

LOCAL ACTION PLAN

THE NEW MIZIL



Introduction by the Mayor

Searching for talented people who were born, live, learn or work in the city of Mizil and promoting such talents has always been one of the main objectives of the local public administration, even before we have countersigned the letter of intent in becoming partner within “Creative Clusters”. This was the reason for which Mizil entered as partner in this project from day one. Throughout the approval of our application for URBACT II Program, our action became structured, and enabled us to use a new set of modern tools for urban planning.

In early 2009, when URBACT project was launched, we have signed “Óbidos Charter – a pact for creativity”, entering, as a city in a process of re-thinking and re-shaping our vision on urban development, throughout creativity.

We enjoyed tremendously the process of learning from our partners experience, welcoming them in Mizil, during the first workshop of the project was part of our efforts to show that not only a small city like Mizil can keep its partnership promises but also that Romanian local administration has definitely connected itself with European standards aiming high to continue improving its performance.

As we reach this final chapter in this project, I am convinced that our participation in this project was truly beneficial and through the elaboration of this LAP, the city of Mizil has shown its potential of re-defining itself in becoming the **NEW MIZIL**.

EMIL PROȘCAN
PRIMAR, ORAȘUL MIZIL



MIZIL LOCAL ACTION PLAN - SUMMARY

In 2008, the city of Mizil decided to become part of URBACT II project “Creative clusters in low density urban area” because it has been facing economic difficulties and the municipality believed that involving in an European project whose main advantage was the exchange of experiences could be the best solution in identifying ways of stimulating economic development and finding methods to maintain people in the city, especially young and talented people, and to create conditions for them to live and work in a city that is satisfying their needs and desires.

The decision was good because during the implementation phase some concrete actions take place and at the end of the project the local action plan was generated, thanks to all the process of sharing experience with the partners: Óbidos (Portugal) – the lead partner, Reggio Emilia (Italy), Enguera (Spain), Barnsley (Great Britain), Hódmezővásárhely (Hungary), Viareggio (Italy), Jyväskylä (Finland), Catanzaro (Italy) and the Research Institute INTELI – Lisbon (Portugal).

The elaboration of Local Action Plan began with the identification of **initial positioning** and the identification of strengths and weaknesses, grouping all the aspects in three categories: places, people and actions.

From a geographic point of view, Mizil has the advantage of being situated close to the Bucharest airports, on a European road and with access to railway. The city is on the border between hills with recognized wineries and plains suitable for cereals cultures.

Part of the infrastructure owned by the city has been recovered during the last years. The municipality has its offices in a new, multifunctional building. The old building, with a rich history, needs reconstruction.

Educational infrastructure is well represented by kindergarten, primary schools and high schools, but it's still needed a new kindergarten and a primary school in a new residential area developed in the last 20 years.

Cultural house, dedicated to the cultural events has to be updated to modern functions and the new cultural agenda thought by the municipality.

Due to legislation and the rethinking the way of using, open public spaces has to be updated and reinvented.

The city owns a spa – Băile Boboci – that needs an ample modernization process. The location offers good opportunities for tourism but also for other utilities, such residencies for creative people, incubator and so on.

The second section of the diagnosis refers to the people.

The city population registered a decrease during last 20 years, due to several factors, such as: reduction of natural demography, migration of inhabitants, reduction of job opportunities locally. The structure of population from age point of view shows that great part of population is suitable for working. Unfortunately the labor market is not balanced, is the offer of jobs is much less than the request, resulting the small level of salaries for the labors in the city.

The people searching for jobs is increasing every year after the pupils is graduating the high-schools. Entrepreneurs' initiative is not stimulated and a lot of pupils is leaving the town for universities or for jobs and they are not coming back in the city.

Aspects about the actions were grouped in activities related to economy, culture and cooperation, activities that are in the view of the municipality.

In the latest year, Mizil became from an industrial city, with a developed defense industry, furniture industry and food industry, in a more services oriented and agriculture center for wine industry and cereals production. The economy is declined and now is in redefinition process.

Municipality is very interested in the cultural activities with an agenda that became well-know at regional and national level, due to some events in the field of art and literature. But the agenda need to be more structure, more organized.

Cooperation of the city with the villages around aims a regional development through common projects. The city is cooperating also at regional level, but also to national and international level, mainly for exchanges of good practices in different areas such as: businesses promotion, youth, sport and so on.

Taking into account the realities as was identified, the vision of the municipality is to fix the people in town. The municipality of Mizil aims at creating necessary means to attract and keep young people in the city, to insure economical and urban development through creativity and for an active social life, to offer citizens the best working conditions because its motto is:

In your service, citizen!

Following the analysis of the environment and by formulating a vision as far the new image of Mizil should be, following objectives were set:

- 1. Creation of creative areas**
- 2. Promoting talented people**
- 3. Promoting a dynamic cultural agenda**

The measures to be taken were grouped around these main objectives as follows:

01 CREATION OF CREATIVE AREAS

- A. Public spaces
 - a) *Modernization of the old historical building of the City Hall*
 - b) *Boboci Spa – creative competitive pole (investment component)*
 - c) *Accessibility at Boboci Spa*
 - d) *Revitalizing the Main Square*
- B. Educational infrastructure
 - a) *Building a kindergarten and a school in the Han area of the city*
- C. Cultural infrastructure

- a) *Modernization of the City Culture House*

02 PROMOTING TALENTED PEOPLE

A. Talented people

- a) *Identifying and promoting creative persons*
- b) *Contest for the best idea of a creative business*

B. Education and creativity

- a) *Program “School after school”*
- b) *Educational Center for permanent professional training*
- c) *Creative education*

03 PROMOTING A DYNAMIC CULTURAL AGENDA

A. Cultural agenda

- a) *Cultural agenda of the city*
- b) *Performing traditional annual events*
- c) *Publishing of the literary newspaper “Fereastra”*

B. Boboci Spa –competitive pole (services component)

C. Communication

- a) *Formulating a communication strategy*
- b) *Implementing the communication strategy*

The measures described in the Local Action Plan started to be implemented in 2010 and it's projected till 2015. The budget allocated for this plan is around 16.000.000 EURO mainly coming from European Funds through Operational Programs (e.g. for Human Resources Development, Increasing Economic Competitiveness) from the governmental Programs, from local budget but also from other sources (other funds, sponsorships, ticket sales).

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1. THE FRAMEWORK: URBACT-CREATIVE CLUSTERS PROJECT

URBACT is an European program aimed at sustaining learning and exchange of good practice, promoting durable urban development. The program allows CITIES to work together in developing solutions to a multitude of major urban challenges, underlining their key role in confronting complex social changes. URBACT sustains cities to develop new, simple, and sustainable solutions, which integrate the three dimensions of an urban environment: economics, social and environment. URBACT allows cities to SHARE their experiences, their examples of good practice with all specialists involved in urban policies throughout Europe. URBACT represents 300 cities, 29 countries and 5000 active participants and is financed by European Union fund for regional development and its member states.



The project Creative clusters in low density urban areas. The assumption, in starting this project, was that the creativity can act as a driving force in developing economics not only in major cities but also in small cities. So, the main added value that the network of creative clusters

can produce is one of transferring the “creative city model” (aimed at large and middle size cities) towards low density urban areas. In other words, to transfer a large array of so called urban attributes (accessibility, cultural life, technological facilities, competitive clusters, global networking, etc) towards small and medium size cities. This fact is relevant at European Union level, because the project has explored the capacity of creativity to sustain and insure a leap as far social development concerned as well as economical development for small and medium size cities, but also an excellent opportunity to re-think rural development.

The objective of such URBACT network was to promote exchanging experience and good practice and to propose recommendations for policies and action plans connected with creative clusters in low density urban areas. Also, one can notice the partners’ intention to assist all political decision makers and the managers of all operational programs in defining these initiatives in this field, for later to be selected within the programs getting financial assistance through structural funds.

Challenges

The URBACT network dedicated to “Creative clusters in low density urban areas”, is a project of cooperation with added value, which aims at creating a mass exercise of “learning by doing” in these communities. The fundamental assumption is that creativity in developing local economy represents also a functional model besides main urban hubs and urban centers. Furthermore, creativity as a source of innovation, should act as a side by side approach in re-thinking economical and social development in small and medium size cities, in conjunction with the new opportunities concerning accessibility, life of the community, culture and business models based on creativity.

In this frame, the concept of “urban areas with low density” will fit both within the concept of the Organization for Cooperation and Economical Development and within the dual concept of far away/close by or accessibility to a main urban hub, thus rejecting the dual concept urban/rural.

Key notes

Following the activities performed during the developing stage, five sub-themes have been selected, with the purpose of concentrating the common activities of the partnerships in its implementation phase (2009-2011):

- Creative clusters: diversifying local economical bas and opportunities for young people. The partnership will confront itself not only with the impulse of new clusters emerging within creative industries, but also with the use of creativity to re-think some mature local industries, so that they can be stimulated with a new growth potential. On same token, the challenge to create new jobs and employment opportunities, in particular for local young people, will remain an important issue to tackle.
- Events and cultural agendas as catalysts, culture and cultural life, are key ingredients in approaching the idea of a creative city. A common idea in the project is to erase strict boundaries between policies of cultural development and economics at an urban scale.
- Promoting the creative city: a new range of facilities and infrastructures. This is the physical dimension of the partnership activity. A number of elements will be considered: from adapting public spaces and town centers to creative activities [where mixing the use of land plots is crucial against the zoning done in the past], cultural neighborhoods...with people always in the stage light, to a new generation of facilities for business and creative entrepreneurs. Here, a relevant and key role will be performed by the Associated Management Authorities, participants in the various financial schemes for such local investments.
- Creative entrepreneurs and talented people: attracting them and keeping them at local level. The financial support and the counseling support adapted specifically to the creative entrepreneurs and businesses. The branding of creative places will be considered as a frame for an intelligent and focused communication of such support instruments.
- Establishing basic ground: the creative educational background at local level. It must be underlined that many of the cities which are serious about attracting creativity have also extended educational background. In this field Reggio Emilia is a world renowned reference, but also Óbidos or Barnsley are active in introducing advanced methods within

public education area. It is relevant for such practice to be spread around partners in this project.

Partnership

The leader of the project is Obidos (Portugal), and the partners in the project are: Reggio Emilia (Italy), Mizil (Romania), Enguera (Spain), Barnsley (Great Britain), Hódmezővásárhely (Hungary), Viareggio (Italy), Jyväskylä (Finland), and the Research Institute INTELI – Lisbon (Portugal).

During the implementation phase of the project, city of Mizil as partner of “Creative clusters” project has benefit of good experienced shared by partners during study visits and thematic workshop.

During the thematic workshop in Barnsley, some good idea for Mizil has resulted, mainly because Barnsley as Mizil was an industrial city that has been reinvented after the main industry – the mining – was closed. Mizil is facing a similar situation and has understood that it has to rethink the development strategy in order to use what is possessed and to use it: spaces and labor force. During the same workshop, Óbidos presented its cultural agenda that suggested Mizil to make its cultural agenda in a more structured way, more organized and well coordinated. The cultural agenda will include traditional events but also new ones, that will take place in dedicated spaces but also in public spaces, as Jyväskylä presented from its experience. From Hódmezővásárhely, but also from Terni we understood how important is to develop the creative spaces if you want to stimulate the creativity. That’s why a specific session from LAP is dedicated to this issue.

Other experiences influenced the Mizil LAP, as result of participating to thematic workshop and study visit organized by Reggio Emilia. Thus, the concept of creativity in school became a target, as Reggio Emilia and Óbidos has presented. The creativity will come both with the space for school that will be rethink but also as part of educational process.

2. INITIAL POSITIONING

THE CREATIVE ECOSYSTEM

“The importance of creativity has emerged as an essential resource to be competitive in the global world. Nowadays, creativity together with innovation and knowledge [the immaterial component of society] are differentiating factors that influence ideas, products, services and places leading to competitive advantages in all fields of economy.

The “Economy of Culture in Europe” report [European Commission, 2006] states that “Creativity is a complex process of innovation, combining some or all of the following dimensions: ideas, skills, technology, management, production processes as well as culture. Creativity has the ability to benefit almost all economic sectors.”

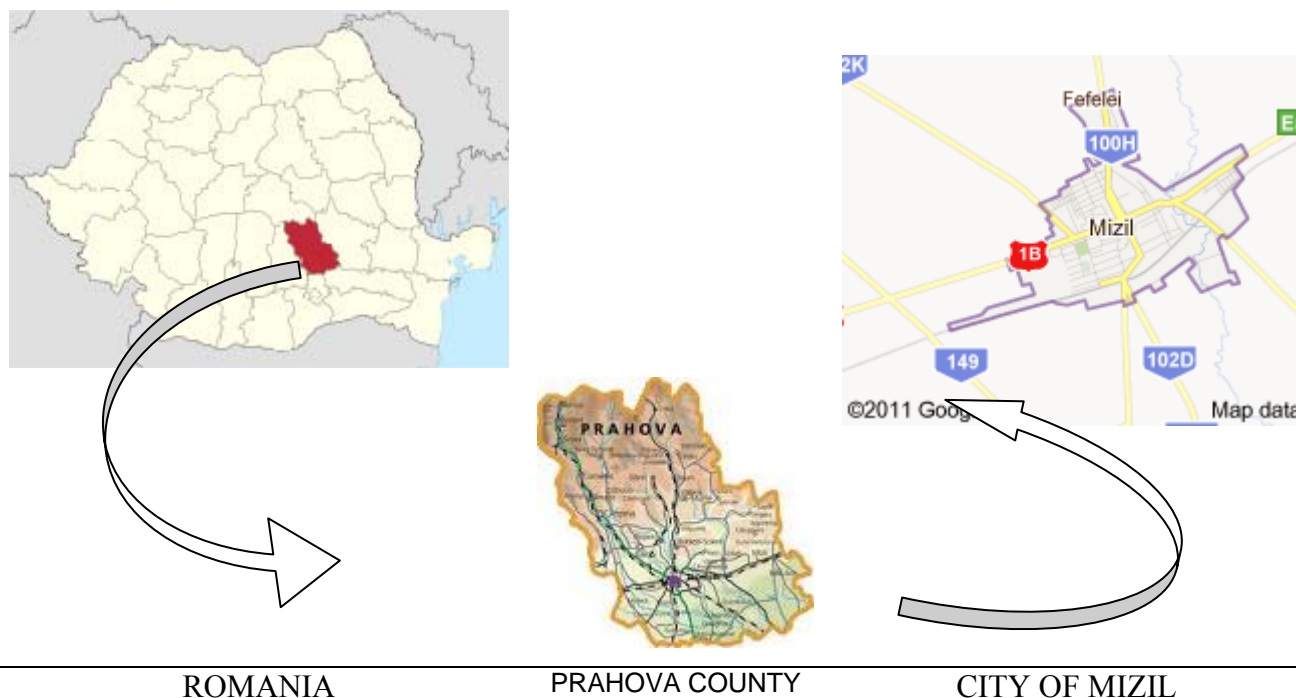
In this context, the concept of creative ecosystem recently posed by the Portuguese think tank on spatial development INTELI it is very useful. The creative ecosystem is an environment of excellence focused on creativity. It comprises: creative people (creative class and entrepreneurs), creative economy (creative industries and clusters) and creative places (creative districts and cities). It is supported by specific creative policies (European, national, regional and local strategies) towards sustainable creative frameworks.”¹

2.1. PLACES

2.1.1. Geography

The city is placed in the south-east of the Prahova county, at the border with Buzau county. Mizil lies at equal distance between the two county capitals – 35 km from Ploiești and same distance from Buzău. Mizil is the only city in Romania sitting on the 45th north parallel.

¹ Baseline Study – URBACT II Project “Creative clusters in low density urban areas”



The city is at the border between fields and hills, at an altitude between 110m and 130 m and is the center of an area Mizil, composed of several villages, connected by very closed common interests, reflected also by their membership within an Association of Intercommunity Development.

The city of Mizil has ownership of Boboci Spa – a tourist facility, situated in Jugureni village, at approximately 10 km from the city.

The city position offers a wide array of advantages, as far the easy access concerned, the connection with the two county capitals Ploiești and Buzău and being on the main road linking Moldavia region to Bucharest. The most important national road crossing Mizil is the European Road E577 Ploiești-Buzău. The city is connected by train, being on the main railroad Ploiești-Buzău. Within 80 km from the International Airport Henri Coandă and 90 km to the International Airport Băneasa, Mizil is an hour away from any worldwide destination.

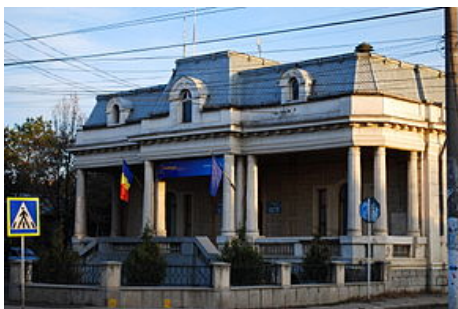
On top of this Mizil sits on the Wine Road, close to the famous vineyards of Tohani, Istrița and Pietroasele.

The total area of the city administrative area is 1931 ha, out of which 432 ha are building permit allowed and 1499 ha are agricultural land.

2.1.2. Infrastructure

City Hall

The local public administration is organized as per Law nr.215/2001 – The law of Public Administration – and performs its duties in several buildings, in accordance with its specific activities. The City Hall itself is using two buildings, an old one, which used to be the main headquarters of the administration up until 2007, and a new one currently being used for this purpose.



The old building, located at 85, Mihai Bravu Street, is a donation made to the City by a former mayor, Leonida Condeescu. The main building was built at beginning of the 20th century, in a neo renaissance architectural style. It is an impressive construction by its architecture and history.

Presently, the building hosts the Europe Direct Center – a centre disseminating European information, the City Library and a hall being used for public meetings. The main lobby of the building allows the organization of various events, with a capacity of up to 50 seats, technical space and equipment for projections and exhibits.

The modern building, situated at 14, Unirii Boulevard, is property of the Prahova County Council, being under the Mizil City Hall direct administration. The building functionality is specially designed to allow working with the public – the main characteristic and function of an administration.



Besides the offices used by the City Hall employees, the building has also 2 meeting rooms, an area frequently used for various events, social and cultural, or meetings, and also a large terrace at top floor, which allows a panorama of the city of Mizil. By all means, this building represents the “heart” of the city, both through location and functionality.

Educational infrastructure

The educational infrastructure of Mizil, which insures the process of learning locally, has been adapted to pre-school, primary, secondary, high school and professional/technical levels and is composed of 5 kindergartens (4 with regular time schedule and 1 with an extended time schedule), 3 general schools, an integrated school group and a high school.

The buildings are in good shape and under permanent maintenance, to be fitted for modern school requirements, concerning both safety and general learning conditions. The school infrastructure harbors, besides class rooms fitted for the learning process, also laboratories, sport halls, libraries and halls for events.

The cultural infrastructure

The City Culture House

A great deal of the social and cultural activities in Mizil, is being hosted by the City Culture House, a building erected during 1965-1966.

The building, property of the City of Mizil and administrated by the Town Hall, has underwent several stages of rehabilitation and modernization, the last such stages being finalized during 2005-2006.

Currently, the City Culture House has a main hall, allowing 384 seats, a stage of approximately 50 sqm, cabins for the actors and/or performers, a projection hall, sound equipment and an air-conditioning and ventilation system.

In 2007, following a feasibility study, the requirement for an extension and a modernization of the building was approved by the City Council. The financing of this project was granted through the government fund “National program for cultural entities” in year 2008.

2.1.3. Open public spaces

In Mizil, the open public spaces are represented by green areas and the main central pedestrian area. The total area of green in the city is 112.605 sqm, i.e. 7 sqm per inhabitant.

The city has a small park in the central area, recently re-fitted and modernized. The park is thought both as a place of relaxation for all ages and a socializing place for the young people due to its wireless coverage. This park became a place for events connected with the national or the city history – due to the presence of a statue “Victory” placed in it – and the special lighting system meant to emphasize such events.

In Teilor area – the city area having the largest density of population in the city due to a large number of apartments - a modern park was recently landscaped, through the “ National program of improving environment conditions through the creation of green areas in local communities”, financed from the Romanian gov’t fund. This project changed completely, for the better the area of Teilor, bringing a fresh new look to it, far from the old “typical communist” look it had. The park, now, can welcome a variety of events that can further attract citizens from other city areas as well, other and above the basic pleasure to stroll around it and enjoy the various landscape arrangements.

Another area, with a lot of residents in it, is MFA area, named after the name of a huge machine construction factory which was once a landmark in Mizil economy, employing over 4000 people. This area has also a big park in its limits, completed with the City hall of sports, a school and a kindergarten , which are public facilities attracting all genders and ages.

The city has also a number of smaller parks or green areas in various parts of it, with similar impact of “well being” for its citizens.

The public amenities, such as public schools, kindergartens, medical units, churches, do also have their own landscaped green areas, the access to these areas being however restricted to their own use.

The so called “protected areas”, consisting of green areas identified around technical installations or main roads, designed to offer a better environment protection are not opened for public use.

The Boboci spa

This spa lies aprox 12 km north of Mizil, in the valley with same name, between the hills of Tohani, enjoying a mild climate throughout the year.

Here, right next to Drăgaica Hill, one can find a number of natural springs, containing iron, salt and magnesium , their quality being comparable to well known similar springs in Calimănești or Căciulata, which were known and in use since the Romans.

Further up, approximately 1 km, on the Boboci creek, one can find the special mud that cures joint diseases.

Back in 1815, this spa appears in a document written by the ruler of the time, Caragea Vodă, under the name of the “healing fountain”. Further, the ruler Ioan Ghica, used to come and enjoy the healthy benefits of the spa. The thermal baths here were highly appreciated in treating and curing rheumatic affections, dermatitis, sexual diseases, etc. The tests run by professor Vișoianu, back in 1883, have shown similarity – as far the quality of treatment – to the famous Bonnes Spa in France.

The spring water of Boboci was first time tested back in 1831 by an Austrian chemist, commissioned at the time by the owner of the spa, Ion Crăciunescu, who attended school in Paris.

Various documents speak of the surroundings of Boboci Spa, such as the “Secular Woods Arhimandrita”, or the fact that the soldiers of Michael the Brave, famous ruler of Muntenia in the 15th century, used the area to re-group and re-gain strength before battling ottoman armies. Due to the area’s non windy mild climate, and proximity of hills, this is the only area where the almond tree grows in Romania and the trees blossom in March. Statistics from 1899 recall that from a total of 120 patients treated at the spa’s for joint diseases, all “walked free”, on their own feet, the result being remarkable to the quality of mineral waters from these springs.

In 1880-1881 the main L shape building and the church are being built, the accommodation consisting of 32 rooms and the traditional Romanian porch. In 1916, due to negligence of some German soldiers from WWI, camping there, a huge fire destroyed most of the premises. The re-building took place in 1921, when the at-the time mayor, Anastasiu Spirică, has re-organized the function of the Spa with the support of the House of Schools, making it a steady destination up until 1944.

In 1952, the Boboci Spa is listed also in the Annuar of Balneology with a number of 5 deserted mineral springs.

In 1972, the buildings are renovated, becoming a camping village for children, and in 1983 a swimming pull was added, operational from 1985.

In accordance with the Decision 249/1990 of Local popular council of Mizil, the spa is being taken into administration by the City Hall of Mizil, under the name “The house of pupils, children and young people from Mizil”.

Currently, the Boboci spa, as per Decision 1359/2002 of the Romanian Gov’t, annex 10, is listed at position 111-118, as public property of City of Mizil, consisting of: main building Baile Boboci area 849,05 sqm; restaurant building area 172,80 sqm; church area 118,70 sqm; cabins area 30,50 sqm, swimming pool area 386,25 sqm, land area 16.030 sqm and a tree plantation of 14.000 sqm.

The Boboci Spa, as a tourist and entertainment destination can be re-launched, but some modernizing investment is needed, as far the access road and utilities concerned.

2.2. PEOPLE

2.2.1. Demography

As per the statistics supplied by National Institute of Statistics, the population of Mizil is 15.750 inhabitants.

The city population registered a decrease during 1992-2010, due to several factors, such as: reduction of natural demography, migration of inhabitants, reduction of job opportunities locally.

The reduction of demography, as a difference between the number of births and number of deaths, is determined, primarily, by the harshening of living conditions, following the transition from centralized economy to free market economy and due to last years economical crises.

The city population was affected also by the migrating process, either towards bigger cities or towards other EU countries, in search of a job or school.

The age structure in the city still indicates a positive trend consisting of 16% young people and only 12% old people, but as the average life expectancy will rise and the birth rate will decline, an older population of Mizil is to be expected in the years to come.

Total population	Age between 0 and 14	Age between 15 and 64	Age over 65
15,750	2,493	11,324	1,933
100%	16%	72%	12%

Such scenario can alter the future development of the city and a shortening of labor force. As per data resulting from the population count back in 2002, the ethnical structure of Mizil population consists of:

Total population	100%
Romanians	87,4%
Gypsies	12,4%
Other nationalities	0,29%

It is estimated that at present time, the gypsy population in the city rose to almost 3,000 people, representing 19% from the total population. Such percentage can further trigger negative input, as it is widely known, that gypsies do not hold continuous jobs nor participate in educational programs.

2.2.2. Labor force

A problem for Mizil is the high jobless rate. From statistical data received from the County Agency dealing with labor force, the percentage of those without a job from the total active population is almost 68%.

Considering that total active population in Mizil is 9000 people, with vast majority working in service area, this jobless ratio is highly alarming.

2.2.3. Youngsters

Total number of pupils registered as entries in all schools from Mizil within the last 4 years is in decrease, in particular in the primary cycle. The pupils attending the high school and vocational school comprises also pupils coming from neighboring villages of the city of Mizil. During school year 2010-2011 from a total of 177 teachers, 68% were steady jobs and 32% on a fluctuating basis. As far the level of education of the teachers concerned, many of these attended in last few years re-training programs, through projects developed by County School Agency of Prahova or EU financed training programs.

A strong positive point is the high percentage of specialized teachers and the increasing rate of graduation (more than 69,5% in primary grade and 74,6% in higher education grade). Such rate is lower in schools where gypsies attend class.

Another prerequisite for a quality learning potential is the high rate of pupils promoting the graduation exams. Regarding secondary education, in school year 2010-2011, the exam was passed by 69.5% of the pupils. The St. Nicholas School recorded the lowest rate of promotion. In this school share of Roma students is the most significant compared to other schools.

Regarding to high school, in 2010-2011 school year, the exam passing rate in the city schools was 74.6%.

2.3. ACTIONS

2.3.1. Economy

As per data supplied by Chamber of commerce of Romania and Public Finance Administration, Mizil is registered with 339 commercial companies. Not all of them are active, due to high taxation and current economical crisis. Per activities and categories we can list 15 companies dealing in agriculture, 42 companies in manufacturing, 38 companies in constructions, 9 companies in transportation services, 132 companies in trade activities, 51 companies in various services, while 52 companies deal in various other fields.

Activity	Number of companies	Percentage of total
Agriculture	15	5%
Productive industries	42	12%
<i>Heavy industry - Ferrous</i>	4	
<i>Wood processing industry</i>	8	
<i>Light industry - textiles</i>	13	
<i>Light industry - Food</i>	17	
Construction industry	38	11%
Transport	9	3%
Trade	132	39%
Services	51	15%
<i>Tourism</i>	9	
<i>Public services</i>	7	
<i>Other services</i>	35	
Other activities	52	15%
TOTAL	339	100%

Industry

The industrial field in Mizil has deteriorated gradually after 1989, the year the centralized – communist type – economy was replaced by free market capitalistic economy.

Mizil was well known in the past for the military equipment manufactured by the mechanical plant MFA, for the furniture and mattresses manufactured by RELAXA, or by the famous vinegar made in Mizil. Today, this is all history.

MFA, the biggest employer in the city, with over and above 3.500 workers, is currently in insolvency due to lack of military orders and no plans of re-conversion towards consumer goods products manufacturing, its assets being sold one by one.

The labor force, in a small percentage however, was re-hired by small companies emerged in mechanical and metallic construction fields.

RELAXA, after a lengthy process of privatization , has reduced gradually its turnover and the number of jobs, working presently at a historical minimum. Some workers moved to smaller companies manufacturing furniture or wood components, but the overall situation is bad.

The food processing industry, even though left without its landmark “vinegar from Mizil”, is highly developed. Two of the biggest food processing companies in Romania, ANA&CORNEL and CARMISTIN are located here and created a vast nationwide network of distribution.

Considering the city location, on the border between the plane (the Romanian Plane) suitable for cereals crops, and the hills with big surfaces with vineyards, the food industry presents typical characteristics as collecting and processing centre for cereals and grapes, but also animal breeding, this industry is bound to develop further in the city, becoming an export item as well on international level.

If cereals products, milling and baking companies can speak about regional business, in terms of wine products, they are already well known internationally, being awarded at various international exhibitions in the field. In Mizil is situated the headquarter of BUDUREASCA vineyards, which products are internationally promoted, being the brand used officially by the company TAROM on international flights. In the city neighborhood, with a selling point also in Mizil is TOHANI vineyard that are already exporting heavily in EU market (Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg of Finland), North America (USA, Canada), Asia or Russia. These vineyards are part of the internationally highly promoted “Wine Road of Romania”.

After 2000, city of Mizil became an important player in the textile industry as a result of the activities developed by several companies in the field which chose Mizil as operative basis for their export contracts. This field, inspite of the overall crisis in this sector, is still active in Mizil.

Agriculture

The position of the Mizil, as a center of agricultural activities in the area, has achieved perfect adaptability for various crops, from vineyards to cereals, from fruits to vegetables, and to all animal breeding and the relevant processing .

Using more and more EU funds for agriculture, individuals or organized companies dealing in agriculture developed steadily their activities.

Services

This sector has become the main economical sector of the city, as far number of employees, and is under continuous development. Trade sector is well represented both by a central commercial area, proximity and residential areas shops, as well as supermarkets, part of nationwide chains. In the city there are 6 banks, 5 suppliers of internet and communication systems. Quality of services has grown steadily and continuously adapted to the requirements of the population.

Public services are offered by a reduced number of personnel – last cut of 50% being operated in 2010 - which are insuring all necessary functions for the citizens and the commercial agents both in Mizil and surrounding villages.

2.3.2. Culture

The city of Mizil has an extensive cultural agenda followed up both by the City Hall and the City Culture House. Within the City Hall, there is a consultant to the Mayor that organizes the cultural newspaper FEREAȘTRA, the annual folk music festival TATIANA ȘTEPA, the annual National Competition for Literature AGATHA GRIGOREȘCU BACOVIA (wife of famous poet GEORGE BACOVIA).

The City Culture House, under current legal frame, has the obligation of formulating , at beginning of each year, the cultural agenda, which includes, projections of movies, presentation of plays, organizing events (book launchings, workshops, etc.), organizing concerts and various trainings.

2.3.3. Cooperation

Cooperation at local level

The city of Mizil is the initiator and leader of an Association of Intercommunity Development, which reunites 17 villages around Mizil. The purpose of the association is to develop projects of interest for the area, to the benefit of all members.

Cooperation at regional level

Mizil is an active participant to all activities initiated by the Prahova County Council , the regional ruling body, or by the Gov't representative in Prahova County.

Cooperation at national level

The city of Mizil is very active at national level, too, its mayor holding a key position with the Association of Cities in Romania. Due to this, the mayor is member in the Monitoring Committee of Regional Operational Program for EU funding for South-Muntenia Region and also member of similar committee for the Operational Program for Administrative Capacity Development. Such positions allow an excellent representation of the cities in Romania.

Cooperation at international level

At international level, a first initiative of developing a bilateral international cooperation covering common language, tradition and culture, was done with city of Iargara from Republic of Moldavia. Starting 2010, city of Mizil and city of Lingewaard (NL) entered a twinning agreement. The common agenda is highly oriented towards cooperation in promoting business exchange, in sports as a public dynamic, in civic organization, culture and youth exchange.



Mizil involvement in the project “Creative clusters in low density urban areas” is part of the strategy of cooperation with administrative units in other countries, the first action of this kind. The city of Mizil actively participated to URBACT project activities, as a first partner hosting in 2009 a thematic workshop from the 5 workshops included in the project. The hosted event was a good opportunity to share experience both with partners and with participants at the workshop, but also a good opportunity to promote the city. The event was highly appreciated. The intention is to continue and develop such projects at bilateral or multilateral level, including interregional cooperation.



3. VISION AND STRATEGY: FIXING PEOPLE IN TOWN

The municipality of Mizil aims at creating necessary means to attract and keep young people in the city, to insure economical and urban development through creativity and for an active social life, to offer citizens the best working conditions because its motto is:

In your service, citizen!

In 2008, the City Hall promoted a strategy of durable development for period 2008-2015. Following the participation in project “Creative clusters in low density urban areas” and by achieving the relevant experience in this project, but also as part of promoting such creativity, some of the measures from the strategic development have been carried over and further enhanced through this local plan of action.

Formulating the objectives and the strategy, was done based on a diagnose analysis of the environment, analysis which identified the weak and the strong points of the city, but also the opportunities and threats one could see.

Up until the final version of the local plan was submitted, the measures included in the plan were analyzed by the Local Support Group, formed by representatives of the stakeholders.

3.1. Stakeholders

While initiating the project “Creative Clusters” stakeholders were identified in view of creating the Local Support Group. Thus, it is considered that this project is of interest to following categories:

- Local public administration – it represents the main group interested in developing and implementing the local plan of action.
- Local Council of City of Mizil – approves the LPA and the needed budget allocation.
- Economical entities – sustain talented persons through sponsoring, furnish information as far operating commercial activities.
- Teachers – teaching young people to develop creative talents
- Persons with creative activities – furnish information as far necessities to be fulfilled for creative persons.
- Young people – pupils, students – the “raw material” for what will become the “creative segment” of the population, but also the future entrepreneurs.
- County Council – insures promoting the plan and attracting financial sustainability for it.
- Management authorities – furnish information and support in obtaining financing measure contained by LPA.

COMPOSITION OF URBACT LOCAL SUPPORT GROUP

Name	Sex	Organization	Type of organization	Activities	Position	Age
Proşcan Emil	M	Mizil Municipality	Local administration	Administration	Mayor	60
Sandu Ana	F	Mizil Local Council	Local	Administration	Counselor	45

			administration			
Istrate Constantin	M	Grigore Tocilescu high school	Public institution	Education	Professor	58
Mărgărit Romeo	M	City hospital	Public institution	Health	Medical manager	60
Preda Doru	M	S.C. P&M Reparatii S.R.L.	Private business	Technical appliances reparations	Administrator	55
Mladin Doru	M	Mizil Municipality	Local administration	Administration	City Manager	53
Alixandrescu Liliana Florentina	F	Prahova County Council	Regional administration	Administration	Counselor	45
Jitaru Costel	M	Management Authority for Operational Regional program	Management Authority	Program Management	Counselor	32
Frangulea Marian	M	Children club	Public institution	Education	Administrator	58
Mănăilescu Lucian	M	Mizil Municipality	Local administration	Press department	Counselor for culture	58
Pavel Elena	F	Grigore Tocilescu high school	Public institution	Education	Professor	55
Samoilă Mendy	F	Grigore Tocilescu high school	Public institution	Education	Professor	55
Tudorache Nicoleta	F	City library	Public institution	Library	Servant	37
Sturz Petronela	F	Mizil Municipality	Local administration	Project management department	Counselor	38
Baciu Carol	M	Tase Dumitrescu Vocational School	Public institution	Education	Manager	62
Procopie Georgeta	F	P.F. PROCOPIE GEORGETA	Independent trader	Artistic activities	Artist	53
Elisei Anca	F	Bucharest University	Public institution	Education	Student	22

3.2. Objectives

Following the diagnose analysis of the environment and by formulating a vision as far the new image of Mizil should be, following objectives were set:

1. *Creation of creative areas*
2. *Promoting talented people*
3. *Promoting a dynamic cultural agenda*

The setting of above objectives was done in relation to the key sub themes developed within the URBACT project “Creative clusters in low density urban areas” for the period 2008-2011, as follows:

1. Creative clusters: diversifying economical infrastructure and opportunities for young people.
2. Events and cultural agenda as a catalyst.
3. Promoting the idea of a creative city: a new set of facilities and infrastructure.
4. Creative entrepreneurs and talented people: attracting them and then keeping them in the city.
5. Establishing the base: a creative educational environment at local level.

3.3. Measures to be taken

01 CREATION OF CREATIVE AREAS

A. Public spaces

- a) *Modernization of the old historical building of the City Hall*

The purpose of this action in rehabilitating the old building where the City Hall functioned up until 2007, by maintaining its historical architecture and also by re-shaping its functionality , will allow us to set the stage for a number of future events, from gatherings and meetings to exhibits. The project was registered in 2007 with the Ministry for Regional Development and Tourism, through the “Program for diminishing risks in case of natural disasters and preparing for emergency situations”, financed by a common facility between the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and co-financing from the Romanian Government. The additional costs incurred by the full rehabilitation of the building are financed from the local budget.

The technical documentation for the modernization of this building was finalized and approved by all parties and works shall begin in 2012.

Estimated value: 1,250,000 EURO.

Financing sources: Governmental and local budget funds allocated as per the project.

Completion period: 2011-2013

b) Boboci Spa – creative competitive pole (investment component)

This area will be re-shaped as a creative competitive pole for the city of Mizil, and its development will have as base an integrated project covering minimum 1 project for the rehabilitation of business infrastructure, 1 project for research and development and innovation and 2 projects “soft”, out of which at least one will cover the management of the pole and its monitoring in making sure the implementation of the strategy is working properly. The exact profile of the pole shall be determined through a feasibility study, but the vision of the local authority is that the objective is to be shaped as a cluster of local creativity, an incubator of experience and consultancy for the local business community, a show case of the direct results and directions of development for the city, and last but not least, as an artistic playground.

Consequently, via this investment project, the Boboci Spa will be prepared for its new function.

Estimated value: 3,250,000 EURO

Financing sources: Operational Program for Increasing Economic Competitiveness and local budget

Completion period: 2012-2015

c) *Accessibility at Boboci Spa*

The Boboci Spa is located at 12 km from Mizil. At present time the link between Mizil and this property which lies on the administrative ground of a neighboring village to Mizil, is done by a county road which needs extensive rehabilitation.

In order to dig out the potential of Boboci Spa, as a creativity and competitiveness pole, but also to ensure the same for the surrounding area, called the 'Wine Road', it's highly necessary that this road is modernized and suitable means of public transportation are created. Considering the importance of this road for the entire area, it is estimated that such project shall be accepted for financing through the National Program of Developing Infrastructure, currently proposed by the Government.

Estimated value: 4,000,000 EURO

Financing sources: National Program for Infrastructure Development

Completion period: 2013-2015

d) *Revitalizing the Main Square*

The pedestrian area in the center shall be extended and re-shaped for a multitude of public functions:

- a relaxation area;
- an area where main city events can be carried;
- an area of shopping local products, antique shops, small manufacturing shops where tourists can actually see how local products are crafted.

Estimated value: 500,000 EURO

Financing sources: local budget

Completion period: 2012-2015

B. Educational infrastructure

a) Building a kindergarten and a school in the Han area of the city

By the end of the 1999, a new residential neighborhood developed in the east side of the city, called Han area. The distance that the children have to cover each day to the nearest kindergarten is 1.5 km. For this reason, it is highly considered, as a project, the building of a kindergarten and of a school in this area. The project must consider the activities carried out inside.

Estimated value: 2,000,000 EURO

Financing sources: National Program for Infrastructure Development

Completion period: 2013-2014

C. Cultural infrastructure

a) Modernization of the City Culture House

In order to adapt the current building to the future cultural activities of the Cultural Centre, it is highly necessary that the building is modernized through a full rehabilitation of the main hall, an extension for the entry of the spectators and a completely new technical system covering light, sound, ventilation, seats, etc.

Estimated value: 1,000,000 EURO

Financing sources: National program for cultural activities and local budget

Completion period: 2010-2012

02 PROMOTING TALENTED PEOPLE

A. Talented people

a) Identifying and promoting creative persons

During 2010 a process of identifying talented people was started, following the implementation of “Creative clusters” project. The process is still running, a great deal of information being gathered.

In promoting creative persons, a number of opportunities were considered, such as contests, participation in national and international projects. We have established a permanent link between City Hall and talented people, also the local administration is supporting the co-financing of these projects and the sponsoring of the travel expenses for these gifted people, in order for them to attend various gatherings and events.

Estimated value: 10,000 EURO

Financing sources: local budget

Completion period: permanent

b) Contest for the best idea of a creative business

Starting 2012, a contest will be launched to find and promote the best idea of creative businesses. The people attending this contest will be strictly from Mizil. The winner shall receive a financial support to sustain the administrative cost of developing his winning business idea.

Estimated value: 24,000 EURO/year

Financing sources: local budget

Completion period: annually, starting with 2012

B. Education and creativity

a) Program “School after school”

We are currently running a project called “School after school”, which has as main objective the prevention and the reversal of school abandon by maintaining/reintegrating in education of those pupils who are a risk factor in early abandoning of school in order to keep them trained for the labor market opportunities.

In 2011 a new application will be registered for a second project “school after school”.

This new one shall cover a more creative approach of activities to identify and develop creativeness with the final beneficiaries.

Estimated value: 900,000 EURO

Financing sources: Operational Program for Human Resources Development and local budget.

Completion period: 2010-2013

b) Educational Center for permanent professional training

The vocational school “Tase Dumitrescu” – a pre-university educational center – shall enhance its educational offer by organizing of a “Educational Centre for continuous professional training” aimed at covering the needs of the local job market. For sectors where Mizil already shows growth potential, such as the wine industry , the centre shall be structured as regional training centre, and even with an international exposure to it towards neighboring countries in particular.

The basic infrastructure (buildings, minimal utilities, etc.) currently existing at “Tase Dumitrescu” is sufficient for the educational activities. By attracting financing to develop new educational programs, these existing conditions will be adjusted, enhanced and modernized, so that learning process is performing at best.

Estimated value: 1,500,000 EURO

Financing sources: Operational Program for Human Resources Development and local budget

Completion period: 2012-2013

c) Creative education

The local authority vision looks at re-considering current methods used in the education process, by using a creative technique. Thus, teachers will be retrained, scholarships and exchange of teachers shall be considered, as well as intensive use of technology of information and communication.

Estimated value: 350,000 EURO

Financing sources: Financial Mechanism for European Economic Space and local budget.

Completion period: 2012-2015

03 PROMOTING A DYNAMIC CULTURAL AGENDA

A. Cultural agenda

a) Cultural agenda of the city

We are approaching final stage of registration for the Cultural Centre Adrian Paunescu, through the fusion of the City Culture House and the City Public library. The new centre will be responsible for the cultural agenda of the city.

The cultural agenda shall include following categories of activities:

- movie projections;
- performing of theatrical plays;
- concerts;
- exhibitions;
- book launching, specific events (dedicated to Day of Europe, Mother's Day, Children's Day, etc.); workshops, etc.;
- various contests for music, dance, graphic art, decorative arts, etc.

These activities and events included in the cultural agenda shall be performed in all creative spaces property of the City hall, from closed spaces, specially designed and dedicated for cultural events, from closed spaces having different daily destination from one hosting cultural events, up to open spaces.

Estimated value: 25.000 EURO/year

Financing sources: local budget, attracting financing through projects, tickets sale.

Completion period: permanent

b) Performing traditional annual events

For many years, Mizil hosts traditional events such as the annual Fair of St. Peter, Fall Celebrations, Christmas Celebration, Children's Day, The Mizil Day, etc. These events represent a good opportunity to promote local manufacturing, local traditions, but also to promote talents through connected events, such as festivals, contests, etc.

Considering the good visibility these events are giving to the city, this will remain an annual task.

Estimated value: 25,000 EURO/year

Financing sources: sponsorships, participation fees, local budget

Completion period: permanent

c) Publishing of the literary newspaper “Fereastra”

The FEREAstra (“The Window”) cultural newspaper is both a literature publishing and a vehicle in promoting talented people from Mizil within the field of literature. The news paper is publishing various creations awarded at the literature contest the public administration is holding every year.

Estimated value: 25.000 EURO/year

Financing sources: sponsorships

Completion period: permanent

B. Boboci Spa –competitive pole (services component)

This area will be re-shaped as a creative competitive pole for the city of Mizil, and its development will have as base an integrated project covering minimum 1 project for the rehabilitation of business infrastructure, 1 project for research and development and innovation and 2 projects “soft”, out of which at least one will cover the management of the pole and its monitoring in making sure the implementation of the strategy is working properly. The exact profile of the pole shall be determined through a feasibility study, but the vision of the local authority is that the objective is to be shaped as a cluster of local creativity, an incubator of experience and consultancy for the local business community, a show case of the direct results and directions of development for the city, and last but not least, as an artistic playground.

As we have already mentioned, besides the project of research and development and innovation, at least 2 new soft projects shall be developed, which will integrate following actions:

- Training programs of common interest for the pole members; programs of disseminating and informing members; exchange of good practice; mentoring programs and/or coaching; know how transfers; seminars and workshops of common interest for the pole, by activities such: training, consultancy, participations of SME to fairs, feasibility studies, industrial property for SME, renting highly qualified personnel;
- Programs covering management of the pole, which covers the administrative activities of the pole responsible, monitoring implementation of the projects approved for financing, of the development strategy, etc.

The program for financing such projects shall be launched at the end of 2011.

Estimated value: 1,000,000 EURO

Financing sources: Operational Program for Increasing Economic Competitiveness and local budget

Completion period: 2012-2015

C. Communication

a) Formulating a communication strategy

The City Hall of Mizil shall contract an external consultant, specialized in promotion and publicity and with experience in communication between public authority and general public, to prepare and present a strategy of communication fitting local profile. Following this step, a final strategy of communication shall be the result, which will need to be approved by the Local Council.

Estimated value: 15,000 EURO

Financing sources: local budget

Completion period: 2012

b) Implementing the communication strategy

The communication strategy, earlier mentioned, shall be implemented primarily with human resources from local public administration staff, and only on particular

requirements an external consultant or manufacturers of promotion materials may be contracted.

Estimated value: 30.000 EURO/year

Financing sources: local budget

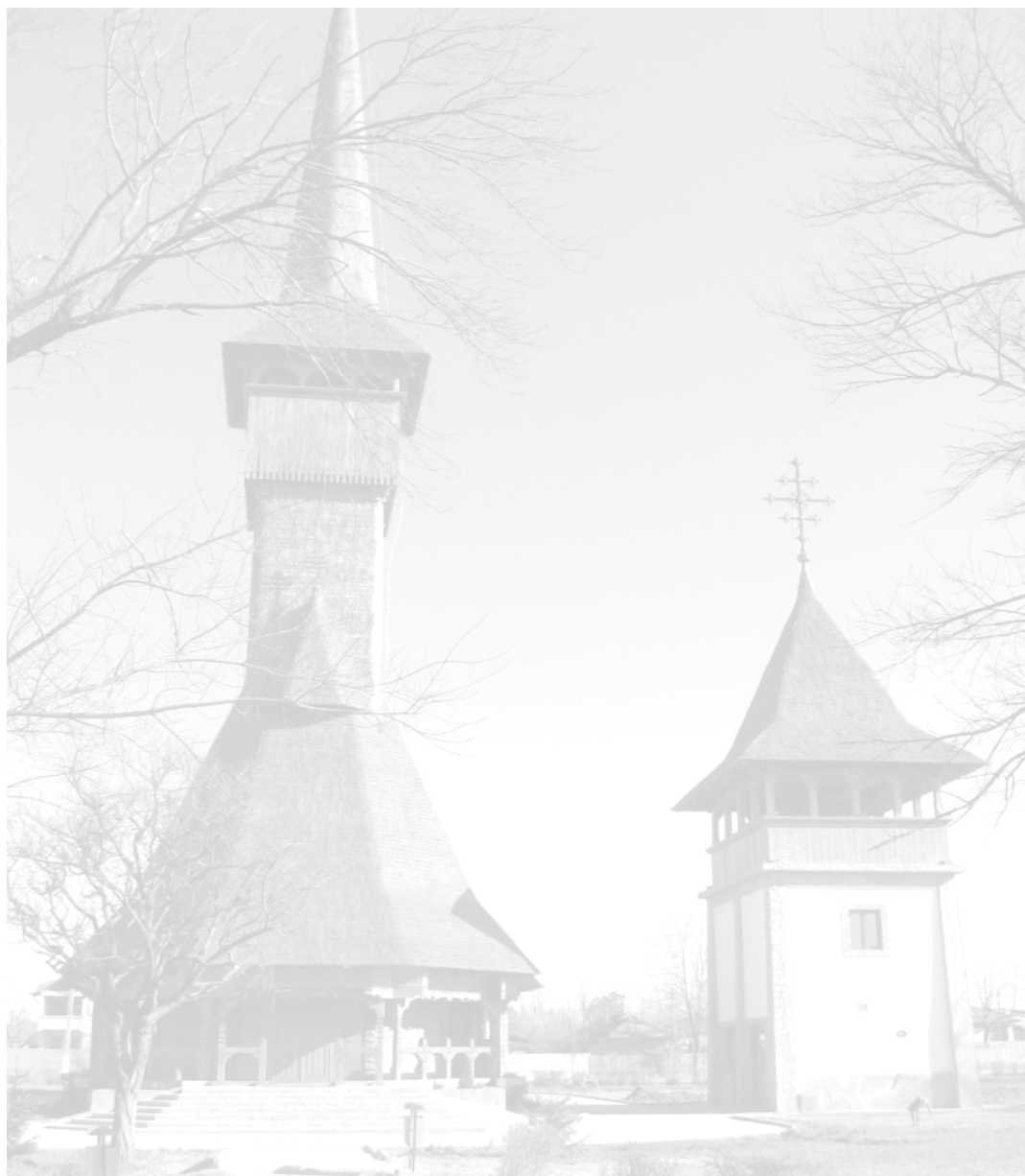
Completion period: permanent

SUMMARY OF LAP's MEASURES

Measure	Estimated budget	Financing sources	Period
01 CREATION OF CREATIVE AREAS			
A. Public spaces			
<i>a) Modernization of the old historical building of the City Hall</i>	1,250,000 EURO	Governmental and local budget funds allocated as per the project	2011-2013
<i>b) Boboci Spa – creative competitive pole (investment component)</i>	3,250,000 EURO	Operational Program for Increasing Economic Competitiveness and local budget	2012-2015
<i>c) Accessibility at Boboci Spa</i>	4,000,000 EURO	National Program for Infrastructure Development	2013-2015
<i>d) Revitalizing the Main Square</i>	500,000 EURO	local budget	2012-2015
B. Educational infrastructure			
<i>a) Building a kindergarten and a school in the Han area of the city</i>	2,000,000 EURO	National Program for Infrastructure Development	2013-2014

C. Cultural infrastructure			
<i>a) Modernization of the City Culture House</i>	1,000,000 EURO	National program for cultural activities and local budget	2010-2012
02 PROMOTING TALENTED PEOPLE			
A. Talented people			
<i>a) Identifying and promoting creative persons</i>	10,000 EURO	local budget	permanent
<i>b) Contest for the best idea of a creative business</i>	24,000 EURO/year	local budget	annually, starting with 2012
B. Education and creativity			
<i>a) Program “School after school”</i>	900,000 EURO	Operational Program for Human Resources Development and local budget	2010-2013
<i>b) Educational Center for permanent professional training</i>	1,500,000 EURO	Operational Program for Human Resources Development and local budget	2012-2013
<i>c) Creative education</i>	350,000 EURO	Financial Mechanism for European Economic Space and local budget	2012-2015
03 PROMOTING A DYNAMIC CULTURAL AGENDA			
A. Cultural agenda			
<i>a) Cultural agenda of the city</i>	25.000 EURO/year	local budget, attracting financing through projects, tickets sale	permanent
<i>b) Performing traditional annual events</i>	25,000 EURO/year	sponsorships, participation fees, local budget	permanent

<i>c) Publishing of the literary newspaper “Fereastra”</i>	25.000 EURO/year	sponsorships	permanent
B. Boboci Spa – competitive pole (services component)			
<i>Boboci Spa –competitive pole (services component)</i>	1,000,000 EURO	Operational Program for Increasing Economic Competitiveness and local budget	2012-2015
C. Communication			
<i>a) Formulating a communication strategy</i>	15,000 EURO	local budget	2012
<i>b) Implementing the communication strategy</i>	30.000 EURO/year	local budget	permanent
TOTAL for 2010-2015	16.000.000 EURO		



Municipality of Mizil_Romania_September, 2011
In the framework of the URBACT Programme

