

Mysia Ways

Nature, History and Culture Routes

Contact info

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Nilüfer District
 Bursa, North West Turkey

Geographical/territorial context:

Nilüfer Municipality is one of the central towns of the metropolitan city of Bursa, fourth largest city of Turkey with a population of approximately 3 million inhabitants. Nilüfer district is one of the recently-urbanized, smoothly-developed, industrialized and modern parts of Bursa. Nevertheless it is founded on until very recently (20 years ago) rural areas, while even today 80% of its territory is rural. Nilüfer Municipality established 'Mysia Ways Nature, History and Culture Routes' - a network of trekking and cycling routes- in the rural mountainous part of the district aiming to support local sustainable development through the encouragement of nature-based and cultural tourism.

Strengths/assets: Rural settlements in Mysia Ways area possess a long history and important archaeological remains and architectural heritage, while they host a rich variety of local cultures. At the same time the rural parts of Nilüfer district are situated in a superb natural environment. Its territory extends from the Western slopes of Uludağ Mountain to Ulubat Lake (Ramsar Wetland Site) and the western part of the historical Bursa (Bithynian) Plain.

Challenges: Urban expansion and foundation of industrial zones has altered the natural and cultural landscape of Nilüfer and created a prevalent mentality which links economic development exclusively with building construction and urbanization.



1

Identified Stakeholders, Establishment of the Hub



- * Üçpınar, Başköy and İnegazi villages
- * Deserted primary school buildings
- * Village representatives, village women associations, cycling and trekking associations

2

Co-development of the Action Plan



The co-development of the action plan happened through Mysia Ways Participatory Workshop (28.09.2021):



The workshop took place at the village of Misi, starting point of Mysia Ways trekking and cycling routes. It was held at Cocoon House, a restored village house used as a restaurant and guest house operated by Misi Women Association and Nilüfer Municipality.



Participants, including Nilüfer Municipality Mysia Ways team and civil society coordinators, four village women association representatives and four trekking and cycling associations' representatives, elaborated on aims, framework of cooperation and action planning.

3

Established Action Plan

The overall aim of Mysia Ways action plan is to initiate processes which promote local sustainable development through the valorization of cultural and natural heritage in rural areas affected by population decrease and high unemployment rates.

Mysia Ways project aims since 2016 at supporting village economies through the development of rural tourism based on the promotion of natural and cultural heritage.

Ruritage -Mysia Ways Action Plan aims to improve and standardize cooperation between municipality, rural civil societies, trekking-cycling associations and rural tourism agencies and to set the framework for a joint organization of touristic packs by involved stakeholders.

Action 1: Trekking activities organized by Nilüfer Municipality in cooperation with village women's associations.

Specific aim: To promote rural tourism activities in Mysia Ways region. More than 150 trekkers participated at the action and interacted with representatives of village communities offering guiding and food services.

Achieved Activities:

-Mysia Ways Autumn Walk in cooperation with Bursa Art Photography Association and Kadriye village community.

-Mysia Ways Winter Walk in cooperation with Bursa Art Photography Association and Üçpınar village community.

-Mysia Ways Valentine Day Walk in cooperation with Maksempinar village community.

Action 2: Establishment of rural centres through the repair and reuse of abandoned primary school buildings in three rural settlements in Mysia Ways region.

Specific aim: To create models of cooperatively managed rural tourism hubs in three Mysia Ways villages (food services – accommodation –hosting of artistic activities) that can be imitated by individuals and other communities along the routes.

Achieved and Planned Activities: Repair and reconstruction works are continuing at Üçpınar, Başköy and İnegazi villages. Works coordinated by Nilüfer Municipality Scientific – Construction Directory are planned to be concluded in June 2022. A participatory workshop concerning rural hubs' management is planned to take place at Üçpınar village in June 2022.

Action 3: Organization of touristic packs on Mysia Ways routes to be used by trekking -cycling associations and eco-tourism agencies

Specific aim: To promote and regularize rural tourism activities in Mysia Ways region.
Planned Activities: A meeting with the participation of village community representatives, local tourism business people, trekking and cycling associations representatives and eco-tourism agencies is planned to take place in June 2022.



Sustainability Beyond RURITAGE

* Ruritage project provides a framework for the regularization of municipality-rural area NGO's cooperation on nature-based and cultural tourism activities, particularly food services.

*Ruritage project provides the framework for the valorization of deserted village school properties with local communities' agency.

*In the future Mysia Ways team will act as coordinator for the management of rural hubs by local rural communities within the standardized quality framework set by the municipality for Mysia Ways nature-based and cultural tourism activities.

*Mysia Ways team plans to organize rural tourism seminars on food and accommodation services in cooperation with Bursa Uludağ University.

*A learned lesson is that long-term planning is fundamental for the development of a successful cooperation between stakeholders.

*Rural hubs serving as rural tourism centres (accommodation facilities and artistic-cultural activity points) will be active in Nilüfer villages by July 2022.

*Maintaining hubs' rural tourism high service standards and ensuring a long-term balanced cooperation between municipality and local stakeholders may be challenging in the future.

Who We Are

Development

Implementation and Results