



DOSSIER ON THE 2016 EDEN WINNING DESTINATION Template

Project number: GRO/SME/16/C/071-Tourism	Project Acronym: BULCULTOURism
Destination: YAMBOL MUNICIPALITY	

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

1. FOREWORD MESSAGE OF THE MANAGEMENT OF THE DESTINATION

(Max 250 words)

The conversion of Yambol into a recognizable destination for cultural, historical and festival tourism is an important priority for the municipality management.

The opportunities of European funds are used, both for the restoration of tourist sites and the creation of new attractions, as well as for the improvement of the urban environment.

Yambol Municipality has implemented six projects aimed at developing cultural tourism that guarantee cultural sustainability of the destination. The total value of the projects exceeds BGN 8 million. BGN 5 million are invested in the modernization of the leading tourist attractions - the five centuries old Bezisten (covered market), transformed into a modern interactive museum, and the archaeological reserve (AR) "Thracian and ancient town of Kabyle".

Within the implementation of a CBC project, the ethnographic complex in the neighbourhood of Kargon was completely restored. The investment program of Yambol for the new programming period envisages the modernization of the buildings of the Art Gallery and the Museum of Battle Glory.

Yambol Municipality implements a Strategy and Marketing Program for Cultural Tourism. A Concept and a Plan of Marketing Communication were developed for popularization and positioning in the tourist market of Bezisten and AR "Thracian and ancient town of Kabyle". The concept is aimed at developing a region-specific product with the official slogan "Yambol: Get into History" and the sub-slogan "Journey Through the Time Tunnel". A municipal company "Tourism and Culture" was created for the development and management of the destination.

New attractions, tourist sites and cultural events are constantly created and developed at the destination.

SECTION 2 - DESCRIPTION OF THE DESTINATION IN A MARKETING PERSPECTIVE

In this section the destination is described from a pure place-marketing point of view (travel-friendly communication style, attractive slogan, and some pictures) for promotional purposes. This part of the document should be prepared with a support of a travel journalist or expert in place marketing.

2. POSITIONING DECLARATION

What makes this destination	"Journey Through the Time Tunnel" – Yambol – one of the oldest towns in Bulgaria with rich cultural and historical heritage, remarkable tourist sites combined with modern
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Co-funded by the COSME programme
of the European Union

excellent?

Why should a tourist visit it?

Here it should be stated (in max 2 or 3 lines) in which way the destination is excellent (from a traveller's point of view). The prospect traveller should immediately get clear in what sense this destination is excellent.

Please, add a picture that symbolizes the statement.

technologies, colourful festivals and new attractions. Yambol has a strategic location, is easily accessible and with excellent infrastructure.



3. EXPERIENCES

What can a traveller do in visiting the destination?

Please, describe max three iconic experiences the destination has to offer:

Headline

A short three- to five-word phrase that captures readers' attention and imagination.

Benefits

Focus on what travellers will gain from of the experience.

Call-to-action:

Be clear and concise in describing the primary action you want readers to take (start the sentence with an action verb). In case you want to have descriptions of the amenities that may be important for certain promotional activities, make sure it supports the experience. Do not position buildings and beds as the reason for travel.

Yambol – Journey Through the Time Tunnel

Take an exciting journey that began 6000 years ago and continues to this day! Yambol offers its visitors the unique opportunity not only to get acquainted with the legacy of ancient civilizations, but also to shift in the spirit of past times. The visitor can experience the mystery of the ancient Thracian ritual by welcoming the sun to a millennial rock sanctuary. The Kukerlandia Festival will captivate him with the mystery of the Kuker Games. The Fair of Tourist Entertainment and Animations will bring him to the epoch of Thracians and Romans.

Welcome the Sun with the mystique of the Thracians

Meet the Sun on the longest day of the year, as the Thracians did 4000 years ago! Many enthusiasts climb the hill called "Rabbit Peak" on the early morning of the longest day of the year to meet the first rays of the sun and to recharge themselves with the energy of the millennial sanctuary. The rock sanctuary is considered an ancient Thracian observatory. The Thracians have recognized the longest day of the year when the first sun beam passed through a special groove and lit the image of the goddess Cybele engraved into the rock.

Kukerlandia - the festival is life

Join the Kukertown in the days of Kukerlandia!

The Kukerlandia Festival is the emblem of Yambol as a festival town. The event gathers thousands of participants and guests, who come to experience the colourful show. Thousands of mummies, babugers, sourvakars, old men and other masked people from all parts of Bulgaria participate and recreate the ancient tradition of Kukeri masquerade games. The Yambol Festival is one of the largest and most spectacular

events in the country. The colours of the festival are complemented by the participation of many foreign groups. Among the distinctive features of the Yambol Festival are the giant mummer masks - dreadful 3-meter installations that bring a unique colourful touch to the holiday. The four-day event is celebrated with many concerts, exhibitions, competitions, open-air workshops, processions, grills and appetizers.

Antiquity alive

Transfer yourself to past ages with the Fair of Tourist Entertainment and Animations! Among the natural scenery of the AR "Thracian and ancient town of Kabyle", you will witness battles between the Romans and the Thracians and enjoy scenes from their lifestyle. Challenge lovers can try their skills in archery, horse riding, barbooth /ancient dice game/. In the art workshops, everyone can check their skills in making clay necklaces and bracelets with coloured wooden beads, painting ceramic figures, making cardboard masks or shields and colouring drawings of Thracian warriors. Also don't miss the market of crafts and the tasting of food and drinks typical of the antique era.

4. MAIN TOURISTIC FEATURES

Iconic/Famous people

Famous historical facts happened in the destination

Cultural and Natural sights

Celebrations, festivals and events

Please, describe in no more than 200 words the main features that are worth a travel to the destination.

The following famous people were born in Yambol: the creator of the computer John Atanasov, the authors of the prototype of Bulgarian tricolour Ivan and Stiliyana Paraskevov, General Stiliyan Kovachev - defence minister and commander of the Fourth Bulgarian Army, one of the first European artists – the surrealist - George Papazov, the first professor pedagogue in Bulgaria - Prof. Peter Noikov.

In 1922, the only Balkan futuristic magazine - Crescendo was launched in Yambol.

Main attractions - AR "Thracian and ancient town of Kabyle" - the only preserved Thracian antique town in the country; the five-century old Bezisten with a modern interactive museum; the only one in Bulgaria Municipal Museum of Battle Glory with unique military exhibition. The only one astronomical observatory and planetarium in southeastern Bulgaria is located in Yambol. Above the ancient town of Kabyle is located the Thracian rock sanctuary "Rabbit Peak" dating from the 2nd millennium BC, which is considered an ancient Thracian observatory.

Parts of the rich cultural and historical heritage of Yambol are the 3 museums, the 2 galleries and the 4 churches. Yambol Municipality organizes festivals, historical restorations, attractions and cultural and tourist entertainment events with national significance. The International Masquerade Festival "Kukerlandia" is the emblem of Yambol as a festival town. Yambol is a member of the Federation of European Carnival Cities. Another unique event is the celebration of Yambol dancing carol groups - a trademark protected with the Patent Office.

5. PRATICAL INFORMATION REFERENCES

Please add websites (links) references for practical information:

Getting there & away
Getting around
Accommodation
Restaurants
Shopping
Touring
Health and Safety

www.tourism-yambol.com/bg, www.bezistena.com, www.yambol.bg, www.hotel-tundzha.domino.bg/, www.hotelkabile.com/, www.riverside-hotel.eu/bg/, www.borovetz-yambol.com/index.html, www.hotels-bg.com/yambolen/, www.hoteldianapalace.com/index.php?l=bg, amadeus-yambol.com/bg/restorant, www.hotel-kapri.com/, <http://poseti.guide-ulgaria.com>, <http://travel-tourism.info/>, www.ribolovenatlas.com

SECTION 3 – DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS WHICH JUSTIFY THE NOMINATION

In this section, there is a description of all reasons why the destination fulfils the European and national criteria. It is important that all actions and initiatives taken are presented in a way to underline why they contribute to make the destination considered a good practice in the field of sustainable tourism.

6. GENERAL CRITERIA

What makes this destination excellent in "cultural tourism"?

What makes this destination emerging, not traditional and off the beaten track?

On what basis was it assessed that the destination offers authentic tourism experiences?

On what basis was it assessed that the destination has local authorities with a capacity in managing their destination in a way to ensure social, cultural and environmental sustainability?

On what basis was it assessed that the destination has a management destination organisation that has a capacity in sustainable tourism management?

On what basis was it assessed that the destination has agencies, NGOs or authorities with a capacity in adopting sustainable tourism practices?

Please, specify criteria, facts and data upon which you have based the assessment

Yambol is an excellent destination for cultural tourism because of the rich cultural and historical heritage, colourful festival life, innovative products and attractive experiences for tourists. The town has excellent infrastructure and accessibility. 57 archeological, artistic, architectural, and historical sites have been identified in the municipality of Yambol and declared immovable cultural properties. 11 of these are of national importance. There are also more than 270 ancient settlements and about 1000 burial mounds. There are 16 cultural institutes, 26 sports clubs and 5 sports facilities in the municipality of Yambol. Nearly 100 are the significant events in the annual cultural calendar of the Yambol Municipality. Significant investments have been made in the tourist infrastructure. The main tourist attractions have been modernized and developed, innovative tourist products have been created and large-scale of festivals recreate the customs and traditions has been organized.

Despite the available resources, Yambol is not included in the established tourist routes and is still an unknown destination for the tourists. The tourist flow and the attendance is low. The reason for this is the fact that until 2007 tourism was not among the priority economic activities for the municipality. Only 10 years ago, the local government set itself the goal of developing the tourist potential of the region and recognizing Yambol as a tourist destination.

The strategy of the Municipality is directed towards the development of tourist resources that are specific to the region: Thracian mysteries and rituals, Kuker, Carol and other local traditions, Museum of Battle Glory, Bezisten and others. The aim is to preserve the authenticity of both the objects and the events that are being organized. For this purpose, the Municipality works in close cooperation with prominent specialists in Thracology and Folklore such as (among others) Prof. Valeria Fol, Prof. Lyudmil Getov, Prof. Georg Kraev.

The Municipal company "Tourism and Culture" was established with the main purpose to implement the policy of the Municipality of Yambol in the field of tourism. The tasks of the enterprise include coordinating and synchronizing the activities of museums, art galleries and other cultural institutions; advertising the sites and events of Yambol; organizing events of interest to the citizens and guests of Yambol. The enterprise is an autonomous structure with 6 experts, modern facilities, communication equipment and systems. The museums and the Art Gallery are provided with the necessary number of curators and researchers. A new tourist information center was opened for the guests of the destination.

In order to achieve a sustainable interest in the cultural heritage of Yambol and the region, in the "Thracian and ancient town of Kabyle" excavations and scientific researches are being carried out, which are funded by Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski" and the municipality of Yambol. The Reserve is a scientific base for training students of archaeology.

Yambol's active policy of modernizing and rebuilding infrastructure has a direct impact on improving the quality of life of the local population. The development of festival tourism has a positive impact on the entire tourism industry. The infrastructure projects implemented in tourism provide employment to the local businesses and the local community.

In order to achieve environmental sustainability, the municipality implements the following environmental and waste management program documents: Waste Management Programme 2015-2020, Ordinance on waste management on the territory of Yambol Municipality, Ordinance on building and preservation of the Green System on the territory of the Municipality of Yambol, Programme for controlling the population of stray dogs on the territory of the Municipality of Yambol, Programme for reduction of fine dust particles-10 levels and reaching the established norms for their content in atmospheric air in Yambol Municipality for the period 2016 -2018.

In its activity in terms of tourism, Yambol Municipality works strictly according to the following programming documents: Sustainable Development Plan of the South-East Planning Region, Integrated Urban Recovery and Development Plan of the Yambol Municipality 2014-2020, Yambol Municipality Development Plan (2014-2020), Strategy and Marketing Programme for Cultural Tourism in Yambol Municipality.

Yambol Municipality is a member of the Yambol Regional Tourist Association. It's part of the Southeast Planning Region. The following partnership projects have been realized in the field of tourism - "The good practices of the province of Catania - a stimulus for the municipality of Yambol in the development of tourism", "Innovative tourist territories" together with Borja province, Spain and Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Our municipality is also a partner of the Agency for Regional Development and Investments in the project implemented under the program "Cross-border Cooperation Bulgaria-Turkey", together with the Thracian University-Edirne and the Directorate of Tourism and Culture at the Edirne Regional Administration. Yambol has a cultural exchange with six twin cities. Groups from Edirne and Târgu Jiu participate in the International Masquerade Festival "Kukerlandia". With Edirne, a number of cross-border projects are also being implemented. A cross-border cultural cooperation strategy for Yambol - Edirne 2012 - 2015 was implemented, with a bilateral cultural cooperation committee established.

In order to acquire good tourist practices, following the establishment of "Tourism and Culture" Municipality Company practical trainings for its experts were organized, focusing on sustainable tourist practices.

7. SPECIFIC CRITERIA

Please, specify criteria, facts and data upon which you have based the assessment.

Accessibility:

Yambol has a strategic location and excellent road infrastructure. The town is located 93 km from Bourgas – a city with a port and an airport. Yambol is an intersection of two international transport corridors: European transport corridor No 8 connecting the Adriatic Sea with the countries of the Black Sea region and Central Asia, and the I-7 republican first-class road Silistra-Shumen-Yambol- border checkpoint Lesovo-Hamzabeyli, which provides an immediate link between Turkey with Romania, Russia and other Eastern European countries. Trakia Motorway Sofia-Bourgas passes 7 km away from Yambol and is an essential prerequisite for the development of the socio-economic relations of the Municipality of Yambol with its neighbouring municipalities and regions, which makes the town an even more favourable and preferred destination for tourists and tour operators.

The infrastructure of Yambol destination is very good. Most of the tourist sites are located in the central part of the town, which was renewed two years ago under OP "Regional Development". The most of the attractions in the town are accessible for people with disabilities.

Visitors evaluation

The Municipality of Yambol provides various forms for receiving feedback from visitors about the quality of the services offered in the destination.

Formal complaints can be submitted via the website of Yambol Municipality www.yambol.bg, as well as on site at the Citizens Service Center. Another form of feedback is a market research questionnaire which purpose is to find the impressions of the visitors of Bezisten in Yambol, and could be filled in online on www.bezistena.com or on the spot via the Info Point terminals in Bezisten. Recommendations can also be sent through the feedback forms on the official tourist portal of Yambol www.tourism-yambol.com, as well as through the official Facebook pages of the Municipality of Yambol and the municipality company "Tourism and Culture". A book of impressions and recommendations is available at the Bezisten Cultural and Information Center.

SECTION 4 – INFORMATION ABOUT THE DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

8. THE ORGANISATION MANAGING THE "DESTINATION"

(i.e. organisation which submitted the application for the EDEN Award)

	Governance System	Overall Budget (in €)	% Budget in tourism	Staff working in tourism activities
What type organisation is it?	Select of the following: <u>Municipality</u>	Select of the following: Up to 50,000 50,001 – 75,000 70,001 – 100,000 100,001 – 250,000 250,001 – 500,000 500,001 – 1M <u>more than 1M</u>	Percentage: 1,48%	Total: 12 Breakdown - permanent: 12 - temporary: 0 - consultants: 0
Which tasks in tourism management are performed by the organisation? <i>Please choose one of the list on the right</i>	<p>Strategic planning</p> <p>Tourism infrastructure development</p> <p>Human Resources development (within our DMO)</p> <p>Advance Innovation and Information Communication Technology systems (ICT)</p> <p>Promotion activities/publications</p> <p>Management and development of events</p> <p>Management and development of attractions</p> <p>New tourism products/services development</p> <p>Capacity building programs for SMME's</p> <p>Training and education seminars for tourism professionals</p> <p>Business advice/consultancy</p> <p>Quality management</p> <p>Tourism facilitation activities (reservations and bookings)</p> <p>Information services for tourists/visitors</p> <p>Customer Relationship Management (CRM)</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation of consumers' behaviour</p> <p><u>Develop sustainable tourism products/services</u></p> <p>Research and development actions</p>			
Please indicate the partnership or co-operation schemes in which the private sector has been involved in the organization?	<p>Advisory boards</p> <p>Joint Management units</p> <p>Sectorial liaison groups</p> <p>Corporate partnerships with private associations and agencies</p> <p>Membership</p> <p>Registration (annually or periodically)</p> <p><u>Outsourcing/subcontracting private companies</u></p> <p>Visitors/tourists services and products</p>			
Please indicate if there are special agreements with the regional or national tourism offices for marketing the destination in the domestic and international markets.	<p>Yambol Municipality uses various methods and forms to promote its tourism. Design and Advertising Agency has developed and maintained the official tourist internet portal of Yambol. The destination is also advertised on specialized web platforms and printed publications for tourism - Peika.bg, "Cherga" magazine and others. The Yambol authorities has signed a contract for the presentation of Yambol in the book "The Secret Places of Bulgaria".</p> <p>Yambol has also signed a contract with the Bulgarian Tourist Union to participate in the national movement "Explore Bulgaria -100 National Tourist Sites".</p> <p>The destination is also included in the official interactive guide of Bulgaria - ILoveBulgaria, which offers comprehensive marketing services.</p> <p>The destination is actively present in the social networks with the sites of the cultural and historical heritage and the events that are being organized.</p> <p>In order to popularize the destination, the employee in the tourism sector participate in tourist fairs and exchange in the country with an information stand for tourist packages and promotional materials - brochures, paper mummies' masks, souvenirs and others.</p>			

9. CONTACT DETAILS

CEO, General Manager, Legal representative of the Organization

The person who will attend and represent the destination at the EDEN Award ceremony

Provide a full name of a representative and his position, address, phone, fax, e-mail, foreign languages spoken.

Georgi Ivanov Slavov – Mayor of Yambol Municipality, 7 G. S. Rakovski Str., Yambol 8600, Tel. +359 46 681 204, Fax: +359 46 66 22 47, e-mail: yambol@yambol.bg

Tourism Manager

The person who will attend the EDEN Network meetings and who is in charge of tourism management

Provide a full name of a representative and his position, address, phone, fax, e-mail, foreign languages spoken.

Vanya Milanova Sulemenko – Director of Municipal company „Tourism and Culture“, 7 G. S. Rakovski Str., Yambol 8600, Tel. + 359 895599593, e-mail: sulemenko@bezistena.com

SECTION 5 – STATISTICS AND FACT ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE DESTINATION

10. TOURISM STATISTICS

Tourism Volume

Please, in counting the tourism volume consider all accommodation establishments close (less than 30 minutes) to the destination

	Hotel	B&B, apartments, other
Number of establishments	10	18
Number of bed places	447	No information
Number of days of the peak season	All year tourist destination	
Arrivals	8218	No information
% of arrivals from abroad (international arrivals)	50%	No information
Nights (overnight stays)	26270	No information
Average daily rate per room in the peak season	No information	No information

11. FACTS ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY

Facts and data on a sustainable tourism supply chain

278 restaurants and entertainment venues (coffee shops, fast food restaurants, pizzerias, beer houses, snack bars, etc.) are registered in the municipality of Yambol. 90 % of the restaurants offer local cuisine. About 40 % of the products used are from local producers. There are 2 organic food shops in town. In the space around the building Bezisten there are souvenir shops, which offer products by local craftsmen.

Facts and data demonstrating results to reduce the use of the cars in the destination

Yambol offers excellent opportunities for hiking. The main tourist sites are located in the centre of the town at close distances from each other. Very good transport accessibility is offered both by public transport and on foot to the town centre. The pedestrian zone in the central part of the town includes parts of Targovska street - 640 m, Rakovski street - 1050 m, and Tsar Osvoboditel street - 190 m. All neighbourhoods are connected by pedestrian sidewalks and have separate internal pedestrian zones. Yambol Municipality is developing projects for building bike lanes, which will connect the neighbourhoods of the town. Actions for reducing the use of cars is the payoff zone for short-term parking having 637 parking places.

Facts and data demonstrating results in waste reduction

A system for separate waste collection has been developed in Yambol. The total volume of recycle bins in the town is 503 760 litres. The total collected household waste in the territory of the Municipality of Yambol in 2014 was 26 077 t and in 2015 - 21 536 t.

<p>Facts and data demonstrating results in decreasing water consumption</p> <p>Facts and data demonstrating results in reducing energy consumption</p>	<p>In 2016, a regional landfill was established - part of the regional waste management system.</p>
	<p>One of the measures for improving the quality of the water supply is the implemented project "Integrated project for the water cycle of the town of Yambol - construction of WWTP and intake manifold, extension and reconstruction of the sewerage and water supply network of Yambol". 50 million BGN were invested in the first phase of the project.</p>
	<p>The illumination of the destination area is energy saving, in line with the new requirements for low power consumption.</p> <p>The following projects were implemented in the field of energy efficiency: "Energy-Efficient Activities in the Municipal Educational Infrastructure of the Municipality of Yambol", "Urban Measures for Sustainable Housing Construction", "Sustainable and Integrated Development of the Educational Infrastructure of the Municipality of Yambol", "Complex Measures for Renovation of the Vocational High School of Agriculture "Hristo Botev". Yambol Municipality participates in the National Program for Energy Efficiency of Multifamily Residential Buildings.</p>

<p>12. GENERAL STATISTICS</p>	
<p>How many inhabitants?</p>	<p>The population of Yambol is 69 542 inhabitants, according to NSI data.</p>