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PRESS RELEASE

INSiGHTS - A project with a proven need

Internal thematic meeting in Vienna on development of tourism strategies

Partners from Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia met **at the 2nd internal thematic meeting** within the **INSiGHTS** project - “**Integrated Slow, Green and Healthy Tourism Strategies**”. The meeting took place in Vienna, Austria on the 10th May 2017 and was hosted by the **University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna (BOKU)**.

Partners were discussing the progress of work packages on Local Strategies, analysing the answers of their pilot destinations on the Self-Assessment manual. The manual was prepared by BOKU under the expert guidance of prof. **Ulrike Pröbstl-Haider** for mapping local resources, analysing strengths and weaknesses, and setting sustainability goals in the respective destinations: »With the help of ‘smileys’ the workshop in Vienna was dedicated to the evaluation of the Status Quo analysis and the exchange of information between the various partners. Each destination explained the outcomes of their stakeholder involvement. This first step shows that all study regions in the project want to improve their destinations’ strategy, the socio-economic benefit for their region and the quality of visitors’ experiences through product development. The workshop also made visible that the awareness of local offers and the unique products in the piloting regions are quite different – it is not so easy to see what is your own “beauty” and extraordinary offer«.

During the project meeting in Vienna partners also discussed the Stakeholder involvement activity presented by the director of **Pons Danubii, Zoltán Bara**, and the State-of-the-art good practices approach, moderated by **Krisztina Campbell** and **Michael Meyer** from **CEEweb for Biodiversity**. The research of good practices has proven to be important. “Young regions can learn from those with well-established offers. Others may learn how to make shoulder seasons (spring and autumn) more attractive”, explained prof. Ulrike Pröbstl-Haider.

The focus of the meeting was also on designing a concept of workshops, including study visits, a critical classroom and a master class. The first bilateral study visit will be organized in June 2017 in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, where the **Regional Development Agency with Business Support Centre for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises** will be hosting project partners from Serbia. A workshop combined with the 3rd thematic meeting of the project is planned for June 2017, when the **Regional Economic Development Agency for Šumadija and Pomoravlje** will host all INSiGHTS project partners in Aranđelovac, Serbia.

For more information about the INSiGHTS project and CEEweb’s role please visit:

<http://www.ceeweb.org/work-areas/priority-areas/tourism/insights-project/>

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