

# TOURISM AUTHORITIES PLAN TO BRING MORE EUROS TO ALBANIA



Albanian tourism officials realized the importance of creating a unique national strategy in order to attract more foreigners. Aldo Bumci, the Minister of Tourism, recently declared in a press conference that this plan is aimed to sustain a long-term development of the tourism industry, which accounts more for than 11% of the nation's GDP.

The new tourism industry development plan includes strategies regarding mountain tourism and the improvement of the service sector. The main objective is the promotion of Albania as a worldwide tourist destination.

The tourism in Albania brought more than 1.2 billion euros in the economy. At the moment, it already employs about 138,000 people, which represent 6% of all labor force in the country. Recent statistics showed that the number of tourists has been growing at a steady pace since 2007, rising from 1 million to 2.7 in just 5 years.

A great place with an extraordinary tourism potential is the town of Himara. Located at 220 km from the Capital city, Tirana, this city it's the first in the history that won the government's approval for its urban plan that is focused on a sustainable development of tourism in that area. According to this breakthrough plan, the area's tourist capacity can triple in just a couple of years. The first development permits will be issued in September.

Even if the government financing is still low, the Mayor of Himara, Jorgo Goro, hopes that their big projects will be easily approved, since the tourism is a priority for the government. He declared in an interview for SETimes that he will struggle to preserve all cultural sites in the Himara region, from churches to old castles.

In order for the urban plan to be implemented, Goro declared that there is an urgent need for investments in the infrastructure, water supply and energy. In order to accommodate more tourists, more rooms and floors have been already added to existing facilities.

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