

BRAND EU PROJECT

DUBROVNIK
DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY

brand eu

ACQUIRING PLACE
BRANDING
COMPETENCES AT
WORK THROUGH
CONTINUING VET TO
INCREASE THE
ATTRACTIVENESS OF
EUROPEAN CITIES

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
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THE STRATEGY OF DUBROVNIK DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

STRATEGY AREA: BRANDING AND TOURISM ATTRACTION



Since the city of Dubrovnik has a positive reputation as a tourist destination with a rich historical and cultural heritage, the analysis of the existing situation and opportunities for further development of the city as a place attractive for life, work, and education identified a complementary and promising niche for branding Dubrovnik as a city for sports. Sports tourism as a form of tourism that is dominantly motivated by sports has an extremely large market potential. It achieves high annual growth rates and represents a niche that can significantly improve current tourism results.

The Strategy for the Development of Sports and Sports Infrastructure in the City of Dubrovnik is a strategic document and an excellent starting point for further development and planning of sports events in Dubrovnik, including all aspects of the development of the image of the city for sports. It is based on sports education, sports events, successful sports clubs, adequate sports infrastructure, and active citizens.

INVOLVED ACTORS

NUMBER OF ACTORS INVOLVED

- Dubrovnik Development Agency DURA (creation, planning)
- City of Dubrovnik Administrative Department for Education, Sports, Social Welfare, and Civil Society (creation, planning, implementation)
- City of Dubrovnik Administrative Department for Tourism, Economy, and the Sea (creation, planning, implementation)
- City of Dubrovnik Tourism Board (implementation)
- Travel agencies (implementation)

INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION OF THE PEOPLE INVOLVED

City government, local development agency, city tourism board, local sports associations, local universities.

ROLE OF THE ACTORS INVOLVED

Before further elaboration and communication of the "Strategy for branding Dubrovnik as a sports destination", the following actions will be undertaken:

- examining the attitudes and interests of the citizens of the City of Dubrovnik in the context of branding Dubrovnik as a "sports destination"
- involvement of different interest groups in brand creation processes and involvement of a public (bottom up approach), as opposed to creating a new brand at a level of city authorities (top down approach)
- cooperation with representatives of the sports community, individual sports clubs and sports officials with the aim of recognizing and incorporating their interests into the final document
- cooperation and involvement of private entrepreneurs, potential investors and the real sector in creating a new strategy with the aim of recognizing and incorporating their interests in the final document

ROLE OF THE MAIN PERSON IN CHARGE OF/RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STRATEGY

The City of Dubrovnik is the main actor responsible for the implementation of the Strategy, specifically the Administrative Department for Education, Sports, Social Welfare, and Civil Society and the Administrative Department for Tourism, Economy, and the Sea.

CONDITIONS AND OPERATIONAL MODALITIES OF IMPLEMENTATION:

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OBJECTIVE 1 - ORGANIZATION OF MEDIUM AND SMALL-SCALE EVENTS

Small scale sport events represent a realistic target group of sport events that the City of Dubrovnik should seek for in the future. There are several arguments based on the analysis of the situation and the SWOT analysis of why Dubrovnik should strategically focus on these events:

- The analysis of the situation states the advantages of small-scale sports events for the development of sports tourism in relation to large sports events
- A large number of traditional sports events currently organized in Dubrovnik belong to the group of small-scale sports events
- Inappropriate sports infrastructure for organizing major sporting events
- Identified weaknesses and threats related to the number and competencies of employees in tourism and sports
- Insufficient development of the sports destination brand

Strategic orientation to medium and small-scale sports events will enable continuous and sustainable development of the brand without any need for unrealistically high allocations of financial resources related to the organization of large sporting events that have great potential, but very often only one-time and limited impact on destination development brand.

Strategic focus on medium and small scale sporting events does not exclude the organization of large sporting events (eg European and world championships, etc.). If the opportunity arises and it is assessed that the positive effects of such events will not be less than possible negative consequences.

The organization of sports events of medium and small scale include:

- Continuation of the organization of existing traditional sports events (20 sports events)
- Launching new traditional international annual sporting events (10 new sporting events)
- Organizing international training camps for children and youth (10 training camps per year)
- In cooperation with private entrepreneurs (hotel houses, travel agencies, etc.), in design and organization of sports events (facilities) related to active recreation (racing, hiking and cycling races / routes, adrenaline parks, adventure tourism, extreme sports (cliff diving, etc.), karting track, Moto quad tours, jet ski, sport sailing, sport archery (eg trap), golf, etc.)

OBJECTIVE 2 - RAISING THE QUALITY OF EXISTING TRADITIONAL SPORTS EVENTS

Currently in Dubrovnik 20 annual traditional sports events are organised annually. The analysis of the financial effects of one of these events, Du Motion, shows very good results regarding consumption in the destination. It is necessary to continue to develop existing events that have a high sports and tourism potential. The SWOT analysis recognized that most traditional sporting events are of a low production and / or organizational level, which limits their potential for further growth. In addition, apart from Du Motion, any of traditional sporting event in Dubrovnik has its own website and Facebook pages are insufficient in communication. It is also recognized that the City of Dubrovnik allocates from the city budget as well as from the residence tax and systematically and regularly provides funding for co-financing the costs of most traditional sporting events.

Most current sporting events in the City of Dubrovnik in organizational terms depend on the commitment and "good will" of a small number of individuals who "do it for years" and are not strongly institutionally, business or formally-legally conditioned. Detraction from the organization of sporting events or resistance to possible changes would be a threat to the survival and continued holding of these sporting events. It is necessary strategic orientation towards strengthening and raising the quality of existing sporting events.

OBJECTIVE 3 - DEVELOPING THE SPORTS HERITAGE OFFER

Dubrovnik as a city with a prominent sports tradition and the Republic of Croatia as a country that has athletes who continuously achieve top sports results and is proud of their success has an inappropriately weak attitude towards sports heritage and its use for the development of sports tourism. At the same time, some countries that represent the most important tourist markets for Dubrovnik tourism have a highly developed attitude towards sports heritage stronger and related tourism (USA, Great Britain, Australia, etc.). Therefore, making sports heritage stronger, it will develop sports tourism in the context of sports nostalgia and could have a very significant potential in the City of Dubrovnik.

The development of the offer of sports heritage (sports nostalgia and sports sights) should be strategically directed in two directions: 1) local sports heritage related to Dubrovnik and surroundings and 2) national sports heritage related to the entire Republic of Croatia. The first direction dominantly refers to the announced establishment of a museum / memorial center of Dubrovnik Water Polo and VR Jug within the swimming pool in Gruž, and a stronger inclusion of sports in the exhibitions and occasional exhibitions of Dubrovnik museums. The second direction needs to be realized with the private or public (Croatian Sports Museum) sector in terms of a memorial multimedia exhibition dedicated to the sporting successes of Croatian athletes during the 20th and 21st centuries.

OBJECTIVE 4 - BUILDING A BRAND AND CREATING THE IMAGE OF THE CITY OF DUBROVNIK AS A SPORTS DESTINATION

This strategic goal is predominantly related to the systematic strengthening of cooperation between the sports and tourism sector in the City of Dubrovnik. Establishment of a system for monitoring tourism results (statistics) related to sports, material, personnel building, strengthening sports, tourism capacities, development of common marketing and communication tools. Building and promoting the Dubrovnik brand as a sports destination, creating, and nurturing the image of a tourist-sports destination (creating a communication and marketing master plan, choosing a communication constant and message, creating a database of communication materials, designing and launching campaigns in domestic and foreign markets, cooperation with DMK agencies, etc.). Effective operationalization of the desired brand concept presupposes the systematic implementation of various activities aimed at raising the destination sports and tourism visibility and desirability, communication with the market and creating organizational preconditions for managing sports and tourism development. This goal is in line with other strategic goals that are more related to the development or enrichment and creation of a range of sports and tourism products in the City of Dubrovnik.

CONTINUITY

Continuity is based on the Framework Action Plan which operationalizes the defined strategic goals in a way that precisely determines the measures for each strategic goal and the activities that need to be performed in order to meet the measures.

For each activity the following are precisely defined: objective, description of activities, holder, participants in implementation, performance indicators, required financial resources and their sources, control mechanisms and possibly other parameters that make strategic goals operational, achievable, and measurable. The Framework Action Plan proposed at this stage of drafting the strategic document is less detailed and consists of proposed measures for each strategic goal without going into the area of specific activities and all the necessary parameters that define the activities.

ELEMENTS CHARACTERISING THE STRATEGY

During 2019, the University of Dubrovnik surveyed the DU MOTION Runners' Days Dubrovnik participants. On that occasion, it was determined that 31.8% of participants came to participate in the race accompanied by 1 person, 27.9% of participants accompanied by 2 people, and 18.5% of participants accompanied by 3 people, as in 2019 there were 2,700 arrivals in Dubrovnik related to Du Motion.

Participants mostly stayed in hotel accommodation (43.5%), or private accommodation (39.3%) and the average length of stay of participants was 4 nights.



During 2019, the participants of DU Motion and the person accompanying them realized about 11,000 overnight stays in the area of the City of Dubrovnik. The total consumption of Du Motion participants in the destination amounted to around 15 million kuna or around 2.1 million euros. The average daily consumption of participants and escorts in the destination was around 188 Euros. The largest share in consumption was accommodation (40%) and food and beverages (41%). The above analysis of Du Motion shows extremely favorable economic and financial effects of the sporting event and has been used as an example of best practice.

EFFECTIVENESS

Opportunities:

Sports infrastructure

- 400 million HRK (around 53 million €) will be invested in the construction of sports infrastructure by 2028
- construction of a new sports hall in the area of Gospino polje

EU funds

financial resources in the new EU financial envelope, part of which will be intended for the development of tourism and tourism and sports infrastructure

Trends in the development of sports tourism

- a large and developed sports-tourism market at the world level
- estimation of strong growth of sports tourism worldwide at post COVID 19 era per annual growth rate of 13%
- development of sports tourism in markets that are emitting markets for Dubrovnik (USA, Great Britain, Germany, Australia, etc.)

Acceptance of sports as an important part of the tourism offer in Croatia by tourism experts and employees

- sports and recreation as well as related tourism products are strongly recognized and highlighted in the strategic document of Croatian tourism
- in 2020, tourism and sports were formally connected for the first time at the level of state administration with creation of Ministry of Tourism and Sports

Positive perception of sports at the level of the city administration of the City of Dubrovnik and all city political factors

- In the previous mandate of the current city government the first strategy for the development of sports in the history of the City of Dubrovnik was drafted and unanimously adopted.
- 2025 World Handball Championship
- an opportunity to organize a part (one group competition) of a big sporting event
- raising capacities and competencies and gaining experience of local sports and sports-tourism employees
- establishing Dubrovnik as a desirable and quality host of sports events and sports-tourist destinations as well as enriching the portfolio of major sporting events in the city

The strength of the destination brand of Dubrovnik

- strength and recognizability of Dubrovnik as a destination can significantly help attract sporting events, private investment and entrepreneurs in the field of sports tourism

Destination branding, related to sports is not developed in any city on the Dalmatian coast

- currently there is no destination in Dalmatia that has a pronounced or developed destination branding related to sports

Renovation of the Gruž swimming pool and opening of the Jug Water Polo Club Museum

- swimming pool in Gruž and the announced opening of a museum-memorial exhibition dedicated to VK Jug have the potential to become a sports and tourist attraction

Volunteers in the organization of sports events

- Du Motion involves around 700 volunteers in the organization of a sporting event - a developed civic awareness of the importance and need for volunteering in the community

EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY

At the moment in the City of Dubrovnik it has been about 20 traditional small-scale sports events organized. They ensure the arrival of a larger number of athletes, coaches and sports staff, as well as escorts / families, etc. They usually spend tourist nights outside usual tourist periods of the year. Traditional sporting events as well as regular competitive sporting events and the arrivals associated with them generate an estimated more than 25,000 overnight stays per year. Researchers of sports tourism agree that traditional small-scale sporting events have a more significant and long-term positive impact on the environment in which they are organized compared to one-off large-scale sporting events that can no longer be repeated. Traditional small-scale sporting events have positive effects on the local economy, but also encounter more positive attitudes from the local population. Locals are more likely to participate more in the organization and support traditional small-scale sporting events, and consequently show a sense of pride. It is believed that such sporting events significantly improve the recognizability and attractiveness of the destination, strengthen its competitiveness and positively affect the return of participants in the sporting event to the venue as classic tourists. Small-scale sporting events can be just as important for smaller cities as large events for large cities. A rich portfolio of sporting events will have a better effect on the development of a positive and long-lasting image than a large sporting event that will not be repeated.

TRANSFERABILITY

Since Dubrovnik is already a well-developed tourist destination brand, there is the possibility for transferability, for example to focus on other niche branding activities such as cultural tourism, food tourism, marine tourism, etc.

CHANGES IMPLEMENTED AS A RESULT OF THE PRACTICE

The most significant changes are expected in the future, by 2030. As the biggest change in the course of the project so far, we can point out raising awareness in the local community about the potential of branding Dubrovnik as a sports destination and the impact this can have in an economic sense. As a good example of this, we can cite the decision of the Mayor and the City Council to direct part of the income from the city sojourn tax directly to the organization of traditional sports events, which already generate about 25,000 overnight stays annually.

EVALUATION TOOLS OF THE PRACTICE

In accordance with best practice, once the Strategy for Branding Dubrovnik as Sports Destination is formally accepted by the City Council, an Action Plan will be drafted and implemented that will be evaluated with a Monitoring Plan.

POSSIBLE WEAKNESS OF THE PRACTICE

Possible threats to consider and mitigate in the process of implementation of the Strategy:

- Traffic congestion - existing traffic infrastructure and seasonal traffic congestion can hardly absorb additional (short-term) traffic pressure that can be created by large or mass sporting events
- Lack of capacity, competencies and experience of local sports / business / tourism employees in the candidacy processes for sports events and their organization
- Low likelihood of attracting local businesses as sponsors / donors of sporting events - existing sports clubs as well as current organizers of sports events have great challenges in animating donors as well as in attracting sponsors to cooperate

- Resistance and inflexibility of existing organizers of sports events with new ideas, trends and new circumstances
- Developed destination branding related to sports in Istrian tourist centers (Porec, Rovinj, Umag, Medulin)
- Traditional organization of large significant, recognized and developed destination events in other areas (eg Dubrovnik Summer Festival)
- Occupancy of tourist-accommodation capacities of the destination accommodation capacities in the city of Dubrovnik are largely filled during the season. From June to September it is difficult to organize larger and more massive sports events.
- These threats will be reduced by careful planning with all stakeholders.

