

BULGARIAN MINISTRY OF ECONOMY, ENERGY AND TOURISM

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ANNUAL TOURISM REPORTING TEMPLATE

1. INTRODUCTION

Council Decision 86/664/EEC of 22 December 1986¹ establishing a consultation and cooperation procedure in the field of tourism foresees that "each Member State shall send the Commission, once a year, a report on the most significant measures it has taken and, as far as possible, on measures it is considering taking in the provision of services for tourists which could have consequences for travellers from the other Member States".

With the publication of the "Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism", the Commission announced that "in order to strengthen the collaboration with and among Member States, their current annual reporting through the Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) will be used to facilitate the exchange and the dissemination of information about how their policies and actions safeguard the sustainability of tourism". This Communication was welcomed by the Competitiveness Council conclusions (22nd-23rd November 2007) and by the Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 14th December 2007.

The main aims for the reporting process are:

- to be able to monitor the level of implementation of the "Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism" by Member States;
- to facilitate the exchange of experiences among member States with regard to how they tackle issues which are important for the competitiveness and sustainability of European tourism.

MS reports referring to year n shall be sent to the European Commission by the end of February of year $n+1$.

If the reports are sent in English, the deadline is shifted to the end of April.

2. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

This section should provide an overview of the main organisational structure to illustrate how tourism is organised and managed, to identify linkages and to identify the engagement of other organisations/stakeholders.

The information required will only need to be prepared fully in year 1 as it will subsequently only be necessary to provide details of any changes.

2.1 Please identify the National Bodies responsible for tourism (Ministry and also any separate/related National Tourism Organisation), including key areas of responsibility, and their relationship to other national bodies. (maximum of 1.000 characters)

¹ Official Journal L 384, 31/12/1986 P. 0052 – 0053.

Bulgarian Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism:

1. develops short term concepts and programs for development of tourism and proposes to the Council of Ministers to accept a strategy for development of tourism;
2. organizes and coordinates the control of the quality of the tourist product; implements registration of tour operator or tourist agency activity and categorizes of tourist sites in the cases provided by law;
3. develops and controls the fulfilment of the annual program for spending of the resources for the state financial support of the development of tourism, in this number of the annual program for national tourist advertising;
4. conducts, together with the competent departments, the state policy with regard to the training and improving the qualification of the cadres in tourism;
5. supports the activity for attraction of investments and for realizing of projects for development of tourism at national, regional and local level; cooperates for the construction and the maintenance of the infrastructure connected with tourism;
6. interacts with the bodies of local authorities and the local administration and with the regional governors at implementing of their authorities in the sphere of tourism;
7. represents the Republic of Bulgaria before the international bodies and organizations in the field of tourism and coordinates the fulfilment of the obligations of the Republic of Bulgaria, ensuing from its membership in the international bodies and organizations;
8. participates in the development, the assessment and the control of the fulfilment of programs and projects financed by the European Union and international organizations;
9. implements the methodical guidance of the activity of the regional and the local tourist information centers;
10. interacts with the respective departments and organizes the joint activity for the development and recognition of the separate kinds of tourism;
11. organizes the creation and the maintenance of unified system for tourist information, including the National tourist register;
12. manages the National Council of Tourism;
13. issues the regulations for the activity of the Expert commission for registration of tour operators and tourist agents (ECRTTA) and the Expert commission for categorization of tourist sites (ECCTS) and organizes and manages their activity in his/her quality of their chairperson;
14. interacts with the services for the trade – economic issues at the diplomatic and the consular representations of the Republic of Bulgaria for the promotion of Bulgarian tourism abroad and coordinates the activity of the Bulgarian culture institutes and societies abroad for the promotion of the Bulgarian cultural-historic heritage;
15. ensures the information service and support the participation of Bulgarian companies at fairs and events connected with tourism;
16. develops and participates in the discussion of drafts of normative acts in the field of tourism;

Tourism State Public Advisory Commission:

- formulates and suggests on the basis of the national priorities and policies for tourism development in accordance with the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism in Bulgaria;
- analyzes trends in the field of tourism development;
- analyzes and makes studies for arising problems in the field of tourism and provides solutions;

- informs appropriate competent authorities for need of cooperation in specific issues in the field of tourism;
- elaborates positions concerning drafts of normative acts, programs and strategies and action plans in the field of tourism;
- presents report about the activity of the commission to the Council of Ministers on yearly basis.

National Council of Tourism:

- approves the annual program for spending of the resources of the state financial support of the development of tourism, in this number the annual program for national tourist advertisement;
- coordinates the implementation of the national advertising in the sphere of tourism;
- discusses worked out concepts and programmes for development of the tourism in the country;
- gives opinion on draft normative acts and make proposals for their amendment, supplement or revoking;
- discusses issues related to the creation and maintenance of the tourist infrastructure and attraction of foreign investments in tourism;
- discusses the readiness of the Bulgarian air carriers for fulfilment of their charter programmes;
- discusses and analyze the preparation for the tourist seasons and the results from them;
- discusses the results from the activity of the bodies assigned to whom is the control in the tourism and the related activities and give opinion for the improvement of the work of the control bodies;
- discusses issues and give recommendations for improvement of the protection of the users of tourist services.
- The Minister of Economy, Energy and Tourism determines the number of the members of the National council for tourism, ensure its organizational – technical servicing and issue regulation for its organization and activity.

2.2 Please, describe what organisations/agencies are used to deliver services at the national and regional level and the services that they deliver. (Maximum 800 characters)

National level

Bulgarian Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism:

List of unified administrative services in the field of tourism provided by the Bulgarian Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism:

1. Issuing the certificates for registration of tour-operators and tourist agents;
2. Maintaining the Register of tour-operators and tourist agents, a part of the National tourist register;
3. Classification of the kinds of places of shelter, the places of accommodation, the food and entertainment establishments;
4. Issuing the certificates for classification of the kinds of places of shelter, the places of accommodation, the food and entertainment establishments;
5. Entry of classified tourist sites and persons, who implements or will implement hotel or restaurant keeping in tourist sites, in the Municipality tourist register;
6. Classification of beaches and ski tracks;
7. Classification of tourist cottages and catering establishments;
8. Entry the tourist associations in the National tourist register;
9. Entry the tourist information centres or bureaux in the National tourist register;
10. Entry of changes of circumstances in the National tourist register;
11. Issuing of duplicates of certificates for certain classification and registration;
12. Provision of information services and consultations concerning certification and registration regimes under Tourism law.

Regional level

Municipalities:

List of unified administrative services in the field of tourism provided by the municipalities:

1. Classification of the kinds of places of shelter, the places of accommodation, the food and entertainment establishments for certain categories under the provisions of Tourism law;

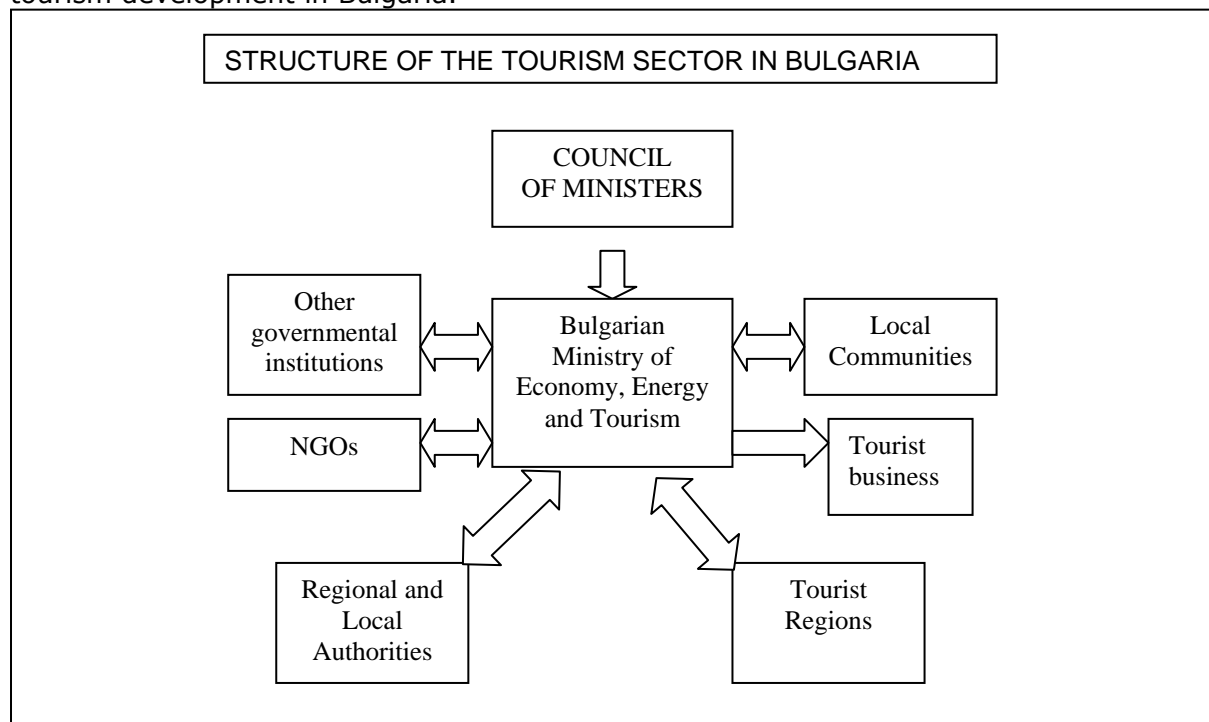
2. Issuing the certificates for classification of the kinds of places of shelter, the places of accommodation, the food and entertainment establishments;
3. Entry of classified tourist sites and persons, who implements or will implement hotel or restaurant keeping in tourist sites, in the Municipality tourist register;
4. Entry of changes of circumstances in the Municipality tourist register;
5. Issue duplicates of certificates for classification;
6. Provision Information services and consultations concerning certification regime under Tourism law.

2.3 Please, describe which other bodies and organisations are involved at the national level and the process for involving them. (Maximum 800 characters)

National Council of Tourism: a governmental and public consultative and coordinative body to the Minister of Economy, Energy and Tourism which includes governmental bodies and institutions, tourist associations, associations of air, land and water carriers nationally represented associations of the consumers in the Republic of Bulgaria.

2.4 Please provide a diagram/organ gram of the organisational structure for tourism identifying the relationship between national, regional and local bodies. Provide also a short description of the core responsibilities and competencies of each of the organisations. Include also information regarding the direct and indirect links between other departments, stakeholder organisations and unions. Information about mechanisms of decision making process participation from outsider organisations, e.g. forums, advisory committees is also requested. (Maximum of 2.000 characters)

The diagram of the organisational structure of the tourism sector in Bulgaria gives only general information for the relationship between national, regional and local bodies due to the lack of direct subordination between the responsible bodies and institutions for tourism development in Bulgaria.



Bodies and institutions responsible for tourism development in Bulgaria:

Tourism state public advisory commission:

- formulates and suggests on the basis of the national priorities and policies for tourism development in accordance with the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism in Bulgaria
- analyzes trends in the field of tourism development
- analyzes and makes studies for arising problems in the field of tourism and provides solutions
- informs appropriate competent authorities for the need of cooperation in specific issues in the field of tourism
- elaborates positions concerning drafts of normative acts, programs and strategies and action plans in the field of tourism
- presents every year to the Council of Ministers report about the activity of the commission

Bulgarian Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism:

1. develops short term concepts and programs for development of tourism and proposing to the Council of Ministers to accept a strategy for development of tourism;
2. organizes and coordinates the control of the quality of the tourist product; implements registration of tour operator or tourist agency activity and categorizing of tourist sites in the cases provided by law;
3. develops and controls the fulfilment of the annual program for spending of the resources for the state financial support of the development of tourism, in this number of the annual program for national tourist advertising;
4. conducts, together with the competent departments, the state policy with regard to the training and improving the qualification of the cadres in tourism;
5. supports the activity for attraction of investments and for realizing of projects for development of tourism at national, regional and local level; cooperates for the construction and the maintenance of the infrastructure connected with tourism;
6. interacts with the bodies of local authorities and the local administration and with the regional governors at implementing of their authorities in the sphere of tourism;
7. represents the Republic of Bulgaria before the international bodies and organizations in the field of tourism and coordinates the fulfilment of the obligations of the Republic of Bulgaria, ensuing from its membership in the international bodies and organizations;
8. participates in the development, the assessment and the control of the fulfilment of programs and projects financed by the European Union and international organizations;
9. implements the methodical guidance of the activity of the regional and the local tourist information centers;
10. interacts with the respective departments and organizes the joint activity for the development and recognition of the separate kinds of tourism;
11. organizes the creation and the maintenance of unified system for tourist information, including the National tourist register;
12. manages the National Council of Tourism;
13. issues the regulations for the activity of the Expert commission for registration of tour operators and tourist agents (ECRTTA) and the Expert commission for categorization of tourist sites (ECCTS) and organizes and manages their activity in his/her quality of their chairperson;
14. interacts with the services for the trade – economic issues at the diplomatic and the consular representations of the Republic of Bulgaria for the promotion of Bulgarian tourism abroad and coordinates the activity of the Bulgarian culture institutes and societies abroad for the promotion of the Bulgarian cultural-historic heritage;
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National Council of Tourism:

1. approves the annual program for spending of the resources of the state financial support of the development of tourism, in this number the annual program for national tourist advertisement;
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5. discusses issues related to the creation and maintenance of the tourist infrastructure and attraction of foreign investments in tourism;
6. discusses the readiness of the Bulgarian air carriers for fulfilment of their charter programmes;
7. discusses and analyze the preparation for the tourist seasons and the results from them;
8. discusses the results from the activity of the bodies assigned to whom is the control in the tourism and the related activities and give opinion for the improvement of the work of the control bodies;
9. Discusses issues and give recommendations for improvement of the protection of the users of tourist services.

Municipalities:

The Municipal Council shall adopt a programme for development of tourism on the territory of the respective municipality in compliance with the priorities of the national strategy and in compliance with the local tourist resources and needs. Municipalities provide a certain number of administrative services in the field of tourism described in 2.2

Tourist associations:

The associations shall be established on territorial and professional principle and they can be:

1. national, regional and local associations;
2. branch and product associations.

The tourist associations, in compliance with their statutes, shall:

1. represent and defend the interests of their members before the respective bodies of the central and local administration and of the local independent government;
2. participate in the development of strategies and programmes for development of tourism on national scale, on the territory of the region and of the municipality and assist their implementation;
3. assist the advertising of the tourist product;
4. assist the creation and functioning of tourist information centres or bureaux;
5. participate in ECCTS;
6. participate in ECTTA;
7. assist the improvement of the professional qualification of the personnel engaged in tourism;
8. participate in the control over the observing of the normative acts in the sphere of tourism;
9. stipulate the professional ethics in tourism and non-admission of disloyal competition between and regarding their members and approach the competent bodies regarding the committed offences of the legislation.

2.5 Please provide information about financial data, including spend/budget on tourism as a percentage of overall government spend/budget, the level of national funding support for tourism marketing, the amount of EU funding support made available for tourism and data concerning the support to SME-s and Destinations. (500 characters)

- The Bulgarian Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism does not have financial information for spend/budget on tourism as a percentage of overall governments spend/budget.
- 5 143 624 Euro or 10 600 592 BGN ² is the national funding support for the national tourism marketing in 2009
- The Bulgarian Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism does not have official financial information for the general amount of EU funding support made available for tourism. The reason is that all operative programs have measures, which contribute to the development of the tourism – directly or indirectly. For example, in Priority Axis 3: Sustainable Tourism Development of Regional Development Operative Program for period 2007 – 2013, 218 093 623 EURO are allocated. In this and in the other operative programs indirectly are allocated amounts, for example for training, protection of the biodiversity, rehabilitation of infrastructure, etc., which indirectly benefits the tourism sector.
- The Bulgarian Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism is direct beneficiary of **32 714 044 EURO** (in the field of tourism) / National public funding **4 907 107 EURO** / from Operative Program Regional Development for the period 2007 – 2013.
- The Bulgarian Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism does not have official financial information concerning the support to SME-s and Destinations.

3. POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

3.1 Is there a current National Strategy for tourism? Yes No

If yes, please, provide information in bullet point format about the key aims, objectives and priorities of the strategy highlighting those that are designed to address sustainability issues in economic, environmental and social terms in particular those related in the six aims included in the Agenda. In preparing the tourism strategy, explain how consideration has been given to the 9 principles set out in the Agenda (para.2.3 p5) and given in the appendix. (Maximum 1.000 characters)

The National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism in Bulgaria 2009-2013 is of approved by the Council of Ministers at the 2nd of April 2009. In this connection the activities described in 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3, 4.1.4, 4.1.5 and 4.1.6 are included in the additional Action plan (part of the Strategy).

OVERALL VISION: STRATEGY FOR SUSTANABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

- Bulgaria will become well-known and preferred all year round destination, from both Bulgarian and international tourists, chosen for its conserved cultural traditions and unique combination of preserved natural resources. With its hospitality and positive international image, provided competitive and high quality tourist products, the country gives attractive opportunities for business, relaxation and environmentally harmonious life.
- Tourism in Bulgaria is priority and prosperous sector number one which main purpose is contribution concerning right application of the principles of sustainable development as a whole – protection of nature, prosperity of local authorities and economic growth.
- Tourism sector will be based on the ground of successful long term partnerships at national, regional and local level between all involved parties - national, regional and local authorities, business, NGO-s, local communities and foreign partners.

² 1 Euro = 1.95583 BGN

MISSION

Bulgaria promotes a purposeful consecutive tourism policy based on the partnerships between governmental and local authorities, NGO-s, Bulgarian business and role of society in the making of new jobs for the industry, creates good conditions for investments, long term economic and social benefits and increases tourism revenues.

AIMS

The main purpose for tourism development in Bulgaria until 2013 is enhancing the competitiveness of the sector through effective use and preservation of current nature and anthropological resources in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

STRATEGIC AIMS:

1. Promoting of Bulgaria as a tourist destination from higher world wide class.
2. Improving the infrastructure at national, regional and municipality level.
3. Unified application of international standards, best European practices, innovations concerning products, high technologies and human resources in tourism industry.
4. Storage, protection and quality improvement of current tourism resources.

3.2 Who was the initiator and who is responsible for its implementation? (Maximum 200 characters)

Bulgarian Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism

other ministries and public organizations;
Municipalities (local authorities);
Regional authorities;
NGOs;
Tourist enterprises;
Hotels;
Restaurants.

3.3 How is the strategy monitored and how often? (Maximum 500 characters)

Monitoring every two years in accordance with the draft.

3.4 What tourism specific legislation exists? (Maximum 500 characters)

Law for tourism (*Amendments under preparation in compliance with Services Directive 2006/123/EU*);
Regulation of Unified system of tourist information;
Regulation of classification of the kinds of places of shelter, the places of accommodation, the food and entertainment establishments;
Regulation of classification of tourist cottages and catering establishments;
Regulation of the beaches;
Regulation of terms and conditions for conclusion of preliminary insurance, under art. 42, Para 1;
Regulation of requirements concerning tour-operators and tourist agents staff and the person, implementing the functions for management of tour-operators or tourist agents activities, ensured appropriate premises for implementation of tour-operator or tourist agent activity;
Regulation of the ski tracks.

4. MEASURES AND INITIATIVES

This section provides Member States with an opportunity to outline specific initiatives and policies that are or are going to be adopted to manage and develop tourism activity in ways which respond to the key challenges of the Agenda and which fall within the six main aims of the Agenda itself.

1 Economic prosperity

- a. To ensure the long term competitiveness, viability and prosperity of tourism enterprises and destinations.
- b. To provide quality employment opportunities, offering fair pay and conditions for all employees and avoiding all forms of discrimination.

2 Social equity and cohesion

- a. To enhance the quality of life of local communities through tourism, and engage them in its planning and management
- b. To provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, race, religion, disability or in other ways.

3 Environmental and cultural protection

- a. To minimise pollution and degradation of the global and local environment and the use of scarce resources by tourism activities.
- b. To maintain and strengthen cultural richness and biodiversity and contribute to their appreciation and conservation.

4.1 Please set out, briefly, the steps which have been or will be taken, if any, to address the 7 key challenges for the delivery of sustainable and competitive tourism, covered in the TSG report and referred to in the 'Agenda'.

4.1.1 Reducing the seasonality of demand. (Maximum 200 characters)

According the draft of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism in Bulgaria 2009-2013:

Priority 1. «Diversification of the national tourism product, increasing quality of provided services and protection of the right of consumers»:

Specific aim 1: „Diversification of the national tourism product» includes the following activities:

- Encourage diversification of the national tourism product, improvement of tourism environment in resorts and populated areas, increasing the share tourist establishments for all seasons use;
- Organizing events at regional and national level as festivals, open air events, sport competitions, folklore activities, presentations at local and regional level of traditions, national cuisine, handy crafts etc.

4.1.2 Addressing the impact of tourism transport. (Maximum 200 characters)

In Transport part of the National Strategy for the environment (2009 - 2018) are predicted some of the following measures/ activities:

- Improving the city bus transport in relation with ecological aspects - gradually renewal of bus parks in accordance with European legislation concerning CO2 emissions from engines;
- Implementing a policy of taxation, encouraging the delivery and operation of the hybrid motor vehicles;
- Improvement of rail way structure and provided services;
- Electricity of railway lines along the Tran European transport corridors on the

territory of Bulgaria;

- Remotorisation of old diesel engine in order to decrease fuel consumption and from there decreasing the sulphur dioxide emissions;
 - Enlargement of the electricity in internal city transport;
 - Maintaining the tax policy, which encourage the producing and spreading of biofuel for the transport with the propose to reach 5,75% share market of the biofuel in Bulgaria until 2010 and minimum 10% share in the energy balance of the country until 2020;
 - Ensuring the security system for noise decreasing and blocking in the internal transport;
 - Gradually renewal of bus parks and initiating of eco engines;
 - Establishment of "Green wave" systems in the big cities;
 - Creation of paths for cycling;
 - Closing the streets and initiating of pedestrian zones in over 50 000 population cities;
- Building and exploitation of "freight settlements" and continuing development of the network and systems of the intermodal transport.

4.1.3 Improving the quality of tourism jobs. (Maximum 200 characters)

According the draft of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism in Bulgaria 2009-2013:

Priority 8. Stimulating role of tourism as a key factor development of the label market, implementing of current training the specialists in the field of tourism:

Specific aim 1: „Increasing the productivity and adaptation of the labour force in tourism and respectively competitiveness in compliance with the strategic aims of Lisbon Strategy“, includes the following activities:

- stressing alternative methods of training and education – distant, multimedia, interactive;
- encourage the employers in tourism industry to invest more in professional training providing an integrated training included at the place of work;
- better tourist responsibility and SME-s training in smaller populated areas;
- use of flexible forms of employment;
- enlargement al live training programs development of activities for good practices in tourism services and cluster activities development;
- Terms and conditions for green card for foreigners from third countries to be in conformity with the need .

Specific aim 2: „Better quality of education and training in tourism in compliance with necessity of the labour market forming knowledge based economy“:

- use of high communication technologies and instruments in tourism industry;
- Improvement the quality of education and professional qualification of the cadres in tourism industry at all levels – services, marketing, management, etc.
- monitoring of the system of training and qualification of the staff and mechanisms for sustainable partnerships between trainers and business;
- Synchronizing procedures for issuing work permissions for the staff of foreign tour-operators and tour agents on the territory of Bulgaria during the active season.

4.1.4 Maintaining and enhancing community prosperity and the quality of life, in the face of change. (maximum 200 characters)

National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism in Bulgaria 2009-2013 takes into special consideration the development of rural tourism and its role for :

- diversity in the field of agriculture according to tourist demands;
- stimulating or breathe new life into handicrafts in certain areas in Bulgaria, as a source of profitableness for locals on one hand and a guarantee for old Bulgarian traditions and culture on the other;

- encouraging or improving the activity of food industry through local SMS-s on the base of local raw materials for the need of tourist and native demands;
- stimulating improvement or creating a new kind of services in rural areas with double effect - give satisfaction to the tourists and local people on one hand and raising quality of local life on the other;
- improving identities of local communities;
- diminishing of territorial disproportions in infrastructure through development of tourist facilities in thinly populated or rural areas of the country;
- breaking off or delay the process of depopulation in rural areas of the country through raising incomes and quality of life for local communities;

4.1.5 Minimising resource use and the production of waste. (Maximum 200 characters)

Priority 6 Implementing of current standards for applying of energy saving technologies (energy efficiency measures) in the tourism industry and the standards for conservation and preservation of the environment usage solar energy technologies:

Specific aim:

„Sustainable management of tourism activities, conservation and improvement of tourism resources and their sustainable use“

- encouragement the implementation of effective innovation systems – energy saving technologies, usage of renewable energy sources etc.;
- encouragement the implementation of good practices in energy and eco management in places of shelter and places of accommodation;
- encouragement the investments for increasing the energy efficiency in places of shelter and places of accommodation;
- developing programs and measures for sustainable development, related to energy saving and eco-friendly technologies used in building and management of tourist sites;
- use and applying of eco-friendly technologies and systems;
- use of protected natural areas as a resource for sustainable development of tourism;
- minimizing the energy use (for example the air conditioning and heating systems);
- controlling the quality of water and air, effecting management of the system of sewers and sustainable management of waste;

Encourage the use of European quality standards, EMAS, EU Eco-Label for accommodation services, etc.

4.1.6 Conserving and giving value to natural and cultural heritage. (Maximum 200 characters)

One of the strategic aims of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism in Bulgaria 2009-2013 is conserving and giving value to tourist resources – natural and anthropological.

The Strategy stresses on the need of complex measures for development of the forms of sustainable tourism - friendly to the environment and biodiversity, creating conditions for effective management of protected areas in conditions of fast developing tourism, keeping of high recreational capacity of ecosystems and landscapes, monitoring the impact of the tourism activities on biological diversity.

Such measures are proposed at the action plan.

The Bulgarian Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism is in a process of development of two product programs – National Programs and Action Plans for the development of Ecotourism and Rural tourism in Bulgaria. These programs envisage measures for the protection and sustainable usage of the natural and cultural heritage.

The participation in EDEN Project/ 2008 and 2009 also supports the sustainable and responsible usage of the natural and cultural heritage.

4.1.7 Making holidays available to all. (Maximum 200 characters)

The requirements according Regulation of classification the kinds of places of shelter, the places of accommodation, the food and entertainment establishments are in accordance with Regulation №6/26.XI.2003 for friendly urban environment. Under Tourism law, Art. 3a. Refusal of rendering tourist services in tourist sites of art. 3, para 3 as well as the rendering them with lower quality or at more unfavourable conditions based on the characteristics of art. 4, para 1 of the Law of protection against discrimination shall not be admitted. The persons rendering tourist services in tourist sites of art. 3, para 3 shall be obliged to announce their prices in equal extent for all tourists not admitting different treatment of the tourists or placing part of them in more unfavourable position with regard to other part of them based on the characteristics of art. 4, para 1 of the Law of protection against discrimination. The requirements of para 2 shall be applied also in the cases when the announced prices of the tourist services are pointed out in Internet, in advertisement and trade brochures and publications as well as in the radio and television programs.

4.2 As key challenges may change over time, please identify any other areas that are becoming a new challenge. (Maximum 600 characters)

The most important challenges for the Bulgarian tourism sector for the moment are as follows:

- Economic and financial crisis in the main source markets and targets markets for Bulgaria
- Overcoming the serious seasonal and territorial concentration of the Bulgarian tourism sector.
- Undertaking measures for the minimization of the effect of the tourism sector for the climate change / global warming and adaptation of the national tourist product to the climate changes;
- Environmental protection – encouragement of implementation of measures for energy efficiency, waste management and protection of the biodiversity and the landscape in the tourism sector;
- Carrying capacity – development of carrying capacity indicators for vulnerable nature areas and places of tourist interest;
- Overcoming the over-construction in the seaside and mountain resorts through application of legal regulations.

4.3 Please identify and describe a specific initiative, which is related to the 7 key challenges, that is innovative/ successful and which would be of interest to or of help to other Member States. (Maximum 2.000 characters)

- Initiatives related to challenge № 6 Conserving natural and cultural heritage:
 - Participation in EDEN Project/ 2009 – “Tourism in protected areas”.
 - Green House National Competition of the Bulgarian Association for Alternative Tourism and Bulgarian State Agency for Tourism for eco accommodation under ECEAT criteria’s for sustainable tourism.
 - 2009 – Year of Ecotourism and Rural Tourism in Bulgaria – includes a number of marketing activities for encouragement the development of these types of tourism in Bulgaria.

5. MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Three mechanisms for implementing the Agenda were identified in the "Agenda": sustainable destinations, sustainable businesses and responsible tourists.

5.1 Sustainable destinations: What support is given to strengthen destination management at the regional/ destination level (supportive policy environment, knowledge networks, training programmes, establishment of measures/indicators for benchmarking, etc.)? (Maximum 600 characters)

- In 2007 the State Agency for Tourism started a process for development of 8 tourist regions /destination. This process continued in 2010 with development of a concept for the organization of the activity of the tourist regions and a series of seminars in all regions for presentation of the concept.
- In 2008 started a project of UNIDO - UE/BUL/06/001 – Programme for the Sustainable Development of Enterprises in Bulgaria with focus on enhancing the local expertise in CP, EST and CSR methodologies. The project is in its second phase of implementation. The State Agency for Tourism is national coordinator of the project.
- In 2007 State Agency for Tourism set up annual Award for the most successful cultural sustainable destination. The winner for the 2008 was the village of Dobarsko, Razlog region and for 2009 was the site Villa Armira near the town of Ivaylovgrad.

5.2 Sustainable businesses: What support is given to strengthen the sustainability and competitiveness of businesses (supportive policy environment, orientation of business support services to sustainability, training, financial incentives, etc.)? (Maximum 600 characters)

- o The tourist enterprises in Bulgaria can apply for funding from Operative program Competitiveness /for application of international standards, etc./ and Operative program Human Resources for training programs and professional requalification.
- o In 2008 Bulgarian State Agency for Tourism and Bulgarian Association for Alternative Tourism in a joint project started National competition named "Green house" for eco accommodation under ECEAT criteria's for sustainable tourism. One of the participants with Certificate of quality is going to be awarded as the most responsible ecological business (the initiative continued in 2009).

5.3 Responsible tourists: What support is given to promote responsible choices by tourists (e.g. sustainability in education, national marketing and media campaigns, and promotion of certification schemes)? (Maximum 600 characters)

- Year 2009 was proclaimed to be Year of Ecotourism and Rural Tourism in Bulgaria – a number of marketing activities for promotion of these types of tourism in Bulgaria.
- The Governmental Institutions organize seminars for promotion of certification schemes. Experts from The State Agency for Tourism participated as lecturers in order to promote the EU Eco label for Tourist Accommodation Service, EMAS, PAN Parks etc.
- The State Agency for Tourism participated as a partner or observer in several projects which aim was to promote the responsible and sustainable tourism and promotion of certification schemes.

6. DATA AND INDICATORS

Euro stat will provide, as an annex, the key statistical data required to support the reporting process covering around 20 indicators³. These are mainly related to the aim of 'economic prosperity'.

Please, identify indicators that are being used or developed which could add to the range of information being provided by Euro stat, particularly in relation to social and environmental issues (other indicators from the TSG report, visitors/ residents satisfaction, etc.). (maximum 500 characters)

The following are the indicators that are being used to the range of information provided by Euro stat :

1. Total visitor arrivals or bed nights per month;
2. Number of bed spaces (by accommodation type);
3. Annual average % bed space and bedroom occupancy of accommodation;
4. Average spending per head;
5. Number of bed spaces per 1000 local population;
6. Ratio of number of tourists to local population;
7. Average length of stay;
8. % of visitors arriving by means other than car or plane.

7. COMPLEMENTARY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If necessary use the following box to provide additional complementary information that has not already been covered.

³ These indicators have been selected from the 50 TSG indicators on the basis of the possibility to calculate them at the European level.