



**URBACT III**  
**TOURISM FRIENDLY CITIES**

**INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN – DRUSKININKAI**





## Tables of contents

Introduction .....	3
Part 1a City context and definition of the initial policy challenge .....	4
Part 1b Focus .....	7
Part 1c The policies and concrete actions developed by the partner city so far in relation to the policy challenge.....	8
Part 1d Description of the process .....	12
Part 2a Objectives, actions and schedule .....	13
Part 2b Small Scale Actions (SSA) .....	19
Part 2c Resourcing .....	23
Part 2d Risk analysis .....	23
Lessons from URBACT networks: Self assessing your integrated action plan .....	



## Introduction

The Integrated Action Plan of Druskininkai Municipality is the document which has been developed as a result of URBACT project 'Tourism Friendly cities' of Action Planning Network (an exchange and learning tool for cities that have common challenges to be addressed in a transnational learning environment with peers and experts. It was worked out with local stakeholders to agree focusing on implementing the policy challenge locally. Integrated Action Plan is a succinct document defining actions to be implemented, covering the planned timings, implementation responsibilities, costings, funding sources, monitoring indicators and risk assessment of the actions.

URBACT is the European Territorial Cooperation programme aiming to foster sustainable integrated urban development in cities across Europe. It is an instrument of the Cohesion Policy, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the 28 Member States, Norway & Switzerland. It enables cities to work together to develop solutions to major urban challenges, reaffirming the key role they play in facing increasingly complex societal changes.

TOURISM-FRIENDLY CITIES is an Action Planning Network aimed at exploring how tourism can be made sustainable in medium-sized cities, reducing the negative impact on neighbourhoods and areas interested by different types of tourism and its related aspects through integrated and inclusive strategies keeping a balance between the needs of the local community, in terms of quality of life and of services available, and the promotion of sustainable urban development at environmental, social and economic level.



The project 'Tourism Friendly cities' won a competitive process, and is now one of a 23 selected networks selected at European level to conduct such work. 23 such networks as TFC, gathering 26 countries and 203 partners, were approved by the programme's Monitoring Committee on 25 June 2019. It focuses mainly on exchange & learning.

Druskininkai city is a partner city in a network of 9 cities which includes: Braga, Cáceres, Dun Laoghaire, Krakow, Venice, Dubrovnik, Rovaniemi + led by Genoa.



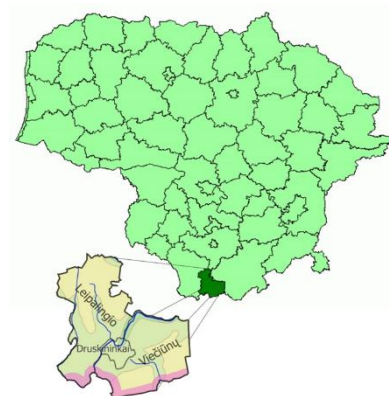


## 1A. City context and definition of the initial policy challenge

Druskininkai city: area 24 km<sup>2</sup>, population 13 893.

Druskininkai municipality: area 453,92 km<sup>2</sup>, population 21868.

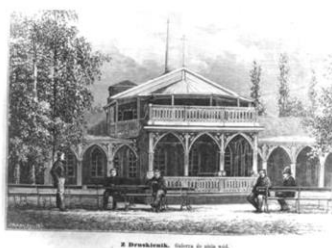
Druskininkai is a balneological, mud and climate therapy resort, located in southern Lithuania. It is the largest Lithuanian resort, famous for its chloride sodium-calcium-magnesium waters of different mineralisation (small, medium, large and dry-salted). Mineral waters are used for various balneological procedures and for drinking purposes. The climate at the resort is typical of a forested plain with continental influence and high levels of air ionisation. In Druskininkai, mineral waters and mud are used to treat the articular, spinal, respiratory, cardiovascular, nervous systems, and gynaecological, gastric, hepatic, intestine and skin diseases. Druskininkai is a modern unique Lithuanian resort city which successfully combines its century old treatment traditions with modern methods and advanced technologies, providing highest quality wellness, tourism, sports and recreation services. Attractive tourism infrastructure, well-developed and efficient mineral water, mud and climate therapies, highest quality spa and wellness services, thematic aqua park, and the only indoor skiing centre in Europe rank Druskininkai among the best European resorts. The city has developed its tourism base and is struggling to changing its international marketing/ branding strategy - to be seen as a modern spa resort with deep rooted treatment traditions and diversified services.



### RESORT SINCE 1794

Cure mud and mineral water treatment

**18.6 thousand tourists**



### SOVIET TIMES

Mass-healing, sanatorium treatment for Soviet Union citizens

**400 thousand tourists**



### TODAY

Old treatment traditions and modern facilities

**336 thousand tourists (2018)**



Until COVID-19 pandemic Druskininkai was annually visited by almost 370 thousand tourists from all over the world. Accommodation services are provided by 471 public and private establishments offering more than 8 thousand beds at a time. Being one of the largest resorts in Lithuania, Druskininkai has the largest number of accommodation establishments (139 establishments in 2018), including 36 hotels and guesthouses, 4



sanatoriums and rehabilitation centers). Before pandemic (2010-2018) the number of tourists staying in accommodation establishments has increased from 203 062 tourists to 336712 tourists (65.8 percent).

A great variety of tourism, recreation, cultural and entertainment activities can satisfy even the most demanding visitor. Deep-rooted treatment traditions, well-developed and efficient mineral water, mud and climate therapies, high quality wellness services, attractive tourist infrastructure and high quality offered at a

competitive price are the features that rank Druskininkai as one of the best European resorts. The image of Druskininkai as a safe and hospitable tourist destination has a large effect on the competitiveness of Lithuanian tourism sector and economy.

Tourism and services account for more than 50% of local economy. Key local industry and employment sectors in Druskininkai are tourism and service sector 51,37 %, education, transportation and logistics 12,3 %, health care and other utility and social services 10 %.

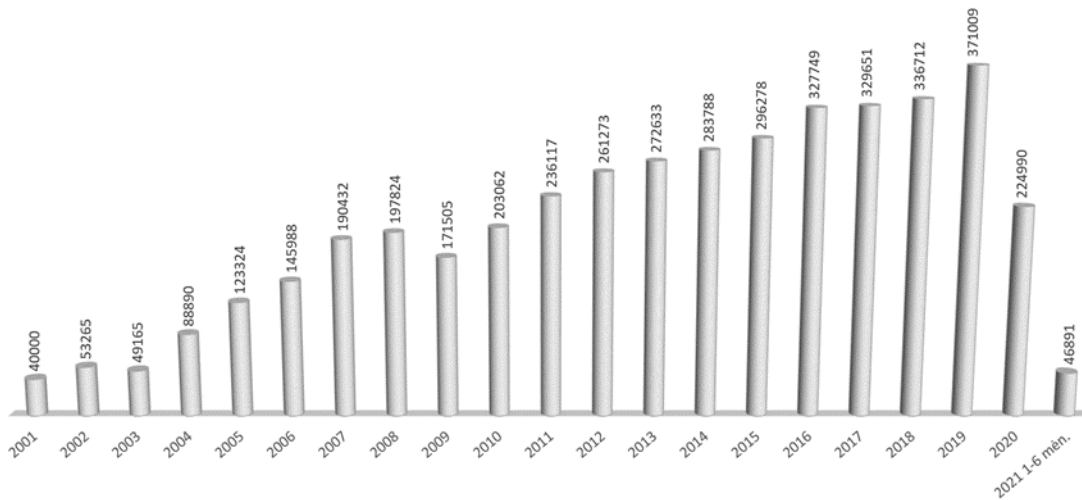
Of all four Lithuanian resorts, Druskininkai resort suffered the most during the pandemic due to seasonality factor. During 2020 and 2021 summertime the Covid-19 pandemic liberations took place and Lithuanians preferred to choose the seaside resorts of Neringa and Palanga, so these resorts did not lose so many customers, as the quarantine liberations coincided with the warm season. Druskininkai had previously eliminated the seasonality factor due to its developed infrastructure of sanatoriums and recreation centers, used to receive tourists from Lithuania and abroad at all times of the year. However, in year 2020 the quarantine that began in the spring and later extended in the winter caused a great deal of damage to the resort of Druskininkai and its businesses. The number of foreign tourists in Druskininkai in 2020 compared to 2019 decreased by 77.8%, meanwhile in the first half of year 2021 it fell by 98.3% compared to the same period of year 2019.





Lithuanian tourist flows also decreased, but not so drastically, and helped businesses earn at least during the summer season. 2020 In the summer, even more Lithuanians visited Druskininkai than in the summer before the pandemic.

### Tourist flows in Druskininkai 2001-2021 m. (1-6 months)



From a business standpoint, the municipality supported the business by exempting it from 25% real estate and land tax in 2020, also the municipality of Druskininkai gave outdoor cafes access to public spaces. The Lithuanian government provided subsidies for downtime, which many tourism businesses took advantage of this offer.

Although the number of tourists in Druskininkai is decreasing in absolute numbers, we see a tendency that local tourism is becoming more popular in Lithuania and we are trying to take advantage of this by investing in the quality of events, city holidays and advertising the resort.

However, Druskininkai is ready to receive tourists - the proportion of people vaccinated in Lithuania has already reached the EU average, so the top-class services provided by the resort should be available to everyone who has been vaccinated or has recently contracted Covid-19.

### Employment levels





In 2020 the employment level in Druskininkai municipality was 11.8 thousand. The employment rate was 80 % (female - 82.3 %, male - 78.5). In 2000 the unemployment level in Druskininkai was 29% while in 2020 it was 8%. Effective organization of public works in Druskininkai municipality contributes to increasing the employment of disadvantaged people and to developing the skills needed to integrate into the labour market. 45 % of working population are employed in tourism related businesses.

Statistical data show the negative demographic trends in Druskininkai municipality: ageing population, falling birth rate, increasing migration. The average age of the population in the last decade has increased by six years (from 43 in 2010 to 49 in 2019). The average age of women remains five to six years longer than that of men. The number of children and the working age population is significantly decreasing. This leads to a shortage of skilled labour. The main reasons for population decline are negative natural population change, migration to foreign countries, internal migration of youth and families with children to other municipalities. In addition, a new trend has been observed - the arrival of older people to live in Druskininkai. According to the data of the Department of Statistics, during the period of 2010 - 2018 net migration of Druskininkai municipality was negative.

The fact that Druskininkai is a resort affects real estate property and rent prices. According to the Real Estate Property Market Analysis provided by JSC "Dzūkai", real estate property prices in Druskininkai municipality are from 35 to 50% higher than in other neighbouring municipalities (Alytus, Lazdijai and Varėna). The price varies from 1500 to 3000 Eur/m<sup>2</sup> depending on that which part of the city apartments are in. A big part of average local families cannot afford buying apartment in the central part of the city. 30 % of apartments in the city are bought for commercial purposes (provision of accommodation services). One third of the apartments - as the second apartment by people from other Lithuanian cities. They are used by the owners as their holiday and weekend accommodation, and it is also their investment to ensure the future. Lithuanians tend to own their apartment or house instead of renting it. This trend prevails in Druskininkai as well. Up to 20 % of apartments are rented in Druskininkai but only up to 8 % are for permanent rent. The rest are short term rentals for the tourists. The long-term rental prices vary from 200 to 350 Eur/month depending on size and location of the apartment. The utility services are normally not included into the rental price. It additionally costs 2,5 Eur /m<sup>2</sup>/month. In comparison to the average salary, real estate property and rental prices are high for local citizens. According to the data of the Lithuanian Department of Statistics, average monthly (gross) salary increased by 67.9 percent in Druskininkai municipality 2010-2019 from 445.1 Eur in 2010 to - 747.2 Eur in 2018. The solution in this situation for many local residents is moving to the rural part of the municipality where the prices are lower. The average price of rental for commercial premises in the city is from 30 Eur/m<sup>2</sup>/month depending on location and type of building.

Also, social cohesion in rural areas seems to be stronger - Druskininkai municipality has 10 rural communities and 9 of them have their own community houses for activities. Greater social cohesion in rural areas can also be supported by the process of gentrification, as more and more apartments are left for rent in the city and locals moving outside the city are active in their communities. This was especially evident during the covid pandemic period, when the center of Druskininkai was completely emptied.

Druskininkai is not so favorable for buyers of first-time housing who do not have the capital, especially for young families, for whom it is currently more difficult to buy housing. However, it is favorable for another market participants to buy housing in Druskininkai - investors with capital and who can accumulate assets are very happy to enter this market. They are buying a third or even a fifth flat, and are enjoying easy earnings from rising short rental and long rental prices. But this is determined not only by the situation of the resort, but also by the general economic environment due to inflation in Lithuania and the world.

## 1B. Focus



The functions of Druskininkai municipality in the area of tourism are related to tourism governance, promotion and planning of tourism operations, communication of tourist information and implementation of tourism infrastructure projects.

We would like to improve tourism governance and develop our urban policies involving different stakeholders and implementing sustainable urban strategies and actions, mainstreaming sustainability into the wider tourism business through more persuasive marketing messages. We are interested in the exchange of experiences and knowledge between local authorities and other stakeholders in Europe and as well as capacity-building activities in the field of sustainable tourism development and designing an integrated action plan.

**The focus of the Integrated Action Plan to be the guideline in developing sustainable tourism in Druskininkai and improving the image and perception of Druskininkai as a sustainable and high-quality tourism destination.**

The image of Druskininkai as a safe and hospitable tourist destination has a large effect on the competitiveness of Lithuanian tourism sector and the economy. The city has managed in 20 years a complete regeneration of the once derelict spa-based economy, with modern spa and wellness, as well as winter sports facilities. The prioritisation of funding and investments has always taken into account not only local residents needs, but potential future resident needs. Residents are free to use the well developed public infrastructure and have special discounts to a large variety of facilities. Children from secondary schools have free skiing lessons in winter entertainment complex “Snow arena”, swimming activities in the Aqua park, a strong program on elderly wellbeing and significant investment in education, green spaces and hobby/ crafts centers.

Nevertheless, while analysing the situation before 2014-2020 financial period, a number of problems were identified: the cultural heritage was insufficiently explored and presented, public environmental awareness and engagement was limited, cultural and recreational needs of the population were not met to the desired extent. The city lacked an integrated information and marking system and suffered from underdeveloped marketing actions. We found it crucial to improve the image and perception of Druskininkai as a sustainable and high-quality whole of tourism attraction sites, promote points of interest and increase their attractiveness, use modern information technologies to better inform tourists on tourism opportunities.

The integrated governance is also important as the municipality needs local opinion to know if it is on the right track and to secure local support in making important decisions. Therefore, in preparation for 2021-2029 the Municipal Strategic Development Plan residents were interviewed twice. The first survey was on the effectiveness of the implementation of the previous plan (2014-2020) and the second survey was on the priorities of the 2021-2029 Municipal Strategic Development Plan. It is important that locals are co-creators of actions and policies.

There is a problem with tourism data collection that the process is very slow. The information from Statistics Lithuania (Lithuania's official statistics department) submits information with a delay of three months. 8 years ago Druskininkai Tourism and Information Centre tried to collect statistics from accommodation facilities directly, but it lasted only for one year because the business did not like to provide its guest statistics openly. Druskininkai Tourism and Information Centre have returned to Statistics Lithuania, which provides general statistics. Druskininkai Tourism and Information Centre fails to count short-term (no overnight) stays -those that include bus tours or short visits to Druskininkai water park (which already has 5 million visitors).

Our challenges:





- Better positioning of Druskininkai resort and reinforcing the communication dimension in urban management.
- Improving tourism governance on the municipal level. The consistency and co-ordination of actions of all institutions involved, the involvement of stakeholders (authorities, public and private sectors, businesses, NGO's and society) into the process of formation, implementation and monitoring of tourism policy.
- Stakeholder involvement in co-delivering the strategic communication of the City and Improving co-ordination based on voluntary co-operation and partnership between authorities, businesses and the society, orientation towards long-term goals and integrated approach as well as sustainable development principles.
- Facing tourism's sustainability and the role marketing can play in helping to achieve more sustainable outcomes
- Preserving a good quality of life of residents.



### 1C The policies and concrete actions developed by the partner city so far in relation to the policy challenge

Current strategic directions on tourism for the city were determined in our Development Strategy of Alytus Region 2014-2020, Plan of Strategic Development of Druskininkai Municipality 2014-2020 and Tourism Marketing Strategy of Druskininkai Municipality 2015-2020:

- Developing public and private tourism infrastructure: investments into sites of cultural and sustainable tourism infrastructure; adapting cultural heritage sites for cultural, educational, economic and social needs, by using their social and economic potential in innovative ways. Adaptation of buildings for use to increase their attractiveness and economic viability.
- Implementation of public information, education and awareness-raising measures on different environmental issues. Modernisation of parks of national interest (as cultural properties) and environmental-recreational sites, increasing their attractiveness, visiting and educational impact, thus contributing also to the economic development of regions and/or implementation of integrated regional investment plans.
- Creating and developing attractive tourism routes;
- Improving resort's accessibility;
- Increasing the competence of employees of the tourism sector and improve it's entrepreneurship;
- Stimulating the creation and the implementation of e-marketing projects;
- Implementing integrated marketing activities in the priority tourism markets;
- Developing the marking and information system of tourism objects;
- Co-operating with neighbouring countries in the field of the implementation of joint international marketing projects;
- Stimulating and initiating the implementation of joint public and private tourism marketing projects;
- Increasing the supply of cultural events and attractions off-season;



- Improvement of a marking system for tourism objects, routes and tracks (informational stands, signposts, descriptions, direction markers, etc.) to help tourist find the way easily and obtain all information they need about tourism resources. Developing of the informational infrastructure by making use of the advantages of regional cooperation and in line with the principles of sustainable tourism development;
- Restoration of affected territories;
- Ensuring sustainable development and modernization of municipality infrastructure
- Implementation of sustainable mobility planning, designing environment-friendly and low carbon transport systems, including river transport, non-motorised transport and electric transport;
- Promoting sustainable and quality employment.

Concrete actions were determined in our Regional Development Strategy 2014-2020 and Druskininkai Plan of Strategic Development 2014-2020 in order to solve the problems. The Action plan which is based on the implementation of the Plan of Strategic Development. The actions had an impact at different levels. There were activities at local / regional level and at international level:

#### A) Local/ regional level.

A number of measures were foreseen and are being implemented regarding adaptation, actualization and promotion of cultural heritage sites (K. Dineika park, Leipalingis Manor, the art gallery “Muziejaus galerija”), their restoration and development to cultural, visitor and educational centres; marketing natural and cultural heritage sites so as to offer the possibility to the public to access all of the most important and exceptional objects of nature, to get knowledge about them and spend time responsibly. Attracting investments into preservation and adaptation of cultural heritage and promoting its active utilisation for economic (tourism, entrepreneurship), social (education and educational base for learning purposes) and cultural activities.

It is expected that the implementation of these measures will result in improved environmental awareness of the public, guaranteed protection and well-balanced use of natural and recreational resources, greater openness of protected territories for the public. Actualised objects of cultural heritage, effective information and labelling infrastructure and marketing measures will improve the image of Druskininkai as an attractive tourist destination in foreign markets and boost the interest of the Lithuanian population in cultural heritage. These actions focus on the implementation of objectives of integrated territorial strategies (promoting regional economy, job creation, ensuring sustainable development and concentration of investments).

#### B) International level.

Administration of Druskininkai municipality implemented several cross-border initiatives with different institutions from Belarus in relation to the policy challenge. In 2015, while implementing the project LLB-2-173 'Ecological Transport Uniting

Neighbours' (European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI): Latvia, Lithuania and Belarus Cross border cooperation programme) we prepared a common 'Druskininkai Municipality and Grodno Region Tourism Strategy 2014-2020'. Project aimed at encouraging development of international tourism using environmentally-friendly means in cross-border region. The common strategy developed aims at ensuring the sustainable tourism development in the cross-border region through international cooperation. Realising the objectives and implementing the measures foreseen in this strategy, in 2018 the project “Cultural Heritage across the Border” was initiated. It deals with developing tourism and cultural services and promoting cultural heritage sites in Druskininkai municipality and Grodno region. This initiative will contribute to the attractiveness of the region and stimulate the growth of cultural and ecological tourism, provide more diversified services. Joint efforts will be more visible and become an important stimulus for cross-border experience-sharing. The established relationship between Druskininkai and Grodno institutions will develop into further mutual cooperation. Favourable conditions for promoting ancient crafts, traditional skills and authentic household activities as tourism products will be created. Cultural and tourism services in cultural heritage site will contribute to the diversification and complexity of the services Druskininkai resort can offer. Encouraging local craftsmen and artists to use their traditional skills in economic activity might positively contribute to development of entrepreneurship in local



community enhancing its human capital and positively affect local economic activity there by creation of new businesses. Creative use of local heritage and unique traditions will not only increase the welfare and quality of life of the local residents but would also boost the competitive advantage of the area.

2019 the project “Enhancing the Access to Social Services across the Border” (2014-2020 European Neighbourhood Instrument Cross-border Cooperation Latvia-Lithuania-Belarus Programme) was initiated. It aims at the development and increasing of the availability of social services for the socially vulnerable groups in the region. Within the framework of the project “Druskininkai Municipality and Grodno region social services strategy of development for the year 2019-2021”, has been developed. This indicates further cross-border cooperation prospects. The Cross-border cooperation helps to solve the problems related to the elderly, people with disabilities and their families, social exclusion reduction and social care infrastructure improvement and accessibility. It will strengthen cross-border relations, capacity building and exchange of experience between the Druskininkai municipality and Grodno city residents and organizations. It will also contribute to improving social specialist skills and create conditions and means for development of social services.



At the end of 2019 the project „Effective Ecological Solutions over the Border“ was approved. The project aims at examining possible alternatives how to manage the spread and outcomes of the leaf miner in Druskininkai and Grodno and to provide the most efficient solutions that will be applied in the cross-border region. While implementing this project local authorities of Lithuania and Belarus shall actively cooperate in developing a common methodology to manage natural resources, prevent the spread of invasive species and eliminate their consequences. Two methods (mechanical and biological) to manage the invasive species will be implemented, monitored and evaluated. After having completed the project implementation, the sufficient technical capacities to manage the invasive species *Cameraria ohridella* in Druskininkai and Grodno will be ensured. Development and implementation of training, experience share initiatives and elaborating the methodology will strengthen the abilities of partner organizations to deal with the spread of invasive species, cooperation between institutions of Druskininkai and Grodno will be established and promoted. The ecological issues will be addressed. Reduction in damage, especially in built-up areas, will help to maintain tree health and ensure the survival of approximately 1900 horse chestnut trees in the project area.





In 2021- 2022 a new Plan of Strategic Development of Druskininkai Municipality for 2021-2029 was developed. A special attention is going to be paid to new technologies in tourism:

- Digitization of visitor relationship management;
- Use of creative techniques and intelligent tools to improve the tourist experience, information flow and analysis of tourist activity paths;
- Development of tourist information and signage tools using modern technologies;
- Building the city's tourist offer based on new technologies taking into account in-depth tourist relations and experiences.
- Promotion of the city's tourist offer with a high degree of digitization.

The focus of the Integrated Action Plan to be the guideline in developing sustainable tourism in Druskininkai and improving the image and perception of Druskininkai as a sustainable and high-quality tourism destination. Better positioning Druskininkai resort, reinforcing the communication dimension in urban management and cooperating with local stakeholders. It is expected that URBACT integrated action plan will contribute to establishing directions and measures for sustainable and quality tourism development.

## 1D. Description of the process

To reach out the project impacts the Municipality brought together different stakeholders in the field of tourism in order to exchange information and work out the solutions that can make Druskininkai an international tourism friendly city, at the same time ensuring quality life for its local residents. Thus, the Municipality involved the representatives from the local businesses, their associations and NGO's so as to gather full and real information on every aspect of the problems of the sector, as well as to participate actively in capacity-building activities in the field of sustainable tourism development and design an integrated action plan. The stakeholders involved in ULG are representatives from the City Council, Administration of Druskininkai Municipality, Druskininkai Tourism and Business Information Centre, Druskininkai Business Club and other business institutions, NGOs and local community.

Druskininkai ULG has 8 members:

Linus Urmanavičius, Deputy mayor of Druskininkai municipality, responsible for tourism and culture

Violeta Grigorienė, Deputy director of the administration, responsible for social issues

Vaiva Žagunienė, Head of Tourism, Communication and Culture Department.

Antanas Urbonas, Chief specialist for Culture and Tourism, Tourism, Communication and Culture Department

Alvydas Varanis, Head of Druskininkai Local Action Group (LAG), the chairperson of Viečiūnai rural area of Druskininkai Municipality

Albertas Matiukevičius, Foreign market project manager of Druskininkai Tourism and Business Information Centre

Kęstutis Ramanauskas, Head of Health Resort Druskininkai

Modestas Vitkauskas, Businessman, member of Druskininkai Tourism and Resort Development Board, member of the City council, the head of Economy and Tourism Committee of the City Council, owner of guest house 'Saka', Board member of businessmen club 'Druskininkų klubas'

The ULG coordinator is Vaiva Žagunienė, Head of Tourism, Communication and Culture Department. She is responsible for tourism issues in the administration of Druskininkai municipality and coordinating the activity of the staff of Tourism, Communication and Culture Department and the efficiency of municipal organizations, which are involved in tourism. Vaiva Žagunienė has extensive experience - she had previously worked in Druskininkai Tourism and Business Information Centre, later she was a chief specialist at Investment and Property Management Division at Druskininkai Municipality. Vaiva Žagunienė has a good relationship with businesses, municipality and local community, she is experienced in project implementation.



By consensus of ULG and after having discussed it with the members of project working group, Vaiva Žaguniene was chosen. The main motives of the decision made were her diverse experience, the fact that she will be able to effectively organize the work of ULG. She will be able to effectively and quickly bring together and coordinate business, the Druskininkai Tourism and Business Information Centre, and the staff of the administration of municipality.

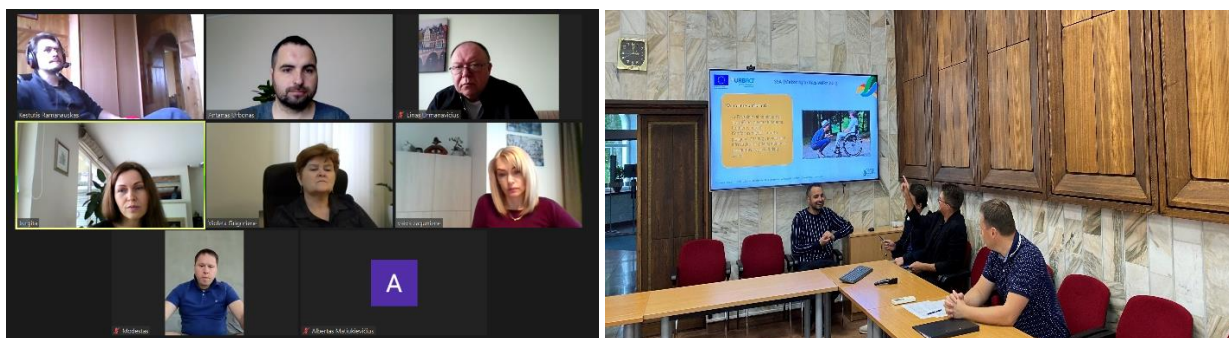
The process of selection of ULG started one month before lead expert of URBACT visit to Druskininkai on 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2019. Initially, there were more than 10 ULG candidates, but some refused and some could not participate in ULG for other reasons. The final group of 8 ULG members formed on 15/01/2020- by the order of the director of the Administration of municipality.



The ULG meetings are organized at least quarterly (4 times a year). In case there is a need, we organize thematic meetings. After each international meeting, the ULG meetings are organized and the knowledge gained during the transnational meeting and information about the progress is spread among the members. It was done in several particular ways in order to get ULG members more interested and thus more involved in the process itself. Local challenges always seem to be the most important and the locals put the most effort into them, so we tried to provide for our ULG members the most relevant examples from transnational meetings. We tried to use illustrations - provided by URBACT colleagues, or made by ourselves during online and in live transnational meetings. It helped a lot, that lead expert prepared and sent structured information after each international meeting.

ULG members defined the conception of sustainable tourism for the city of Druskininkai, discussed the criteria for sustainable tourism proposed by the partnership and selected the most relevant for the city. URBACT methodology and template designed by the Lead partner and the experts was very useful while designing the roadmap of IAP of Druskininkai. The knowledge gained during the online partner meetings, especially how each city coped with the Covid situation was especially appreciated, and some of the measures taken by the partners were successfully introduced in the city contingency plan. Thematic partner meetings, such as Approaches for integrating short term rental, Future of events/ festivals and impact on tourism strategies of cities, How to effectively count and manage one-day trips in cities and Environmental implications were especially relevant to Druskininkai city. Personal webinar with the consultation of Lead and URBACT experts as well as the Lead partner regarding the development of SSA of Druskininkai was very fruitful and together with the ULG allowed to design the project of SSA which was highly supported by the stakeholders: relevant specialists of the municipality, elected members and NGOs dealing with people with disabilities. While working with the development of IAP online consultations and discussions on concrete topics with certain ULG members were organized.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemics quarantine ULG online meetings were organized but mostly offline meetings were preferred as more acceptable among all ULG members.



## 2A. Objectives, actions and schedule

### Objectives:

Promoting sustainable mobility (action 2a1);

Adaptation, actualization and promotion of cultural heritage sites (action 2a2);

Promoting the use of natural resources for healing purposes and natural treatment services (2a3);

Raising tourist awareness (2a4);

Promoting inclusion of people with disabilities (2a5);

Improving the system of tourist monitoring and data collection (2a6);

Regional cooperation in the field of tourism and positioning of the region as a single tourist destination (2a7).

### Framework of delivery

We will monitor the implementation of the strategy based on 2021-2029 the strategic plan of the municipality, as well as the collegial management body - the tourism council (mayor with business and self-government). The Investment and Project Management Division of the Druskininkai Municipality Administration will be responsible for writing and implementing projects (hard projects), while the Tourism, Communication and Culture Division will be responsible for soft activities.

Action	Intended result	Resources/ Assets	Lead Agency	Key partners	Timescale





<b>2a1.</b> <b>Improving and developing the system of bicycle paths</b>	Increased % of bicycle local and tourist users. <b>We will strive to reconstruct bicycle paths, improve marking systems. Currently only 20 out of 60 km. reconstruct bike paths.</b>	EU, Lithuanian and municipality budget funding	Druskininkai municipality	Local businesses	Constantly (improvement within 2 years)
<b>2a2.</b> <b>Actualization and promotion of adapted cultural heritage sites by organizing cultural events and increasing the tourist offer</b>	Preserved authenticity and increased tourist flows in cultural heritage sites. <b>The city has taken over the organization of the festival of the most famous Lithuanian composer M. K. Čiurlionis, the reconstruction of the only manor has been completed, we will try to use these authentic aspects for cultural tourism.</b>	EU, Lithuanian and municipality budget funding	Druskininkai municipality	Local businesses, guides, private and public cultural institutions	2-5 years
<b>2a3.</b> <b>Initiating cooperation of relevant authorities, scientific institutions and businesses while making the researches and providing</b>	Increasing eco, sustainable and authentic tourism target audience. <b>We are trying to cooperate with Lithuania university of health sciences to improve spa treatment research. It is planned to transfer one</b>	EU, Lithuanian and municipality budget funding, natural resources (pine forests, curative mud, mineral water etc.)	Druskininkai municipality	Local SPAs and sanatoriums, scientific institutions, government authorities	Constantly (improvement within 2 years)



information about the preventive positive effects and benefits the use of natural resources and natural treatment	sanatorium to the university.				
<b>2a4. Educating tourists by promoting eco-friendly ways of tourism activities and sustainable use of resources</b>	Increased number of tourists involved in eco friendly tourism activities.  <b>It is planned to open an eco-laboratory to educate children and adults.</b>	EU, Lithuanian and municipality budget funding, local business funding	Druskininkai municipality	Local businesses, local communities, local and country media	2-6 years
<b>2a5. Developing people with disabilities friendly public infrastructure and services and encouraging business to develop their services to meet the needs of people with disabilities</b>	Increased number of improved public areas and public/private services accessible to all groups of people  <b>SSA is oriented to this particular case, it will take place in Druskininkai 2022 05 05/06</b>	EU, Lithuanian and municipality budget funding, local business funding	Druskininkai municipality	Local businesses, local communities	2-4 years
<b>2a6. Introducing the new tourist tax collection</b>	Improved data collection system  <b>We will cooperate with Agency for</b>	EU, Lithuanian and municipality budget funding	Druskininkai municipality	Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology,	6-24 months



system allowing to monitor the tourist flows efficiently and allowing accommodation facilities to provide relevant data conveniently	Science, Innovation and Technology of Lithuania to try to calculate day-visit tourist.			local SME and SPA centers	
2a7. To establish the functional zone of tourism of Alytus region and cooperate while implementing common tourism projects promoting the region as a single tourist destination	<p>Increase of tourist flows to Alytus region and Druskininkai</p> <p>The strategic plan of the municipality for 2021-2029 has been prepared where emphasis is placed on regional cooperation in promoting tourism.</p>	EU, Lithuanian and municipality budget funding	Druskininkai municipality	4 other Alytus region municipalities (Alytus city municipality, Lazdijai district municipality, Alytus district municipality, Varėna district municipality)	1-10 years

## 2a1. Promoting sustainable mobility

Sustainable mobility is important for every city, but for Druskininkai, as a resort, it is also important for the sustainable integration of tourists into the traffic flow.

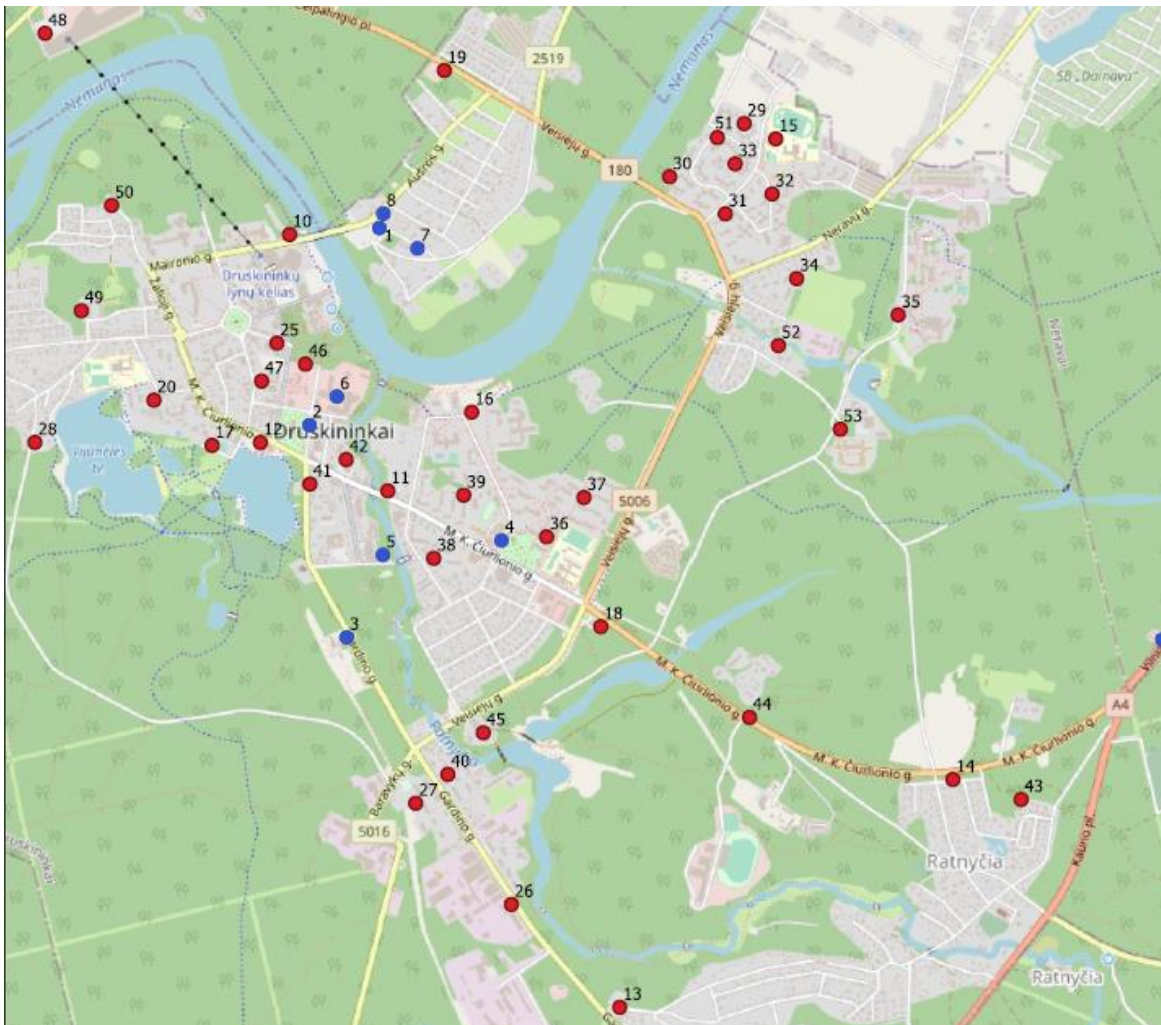
The sustainable mobility plan of Druskininkai city prepared in 2016 has already been partially implemented. The aim of the Sustainable Mobility is to create the conditions for resort guests and the local community to reach their destination comfortably, safely and quickly by any means of transport and, of course, on foot. During the preparation of the plan, external experts, together with municipal specialists, carried out detailed research, which



showed which areas of the resort should be improved in terms of mobility - the plan includes measures to promote mobility.

In 2016, it was expected that the introduction of modern measures provided for in the Sustainable Mobility Plan and in order to protect the environment would enable the community to more actively choose greener vehicles (bicycles, electric bicycles, electric scooters etc). Additional bicycle paths, convenient bicycle and pedestrian areas, bicycle stands and bicycle repair places, bicycle storages, etc. were planned some of them were implemented (bicycle paths, pedestrian areas), some are still in line to be done (bicycle stands and bicycle repair places, bicycle storages).

Druskininkai can already enjoy more than 60 km of asphalt bike paths, and the Sustainable Mobility Plan emphasized the development of bike paths in the resort center. Unfortunately this didn't happen yet as the main street still does not have a planned area for cyclists to move comfortably and safely in the center of the resort and they have to share it with pedestrians. The Sustainable Mobility Action Plan also included measures such as electric car charging stations and 8 public charging stations were created and for 5 years it will be accessible to public free of charge. There are plans to build many more charging stations in Druskininkai (in picture blue dots represents existing charging stations, red dots – planned in near future).



The city also plans to provide green public transport from the mid-2022 when all 22 buses running in the municipality will be electric.



The all-year-round Cable Car (Cable way) in Druskininkai is the only one of its kind in Lithuania. It is one of the most environmentally friendly modes of transport that does not pollute the environment and it is also great for entertainment. From Druskininkai Water Park which is in Druskininkai Old Town it is possible to reach indoor skiing center “Snow Arena” within 7.5 minutes. This way of transport helps reduce amount of cars driving around Druskininkai.

However, although Druskininkai has come a long way in terms of sustainable mobility, city still have a long way to go to reach full potential in sustainable mobility as 20 of the 60 km of cycle paths in the city are in need to be renovated, cycling in the city center could be better by separating pedestrian and cycling areas, and the city has an increasing parking problem.

## **2a2 Adaptation, actualization, and promotion of cultural heritage sites**

Druskininkai is the oldest resort in Lithuania, therefore it is rich in historical and cultural objects. During the Soviet era, some objects were not given due attention, the condition of others deteriorated after Lithuania regained its independence and lost a number of clients from former USSR. When Druskininkai started to catch up and attract more tourists in the early 2000s, it was not necessary to build many new objects in the city, it was enough to renovate the existing ones and adapt them to tourism.

Some examples of successful restoration of cultural heritage sites are Karolis Dineika Wellness Park, Leipaling Manor, wooden villas from interwar times.

Karolis Dineika Health Park is unique in that it was revived in 2015 for the third time. During the interwar period, for the first time in the park, sunbathing procedures, exercises and other activities were organized. During the Soviet era, health specialist Karolis Dineika expanded the range of natural health treatments, and now the park is reborn with natural water cascades, a sauna and gym equipment in the fresh air.



Leipalingis Manor was built in 1830 and is one of the most important objects to represent the historical architectural heritage of South of Lithuania. The Classical-style manor is now the site of a regional administration office, a library and a unique ethnography museum with over 12,000 exhibits. After newest renovation it also could be adapted for commercial events and as a tourist attraction.



These projects cost a lot (for example, the reconstruction of Leipalingis manor - EUR 1.15 million), but they bring a historical value that is more attractive to tourists. Efforts are also being made to promote cultural heritage sites by modern means. For example, a page promoting interwar architectural objects has been created (<https://tarpukarioarchitektura.lt/en/objects/> )

It is also worth mentioning the phenomenon of cultural roads - on the way from the Lithuanian capital Vilnius to Druskininkai leads the sculptural road of the most famous Lithuanian artist and composer M. K. Čiurlionis (<https://ciurlioniokelias.lt/en/>), similarly, the region is planned to commemorate the already extinct Baltic people Yotvingians (or Sudovians) on the Jotvingian cultural route.

Of the seven goals, this is the easiest to achieve, as many cultural heritage sites are already adapted to modern tourism. But there are still non-restored private buildings in Druskininkai that are cultural heritage objects, so there may be some challenge here, because private businesses are lacking financing as it is easier to build something new than restore something old.

### **2a3 Promoting the use of natural resources for healing purposes and natural treatment services**

For Druskininkai it is especially important to promote the use of natural resources for healing purposes and natural treatment services as it is main slogan (Druskininkai wellness springs resort) and identity of the resort.

The use of natural resources for health and wellness procedures in Druskininkai started in 1841, when 14 baths were established in a wooden mineral water spa. Later, their number increased, and in 1894 mud baths have also been put into use. Procedures based on these natural resources are used to this day.

The use of natural resources and their combination with modern health and wellness technologies and methods ensures the uniqueness of services, which improves the city's tourism development opportunities, attracts foreign tourists to use the services provided. In order to maintain the traditions of the resort, it is necessary to review and implement various historically used mineral water and mud procedures (heated stone baths, mud pools, etc.). There is a need to raise patient awareness of the history, methods, benefits and health effects of the natural procedures used.

The promotion of the use of natural resources for healing purposes in Druskininkai resort is currently especially relevant and important due to the increased life expectancy, prevention of chronic diseases and the increasing pace of life. However, this is not an easy challenge, as there is necessity to look for new ways how to reaching the target audience, which is already attacked by thousands of other promotional messages every day.

### **2a4 Raising tourist awareness**





Tourist education should be an important part of Druskininkai municipality's sustainable tourism plan. In the best years of the 1980s, Druskininkai received about 400,000 tourists annually. As it is mentioned earlier, before the pandemic in 2019 resort had 371,000 tourists, so Druskininkai is still in the tourist growth stage. Assuming that tourist flows will return to normal and start to grow in a few years, it is realistic that the personal space in the resort will decrease and a new wave of tourists may come to the city. Therefore, as the number of tourists increases, they need to be constantly educated about the following topics - littering, parking, respect for pedestrians, cyclists and the like. Druskininkai already has good tourist education examples - the city is rich in collection boxes (dispensers) for dog excrement bags and signs on how to care for your dogs in the city.

However, new technologies also present new challenges - one of them is many rental points of the electric scooters in the resort and the lack of regulation of the use of these scooters. It is not yet clear how scooter drivers should be treated in traffic, either as cyclists or as full-fledged road users who would need driving permits and insurance for their motor vehicle. Therefore, the number of injuries while driving electric scooters is increasing in Druskininkai. The municipality is working to inform people about the safe use of electrical scooters through the local media, but the problem remains unresolved.

So far, Druskininkai is safe, clean, and attractive resort, but to keep the city like this, a lot of work is needed to be done to inform the public and tourists and raise their awareness.

## **2a5 Promoting inclusion of people with disabilities**

In 2020 at the event "Lithuanian Change 2019" evaluating the approach to the inclusion of people with disabilities in the labor market, "Druskininkai was awarded the nomination of the friendliest city for the people with disabilities". As a municipality, Druskininkai would like to constantly improve in the field of integration of the disabled. In 2018 four information terminals for the disabled with relevant tourist information were built in the city. In 2021 four more information terminals adapted for the disabled were built in the municipality (2 in Druskininkai and 2 in smaller cities). People with movement disabilities have access to local lakes, SPA centers, indoor skiing arena has skiing gear that is disabled friendly.



However, all urban infrastructure is deteriorating and needs to be constantly reviewed and improved, especially for dependent groups such as people with reduced mobility. Also, some hotels in Druskininkai still do not have all the facilities adapted for the disabled. The next period of EU funding will focus on robotization process, so the municipality could take the leadership and publicize opportunities for the private sector to apply for EU funded projects, thus encouraging hotels to robotize services for people with disabilities.

Another solution could be the involvement of the local community of people with disabilities to constantly monitor the quality of infrastructure and services developed for people with disabilities. It would be useful not only for the tourists but also to make the city more accessible for the residents.

Druskininkai municipality will try to measure aforementioned problems during our SSA event that will take place in spring of 2022.

## **2a6 Improving tourist monitoring and data collection the system**

For more than 10 years, Druskininkai municipality has been looking for solutions on how to collect statistics on tourist flows faster, because at the moment the statistics of each quarter are obtained at the end of the new quarter - only in 55 days. For example, January-March data are available on 25 May. The system needs to be improved and Druskininkai municipality was inspired by the examples of monitoring tourist flows in Venice and Dubrovnik as seen in the URBACT project.

Municipality administration is currently working on a govtech project initiated by the Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology, during which Druskininkai municipality is seeking to improve the administration of the city tax (resort fee). The main problem and challenge is how to efficiently and innovatively administer and



control the local city tax with the help of digital technologies and contribute to the reduction of the shadow economy in the accommodation sector.

Druskininkai municipality is looking for a solution that would allow to create a modern, efficient, attractive and accessible city tax administration system that would help taxpayers to conveniently (by synchronizing relevant data of different systems) declare them for city tax assessment and pay this tax.

By automating and synchronizing many processes, specialists who administer the city tax would be able to do their job more accurately, faster, and more efficiently. Relevant data on incoming and outgoing accommodation recipients would be obtained it would also contribute to the reduction of shadow economy in the accommodation sector, creating fair competitive conditions and promoting fair business.

This is the first step towards gathering information on tourist flows. The next steps would be a more detailed description of the average tourist based on the data, which would help to develop a more accurate marketing strategy and marketing campaigns.

## **2a7 Regional cooperation in the field of tourism and positioning of the region as a single tourist destination**

Druskininkai municipality belongs to Alytus region, representatives of the municipality also belong to Alytus region development council. The Council includes 5 municipalities - Druskininkai municipality, Lazdijai district municipality, Varėna district municipality, Alytus city municipality and Alytus district municipality. Alytus region development council consists of mayors and deputy mayors of all 5 municipalities, as well as independent members who are delegated from business.

A new regional development plan is currently being prepared, in which the whole Alytus region plans its activities and how it will position itself and in which direction it should develop towards. Informally, municipalities are divided over who oversees which areas. Druskininkai, as a regional tourism attraction center, is also responsible for the development of tourism in the whole Alytus region.

Until now, there has been no unified positioning of the Alytus region as a common tourism destination, so the regional municipal tourism information centers have agreed to cooperate and develop a unified tourism marketing and position the whole region as a single tourist destination. Maps, plans, routes, etc. are currently being prepared and the responsibility lies with the Druskininkai Tourism and Business Information Center. For example, in future during marketing campaigns when inviting people to South of Lithuania it is planned to include not only Druskininkai resort, but also nearby natural objects - Dzūkija National Park, Meteliai Regional Park, Veisiejai Regional Park etc.

It should be mentioned that cooperation in the field of tourism between these municipalities also took place during 2014-2020 EU funding period. Four projects were implemented in which Druskininkai municipality participated. Two projects are related to the physical marking of tourist routes and the construction of tourist related information stands, the other two are related to e-marketing. One of them, <https://atraskdzukija.lt/en>, is a good example and based on it, an attempt will be made to expand the positioning of Alytus region as a single tourist destination. It should be added, however, that the main motivation for municipalities to cooperate in these projects was EU funding.

This regional cooperation could be used as opportunity to Druskininkai to become breakthrough propagator in sustainable tourism and even try to bring sustainable tourism agenda to government of Lithuania.

## **2B Small Scale Actions**

Proposed SSA is Pilot for tourist with disabilities experience “Druskininkai without limits?” This small scale action will include a two-day event for measuring how friendly Druskininkai is for tourists with movement disabilities. It will be a tourist with disabilities experience in Druskininkai.





**Target group:** in total 40 people (20 people with movement disabilities, 20 people with other disabilities or accompanying persons; 20 of them - tourists from other cities, other 20 – local residents).

The members of the target group will be invited to come and stay in Druskininkai for two days (one overnight stay), participate in the planned small scale action activities, reflect and give feedback about their comfort in the city, evaluate its facilities, quality of services and public infrastructure from the point of view of the tourist with disabilities. The feedback will be collected by filling in the feedback survey provided by the organizers, giving interviews and during the panel discussion with the stakeholders. This information will be analyzed, discussed with relevant specialists (Urban Development, Tourism, Social Issues, etc.) of the municipality, the recommendations will be developed and proposed actions will be presented to the stakeholders (policy makers, local authority, business, NGO's) and integrated into the strategic documents of the municipality.

The accessibility and comfort of Druskininkai as a tourist destination will be assessed from the tourist with disabilities point of view. It would involve different aspects of tourist's experience:

- Pilot accommodation

20 people with disabilities from other cities will be invited to find themselves accommodation in Druskininkai (one night) and give feedback on their experience. Accommodation costs will be covered.

- Travelling around the city experience.

20 people with disabilities from other cities will travel around the city on their own by choosing the type of transport they prefer.

- Pilot tourist entertainment (all target group - 40 people)
  - Orienteering games for people with disabilities in central part of Druskininkai based on Druskininkai history and present.
  - Pilot skiing experience (all participants will be acquainted with skiing possibilities for people with disabilities and be given a chance to have a pilot skiing in Snow arena (Indoor skiing track).
  - Pilot SPA experience (the participants of the Orienteering games will be given the prizes - SPA services).
  - Brain Battle and Evening concert (The target group members will be able to participate in the Brain Battle). The concert which will be accessible for other visitors as well.
  - Morning panel discussion of people with disabilities who participated in the event and other stakeholders (authorities, business, NGOs representatives, local residents) about the situation of tourists with disabilities in Druskininkai, their experience, problems and actions to be taken to improve the situation.

### **Goals of the Small Scale Action**

1. To promote inclusion of people with disabilities in Druskininkai.
2. To assess how friendly Druskininkai city is for people with disabilities.



3. To identify the problematic aspects of Druskininkai city from the point of view of tourists and local residents with disabilities; to identify their needs and necessity for further improvement of public and private tourism infrastructure and services in order to make Druskininkai city friendly for people with disabilities.
4. To develop recommendations and concrete actions for further development including stakeholders into the decision making process and implementation of measures foreseen..
5. To promote Druskininkai as a city caring and friendly for the tourists and local residents with disabilities.

#### **Stakeholders involved in the co-creation and implementation phases**

No.	Stakeholders involved	Involvement
1.	40 people (20 people with movement disabilities, 20 people with other disabilities or accompanying persons; 20 of them - tourists from other cities, other 20 – local residents)	CO-creation phase. Will participate in the pilot activities of the event and provide the feedback about the accessibility and comfort of recreational and tourism services in Druskininkai from the point of view of tourists and local residents with disabilities
2.	The Department for the Affairs of Disabled under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania	CO-creation phase. During panel discussion the representative will present the overview of tourism possibilities, needs and problematic aspects for people with disabilities in Lithuania and will receive the feedback from the event participants about the situation in Druskininkai and other cities. Will be informed what actions are necessary to be taken on the state authority level.
2.	“Erzon” Club of people with disabilities of Druskininkai	CO-creation phase. Representatives will participate in the pilot activities of the event and provide the feedback about the accessibility and comfort of recreational and tourism services in Druskininkai from the point of view of local residents with disabilities
3.	The Working Disabled Association	CO-creation phase. Representatives will participate in the pilot activities of the event and provide the feedback about the accessibility and comfort of recreational and tourism services in Druskininkai from the point of view of tourists with disabilities
4.	The Administration of Druskininkai Municipality	CO-creation and implementation phases. Will receive the feedback from tourists and local residents with disabilities about the needs and necessity for further improvement of public tourism infrastructure of Druskininkai city to make it friendly for people with disabilities. Will cooperate while presenting the problems to the City Council and foreseeing concrete measures in strategic documents of the municipality. Implement the actions and measures foreseen. Monitoring the improvement.



5.	Druskininkai Tourism and Business Information Centre	<p>CO-creation and implementation phases.</p> <p>Will collect and systemize the feedback from tourists and local residents with disabilities about the needs and necessity for further improvement of private tourism infrastructure of Druskininkai city to make it friendly for people with disabilities and share it with business organizations and discuss the possibilities for further development.</p> <p>Will cooperate while presenting the problems to the local authority and business and foreseeing concrete measures. Contribute while Implementing the actions and measures foreseen. Monitoring the improvement.</p>
6.	Local Activity Group	<p>CO-creation phase.</p> <p>Will provide information about the accessibility and comfort of recreational and tourism services in Druskininkai municipality from the point of view of the residents with disabilities from rural areas. They will also promote tourism services that are available and accessible for people with disabilities in rural areas of the municipality.</p>
7.	Druskininkai Tourism and Resort Development Board	<p>CO-creation and implementation phases.</p> <p>Will receive the direct feedback from participants of the pilot activities of the event about the accessibility and comfort of recreational and tourism services in Druskininkai from the point of view of tourists with disabilities. Participate in the open discussion how local businesses can improve the services. Will cooperate while developing recommendations for business organizations for making the services more people with disabilities friendly. Contributing in the implementation of the recommendations.</p>
8.	Politicians (Deputy mayor)	<p>CO-creation and implementation phases.</p> <p>Will receive the direct feedback from participants of the pilot activities of the event about the accessibility and comfort of recreational and tourism services in Druskininkai from the point of view of tourists with disabilities. Participate in the open discussion how local authority can contribute to improve the public services and infrastructure to make them for people with disabilities friendly. Will present the problems to the City Council and foresee concrete measures in strategic documents of the municipality.</p> <p>During the open discussion will provide information about the strategic actions and future plans regarding tourism and recreational services improvements.</p>
9.	Media	<p>CO-creation and implementation phases.</p> <p>Representatives from local newspaper and country media will be invited to the event, the press release will be made</p>





		to Lithuanian news portal. Information about further actions and improvements will be provided.
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### Foreseen impact of SSA on the city

This small scale action will allow to assess how friendly Druskininkai city is for people with disabilities and to identify the problematic aspects (architectural barriers, uncomfortable pathways, parking spaces, accessibility of lodging spaces, information and marking system, etc.) of Druskininkai from the point of view of tourists and local residents with disabilities. It will allow to identify the objective needs and plan concrete actions for further improvement of public and private tourism infrastructure and services in order to make Druskininkai city friendly for people with disabilities.

All stakeholders will be informed and involved in the process of development of recommendations, decision making and concrete actions and measures planning.

The action will foster the culture of inclusion and tolerance, focusing on tourism for everyone and promoting better quality of services for all tourists and local residents.

The positive impact of the Small Scale Action could be useful on different categories of residents:

For city users it would show, how Druskininkai is ready to accept people with different needs. Also, often the infrastructure of people with disabilities correlates with the needs of families with babies, so Druskininkai resort would be attractive for younger families too.

For businesses and spa operators it would help identify weaknesses and strengthen them, also, this would help be a socially responsible business and send a positive message about business.

For disabled people it could help in many ways – for locals it could be possibility to use the facilities or be more available for local job market, as more public and private buildings would have access for people with disabilities. It would also raise awareness on accessibility as a social and economic leverage for local growth.

Druskininkai will be promoted as the city caring and friendly for the tourists and local residents with disabilities. The perception of Druskininkai as all people inclusive city will be improved. It will allow attract more tourists and develop a diversity and welcoming culture.

## 2C Resourcing

The implementation and monitoring of the IAP progress will be coordinated by the Administration of Druskininkai Municipality. However, majority of actions included in IAP will be delivered in cooperation with ULG and relevant stakeholders based on the nature and scope of the action.

For the moment necessary budget would be dedicated from Druskininkai Municipality funds. The actions of IAP are and will be integrated in Strategic activity plans of the Municipality. Additionally, ULG members expressed their willingness to contribute to the plan implementation, therefore certain actions would be implemented through their voluntary input.

For the moment It is hard to determinate, how much funds municipality, state government and EU can grant for the future as it is uncertain. As mentioned in Framework for delivery, Tourism, Communication and Culture Division could be responsible for soft activities. This division has a separate line for representation expenses (up to 100 000 Euros annually). These expenses could be used for Green public procurements. Green public



procurement is a procurement where the buyer ( for example, Druskininkai municipality administration) seeks to procure goods, services or works that have the least possible impact on the environment at one, several or all stages of the life cycle of the product, service or work.

Also funding for the implementation of the IAP will be identified on a case by case basis.

Some actions are planned to be financed based on partnership funding from the main stakeholders.

**Other possible funding sources depending on foreseen IAP activities:**

- • EU Structural funds support 2021-2027.
- • ERDF programmes (cross-border cooperation programmes).
- • EEA Financial Mechanism 2021-2027.

## 2D Risk analysis

Type of risk	Risk description	Risk level	I Risk management
Timing	The actions planned for particular activities could not be completed within the stipulated time despite commitment and plan of action.	High	Readjusting/rescheduling planned operations and other activities to ensure the realization of tasks up to the final deadline
Financing	Lack of financing or need for additional finances to realize provided activities could cause a delay in the implementation process	Medium	Ensuring proper level of realization of actions and other committed activities, by compensating lack of finances using other funding programmes and/or inner funds of the implementing institution
Staff	Changes in personnel or shifting responsibilities could cause the interruption in plan's implementation process	Low	Filling vacant positions by finding equivalent or higher qualification and expertise, primarily, exploiting existing human resources available, and if necessary – recruiting specialists from outside.
Level of commitment of civil society	Economic and geopolitical changes may force civil society to be less active and less	Low	It is important for stakeholders to speak with influence in public and to show the



	focused on people with disabilities. This can also be influenced by a little talk about these issues in the public.		integration of people with disabilities into society by example. This topic always has to “be on the table”.
Government al changes	Changes at the highest level of city management can cause the abandonee of actions and the transfer of power and resources to other matter	Medium	Making sure to have a full support of City Council in order to be able implementing the actions provided in IAP.

### Lessons from URBACT networks: Self assessing your integrated action plan

Information sharing became particularly important during the Covid-19 pandemic, when TFC cities were able to see if they were on the right track in managing the pandemic in the context of tourism and tourists. The provision of space for outdoor cafes, the emphasis on outdoor activities and the promotion of domestic tourism were the tools used by most cities and this information helped Druskininkai to understand that the resort was on the right track, as the same strategy was used in Druskininkai municipality.

Other good practices and examples are the management and monitoring of tourist flows. Druskininkai has taken a lot of information from Venice and Dubrovnik, as the city aims to calculate the flow of one-day (non-overnight) tourists, and the partner cities are already advanced in this area with control rooms (Venice) and monitoring of tourist flows in the Old Town (Dubrovnik).

Representatives of Druskininkai realized that large numbers of tourist flows are not a main goal in itself, but rather balanced and well-distributed flows of educated tourist must be the main goal of the resort.

The type of work of the Druskininkai ULG group has changed significantly when using remote means (MS TEAMS, ZOOM PLATFORM), which has become a challenge, as it is much more difficult to maintain concentration in this type of meeting than in live meetings.

The concentrated information of the topics in the remote meetings allowed the participants to concentrate and achieve the required results.

E-transnational meeting was great experience, where Druskininkai ULG hosts tried to show best of the city via digital walk around with experts from field of tourism. It helped to deal with “zoom fatigue” and keep participants interested.

Information taken from network experts about short term regulation helped to improve a lot in this field of knowledge. With the information taken from Genoa about central tax collection via Airbnb Druskininkai are now trying to do the same thing.