity and diversity of trade goods, thus create conditions for enlargement of the engaged labour force. This sector was stated by the stakeholders as one of the sectors that will benefit the most from the cross-border cooperation.
3.3.4 Wood processing industry

The targeted area is rich in forests, offering potentials for development of wood processing industry. However, the businesses from this sector functioning here are mostly small and they do not have significant quantity of production.

The wood processing industry on the Macedonian side of the region is represented by a main centre for wood production “Drvo Prom” . There are a few branches of the wood processing industry operating in this region, mainly in Ohrid. Some of them are: for sawmills- “Ela Mak”, “Mak Vud”; “Tejn Inzenering”; for construction materials: “Drvo Prom”; for firewood and briquettes: “Markisto” etc.

On the Albanian side there are around 39 wood processing entities. Most of them are placed in the district of Korce (20), and the others are placed in the district of Pogradec (19). Most of these wood processors are furniture producers, while some of them produce sawn wood products11.

3.3.5 Renewable energy sources and green industry

The renewable energy sources and the green industry are sectors that currently do not contribute significantly in the total GDP of the region and respectively of the countries, but they have great potentials to be developed into one of the most important economic sectors. For instance Ohrid has more than 230 sunny days and some parts of the Korca County are considered as one of the best mode of solar energy and high potential of solar radiation. Solar energy is a promising energy source for the future and its potential use as a natural source of energy is inexhaustible. The Sun is a natural resource of energy used throughout the world in great quantities. This type of energy is clean and its use requires no additional cost, it presents no risk of environmental pollution. Erseka and Voskopojë in the County of Korca are areas that have this potential12. Regarding the Macedonian side, the biggest potential for production of solar and photovoltaic energy is the municipality of Ohrid. This municipality has around 232 sunny days during the year.

The solar energy can contribute towards significant savings of costs related to electricity. The instalment of solar collectors can significantly decrease the costs for households, businesses and public facilities. The result of such savings can influence the livelihood of citizens, development of businesses and investments in local and regional infrastructure. The Albanian part of the region has better practice in utilization of solar collectors. However, there is room for greater usage and organized approach by becoming aware of the benefits of the solar energy among the population. The leader of the awareness process has to be the public sector.

Taking into consideration the number of sunny days, production of photovoltaic energy can become significantly economic driver, which can employ considerable number of people, improve the situation with the electricity in the region, generally income and contribute through improving the situation of GDP.

This cross-border area has a great potential for development of the green industry. The position of the area and its clean environment offer development of small economic activities, located in rural settlements. These activities include landscape and horticultural services, as well as businesses related to usage of renewable sources of energy and organic waste recycling. Development of small green industry activities does not have negative impact on the environment, so the rural settlements would not feel the threat, but only the positive result.

3.4 Performance of the main economic sectors

Several economic sectors compose the core of the economic activities in the Prespa cross-border area. They are: agriculture, food processing industry, textile industry, construction industry and tourism. These sectors have been developed due to the main characteristics of the area, such as climate, geographic position, history of economy and cooperation and capacities of human resources. Most of these sectors have been elaborated in the section economic drivers. However, in that section they have been presented as generators of development by analysis of their general characteristics and potentials. This section presents the analysis of current performances.

11 Source: Ministry of Industry and Energy
Only the main economic sectors are presented in this section. Statistical data and data generated through questionnaires were utilized for these purposes.

### 3.4.1 Agriculture

Prespa region land composition provides excellent preconditions for development of agriculture. The share of arable land in the region provides the opportunity for development of farming while the pastures give the opportunity for development of livestock breeding. The following table illustrates municipal statistical data related to land use in Prespa cross-border area. Some of the data is missing because it was not provided by municipalities or stakeholders. The State statistical offices do not possess such data for municipalities. Table 11 provides data for land use per municipality.

#### Table 11: Land use (in ha) per municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>land use (in ha)</th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Kolonje (data found for Erseke)</th>
<th>District of Devoll</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
<th>County of Korce (as a region)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>forest area</td>
<td>75.000</td>
<td>23.625</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>132.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total agricultural land</td>
<td>17.918</td>
<td>20.235</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>4.380</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>90.909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>share of arable and permanent crops</td>
<td>6.588</td>
<td>11.116</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3.080</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastures</td>
<td>11.330</td>
<td>1.142</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: state statistical office

Beside the fact that the area has excellent conditions for developing the agriculture the division of the land in small farms results with a low level of competitiveness of the sector on the market. The most difficult hurdle to overcome by agriculture development is the land property. The average surface of farms on both sides of the region is less than 2 ha. The existence of small agricultural parcels keep the mechanized farming at low level. This interferes with the perspectives of the specialized farming products and the mechanization of the agriculture. Adding to the facts mentioned above and the impossibility of the use of farming inputs it can be concluded that the farmers are not able to fulfil the needs of the country’s economy with such products. As a result of this there is a small productivity, high costs and low quality; which are typical characteristics of the farming products in the Albanian part of the cross-border area. The national farming products are so insufficient; and there is a free space for the imports of these farming products. Meanwhile, the farming product does not fulfil the needs of the national markets and it is not competitive with the imported products.

Because of the favourable climate and the use of small quantity of fertilizers and pesticides, the regional farming products are of a high quality and biologically clear, but they are not certified. Other present situation is the fact that the farmers are neither trade nor market oriented. The unification of small farms into bigger ones will in itself bring the possibility of agricultural further modernization as well as mechanization. This will bring a growth of productivity and competition of the agricultural regional products.

Livestock and poultry production is driven by small farmers, which results in small quantity production, with insignificant influence over the region and the countries.

However, beside the challenges mentioned above, the agriculture remains the most developed sector in the area due to the fact that the entire area is typically rural. This sector can further grow by improving the capacities of farmers and integrating them into organized and functional associations. More about this sector is presented in section 3.5. Rural economy and quality of life part Agriculture and production of food).
According to the statistics, provided by the statistical bureau in both countries, agriculture is one of the sectors that provide most of the income in most of the municipalities of the target area. Agriculture in this area is mostly traditional, focusing on production of traditional products, without considering the needs of the population. The main producers of agricultural products are individuals, whose production process does not have well defined value chain. As the table below shows, the number of the individual farmers dominates on the Albanian part, which shows that the agriculture has a vital part in the economy of the cross-border area.

In the Prespa cross-border area the number of registered farmers is shown in the table below:

Table 12: Number of registered individual farmers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Kolonje</th>
<th>District of Devoll</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>4847</td>
<td>22894</td>
<td>2303</td>
<td>8210</td>
<td>8660</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State statistical office and municipality sources

a) Cereal production

The cereal production represents a significant part of the overall agriculture. The top three crops planted in the region are: wheat, maze and barley, representing the highest production quantity of the cereal crops planted there.

As it is presented in the following tables, districts coming from Albania have planted and are producing cereals in much bigger quantities than Municipalities from FYROM. The District of Korca is the biggest producer in cereals, producing 38.148 tones of wheat per year which is three times more than the District of Devoll and even 22 times more than the production in the Municipality of Resen.

Table 13: Planted cereal in ha

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planted cereals (in ha)</th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Kolonje</th>
<th>District of Devoll</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wheat</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>9399</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>3061</td>
<td>2027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maze</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>2376</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rye</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barley</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>1693</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oats</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Albanian Ministry of Agriculture; State Statistical Office- Macedonian municipalities

Table 14: Cereal production in tonnes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>total production (in tonnes)</th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Kolonje</th>
<th>District of Devoll</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wheat</td>
<td>1036</td>
<td>1678</td>
<td>38148</td>
<td>2142</td>
<td>10962</td>
<td>7471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maze</td>
<td>1078</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>9881</td>
<td>2116</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>3572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rye</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barley</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>5097</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>1152</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oats</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>1449</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Albanian Ministry of Agriculture; State Statistical Office- Macedonian municipalities

b) Other plantings in the cross-border area

This section includes all plantings, such as vegetables, potatoes, white beans, tobacco, forage crops, orchards etc. These crops are presented in the tables below, showing the plantings in ha and the production in tonnes for each plant.
Table 15: Other plantings in the cross-border area: vegetables, tobacco, forage crops

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipalities</th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Kolonja</th>
<th>District of Devoll</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plantings in ha/ production in tones</td>
<td>Plantings</td>
<td>Production</td>
<td>Plantings</td>
<td>Production</td>
<td>Plantings</td>
<td>Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vegetables</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>1813</td>
<td>42241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potatoes</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>1505</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>3713</td>
<td>1467</td>
<td>42756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white beans</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tobacco</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forage</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>7908</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ministry of agriculture

Table 16: Supporting table about the forage crops in Ohrid and Resen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the forage crops</th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plantings in ha</td>
<td>Production (in t)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clover</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>1625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vetches-hay</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fodder peas-hay</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fodder maize</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fodder beet</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>1902</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Statistical Office

The plantings of vegetables, potatoes and white beans prevail in the Prespa cross-border area. This is due to the conditions caused by the favourable climate and altitude.

c) Orchards plantings in the cross-border area

Among the orchards being cultivated, the most frequently cultivated planting is the apple with the highest production quantity; followed by plums and cherries. The data relating nuts orchards is presented below.
Table 17: Orchards plantings and production in the cross-border area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Kolonje</th>
<th>District of Devoll</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plantings / production</td>
<td>Plantings in 000 trees</td>
<td>production</td>
<td>Plantings in 000 trees</td>
<td>production</td>
<td>Plantings in 000 trees</td>
<td>production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple</td>
<td>275.2</td>
<td>9560</td>
<td>2790.7</td>
<td>80047</td>
<td>1010</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pear</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plum</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1050</td>
<td>19.85</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>2230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherry</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>7.725</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fig</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peach</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>0.570</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nuts(^1)</td>
<td>1550</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6210</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ministry of agriculture

This table shows that the Municipality of Resen has the biggest orchards fruit production. Having in mind that the region shares the same geographical and climate conditions, the production results of the Municipality of Resen can serve as an indicator or an example for development of the orchard planting production in the rest of the municipalities of the Region. This can be especially useful for the Albanian municipalities.

Macedonian part of the region is also producing nuts. In the table below are shown the nut trees that enter into the nut classification of the State Statistical Office in FYROM. As it can be seen, these trees are almonds and walnuts.

Table 18: Supporting table for nut plantings and production in Ohrid and Resen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nuts plantings and production</th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plantings in number of trees</td>
<td>Production in tones</td>
<td>Plantings in ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walnuts</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almonds</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1550</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Statistical Office
**d) Livestock breeding and poultry**

The region has huge potentials for livestock breeding due to the abundance of pastures and meadows. Using the advantages of the natural resources, the population in this area have the following distribution of livestock and poultry:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of livestock (in 000)</th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Kolonje</th>
<th>District of Devoll</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cattle</td>
<td>0.921</td>
<td>0.897</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cows</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sheep</td>
<td>6,512</td>
<td>4,239</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goats</td>
<td>1,502</td>
<td>0,813</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pigs</td>
<td>3,421</td>
<td>0,924</td>
<td>4,5</td>
<td>0,2</td>
<td>0,4</td>
<td>0,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poultry</td>
<td>10,405</td>
<td>10,411</td>
<td>247,3</td>
<td>23,5</td>
<td>31,8</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State statistical Offices

**e) Beekeeping**

Beekeeping is also a developed occupation of the population in the cross-border area with significant numbers of beekeepers that exist here. The data is placed in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beehives in the area and honey production (in 000)</th>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Kolonje</th>
<th>District of Devoll</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beehives (in 000)</td>
<td>1,867</td>
<td>2,211</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7,4</td>
<td>5,1</td>
<td>6,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honey (in tones)</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ministry of agriculture and State statistical office

Taking into consideration the uniqueness of the eco-system that exists in the region, the natural resources represent its strongest asset. They provide potentials for development of many areas. The excellent geographical position of the region makes it rich in forests, water funds, arable (fertile) land etc, which are valuable assets for providing an opportunity for development of many economic sectors. With appropriate and effective management of these resources the maximum potential can be used in order to improve the economic condition of the whole cross-border area.

Comparative advantages in productions of complementary products and an ever increasing exchange of goods, services and people may provide a good opportunity to further develop trade. However there is a lack of organizations such as trade association and chambers that gather all the merchants in the region. The establishment of such organizations can contribute in increasing the trading activities.

3.4.2 **Food processing sector**

The region of Korça is one of the greatest producers of meat, salami, dairy product, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. This business has achieved its most essential growth in the recent years. Food industry has been transformed in an important factor that influences employment in the region of Korça. Food industry also relies on the local agricultural production by integrating local farmers and livestock breeding production into its supply chain. During the Participatory Planning sessions the local stakeholders have stated that there have also been increases in fruit and vegetables manufacturing industry, milk industry and wine industry. Most of the companies that operate in this sector are classified as small and medium business.

On the Macedonian part of the area this sector is also developed. The fruit processing industry,
especially the processing of apples has been one of the most developed. Here the industry for confectionary, honey production, poultry farms etc is also present.

Some of the companies that operate their business in this sector are: Swisslion Agroplod; AD Agroplod-Agrar; Vita Res; CD Fruit Carev Dvor; Reskom etc. The food processing sector has been growing steadily and has become a comparative advantage of the region. If this trend continues, this sector might be transformed into the leading agricultural sector and one of the main economic drivers of the targeted area.

The population, mainly the ones that live in the rural areas, are already involved in agricultural activities, but these activities do not use the whole potential that the region offers. The locals should use this potential, in order to provide conditions for opening new companies for fruit and vegetable processing. The development of agriculture itself will provide new job opportunities for the local population, both in the field of agriculture and in the processing industry. This will also contribute in the overall economic condition of the region by lowering the unemployment level and providing a potential for development of organic products trade.

3.4.3 Textile and Apparel Industry

Based on the number of enterprises, the textile and apparel industry is one of the largest branches of economy in Korca. This sector is also one of the biggest employers in the region. It provides employment for approximately 4500-5000 people, mainly women. The number of employed population in this sector is a result of the low labour costs. Most of the companies working in this sector are Albanian Greek companies and they have chosen the region of Korca due to its geographical position, its vicinity with Greece and existence of labour force (qualified and non-qualified). Around 90% of these entities operate in apparel manufacturing. The raw materials are mainly imported from Greece and the export of the products is done abroad through Greece. The challenges of the regional crisis can jeopardise the competitiveness of the sector. It is expected that the production costs will increase and the first factor that will influence the production costs will be the tendency of increase of the manual labour costs. The only companies which have the greatest probability to survive are those which may create direct connection with big clients abroad because the production for inner demands and its minor markets is insignificant. On the Macedonian part the situation is the same. This sector is developed mostly because the labour costs are also low and this attracts investments and opening of new confection facilities. In the area of Ohrid and Prespa the female employees dominate in this sector, but in comparison to the County of Korca this sector has significantly smaller percentage of employees. The Greek companies are those that make the most investments in this sector. The challenges of the global and regional crisis can endanger the overall competitiveness of the sector from both sides of the border and question its future viability and progress. Beside the global and regional challenges, current situation in this sector identifies the lack of skills among the employees as major problem related to the level of competitiveness. Inadequate vocational and lack of promotional and marketing knowledge and skills specific to the textile industry is also a constrainer in the development of this sector. Finally, the actors are operating without established links and effective communication and cooperation between the stakeholders from the sector, thus the value chain and the supply chain within it perform under the level of efficiency.

3.4.4 Construction Industry

The construction sector has very strong impact on the development of the local and regional economy and is one of its crucial parts. The construction sector has been increasing at an average of 10-15% in Albania on annual basis (the same numbers are valid for the County of Korca) and at an average of 10% in the south west regions of FYROM.

The region of Korca counts about 35 construction companies that deal mainly with private and business constructions, constructional services on public projects and production of various constructing materials. Some of these cope rations have created well-organized inner structures and have tried to create international operational relations. Construction has always shown a high economical dynamics and it still presents a great potential for the development of economy. Based on the growth in demand from emigrants to purchase houses in Korça, the house sale market will remain constant. The attempts to reduce informal economy will decrease the number of
constructing companies and will promote a positive development of the economy inside this sector. There will be great chances for participation in future public projects if the regional companies are able to regenerate their technology, quality standards, human resources as well as to make up for partnerships with experienced foreign companies.

In the part of FYROM this kind of industry is also developed, as well as the previous sectors. The sector is represented by around 39 construction companies that operate in the area of the municipalities of Ohrid and Resen.

3.4.5 Tourism sector

The tourism is one meaningful and very important area that depends on the natural resources. The lakes and the National parks have potentials waiting to be used. The development of the tourism will also affect the economy in a positive way, because a strong supply chains can be established and new service facilities can arise. The development of tourism will further affect the construction and trade sectors, which exist in the cross-border area.

Due to tourist potentials of the Region and the development of infrastructure, there has been a notable growth on demands and capacity of hotels in the recent years. There are about 10 hotels with 400 beds in the town of Korça and 17 hotels with 520 beds in the town of Pogradec. The incomes from this sector are still a minor contribution for the region of Korça, but in the region of Pogradec they are a valuable economic income. Improvements within the infrastructure and investments on tourist areas will affect on an increase in this sector. In our neighbouring countries like Greece and FYROM tourism is well-developed and very competitive.

The tourism sector in the region of Municipality of Ohrid and Municipality of Resen has always been one of the most present sectors. This part of the cross-border area is abundant in natural and cultural resources that offer a great potential for further development of the tourism sector. Even more, they already have the necessary infrastructure for existence of this sector, but more or less, this entire infrastructure needs to be reconstructed. With the establishment of cooperation between the two regions of the cross-border area, experiences for this sector can be exchanged, as well as joining forces for further promotion and improvement of the sector can be gained. According to the statistical data, currently there are around 68 hotels and over 180 restaurants that operate in the Macedonian part offering more than 80% of the total hotel beds in the country.

In Ohrid the accommodation capacities provide total of 29113 beds, while in Resen the accommodation capacities provide total 2829 beds. Most of the hotels in Resen need refurbishment because they are in a very inadequate position and offer a very poor service for the visitors.

The lake tourism dominates in the region and its peak periods are during the summer, especially during the summer holidays in July and August. Although there is a tendency for development of the rural, mountain, cultural, religious and sport tourism, their contribution in the development of the tourism sector is very lo. Therefore, it is necessary to intensify the efforts for creating an integrated and competitive offer in these kinds of tourism, in order to ensure economic activities in the sector during the whole year.

This sector also needs employment of qualified and skilled staff. The region has human potential but it needs systematic training. Capacity building of the touristic labour force and development of new touristic products are the actions that can provide a sustainable growth of the tourism in the region.

3.5 Environment and waste management

3.5.1 Environment

The Prespa region is ecologically clean because there are no big factories that cause pollution and harm the flora and fauna. The environment does not suffer from heavy soil or air pollutions. There are several natural resources which are especially important for the environment in the region. Most of them are presented in the part Geographical and natural resources. Here, these resources are analyzed from the aspect of their contribution to the environment and bio-diversity of the target area.
α) Bio diversity and eco systems

The untouched areas in the Prespa cross-border region are rich in numerous different and living organisms, which make this place full of varieties of flora and fauna. Some of these species of flora and fauna are endemic and protected by law. In this region there are four national parks, which partially belong to the Prespa cross-border region. These national parks are of a great importance for the countries which territory they occupy, as well as for the local people that live there.

“Drenova Fir” - In the region of the national park “Drenova Fir” different species of flora and fauna can be found. The woods of Macedonian fir (Abies borisi Regis), which are found bordering the south-eastern of Albania, black pine, panja and tisi (Taxus bacata), which is a very rare, dominate this park. Drenova Fir has a great number of mammals.

“Galicica National Park” - There is an exceptionally rich and unique flora in the National Park. Up to date, there are over a thousand registered plant species in Galicica National Park. There is a large number of relict species of plants of special interest. They have found shelter on Galicia before the beginning of the ice age. The most significant are the ones that have survived the four ice ages, such as Morina persica, Stipa mayeri, Ramonda nathaliae and Phelipaea boissieri, etc. Furthermore, a large number of endemic types deserve a special interest. Several endemic types exist on Galicica: special attention is given to: Ajuga piskoi, Erodium guicciardii, Oxytropis purpurea, Astragalus baldaccii, Poa galicicae, Lilium heldreichii, Arabis bryoides.

In the Galicica National Park there are 171 species of vertebrates (fishes excluded), 10 amphibian, 18 reptiles, 124 birds and 19 mammals. It is worth mentioning the chamois, lynx and bear, - mammals that are becoming rare in the rest of Europe, and the birds: large and small cormorant and pelican that naturally live at the Lake Prespa and the island of Big City.

Pelister National Park - The territory of the national park Pelister has more than 20 rare plant species, 13 of which retain their taxonomic status. The plants are: Pelister heavenly dew, withered centaurea, Pelister kachunka, carnation, Pelister vlasenika, fir, red defiance etc.

From the biological diversity of Pelister, the mushrooms are of great importance because there are many rare species of fungi mikorizni.

National Park Pelister’s fauna diversity is also important. The big mammals deserve special attention: bear, deer, lynx, chamois, common deer, wild boar, squirrel and wild cat and small mammals, such as Balkan blind mole can be found there. Pelister has registered about 130 species of birds. Among the most important are partridge, golden eagle, rocky reptiles and Red Galica. Fish, it is important to emphasize the Pelister endemic trout and Pelagonia Trout.

Herpetofauna (reptiles and amphibians) of Pelister is also diverse. Firstly, one poisonous snake - hinge (Vipera berus), and two non-toxic snakes - mountain snake (Elaphe longissima) should be mentioned. Among the six types of lizards, that are found on Pelister, is the mountain lizard (Lacerta agilis).

Prespa National Park - The Park is rich with flora and fauna which is quite unique: 56 kinds of plants; eight kinds of endemic fish and the rare White Curly-Hair Pelican, which can be found only there and in Karvasta, Greece. With seven small rural villages and no towns or industries in the vicinity of the park, a huge and rare natural treasure can be discovered in the National Park of Prespa.

Ohrid Lake - is a distinctive shelter of a large number of freshwater organisms originating from the tertiary period, whose close relatives can be found in fossil forms only. For precisely this reason it bears the name “Museum of living fossils”. The Lake’s fauna is dominated by various types of algae and superior water plants. It also includes freshwater shells, crabs, sponges, etc. The fish population of Lake Ohrid comprises of 17 native species.
Prespa Lake - The Prespa Lake has rare plant and animal life that have been preserved through the centuries and its environment is strictly protected by law. From all species, only 11 native fish species are known from the lake and 9 of them are endemic. **Nature Reserve Ezerani** covers the northern coast of the lake Great Prespa, at 855 m altitude. The protected area covers 2,080 hectares. In 1995 it was designated as a Ramsar site, and in 1996 declared as a strictly protected reserve. Almost all species of birds that live in Lake Prespa build nests and seek shelter here. There are about 200 species of birds 104 of which are aquatic. Pelicans, Herons and Cormorants as well as Mute Swans, Tundra Swans, Greater White-fronted Gooses, Greylag Gooses, Ruddy Shelducks, Common Shelducks can be seen here which makes this site an attractive location for bird watching and research.

3.5.2 Waste water and solid management

The region lacks the appropriate level of waste water management. The urban settlements in the region have some water collectors, but they need reconstruction. Most of the rural areas do not have water collectors at all and all of the wasted water goes in water basins. The lack of treatment of waste water endangers the entire system of water resources in the whole cross-border area and it needs immediate activities for improvement of the situation. This problem is further explained in the section Environment and waste management.

The lack of solid waste management mechanisms can jeopardize the regional environment. There is no single landfill in the region that satisfies the standards adopted by the national legislation for solid waste management. The urban municipalities have public communal enterprises which manage the solid waste. They collect the waste and dispose it to irregular landfills. Rural municipalities and settlements are mostly not covered by solid waste management mechanisms. People from these settlements throw the garbage at illegal places (mostly located in the vicinity of river basins). There are initiatives for creation of standardised regional disposal facilities and they are going to be created in the future. In the meantime, this serious problem requires alternative solutions that will prevent further pollution of the environment.

The watersheds of the area are not environmentally protected from water and soil pollution. Both lakes have partial protection from the organic waste flow. The waste water collectors are mainly covering the Macedonian part of the lakes. Ohrid Lake Waste Water Collector is placed along the shores of the lake and collects the waste water from the settlements which are close to the lake. It also threatens the water from the rivers that flow into the lake. This system is operational, but it needs an upgrade. The Albanian part of the lake is not covered with collector systems.

Prespa Lake Waste Water System is even at lower level. The system is partially built on the Macedonian side, threading the water in some of the settlements and does not cover the entire coast of the lake. The Albanian and Greek side have not started building collectors yet. Currently UNDP has started with implementation relating improvement of water quality in Lake Prespa. More about this can be found in the Shortcomings- solid waste management.

Solid waste management is a legal commitment of the local government, as part of their communal competences. Each municipality collects communal waste but the disposal of the waste is on irregular landfills. Generally speaking, in the Prespa cross-border area there are no regular regional or local landfills for waste solid management. There is an urgent need for development of functional solid waste structures, because the current situation can have a serious impact on the environment and the agriculture in the region.

This endangers the quality of the water resources in the region, and the agriculture and tourism are the most influenced.

The environment in the cross-border area is a precious gift and the virgin nature is the biggest potential for development. Therefore this resource should be preserved. Even though there are some attempts for preservation of the regional natural resources from pollution or destruction within the national borders of the region, there is not yet a concrete mechanism for integrated management of the environment at cross-border level established.

13 [http://www.stat.gov.mk/Publikacii/2.4.11.07.pdf](http://www.stat.gov.mk/Publikacii/2.4.11.07.pdf)
3.6 Rural economy
The agriculture is the backbone of the rural economy in the target area. It is presented within the part Performance of the main economic sectors. In this part other economic sectors consisting rural economy will be presented.

3.6.1 Developed sectors other than agriculture
The data from the National Statistical Offices was consulted for this part. Information for the districts of Kolonja and Pogradec was not provided, so the decision was to take the data for the whole area of Korca County as data which will be analyzed.

Economic activities such as construction, textile and apparel industry, fur industry and tourism, trade and manufacturing constitute the rest of the economic sectors, which are vital in the rural areas. The economic activities on both sides of the border are very similar, which can be seen as a competitive advantage. Establishment of infrastructure for cooperation and collaboration within the sectors from both sides of the region can strengthen cross-border cooperation and the overall competitiveness of the region.

Table 21: Top developed sectors in the municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality of Ohrid</th>
<th>Municipality of Resen</th>
<th>District of Korca</th>
<th>District of Kolonje</th>
<th>District of Devoll (Bilisht)</th>
<th>District of Pogradec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>food processing</td>
<td>apparel and fur</td>
<td>agriculture</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>food processing</td>
<td>light industry</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>fruit industry</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>products for</td>
<td>personal use and</td>
<td>construction</td>
<td>trade</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>housing construction</td>
<td>products for</td>
<td>metal processing</td>
<td>services</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agriculture, hunting,</td>
<td>public services</td>
<td>tourism</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: stakeholder survey

3.6.2 Barriers for creation of employment opportunities
Even though FYR Macedonia and Albania are not the poorest in the Western Balkans, they remain among the countries with incomes below the average. In the past few years even the GDP shows decreasing rates in both countries, which have a negative effect on the countries in whole\(^{14}\). Even though there are some investments\(^{15}\) in the rural areas, the unemployment still increases. Therefore the population is migrating within and out of the country, searching for better jobs and better living conditions.

The traditional agriculture that produces traditional products has not increased its capacities for production during the years. Therefore only certain number of people is involved in the production processes without prospects for further employment. On the other hand, the traditional agriculture has no initiatives for starting other agricultural practices and developing other products, at least to satisfy the demands on the market. In such situation employment opportunities cannot be seen in this aspect. Finally, employment opportunities in the field of agriculture are reduced by the population itself due to lack of knowledge. This means that there are no developed skills for using the entrepreneurial opportunities and there is no courage to initiate new businesses.

The rest of the economic activities which exist in the rural areas are small and their underdeveloped capacities and experience cannot secure more significant development of businesses and creation of new jobs. An organized capacity building programs for farmers and entrepreneurs from the region have to be developed and implemented as initial step in order to provide conditions for the situation to be changed.

\(^{14}\) http://www.no-university.org/index.php?id=506
\(^{15}\) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_universities_in_Albania
Beside the challenges related to traditional production and the capacities of businesses and people, other barriers impede development of opportunities for new jobs.

The cross-border area lacks of good road infrastructure. The area also suffers of road disconnection because of the shortage of regional roads or highways, which pass through the region on both sides of the border. Road network that connects the countries has a capacity and standards of local roads. Both FYROM and Albania have motorways that connect the urban settlements, but their condition is inadequate and they need to be reconstructed. Furthermore, some of the rural settlements do not have an appropriate road connection with the urban settlements, which is a problem that impedes their future development. In FYROM there is a potential for developing the road connection with the new Corridor VIII that has great strategic and economic importance for FYROM and the region. The main transportation infrastructure in the Macedonian side of the region is the regional road Ohrid-Bitola (M-74). It connects the region with the route of Corridor VIII (Skopje-Struga-Durres) - on the one side, and on the other side it connects the region with Corridor X (Skopje-Athens) through Prilep. There is a local road that connects municipality of Resen with the Greek municipality of Prespa. All roads that are functioning in the moment in the cross-border area need reconstruction because they are in an inappropriate condition.

Korca is an important bond in transportation because it connects the Central Albania with its vicinities: Devoll, Kolonje, and Permet through Pogradec by motorway. The national road that joins the south-eastern Albania with Greece, Selanik, and Larissa etc. pases in Korca. The main motorways are: Korce-Elbasan-Tirane, Korce-Erseke, and Korce-Bilisht-Kapsttice. The quality of local and rural road network is in inappropriate condition. The roads had been constructed long time ago (during the socialis regime) but no significant reconstruction has been made.

There is no railway connectivity from and to the region. The nearest railway station in the region of Korca is Elbasan (around 80 km away from the region), and the others (Vlore, Fier) are more than 100 km away. There used to be a railway only to Pogradec, but today this railway route does not work. In Macedonia, the region also lacks railway connectivity and the nearest railway station is in Bitola, around 35 km of Resen.

There is one airport in the area, located in Ohrid. This airport can fulfil the needs of the region for transportation of passengers from both countries. However, this airport cannot provide effective services for transportation of goods for the Albanian part of the region due to administrative barriers related to customs, food and sanitary inspections, etc. The other two nearest airports are Mother Teresa (Nënë Tereza) in Tirana and Alexander the Great in Skopje.

The capacities of the border crossings points are lower than the real flow of goods and people. They are not staffed nor have the needed infrastructure and technology to process higher level of flow. There are two border crossings within the region. Both of them have small capacity and the circulation of people/goods is very small, compared with the bigger border crossing points within the country. The one in Stenje-Liqenas (Resen-Liqenas-Korca) operates from 5:00 AM until 00:00 AM; the second in Sveti Naum-Tushemist (Ohrid-Pogradec) operates 24 hours. There is another border crossing point – Kafasan-Qafetane which is close to the target area (app. 25km). This border crossing is central one and has much bigger capacities for transit of people and goods. Therefore most of the people and entities from the region use this border for crossing when it comes to transport of larger shipments of goods. Another impediment is the inappropriate conditions of the roads leading to the border crossings. The lack of bigger border crossing facilities is something that should be considered because it hinders the connection between the countries.

3.6.2.1 Dependence on financial resources

Rural population mostly deals with private small production of agricultural products or micro businesses and their additional problem is providing the necessary financial resources. The access is limited to these financial resources because the people lack knowledge and they are not informed enough about the opportunities of utilization of bank loans. The lack of experience with loans and the risk of taking a loan from the local banks are assumed to be one of the reasons why these people lack financial resources. However there are some sources of funding within the region, such as national programmes for development of rural areas, local government funds, funds of existing international
donors etc, but these sources do not provide enough financial resources. This conclusion is based on the stakeholders questionnaire, which can be found in Annex 2: Stakeholders questionnaire.

3.6.2.2 **No attractive offers by the banks**
There are many banks that operate in this area, but the population does not feel free to use a loan. The reason for that is the fact that all these banks are not offering appealing conditions for loans. The loans rate offered from these banks is bigger than 10%. Furthermore, their communication with the population is on low level. There is no interaction between the banks and the local population, which means that the banks do not actively present their offers. The proactive interaction is lost, the population lacks financial resources and the banks are not taking the opportunity to fulfil the needs of the local population. This is a bad sign for the region, because the entrepreneurship and the existent small business, as one of the major “customers” of the banking services, will stagnate due to lack of information.

The bank system in the Macedonian part of the cross-border area is developed. All banks that exist in the country have established their branches in the region. They are:

- Ohridska Banka
- Stopanska Banka AD Skopje
- NLB Tutunska Banka
- Pro-credit Banka
- UNI Banka
- Komercijalna Banka
- TTK Banka
- Halkbank
- Sparkasse Banka
- Alpha Bank

The situation in the County of Korca is similar. The bank system in the Region of Korça is developed with existence of many banks and services. Here, the following banks are operating:

- National Bank of Greece (Greek)
- Tirana Bank (Greek), Pro Credit Bank (German)
- National Trade Bank (Turkey)
- Raiffeisen Bank (Austria)
- American Bank of Albania (American)
- Alpha Bank (Greek)
- Emporiki Bank

3.6.3 **Micro business formation**
There are lots of micro and small businesses in the region, mainly dealing with agriculture and trade. The statistical data for the Macedonian part shows a total number of 2678 active enterprises, of which 405 paced in Resen and 2273 placed in Ohrid. This shows that the region has promising potential for opening new businesses. The number of micro-businesses on the Macedonian side is more than double higher than the number of the entire Albanian part. This might be due to inexperience, lack of knowledge and courage for starting as new business. However, through integrated efforts of national, regional and local institutions and through provision of capacity building programmes by development agencies, this problem can be decreased.

The information about the statistics for the County of Korca was taken from the Business and development strategy 2007-2013 from the National Business Strategy 2007-2013. The statistics that this document deals with is from 2006 national statistic data.
Table 22 presents the number of enterprises that operate in the cross-border area, registered in their municipalities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Number of active enterprises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipality of Resen(^{17})</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality of Ohrid</td>
<td>2,273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region of Korca County(^{18})</td>
<td>1,008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: state statistical offices

### 3.7 Description and gap analysis of the provision of services in rural areas

#### 3.7.1 Services by the government

The local governments’ services in the region are provided in accordance with their competences defined by laws. Local government’s services are mainly located to communal issues, transportation, primary and secondary education, urban planning etc. Bigger municipalities possess bigger potential for provision of quality services.

In the Macedonian part of the cross-border area both municipalities are delivering services through established municipal service centres. These centres are located in the premises of the municipal buildings. The delivered services that are provided mainly include urban planning permits, communal issues, provision of information, working permits etc. For the citizens from the urban communities, the entire set of municipal services is provided, while the citizens from rural settlements are directly receiving some basic communal services, such as water supply and public lightening. Public transportation and solid waste collection is provided for bigger villages only. The rest of the services, for which population from rural communities is in need of, has to be obtained from the municipal office.

The situation in the Albanian part is similar. Urban municipalities (bashkia) provide the same services as in the Macedonian part. Rural municipalities (komuna) provide essential services, while in case of some specific services people from these municipalities are directed to the closest urban municipalities (bashkia).

#### 3.7.2 Electricity

On the Macedonian side of the region, ELEM is the regulated generator of electricity and monopoly wholesale supplier for retail distributor EVN. In case ELEM itself does not generate enough electricity to supply all tariff customers, it imports additional power. MEPSO is the sole operator of the electricity transmission network. EVN is the retail distributor, i.e., the supplier of tariff customers. EVN buys transmission services from MEPSO and power from ELEM. EVN concludes individual contracts with retail end-users and collects payments. However, in the cross-border area the coverage of electricity is 100%, which means that all inhabitants there have access to electricity.

Korça’s electric supply is provided by the national provider KESH and has been completely renovated over the past couple of years. Reconstruction of the main transformer at the city’s power station has an installed power of 42 MW. The mid-voltage 20 kW transmission system is now rehabilitated and the voltage provided is stable.

#### 3.7.3 Telephone and Internet

Today, the fast growing technology has developed many gadgets that have become vital part of our lives. Most of them are requiring access of mobile and internet network service in order to stay in touch. These mobile and Internet services need to be provided by the local operators and providers.

In the Macedonian part of the cross-border area operate three mobile operators: T-Mobile, Vip and One. They all have a mobile network that provides almost 100% coverage of the region. The Internet coverage is more or less the same- the provision of 3G network is present in almost all areas.
Fixed land-line covers the region on the Macedonian part. The services are provided by two national operators—T-Home and One and the coverage is 100% in both municipalities on the Macedonian part of the cross-border area. These companies are internet service providers as well and cover the entire area. Beside these companies, Internet is provided by other local or regional cable TV providers, such as Mobi, KTV etc. These providers have 100% coverage of mobile network over the municipalities, as well as 100% coverage of 3G. The mobile coverage and the 3G coverage is provided by three mobile operators: T-Mobile, One and Vip.

In the Korca County, fixed land-line telephone service is provided by the national supplier AlbTelekom who also provides an internet service. Internet service is also provided by a private company Abissnet.

Mobile telephone service is provided throughout the country, by the companies Vodafone and AMC. There are also other local service providers including Card Phone service. The coverage of 3G network in the Albanian part significantly differs in terms of capacities and coverage from the 3G coverage on the Macedonian part.

3.7.4 Sewage and water supply

Other parts of this document present the situation of the water sewage of the target area. This part presents only the situation of the water supply.

On the Macedonian part the research shows that the water supply problem is solved in almost all settlements. The only problem is felt in the smallest settlements, where there is still a need of quality water system supply. The sewage system is covering all areas, but the problem in rural areas is that the water of the sewage system has been discharged without purification in the natural watershed.

In the late 1990s, the region of Korça did not have a sufficient potable water supply. The reasons for this supply deficiency were:

- insufficient delivery rate of the existing well field
- insufficient storage capacity
- high water losses due to leakages in the existing piping system
- poor water quality

Recently, the water supply system in Korça, including new water pumping stations has been renovated with the support of the German government through KfW in an amount of 25 million Euros. The water supply system passes EU standards for drinking and the City is the first in Albania to have continuous 24 hour water service.

Korca suffered from problems with non-efficient waste water management system. Later, a project was adopted for solving this problem. By the 2005 a campaign was launched to rehabilitate and extend the Korça sewer system. One of the main objectives was to reduce the health risk by providing a proper discharge and treatment of the waste water. At that time, Korça's sewer system was in a desolate state and in urgent need of substantial rehabilitation.16

3.7.5 Infrastructure need—Road infrastructure inside and outside the municipalities

As it was mentioned before, the region lacks of quality road connections that would improve the connection between the two countries of the cross-border area.

The situation in the entire region is similar. The urban settlements have some level of quality of roads, but all of them need reconstruction. The real problem here is the lack of a quality road connection in the small rural settlements, which has to connect at least the urban settlements. There are also rural areas that do not have asphalt road at all. These are settlements especially in the mountainous areas.

However, there are some quality differences between the infrastructure road in Albania compared to

the Macedonian part of the region. The Albanian road system is less maintained in terms of local and rural roads, as well as in terms of intra-national connections.

The road system in the Macedonian part lacks bigger improvements in terms of intra-national connections, while local roads are relatively good.

It should be also mentioned that in Ohrid there is an airport- “St. Paul the Apostle” Airport, that is operated by the Turkish company Tepe Akfen Ventures (TAV). This airport represents a significant connection, because it opens the doors to a new connection of the cross-border region with the rest of the countries in the world.

3.7.6 Cultural and Natural Heritage

Even though the Macedonian and the Albanian countries have similarities and share history and traditions, their culture is different. The diversity of culture is a potential strength which can be used for development initiatives; however such differences can become a burden for establishment of joint and synchronized development of actions at the initial stage of establishment of such cross-border cooperation.

Different culture means different language, different lifestyle, traditions and attitudes, which can result with barriers in mutual communication, cooperation and understanding. Such disparity can impact the potential for development of common bases and mental platform for cooperation among population and legal entities. However, the presence of ethnic Albanian community in the Municipality of Resen and the presence of the Macedonian community in the Municipality of Liqenas (Pustec) can bridge the barriers and establish a foundation for improved communication and cooperation.

The links for cooperation among people has to be created by the institutions and developed to function, thus making the people aware of the benefits of cooperation. The Region has enough human potential, administrative and institutional structures that can significantly improve the situation. This potential has to be consolidated and organized in order for frameworks and infrastructures for cooperation to be developed by developing their capacities for networking, participatory planning, decision making and by decentralizing competencies for implementing activities.

The Prespa cross-border area is abundant in numerous natural monuments that represent an invaluable part of the whole territory of the area. These natural monuments are protected by law and some of them represent a rarity in the area, not only in the municipality, but also in the Balkan area as well.

Cultural and Natural resources are listed in Annex 6.

3.7.7 Build environment in villages

Each part of the Prespa cross-border area has an authentic architecture that symbolizes the culture and the identity of the people who live there. Most of the settlements here are rural and untouched by new and modern human interventions. Therefore they have all saved their traditional architecture. This architecture is a monument that has always represented a mirror of the characteristics and the values of the local population. In most of the villages the houses, which represent the main part of the authentic architecture, are saved, although they are in a bad condition. This kind of traditional values and architecture provide many opportunities, mainly for development of the touristic activities, but it requires overall support for reconstruction and renovation.

3.7.8 Human potential and local capacities for local governance

Although the region of the Prespa cross-border area is vulnerable to migration, there is still a potential for employment of qualified and skilled staff. This should be mostly exploited, firstly in the planning and then in the implementation of the projects. The conclusion from all this is that there is a human potential in this area, but before being exploited, this human capital needs to be trained and then included in the implementation of the projects. Only by these actions the region will be able to provide a sustainable growth.
3.8 The main results of previous activities and operations undertaken with Community and other bilateral or multilateral assistance, the financial resources deployed

Since the 90s in both parts of the cross-border area there is a presence of different international donor organizations that help the countries in need in many different areas. Almost all international donor organizations are present in FYROM and Albania, and through different type of funding are helping these countries. These organizations have helped in many projects, of which few were (or are) meant to include the parts of the cross-border area.

Some of them are listed below.

3.8.1 UNDP
In Macedonia, UNDP has been present since 1998. Since then, they have been working on the three key focus areas:

- Democratic Governance
- Social Inclusion
- Energy and Environment

UNDP has worked on several projects for protection of National Parks and Prespa and Ohrid Lake through GEF during the last two decades.

In Albania, UNDP supports their aspirations towards European Union integration and contributes to national efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). UNDP responds to national priorities through the Human Development Approach.

3.8.2 GIZ
GIZ started its bilateral development cooperation with FYROM in 1992, after the country gained independence. Germany is the second largest bilateral donor. GIZ has maintained an office in Skopje starting in 2007. There are currently 5 seconded personnel, 31 national personnel and 3 CIM experts working in the country. GIZ is active in the region and it has a branch office in Ohrid, which covers the entire cross-border area. Many GIZ projects in this region were related to environmental protection of the cross-border region, development of tourism sector as well as small and medium-sized enterprises. GIZ has well-developed network of partners within the Prespa cross-border region.

Development cooperation between Germany and Albania began in 1988. GIZ has operated in Albania, on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), since cooperation between the two countries was initiated. The GIZ office in Tirana was opened in 2008. Currently 6 seconded staff members, 6 CIM experts and 37 national personnel are working for GIZ in Albania.

3.8.3 USAID
In Macedonia, USAID supports the country’s efforts to strengthen democratic practices and institutions, increase economic growth and improve the quality of education. Democracy assistance focuses on strengthening the independence, transparency and professionalism of the judicial system, and improving parliamentary oversight. USAID is also helping the citizens in increasing effective oversight of their government through civic involvement and by promoting independent and legitimate media. The economic growth program focuses on improving the business environment and increasing the competitiveness of small- and medium-sized enterprises in sectors with potential for growth and job creation. USAID works with the Ministry of Education (in order to ensure that youth are equipped with the knowledge and skills that foster economic growth and reinforce an appreciation for diversity necessary in a multi-ethnic society and to ensure equal access to education for all children).
In Albania, USAID exists since 1992. Since then it has delivered over $500 million in foreign aid to support Albania’s development, stability, and integration into Europe. USAID’s programs in Albania are strengthening democratic institutions, promoting civil society, are reducing corruption, promoting gender equality and, at the same time, are creating a more favourable environment for inclusive economic growth—all of which are necessary in order for Albania to move forward more quickly towards greater democracy while meeting criteria that are essential for achieving its European aspirations.

3.8.4 European Commission
The European Commission is operating in this region through its national offices-representations. Most of the projects that are implemented at national level are present through activities in the region.

Programs of the European Commission in the cross-border area

As non-EU-members, FYROM and Albania can participate in some programs supported by European Commission. Some of them are listed below.

3.8.4.1 IPARD
The main purpose of the Programme is to act as planning document for implementing Council Regulation (EC) of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) for the period 2007-2013. In FYROM this program is implemented since 2010, while in Albania its implementation should start after 2013.

3.8.4.2 CBC
Cross Border Cooperation (CBC) is a key priority of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). It aims at reinforcing cooperation between member states and partner countries along the external border of the European Union. One of the programs for the countries in this cross-border region is the Cross-Border Cooperation Program Macedonia-Albania 2007-2013.

3.8.4.3 CIP
As part of the programs of EC is the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP). With small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as its main target, CIP supports innovation activities (including eco-innovation), delivers business support services in the regions and provides better access to finance. It encourages a better take-up and use of information and communication technologies (ICT) and helps to develop the information society.

It also promotes the increased use of renewable energies and energy efficiency. The CIP runs from 2007 to 2013 with an overall budget of € 3621 million. It is divided into three operational programmes and each programme has its specific objectives, which are aimed at contributing to the competitiveness of enterprises and their innovative capacity in their own areas, such as ICT or sustainable energy:

- The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP)
- The Information Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme (ICT-PSP)
- The Intelligent Energy Europe Programme (IEE)

Albania and Macedonia, although they are not part of the EU, they participate in some of the programs of CIP. FYROM participates in EIP and ICT-PSP parts, while Albania only in the EIP part of CIP\(^7\).

\(^7\) http://ec.europa.eu/cip/faq/index_en.htm
3.8.5 **World Bank**
The World Bank actively supports FYROM in strengthening its competitiveness for sustained economic growth, improving the business environment, strengthening human capital, improving the transport and energy infrastructure, and supporting the decentralization process. Going forward, the World Bank will continue its partnership with FYROM through a lending and advisory program that aims to achieve: faster growth by improving competitiveness; more inclusive growth by strengthening employability and social protection; and greener growth through more sustainable use of resources and direct climate action.

Albania has made great strides over the last years and is considered an IDA success story. The World Bank has been playing a major role in supporting reforms, strengthening institutions and financing investments across the full range of sectors. Albania graduated from IDA and is now creditworthy for IBRD and entered the ranking of upper-middle income countries.

3.8.6 **OSCE**
Albania and FYROM are also part of this organization and have participated in many of their programs. All of these agencies have activities in the cross-border countries, including the areas of the municipalities of Prespa cross-border area. These municipalities have participated in many projects, some of which are listed in the tables below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the project</th>
<th>Participation countries</th>
<th>Supporting organization</th>
<th>Bilateral/multilateral assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENHANCING TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION IN WATER MANAGEMENT IN THE PRESPA LAKES BASIN</td>
<td>Macedonia, Albania, Greece</td>
<td>Prespa Park, GEF, UNDP</td>
<td>Multilateral assistance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objective of the project: The project is developed in order to strengthen capacity for restoring ecosystem health and conserving biodiversity first at national level in Albania and FYR of Macedonian Prespa. This will be done by piloting ecosystem-oriented approaches to spatial planning, water use management, agriculture, forest and fishery management, and conservation and protected areas management.

**Project start- 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the project</th>
<th>Participation countries</th>
<th>Supporting organization</th>
<th>Bilateral/multilateral assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Prespa Lakes Basin of Albania, FYR Macedonia and Greece.</td>
<td>Macedonia, Albania, Greece</td>
<td>Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), Governments of the three countries</td>
<td>Multilateral assistance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objectives:** This project was developed in order to help the region’s people with long term economic and social development, to conserve the rich biodiversity and to protect the waters of the Prespa Lakes Basin. Also, one of the expectations was that stakeholders will start applying new tools and processes in order to manage key national sectors and trans-boundary resources in a way that generates national, trans-boundary and global benefits.

**Implementation period:** Apr 2006 – Apr 2011
**Budget:** US$ 4.3 million (GEF) + US$ 3.4 million (SDC)

**Results:** The project resulted with developing of a Strategic Action Program in cooperation with the stakeholders from all three countries, identifying key issues that need to be addressed in order to further improve the status and overall ecosystem health of the Basin. In order to reduce the pesticide inputs successful agricultural practices were introduced. Over 120 men and women, farmers, fishermen and foresters were trained in modifying management practices. This helped them increase habitat diversity, while making their products more attractive for national and international markets, thus ensuring higher and sustainable income generation for all the people living in the area. There is a 30% reduction in frequency and quantity of pesticides applied each season.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the project</th>
<th>Participation countries</th>
<th>Supporting organization</th>
<th>Bilateral/multilateral assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cross-border Programme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPA CBC FYROM – Republic of Albania</td>
<td>Macedonia, Albania</td>
<td>Ministry of Self Government</td>
<td>Bilateral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ministry of European Integration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cross-border program between the Republic of FYROM and Albania will be implemented during the period of 2007-2013. This strategic document is based on a joint strategic planning effort between the two countries and is also the result of a large consultation process with the local stakeholders and potential beneficiaries. The objective of the cross-border program is to promote good neighbourly relations, foster stability, security and prosperity, which are in the mutual interest of both countries, and encourage their harmonious, balanced and sustainable development.

**Implementation time:** 2007-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the project</th>
<th>Participation countries</th>
<th>Supporting organization</th>
<th>Bilateral/ multilateral assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project for water supply in the region of Ohrid and Pogradec</td>
<td>Macedonia, Albania</td>
<td>Albanian and Macedonian government, the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), the German Government through its Development Bank (KfW)</td>
<td>Bilateral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective:** The objective of this project was to improve the water supply, build a sewage network and treatment plant, and improve the management of the UK Pogradec in order to create a viable publicly owned utility.

**Budget:** International donors provided a contribution of around €27.5 million.

**Implementation:** starting date May, 2007

**Results:** Since the problem in the area was having clean water only six hours per day, the end result of this project delivered in having clean water in the municipalities every day, 24 hours per day. Also, there were many actions undertaken, such as: restructuring, intensive training, better and more socially conscious financial management, and developed client and public relations policies in the UK Pogradec.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the project</th>
<th>Participation countries</th>
<th>Supporting organization</th>
<th>Bilateral/ multilateral assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watershed Management Plan for Lake of Prespa</td>
<td>FYROM and Sweetzerland</td>
<td>UNDP, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning and Swiss Development and Cooperation</td>
<td>Bilateral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective:** Improving the water quality in Lake Prespa and soil quality in the Lake watershed area.

**Budget:** CHF 5,702,000

**Implementation:** July 2012 - mid 2018

**Expected results:** Significantly reducing the organic load in the Lake and improving the ecosystem health. By the improved water quality, the opportunities for faster economic development will be open, including open opportunities for development of the tourism and agriculture.
4 Strategic Framework for development of Cross – Border Region Prespa

4.1 Strategic Planning Process

The Strategic plan was developed as a joint document of the Regional Stakeholders Group. It was built on the ABD methodology through participatory involvement of the regional stakeholders.

The strategic planning process was done through a series of four workshops during the period April – June 2012. It began with the formation of the Regional Stakeholders Group. The Group was created before and during the first workshop.

Between the first and the second workshop an overall research (baseline assessment) and analysis of the target area were done. The generated information was presented in front of the Stakeholders Group during the following meetings in order to provide their input about priorities and directions for development of the Region. Their work was organized in thematic groups. Beside the involvement of the Stakeholders Group, participatory tools such as surveys, interviews, etc. were used in the process in order to analyze the overall situation in the Region, identify Priority areas and develop the Vision and the Strategic Framework. The meetings were attended by 30 representatives: half of them were local governments’ representatives, 18% representatives of the private sector and 32% participants representing civil society.

Once the workshops were completed, the regional consultant finalized the draft plan which was based on the generated feedback and the obtained information during the research process. Finally, the draft document was discussed with stakeholders. Stakeholders’ concluding input was integrated into the document that defines the Regional needs, Priority areas, Strategic goals for each Priority area followed by objectives and activities.

The Strategic Framework provides a high-level statement of the future direction and priorities of the Cross – Border Region and guides the decisions of the Stakeholders during the period of implementation. The strategy framework has been designed with a defined vision of Prespa region, six priority areas and a SWOT analysis for each priority area. Based on the identified strengths of each priority area and taking into consideration its weaknesses, two development goals were set, followed by objectives. Each objective shall be realized by set of activities which are elaborated in Chapter 5 (Action Plan Framework).

It is the foundation for project initiatives that enhance the achievement of strategic goals in priority areas.

More about the Strategic planning workshops can be found in Annex 3.

4.2 Vision

There was widespread agreement expressed through the consultation process for the principle of developing a Shared Vision which would reflect the views of the people of the Region and their aspirations for the future of the place which they all share. It is a result of the participation of stakeholders in the planning process and it is based on the findings of the baseline assessment, the SWOT analysis of the priority areas and the rest of the activities. The Shared Vision which emerged from the consultation process is:

**Cross - Border region of Prespa through joint efforts and programs will grow in economically developed area with a clean and healthy environment, reduced unemployment; it will be a region with sustainable development of tourism and agriculture and high level of energy efficiency in all sectors, a place where diversity of culture and tradition is respected and promoted and a region ready for EU integration.**

Turning this challenging Vision into reality will require the combined efforts of all the people of the Region. The development of the Cross – Border Region of Prespa towards the achievement of the
Shared Vision will be guided by the Strategic Plan for Development and the accompanying Strategic Planning and implemented by its implementing structure – unit.

The Strategy needs to be built on principles and values which regional Stakeholders consider to be important. The Strategy is, therefore, underpinned by the sustainable approach and guiding principles set out below.

4.2.1 **A sustainable approach to Regional Development**

The Strategy has a significant legislative basis reflecting national and international commitment to a sustainable approach to accommodating growth within the Region. This principle is firmly established in the National laws for balanced regional development and the IPA Programmes for Cross – Border Cooperation. This document aims towards achievement of a balanced and sustainable development of the territory by the accomplishment of three fundamental goals:

- economic and social cohesion;
- conservation and management of natural resources and the cultural heritage; and
- more balanced competitiveness of the area.

The document also aims to support regional/local authorities to work together across national borders to develop an integrated approach to regional issues.

The principles of accommodating development in a sustainable manner are embedded in the guiding principles. The core of the Strategy is the principle of ensuring a better quality of life for the citizens from the area, by seeking to meet the four objectives of sustainable development:

- Successful protection of the environment;
- Sustainable use of natural resources;
- Improvement of economic growth and employment
- Social protection and progress which appreciates the needs of everyone.

4.3 **Priority areas**

Priority areas represent the main areas where the strategy can contribute to improvements (either through tackling the main challenges or through seizing the main opportunities). The priority areas have been identified and selected throughout the process of participatory planning. Information from several factors have been used in the process of defining the priorities:

- Contributions of the stakeholder group through discussions during the meetings as the main factor for designing and selecting the six priorities.
- Responses from the performed surveys (Survey for municipalities and survey for local stakeholders). Information generated from the surveys provided the members of the stakeholder group with an insight and played an essential role in guiding the stakeholders group in the selection of the priorities.
- The elaborated existence of a certain economic development potential in various sectors and the limitations of human, social, physical capital and institutional capacities, presented in the baseline assessment provided solid base to increase the participatory exercise and debates of the SG members.

During the meetings, stakeholders discussed extensively the essential local needs seen though the prism of all three sectors (public, private and civic). The discussion was not only focused on unveiling the local needs but on strategies and solutions how they could be included and addressed in a regional and cross – border context.
The key priority areas were then defined as follows:

1. Environment
2. Agriculture
3. Economic growth and tourism
4. Social cohesion
5. Regional infrastructure
6. Energy efficiency

Each priority area has to be considered in parallel with others. The Strategy encourages an integrated approach (e.g. environment - agriculture - economic growth - regional infrastructure, - energy efficiency, etc.). The activities undertaken within one priority area have an impact on the rest of the priority areas and vice versa. For example, climate change adaptations have an impact on agriculture, energy, tourism, environment, etc. whilst the latter also have an impact on climate change. Therefore, for the implementation of each Priority Area, it is important that there is involvement of bodies and institutions representing other priority areas.

A SWOT analysis for each of priority area was carried out by the SG in subsequent meetings.

4.4 The Strategy

Cross – Border Region of Prespa can achieve its aspirations by crafting a strategy that aligns the region’s strengths and develops capabilities to address the opportunities and challenges in the emerging economic environment.

The major strategies that will shape Region’s strategic and action plan are comprised of the following initiatives:

A people and community focused approach – seeks to meet the future needs of the entire population, local communities, minority ethnic communities and the disabled. This approach aims to create healthy and supportive environments which help people to maintain in good health and social well-being. It appreciates the fact that local identity is important quality valued by the communities (urban and rural), and respects their aspiration to protect positive features of local environments and sustain the diversity of the area.

- Involvement and participation of the community has been essential to the process of the development of the document. Community participation has been vital to secure the preparation of the strategy, which reflects the views and ambitions of stakeholders.
- Community involvement will continue to be a part of the Strategy implementation process and part of the monitoring and review process. Constructive notes from the key stakeholders will assist the process of development of a more cohesive Region.

Achieving a more cohesive Region which is based on:

- equality of prospect and targeting social need – being aware of the fact that the development must be connected to equality and inclusivity, and to more equitable access to the assets for all its people;
- spatial equity and complementarily – recognising the strong interdependence between the parts of the Region and reflecting their needs to achieve a reasonable and sustainable balance of development across the area;
- a partnership approach – recognizing the importance of local cooperation and networks between different parts of the Region and between different communities;
- strengthening community cohesion in the Region – taking an approach to development which respects the sensitivities of a divided community, is supportive to and encourages community interaction;
- sustainable approach to transport – which integrates the communities more closely between themselves and the rest of the country; and an external looking perspective – which recognises the importance of improved linkages between the communities across the border.
Achieving competitiveness based on:
- to invest in intelligence – increasing the level of education, employability and skills of the population;
- to develop accessibility and communications to, and within, the Region, in order to connect the resources of the Region more fully;
- to integrate development with quality of life in order to ensure the Region is increasingly noted for its high quality environmental assets and cultural amenities – assets which will encourage citizens to train and stay in the Region and which are attractive to investors.

An integrated approach to future joint development of the Region based on:
- to strengthen interconnections between regional and local governments to deliver cross-sectoral solutions to complex and inter-related environmental, economic and social issues;
- to develop an inventive and proactive approach to future progress characterised by partnerships and co-operation
- to protect and enhance the environment through an approach to development and policy formation which has the condition of the environment as a central deciding factor
- to facilitate the development of tourism assets on a cross-border basis such as Ohrid and Prespa lakes and shared culture and history
- to strengthen the position of the Region on the world tourist map through development of a positive and welcoming image which is built on hospitality and quality products and on the regional cultural, natural and sporting resources
- to Encourage cross-border networks of economic co-operation and enterprise
to encourage rural revitalisation based on cross-border joint initiatives in order to provide benefits in terms of employment, services, infrastructure, and cultural understanding.

4.5 Strategic goals and objectives per priority area

4.5.1 Priority Area: Environment

4.5.1.1 SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS:
- A wealth of unexploited natural resources
- Biodiversity / Existence of a great wealth of biodiversity
- Existence of 4 national parks
- Existence of indigenous (autochthonous) species of flora and fauna
- Large amounts of water resources - 2 natural lakes - the existence of large resources of drinking water
- Large areas covered by forests
- Large area covered with pastures
- Large areas of fine arable land
- Existence of legal framework (legislation)
- Existence of strategic and planning documents on environmental protection at local level and the level of national parks
- Existence of cross-border level of experience in the area of the environment
- Existence of competencies in the field of environmental protection at local level (municipalities)
- Interested and active NGOs

WEAKNESSES:
- Insufficient number of qualified and experienced personnel in local administrations for environmental management and enforcement - stakeholders considered that only few
municipalities have the appropriate human resources
• Lack of funds for recruitment of professional staff supervision and inspection at local level
• Insufficient financial resources from central level to support local authorities in law enforcement
• Unbalanced systems for solid and liquid waste at regional level – there are disparities between the waste management infrastructure and facilities between bigger urban communities and the rest of the settlement and a difference between the systems from both sides of the border. The Macedonian part has better developed waste management infrastructure
• Lack of regional landfills for storage and treatment of solid waste – the existing landfills are local and operate without standards
• Large number of illegal dumps nearby water resources
• Lack of systems for treating and purifying wastewater – most of the rural communities do not have filter stations
• Lack of technical documentation related to the protection and management of environmental and waste management (studies, analyzes, plans, etc.)
• Lack of cooperation between NGOs and local authorities
• Endangered flora and fauna - endangered autochthonous biodiversity and endangered fish fund such as the Ohrid trout, the birds (Pelicans at Prespa Lake, etc)

OPPORTUNITIES:
• Implementation of measures and national laws for environmental protection
• Preparation of strategic planning documents or review of existing ones and their application
• Development or review of existing Local Ecological Action Plans (LEAP) and their implementation
• Identification and evaluation of natural resources and goods in the region and assessment of their practical value in producing healthy food, organic agriculture, health and spa tourism, etc.).
• Creating a database of polluters due to their control – classification of polluters
• Cooperation at municipal, regional and cross-border level to protect natural resources
• Existence of cross border cooperation within IPA (CBC IPA) - development and application of projects related to environmental protection
• Existence of policy initiatives to declare the entire territory of the region as an area protected under UNESCO (3 national parks and 2 lakes)
• Cooperation and financial support to local and regional NGOs dealing with environmental protection
• Strengthening the awareness of environmental protection through formal education and use of a variety of media appropriate to the age of the students
• Informal forms of environmental education in primary and secondary education
• NGO activities for informal environmental education for different age groups

THREATS:
• Continuation of the trend of pollution – Usage of pesticides and increasing the number of illegal dumps
• Uncontrolled development of tourism industry can result with extensive pollution – the Region lacks well developed and balanced waste management infrastructure
• Economic development that is not based on the principles of sustainable development – Uncontrolled use of natural resources and introduction of heavy industry
• Weak capacity of the economy for investment in environmental protection
• Decrease of the number of endemic plants and animals
• Slow implementation of national and local strategies for environmental protection
• Lack of sufficient funding or inadequate funding for implementation of initiatives and projects for environmental protection
• Management of solid waste in the region at low level - high costs for construction of standardized regional landfills

SWOT analysis indicated that the priority area Environment possesses some of the biggest values. The Region can utilize the wealth of unexploited natural resources and biodiversity rich with indigenous (autochthonous) species of flora and fauna to use the environment as one of the most competitive assets for development. There is a potential for the Environment to be further protected and managed because there is existence of national legal frameworks, strategic documentation developed by the national parks and cross-border experience in this area.

The opportunities which have been created by the IPA CBC programme and country initiatives – policies to declare the entire territory of the region as a protected area, can be utilised as a basis for further joint activities for sustainable management of the environment and utilization of the natural resources.

However, the Region lacks technical documentation (feasibility studies, technical plans, elaborates, etc.) and strategic documentation, financial resources and qualified and experienced personnel in local administrations for environmental management and enforcement. The main burden of the region is the unbalanced and underdeveloped infrastructure for waste management and existence of illegal dumps. The further development of the environment protection can be challenged by the threats of continuation of the pollution trend and the uncontrolled use of natural resources as consequences of the slow implementation of national and local strategies for environmental protection.

4.5.1.2 Strategic goals for the priority area: Environment

There are two strategic goals for the priority area Environment. Each strategic goal has two objectives.

**Strategic Goal 1**: Establishment of a functional system for integrated regional protection of environment and natural resources

- **Objective 1**: Improve Regional cooperation for Regional protection of environment and natural resources
- **Objective 2**: Increase regional public awareness about the benefits of environment protection

**Strategic Goal 2**: Improvement of the systems of waste water and solid waste management.

- **Objective 1**: Improvement of the waste water management systems.
- **Objective 2**: Improvement of solid waste management systems.

4.5.2 Priority area: Agriculture

4.5.2.1 SWOT Analysis

**STRENGTHS:**
- Good geographic position and climate
- Most present economic activities through the entire region
- Richness of terrain diversity (mountains, plains)
- Large areas of pasture land and tradition in cattle breeding and processing of meat and dairy products
• Large areas of arable land and tradition of crops and fruits production
• Large areas of forests – the entire cross border region is abundant in forests
• Wealth of clean water - lakes, springs and rivers suitable for irrigation
• Diversity of plant and animal species
• Preserved and healthy environment in the villages
• Saved natural resources for development of organic production
• A large number of sunny days per year – more than 220 sunny days per year
• Increased interest of municipalities to develop strategic plans for agriculture and rural development and attracting investors
• Existence of traditional skills of farmers
• Increased interest in introducing modern production technologies
• Local markets that have a range of traditional products on the entire territory of the area

WEAKNESSES:

• Inadequate quality of available labour – farmers possess only basic traditional farming skills
• Low level of education among farmers – most of the farmers attended primary education only or they have no diploma
• Resistance to introduction of new technologies and new products due to conservative approach to keep the traditional aspects in agriculture
• Irresponsible attitude towards exploitation of natural resources – lack of environmental awareness
• Small family-run farms - small individuals that are uncompetitive - producing small quantities of agricultural products
• Fragmented land in private possession which is present on the entire territory of the area
• Municipalities do not manage the state agricultural land - they do not have legal competencies in agriculture
• Poor condition of the local road network
• Low economic development in rural areas
• Financially weak municipalities
• Lack of greenhouses and glasshouses
• Lack of appropriate professional staff in agriculture – most of the professional staff possess knowledge and skills in application of traditional methods and standards in agriculture and need further professional development in provision of extension services
• Low level of cooperation between farmers and educational and research institutions
• Lack of association of farmers - a small number of active associations in the Region
• Underdeveloped organic farming – small number of farmers have introduced the organic farming
• Lack of access to suitable credit lines
• Old and ruined farm machinery

OPPORTUNITIES:

• Utilization of soil and climatic conditions for agricultural development
• Utilization of renewable sources of energy
• Introduction of new products and farming methods
• Use of national and international funds
• Global trends in demand of healthy food (organic products)
• Increased incentives from the state for agricultural development
• Promote the work of associations of farmers
• Training of farmers and introduction of standards that are required in countries that import agricultural products (Global GAP)
• Use of IPA funds for rural development and cooperation between farmers
• Use of IPARD funds for agricultural development

**THREATS:**

• Unavailability of credit lines for farmers - high interest rates
• Global Climate Change
• Increasing the price of electricity and oil
• Expensive farm equipment and machinery
• Absence of clearly defined ownership and right of use of agricultural land
• The economic situation in the region and globally
• Difficult access to foreign markets
• Usurpation of agricultural land for construction

SWOT analysis indicated that the Priority Area Agriculture is one of the most present economic activities through the entire region and one with the greatest potential for development. The entire area is mainly rural. The strengths of the agriculture and its competitive values are the relatively unpolluted - healthy agricultural products and farmers with basic skills and tradition in production of certain agricultural products. These strengths are present due to the clean environment, climate conditions, geographical position of the region, basic agricultural practices in production of the traditional products as well as presence of arable land and fertile soil.

The operating businesses consist of small family-run farms or small individuals. They are not market oriented and not competitive to the farmers from other countries by quantity of production. The farmers are also not organized into associations.

There are opportunities for development of this area by introduction of new products and farming methods as well as utilization of the funds of national programmes and IPARD and creating alliances of small farmers. The challenges which agriculture faces in terms of threats are consequences of climate changes and the lack of awareness among the stakeholders for immediate responses as well as the absence of clearly defined ownership and right of use of agricultural land.

4.5.2.2 **Strategic goals for the priority area: Agriculture**

There are two strategic goals for the priority area Agriculture. The first strategic goal has two objectives while the second strategic goal has three objectives.

**Strategic Goal 1:** Development of the agriculture in the Region through support in adding values to traditional agricultural products

- **Objective 1:** Improve regional cooperation for production of healthy food
- **Objective 2:** Protection and branding of traditional agricultural products

**Strategic Goal 2:** Increase the production of healthy food and organic farming

- **Objective 1:** Creating the conditions for organic farming and production of healthy food
- **Objective 2:** Technical support in introducing planned organic production and marketing organic products
- **Objective 3:** Support the development of regional businesses with wild gathered products - herbs in rural areas in accordance to the EU standards and practices
4.5.3 **Priority area: Economic Development and Tourism**

4.5.3.1 **SWOT Analysis**

**STRENGTHS:**

- Natural resources that allow diversification of the economy through their sustainable use and are excellent basis for development of different types of tourism
- Climate of increasing number of small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs in the region
- Existence of regional and local institutions for support of the economy in the region (offices / departments of local economic development agencies for local / regional development, etc.).
- Existence of strategic planning documents at a local level that define local economic development activities (strategic plans for local economic development)
- National Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (support measures to diversify the rural economy and rural tourism) and IPARD Program (MK)
- National support - tax incentives for the tourism sector (MK)
- National strategies for development of small and medium enterprises and tourism
- Existence of mountain, rural and alternative tourism in the region
- Existence of many tourist facilities (located by the lakes and larger settlements
- A wealth of cultural - historical heritage, cultural and religious diversity (mosques, monasteries, churches, archaeological sites, monuments, etc.).
- Preserved nature, rural areas and clean water
- Hospitality of the people of the region
- Rich folklore and ethnological tradition
- Authentic cuisine - traditional food
- Relatively good road links and easy access to the region

**WEAKNESSES:**

- Lack of institutional - political framework for regional economic development
- Incompatible legislation and conditions for foreign investment
- Existence of a large number of micro businesses which have little potential to generate new employment
- Insufficiently developed entrepreneurial skills among local businessman
- Lack of management skills of owners and business managers
- Inadequate government support to local businesses (local, regional and national) - slows down the development of small and medium enterprises
- Indifference to innovation in business
- Weak competitiveness of existing small and medium businesses
- Lack of defined, multifaceted joint tourist offer
- Lack of well-known and promoted tourist destinations in all parts of the region
- Lack of authority - a Destinations management Organization (DMO)
- Lack of integrated tourist offer and promotion of the entire region
- A small number of tourism establishments who possess world (international) standards for their facilities
- Insufficient participation of cultural institutions in creating and offering tourists
- Lack of promotion of tourist potentials
- Underdeveloped awareness of tourism opportunities
- Poorly organized and underdeveloped road infrastructure (mainly in the mountainous parts)
OPPORTUNITIES:

- Fiscal decentralization – increases the power of local governments for financial operations and decisions
- Decentralization of management of construction land
- Increase collaboration between local businesses and scientific and research institutions - increased competitiveness and innovation
- Existence of economic chambers and initiatives for cooperation and exchange of information
- Existence of advisory services in the region
- Existence of opportunities to increase export - free trade agreement (CEFTA, WTO)
- Increased access to funding sources
- Potential for creation of common regional brands (unique products and services)
- Support given through a capacity building programmes to Businesses for achieving the EU standards
- Global trends in development and demand for services related to ecological, ethnic, rural and alternative tourism
- Interest of the tour operators for the region
- Existence of an airport in the region - Ohrid
- Exploiting the possibilities for sustainable alternative tourism (eco, rural, mountain, mountaineering etc.).
- Promotion of Cultural Heritage (mosques, churches, monasteries, archaeological sites, cultural monuments)
- Presentation of the model of public-private partnership in tourism
- Existence of a large number of households interested in providing services in rural tourism

THREATS:

- Inadequate, uneven and unbalanced credit policy to support SMEs
- Inadequate, uneven and unbalanced support through a system of subsidies and tax incentives for investment, increased employment etc.
- Slow implementation of national, regional and local strategies
- Lack of system support - lack of effective institutions that provide support services to entrepreneurs - lack of quality services that will help to increase competitiveness of local businesses
- Outflow of trained staff
- Increased competitiveness with market liberalization
- Unmaintained regional roads and lack of a clear plan for reconstruction
- Insufficient renovations of tourism infrastructure
- Unsatisfactory improvement of the quality of services
- Lack of improvement of quality of skills for services provision

SWOT analysis for the priority area Economic Development and Tourism indicated that the Region has natural resources that allow diversification of economic activities. At the same time they are excellent basis for development of different types of tourism. There is already an atmosphere of increasing number of small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs in the region. Local authorities are supportive to private sector and have developed strategic documents and local tax policies which can further stimulate the growth of the economy. At the same time National Programmes for Agriculture and Rural Development and IPARD are supportive to measures for diversification of the rural economy and rural tourism. The tourism can become one of the main economic drivers in the region if the wealth of natural, cultural and human resources are considered and engaged. However, there is a lack of institutional framework and national policies for regional economic development. The competitiveness of the existing SMEs is weak and the owners and business managers possess low and inadequate level of management skills. The labour force faces serious...
need for further development of their skills and capacities. The region is also in need of additional touristic facilities (especially in the lakes and national parks areas).

The improvement of the quality of products and services remains at unsatisfactory level. The enhancement of the quality of the touristic services is essential for the both parts of the region. The development of the economy is dependent on the regional transportation infrastructure and administrative and financial procedures regarding customs. If road infrastructure and administrative procedures are improved, the economy can enhance its potential and become more competitive.

4.5.3.2 Strategic goals for the priority area: Economic Development and Tourism

There are two strategic goals for the priority area Economic Development and Tourism – one for development of the economy and one for tourism. Each strategic goal has two objectives.

Strategic Goal 1: Creating conditions for economic development and increasing competitiveness of the region

Objective 1: Creating a favourable climate for further development of existing businesses

Objective 2: Strengthening the capacity of the institutions within the Region in regional development and project management

Objective 3: Development of infrastructure support and business networks to support existing and new businesses

Strategic Goal 2: Support the development of integrated tourist offer as a basis for sustainable tourism

Objective 1: Utilization of natural resources and cultural and historical heritage for tourism development

Objective 2: Promote authenticity and comparative advantages of the Region

Objective 3: Development of sustainable tourism and catering industry by providing quality products and services

4.5.4 Priority area: Social cohesion

4.5.4.1 SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS:

• Presence of Centres for social affairs in urban communities
• Presence of Employment Centres in urban communities
• Existence of Daily Centres for people with special needs in bigger urban settlements
• National programs and strategies in the social sphere
• Local programs and strategies in the social sphere – Urban municipalities are dealing with these issues in their Strategic Plans and in everyday work
• Legal regulations related to social and health protection
• Community experience in getting involved in different projects financed by donors
• Existence of Strategies for rural development in some municipalities – Social protection is a priority in this Plans -Municipality of Resen has developed such plan and it could be used as an example for other rural municipalities
• Existence of national funds for rural development
• Existence of a primary and secondary health protection in the region – both level of health protection cover the entire region – secondary health protection present in bigger urban municipalities
- Educational Institutions – primary and secondary schools are present on the entire territory, in every municipality
- Tradition in tolerance among different nationalities, ethnic groups and religions
- Variety of NGOs and Associations working in the social sphere

WEAKNESSES:
- No mechanism for identification of vulnerable and marginalized groups
- Poor coordination among the institutions and no coordination of activities at regional level
- Legal regulations not being followed
- Absence of local authority’s participation in the national policy creation in social sphere
- Increased number of people abusing drugs
- Inappropriate treatment to people with special needs
- Poor information about specialized health services
- Lack of available households for accepting people from the institutions of social protection
- Existence of prejudice towards vulnerable and marginalized groups
- Poor health protection in rural area – many villages do not have primary health protection
- Decreased rate of new born children in the entire region

OPPORTUNITIES:
- Utilization of the existing capacities and facilities
- Legal opportunities to act and improve social services at local level
- Amendments that improve the law for social welfare
- Decentralization itself as a process – It brings more power to municipalities – Social protection is part of local competencies
- Availability of investors and foreign donors to invest or support social protection and cohesion activities
- Participation of the community with different activities and events related to social cohesion
- Improvement of the infrastructure for people with special needs
- Enriching the life of the youth through organization of different youth cultural activities
- Creation of a sustainable system for communities’ involvement in the decision making process
- Awareness raising among the community for the importance of their active involvement in the decision making process
- Awareness raising among the Municipality Council members for their role and the importance of community’s participation in the decision making process
- Participation in Euro-regional projects

THREATS:
- General economic situation – the economic crisis – tax collection at local level slows down
- Absence of sustainable strategy for social welfare at a regional level
- Restrictive social policy
- Migration and depopulation of the entire region – mostly caused due to economical reasons
- Aging of the population – concerns the entire region

The cross analysis for the priority area Social Cohesion shows that the communities from the region are dealing with social issues and providing social services. However, the level of the range, amount and quality of these services is different and dependable on the capacity and size of the municipality. The most serious weaknesses and threats are in the area of social cohesion, and are linked to: poverty, unemployment, delinquency, housing, resettlement of large numbers of people – emigrants moving from the EU back to the region.

It may be also concluded that the region has been faced with demographic changes such as ageing and increasing ethnic and cultural diversity. Another relevant factor is the divide in society and the exclusion of vulnerable groups. The existing division will be exacerbated by the economic crisis,
but also by longer-term processes. A wide range of vulnerable groups lack better inclusion in the communities and their quality of life and active citizenship are under threat from a multitude of reasons. In addition to these issues, health should also be considered as a priority to be addressed, both in terms of health services provision and medical infrastructure.

The provision of social services, as part of local competencies, offers considerable opportunities for promoting social participation and self-sufficiency of vulnerable groups. Finally, a global economic crisis is currently underway. Its exact consequences and impact are hard to predict, but it will probably concern the region for a certain period (at least 5 years). The SWOT analysis and the workshop revealed that, on the basis of proven effectiveness two preconditions are essential for the selection of project proposals.

- The solution should result from or be part of integrated policy development. That is to say policy development which includes integral problem analysis and planning. Integrated means that social, physical, spatial and economic aspects are all taken into account.
- Service provision and product delivery have to be part of a local government, NGOs, welfare services, healthcare organizations etc. This improves services and makes the solution more effective for the demands of people living in the region.

4.5.4.2 Strategic goals for the priority area: Social Cohesion

There are two strategic goals for the priority area Social Cohesion. Each strategic goal has two objectives.

**Strategic Goal 1:** Raising the level of social protection of the entire population, with special emphasis on vulnerable and marginalized groups of people.

- **Objective 1:** Improve services in social care by developing programs and establishment of appropriate mechanisms
- **Objective 2:** Construction of new and conversion of the existing infrastructure for the needs of vulnerable groups, by creating partnerships and use of domestic and international funds

**Strategic Goal 2:** Raising the capacities of the existent institutions, associations and NGOs as well as creating new in order to address adequately the burning social issues.

- **Objective 1:** Regional networking of regional and municipal institutions and NGO sector working in the field of social protection
- **Objective 2:** Raising public awareness and stimulating social solidarity and philanthropy.

4.5.5 Priority area: Regional infrastructure

4.5.5.1 SWOT Analysis

**STRENGTHS:**

- Cross-connectivity of the Region - Presence of cross border passing in the region – two border crossings within the region and one in the nearest vicinity
- Presence of relatively good road infrastructure – regional and local
- Telecommunication coverage of the region – the entire region is covered by telecommunication services – mobile and land line telecommunications
- Existing water-supply systems in the urban and rural areas
- Existing electrification of the area – the entire region is covered with electricity
- Access to internet technology – Existence of several internet providers
• Existence of airports in the Region and its vicinity – There is only one functional international airport – located in Ohrid. The other nearest airports are in Tirana and Skopje
• Existing projects for rehabilitation and expansion of a road infrastructure
• Quality building materials in the region
• Existence of construction companies in the region
• Qualified workforce (construction workers with tradition, electricians, technical engineers, etc)
• Transit geographical position
• Existence of communal infrastructure in the Region – the infrastructure differs and exists in bigger communities
• Existence of customs’ terminals
• Existence and development of GUP (General Urban Plan) and DUP (Detailed Urban Plan)
• Existence of procedures for legalization of facilities and houses not being built within the detailed urban plan

**WEAKNESSES:**

• Old water supply network – most of the water supply systems in the region are at least 20-30 years old.
• Small capacity of the sewage system – uncompleted in most of the rural communities
• Not having enough filtering stations – especially noticeable in smaller, rural communities
• Insufficient and unstable coverage with electrical infrastructure – especially noticeable in Albania
• Lower electricity voltage in rural areas
• High price of electricity in the region
• Absence of lake traffic (on both lakes)
• Insufficient maintenance of the road infrastructure, both regional and local
• Absence of railway infrastructure – there is no railways and no plans for connection of the Region with railway
• Problems with payment of communal services
• Management of the state land by the central government – present in Albania
• Old technology in the energetic sector
• Not having enough artificial accumulations for watering the land
• Lack of infrastructure development initiatives (no cross – border infrastructure development initiative)

**OPPORTUNITIES:**

• Possibilities for public private partnership in development of infrastructure
• Initiatives for Road modernization due to cross – border cooperation
• Opening of lake traffic and building of ports
• Development of tourism initiatives – touristic infrastructure development
• Increasing the budget portion for public investments in the region through IPA funds for regional development
• Current initiatives for upgrading the waste water networks through building of filtering stations
• Introducing new technology
• Joint project application for euro-regional funds for building infrastructure
THREATS:

- Economic inefficiency of public enterprises
- Insufficient capacity of communal enterprises
- Unfavourable economic situation does not allow realization of bigger infrastructure projects in the Region
- Low interest among young people for education in technological and natural sciences - the infrastructure sphere
- Administrative barriers related to land property issues (very often slow down the process of infrastructure construction)
- Limited municipal budgets and regional budgets for infrastructural projects
- Low national priorities to invest in infrastructure projects in the region
- Lack of human capacities for collaboration with donors in terms of project preparation and implementation
- Lack of public awareness for taking care of public property
- Lack of technology and financial resources to overcome difficulties related to climate conditions in winter
- High cost of heating the schools and kindergartens

SWOT analysis for the Priority area Regional Infrastructure indicates that the Region has different infrastructure. The entire territory of the Region is covered with electricity, internet and telecommunications, both land line and mobile. The Region also possesses regional and local road infrastructure as well as border crossings which secure the cross-connectivity of the Macedonian and Albanian part. In addition, the main communities are covered with waste water network and solid waste collection systems. Such infrastructure is better developed on the Macedonian side. The existence of these types of infrastructure create solid basis for further development of the entire Region. However, the Region is of urgent need of improvement of water supply and waste water management networks as well as solid waste management and disposal of the waste in accordance to the EU standards. The region is not connected with the railway network which is a weakness and a threat due to the increased costs of the fuel. The infrastructure in the Region will remain a challenge due to the low financial resources of the local and national authorities. Sustainable solutions for infrastructure development can be created only through integrated policy development and cooperation of the local authorities with the business sector from both sides of the border.

4.5.5.2 Strategic goals for the priority area: Regional Infrastructure

There are two strategic goals for the priority area Regional Infrastructure. One goal is related to development of the regional road infrastructure and the other is targeting the communal infrastructure in the region. Each strategic goal has two objectives.

**Strategic Goal 1:** Improved local and cross-border connections of the municipalities in the region through development of modern infrastructure.

- **Objective 1:** Construction of regional road infrastructure
- **Objective 2:** Increasing the capacity of border crossings and cross – border transportation

**Strategic Goal 2:** Improvement of the communal infrastructure in the region.

- **Objective 1:** Development of water supply and waste water infrastructure
- **Objective 2:** Regulation of river basins
4.5.6  Priority area: Energy Efficiency

4.5.6.1  SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS:
- A great geographical potential of the Region
- National law regulations related to the renewable energy resources (RES) and energy efficiency
- National strategy for energy efficiency
- National action plans – both countries have developed NAPs
- Energy efficiency programs within mountain regions
- Local action plans and programs – existing in some urban municipalities
- State subventions for usage of RES and energy efficiency – the state provide subsidies to a certain level for instalment of solar collectors
- Existence of natural potential of the region for usage of RES (sunlight hours, biomass, water, wind)
- Collaboration between local authorities and NGOs in this sphere
- Municipality awareness for some of their responsibilities in the area of energy efficiency i.e. maintenance of street light – some municipalities already started to replace the traditional light bulbs with economic and lightening which relies on solar energy
- Availability of construction materials and systems for energy efficiency
- Possibility to involve the local labour force

WEAKNESSES:
- Lack of responsibility for the achievement of the objectives of the renewable energy resources and the energy efficiency
- Deficit of skilled personnel in this sphere (management personnel and technical experts)
- Low level of awareness for energy saving and RES
- Lack of control over the isolation materials used in the public facilities
- Low level of knowledge for energy efficiency and RES among the municipality administration
- Energy inefficient street light – most of the street lightening in municipalities
- Not having enough studies for the potential of biomass, wind, sun and water in the region
- Shortage of professional knowledge how to prepare and use the biomass
- Expensive investments in RES and photovoltaic energy
- Usage of electric energy as a source for heating
- Usage of fossil fuels as a source for heating
- Insufficient investments in renewing and development of energy infrastructure
- Having old public facilities and buildings (energy inefficient)
- Low interest for applying energy efficiency in the industrial facilities in the region (no applicable subsidies for business sector in this field)

OPPORTUNITIES:
- Possibilities for financing energy efficiency activities through international funds
- Possibilities for having functional public private partnership
- Possibilities for development of the constructing industry
- Production of energy efficient building materials
- Introducing of new technology related to energy efficiency to reduce the costs
- Energy efficiency certification of public and private buildings in the municipality
- Fiscal decentralization – allowing municipalities to create their own taxes and benefits for energy efficient households and businesses
• Training the municipality administration and the employees in the public institutions regarding energy efficiency and RES

**THREATS:**

• Administrative obstacles – Electricity and energy sector is still centralizes; municipalities can not plan by itself investments in this field
• Continued increase of the prices of electricity and fuel
• Lack of credit lines from banks
• Limited budgets of the municipalities to invest more in RES and energy efficiency

SWOT analysis for Priority area Energy Efficiency indicates that the region has great conditions for utilization of the renewable energy sources. There are national laws for renewable energies and energy efficiency developed and they format the framework for the activities within these sectors. National governments provide support through subsidies for instalment of solar energy collectors to a certain level. However, municipalities cannot plan business investments in RES locally and the percentage of subjects that have installed solar energy collectors remains very low.

There is also a low level of awareness and knowledge for energy efficiency among municipal administration and local businesses. Local economy, private households and public infrastructures have made some improvements in energy efficiency and steps towards less energy-intensive sectors. The gains in energy efficiency from renewable sources may lead to greater competitiveness and distinctiveness. New networks and knowledge transfer that develop new and existing products, as well as provide support in addressing and reaching markets, could benefit the Region through a higher profile and a regional brand image as environment friendly and energy efficient region and brand related to high environmental quality and standards in both: natural environment and local products. Finally, improvements made in this sector will decrease the living and production costs and positively affect the livelihood of the citizens.

4.5.6.2  **Strategic goals for the priority area: Energy Efficiency**

There are two strategic goals for the priority area Energy Efficiency. The first goal is related to usage of RES and has one objective. The second goal is related to development of energy efficient infrastructure and has two objectives.

**Strategic Goal 1:** Use of renewable energy sources in the region.

**Objective 1:** Creating conditions to attract investors to build investments/plants for renewable energy sources

**Strategic Goal 2:** Building of energy efficient public facilities and promote energy saving in the region.

**Objective 1:** Improving the energy efficiency of public facilities

**Objective 2:** Promote energy saving measures in the region.
5  Action Plan Framework

During the strategic planning process the SG succeed to develop a basic framework of the Action Plan. Its main purpose is to develop key steps that must be taken, or activities that must be performed well, for successful implementation of the Strategy. The commencement of the development of targeted area of Prespa towards the achievement of the Shared Vision will be guided by the Development Strategy, and this Action Plan Framework. This Framework aims to describe the actions for each of the strategic goals and objectives and to identify several priority actions which will secure efficient start up of the activities in each Priority Area. These actions will be further elaborated into Project ideas. Each Project Idea will present the rationale for intervention, project objectives and results, the indicators and costs and will make it clearly who is responsible for its implementation and follow-up. These Project ideas will be presented in the Annex 5 – Project Description.

In order to provide more detailed guidance to assist implementation of the Strategy, a comprehensive Action Plan will have to be prepared at the very beginning of the implementation process. Such document will have to define the potential and critical needs as well as the potential beneficiaries, the eligible criteria, monitoring and quantified target indicators, costs and time frame for each action separately. Moreover, it will also have to assign the responsibilities to different actors within the Region, with support from the other partners, notably the local and central governments as well as the EU Institutions.

The Action Plan incorporates the following elements:

**Priority Areas:**

These address the main fields where the strategy will intervene. They are at the core of the Strategy and are essential to the success of its work, and how it is communicated.

Implementation of each priority area will be allocated to the Thematic Group which was created for each priority area from the SG during the participatory planning process. Coordination of the activities will be assigned to a Priority Area Coordinator who will be selected from these thematic groups. These coordinators are at the key of making the Strategy operational, and bear a central responsibility for its success. They work on its implementation, in close cooperation with the Project Implementing structure (Unit), with all stakeholders involved, especially Local and Regional Authorities, National Governments and NGOs.

**Strategic Goals:**

These address the milestones the target area aims to achieve that evolves from the strategic issues of each priority area. The goals transform strategic issues into specific performance targets that impact the entire priority area. The strategic goals were subject of elaboration in the previous chapter.

**Objectives:**

They are consistent to the strategic goals and are designed to operationalise the goals. Several objectives are designed for each strategic goals. They are defined as statements of specific outcomes that are to be achieved. The achievement of the outcomes of each objective has to be done through implementation of a set of actions. The objectives were presented in the previous chapter.

**Actions:**

The Actions are important issues requiring intervention by the target area and stakeholders involved to meet the strategic goals and objectives of the Priority Area. An action can be a new approach, an increased coordination (in policy making or other spheres), a support to a process already engaged, a networking initiative, etc. An action may not necessarily require financing.
Projects:

A project is concrete activity, with a start and end date. In general it requires financing, a project team and project partners. The Action Plan presents only the priority projects that were identified and developed by the Thematic Groups. There is one project for each Priority Area. Each project aims to serve as a start up point for commencement of the activities within a Priority Area and the are presented by way to stimulate further initiatives as the Strategy progresses, and as new ideas emerge. The detailed elaboration of the projects is presented in the above mentioned Annex (Annex 4).

These projects can be financed by national/ regional funds, EU funds - the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), International Financial Institutions or private investors, in line with the appropriate frameworks and practices.

The timeframe of the actions and projects varies. Some can be implemented in a short time (app.1-2 years) and some will need longer. As a general rule, each project would have a lead organisation and a deadline. When not defined by the time of adoption of the Strategy by the SG, the Priority Area Coordinators would ensure that this is decided by the same SG further in the process of implementation.

In identifying the actions and projects suggested in the Action Plan, the following factors have been taken into account:

- To address the identified priorities and be supported. The need for the action or project should have been clearly expressed by the stakeholders from the target area. In addition, the support of these stakeholders and partners is also crucial for the implementation and the proposals have been thoroughly discussed with them.

- To have an impact on the target area (or a significant part of it). Many projects should therefore have the cross - border character (be transnational). However, if a national project has a direct impact on the macro-region (e.g. the construction of a waste water treatment plant that improves the water quality of the rivers ) or contributes to a policy objective of the strategy (e.g. the renovation of a site as part of a network to attract tourists) they could be included. However, most actions and projects having an impact on the region will involve several municipalities from both countries. The impact should be articulated in the form of an impact indicator which can be evaluated over time. Consideration should be given to the data which will need to be gathered in order to evaluate the impact (including the establishment of the baseline situation).

- Realistic and feasible (technically and financially). There should be also an overall agreement between stakeholders, the strategy Implementation Unit, SWG and other interested parties of their worth. In particular, a realistic source of funding should be identified. Proposing a project for the Action Plan is not a funding request but the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of a project should be established.

- To be coherent and mutually supportive. Actions and projects must be compatible with each other and create win-win solutions. For example transport projects or energy efficiency initiatives cannot jeopardise achieving environmental targets.

5.1 The Actions

1. Priority Area: Environment

Strategic Goal 1: Establishment of a functional system for integrated regional protection of environment and natural resources

Objective 1: Improve Regional cooperation for Regional protection of environment and natural resources
**Actions:**

1.1. Preparation of Regional Ecological Action Plan in order to improve protection and conservation of biodiversity
1.2. Improve joint institutional lake protection
1.3. Improve river and springs protection
1.4. Finalize the process of establishment and formalize the functioning of the joint – Trilateral Natural Park of Prespa
1.5. Strengthening of regional institutions for integrated regional protection of the environment and natural resources
1.6. Promote regional public, private and civil sector cooperation for protection of the environment
1.7. Develop common-joint methodology for protection of natural resources
1.8. Integrated regional protection and management of forests

**Objective 2:** Increase regional public awareness about the benefits of environment protection

**Actions:**

1.1. Initiate regional public awareness campaigns for protection and preservation of the environment and natural resources
1.2. Develop environmental monitoring programs to protect the environment

**Strategic Goal 2:** Improvement of the systems of waste water and solid waste management.

**Objective 1:** Improvement of the waste water management systems.

**Actions:**

1.1. Creation and /or upgrade of collector system of waste water for Prespa lake
1.2. Completion of the Ohrid Lake collector system of waste water around the entire lake
1.3. Reconstruction and building of new waste water collection systems in the region

**Objective 2:** Improvement of the solid waste management systems.

**Actions:**

1.1. Improve regional cooperation for solid waste management
1.2. Establishment of regional centres for solid waste management and expand solid waste services
1.3. Support to municipalities to strengthen their capacities for cooperation in the selection, recycling and waste incineration
1.4. Improve collection, disposal and management of the construction waste
1.5. Enhance the capacity of people, public institutions and private sector to manage solid waste
1.6. Exploring opportunities to manage regionally the municipal, commercial and industrial waste, and to contribute to energy supply by developing energy from waste alternatives through PPP

2. **Priority area: Agriculture**

**Strategic Goal 1:** Development of the agriculture in the Region through support in adding values to traditional agricultural products

**Objective 1:** Improve regional cooperation for production of healthy food
Actions:
1.1 Increase of the production, protection and post-harvest management of traditional agricultural product and branding the most distinguished ones
1.2 Increase the quality and quantity of agricultural product through introduction of new technologies
1.3 Training of farmers to implement EU standards and systems in agricultural production (EUREPGAP/GLOBALGAP)
1.4 Support the reintroduction of traditional crops at regional level

Objective 2: Protection and branding of traditional agricultural products

Actions:
1.1 Support of standardization of agricultural products and increase their value
1.2 Educating farmers to add value to their product by improving the packaging, design, transport and storage of product
1.3 Improve the existing ways of producing and processing fruit through introduction of agro-technical innovations
1.4 Improve the existing ways of plant protection products and use of fertilizers
1.5 Joint promotion of the traditional agricultural products

Strategic Goal 2: Increase the production of healthy food and organic farming

Objective 1: Creating the conditions for organic farming and production of healthy food

Actions:
1.1 Establish basis for transitioning to organic production through institutional, legal and financial support
1.2 Preparation of Study for identification of the barriers for farmers transitioning to organic production;
1.3 Establish Transition Advisory Services at Regional basis

Objective 2: Technical support in introducing planned organic production and marketing organic products

Actions:
1.1 Support farmers through technical assistance for the use of organic fertilizers;
1.2 Support farmers to use biological methods to combat diseases, pests and weeds
1.3 Provide support for organic search
1.4 Provide support to farmers to plant crops and plants that have increased resistance to diseases and pests
1.5 Provide support to enhance regional market linkages between organic producers, processors and traders.
1.6 Joint marketing of the organic products from the Region

Objective 3: Support the development of regional businesses with wild gathered products - herbs in rural areas in accordance to the EU standards and practices
Actions:

1.1 Training of WGP collectors for sustainable gathering of wild gathered products in accordance to the best practices and EU standards
1.2 Creation of communication and cooperation networks between WGP collectors and traders
1.3 Joint promotion of wild gathered products from the Region

3. Priority area: Economic Development and Tourism

Strategic Goal 1: Creating conditions for economic development and increasing competitiveness of the region

Objective 1: Creating a favourable climate for further development of existing businesses

Actions:

1.1 Preparation of studies on the potentials for economic growth
1.2 Preparation of studies for rational use of regional natural resources for the economic growth
1.3 Preparation of studies to determine the priority sectors for development of the Region
1.4 Preparation of studies for identification and applying of modern methods for rapid retraining of the workforce
1.5 Promotion of PPP as a form of Regional Economic Development

Objective 2: Strengthening the capacity of the institutions within the Region in regional development and project management

Actions:

1.1 Training of regional and local administration in local and regional planning
1.2 Training of regional and local administration in the area of project management
1.3 Completing the organizational structure of the Region (PMU) for efficient and professional monitoring of the implementation of Strategic Plan
1.4 Establishing systems and procedures for providing support to business entities

Objective 3: Development of infrastructure support and business networks to support existing and new businesses

Actions:

1.1 Establish regional information and advisory centers for support of micro and small enterprises
1.2 Support the introduction of international standards by small and medium size enterprises
1.3 Facilitate linking of academic/research institutions with the regional economy
1.4 Establishment and upgrade of business networks – regional clusters for exchanging information and joint appearance and presentation at regional and global market
1.5 Support local businesses in preparation of project proposals and project applications for national and foreign funds/EU Funds
1.6 Establishment of regional labour market

Strategic Goal 2: Support the development of integrated tourist offer as a basis for sustainable tourism

Objective 1: Utilization of natural resources and cultural and historical heritage for tourism development
**Actions:**

1.1 Development of Studies for mapping the tourist potentials of the Region,
1.2 Preparation of strategic documents and action plans for tourism development in the Region
1.3 Preparation of technical and project documentation for development of regional tourist sites
1.4 Construction of tourist infrastructure and infrastructural arrangements of tourist sites
1.5 Joint approach for development of project applications for renovation of old cultural - historical monuments on the territory of the Region

**Objective 2: Promote authenticity and comparative advantages of the Region**

**Actions:**

1.1 Identification of regional authentic values, products and services for development of regional tourist products
1.2 Introduction and promotion of tourist offer and products from alternative, rural, agro, cultural, weekend, event, wellbeing and other types of tourism
1.3 Preparation and publication of a Touristic Offer Catalogue with accommodation, restaurants, coffee bars, tourist sites and routes
1.4 Promotion of traditional kitchen and food products

**Objective 3: Development of sustainable tourism and catering industry by providing quality products and services**

**Actions:**

1.1 Establishment of Regional Tourist Information Centre and its branches within the Region as form of institutional support for development of tourism
1.2 Capacity building of interested economic entities and citizens for provision of high quality tourist services and customer care
1.3 Training of local population for utilization of national/EU (IPARD) and international funds for development of rural tourism
1.4 Support of business entities and citizens from rural areas in opening/reconstruction/adjusting of accommodation capacities in rural areas
1.5 Categorization of the private accommodation capacities

4. **Priority area: Social cohesion**

**Strategic Goal 1:** Raising the level of social protection of the entire population, with special emphasis on vulnerable and marginalized groups of people.

**Objective 1:** Improve services in social care by developing programs and establishment of appropriate mechanisms

**Actions:**

1.1. Assess the needs and wants of elderly, vulnerable and marginalized groups of people
1.2. Analysis of the situation with unemployment and social structure of the unemployed within the Region
1.3. Develop Strategic and Action Plans for social care at local/regional level
1.4. Provision of training support for unemployed people through development and delivery of programs for entrepreneurship and self-employment
1.5. Preparation of cross-border projects for vulnerable social groups between partners from the Region
1.6. Support and provision of capacity building of the NGO sector for fostering support and care of socially disadvantaged persons
1.7. Provision of training for volunteers to provide home care to elderly people
1.8. Establishment of centres for free legal aid to vulnerable groups
1.9. Reintegration of immigrants – returners into the society

**Objective 2:** Construction of new and conversion of the existing infrastructure for the needs of vulnerable groups, by creating partnerships and use of domestic and international funds

**Actions:**

1.1 Preparation of cross-border projects for construction/reconstruction/conversion of public infrastructure into facilities for provision of social care and protection
1.2 Reconstruction/conversion of available public infrastructure (buildings) in care centres for socially disadvantaged persons.
1.3 Construction of access ramps in institutions for persons with disabilities

**Strategic Goal 2:** Raising the capacities of the existent institutions, associations and NGOs as well as creating new in order to address adequately the burning social issues.

**Objective 1:** Regional networking of regional and municipal institutions and NGO sector working in the field of social protection

**Actions:**

1.1 Training for networking with interested partners at regional level and networking with partners from the Region
1.2 Establishment of regional network between regional and municipal institutions and NGO sector working in the field of social protection
1.3 Establishing cooperation with international organizations and institutions
1.4 Strengthening capacity of public and NGO sector to utilize national/ EU IPA/International funds which are available for social protection

**Objective 2:** Raising public awareness and stimulating social solidarity and philanthropy

**Actions:**

1.1 Promote the volunteer movement and social solidarity among young population
1.2 Organize campaigns to stimulate public opinion and improve the social solidarity and philanthropy
1.3 Support social solidarity and philanthropy through non-formal education activities in high schools and universities
1.4 Support campaigns that raise awareness regarding multiethnic and religious tolerance and building of democratic societies

5. **Priority area: Regional infrastructure**

**Strategic Goal 1:** Improved local and cross-border connections of the municipalities in the region through development of modern infrastructure.

**Objective 1:** Construction of regional road infrastructure
**Actions:**

1.1 Preparation of technical documentation for cross-border and regional road connectivity between municipalities within the region
1.2 Reconstruction of regional road infrastructure

**Objective 2:** Increasing the capacity of border crossings and cross-border transportation

**Actions:**

1.1 Preparation of technical documentation for increasing the capacity of border crossings
1.2 Reconstruction of border crossings and expansion of their operational capacities
1.3 Establishment of lake traffic and transportation of passengers and goods

**Strategic Goal 2:** Improvement of the communal infrastructure in the region.

**Objective 1:** Development of water supply and waste water infrastructure

**Actions:**

1.1 Preparation of a Feasibility Study for regional reconstruction/construction of water supply and waste water networks
1.2 GIS mapping of water supply and waste water networks in the Region
1.3 Preparation of technical documentation for reconstruction of regional/local water supply and waste water networks,
1.4 Reconstruction of old water supply infrastructure in residential areas
1.5 Construction of new water supply infrastructure in residential areas
1.6 Reconstruction of old waste water networks in residential areas
1.7 Construction of new waste water networks in residential areas
1.8 Construction of regional plants for purifying waste water
1.9 Construction/reconstruction of sewerage networks in urban areas

**Objective 2:** Regulation of river basins

**Actions:**

1.1 Preparation of technical documentation and regulation of river-beds in the Region,
1.2 Cleaning of river basins especially in areas with identified risk of flooding
1.3 Construction of river reservoirs – manmade lakes
1.4 Construction/Reconstruction of sewerage network and drainage systems and improvement of management of atmospheric waters

6. **Priority area: Energy efficiency**

**Strategic Goal 1:** Use of renewable energy sources in the region.

**Objective 1:** Creating conditions to attract investors to build investments/plants for renewable energy sources

**Actions:**

1.1 Development of Regional Feasibility Study for utilization of renewable energy sources
1.2 Support the inclusion of public private partnership in construction of plants for production of electricity based on incineration of solid waste and construction of combined heat plants
based on renewable energy sources such as biogas, biomass etc.

1.3 Preparation of technical documentation for connecting the Region to the nearest and most rewarding gas pipeline

**Strategic Goal 2**: Building energy efficient public facilities and promote energy saving in the region.

**Objective 1**: Improving the energy efficiency of public facilities

**Actions:**

1.1 Upgrade and reconstruction of heating systems in public facilities
1.2 Upgrade and reconstruction of thermal insulation of public buildings

**Objective 2**: Promote energy saving measures in the region

**Actions:**

1.1 Support for municipalities for introduction and implementation of energy efficiency and energy saving days
1.2 Preparation and implementation of local and regional campaigns to raise awareness about the benefits of energy savings
1.3 Raising awareness and training of citizens and legal entities to improve energy efficiency and energy saving in private facilities
1.4 Support inclusion of PPP in public lighting based on energy efficient lamps

### 6 Publicity and visibility

The Implementing structure provides information about the Cross-Border Region of Prespa Strategic Development Plan, as a part of the contributions made by the communities from the Region and makes those public. This information shall be aimed at the regional stakeholders, beneficiaries from the Region and the general public. It shall spotlight the role of the Region seen as a Community during the process of implementation and ensure transparency of the implementing activities.

Implementing structure shall be responsible for the publicity of the Strategic Plan as follows:

- informs potential beneficiaries (especially rural population) professional organisations, businesses, social partners, and the non-governmental organisations concerned, including environmental organisations, of the possibilities for development designed and offered by the Strategic Plan, implementation of the activities from the Plan and the achieved results;
- informs the beneficiaries of the implementation of the activities, donors, national/regional authorities and community contribution;
- informs the general public about the role played by the stakeholders and the Community in the programmes and the results thereof.

Once the Strategy commence, communication activities and actions will be elaborated in a separate document (communication strategy - plan).

The Communication should be clear, concise, concrete, adapted to the target-public and coherent at local, regional and national level throughout the implementation period. This shall be articulated around the following principles:

- flexibility (the capacity to quickly respond to the feedback arriving from the internal and external environment),
• transparency (capacity to supply objective and accurate information in regard to the implementing activities and activities of the Implementing Structure),

• efficiency (optimal use of resources in order to reach the maximum impact).

**Actions foreseen to inform potential beneficiaries (especially rural population) professional organisations, businesses, social partners, and the non-governmental organisations concerned, including environmental organisations, of the possibilities for development designed and offered by the Strategic Plan, implementation of the activities from the Plan and the achieved results**

• the Implementing Structure provides clear, unambiguous and detailed information for the potential beneficiaries from the rural population;

• the Implementing Structure ensures that the teams operating as intermediaries in informing the potential beneficiaries are involved in the activities;

• the Implementing Structure provides information on the role of the Stakeholders and uses their networks in order to spread information.

The following tools and activities shall be considered and elaborated:

• development and dissemination of information materials (fliers, brochures, guides, posters, etc),

• development of radio spots, design and regular maintenance of a website, attendance at conferences, participation in specialized shows and others.

• organization of workshops and professional presentations mainly for stakeholders (staff) involved in the effective and uniform implementation of the Plan

• participation at events, exhibitions

• the application of other direct marketing tools,

• setting up special marketing channels targeted at the rural population

**Actions foreseen to inform the beneficiaries of the Community contribution, the non-governmental organisations of the possibilities offered by the programme and the rules for gaining access to programme funding**

The Implementing Structure ensures that the beneficiary is regularly informed about the implementation of the strategy and the provided support. The beneficiaries shall be directly informed about latest news concerning the Plan, events to be held and other relevant developments.

The following tools and activities shall be considered and elaborated:

• preparation of publication for making known tasks to be carried out during the implementation and realization of projects,

• organisation of workshops to summarize experience gathered during the implementation of the Plan, drawing conclusions, making forward looking proposals and conveying these to the general public,

• website (continuous supply of information about the news related to implementation of the Strategic Plan)
**Actions to inform the general public**

The Implementing Structure shall make every effort possible to inform the general public in the widest spectrum and through every means of communication about measures under the Strategic Plan.

The Implementing Structure informs the general public about the modifications, key results achieved in the course of the implementation of the Plan, and the closing of the Plan.

The Managing Authority publishes the list of beneficiaries of the Cross Border Region Strategic Plan, the titles of the projects to be realised, and the sum of public funds spent on the projects.

The Implementing Structure is responsible for executing measures aimed at the supply of information. In the course of the activity the Implementing Structure uses all possible forms of informing the general public at regional level. It is necessary to make use of communication campaigns, printed and electronic media.

**Tools:**

- preparation of brochures, leaflets for a brief introduction to the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan will be introduced on road shows and other events.

- production of publications on the activities co-financed by the National Programmes ans IPA, the method of application, about the process and principles of evaluation of the applications, the steps of implementation and control of the projects to ensure transparency,

- advertising in the printed press (daily, weekly, monthly, professional, county, regional papers), preparation of articles and studies and their communication throughout the programme period,

- questionnaire survey, public opinion poll on knowing about the Strategic Plan and the general opinion about the Strategic Plan), so the Managing Authority can get a picture about the sources of information of the target groups, their needs, expectations and any problems, thus ensuring the successful supply of information,

- preparing marketing communications tools by using the Strategic Plan

- image, signage and logo, which can be obtained by the parties interested and at events organized in order to spread information.
7 Annexes

7.1 Annex 1: Natural – geographical resources of the Region

The cross-border region of Prespa has richness of natural resources which are present on both sides of the border. The following are the most important natural resources of the area.

Ohrid-Struga valley is divided into two parts: larger - Struga Field and smaller - Ohrid Field. Ohrid Field belongs to the territory of Municipality of Ohrid. The valley is located in the southwest of Ohrid. It borders several mountains that are mostly of limestone composition. The east is bordered by Ilinska Mountain (Liska, 1.909 m), Plakenska Mountain (Stalev Stone, 1.998 m), Petrinska Mountain (Gog 1.737 m) and Galicica (Magaro 2235m), to the west by Jablanica (Black Stone, 2.257 m), and Mokra mountain (1.522 m), to the north by Stogovo (Golem Rid, 2.268 m) and mountain of Karaorman (Orlov Kamen, 1.794 m) and to the south by Gora hill.

Prespa valley is divided between three countries --- FYROM, Albania and Greece. The Macedonian part of Prespa valley is located between two National Parks: Pelister and Galicica, and actually represents an integral part of them. This part of the Valley belongs to the municipality of Resen and it is bordered by Baba Mountain (the highest peak Pelister 2600m) to the east and Galicica (the highest peak Magaro 2235m) to the west. To the north is bordered by Mount Plakenska (the highest peak Plake 1999m) and Bigla (the highest peak Crn Vrv 1933m), and to the south by the Albanian part of Gorbac (the highest peak Gorbac 1750m).

Pelister National Park, located in the south-western part of the FYROM. It is encompassing an area of 17.150 ha on the northern side of the Baba massif at altitudes between 900 and 2601m. The regional road Bitola-Resen and the Bigla Mountain are to the north of the Park and the border with Greece is to the south. To the east of the Park are the Pelagonia valley and the city of Bitola and to the west are the Prespa valley and the city of Resen. Pelister is characterized by lush, well-watered forests and unique geological formations, which include layers of Paleozoic and Mesozoic magma rock and layers of quartz. The core of the mountain is made of granite, some even 465 million years old. Wild life in Pelister is present with 44 species or 42.7% from the total number of wild life in the FYROM. 14 species or 45.2% is permanently protected wild life, while 13 species or 76.5% has no legal protection.

Galicica National Park is a mountain range which is part of the mountain Galicica. It is located between the Prespa Lake and Ohrid Lake. Galicica National Park covers an area of 25 000 ha. The lowest elevation in the park is Lake Ohrid (695m) above sea level and the highest point is the peak Magaro (2255m). To the south it borders Albania, to the west the Park borders the shoreline of Lake Ohrid. To the north, the border line passes through several landmarks and connects both lakes It starts at St. Petka monastery in the village of Velgosti, continues in a straight line to the high point Visesla. From there, through the valley of Petrino, locality Istok, to the peak of Samar, and from there goes down to the locality of Sir Han near Lake Prespa. To the east it borders Prespa Lake and the Albanian border and includes the island Golem Grad (Island Big City) in the Lake Prespa. There are some relict and endemic species of flora, oldfinds of 20 species of higher plants, 12 of which are local endemic species and there are 26 endemic faunal species.

Lake Ohrid is the oldest and deepest lake in the Balkans and the seventh deepest lake in Europe, with a maximum depth of 288 m (940 ft) and average depth of 155 m (508 ft). It covers an area of 358 km² (138 sq mi), containing an estimated 55.4 km³ of water. It is 30.4 km long by 14.8 km wide at its maximum extent with a shoreline length of 87.53 km, shared between the FYROM (56.02 km) and Albania (31.51 km).

Prespa Lake consists of two lakes: Great Prespa Lake and Small Prespa Lake. It is a triangle of the Macedonian, Albanian and Greek border. Great Prespa Lake covers an area of 284 km2, with a 54m maximum depth and altitude of 853m and it is among the cleanest lakes in the world. 65% of the total surface of the lake belongs to FYROM, 18% to Albania and 17% to Greece. Small Prespa Lake covers an area of 45.59 km2 and it is three feet higher than the Great Lake, located on the territory of Greece with a small part in Albania. On the Macedonian side of Lake Prespa. The main confluent that feed the lake with water are the rivers Istochka, Pretorska, Brajcsinska and Big River, which passes through the town of Resen.
The only island in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - Island “Big City” or Island of Snakes, which is located 2km from the village of Konjsko, is located in Prespa Lake. It is a part of the National Park Galicica, it is about 18 hectares big and includes ancient ruins from the Neolithic, Roman, Hellenic, Byzantine and Ottoman times. The island is characterized by its century-old juniper trees, as well as the abundance of endemic animal life. When the level of water falls, settlements from the 11th and 12th centuries become visible.

The Ezerani Nature Park (ENP) is a natural wetland area on the northern shoreline of Lake Prespa. It is approximately 1917 ha big (of which 1066 ha are on land and 851 ha in the waters of Lake Prespa) It is situated between the villages of Sirhan and Asamati. It was created as a Ramsar site on 5 March 1995 and it is the first Ramsar site in Macedonia. Being an integral part of the Lake Prespa region, the Ezerani Nature Park also has a special scientific and research significance and has a special zoological purpose. The ENP is known to contain many rare, endemic, and/or threatened plants and animals, such as the waterwheel plant, several invertebrate species, the European eel, Prespa trout, Macedonian crested newt, Hermann’s tortoise, European pond terrapin, Dalmatian pelican, lesser horseshoe bat and Mediterranean horseshoe bat. Bird-watching can become a very important tourist product. In 1996 the Government of FYROM ornithological area 'Ezerani' has been declared for Strict Nature Reserve, while in 2012 the area was re-designated as a Nature Park to be managed by the Municipality of Resen.

In the Albanian part of Prespa cross-border area there are two National Parks: Prespa National park and Drenova Fir.

The Prespa National Park in Albania includes the entire Prespa basin in Albania, an area of 277.5 km². It was established in 1999 for the restoration and protection of the important land and water ecosystems in the Big and Small Prespa region. For further information about this natural-geographical resource read Annex XX As on the Greek side, the local communities of the Prespa National Park in Albania try to find a model of development that fully integrates the fundamental advantages bestowed by Prespa's rich natural values and the monuments of its long cultural history. The area of Prespa is declared as tourist zone and National Park, where the nature creates opportunities for development of rural tourism during the whole year.

“Drenova Fir”, 10 km far from Korca city, is situated on the crest of Morava Mountain 1400m above sea level, with an area of 1380 hectares. The park is rich in water sources like those of Shen Gjergji, Pllakes, Pllices etc., which are attractive sights and important resource for tourism. The park has high competitive values for development of ecotourism, winter sports, alpinism and excursions.

One of the most important rivers that cross over the area is Devoll River. It is a river in southern Albania, one of the sources of the Seman. Its source is in the southwestern corner of the Devoll District, close to the Greek border.
7.2 **Annex 2: Strategic planning workshops**

In line with the Area Based Development approach and participatory involvement of the stakeholders’ group, four workshops have been organized. There were 30-40 participants in total, depending on the workshop. The first workshop was organized at micro regional level in four different urban municipalities (Resen, Ohrid, Pogradec and Korce) during the period 09 -10. 04. 2012. The aim of such approach and the meeting was to closely present the Project in front of the local representatives on local and national basis and to create local groups as a first step of creation of Regional Stakeholders group (created by members of local stakeholders groups).

**09.04. 2012** – Meeting with representatives from municipalities of Ohrid (MK) was organized and realized in the premises of the municipality of Ohrid. Representatives from the municipality, National park Galicica, private and civic sector attended the meeting. The participants were introduced with the project, its aim and objectives as well as the timeframe for realization of the designed activities. All participants showed strong interest in the project. Both types of questionnaires (Stakeholders questionnaire and Municipal questionnaire) were presented, explained and delivered to municipal administration and meeting participants. Dates for completion of questionnaires were agreed.

**09. 04. 2012** - At the same day, in the afternoon hours, a joint meeting with the representatives of the County of Korce (AL) was realized. The meeting was held in the premises of Korce Municipality with participants from all three sectors. Representatives from Municipalities of Korce, Devoll, Erseke, Pustec and few other, smaller and rural municipalities. All the participants were introduced with the project, its aim and objectives as well as the timeframe for realization of the designed activities. Stakeholders’ questionnaire and Municipal questionnaire were presented, explained and delivered to municipal administration and meeting participants. Dates for completion of questionnaires were agreed.

**10. 04. 2012** - The meeting with the representatives from the Municipality and District of Pogradec (AL) was organized in the office of the Municipality of Pogradec. The participants on this meeting were representatives all three sectors. The Project, its aim and objectives as well as the planned timetable were presented in front of the participants. The participants showed interest in the project. Both types of questionnaires (Stakeholders questionnaire and Municipal questionnaire) were presented, explained and delivered to municipal administration and meeting participants. Dates for completion of questionnaires were agreed.

**10. 04. 2012** - At the same day, during the afternoon hours, a meeting with the representatives of the Municipality of Resen (MK) was realized in the premises of their Municipality. Participants from all three sectors attended the meeting. They were introduced with the project, its aim and objectives. The timeframe for realization of the designed activities was also presented. All participants showed strong interest in the project. Both types of questionnaires (Stakeholders questionnaire and Municipal questionnaire) were presented, explained and delivered to municipal administration and meeting participants. Dates for completion of questionnaires were agreed.

The results of the activities undertaken in this period were:

- Information related to the project presented in front of stakeholders.
- Awareness about ABD increased among participants
- Questionnaires disseminated.

The second workshop was held on Apr. 30, 2012 in Korce. The participants – representatives of the stakeholder’s group were familiarized with the common project of SWG and Europe Commission introducing the Area Based Development approach. One of the key objectives of this workshop was to discuss and identify priority areas for development of the region. The participants were working in thematic groups according to their interest and experience and were also tasked to prepare a draft version of a vision of Prespa region. Each group reported out their draft vision and it was agreed that one general draft vision would be comprised reflecting the components of all. Afterwards, the participants still were working in thematic groups, started to perform a SWOT analysis for each of the identified priority area. After the workshop, the stakeholders’ group members were tasked to do
more in-depth SWOT analysis for each priority area. In addition, they were also tasked with outlining draft development goals for each of the priority area.

The results of the workshop:
- Priority areas identified
- SWOT analysis drafted
- Strategic Goals drafted

The third workshop was held on May 10, 2012 in Korce. The key objective of this workshop was to finalize the vision of Prespa region and the priority areas. The representatives of the stakeholder’s groups had submitted their individual SWOT analysis of each priority area and different aspect of the SWOT analyses were discussed and finalized. The development goals were also discussed and finalized. The stakeholder’s group members were tasked to identify actions that can be developed into activities for each developmental goal under each priority area.

The results of the workshop:
- The Vision Statement finalized
- Priority areas finalized
- Strategic Goals finalized
- Activities developed

The fourth workshop was held on June 29, 2012 in Resen. International consultants and the SWG management staff participated at this workshop as well. The key objective of this workshop was to finalize the Strategic Framework and the Action Plan as well as to prioritize the actions and project ideas which can be further developed. The stakeholders were asked to discuss the Priority areas, the Strategic goals for each Priority as well as the defined objectives and identified activities in order to confirm the Strategic plan. Finally, the stakeholders were asked to identify, select, prioritize and project activities and identify and prioritize project proposals which will become part of the document.

The results of the workshop:
- Strategic Framework and the Action Plan Activities for each strategic goal discussed and prioritized
- Project ideas for further development identified

As a result of the participatory involvement of the stakeholder’s group members, the Strategic Plan is designed with defined vision of Prespa region, six priority areas and a SWOT analysis for each priority area. Each Priority area has two development goals and each goal is followed by objectives and activities.
7.3 Annex 3: Stakeholders’ questionnaire

During the preparation of this study a questionnaire were included. This questionnaire included many questions from different sections, in order to provide further relevant information about the municipalities and the stakeholders within the region.

From the stakeholder’s questionnaire 100 samples that were sent for answer, but only 80 questionnaires were answered. The following questionnaire was used for the study:

**Questionnaire- Survey**
(to be administered by local stakeholders)

**A– Responder information**

1. Name of organization: ____________________________________________

2. Position currently hold in the organization:
   - [ ] President/ Director
   - [ ] Manager
   - [ ] Expert
   - [ ] Other (specify) _______________________________________________

3. Date of responder: ______________________________________________

**B– Human capital**

1. What are currently the key issues related to human resources for the **sustainable development** of your municipality?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A huge problem</th>
<th>A problem</th>
<th>Not a problem</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability of statistical data on human resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Current skills of the local workforce</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Job opportunities</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Employability of people in general, compatibility of competencies gained in education with job requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employability of young people in general</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. Are there any other current key problems related to human resources for the sustainable development of your municipality?

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

3. What would you say about the existence of vocational training possibilities for the local workforce in the area? (Please indicate your response on a scale from 1 - meaning inexistent to 5 - meaning fully meet demand).

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<th></th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

X – Cultural resources

1. As how relevant do you consider the following cultural resources for local development in your municipality, both in terms of their current (C) and potential (P) utilization? Please indicate your response on a scale from 1 - meaning not relevant at all to 5 - meaning very relevant.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local food and beverage products</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theatre events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music events</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural heritage monuments and sites</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other- specify</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. Is there either in terms of an official document or a vision shared by local stakeholders that concerns the valorization of local cultural resources? (if yes answer Q3 and Q4)
   □ Yes
   □ No
   □ Don’t know

3. Has your organization been involved in design and implementation of this strategy?
4. What are the sources that make up the budget allocated to secure implementation of this strategy? (Please indicate your response on a scale from 1 - meaning that no such funding available to 5 - meaning that fully funded by this source)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own local funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central government funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>International donor funding</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

5. Are there cultural events that are organized in a recurring way, such as, for example an annual music festival?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   (if yes, how many) ______

6. Are any of these recurring cultural events organized through or in relation with cross-border activities?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   (if yes, how many) ______

7. Has your organization been involved in cross-border activities related to cultural resources during the last 5 years?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   (if yes, how many) ______

8. Are there any concrete plans for involvement of the cross-border network of your organization related to cultural resources in the next 2 years?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

9. Are there in your municipality, existence of cross-border network of organization concerned with culture?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   (if yes, how many) ______
△ Natural resources

1. To what extend the following issues are putting in danger the local natural resources? (Please indicate c on a scale from 1 -meaning not endangered to 5 -meaning highly endangered)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waste water management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solid waste management</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Agricultural pollution due to plant protection products, fertilizers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial pollutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Threats to biodiversity (fauna, flora)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Threats to landscape (uncontrolled urbanism or industrial settlements)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Climate change treats</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (give examples)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. Does a local strategy exist (local official policy document that regulates the preservation of natural resources and eco-systems)? (if No, go to Q6)

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

3. Has your organization been involved in the design of this strategy?

- Yes
- No

4. Has your organization been involved in the implementation of this strategy?

- Yes
- No

5. To your knowledge, what kind of public resources are provided for a secure implementation of this strategy? (Please indicate your response on a scale from 1 -meaning that no such funding available to 5 -meaning that fully funded by this source and 6-don’t know the relevance of the possible funding sources)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own local funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central government funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>International donor funding</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6. Are there cross-border agreements in place on the preservation of natural resources and ecosystem?

- Yes
- No
7. If yes, which localities/countries are such cross-border agreements in place?
________________________________________________________________________________
8. During the last 5 years has your organization been involved in measures concerned with the preservation of natural resources and eco-systems?

☐ Yes
☐ No
9. For the next 2 years do you expect the allocation of budget for measures concerned with the preservation of natural resources and eco systems to …?

☐ Increase
☐ Decrease
☐ Remain the same

10. What are currently the key issues related to natural resources for the sustainable development of your municipality?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A huge problem</th>
<th>A problem</th>
<th>Not a problem</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability of statistical data on natural resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of public awareness of engagements to natural resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Inefficient legal framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unsatisfactory implementation and enforcement of the legal framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-operation amongst local authorities on your side of the border</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross-border co-operation of local authorities</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other problems (specify if any)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

E - Infrastructure and connectivity

1. Do you consider infrastructure as main development obstacle in your municipality?

☐ Yes
☐ No

2. Number of public transport connections between municipalities

☐ Train
☐ Bus
☐ Airport
☐ Car
Φ – Economic activities

1. What are the main three sectors that are most developed (produce the biggest income) in the municipality?

1. ____________________________

2. ____________________________

3. ____________________________

2. What are the current key issues related to economic sectors (listed above)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>A huge problem</th>
<th>A problem</th>
<th>Not a problem</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability of skilled (qualified) labor</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Availability of credits and loans</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Availability of general business support services</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Security issues and legal certainty (including corruption)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition on local markets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competition on regional/regional markets</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition on international markets</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal and custom procedures</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of production</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost of transport</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of production</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantity of production</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (specify if any)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. In your opinion which are the economic sectors which would benefit the most from greater cross-border cooperation in the region? Please list up three sectors

1. ____________________________

2. ____________________________

3. ____________________________
Local institutional and cross border capacities

1. Has your organization have experience in cross border activities, during the last 5 years? (if no, go to Q5)
   - Yes
   - No

2. Please indicate the number and localities of cross-border project your organization has been involved with in the last 5 years?
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

3. Please indicate the number and localities of official cross-border agreements your organization has signed with in the last 5 years?
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

4. Was this experience in cross-border activities related to (multiple answers are possible):
   - Human capital development (develop the skills of the local population in general and the local workforce in particular)
   - Natural resource common administration (to administer in a sustainable way shared/common natural resources, such as water streams, national parks, etc.)
   - Cultural resource development (understood as measure to promote cultural heritage shared by cross-border localities)
   - Institutional capacity development (to develop the institutional capacity of involved organizations in terms of achieving general and/or project related objectives)
   - Cross-border capacity development (develop capacities to engage in cross-border activities)
   - Others: ___________________________________________________________

5. What are the limitations of cross-border cooperation? (multiple answer is possible)
   - Lack of communication and information
   - Legal framework
   - Limited opportunities
   - No leadership
   - Lack of funds
   - Too many difficulties
   - Political climate and situation
   - Lack of personnel
   - Lack of joint cultural and social activities
   - Other-specify ________________________________________________
6. **Are you satisfied with the socio-economic development progress in your municipality?**
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

7. **Which are the main obstacles to socio-economic development in your municipality and/or sector of activity?**
   
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

8. **Does a local development strategy exists – and official policy document that sets out the socio-economic development priorities and directions for your local economy?**
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

9. **What are the sources that make up the budget allocated to secure implementation of the local development strategy?** (Please indicate your response on a scale from 1 - meaning that no such funding available to 5 - meaning that fully funded by this source)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own local funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central government funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>International donor funding</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

10. **Who are the key people and institutions fostering local development?** (multiple answer is possible)
   - ☐ Political parties
   - ☐ Local Authorities
   - ☐ NGOs
   - ☐ Regional Development agencies or equivalent institutions
   - ☐ Other - ________________________________________

11. **According your opinion, what are the key priorities for local development?** (Please indicate 5 priority areas on a scale from 1 - meaning most important to 5 - meaning least important)
   - ☐ Local economic development
   - ☐ Tourism
   - ☐ Local Governance
   - ☐ Agriculture
   - ☐ Infrastructure
   - ☐ Employments
   - ☐ Cross-border collaboration
   - ☐ Environmental protection
   - ☐ Skills development
   - ☐ Legal framework
   - ☐ Promotion of investments and trade
   - ☐ Cultural activities
   - ☐ Youth programs
   - ☐ Promotion of natural resources
12. **What is the current link between the local development strategy and cross-border activities?**
- Current cross-border activities play minor role for the implementation of the local development strategy
- Current cross-border activities play major role for the implementation of the local development strategy

13. **What are the present limitations in your opinion of cross border interactions with neighboring countries?**
- Lack of communication and information
- Legal framework
- Limited opportunities
- No leadership
- Lack of funds
- Too many difficulties
- Political climate and situation
- Lack of personnel
- Lack of joint cultural and social activities
- Current way of cooperation

14. **What are the opportunities arising from cross-border cooperation?**
- Cultural and social exchange
- Trade of goods and services
- Tourism
- Environment
- Other

15. **List three priority actions for promoting development in your area?**
1. 
2. 
3. 

16. **Please list three main barriers that impede the promotion of the legal and administrative framework for local development and cross border relations (rank from 1-most important to 3-least important)**
1. 
2. 
3. 
Part B: Human capital

Q1: For this question the following answers were provided:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Availability of statistical data on human resources</th>
<th>Current skills of the local workforce</th>
<th>Job opportunities</th>
<th>Employability of people in general, compatibility of competencies gained in education with job requirements</th>
<th>Employability of young people in general</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>159%</td>
<td>180%</td>
<td>197%</td>
<td>217%</td>
<td>238%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do not know</td>
<td>do not know</td>
<td>do not know</td>
<td>do not know</td>
<td>do not know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a huge problem</td>
<td>a huge problem</td>
<td>a huge problem</td>
<td>a huge problem</td>
<td>a huge problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a problem</td>
<td>a problem</td>
<td>a problem</td>
<td>a problem</td>
<td>a problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not a problem</td>
<td>not a problem</td>
<td>not a problem</td>
<td>not a problem</td>
<td>not a problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>don't know</td>
<td>don't know</td>
<td>don't know</td>
<td>don't know</td>
<td>don't know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the results it can be seen that the current issues in the region are Job opportunities, as huge problem, while the rest of the offered answers were stated as problems.

Q2: The next question was to state the other current key problems related to human resources for the sustainable development and again most of the provided answers were related to the moving out of young skilled staff, outflow of the skilled staff and the lack of skills and knowledge of the current staff on their positions.

Q3: For the following question, the provided answers are showed in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>unemployed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results show that there are some vocational possibilities in the area for the employed, but for unemployed these possibilities are very small, almost inexistent.

Part C: Cultural resources

Q1: This question is composed of four parts that refer to four different cultural resources.

Below are the charts of the provided answers for the same question.
The local food and beverage products have current utilization ranked with middle relevance, while the potential utilization of this cultural resource is ranked as relevant.

The second cultural resource was the theatre events, which current utilization was ranked with small relevance, and the potential utilization was ranked with middle relevance. The average rates show the same results.

The next cultural resource was the music events. This time the results show that the current utilization of this cultural resource is ranked with small relevance, while the potential utilization is ranked as very relevant for the local development of the municipality.
The following resource was about the cultural monuments and sites in the municipality. For this question were provided the following answers:

- crafts, fishing tradition, ceramics
- touristic tour with a visit of cultural and historical places, art workshops based on handcraft and traditional souvenirs
- ethno-museum Podmocani
Q2: The answers of the following question are showed in the chart below:

As it can be seen from the chart below, in most of the municipalities (50%) the stakeholders do not know whether such document exists.

Q3: This question, those stakeholders that answered “no” in the previous question, were asked to skip it. The provided answers are showed in the chart below:

Most of the stakeholders were involved in the design and implementation of the strategy for local development.

Q4: In those municipalities (45%), where there is such document, the stakeholders were asked to rank the sources that make up the budget allocated to secure implementation of this strategy on a scale from 1 - meaning that no such funding available to 5 - meaning that fully funded by this source. Below are the provided results:

The numbers from 1-3 (x-axis) represent the suggested sources:
1. Own local funds
2. Central government funding
3. International donor funding
The conclusion is that most of the sources for funding the strategy are provided by international donors.

Q5: The following chart represents the answers of the question about the cultural events occurring within the region. The percentages show that in most of the municipalities there are such cultural events, organized in a recurring way.
Q6: The next chart shows the answers on the question about the recurring events and their organization. The percentages show that most of the events are organized through or in relation to cross-border activities.

Q7: Next, the stakeholders were asked to say whether they or their organizations are involved in cross-border activities. 55% answered that they have been involved, 35% were not involved, while the rest did not answer this question. This means that some experiences with cross-border activities exist in the region.

Q8: The chart below represents the next question about the future plan for involvement of the stakeholders into cross-border activities. The answers show that there is a good percentage for future involvement into cross-border activities within the region.
Q9: The following question was about the existence of a cross-border network or organization. The provided answers showed that in most of the municipalities (55%) there is no such organization, while in the rest of the municipalities (45%) there is such network or organization.
Part D: Natural resources

Q1: The results of this question are presented in the table and chart below:

| To what extend the following issues are putting in danger the local natural resources?  
(Please indicate c on a scale from 1 - meaning not endangered to 5 - meaning highly endangered) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waste water management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid waste management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural pollution due to plant protection products, fertilizers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial pollutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats to biodiversity (fauna, flora)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats to landscape (uncontrolled urbanism or industrial settlements)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the results show, the issues that are ranked as highly dangerous for the local natural resources is agricultural pollution due to plant protection products, fertilizers. This means that the people are using too much plant protection products and this is the only highly dangerous issue.

Issues that represent a threat to the local natural resources are solid waste management, waste water management and threats to biodiversity. This threat should be resolved as soon as possible, so that they would not represent a problem in near future.

Issues with middle danger for the local natural resources do not exist, but there are issues that are at low danger level or are not dangerous at all. These are: threats to landscape, climate change threats and industrial pollution. The results show that stakeholders still do not recognize the threats of climate changes. Additionally there are no heavy industry factories that will pollute the air and there are no big cities where the uncontrolled urbanism will be a threat for the settlements.

The average rates are showing that the highest threat to the local natural resources is the same:
agricultural pollution due to plant protection products, fertilizers and to some extent the waste water managements; small to medium threat present industrial pollution, climate change threat, threats to biodiversity and solid waste management; while the smallest threat represent threats to landscape due to uncontrolled urbanism or industrial settlements.

Q2: On this question about the existence of a strategy that regulates the preservation of natural resources, 65% of the stakeholders have answered that there is such local strategy that regulates the preservation of natural resources at municipal level, while the rest of the stakeholders- 35% are not aware of the existence of such strategy. The conclusion is that the local authorities have to
make announcements when a local strategy or a local official policy document that regulates the preservation of natural resources and eco-systems are being adopted and published.

Q3: The following question was about the involvement of the stakeholder’s organization in the design of this strategy (or local official policy document) that regulates the preservation of natural resources and eco-systems mentioned in the previous question.

45% of the interviewed stakeholders has answered that their organization has participated in the design of that strategy, 40% stated that they have not participated in the design of the strategy and 15% did not answered the question. Only 16% of the stakeholder from those that in the previous question answered “yes”, in this question stated that their organization did not participated in the design of the strategy.

Q4: The next question was about the involvement of the stakeholder’s organization in the implementation of the same strategy mentioned in the previous two questions. The results are presented in the chart below:
According to the stakeholders, the same distribution of the answers is present as in the previous question. This was expected because those stakeholders that in the previous question answered that their organization is involved in the design of the strategy, the same stakeholders were participating in the implementation of the same strategy (45%). The same stakeholders that answered with “no”, here also gave a negative answer, and the same stakeholders that did not answered the previous question, this question was also skipped by them.

**Q5:** In the following question the stakeholders were asked to indicate their response on a scale from 1 - meaning that no such funding available to 5 - meaning that fully funded by this source and 6 - don’t know the relevance of the possible funding sources.

The results are presented in the table and chart below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Own local funds</th>
<th>Central government funding</th>
<th>International donor funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,61</td>
<td>2,46</td>
<td>4,08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the stakeholders that have answered this question, most of them have ranked the own local funds and the central government funding as poorly available for funding the strategy (or local official policy document) that regulates the preservation of natural resources and eco-systems mentioned in the previous questions. The international donor funding is mostly rated as available but that is not fully funding that kind of strategy.

The average rate show the same results, which mean that only the international donor funding can be considered as available for supporting this kind of strategies.

**Q6:** On the question about the cross-border agreements in place on the preservation of natural resources and ecosystem the following answers were provided:
Most of the respondents - 75% have answered that there are cross-border agreements of that kind, 15% stated that there are no cross-border agreements for preservation of natural resources and ecosystem, while 10% did not answer the question.

**Q7:** The answers of the following question, which localities/countries are such cross-border agreements in place. There were different answers by almost each stakeholder and that is the reason why these answers were presented in a table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q7: The answers of the following question, which localities/countries are such cross-border agreements in place. There were different answers by almost each stakeholder and that is the reason why these answers were presented in a table.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trilateral agreement for the Prespa Park between Macedonia, Albania and Greece</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prespa Park-Macedonia, Albania and Greece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonia, Albania, Greece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resen, Pustec, Prespa – municipalities in Macedonia, Albania, Greece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resen, Pustec, Lerin-Macedonia, Albania, Greece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resen, Macedonia, Prespa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>整批普萨: Prespa-Albania, Prespa-Macedonia, Prespa-Greece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>整批普萨: Greece, Albania, Macedonia-Prespa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>整批普萨: Albania, Greece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>整批普萨: Prespa-Greece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>整批普萨: Albania-Macedonia-Greece-Prespa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>整批普萨: Albania-Macedonia, Greece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>整批普萨: Albania-Prespa-Macedonia; Prespa- Greece</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all answers dominate Albania and Greece as countries included in the agreement. This means that in the future there is an possibility of cooperation and that there would not be a problem to get in other cross-border cooperation, because these counties have already been involved in a mutual cooperation before.

**Q8:** The following question was about the involvement during the last 5 years been involved in measures concerned with the preservation of natural resources and eco-systems.
Most of the stakeholders - 65% have stated that their organization was involved in the measures concerned with the preservation of natural resources and eco-systems. The other 35% have stated that their organization have not participated in such measures. This can be an indicator that the stakeholders from this cross-border area are interested in preserving the natural resources and are ready to participate in such measures in the future. Most of them have already an experience in such measures concerned with the preservation of natural resources.

Q9: The following question was about the expectations for the allocation of budget for measures concerned with the preservation of natural resources and eco-systems by the stakeholders for the next 2 years.

The stakeholders have provided the following results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decrease</th>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Remain the same</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

60% of the stakeholders expect increase in the next 2 years of the budget for measures concerned with the preservation of natural resources and the ecosystems. This can be due to the previous involvement of the stakeholders, or due to the fact that the environment is very important for this area for the population, as well as and it needs to be preserved in the future. 20% have answered that they expect this budget to decrease, and 20% have answered that they expect the budget to remain the same. This can be due to the economic condition of the country in this area and the overall bad
The last question of this section was about the current key issues related to natural resources for the sustainable development of stakeholders’ municipality. This question should provide a good picture of how problematic are the key issues offered in the possible answers for the sustainable development in the stakeholders’ municipality.

**What are currently the key issues related to natural resources for the sustainable development of your municipality?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>A huge problem</th>
<th>A problem</th>
<th>Not a problem</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Not answered</th>
<th>Not answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability of statistical data on natural resources</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of public awareness of engagements to natural resources</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inefficient legal framework</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfactory implementation and enforcement of the legal framework</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-border co-operation of local authorities on your side of the border</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-border co-operation of local authorities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of statistical data on natural resources</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q10:** The current key issues related to natural resources for the sustainable development of stakeholders’ municipality are the key issues offered in the possible answers for the sustainable development in the stakeholders’ municipality.
According to the stakeholders a huge problem represents the Lack of public awareness of engagements to natural resources, which means that the public awareness of engagements to natural resources should be raised in near future.

As a problem in the municipalities are stated the following: unsatisfactory implementation and enforcement of the legal framework, co-operation amongst local authorities on stakeholders’ side of the border and cross-border co-operation of local authorities. These are the key issues that were represented as problems which need to be overcome in order to achieve a sustainable development in the municipalities.

According to the stakeholders the availability of statistical data on natural resources and inefficient legal framework are not considered as problems.

**Part E: Infrastructure and connectivity**

**Q1:** The next chart shows the answers provided for the question about whether the infrastructure as a main development obstacle in the municipalities. Most of the stakeholders (75%) confirm that the infrastructure represents a major development obstacle in their municipality.

**Q2:** Next the stakeholders were asked to indicate the public transportation connectivity between municipalities. The following answers were provided:
According to the answers, the most used public transportation connectivity in the region are car and bus. As it was stated earlier, that there is no rail connectivity within the region, the survey once again confirms the statement.

**Part F: Economic activities**

**Q1:** In order to find out which sectors are the most developed in the area, there was a question about the main three sectors that are most developed (produce the biggest income) in the municipality, and the stakeholders were asked to state them in the empty field. The results are placed in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Not Answered</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catering services</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits / orchards</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small production companies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not answered</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the results show, the top three sectors are agriculture, industry and trade. But also are stated tourism and fruits/orchards as sectors that are also developed in municipality of Resen.

**Q3:** The answers for current key issues related to economic sectors, in which the stakeholders were asked to choose whether they are a huge problem, a problem, not a problem, are placed in the chart below:
As it can be seen, a huge problem is the competition on the international markets. Other issues that are stated as problems are availability of credits and loans, availability of general business support services, competition on local markets, competition on regional/regional markets, cost of production, cost of transport, quality of production and quantity of production. The availability of skilled (qualified) work force, security issues and legal certainty (including corruption) and legal and custom procedures are stated that are not a problem.

This means that there are no huge problems (only the competition on the international markets. The issues stated as problems should be solved, or at least some solution should be found because they can be a further obstacle in future cross-border cooperation and collaborations.

Q3: Following are the economic sectors which would benefit the most from greater cross-border cooperation in the region:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tourism</th>
<th>trade</th>
<th>agriculture</th>
<th>production (export-import of raw materials) on new markets</th>
<th>industry/industrial</th>
<th>cultural sector</th>
<th>ecology</th>
<th>fishing</th>
<th>Not answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the stakeholder’s survey, tourism, industry sector, agriculture and trade are the sectors that will mostly benefit from the cross-border cooperation. Having in mind that these identified sectors are almost the same as the one identified by statistical data research it can be concluded that these sectors will most benefit from the cross-border cooperation. These sectors should consist the basis on which platforms and joint cross-border cooperation will be established. The future platform cooperation of the most developed sectors in the cross-border area can be an opportunity for these sectors to improve their economic condition.

Part G: Local institutional and cross-border capacities

Q1: On the question about the participation in cross-border cooperation 40% answered that they have participated in such cooperation; 55% answered that they have not participated in CBC, while 5% did not answer the question.

This leads to a conclusion that the participation of the stakeholders in CBC activities is on a good level, but this percentage of involvement should be increased.

Q2: From all the stakeholders that have participated in CBC projects, most of them answered that these CBC projects were related with cooperation in ecology (eco-activities, reforestation etc.), tourism etc. The countries involved in these projects are FYROM (Resen), Albania (Pustec) and Greece (Greek Prespa- German).

Q3: This question was related with the previous question about the CBC projects of the stakeholders within the region. These co-operations and projects are rarely closed with an agreement and most of the stakeholders did not answer the question.

Q4: In the next question multiple answers were possible. Most of the stakeholders that have participated in CBC activities have stated that Human capital development, Natural resource common administration and Eco-education are the most common topics of the activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human capital development (develop the skills of the local population in general and the local workforce in particular)</th>
<th>26.67%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural resource common administration (to administer in a sustainable way shared/common natural resources, such as water streams, national parks, etc.)</td>
<td>26.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cultural resource development (understood as measure to promote cultural heritage shared by cross-border localities) /

Institutional capacity development (to develop the institutional capacity of involved organizations in terms of achieving general and/or project related objectives) 13.33%

Cross-border capacity development (develop capacities to engage in cross-border activities) /

Eco-education 20%

Trade 6.67%

Q5: In the next question the stakeholders were asked to indicate the limitations of cross-border cooperation. The following results were provided:

Lack of communication and information 70
Legal framework 15
Limited opportunities 10
No leadership 30
Lack of funds 45
Too many difficulties 10
Political climate and situation 45
Lack of personnel 30
Lack of joint cultural and social activities 65

The results show that the most common limitation of the CBC activities are the lack of communication and cooperation, lack of joint cultural and social activities, the lack of funds and the political climate and situation.

Q6: The next question was about the socio-economic development progress in the stakeholders’ municipalities. 10% of the stakeholders answered that they are satisfied with the socio-economic development progress, while 85% are not satisfied with the progress. The rest of the stakeholders did not answer the question. This leads to a conclusion that the municipalities should take some activities to change the situation with the socio-economic development progress.
For the question about the main obstacles related to socio-economic development, the following answers were provided:

- reduced industrial production and capacities
- lack of financial resources
- responsible persons are not involved enough and they don’t have the right knowledge
- destroyed factories
- decrease in tourism
- decrease in the people’s standard, unemployment
- insufficient production capacities
- lack of innovation
- failure of industry and tourism
- low conscious, lack of quality staff
- bad condition of the economy
- underdeveloped and destroyed economy
- destroyed touristic infrastructure
- Unemployment
- failed companies
- Poverty
- no financial development

Global crisis and the economic trends in the country, concentration of all social and economical activities in the capital city and not stimulating the other municipalities at any field, at the same time outflow of money and young staff from the municipality

These are the most often stated answers. The conclusion is that there are many obstacles of the socio-economic development that exists within the region.

The next question of this section was about whether there exists a local development strategy and official policy document that sets out the socio-economic development priorities and directions for the local economy of stakeholders’ municipality. The answers show that 60% answered that there is such strategy, 25% answered that there is no such strategy, while 15% did not answered the question. This shows that the municipalities have some kind of document of the socio-economic development priorities and directions.

The following question was about the sources that make up the budget allocated to secure implementation of the local development strategy. The results are showed in the table below. They show that in the region the sources that make up the budget allocated to secure implementation of the local development strategy are mostly the own local funds, while the international donor funding participate with some small amount.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>own local funds</th>
<th>central government funding</th>
<th>international donor funding</th>
<th>Not answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided answers</td>
<td>20 45 65 10 0</td>
<td>15 25 25 10 0</td>
<td>25 5 30 20 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next question was about the key people that foster the local development in the municipalities. The results in the table below show that the local authorities and the regional development agencies are the entities that foster the local development.
Q11: The next question was about the key priorities for local development. The following answers were provided. The most often selected key priorities from the offered below are: local economic development, tourism and employments, rated as most important priorities.

Q12: The next question was about the link between the local development and the cross-border activities. The results are showed in the table below:

80% of the stakeholders answered that there current cross-border activities play minor role in the socio-economic development; while 15% have answered that the cross-border activities play a major role. The rest (5%) did not answer the question.
Q13: Following, was the question about the limitations of cross border interactions with neighbouring countries. The most often selected answers were the following: political climate and situation, lack of communication and information and no leadership for interacting with the neighbouring countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limitation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of communication and information</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal framework</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited opportunities</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No leadership</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of funds</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many difficulties</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political climate and situation</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of personnel</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of joint cultural and social activities</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current way of cooperation</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q14: The following question was about the opportunities that can arise with the cross-border cooperation. The results are showed in the table below. Almost all offered answers were stated as opportunities that can arise from the cross-border cooperation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural and social exchange</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade of goods and services</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q15: The following question was open for the stakeholders to state their answers about the three priority actions for promoting the development in the area. The answers are presented in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>internet campaigns, TV, printed media</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>local campaigns- events</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>various informational promotional material with good quality</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information materials- printed, electronic</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>informational and promotional events</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promotion of fishing tourism</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cooperation and exchange</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to invest more in promotions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>training the people that have to do the promotion</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development of the amateurism</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enrichment of the total stock of the library</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>popularization of classical and ethno- music</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education and awareness for exploiting the opportunities in Prespa</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cooperation between a generator on a local level and international level</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good communication on local and state level</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improvement of the production quality</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The most often stated answers were employment, promotion through internet, TV and printed media and through informational and promotional events.

**Q16:** This question was about the barriers that impede the promotion within the region. The stakeholders’ answers are showed in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>insufficient involvement, conscious and knowledge</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insufficient financial resources</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insufficient information, coordination</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insufficient cooperation of local authorities and responsible persons</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of communication</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insufficient quality of managers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much more involvement of the responsible persons and authorities</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the institutions are not working</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people and offices/ departments lack of quality</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there is no understanding of what is important</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the institutions that has the authority are not functioning</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political climate</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of interest in local population</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of leaders and managers</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>local economic development</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of infrastructure</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.4 **Annex 5: University education**
In the Macedonian part there are 3 universities. The universities are situated in Ohrid; two of which are state universities and one is private. The universities have the following disciplines:

State universities:
1. University for Information Science and Technology “St. Paul the Apostle”, composed of six faculties:
   - Faculty of Information System, Visualization, Multimedia and Animation (ISVMA)
   - Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering
   - Faculty of Communication Networks and Security
   - Faculty of Information Theory and Analysis
   - Faculty of Business Informatics
   - Faculty of Machine Intelligence
2. Faculty of Tourism and Organizational Sciences – Ohrid, part of the University St. Kliment Ohridski-Bitola

Private University:
3. European University - Skopje, composed of five faculties located in Ohrid:
   - Faculty of Economics;
   - Faculty of Informatics;
   - Faculty of Law and Political Science;
   - Faculty of Applied European Languages and
   - Faculty of Detectives and Securing property and persons.

The District of Korca has two universities, one state and one private university.

State University Fan S. Noli is located in the town of Korca and to its students provides programmes in for areas through the:
- Faculty of Agriculture
- Faculty of Economics
- Faculty of Pedagogy
- Faculty of Medical education

The private university, University Nehemia is located in Pogradec, providing education in the field of Business and Economy.

7.5 **Annex 6: Natural and Cultural Resources**

**a) Cultural resources**

The region is abundant in unique cultural resources that represent the cultural heritage. These cultural resources date from different periods, starting from prehistory until today. The region is also rich in cultural facilities, such as museums, galleries, cultural centres, theatres etc. These resources offer potentials for tourism development and cultural industry development through production of unique cultural products and they represent important assets for creating the image and identity of the region for its promotion.

Ohrid is abundant in many historical and cultural monuments. The most important, that can be mentioned here, are the gallery of medieval icons, as well as the museum of pre-historic life. Ohrid also has a city gallery and a museum, as well as a theatre.

Resen has its own museum, settled in the Resen castle (a castle made in French style in 1908 by Ahmed Niyazy Bay). The museum of Resen contains a great collection of archaeological and ethnological
findings from the Resen area, as well as a unique gallery of modern pottery.

Korça is known as a city of museums. The national museum of Medieval art of Albania, the National museum of archeology, the house of the Painter Vangjush Mio and the oriental museum are located here. Moreover the museum of the first Albanian language school (established in 1887) is located in Korça. Additionally, Korça has a theatre.

Pogradec is a historic city and has its own festivals and galleries.

The following is a short-list of the most eminent monuments and institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Museum of Medieval Art</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>Korçë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korça’s Orthodox Cathedral</td>
<td>Cathedral</td>
<td>Korçë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Museum of Archaeology</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>Korçë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Albanian School</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Korçë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bratko Museum of Oriental Art</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>Korçë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vangjush Mio Museum</td>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>Korçë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring of Life church</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Korçë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darhda</td>
<td>Village</td>
<td>Korçë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vodice village</td>
<td>Village</td>
<td>Erseka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devol fortress</td>
<td>Fortress</td>
<td>Devol</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**National Museum of Medieval Art** is a museum in Korçë, Albania. It was established on April 24, 1980. The museum has over 7,000 art and cultural items, mainly icons and less stone, wooden, metal and textile works representing various moments in Albania iconography development. In the principal hall there are many works from anonymous artists of the 13th-14th century and well-known ones such as Onufri, Onufer Qiprioti, Teacher Kostandini, Jeromak Shpataraku, David Selenica, the Zografi Brothers, etc.

**Korça’s Orthodox Cathedral** of the Resurrection was completely rebuilt in 1992 after the previous church on this site, St. George cathedral which was destroyed by the Communist authorities in 1968. Now, the impressive pink building is the largest church in Albania and the second largest in the Balkans. Inside, the modest white interior is dominated by a huge carved wooden iconostasis.

**National Museum of Archaeology** (Korça) - Housed in two charming and well-preserved Ottoman-era buildings around a cobbledstone courtyard that are worth a visit alone, the town's archaeology museum holds 1,200 Hellenic, Roman and Paleo-Byzantine objects from 6000 BCE to 600 CE. Highlights of the museum are a Byzantine-era floor mosaic and various Roman graves.

**First Albanian School** (Korça) - Focus of considerable pride and symbol of national awakening under Ottoman rule, the first secular school with subjects taught in Albanian was opened in Korça on March 7, 1887. Until then, education was only given by travelling teachers. Exhibits inside the former classrooms show documents that are important to the development of Albanian education such as the first written Albanian text (‘The mass’, written by a Catholic priest) and the very first student book.

**Bratko Museum of Oriental Art** - (Korça) This curious avant-garde building combining a traditional Japanese tori gate with modern glass architecture and concrete wave patterns houses the impressive art collection of the Albanian-American Dhimitër Boria (1903-1990).

**Vangjush Mio Museum** (Korça) - The artist Vangjush Mio (1891-1957) had a remarkable painting career encompassing 40 years, producing over 400 paintings and 300 sketches. He studied art at Bucharest’s art high school in 1919 and continued to study art at Rome University before returning to Korça in 1924.
**Spring of Life church** - This church, near the Mitropolitan offices and also known as the Mitropolitan church, was unluckily selected by the communist authorities to be used for the Museum of Medieval Art in the 1980s, and was subsequently nearly completely destroyed in order to be turned into a bland concrete bunker. However, the side entrance leads to the new Shën Gjergj church at the back of the building, where the original 18th century wooden iconostasis can be seen.

**Darhda (Korca)** - The village is sheltered by the Shën Pjeter and the rugged Guri i Vjeshtës (Autumn Rock) mountains and is surrounded by flowering fields, orchards and forests, making it an ideal base for hikes in the surroundings. Founded in 1600 by Orthodox Christians escaping from Ottoman conversion campaigns, Darhda is famous for felt processing (incorporated in the local black/red folk dress), Dharda had 500 houses in the early 1900s. Nowadays, the village consists of a few narrow cobbled streets winding between stone houses, many of which are decorated with carved symbols and retain their traditional flagstone roof tiles. Most of the village’s stone houses look rather smart after recent renovations, yet there are few modern additions to spoil the atmosphere. Dharda has few specific sights, though it’s worth entering the small Shën Gjergj (Saint George) church for its old icons. Sulphur-spiced water from the aptly named Uji i Qelbur (‘filthy water’) spring is believed that helps cure stomach problems.

**Vodice village** - a 20-minute drive north of Erseka, is known for its picturesque Orthodox church, Saint Nicolas. Another interesting sight is Saint Mary’s Bell Tower placed in the same village.

The ruins of the **Castle of Radanj** are located south of the Germanj Forest Area, about a 1km hike from the main road. They offer further evidence of the area's historical importance.

**Devol fortress** - Devoll District The district is known in history for the Devol fortress, where the Treaty of Devol between Bohemond I of Antioch and Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos was held in 1108. Its site became forgotten in modern times; however it has been tentatively identified with the site Zvezdë, a conjecture already proposed by the 19th century British traveller William Martin Leake in 1835.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of St. Sophia</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Ohrid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of St. Panteleimon</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Ohrid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of St. John at Kaneo</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Ohrid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monastery of St. Naum</td>
<td>Monastery</td>
<td>Ohrid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Erasmus</td>
<td>Basilica</td>
<td>Ohrid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Robevi House</td>
<td>Building/House</td>
<td>Ohrid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuil’s Fortress</td>
<td>Fortress</td>
<td>Ohrid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saraj</td>
<td>Neoclassical estate</td>
<td>Resen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of St. Georgi (George)</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Village Kurbinovo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Church of St. Sophia** - The church is one of the most important monuments of Macedonia, housing architecture and art from the middle Ages. It was built during the First Bulgarian Empire, after the official conversion to Christianity. Some sources date the building of the church during the rule of Knyaz Boris I (852 – 889), others during the rule of Tzar Samuel of Bulgaria (997 – 1014).

**Church of St. Panteleimon** - is a monastery in Ohrid, situated on Plaosnik. It is attributed to Clement of Ohrid, a disciple of Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius. Archaeologists have come to believe that the monastery was the site where the first students of the Glagolitic alphabet (used to translate the Bible into Old Church Slavonic) were taught.

**Church of St. John at Kaneo** - The church is attributed to the author of the Gospel of John, John the Evangelist. The construction date of the church remains unknown but documents detailing the church property suggests that it was built before the year 1447. Archaeologists believe that the church was constructed some time before the rise of the Ottoman Empire very likely in the 13th century. Restoration work in 1964 led to the discovery of frescoes in its dome.
**Monastery of St. Naum**- the Monastery of Saint Naum is an Eastern Orthodox monastery named after the medieval Saint Naum who founded it. It is situated along Lake Ohrid, 29 km south of the city of Ohrid. The monastery was established in the year 905 by St Naum of Ohrid himself. St Naum is also buried in the church.

**Saint Erasmus** is an ancient Christian basilica and necropolis located near Ohrid, along the Ohrid-Struga freeway. Archaeological excavations have uncovered a three part basilica and a necropolis with 124 graves dating from the 6th and 12th centuries.

**The Robevi House** is a famous and historic building in Ohrid. It was built in its current state in 1863–1864 by Todor Petkov from a village Gari near Debar. Today the house is a protected cultural monument under the “Institute for protection of cultural monuments in Ohrid”.

**Samuil’s Fortress** is a fortress in the town of Ohrid. It was the capital of the First Bulgarian Empire during the rule of Samuil in the middle-ages. Today, this historical monument is a major tourist attraction and was renovated in 2003. According to recent excavations by Macedonian archaeologists, it was alleged that this fortress was built on the place of an earlier fortification, dated to 4th century B.C., which was probably built by King Philip II of Macedon.

**The Saraj** is a historic neoclassical estate in Resen. It was built in the early 20th century by local Ottoman bey, Ahmed Niyazi Bey. The Saraj’s architectural style makes it unique in Macedonia. The name “Saraj” comes from the Turkish word saray meaning “palace”. The building is now home to a museum, a ceramic colony, a gallery and a library.

**Church of St. Georgi (George)** is placed in the village of Kurbinovo. It is the most interesting Christian Orthodox temple with frescoes painted in 1191, during the time when Byzantine Empire ruled with Macedonia. This church has an important spiritual and cultural meaning for the local population. One of the best painted frescos in the country can be seen in this church.

### β) Natural resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Pheasant forest</td>
<td>Forest</td>
<td>Maliq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The springs of Crn Drim</td>
<td>Springs</td>
<td>near Ohrid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Pheasant forest in Maliq** is a mixed forest semi natural that is declared a natural monument around the ‘60s. The forest has an area of 50 hectares, and it is 813.5 meters above the sea level whereas the height of the trees reaches 22.7 meters. The maximum age of the woods is 45 years.

**The springs of Crn Drim**, one of the most famous and unpolluted rivers in Macedonia, is located in the root of Galicica Mountain, just few hundred meters from Ohrid Lake, on the territory of the protected area of Sveti Naum. The river runs into the lake and exits on the territory of Municipality of Struga. It flows towards north and exits FYROM in the vicinity of the town of Debar. It flows through Albania and connects with the river Bel Drim on the territory of Municipality of Kukes. From there this water system is known as Drin and it flows to the Adriatic Sea.
### Annex 7: Strategic Matrix Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Goals for the priority area: Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Goal 1:</strong> Establishment of a functional system for integrated regional protection of environment and natural resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 1:</strong> Improve Regional cooperation for Regional protection of environment and natural resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Preparation of Regional Ecological Action Plan in order to improve protection and conservation of biodiversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Improve joint lake protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Improve river and springs protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Finalize the process of establishment and formalize functioning of the joint – Trilateral Natural Park of Prespa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Strengthening of regional institutions for integrated regional protection of environment and natural resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Promote regional public, private and civil sector cooperation for protection of the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Develop common-joint methodology for protection of natural resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 Integrated regional protection and management of forests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 2:</strong> Increase regional public awareness about the benefits of protection of environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Initiate regional public awareness campaigns for protection and preservation of the environment and natural resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Develop environmental monitoring programs to protect the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Goal 2:</strong> Improvement of systems of waste water and solid waste management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 1:</strong> Improvement of systems of waste water management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Creation and/or upgrade of collector system of waste water for Prespa lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Completion of the Ohrid Lake collector system of waste water around the entire lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Reconstruction and building new waste water collection systems in the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 2:</strong> Improvement of systems of solid waste management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Improve regional cooperation for solid waste management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Establishment of regional centers for solid waste management and expand solid waste services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Support to municipalities to strengthen their capacities for cooperation in the selection, recycling and waste incineration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Improve collection, disposal and management of the construction waste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Enhance the capacity of the people, public institutions and private sector to manage solid waste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Exploring opportunities to manage regionally the municipal, commercial and industrial waste, and to contribute to energy supply by developing energy from waste alternatives through PPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic goals for the priority area: Agriculture</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Goal 1:</strong> Development of agriculture in the Region through support in adding values to traditional agricultural products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 1:</strong> Improve regional cooperation for production of healthy food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Increase the production, protection and post-harvest management of traditional agricultural product and branding of the most distinguished ones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Increase the quality and quantity of agricultural product through introduction of new technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Training of farmers to implement EU standards and systems in agricultural production (EUREPGAP/GLOBALGAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Support the reintroduction of traditional crops at regional level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 2:</strong> Protection and branding of traditional agricultural product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Support of standardization of agricultural products and increase the value of their product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Educating farmers to add value to their product by improving the packaging, design, transport and storage of product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Improve the existing ways of producing and processing fruit through introduction of agro-technical innovations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Improve the existing ways of plant protection products and use of fertilizers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Joint promotion of the traditional agricultural products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Goal 2:</strong> Increase the production of healthy food and organic farming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Strategic Goal 1: Creating the conditions for organic farming and production of healthy food

**Objective 1:** Establishing the basis for transitioning to organic production through institutional, legal and financial support

- 1.1 Establish basis for transitioning to organic production through institutional, legal and financial support

**Objective 2:** Preparation of Study for identification of the barriers for farmers transitioning to organic production

- 2.1 Preparation of Study for identification of the barriers for farmers transitioning to organic production

**Objective 3:** Establish Transition Advisory Services at Regional basis

- 2.2 Establish Transition Advisory Services at Regional basis

### Objective 2: Technical support in introducing planned organic production and marketing organic products

**2.1** Support farmers through technical assistance for the use of organic fertilizers

**2.2** Support farmers to use biological methods to combat diseases, pests and weeds

**2.3** Provide support for organic search

**2.4** Provide support to farmers to plant crops and plants that have increased resistance to diseases and pests

**2.5** Provide support to enhance regional market linkages between organic producers, processors, and traders.

**2.6** Joint marketing of the organic products from the Region

### Objective 3: Support the development of regional businesses with wild gathered products - herbs in rural areas in accordance to the EU standards and practices

**3.1** Training of WGP collectors for sustainable gathering of wild gathered products in accordance to the best practices and EU standards

**3.2** Creation of communication and cooperation networks between WGP collectors and traders

**3.3** Joint promotion of wild gathered products from the Region

---

### Strategic Goals for the priority area: Economic Development and Tourism

### Strategic Goal 1: Creating conditions for economic development and increasing competitiveness of the region

**Objective 1:** Creating a favorable climate for further development of existing businesses

- 1.1 Preparation of studies on the potentials for economic growth

- 1.2 Preparation of studies for rational use of regional natural resources for economic growth

- 1.3 Preparation of studies to determine the priority sectors for development of the Region

- 1.4 Preparation of studies for identification and applying of modern methods for rapid retraining of the workforce

- 1.5 Promotion of PPP as a form of Regional Economic Development

**Objective 2:** Strengthening the capacity of the institutions within the Region in regional development and project management

- 2.1 Training of regional and local administration in local and regional planning

- 2.2 Training of regional and local administration in the area of project management

- 2.3 Completing the organizational structure of the Region (PMU) for efficient and professional monitoring of the implementation of Strategic Plan

- 2.4 Establishing systems and procedures for providing support to business entities

**Objective 3:** Development of infrastructure support and business networks to support existing and new businesses

- 3.1 Establish regional information and advisory centers for support of micro and small enterprises

- 3.2 Support the introduction of international standards by small and medium size enterprises

- 3.3 Facilitate linking of academic/research institutions with the regional economy

- 3.4 Establishment and upgrading of business networks – regional clusters for exchanging information and joint appearance and presentation at regional and global market

- 3.5 Support local businesses in preparation of project proposals and project applications for national and foreign funds/EU Funds

- 3.6 Establishment of regional labor market

### Strategic Goal 2: Support the development of integrated tourist offer as a basis for sustainable tourism
### Objective 1: Utilization of natural resources and cultural and historical heritage for tourism development

1.1 Development of Studies for mapping the tourist potentials of the Region,

1.2 Preparation of strategic documents and action plans for tourism development in the Region

1.3 Preparation of technical and project documentation for development of regional tourist sites

1.4 Construction of tourist infrastructure and infrastructural arrangements of tourist sites

1.5 Joint approach for development of project applications for renovation of old cultural - historical monuments on the territory of the Region

### Objective 2: Promote authenticity and comparative advantages of the Region

2.1 Identification of regional authentic values, products and services for development of regional tourist products

2.2 Introduction and promotion of tourist offer and products from alternative, rural, agro, cultural, weekend, event, wellbeing and other types of tourism

2.3 Preparation and publication of a Touristic Offer Catalog with accommodation, restaurants, coffee bars, tourist sites and routes

2.4 Promotion of traditional kitchen and food products

### Objective 3: Development of sustainable tourism and catering industry by providing quality products and services

3.1 Establishment of Regional Tourist Information Center and its branches within the Region as form of institutional support for development of tourism

3.2 Capacity building of interested economic entities and citizens for provision of high quality tourist services and customer care

3.3 Training of the local population for utilization of national/EU (IPARD) and international funds for development of rural tourism

3.4 Support of business entities and citizens from rural areas in opening/reconstruction/adjusting of accommodation capacities in rural areas

3.5 Categorization of the private accommodation capacities

### Strategic goals for the priority area: Social cohesion

#### Strategic Goal 1: Raising the level of social protection of the entire population, with special emphasis on vulnerable and marginalized groups of people.

##### Objective 1: Improve services in social care by developing programs and establishment of appropriate mechanisms

1.1 Assess the needs and wants of elderly, vulnerable and marginalized groups of people

1.2 Analysis of the situation with unemployment and social structure of the unemployed within the Region

1.3 Develop Strategic and Action Plans for social care at local/regional level

1.4 Provision of training support for unemployed people through development and delivery of programs for entrepreneurship and self-employment

1.5 Preparation of cross-border projects for vulnerable social groups between partners from the Region

1.6 Support and provision of capacity building of the NGO sector for fostering support and care of socially disadvantaged persons

1.7 Provision of training for volunteers to provide home care to elderly people

1.8 Establishment of centres for free legal aid to vulnerable groups

1.9 Reintegration of immigrants – returners into the society

##### Objective 2: Construction of new and conversion of existing infrastructure for the needs of vulnerable groups, by creating partnerships and use of domestic and international funds

2.1 Preparation of cross-border projects for construction/reconstruction/conversion of public infrastructure into facilities for provision of social care and protection

2.2 Reconstruction/conversion of available public infrastructure (buildings) in care centers for socially disadvantaged persons.

2.3 Construction of access ramps in institutions for persons with disabilities

#### Strategic Goal 2: Raising the capacities of the existent institutions, associations and NGOs as well as creating new in order to address adequately the burning social issues.
### Objective 1: Regional networking of regional and municipal institutions and NGO sector working in the field of social protection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Training for networking with interested partners at regional level and networking with partners from the Region</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 Establishment of regional network between regional and municipal institutions and NGO sector working in the field of social protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Establishing cooperation with international organizations and institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Strengthening capacity of public and NGO sector to utilize national/ EU IPA/International funds which are available for social protection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Objective 2: Raising public awareness and stimulating social solidarity and philanthropy

**Activities:**

- 2.1 Promote the volunteer movement and social solidarity among young population
- 2.2 Organize campaigns to stimulate public opinion and improve the social solidarity and philanthropy
- 2.3 Support social solidarity and philanthropy through non-formal education activities in high schools and universities
- 2.4 Support campaigns that raise awareness regarding multiethnic and religious tolerance and building of democratic societies

#### Strategic Goals for the priority area: Regional infrastructure

##### Strategic Goal 1: Improved local and cross-border connections of the municipalities in the region through development of modern infrastructure.

**Objective 1:** Construction of regional road infrastructure

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Preparation of technical documentation for cross-border and regional road connectivity between municipalities within the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Reconstruction of regional road infrastructure</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 2:** Increasing the capacity of border crossings and cross-border transportation

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<th>Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Preparation of technical documentation for increasing the capacity of border crossings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Reconstruction of border crossings and expansion of their operational capacities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Establishment of lake traffic and transportation of passengers and goods</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

##### Strategic Goal 2: Improvement of the communal infrastructure in the region.

**Objective 1:** Development of water supply and waste water infrastructure

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Preparation of a Feasibility Study for regional reconstruction/construction of water supply and waste water networks</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 GIS mapping of water supply and waste water networks in the Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Preparation of technical documentation for reconstruction of regional/local water supply and waste water networks</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4 Reconstruction of old water supply infrastructure in residential areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Construction of new water supply infrastructure in residential areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Reconstruction of old waste water networks in residential areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Construction of new waste water networks in residential areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 Construction of regional plants for purifying waste water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9 Construction/reconstruction of sewerage networks in urban areas</td>
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</table>

**Objective 2:** Regulation of river basins

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<th>Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Preparation of technical documentation and regulation of river-beds in the Region,</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.2 Cleaning of river basins especially in areas with identified risk of flooding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Construction of river reservoirs – manmade lakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Construction/Reconstruction of sewerage network and drainage systems and improvement of management of atmospheric waters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Strategic goals for the priority area: Energy efficiency

#### Strategic Goal 1: Use of renewable energy sources in the region.

**Objective 1:** Creating conditions to attract investors to build investments/plants for renewable energy sources

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>1.1</th>
<th>Development of Regional Feasibility Study for utilization of renewable energy sources</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Support the inclusion of public private partnership in construction of plants for production of electricity based on incineration of solid waste and construction of combined heat plants based on renewable energy sources such as biogas, biomass, etc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Preparation of technical documentation for connecting the Region to the nearest and most rewarding gas pipeline</td>
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</table>

#### Strategic Goal 2: Building of energy efficient public facilities and promote energy saving in the region.

**Objective 1:** Improving the energy efficiency of public facilities

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>1.1</th>
<th>Upgrading and reconstruction of heating systems in public facilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Upgrading and reconstruction of thermal insulation of public buildings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 2:** Promote energy saving measures in the region

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<th>Actions</th>
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<th>Support to municipalities for introduction and implementation of energy efficiency and energy saving days</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Preparation and implementation of local and regional campaigns to raise awareness about the benefits of energy savings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Raising awareness and training of citizens and legal entities to improve energy efficiency and energy saving in private facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Support inclusion of PPP in public lighting based on energy efficient lamps</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### 7.7 Annex 8: Projects Description

The thematic groups succeeded to develop two projects:

1. **Project Name:** Environmental Protection that Benefits the Poor Rural Population  
   **Priority Area:** Environment  
   **Strategic goal:**  
   1. Improvement of systems of waste water and solid waste management.  
   **Strategic objectives:**  
   2. Improvement of systems of solid waste management.  
   **Action:**  
   2.5 Enhance the capacity of the people, public institutions and private sector to manage solid waste  
   **Justification and brief description:**  
   Out of the total solid waste generated in the Region, 50 to 90 percent is collected (depend of the type of community), while more than 90 percent is disposed unscientifically. Only the urban municipalities have adequate waste transportation facilities. The waste is often left unattended at the disposal sites, creating a health hazard. Plastic contents are for instance amassed by private individuals that sell them to small factories with no adequate technology, leading to the emission of toxic fumes. Rural communities in the Region are likely to be the ones most neglected. Hence, despite concerted efforts by policy makers to create a legal framework around the issue, solid waste in India is still in need of massive attention and acute management. Improper handling of solid waste and indiscriminate disposal in open spaces, road margins, tank beds, and etcetera, give rise to numerous potential risks to the environment and to human health. Direct health risks mainly concern those working in the field without using proper gloves, uniforms, and etcetera; a high percentage of waste workers and individuals who live near or on disposal sites are infected with gastrointestinal parasites, worms, and related organisms.  
   For the public, the main risks to health are indirect and related to poor water, land, and air quality. In addition, infrequent collection of waste provides an attractive breeding ground for flies and rats.  
   The most obvious environmental damage caused by solid waste is aesthetic, i.e. waste that litter public areas is ugly and smelly. A more serious risk is the transfer of pollution to ground water and land as well as the pollution of air from improper burning of waste.  
   Many waste activities generate greenhouse gases; e.g., landfills generate methane and refuse fleets are significant sources of carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide. Open burning dumpsites produce volatilised heavy metals (e.g. mercury and lead), dioxins, and furan. Leachate from unlined and uncovered dumpsites contaminates surface and ground waters.  
   A damaged local environment will first hit the most vulnerable groups of society (Region), those who lack the resources needed to reduce the negative effects of a degraded environment.  
   In addition, people living under poor circumstances are also directly dependent on their close natural environment for their daily survival.  
   **Link with national legislation and national strategic documents (for each country)**  
   The Project is in line with the Law on Environment and National Strategy for Sustainable development of the Republic of Macedonia and with the National Environmental Action Plan and National Strategy for EU Integration of the Republic of Albania.  
   **Link with AP / NPAA / EP / SAA:**  
   The project is in line with the priorities and strategic goals of the Stabilization and Association Agreement document of both countries  
   **Link with MIPD**  
   The project falls under one of the MIPD main sectors for support – Environment and Climate Change and is line with the following priority for IPA support under MIPD: Help the Beneficiaries overcome the economic and financial crisis and prepare for sound recovery by jointly working on increasing competitiveness and investments in infrastructure.
Project objectives:
- to provide "zero" waste to be disposed onto dump-yards and landfills in targeted rural communities
- to secure maximum waste recovery through composting, recycling, and reuse of waste materials
- to reduce the environmental degradation caused by solid waste

Project results:
- Minimised quantity of waste that needs to be disposed in centralised landfills, thus extending existing landfill capacity;
- Reduced environmental impact of disposal sites as the bio-degradable waste fraction largely is to blame for the polluting leachate and the methane problems;
- Improved soil quality by using organic compost instead of chemical fertilisers
- Diverted biodegradable waste from the municipal waste stream and reduced transportation costs and the environmental costs;
- Enhanced environmental awareness in the community;
- Created employment in the Region;
- Ensured sustainability of the project at the local level;

Measurable indicators
- Number of employment – employed people who are already engaged in waste management in the informal sector
- Number of communities that implement SWM through the project
- Number of households whose solid waste has been collected on daily basis
- The amount of biodegradable waste per household per day to be composted into organic manure (at least 400 grams per household)
- The amount of non-biodegradable waste per household per day to be recycled or reused (at least 600 grams per household)
- Number of awareness campaigns;

Main activities:
- Creation of local sites for composting, recycling, and reuse of waste materials
- Development and delivery of training in SWM, including the linkage between a deteriorating environment, waste, and human health, the treatment and management of waste, principles behind composting and recycling, occupational hazards, health and hygiene, collection and transportation procedures, etc
- Segregation of waste at source
- Primary collection of waste
- Composting of biodegradable waste
- Recycling of non-biodegradable waste
- Awareness and information campaigns

Target group:
Rural population from 14 rural communities from the Region (10 villages from the County of Korce, 2 villages from Resen Municipalitiy and 2 villages from Municipality of Ohrid), Municipal administration, public companies for waste management and CSOs focusing on environment environment

Implementation period: 3 years

Assessment of the sustainability and impact
The geo referential data base, “what to do list”, list of project/business ideas is a tool to reach sustainability and logterm effect of strategy. Involvement of young population and forming bioUni Initiative ensures multiplication of project results.

The main risks:
Hand-over of the project to the rural communities and municipalities, Low interest of local community, CSO as well as low commitment of scientific community. Lack of political will to support development of composting and recycling SWM, bypassing and disregarding those people who are already engaged in waste management in the informal sector (i.e. the so-called rag pickers).

Estimated costs and sources of financing/co financing: 1.4 million €
The status of readiness of the project:
- a) Project is ready for implementation
- b) Positive study of prefeasibility
- c) Technical documentation and analysis of expenses
- d) Project proposal
- e) Project idea

Partners involved:
- 7 municipalities from the Region (5 rural municipalities from AL and Municipality of Resen and Ohrid from MK)
- Local CSO
- Public companies for waste management
- National institutions in charge for environmental management
- people who are already engaged in waste management in the informal sector

2.

Project name: Agriculture Sector Investment Project

Priority Area: Agriculture

Strategic goal: 1. Development of agriculture in the Region through support in adding values to traditional agricultural products

Strategic objectives: 1. Improve regional cooperation for production of healthy food

Action:
1.2 Increase the quality and quantity of agricultural product through introduction of new technologies

Justification and brief description:
Agriculture is the key economic sector in the Region. The central and Local Governments from both countries considers the improvement in farm incomes of the majority of the rural population as a precondition for the reduction of rural poverty. The feasible solution is decentralized development efforts that provide for a modernised agriculture sector and the creation of an enabling environment for improving agricultural productivity and profitability, improving farm incomes, reducing rural poverty and ensuring household food security. This project seek to address the issues of food production and poverty reduction through empowerment of rural communities, support to the decentralization process through capacity building of local government authorities, improvement of the performance of agricultural marketing systems; support to small-scale infrastructure to improve access to markets and water, promoting improved crop and livestock husbandry practices.

The project has three major field components and one project management component, with the following outputs:

Link with national legislation and national strategic documents (for each country)
The Project is in line with the Law on Environment and National Strategy for Sustainable development of the Republic of Macedonia and with the National Environmental Action Plan and National Strategy for EU Integration of the Republic of Albania.

Link with AP / NPAA / EP / SAA:
The project is in line with the priorities and strategic goals of the Stabilization and Association Agreement document of both countries.

Link with MIPD:
The project falls under one of the MIPD main sectors for support – Environment and Climate Change and is line with the following priority for IPA support under MIPD: Help the Beneficiaries overcome the economic and financial crisis and prepare for sound recovery by jointly working on increasing competitiveness and investments in infrastructure.
## Project objectives:
- To increase agricultural productivity and incomes of rural households in the Region, within the overall framework of the Strategic documentation for agriculture of the Local and Regional Authorities.
- To contribute to the reduction of rural poverty
- To develop technical, organizational and managerial capacities of the farmers through participatory adult learning methods
- To develop capacities of the districts/municipalities to plan, manage and monitor District and municipal Agricultural/Rural Development Plan

## Project results:
- Participatory farmer groups established, made operational and adopting improved technologies
- Management capacity of rural communities enhanced
- Rural infrastructure facilities developed
- Viable Savings and Credit Schemes able to benefit from microfinance and marketing services and engaged in farming as a business established
- Farmers empowered to organize in participatory farmer groups and trained to increase agricultural production and farm profitability, groups able to demand productive agriculture related investment and services.

## Measurable indicators
- Households of gender balanced participating farmer groups increase agricultural productivity by 20%
- Crop production within the project area increased by 25% over the project life
- 50 Gender balanced-participatory farmer groups trained in improved technical, organizational and managerial capacities
- 1250 farmers/group members (50% of whom are females) using improved agricultural production skills
- 4 districts from AL and 2 municipalities from MK side with the capacity to train at least 16 participatory farmer groups per year
- At least 60 rural community committees trained in community mobilization, leadership, and micro-project identification and formulation
- 4 District and 2 Regional Rural Development Plans prepared, implemented and annually updated.
- At least 50 villages from the Region with successful investments, selected by gender balanced committees, in value adding technology and equipment.
- 15 micro-projects and infrastructure works established.
- 100 km of access roads improved.
- At least 2 operationally sustainable Savings and Credit Cooperatives
- Market information network established in the Region

## Main activities:
- Build the capacity of districts to train participatory farmer groups
- Train participatory farmer groups
- Build the capacity of districts/municipalities to plan, manage and monitor Municipal Development Strategic Plans and Regional Development Programmes/Plans.
- Invest in medium size rural infrastructure.
- Invest in agriculture-related micro projects and infrastructure.
- Invest in agriculture related technology and value adding equipment.
- Build the capacity of participatory farmer groups to develop and aggregate into Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies.
- Build a marketing information network in Region.

## Target group:
Rural population from the Region, Local and Regional Authorities, National Extension Services

## Implementation period: 3 years
Assessment of the sustainability and impact

The financing of recurrent expenditure by Local or National Governments of Project activities when the project comes to an end will to a large extent not be necessary. The District /Municipal Training Coordinators and Training Facilitators who will provide training during the Project will be part of the existing personnel of district/municipal administration or the Public Extension Services. They will continue to be employed by these authorities and undertake similar training of farmers as part of their normal duties. Project activities to be undertaken will be part of approved village, municipal, and district agricultural development plans. A participatory approach will be adopted in identifying, prioritising, and agreeing on initiatives that the Project will provide financial assistance. This participatory approach is already in use by MAFS and PORALG and therefore the local administration staff are conversant with the methods. Funding will only be provided to initiatives that are clearly owned by the communities who present them. The beneficiaries are required to make initial contributions.

The main risks:
Low interest of rural population, farmer associations and CSO. Lack of commitment at sustaining the groups formed; Low commitment of local authorities. Lack of political will to support the project; Lack of success in implementation of (Rural) Development Strategies;

Estimated costs and sources of financing/co financing: 1.5 million €

The status of readiness of the project:
a) Project is ready for implementation
b) Positive study of prefeasibility
c) Technical documentation and analysis of expenses
d) Project proposal
e) Project idea

Partners involved:
- All municipalities (4 districts – AL and 2 municipalities MK)
- Local farmers associations and CSO
- National governments – Ministries of Agriculture, Finance and Economy
- National Extension agencies
- National/Regional research and education institutions
### 7.8 Annex 4: Meetings of representatives

#### 7.8.6.1 List of participants in the First workshop meeting of the stakeholders, representatives of the cross-border area of Prespa

30.04.2012, Hotel Grand – Korce, Albania

<table>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<td>Zdenka</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:demdhis@yahoo.com">demdhis@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<td>Xama</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:orjanax@hotmail.lt">orjanax@hotmail.lt</a></td>
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### List of participants in Second workshop meeting of the stakeholders, representatives of the cross-border area of Prespa

10.05.2012, Hotel Grand – Korce, Albania

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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<td>Rahim</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Zana</td>
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<td>Fatjom</td>
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7.8.6.3  List of participants in the Third workshop meeting of the stakeholders, representatives of the cross-border area of Prespa

29.06.2012, Motel Royal, Carev Dvor, Municipality of Resen – Makedonija
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