

In the footsteps of the Romans

Roman Spas

Project duration: 01.08.2014 – 31.01.2016

EU co-funding: EUR 136,319.08

The Consortium rallies behind the idea that the valorisation of Roman thermal spas corresponds to a common transnational theme around European heritage, identity and health, which ultimately involves a high number of touristic destinations across several Member States. This Action is based on the conviction that a pan-European grouping of spa-resorts with Roman roots, which offer a proven high level of health and relaxation benefits and sustainability, will enable the implementation of a successful cultural and future-oriented European tourism product that is attractive for domestic and international visitors alike.

The project “**In the footsteps of the Romans**” gathers European thermal water spas and health resorts of Roman origin. The aim of this project is to **combine thermal baths, which have a common tradition**, and develop subsequent linked thematic bookable transnational tourism packages. Already in ancient times, around 2000 years ago and longer, the Romans (Greeks) established thermal baths which have natural thermal waters for recreational purposes and for relaxation as well as for the use of prevention and the treatment of chronic diseases by this day. The combination of historical and cultural aspects with health related tourism offers is especially seen as a high potential tourism product for overseas tourists. One of the main objectives is the quality of the developed packages. The quality aspects of the facilities play a decisive role in order to make the package bookable within Europe and from other continents.

In addition one of the objectives is to strengthen intercontinental incoming tourism to Europe from North America and Asia. The acceptance of high quality European products is already very high in these countries. With a global marketing approach the consortium will ensure the visibility of the project.

From an economic point of view the project will enhance tourism flows and labour market ripple effects. The number of additional jobs and the extension of seasonal jobs will bring added value, especially to structurally less advantaged regions.

Project activities:

WP 1: Historical and cultural background - Carrying out an analysis of the Roman spa culture as a starting point for the core features of the marketing strategy.

WP 2: Quality criteria to join the network - Determining the conditions for the setup and award of a quality scheme for a specialised label. This award scheme will be tested along the course of the action and be modified in accordance with the practical experiences gained.

WP 3: Product definition and development, development of bookable tourism packages - National tourism packages will be developed for the respective regions/Member States of each participating beneficiary. Furthermore transnational tourism packages will be developed and pilot-tested for France-Portugal and Romania-Bulgaria. The Action will examine how to best integrate the product into the regional and national tourism strategies.

WP 4: Dissemination - Dissemination activities include the development of a joint high-quality brochure, a joint online and social media presence, a flyer for the beneficiaries involved in transnational tourism packages and, especially, the participation in key tourism fairs which allow

reaching out to the target groups in the relevant countries of origin (tourism trade in Scandinavia, Russia and the US). Dissemination activities are supposed to convey the image of a shared heritage and core features that are common to the concerned municipalities and spas. This will be illustrated by a fictitious spa visitor in a cartoon-style presentation (his name being “Termus Romanus”), who will guide the visitor to the thermal spas in the different countries involved, instructing and motivating them “on the way”.

WP 5: Project Management and Coordination – The project management and coordination will contribute to the overall success of the project while keeping the contact to the different parties involved as well as ensuring that targets and objectives will be met.

WP 6: Evaluation and exploitation - The Action will also generate a guideline to support interested stakeholders in order to understand the elements, which form the basis of a thermal spa of Roman origin, the quality concept and the services linked to the tourism packages.

Finally, the evaluation report will also include recommendations to regions and municipalities on how best to capitalize on the heritage in combination with sustainable ecological tourism.

Project participants:

Coordinator:

European Spas Association (Belgium)

Partners:

EuropeSpa med & wellness GmbH (Germany)

FIT Gesellschaft für gesundes Reisen mbH (Germany)

Bulgarian Union of Balneology and spa tourism (Bulgaria)

Badenweiler Thermen und Touristik GmbH (Germany)

AQUI O Thermes-Cluster thermal aquitain (France)

The Business Association of Thermalism (Greece)

The Hungarian National Tourist Board (Hungary)

Terme di Chianciano (Italy)

Termas de Chaves Municipality (Portugal)

Romanian Organisation of Spas (Rormania)

Transfer Partners:

Balneario de Archena (Spain)

Terme di Punta Marina-Ravenna (Italy)

Supporting Partners:

European Travel Commission (Belgium)

Federazione Italiana delle Industrie Termalie delle Acque Minerali Curative (Italy)

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