# PUBLISHABLE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Objectives of the Grow Mobile action**

The goal of Grow Mobile was to promote the cooperation of service innovation, tourism and culture, enhancing the attractiveness of the participating regions and creating a new image for them. This can create high-skilled job opportunities in different areas, unlock the access to cultural heritage sites and boost the development of the regions as a whole.

In the EU Commission’s Communication “Europe, the world’s No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe” the importance of service innovation and its impact on tourism was a pivotal point. The stress was put on the need of the tourism sector to adapt to the new trends and focus on customer behaviour and overcoming traditional patterns.

Therefore, the project targeted the implementation of an integrated destination marketing/management system in the regions of Međimurje (Croatia), Kyustendil and Varna (Bulgaria), as well as the implementation of an integrated mobile tourist information system (mobile application) in the regions of Leipzig, Germany, of large scale demonstrators.

The project will contribute to the vision to initiate regional tourism clusters and setting up collaborations on an international level. The results can be scaled up and leveraged into other regions across Europe and will serve as a good practice platform on which networked regions profiles will be created.

Grow Mobile itself is a part of the European Mobile and Mobility Industries Alliance (EMMIA), and it also promotes the goal of EMMIA, which is to bring together regional and national policy makers and practitioners at an European level. The aim is to develop more sustainable solutions in the area of mobility which is supported by mobile services.

Grow Mobile’s main goals were:

* Test and implement large scale approaches to make use of innovative mobile services to address societal challenges in tourism and to demonstrate the feasibility of a European-wide provision of innovative mobile services;
* Provide easier access to cultural heritage sites, for better informing tourists about the diverse but often dispersed leisure activities in a region and by offering smarter solutions for travelling in rural areas;
* Real, replicable and scalable implementations of the applications, which are implemented to create value and dynamics in practice by customizing the application to the specific context of each participating region with the goal to expand the services into other European regions;
* Exchange of experience and communication to cross-border countries and cross-border regions that are not involved in the consortium through the development of a master plan, a roadmap, reference guidelines and reference training modules.

The main objectives have been:

* Analysis of the touristic and technical framework conditions
* Implementation of DMS and/or Mobile Applications in the participating regions
* Development of business-models
* Training of Stakeholders
* Establishment of public-private partnerships or private organisations to operate the systems sustainably
* Constitution of a Grow Mobile Task Force

The following **achievements** were made:

1. Development of Large-Scale-Demonstrators

Based on the large-scale demonstrator concept Grow Mobile realized **analysis of the touristic and technical framework conditions** in the regions of Međimurje (Croatia), Kyustendil and Varna (Bulgaria), as well as Leipzig (Germany). On the bases of this analysis, Grow Mobile partners determined the specifications for the integrated destination management/marketing systems as well as for the mobile application. Furhtermore private-public partnership models were established to guarantee sustainable future operations of the implemented tourism service solutions. The analysis of these framework conditions provided an overview of tourism sector in the participating regions including the tourism frame conditions with opportunities, barriers and potentials, the technical frame conditions already established mobile solutions and the potential analysis for the establishment of innovative large scale solutions, as well as the tourism stakeholders and recommendation of new and innovative services and its related business models.

Development of a **mobile destination marketing system** (Mobile Application):

A mobile travel guide for the City of Leipzig has been created and is ready for download either in app (Google play) stores or on other platforms. This mobile guide is free of charge for the public. The mobile system (mobile application) consists of an innovative location-based touristic guide with a strong automatic interaction component, which allows the visitor to get in real-time enriched individual information about the surrounding area.

Tourists are now able to navigate on-map and get informed with detailed multimedia information using the global navigation satellite system (GNSS) signal received by the tourist personal smartphone. The system does not only display the current location and orientation, but also provides the user automatically and real-time with enriched multimedia content about nearby points of interest that matches the individual preferences of the user.

The tourist is guided by an interactive map, showing the user’s position and the points of interest worth to visit.

Development of an Integrated Destination Management/Marketing System in Bulgaria (Varna, Kyustendil) and Croatia (Međimurje)

The integrated destination management/marketing systems are developed and taylorised to the specific needs of the individual regions involved in the action.

These DMS serve as framework. They offer integrated tourism packages that are used on different localities, which is completely unknown in tourism industry so far.

At first it is to be used locally in the project regions. After certain time of use and experience, the same system can be used in different regions. When decision makers are introduced to destination management systems, its potential and value for complete region, it is much easier to implement those systems in real life.

1. **Involvement of stakeholders**: Awareness raising, Training of stakeholders and operators, showcasing workshops:

To promote Grow Mobile’s aims and approach and EMMIA as a whole the project realized **awareness raising campaigns** in the Bulgarian regions with a significant response and a strong European-wide orientation (cross-bordering aspects, inter-regional aspects, etc.). The experiences gained within one region can be transferred to other regions, so that an interregional, transnational multi-directional communication stream was built to share and to enhance expertise and results.

Two additional awareness raising workshops (Čakovec, Croatia // Leipzig, Germany) had been carried out in the second period After implementing the large-scale-demonstrators in the regions, involvement and trainings of stakeholders and operators had been provided as well as showcasing workshops in the regions to present the developed destination-management-systems and the mobile application to stakeholders and the public as well.

To secure sustainability these solutions have to be operated also after the end of the project. Therefore, it has to be explained, the use of the systems has to be practiced and maintenance issues have to be solved. This kind of activities had been performed by the companies that established them. The realization of these processes resulted in raising awareness of the tourism potential for destinations, tools in which to utilize these potentials, as well as concrete fundaments for introduction of those systems in ‘’real business’’ surrounding when decision makers find it applicable, business justified and strategically comprehensive.

Relevant actors had been involved into the activities. They were activated through different tasks performed in the project, e.g. such as awareness raising visits in the participating regions. Međimurje, Croatia, had the advantage being in the geographical triangle to Hungary and Slovenia. Varna, Bulgaria, disseminated the results to other regions in Bulgaria and also in cross-border activities with partners from Romania. And Kyustendil, Bulgaria, intends to set up close partnerships with the regions in Serbia and Macedonia. Thus, an expansion to seven additional countries in ten different regions is foreseen after the project.

Through the interregional exchange of private and public support, dynamics had been created in the project that raised the awareness for the challenges and barriers. Moreover, during the project’s duration and – even more importantly – in the periods following the project the contributors will gain a return on their initial support, because stimulation of tourism will lead to economic growth and employment, which also will benefit the wider public interests.

1. **Establishment of public-private partnerships** or private organisations to operate the systems sustainably and implemented business model for the regions.

All regions achieved to implement public-private partnerships and/or involved private organisation in the implementation of large-scale-demonstrators. The established ppp-models in the regions will secure sustainability for the implemented systems (mobile application and Integrated Destination Management/Marketing System) after the project lifetime and the systems will be continuously updated and maintained also after the end of the Grow Mobile action.

1. **Communication** with the other large scale demonstrator actions and with the EMMIA Policy Learning Platform **and further dissemination** of the project activates and achievements were initiated and continued:

Project representatives participated in four workshops and action of the EMMIA Policy Learning Platform during the 2nd project period. In co-ordinating the Grow Mobile activities with other Large Scale Demonstrators “LIMES” and “CultWays” and with the so called “Strand 1” activity (Policy Learning Platform – “PLP”) of the European Mobility and Mobile Industries Alliances, it was targeted to play an effective role in the dynamic interconnectivity between the project initiatives. The interface between these activities was provided through the Grow Mobile Task Force as well as through the participation of Wolfgang Kniejski as Grow Mobile representative in events organised by PLP. Furthermore, Wolfgang Kniejski was accepted as representative from the Bulgarian Region of Vidin as an expert in the Policy Learning Platform.

45 press releases in national, regional and local newspapers were published (including 5 TV or radio features)

1. Constitution of a Grow Mobile Task Force

They were drafted in cooperation with regional stakeholders and members of the **Task Force** in which the countries of the Grow Mobile partner consortium are represented. The main purpose of this Grow Mobile Task Force is to represent the interest of the stakeholders of the Grow Mobile project. The Task Force will serve as a forum to discuss topics, priorities and issues of concern of the project’s stakeholders. It will encourage the information exchange and discussion among the stakeholders, inform about the project’s activities, provide ideas and recommendations to the members of the project consortium, and promote and lobby the project’s interests. Furthermore the Task Force will supervise the installation of the targeted large scale demonstrators towards sustainable operations and its further expansion into other European regions.