

Assessment of tourism assets of Vlora county
(costal region and hinterland)

Integrated Sustainable Development
of
Southern Coastal Region Project

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Genc Metohu, tourism expert
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and with the contribution of: Vlora University (academic staff of Economic Faculty)
Ylber Hysi
Bardhosh Gace

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1. INVENTORY METHODOLOGY

For the purposes of this study a comprehensive inventory of tourism assets was undertaken utilising a combination of:

- **Desk Based Research:** Focussing on ICZM Reports (WB), Vlora county strategic plan, local development plans, different study reports, Vlora county and local websites, web searches, Tourism infrastructure database from Tourism Service Department (2012) of Ministry of Tourism and Vlora county and municipalities;
- In depth **site visits** for the Vlora County (coastal and inland area) study area;
- **Targeted consultation** with different stakeholders

A database was created to audit the tourism potential inventory data under the headings of:

Field 1: Physical characteristics of destinations (rural and urban settlements)

Field 2: Natural characteristics / assets (waters, protected areas, flora and fauna of specific interest, biodiversity, geological formations, etc..)

Field 3: Cultural characteristics / assets (material and non material)

Field 4: Tourism infrastructure (Accommodation facilities, Food and Drink facilities, small infrastructure)

Field 5: Touristic offer and services (the offered services by travel organisers and service providers)

The inventory of tourism assets for Vlora County is made possible with the contribution of local actors such as Vlora University (academic staff of Economic Faculty) for the compilation of tourism infrastructure database through site visits to the destinations, Ylber Hysi who made a contribution for the section of cultural built heritage and Bardhosh Gace who made contribution for the section of traditional living culture (lifestyle).

1.1 Territory of the inventory of tourism potential

Based on the purpose of this study to provide an assessment of tourism potentials within the southern coastal region, both along the coastal area and in the rural hinterland, for the project "Integrated Sustainable Development of the Southern Coastal Region", the following areas are assessed:

- Vlora municipality referring to: Vlora town, Rradhime village, Tragjas village, Orikum Dukat village,
- Selenica municipality referring to: villages of Mavrove, Drashovice, Kote, Lapardha, Gumenice, Lepenice, Gjorm, Brataj, Velce, Ramice, Terbac, Vranisht, Kallarat, Kuc
- Himara municipality referring to: Himara town, villages of Palase, Dhermi, Ilias, Vuno, Jali, Qeparo village, Qeparo field, Pilur, Kudhes, Borsh, Corraj, Piqeras, Sasaj, Lukove, Sh. Vasil, Nivice
- Saranda municipality referring to: Saranda town, Ksamili
- Delvina municipality referring to: Delvina town,
- Konispol municipality referring to: Konispol, Vrine, Xarre, Mursi, Ciflik, Markat
- Livadhja municipality referring to: Finiq, Mesopotam, Aliko, Livadhja, Dhiver

Aiming the development of sustainable forms of tourism such as coastal rural tourism in coastal villages and nature based tourism and rural tourism in rural hinterland, the villages encompassed within the range of interest of these forms of tourism linking the coastal area with the rural hinterland are analysed more in detail. Location data based on GPS position is gathered for culture heritage attractions and tourist infrastructure to be able to feed them into a national GIS system.

Administrative division of Vlora County

Table : Administrative division of Vlora County

County	Municipality	Administrative Units	Towns / Villages
Vlora	Vlorë	Vlorë	Qyteti Vlorë
		Orikum	Qyteti Oriku, Fshatrat; Dukat, Dukat Fshat, Tragjas, Radhimë
		Qendër Vlorë	Fshatrat; Bestrovë, Babicë e Madhe, Babicë e Vogël, Hoshtimë, Kaninë, Kërkovë, Nartë, Sherishtë, Panaja, Xhyherinë, Zvërnec, Sazan
		Novoselë	Fshatrat; Novoselë, Aliban, Bishan, Mifol, Poro, Dëllenjë, Delisuf, Trevllazër, Cerkovinë, Skroftinë, Fitore, Akërn
		Shushicë	Fshatrat; Shushicë, Bunavi, Beshisht, Grabian, Drithas, Mekat, Llakatund, Çepirat, Risili
	Selenicë	Selenicë	Qyteti Selenicë
		Armen	Fshatrat; Armen, Karbunarë, Rromës, Treblovë, Lubonjë, Picar, Mesarak
		Vllahinë	Fshatrat; Vllahinë, Kocul, Mërtiraj, Rexhepaj, Hadëraj, Mallkeq, Gërnec, Petë, Kropisht, Vezhdanisht, Peshkëpi, Penkovë
		Kotë	Fshatrat; Kotë, Gumenicë, Hysoverdhë, Lapardha, Mavrovë, Mazhar, Vajzë, Vodicë, Shkallë Mavrovë, Drashovicë
		Sevaster	Fshatrat; Sevaster, Golimbas, Dushkarak, Shkozë, Mazhar, Ploçë, Lezhan, Amonicë
		Brataj	Fshatrat; Brataj, Lepenicë, Gjorm, Velçë, Ramicë, Mesaplik, Matogjin, Bashaj, Vërmik, Malas
	Himarë	Himarë	Qyteti Himarë + Himara e Vjeter, Fshatrat; Pilur, Kudhës, Qeparo fshat, Qeparo Fushë, Vuno, Iliaz, Dhërmi, Gjilekë, Palasë
		Lukovë	Fshatrat; Lukovë, Borsh, Ftterrë, Çorraj, Piqeras, Sasaj, Qazim Pali, Shënavil, Nivicë
		Horë - Vranisht	Fshatrat; Vranisht, Kuç, Kuç Buronjë, Bolenë, Kallarat, Tërbaç
	Sarandë	Sarandë	Qyteti Sarandë, Fshatrat; Gjashtë, Metoq, Çukë, Shelegar
		Ksamil	Fshatrat; Ksamil
	Konispol	Konispol	Qyteti Konispol, Fshati; Çiflik,
		Xarrë	Fshatrat; Xarrë, Mursi, Shkallë, Vrinë, Shëndëlli, Sopik, Pandalejmon, Vagalat.
		Markat	Fshatrat; Dishat, Vërvë, Shalës, Markat, Ninat, Janjar
	Livadhja	Livadhja	Fshatrat; Livadhja, Kulluricë, Llazat, Kalcat, Kodër, Lefter Talo, Gravë, Qesarat, Komat, Karroq, Grazhdan, Zminec.
		Dhivër	Fshatrat; Dhivër, Rumanxë, Memoraq, Navaricë, Dermish, Leshnicë e Sipërme, Leshnicë e Poshtme, Janicat, Llupsat, Cerkovicë, Shëndre, Malcan
		Aliko	Fshatrat; Aliko, Çaus, Neohor, Tremul, Rahullë, Pllakë, Jermë, Vurgu i Ri, Halo, Dritas
		Finiq	Fshatrat; Finiq, Buronjë, Çlirim, Vrion, Karahaxhë, Bregas
		Mesopotam	Fshatrat; Mesopotam, Dhrovjan, Krongj, Bistricë, Velahovë, Livinë, Brajlat, Sirakat, Kostar, Fitore, Krane, Ardhasovë
	Delvine	Delvinë	Qyteti Delvinë, Fshatrat; Bamatat, Vllahat, Rusan, Lefterhor, Kakodhiq, Sopot, Stjar, Vanë, Kardhikaq, Pecë, Muzinë, Blerimas
		Vergo	Fshatrat; Vergo, Tatzat, Kalasë, Fushë Vërri, Senicë, Kopaçez, Qafë Dardhë, Bajkaj

Map 1: Territory of Qarku Vlore (Municipalities)



Map 2: Territory of Qarku Vlore (Administrative Units)



2. INVENTORY OF TOURISM POTENTIAL

2.1 Physical characteristics of destinations

Generally the villages of Himara Municipality, even have undergone to dramatic change after 90', still distinguish for their traditional character as hillside settlements, with a very traditional architecture of characteristic facades and the groves at the terraced hillsides as a strong cultural heritage identity of them. Table 1 below reviews and summaries the physical characteristics of destinations (villages) of Himara Municipality, both at coastal area and hinterland.

Table 1: Review of Physical Characteristics of Destinations Summary

Physical characteristics of destinations (rural and urban settlements)	
<p>Physical characteristics of the settlement (location, build up area, building features and architectural characteristics, quality of buildings)</p>	<p>a) Coastal area's traditional villages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The old coastal villages such as Palasa, Dhermi, Ilias, Vunoi, Himara, Old Qeparo, Kudhes, Corraj, Sasaj, Piqeras, Lukove, Shenvasil and Nivica are hillside settlements and built a few kilometres up from the shore. The layout of these villages is characterised by their adaptation to the terrain, their density and their formal cohesion. They are mainly surrounded by terraced olive tree plantations, vineyards and orchards. Generally, they are very compact and developed around a plaza which has a plane tree, a spring, a church or a community building, e.g. a coffee shop and goods store. • The houses in these old villages belong to three periods of time: the old characteristic houses build late 1800s and early 1900s till before the WW II, the ones built during the communist time and the last after years 1990' and 2000'. • The houses built before the WW II show the typical characteristics of the traditional houses built in oblong stones carefully joined with a very thin layer of mortar and the corners made of larger stones for locking the walls together. Roofs are four-sided pitch roofs. The old houses present a typical Ionian coastal architecture what makes south Albanian coast extremely attractive. • The villages of Himara, Qeparo Field and Borsh are mainly developed after the WW II. The houses built during the communist period bear the typical design of that period. • Most of the houses are of simple two storey rectangular shape with simple geometric hipped roofs. Generally, they are harmoniously situated next to and above each-other respecting heights such that each façade is easily seen from every viewpoint, has view to the surrounding terrain, and is lit by natural light and has access to fresh air. • The village of Old Qeparo impresses with the stunning beauty, the harmony with the terrain and the stone houses with their typical traditional architecture, as in other coastal villages. It is very well preserved, in spite of the fact that a number of historic houses are being abandoned. The built form of Upper Qeparo is similar in ways to Old Himara. • Construction of the old stone houses is based on the traditional architecture of the southern coastal area having many unique characteristics among them. The number of stories is usually 1 - 2 and does not exceed 3 in all the houses. • The architectural structure of the villages has undergone to dramatic changes over the years 90' and especially the years 2000'. New construction often is done at the expense of the

	<p>unique exterior architectural character of the buildings and has influenced the traditional and harmonious setting of the old settlements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New constructions after 90' refer very little to the architectural or aesthetic values of the old villages and do not keep the traditional design style and use of the local materials at all, as stone, local tail and wood. • The uncontrolled tendency to improve living conditions or enhance space is reflected either by renovating and refurbishing the old houses, or attaching new buildings or by adding additional storeys or the complete demolition of traditional houses and the construction of new ones in their stead. Very little in-character restoration of old houses can be found. • The "Roof and Façade" program of WB tried to bring some restoration of old houses but it was very little and not enough to create a critical mass of restoration of old houses considering the degraded situation in almost all the coastal villages. The number of houses that got restoration according to each of the villages are as below¹: <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr><td>Ilias</td><td>2 houses under R&F program</td></tr> <tr><td>Vunoi</td><td>6 houses under R&F program</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>3 houses under B&B program</td></tr> <tr><td>Old Himara</td><td>3 houses under R&F program</td></tr> <tr><td>Qeparo</td><td>7 houses under R&F program</td></tr> <tr><td>Lukova (Lukshi)</td><td>4 houses under R&F program</td></tr> <tr><td>Nivica</td><td>4 houses under R&F program</td></tr> </table> <p>b) Vlora bay's villages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the village of Old Tragjasi, located on the ridge of the hill between two streambeds, today have remained only the ruins, and people of the entire village moved down to New Tragjas and villages around. The Village of New Tragjasi sits just above the Izvori Artesian Springs. <p>The traditional houses with vernacular architecture are very rare actually. Unfortunately the character of the new buildings in the area has little relationship to any traditional architectural forms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the traditional Old Dukati village is built on the north facing slopes directly above the stream. The slopes are fairly gentle and the building is not very dense. Cobbled path, usually bordered by perimeter walls, connect the structures and form the village open space character. Many traditional buildings in Old Dukati are partially destroyed and crumbling into ruins. <p>The character of many of the buildings of Old Dukati is simple village traditional architecture. However, newer additions and newer buildings in the village are not built in traditional character.</p> <p>New buildings in New Dukati are of indeterminate character and are spreading along both sides of the national road.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The core of the old village of Rradhima is built around cobbled paths with steps. The traditional houses with vernacular architectural are very rare actually. The visually sensitive ridge of Rradhima hill is being developed with new multi-storey constructions without any local character. <p>c) Shushica River valley's villages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The villages settled down at the lower slopes of Lungara and Cika Mountains have little in character buildings, except some 	Ilias	2 houses under R&F program	Vunoi	6 houses under R&F program		3 houses under B&B program	Old Himara	3 houses under R&F program	Qeparo	7 houses under R&F program	Lukova (Lukshi)	4 houses under R&F program	Nivica	4 houses under R&F program
Ilias	2 houses under R&F program														
Vunoi	6 houses under R&F program														
	3 houses under B&B program														
Old Himara	3 houses under R&F program														
Qeparo	7 houses under R&F program														
Lukova (Lukshi)	4 houses under R&F program														
Nivica	4 houses under R&F program														

¹ www. destinacionijug.com as visited on 8.05.2015

	<p>old traditional houses built with the corners made of larger oblong stones for locking the walls together carefully and joined with a very thin layer of mortar. The windows and ports are built carefully in stone elements and roofs are four-sided pitch roofs. These techniques of the old traditional houses seem to be similar in typical techniques used in coastal villages on the other side of the mountains.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houses built during the communist time and after 90' do not keep the traditional design style; the same trend as undergone with coastal villages. <p>d) Rrezoma (Kalasa river) valley's villages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The villages settled here are Tatzati and Kalasa villages. The old traditional houses have similarities on architectural style of the Ionian coastal villages. These traditional houses have faced damages because of abandonment and lack of care. • The new houses built during communist time and those after 90' do not keep the traditional design style. • The area has been known for the considerate number of stone bridges build during the period of Ali Pashë Tepelena, the end of XVIII century till in the middle of XIX century.
<p>Road access situation</p>	<p>Road access situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vloa County is accessed by road and by sea. One road access is from north the road coming from Fieri and after passing through Vloa town continues with the coastal road linking Vloa with Saranda. The other road access is from Gjirokastra direction with access from south east. The access from the sea is made from the ports of Vloa and Saranda. • The southern coastal area is accessible by road from Vloa through the Llogara mountain pass inside the national park of Llogara and from Saranda, too. This is a new rehabilitated two line road. This road passes through almost all the coastal villages. There is a new road signage at the entrances and exits of the all coastal villages. • Good paved connection roads link the villages of Palasa, Old Qeparo and Kudhes with the national coastal road at the respective junctions. While the road connecting Corraj and Fterra with the coastal road are at very bad conditions and need appropriate construction. The road connecting Sasaj with the coastal road need reconstruction and improvement, too. • The road section from Himara to Pilur is accessible but need improvements and security measures according to the standards. • The Valley of Shushica River is serviced by a heavily damaged asphalted road and in some segments it has lost it completely and needs immediate improvement and reconstruction. The most dangerous road segments are Bridge of Kotë-Gumenicë-Lapardha, Horë-Vranisht, Velcë-Ramicë, Kallarat-Kuç, Kuç-Corraj. The road in these segments is a dirty road with narrow bridges, and very steep segments and the change of cars along it is very dangerous. Signage is missing quite on the all segments and driving on the road sometimes is dangerous because no protection barriers are found there, as well as the lack of lighting by night. • The road linking Saranda town with Butrinti Archaeological Site passing through Ksamili village is a new rehabilitated two line road at very good standards of safety and signage. This road continues on the other side of Vivary canal towards the villages

	<p>of Xarra, Mursi. The road conditions are good; it is a paved two lines road.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The road linking Saranda town with Qafe Bote boarder entry point with Greece is a new rehabilitated two line road at very good standard of security and signage. It links with the rural areas of the municipalities of Konispoli and Livadhja through a network of local roads. • The road linking Saranda town with Gjirokastra is a two line paved road. • The road linking Saranda town with Delvina town is a road of good standard of security and signage. The local road of area of Rezoma (Kalasa river) valley suffers the bad road conditions, while a new road is planed linking Delvina territory towards Kardhiq in Gjirokaster (even it was under construction, for the time being the works have stopped) • The road signage is well developed alongside the coastal road from Vlora to Sranda and from Saranda to Qafe Bote (border entry point) at the junctions towards the traditional villeges and settlements and beach areas. • There is a scheduled transport organised by private companies from Vlora to Saranda and Saranda to Vlora. There are two busses daily leaving Saranda during morning hours. One of them goes to Tirana by way of the coastal road, a third bus running during the summer months only. This line does not run during winter. Aria of Palasa, Dhermi, Ilias, Vuno and Jali is served by three buses. Vans, taxis, and private cars service by order the villeges along the coast. • There is a bus line from Saranda to village of Xarra. • There is a bus line from Saranda to Butrinti. • The only scheduled mean of transport serving to Shushica River Valley are the minibuses (furgonet) which make the transportation of passengers from Vlora town to the area.
<p>Main economic activities</p>	<p>Economic activities</p> <p>The main economic activities in rural area of Vlora County are as following:</p> <p>Livestock. Traditionally, livestock farming has been the most important economical activity in all the villeges, mostly for breeding goats and sheep. Livestock provides another source of food and income with products such as milk, cheese, butter, curd (gjize) and meat throughout the year for many families of rural area in villeges of Radhima, Dukat, Tragjas, Dhermiu, Ilias, Vuno, Himara, Qeparo, Kudhes, Pilur, Lukova, Borsh, Piqeras, Corraj Fterre, Nivice, and all the villeges of Shushica River valley. It is also a source for tourism related businesses of accommodation and restaurants by furnishing them with locally produced goods.</p> <p>Farming. Traditionally, farming has not been an important economical activity in Dukati valley area, in Ionian coastal area and Shushica River valley area. Farming is especially developed in Delvina, Vrina, Xarra, Mursi areas. Xarra is the biggest mandarin producing area in Albania. Agricultural activity has been traditionally carried out by villegers in their small gardens cultivating vegetables for their own needs in all the villeges of Rradhima area, Dukati valley area, Ionian coastal area and Shushica River valley area; olive harvesting is another activity carried out by villegers in all these areas known for olive growing as well as in Saranda and Delvina areas.</p> <p>Beekeeping and honey production. This activity is</p>

	<p>concentrated especially in the villages of Shushica River Valley as Kuc, Vranisht, Terbac, Kallarat, Brataj, Gjorm, Lepenice, Sevaster etc. In spite of very favourable climate, environmental conditions and great potentials for its development, apiculture is a rare activity in the coastal area, mainly developed in Palasa.</p> <p>Tourism activity. Tourism related activities as running hotels, guesthouses/B&B facilities, campsites, restaurants/cafés/bars and renting of rooms/apartments are some of the activities that local population is involved mainly to the coastal area and to the main settlements and villages.</p> <p>Handicraft. Hand looming is a well developed tradition mainly in Shushica River Valley's villages as Kuc, Kallarat, Terbac, Gjorm, Vranisht, where some women's possess handlooms and produce carpets, bags, wool socks etc. Also Himara is well known in the region for its carpet-producing which has a long tradition there. Many artisans work the stone and wood, to produce artistic objects and decorations, including fifes, ceilings and furniture.</p> <p>Other activities. Some other economic activities where local population is involved are trade, construction industry, olive oil production, dairy produce, herbs collection, etc..</p>
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2.2 Visitor Attractions

The tourism potential audit identified the visitor attractions, both natural and cultural, for the Vlora county study area (coastal and hinterland) and assessed for their potential and physical state; majority of them identified and selected from the approved lists by Albanian institutions. Their selection is made referring to the interest they have for tourism purposes. Vlora County has a rich, diverse range and considerable number of visitor attractions. Because of the very difficult terrain and lack of access, a number of natural and cultural resources are isolated from one part of territory to another and do not facilitate the cohesion of the region. Generally they lack maintenance from the responsible bodies and are listed only in paper as protected monuments of nature and culture heritage.

The visitor attractions are listed and described in **Appendix 1: Inventory of Natural Assets Detail** and **Appendix 2: Inventory of Cultural Heritage Assets Detail**. Table 2 and Table 3 below review and summarise assets within the Vlora county study area.

2.2.1 Natural attractions

Table 2: Review of Visitor Natural Attractions Summary, Vlora County

Natural characteristics / assets (waters, protected areas, flora and fauna of specific interest, biodiversity, geological formations, etc..)	
<p>Waters (rivers/streams, lakes, lagoons); Mountains and hills; Landscape; Protected Areas (according to IUCN criteria); Natural Attractions (beaches/bays, waterfalls/cataracts, nature monuments, forest/natural parks, canyons, caves, geological formations, panoramic views/point of view,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vlora county is characterised by a rich variety of water sources: Shushica valley is home of Shushica River for almost 80 km which joins together a number of streams as the two main streams of Smokthina and Kuci and the other ones of Vranisht, of Gjorm, of Përroi i Madh, of Vajza, of Turbulli and this of Vlahina, till it flows into the Vjosa river. • The Ionian coastal area from Karaburun peninsula to Saranda is poor in flowing waters except a few intermittent streams as Kudhes and Borshi, the others are mainly running during the wet season. Two important source waters run into the Ionian Sea from Cuka canal till to the Greek border, Bistrica River and Pavllo River which in their way toward the sea joins a number of streams.

scenic beauty, fauna, flora)

- The Butrinti Lake is the most important one not only for the area but one of most important in Albania. It is special because of the biodiversity of flora and fauna; but also it houses in its coast the most important archaeological site in Albania, the Butrinti, a World Heritage Site.
- Narta and Orikumi lagoons are also important sites for migratory birds.
- Vlorë municipality area is dominated by massive powerful ridges of mountains at the western coastal part and also by a number of mountains inland in east-southeast part.
 - Lungare Mountain runs parallel with the sea at a direction north to south-east and on the west it goes down towards the sea with Shashica hills from Kanina Village in the north till in Tragjas and Dukat at the south at Orikumi / Dukati valley.
 - Karaburun and Rreza e Kanalit mountain ridge coming from the west rise and fall to finally meet Mount Cika at the pass of Llogara, 1027m high, which is found between the peak of Çika 2045m in the east and that of Shendellia 1499m in the west.
 - Mountain Cika ridge from Llogara Pass turns to the south and separated from Bogonica mountain from Vali of Vranisht, undulates downhill, and meets the sea. The ridge dissolves into smaller finger ridges that define separate coves, the southernmost being the Porto Palermo Peninsula.
 - Kurveleshi ridge (further inland), which begins with Tartar mountain and continue with Cipini and Bolena mountains runs parallel with Lungare and Cika ridges defining the valley of Shushica river from Velca to Kuci village. It splits into two fingers meeting the sea at Qeparo and Borsh. The southern finger of the Kurveleshi ridge turns southeast at Borsh and continues parallel to the shoreline till Perparim, where it moves slightly inland.
 - Delvina area is surrounded at the eastern side by Muzina Mountain and Krongji Mountain while Livadhja area is surrounded by a number of mountains as Mellezi, Saraqini, Shendeniku, Stugara, Dhivrou, Dhrovian and Drugana mountains.
- The landscape of Vlorë region represents a diversified landscape from the northern coast of Vlorë bay in Adriatic sea and the Ionian coastal area from Karaburuni peninsula till at Stillo cape near the Greece border at the western side, to the inner country with Shushica river valley surrounded by mountains in the both sides continuing with the valley of Kalasa river, Delvina till to the Greece border.
- Vlorë County has a diversity protected areas where the most important ones are the “National Parks” of Butrinti, Llogara and the “Marine National Park” of Karaburun – Sazan. Also the area houses a number of “Protected Nature Monuments” as the Blue Eye Spring in Delvina, Canyon of Gjipe in Vuno, and a number of caves and trees.
- A diversified array of natural attractions dot the territory of the county, both the coastal and hinterland.
- Two islands of significant importance, Sazani island and Zverneci island; the first very important during the Cold war era with a high biodiversity potential.
- The coastal area of Vlorë County, especially the Ionian coast represents the most beautiful one in Albania with many bays and beaches. The bays of Vlorë, Spile, Porto Palermo, Kakome, Saranda and Ksamili house a number of beaches as these of Jonufer and Radhima in Adriatic sea, and the other ones in the

	<p>Ionian seas; some of them with pebble and some with sands mixed with pebble as Grama beach in Karaburun, Palasa beach, Perivollo beaches (Kondraqe), Dhërmu beach, Gjipe beach, Jali beach, Livadhi beach, Spille beach, Filikur beach, Llanan beach, Qeparo beach, Borsh beach, Bunec beach, Lukova beach, Krozë beach, Kakome beach, Ksamili beaches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of Platanus trees represent significant natural attractions in themselves as they are part of the plazas in many traditional villages as in Palasa, Kudhës, Old Qeparo, Nivica, and Shenvasil. • The area of county is rich in caves, too, as the most important ones can be mentioned the caves of Duk Gjoni, Haxhi Aliu and Grama in Karaburun peninsula, the cave of Pirates (Dhermi), the cave of Velçe, the painted cave of Lepenica, the cave of Konispoli, etc. • The Canyon of Gjipe (Dhermi) is very exceptional in its kind, although the area of the Ionian coast is characterised by many gorges and canyons created by the intermittent streams coming up from the mountains. • The Ionian coastal area is a geological amphitheatre in itself with some very spectacular geological formations as those in Dhermi, Old Himara, Potam, Porto Palermo, Old Qeparo, Vuno and Muzina. • A number of forests in the territory of the county offer an attractive environment for nature entertainment. • The Ionian Coast offers some very nice panoramic and point of views, as the view from Pass of Llogara towards the Ionian coast, from Piluri village, from Terrace of Lekursi castle with view over Saranda and deep towards Butrinti lagoon, etc. The road from Dukati which climbs up steeply through Llogara Pass and then descends down along the coast through traditional coastal villages till in Nivica is a scenic road in itself as along it are opened some very panoramic views. Also, some very picturesque panoramas are offered from the top of the hill where is settled the Amantia archaeological site, from Kuci balcony towards the Shuchica valley, and from the passes of the mountain ridges linking the coast with the inner country as this over Terbac, Vranisht, etc. • The Ionian coast is rich also for its outstanding scenic underwater, as this of marine environment of Karaburuni Peninsula and Rreza e Kanalit, Kakome bay to Qefali Cape, Ksamili bay and Cape of Stillo near the Greek boarder.
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2.2.2 Cultural heritage attractions

Table 3: Review of Visitor Cultural Heritage Attractions Summary, Vlora County

Cultural characteristics / assets (material and non material)	
<p>Build Cultural heritage (cultural attractions: historic sites, historic buildings, monuments, museums, archaeological sites, traditional architecture)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is obvious that such a concentration of historic buildings with castles, archaeological sites, settlement ruins and bridges all over the county and old traditional houses in many traditional villages especially alongside the Ionian Coastal road, is not found in any part of Albania. The most important ones to mention: Butrinti Archaeological Site (UNESCO site), Archaeological site of the ancient Oriq in Pashaliman, Amantia Archaeological Site, Archeological site of Foeniche (Finiq), Castle of Himara and the Ancient upper village at Old Himara,

	<p>Castle of Ali Pasha in Porto Palermo, etc..</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A considerate number of other castle remains are spread in the area as to mention the remains of Vlora Castle, remains of Kanina Castle in Kanina village, Castle of Gjon Bocari in Tragjas village, Castle of Borsh at Sopot Hill, Castle of Ali Pasha in Vrina, Castle of Ali Pasha in Vivar (Butrint), Castle ruins in Kalivo, Castle in Mile Mt. near Vagalat village, Castle ruins of Mallathre near Mursi village, Remains of Castle in Cuka of Aitoi in Ciflik village, Ruins of Castle in Delvina town, Ali Pasha Castle in Mahala village, Castle in Vergo, etc.. • The ensembles of old characteristic houses in villages as Vuno, Old Himara, Kudhes, Corraj, Old Qeparo, Lukova, Sasaj and Nivica makes south Albanian coast very attractive by urging immediate measures for preserving the typical Ionian coastal architecture. Also, Palasa, Dhermi and Piqeras in the coastal area and Tatzati and Kalasa in Rrezoma area (Delvina) and villages of Shushica valley as Kallarat, Vranisht, Gumenice, Lepenice, Gjorm have exemplars houses of traditional architecture that value to be preserved. • The rural cultural panorama of the coastal strip that goes down towards the sea is of high interest composed of terracing, on which extended olives and citrus plantations have been created. These terracing face the risk of being abandoned and compromised from a conservative point of view. • A number of fortified houses (called Kulla) demonstrates the economic power and their architectonic style as the Tower of Dervish Aliu in Dukat, Fortified house (kulla) in Gumenice, House of Odise Kasneci in Vuno, the Tower of Vreto and the Tower of Kumi in Dhermi, The tower (Kulla) of Vlashaj family (built by Ali Pasha Tepelena) in Old Qeparo. Of a high interest it is the building in Rusan, too. • Of particular interest are Ancient graffiti and quarry at Grama bay at Karaburun Peninsula and the so called “White Roads” site where Caesar landed in Roman civil wars at the Palasa plain. • A considerate number of stone bridges very well preserved till in our days, but badly maintained, demonstrate the importance of the area. To be mentioned there are the bridge in Brataj, bridge Frenku in Gjorm village, bridge in Tatzat, bridge Jezir in Tatzat, bridge of Cina in Tatzat, bridge Jezir in Rrezome, bridge in Upper Leshnice, bridge in Lower Leshnice, bridge over Theologo River in Cerkovice village. • A very attractive museum is the one of Butrinti Archaeological Museum. Other museums, as the Historic Museum and the Seat of Government of Ismail Qemali, Ethnographic Museum and the Independence Museum in Vlora town, and the Archaeological and Ethnographic Museum in Saranda, are of interest, too. • In Saranda town there are a number of remains that demonstrate the richness of the site as the remains of Onhezmi Castle, Lekuresi Castle, Mosaic at the Archaeological Museum, remains of a Roman Cisterna in the ground floor of Hotel Republika
<p>Religious Heritage (religious buildings heritage as churches, monasteries, shrines, mosques, tekkes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undoubtedly, the Vlora county and especially the territory of the coastal area is the richest with byzantine churches and monasteries. • The coastal traditional villages have a significant amount of religious heritage buildings including churches of Monastery

	<p>Panaia and of St. Ipapandia at Dhermi, churches of St. Spiridhoni, of St. Mehilli, of St. Maria Mesodhia and of St. Sotira at Vuno, churches of St. Sergji & Baku, of All Saints and of St. Maria of Athali at Himara, church of St. Dimitry Qeparo, church of monastery of St. Maria Krimarova in Piqeras, church of St. Mary of Kakome's Monastery, Synagogue and Paleochristian basilica in Saranda, the Monastery and Church remains of 40 Saints in Saranda and the Monastery of St. George in Dema, Ksamil. Also a number of churches in inner country are of a great importance and value as the church of St Nicolas Monastery in Mesopotam, church of St. Maria in Malican, church of St Nicolas in Dhiver, church of St. Mary's Monastery of Mavrodhiver, Dhiver, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While in the bay of Vlora, two churches are of the significance value, the church of Marmiro in Dukat and the church of St. Mary Monastery of 14th Century in Zverec. • The Islamic religion in Vlora County is represented with two significant examples, the Muradie Mosque in Vlora and the Mosque of St. George Alex in Rusan, Delvine.
<p>Traditional living culture (lifestyle) (Oral expressions as legends / myths / stories / tales; Music expressions as songs, musical instruments; Expressions through action as dances, games, ceremonies, rituals, etc.; Material expressions as designing, carving, pottery, felt processing, handmade carpets and blankets, knitting and embroidery, traditional dresses, handloom, musical instruments;)</p>	<p>The territory of Vlore County has a rich traditional living culture which has the origin from the ethno-cultural region called Laberia. All these traditions are materialized, except the architecture, in other expressions of living culture as legends and stories, folklore, music, dances, musical instruments, traditional dresses, handicraft, gastronomy, etc..</p> <p><u>Rituals from traditional festivities</u></p> <p>Many rituals are manifested in the lifestyle of their inhabitants. Such rituals are linked with the cult of agriculture, livestock and "motmoti". Their origin is pagan and related to prayers and thanks to deities for good harvests, to escape from natural disasters, diseases, flood and droughts. Later on these pagan rituals are manifested under the Christian or Islamic connotation. The commons and rituals of these traditional festivities hold the cult of sun, moon, fire, animals and plants, too.</p> <p>Among the ritual festivities that inhabitants of Vlora territory are still practicing can be mentioned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dita e Motmotit të Ri - Kalendrat - Ujë e Bekuar - Dita e Verës Llazaret ose Shën Lazri - Shën Gjergji - Dita e Shën Gjinit - Karnavalet <p><u>Folk musical instruments</u></p> <p>The tradition of folk musical instruments is mainly related with the polyphonic singing tradition of the area. Local masters of wood and stone carving have produced different musical instruments for their everyday lifestyle. Generally for producing these instruments are used the wood from trees of "bushi", maple and "frashër". Even today these instruments are produced in Vranisht, Tërbaç, Bolenë, Kallarat, Borsh, Vërnik, and Kuç. The folk musical instrument of the country are as following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cula: fife (fyell i njëfishtë me sqep); it is used usually by the shepards. - Cula dyjare: a double fife (fyell i dyfishtë me sqep); it is a characteristic instrument of pastoral life. It is made of double

fife in which the melody and counter-melody is played.

- **Bobla:** it is a popular musical instrument made from the horn of cattle, mainly cows, oxen and buffaloes.
- **Boria:** cornet, it is made from the peel of “lofata” tree which after it is peeled from the tree is given the form of the cornet.
- **Bilbili:** it is an instrument made from the wood, animal or bird bones, or metal.
- **Këmborët dhe zilet:** “cow bell” are of different size. They sound to produce melody.

Legends, myths, stories, early tales related to local toponyms:

- Pagan rituals related to “**Shkëmbi Bridash**” in Terbacì village at the slope of Cika Mountain.
- The legend related to “**Shpella e Haxhi Alisë**” në Karaburun
- The legend related to “**Rrethi i Plakës**” situated on the slope of Stogoi mountain at Brataj village.
- The legend of “**Përbindëshi i Bistricës**”
- The legend related to “**Shpella e Katafiqit**”, ose “Shpella e xhindeve”, at the eastern side of Kuci village.
- The legend related to “**Shpella e Qiklopit**” in Himara.
- The story related to “**Sheshi i Çezarit**” situated near the Llogara Pass.
- The story related to “**Vau i Skënderbeut**” situated on the banks of Shushica river, near the Village of Penkove.
- The story of “**Skaloma (Skela) e Ymer Agos**” situated near Radhima village.

Kanun of Laberia

In the content of the Kanun, except the general norms, in the first place are presented key principles as liberty, equality, honour, faith, hospitality, like social moral values and legal principles as reflected in overall Albanian customary law. Kanun of Laberia was applied in rural area of Vlora, in Himara, in southern coastal area in general, in Kurvelesh, in Rrezoma, in Kardhiq, everywhere where “lab” communities lived as well at a restricted stage towns as in Vlora and Delvina. Its origin comes from antiquity (century IV-I BC) and continued as oral expressions through centuries till in the first half of XX century.

Folk music tradition

“**Polyphony**” - The traditional singing of the ethno-cultural region called Laberia is known as ‘Iso-Polyphony’ which is listed in 2005 by UNESCO as a masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity. Iso-Polyphonic songs are old folk songs unwritten, inherited, and transmitted from one generation to the next. This kind of song is sung by a lead singer who is accompanied by a group composed of 4-6 people, mostly men.

“Trioja” of Dukat and the dance which is played by singing at a closed circle are classified elements at the worldwide isopoliphony. This dance is quite unique. The inhabitants of Vranisht village are known for their special polyphonic songs and the dances accompanied by folk songs. The most known groups of Polyphony in Vlora county are those of: Kanina, Orikumi, Dukati, Drashovica, Selenica, Lapardha, Brati, Terbacì, Velça, Bolena, Vranishti and Himara, as well as the coastal area.

Handicraft

	<p>Vlora county (qarku) is also well known for its crafts, including traditional costumes of the different areas, such as kilts, men and women clothing, foot-cloth, handmade wool carpets and rugs, wooden and wicker furniture, woollen covers, knitting, embroidery, felt processing, wrought iron, work tools, and musical instruments. Many artisans work the stone and wood, to produce artistic objects and decorations, including fifes, ceilings and furniture. In the villages of Kuc, Kallarat, Terbac, Gjorm, Vranisht some women's posses handlooms and produce carpets, bags, wool socks etc. Also Himara is well known in the region for its carpet-producing which has a long tradition there. About 20 households have looms; spinning and weaving are old traditional crafts.</p> <p><u>Traditional lifestyle</u></p> <p>The traditional men dressing in the territory of Laberia is a white woollen hat made by felt with an extending on the top called "antenna" by locals; its origin is coming from ancientness. The region is very rich in traditional dresses as each area has its traditional distinctive costume.</p> <p>Traditionally, the local houses have a separate room for guest called (dhoma e miqve) generally decorated in special way. As a tradition, brides prepared their own handmade dowry and in some villages this tradition is still practised.</p>
<p>Traditional cuisine / specialities at the local / regional level (traditional dishes and specialities)</p>	<p>The traditional cuisine in Vlora county is rich and diversified with similarities but also distinctions between the coastal area and the hinterland as well as among the districts themselves. It reflects the agriculture and livestock produce cultivated in the county's rural area as well as fishery in the coastal area.</p> <p>Some traditional specialities are typical for Vlora Region in both coastal and hinterland areas as it is the grilled lamb or kid (of one year) on a skewer, "arapash", "kukurec", "përslesh" with turkey or goose, pie with different ingredients, traditional mix salad of tomato and cucumber with cheese and olives. The use of "kos" (yogurt), strong white cheese of goat/cow/sheep, "gjize" (made by boiling yogurt and dribbling it), strong cheese known as "kackavall", as well as olives and olive oil is common in every table. Traditional spirits use in the area is raki and wine. Raki is used widely in all the county, while wine has been less in common; mainly used in Narta village and Himara. The main varieties of wine produced locally are Kallmet, Shesh and Vlosh wines.</p> <p>More specifically the areas are distinguished for the traditional specialities as following:</p> <p><i>Vlora's area traditional specialities:</i> Grilled meat, "arapash", "kukurec", "trahana", pie with leafy wild greens and "gjize" and yogurt, "pispilit", fish/eel cooked in a baking pan, salad with boiled leaf greens, mix salad, yogurt, hard white cheese of goat/cow/sheep, olives and olive oil, "revani".</p> <p><i>Shushica valley's area traditional specialities:</i> Grilled meat, "arapash", "kukurec", "pace" with the meet of veal's head, "pasterma", "përslesh" with turkey or goose, "thërime / rosnica", pie with different leafy wild greens, "kulac" baked in hot wooden ash, salad with boiled leafy wild greens, mix salad, yogurt, hard white cheese of goat/cow/sheep, olives and olive oil, "revani" as sweet.</p>

	<p><i>Ionian coastal area (Bregu e Saranda) traditional specialities:</i> Trout fish cooked in a baking pan, “ksirogjak”, “pervelak”, pie with rice and different leafy wild greens, “revani”, as well as mix salad, yogurt, hard white cheese of goat/cow/sheep, olives and olive oil. The area, being known for the cultivation of garden orchards, uses their fruits as traditional sweets in form of jams, compotes, marmalades, gliko. The fresh fruits grown in the garden orchards are known mandarins, oranges, lemons, grape, cherry, nespulla, and figs.</p> <p><i>Delvina’s area traditional specialities:</i> Traditional culinary specialties of the area have a big influence from Greek cuisine as well as the livestock tradition of the hinterland. The most traditional specialties are: the Greek traditional pie (mainly cooked in villages as Finiq, Mesopotam, Mursi, Ciflik), “musaka”, sufle, pie with rice, pie with “cep dore”, trout fish cooked in baking pan with spices and vegetables (characteristic for Finiqi area). Also the area is known for “pace”, grilled lamb / kid on a skewer, “tas kebab”, “kukurec” (Delvina area is distinguished for its cooking), and yogurt made with sheep milk.</p> <p>Specifically some of the settlements are known for traditional specialties as below. A list of specialties with a description is given at the Appendix 3: Traditional culinary specialties of Vloa County.</p> <p><u>Shushica Valley</u>: Grilled lamb or kid on a skewer, “arapash” with bowels of the lamb, “përshesh” with turkey or goose, “urle”, “kukurec”, pie with leafy wild greens, “thërime / rosnica”, “pastico”, “revani”.</p> <p><u>Himara</u>: Salad with oranges, olives, dried onions, boiled leafy wild greens, olive oil and lemon, pie or pita, pie with fish, pie with chicken, “bllacaria”, lamb / kid meat with spices in oven, marinated sardines, fish cooked in a baking pan, cooked white beans, stew dish, “arapash”. Himara is known for the traditional produce of bukfiqe and palafi, as well as the wine. Coffee’s liqueur is a traditional home made speciality in Old Himara.</p> <p><u>Piluri</u>: Grilled lamb or kid on a skewer, pie with potato, spinach, “gjize” and yogurt.</p> <p><u>Qeparo</u>: Pancakes, pie with pumpkin, pie with spinach, baked meat (chicken, lamb, kid) with potato,</p> <p><u>Borsh</u>: “Petanik”, grilled lamb or kid on a skewer,</p> <p><u>Saranda</u>: Fish, cooked mussels, cooked sea food (a mixture of octopods, shrimps squids and common cuttlefishes). The fish mainly is mullet, cod, sea bass, scald, “sira”, “koce”, etc..</p> <p><u>Delvina</u>: Traditional Greek pie (in Finiq, Mesopotam, Mursi, Ciflik), as well as, “musaka”, “sufle”, pie with rice, pie with “cep dore”, trout fish with spices and vegetables (characteristic for Finiqi area), “pace”, grilled lamb or kid on a skewer, “tas kebab”, “kukurec”, yogurt made from the sheep milk.</p>
<p>Traditional agriculture produce at the local / regional level</p>	<p>All the coastal region of Vloa county is known mainly for the cultivation of citrus (oranges, lemons and mandarins), as well as the vines, cherries, figs, “nespulla”, etc.. Flat grounds and much of the hill slopes (Dukati Valley, Dhermi, Vuno, Ilias, Himara, Qeparo, Borshi, Piqeras, Lukove) are largely cultivated in olives, oranges, etc. Some of the regions of Vloa county are specific as below:</p>

Shushica valley area

The garden orchards cultivated in this area are mainly olive trees, pears, peaches, apricot, walnut, almond, mulberry, local varieties of grapes, oranges and mandarins but less in number, "hurma", watermelons, melons, and different varieties of plums.

The most cultivated vegetables in the gardens are tomato, peppers, cucumber, eggplant, pumpkin, etc..

Local processing produce consists mainly in:

- Olive oil production mainly carried out for family use.
- Homemade table usage olives for family use by processing and preserving fresh olives in brine.
- Distillation of raki and less wine production mainly carried out for family use.
- Cheese and "gjize" production in local dairies.
- Beekeeping and honey production (mono-flowers honeys, royal jelly, propolis). This activity is concentrated especially in the villages of Kuc, Vranisht, Terbac, Kallaratz, Brataj, Gjorm, Lepenice, Sevaster etc.

The area is also known for herb collection, some of them with use in family, as mountain tea and oregano. They herbs are:

- mint (*Mentha aquatica*), collected and cultivated
- mountain savory (*Satureja Montana*), collected
- "mountain tea" or "shepherd's tea" (*Syderitissyriaca*), collected
- oregano (*Origanum vulgare*), collected
- sage (*Salvia Officinalis*), collected and cultivated
- thyme (*Timus Serpillum*), collected.

Coastal area

The garden orchards cultivated in this area are mainly olive trees, walnut, citrus, as well as the common fruits of the area but less in quantity.

Specifically, the area is distinguished for:

Radhima is known for quantity of citrus, olives, vines, figs, while other fruits are less cultivated and vegetables are grown for family use, not for trading.

Tragjasi cultivates more in quantity walnuts, pears, apples, pomegranates, while olives less. Other season's fruits and vegetables are cultivated for family use.

Dukati cultivates more pears, apples, peaches and vegetables as tomato, leafy wild greens, leek, onions and potato, while olives, walnuts, vines and other fruits are cultivated less in quantity.

In Pilur and Kudhes are cultivated more walnuts, pears, vines, figs and olives less. Other fruits and vegetables are cultivated less. These areas are known for herbs as mountain tea, oregano and sage.

In Qeparo and Borsh are cultivated more citrus, olives, vines, figs. Also herbs are spread there. The fruits and vegetables are cultivated for family use.

Maple wood grown in Llogara is used for handicraft produce. Also, in Llogara the characteristic herbs are mountain tea, oregano and sage.

Local processing produce consists mainly in:

- Production of jams and compotes of plum, cherry, peach,

	<p>walnut, mandarin and fig.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Olive oil production from the local factories. - Beekeeping and honey production, royal jelly and propolis, mainly in Palasa. <p><u>Saranda</u></p> <p>Saranda area is known for the cultivation of citrus, olives (mainly Kalinjot variety) vines, as well watermelon.</p> <p>Mursi area is known for the biggest mandarin plantations, the majority of the produce is exported. In this area are cultivated vines and artichoke, too.</p> <p><u>Delvine</u></p> <p>In Delvina area are cultivated the citrus, olives as well as the vines.</p> <p>Mesopotami area is known for cultivation of vines and olives, as well as the corn.</p> <p>The wine is produced in Delvina and Mesopotam.</p>
Festivals and ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Festival of Iso-Poliphony in Vlora (yearly, on 25th November). - Mediterranean Folkloric Festival "Albmediterraneo". (yearly, on 1st August). - International Folk Festival "Aulona-Folkfest". (yearly, second Friday of May). - The week of Mediterranean Film (yearly, on 10th August). - Carnivals of Narta village. (yearly, on Orthodox Easter). - Summer tour of the humorists (during the summer season) - Summer tour of Puppet Theatre (during the summer season) - Summer tour of Folkloric Ensemble "Laberia" (during the summer season) - Concerts from Wind Orchestra. - Concerts from Symphonic Orchestra.
Cultural and folkloric associations (list and the activity they perform)	(to be filled in by Qarku)
Cultural activities / Entertainment (cinema, theatre, music concerts, discotheques, etc)	(to be filled in by Qarku)

2.3 Tourism infrastructure

The tourism product audit identified a range of tourism infrastructure (accommodation facilities and food&drink facilities) within the study area (coastal and hinterland). The total identified tourism infrastructure is listed in **Appendix 4: Inventory of Tourism Infrastructure**. Summarised information is given below according to each municipality:

1. In **Vlora Municipality**, referring to the tourism database records and the field visits to the Administrative Unit of Vlora (town of Vlora) and the Administrative Unit of Orikum (villages of Radhimë, Tragjas, Dukat, Dukat Fshat), the following data resulted on tourism infrastructure:
 - **86 Hotels** (from the previous list 9 hotels resulted that are demolished): the main areas for hotels are Vlora town with 48 hotels, Rradhima with 24hotels, Orikumi with 9 hotels, Tragjasi with 1 hotel and Dukati (in Llogara pass) with 4hotels.

- **104 Guesthouses / Rented Apartments-Rooms:** under the category of guesthouses / rented apartments-rooms the distribution is Vlora town with 35, Rradhima with 33, Tragjas with 3, Orikum with 11, Dukati with 7 and Llogara with 5.
 - **3 Campsites:** 2 campsites are located in Orikumi area and 1 campsite in Vlora (Plazhi i Vjeter)
 - **261 Restaurants/ Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk:** Vlora town, Vlora-Skele and Vlora-Uji Ftohte are the main locations for this category, respectively 36 in Vlora town, 46 in Vlora-Skele and 64 in Vlora-Uji Ftohte. In Rradhima area there are 34, in Orikumi area there are 27 and the rest in Tragjasi, Dukat and Llogara. In the total number of restaurants and bars are considered the premises located into the hotels of these areas, too.
2. In **Selenica Municipality**, referring to the field visits to the Administrative Unit of Kote (villages of Drashovice, Mavrove, Kote, Lapardha, Gumenice) and Administrative Unit of Brataj (villages of Brataj, Lepenice, Gjorm, Velce, Ramice), the following data resulted on tourism infrastructure:
- **1 Guesthouse / Rented Apartments-Rooms:** The lack of accommodation units in this area demonstrates the low level of tourism activities there.
 - **15 Restaurants/ Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk:** these premises are distributed almost in all villages of study area.
3. In **Himara Municipality**, referring to the tourism database records and the field visits to the Administrative Unit of Himara (Himara town and Old Himara, villages of Pilur, Kudhës, Qeparo fshat, Qeparo Fushë, Vuno, Iliaz, Dhërmi, Palasë), Administrative Unit of Lukovë (villages of Lukove, Borsh, Çorraj, Piqeras, Sasaj, Shënvasil, Nivicë) and Administrative Unit of Hore Vranisht (villages of Vranisht, Kuç, Kallarat, Tërbaç), the following data resulted on tourism infrastructure:
- **67 Hotels:** the majority of the hotels are located in Dhermiu and Himara, respectively 28 in Dhermi and 20 in Himara. There are 3 hotels in Palasa, 4 in Jali, 4 in Qeparo, 7 in Borsh and 1 in Lukova. There is not any hotel establishment in the villages of study area of Administrative Unit of Hore Vranisht.
 - **230 Guesthouses / Rented Apartments-Rooms:** this category of accommodation is developed widely in the villages of the Ionian coastal area; there are 92 establishments in Himara, 34 in Qeparo, 38 in Borsh, 4 in Palasa, 3 in Piqeras, 12 in Lukova, 2 in Bunec, 2 in Shen Vasil, 2 in Nivice, 1 in Jali and 1 in Porto Palermo. While in hinterland this category of accommodation is less developed as, 5 in Pilur, 4 in Hore-Vranisht and 8 in Vranisht.
 - **6 Campsites:** these campsites are located in Himara.
 - **89 Restaurants / Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk:** also this category is well developed in the coastal destinations, the majority of them including the food service as there are 33 in Himara, 16 in Dhermi, 6 in Jale, 7 in Bunec, 9 in Lukova, 2 in Piqeras, 2 in Shen Vasil, 3 in Nivica, 1 in Sasaj. While in hinterland in the villages of study area of Administrative Unit of Hore Vranisht there are 2 in Kuc, 2 in Terbac and 1 in in Kallarat. The establishments serving only drinks are in minority, with Himara with the highest number of 12.
4. In **Saranda Municipality**, referring to the tourism database records and the field visits to the Administrative Unit of Saranda (town of Saranda, village of Cuka) and Administrative Unit of Ksamil (village of Ksamil), the following data resulted on tourism infrastructure:
- **110 Hotels:** the majority of the hotels are located in Saranda town, with 92 establishments, in Ksamil there are 18.
 - **29 Guesthouses / Rented Apartments-Rooms:** there are 16 establishments in Saranda town under this category, while in Ksamil 32.
 - **1 Campsite:** this is located in Ksamili area.

- **105 Restaurants / Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk:** this category is well developed in Saranda area, a great number of them including the food service as there are 54 in Saranda, 6 of them are fast food services, against 18 offering only drinks, 2 night clubs and 1 disco, while in Ksamil there are 27 restaurants.
5. In **Delvina Municipality**, referring to the field visit to the Administrative Unit of Delvina (town of Delvina), the following data resulted on tourism infrastructure:
- **2 Hotels:** The tourism activities demonstrate low level there; it is limited only with 2 accommodation establishment in this area.
 - **25 Restaurants / Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk:** there are 7 businesses of food service in Delvina town where 2 of them are fast foods and 18 businesses offering only drinks.
6. In **Livadhja Municipality**, referring to the field visit to the Administrative Unit of Livadhja (village of Livadhja), Administrative Unit of Dhiver (village of Dhiver), Administrative Unit of Aliko (village of Aliko), Administrative Unit of Finiq (village of Finiq) and Administrative Unit of Mesopotam (village of Mesopotam), the following data resulted on tourism infrastructure:
- **34 Restaurants / Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk:** The area has low level of tourism activities; only in Mesopotam there is the greatest number of food services with 6 restaurants. The rest of activities are mainly services offering only drinks and spread mostly in villages of Livadhja, Aliko, Finiq and Dhiver.
7. In **Konispoli Municipality**, referring to the field visit to the Administrative Unit of Konispol (town of Konispol, village of Ciflik), Administrative Unit of Xarra (villages of Xarre, Mursi, Vrine) and Administrative Unit of Markat (village of Markat), the following data resulted on tourism infrastructure:
- **1 Hotel:** this hotel is located in the village of Mursi.
 - **19 Restaurants / Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk:** these services are spread almost equally in all villages of the administrative units and mainly they are services offering only drinks, except 3 of them offering food service in Mursi.

Table 4: Review of Tourism Infrastructure Summary, Vlora County

Tourism infrastructure	
<p>Accommodation capacity (hotels, guest houses/B&B, rented rooms/apartments, campsites)</p>	<p>Vlora Municipality (town of Vlora, villages of Radhimë, Tragjas, Dukat, Dukat Fshat)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 86 Hotels - 104 Guesthouses / Rented Apartments-Rooms - 3 Campsites <p>From the audit of accommodation facilities it is found that 23 hotels are selves classified; 12 as 3 stars, 6 as 4 stars and 1 as 5 stars, while only one is classified with Silver Award according the scheme Authentic Albania Quality Mark.</p> <p>Selenica Municipality (villages of Drashovice, Mavrove, Kote, Lapardha, Gumenice, Brataj, Lepenice, Gjorm, Velce, Ramice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 Guesthouse / Rented Apartments-Rooms - 15 Restaurants/ Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk <p>Himara Municipality (Palasë, Dhërmi, Iliaz, Vuno, Himara town and Old Himara, villages of Pilur, Kudhës, Old Qeparo, Qeparo Field, Lukove, Borsh, Çorraj, Piqeras, Sasaj, Shënavasil, Nivicë, Vranisht, Kuç, Kallarat, Tërbaç)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 67 Hotels - 230 Guesthouses / Rented Apartments-Rooms - 6 Campsites

	<p>From the audit of accommodation facilities it is found that 4 hotels are selves classified: 3 as 3 stars and one as 5 stars.</p> <p><u>Saranda Municipality</u> (town of Saranda, villages of Cuka and Ksamil)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 110 Hotels - 29 Guesthouses / Rented Apartments-Rooms - 1 Campsite <p>From the audit of accommodation facilities it is found that one hotel I self classified as 5 stars and three are classified according to the scheme Authentic Albania Quality Mark: 2 with Silver Award and 1 with Bronze Award.</p> <p><u>Delvina Municipality</u> (town of Delvina)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 Hotels <p><u>Livadhja Municipality</u> (villages of Livadhja, Dhiver, Aliko, Finiq, Mesopotam)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are not identified accommodation establishments. <p><u>Konispoli Municipality</u> (town of Konispol, villages of Ciflik, Xarre, Mursi, Vrine, Markat)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 Hotel
<p>Food and Drink (Restaurants / Cafes / Bars / Kiosks – take away)</p>	<p><u>Vlora Municipality</u> (town of Vlora, villages of Radhimë, Tragjas, Dukat, Dukat Fshat)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 261 Restaurants/ Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk <p><u>Selenica Municipality</u> (villages of Drashovice, Mavrove, Kote, Lapardha, Gumenice, Brataj, Lepenice, Gjorm, Velce, Ramice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15 Restaurants/ Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk <p><u>Himara Municipality</u> (Palasë, Dhërmi, Iliaz, Vuno, Himara town and Old Himara, villages of Pilur, Kudhës, Old Qeparo, Qeparo Field, Lukove, Borsh, Çorraj, Piqeras, Sasaj, Shënvasil, Nivicë, Vranisht, Kuç, Kallarat, Tërbaç)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 89 Restaurants / Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk <p><u>Saranda Municipality</u> (town of Saranda, villages of Cuka and Ksamil)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 105 Restaurants / Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk <p><u>Delvina Municipality</u> (town of Delvina)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 25 Restaurants / Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk <p><u>Livadhja Municipality</u> (villages of Livadhja, Dhiver, Aliko, Finiq, Mesopotam)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 34 Restaurants / Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk <p><u>Konispoli Municipality</u> (town of Konispol, villages of Ciflik, Xarre, Mursi, Vrine, Markat)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 19 Restaurants / Cafés/ Bars/ Kiosk
<p>Small infrastructure (picnic sites, play grounds, benches and so like);</p>	<p>There is no evidence of small infrastructure to the Vlora county.</p>

2.4 Touristic offer and services

Vlora County represents a very rich and attractive region in terms of natural and cultural heritage attractions with:

- a diversified array of natural attractions, both in the coastal and hinterland,
- a high concentration of historic buildings with castles, archaeological sites, religious heritage, settlement ruins and bridges all over the county and old traditional houses in many traditional villages especially alongside the Ionian Coastal area,
- a rich traditional living culture materialized in expressions of living culture as legends and stories, folklore, music, dances, musical instruments, traditional dresses, handicraft, gastronomy and traditional architecture,
- a rich and diversified traditional cuisine with similarities but also distinctions between the coastal area and the hinterland as well as among the districts themselves,
- a remarkable traditional agriculture and livestock produce in rural area, as well as fishery in the coastal area.

While the coast is the main natural attraction with potential for sun and sea tourism, special interest tourism (marine activities) and rural tourism, the tourism offer there is limited mainly to summer holidays to the coast and visits to Butrinti archaeological site as individual visits or organised ones as part of larger national sightseeing tours managed by travel organiser companies (tour operators) mainly based in Tirana.

According to the information gathered to the area on the type of tours and/or excursions organised there and service providers (travel organisers as tour-operators, travel agencies, excursion organisers, guide service and adventure sports instructors) present to the area, the tourism offer, as the organised tours and excursions, is very limited; one company offering transport facility to Karaburun Peninsula and some scuba diving instructors offering service in Vlora bay. In Saranda there are three operators offering tours and excursions to the area by demand.

Nor organised same day/longer tours and excursions, neither designed/marked trails, for independent tourists, are found to the coastal area for hiking and walking around to coastal destinations or passing mountains to link coastal and hinterland destinations. Only a limited number of Albanian tour operators based in Tirana organise hiking tours to some of the destinations in Shushica River Valley and coastal areas.

The Table 5 below gives a summary of the information on touristic offer and service providers identified through field audit.

Table 5: Touristic offer and Service providers summary, Vlora County

Touristic offer and services (the offered services by travel organisers in the region linking tourist destinations and / or enriching touristic experience there)	
Number and the type of tours / excursions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no tours and excursions offered on daily bases in Vlora, Saranda and other tourist destinations of the region.
Other service providers (travel organisers as tour-operators, travel agencies, excursion organisers, guide service and adventure sports instructors present in the region)	<p>The following is a panorama of the situation to the area of Vlora county:</p> <p><u>Vlora town</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Vlora town there is only one travel organiser agency offering licensed tourism transport to a number of places in Karaburun peninsula (Grama beach, “Shen Vasili” beach, cave of Haxhi Aliu), in Dhermi and Himara. There some other ten hotels in Vlora bay offering boat transport to “Shen Vasili” beach, too. • There are two subjects and two individual instructors offering scuba diving service to tourists in area of Karaburuni peninsula². • While there are 12 travel agencies with offices in Vlora town,

² Overview on Tourism and Ecotourism Potential to Karaburun – Sazan Marine Coastal Protected Area

	<p>none of them offer excursions or tours in the territory of the region. They offer travel services and selling tourism packages for destinations abroad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the hotels in Vlora bay offer hiking on demand, but it is not as a licensed activity³. • Two operators do offer parachuting or skydiving⁴. • The only Tourist Information Office in Vlora town is a private one managed by Celsi Publicity. • In Vlora town there are only two Rent Cars companies. <p><u>Jali beach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Jali beach there is a private run Tourist Information Point. <p><u>Himara</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Himara there are two travel agencies, mainly offering transport services. <p><u>Saranda town</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Saranda town there are three travel organizer agencies offering tours and excursions by demand. • There is on diving operator (Polish) offering scuba diving services in the area of Saranda, also offering biking tours, angling, kayak tour, • There are two travel agencies offering tourism services to the tourists. • There are two tourism transport companies offering ferry services and travel services. • There are three agencies offering Rent Car service. • There is one agency offering Rent Motor service. • There are eight tourism guides offering service to the tourist in the area of Saranda. • There is a private run Tourist Information Office in Saranda town managed by Celsi Publicity. • There are three souvenir shops.
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Appendix 1: Primary natural characteristics / assets detail of Vlora County

Appendix 2: Primary cultural characteristics / assets detail of Vlora County

Appendix 3: Traditional specialities of Vlora County

Appendix 4: Inventory of Tourism Infrastructure

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³ Assessment of Nature-Based Tourism Business Operative in Vlora and Orikum Municipalities

⁴ Ibid

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