

CORE LOCAL PORTFOILO FOR BANJA LUKA

Document Control Sheet

Project	REDISCOVER – Rediscover, expose and exploit the concealed Jewish heritage of the Danube Region
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1. Short abstract about the Rediscover project and content of the portfolio

Pre-WWII Jewish population of Europe was around 9 M, at least a third of them living in a present day's Danube region. Jewish diaspora communities introduced rich cultural identity, deeply rooted traditions and remarkable community heritage (including songs, music, dance, literature, cuisine, architecture, crafts and sciences), all adding value to the hosting cities and their communities. This provides valuable and often unnoticed multicultural asset for the settlements in the region, inherited from centuries of history, presenting an exceptional cultural tourism potential.

Today's Jewish society in the Danube region is fragmented: the capitals and large regional centers have a significant residual community with preserved religious and cultural features. Mid-sized cities with limited built cultural heritage are usually linked to well-known heritage centers on the tourism market. For them, the main challenge is to find ways to explore the tangible/intangible elements of Jewish cultural heritage in order to create competitive cultural products with potential tourism prospects.

The aim of REDISCOVER project is to provide answers for this challenge, through careful research, identifying and testing practices and the creation of transnational network of cities with rediscovered Jewish cultural heritage and cultural diversity. It improves the integrated cultural heritage management and valorization capacities of cities and cultural/tourism actors involved in order to safeguard both tangible/intangible Jewish cultural heritage for upcoming generations, by building on currently undiscovered potential and developing it into contemporary tourism solutions, while smartly arranging their visibility/accessibility/sustainability as well. This way, mid-sized cities are provided with adaptable solutions on building competitive advantages.

The main objective of the project is to explore, revive and present the hidden intellectual heritage along with locally available Jewish cultural heritage of project partner cities. That can create a jointly presented, synergistic tourism tool/service that is accessible to the wide audience as well.

Project partners are the 9 municipalities of Danube region mid-sized cities which used to be homes to very prosperous Jewish communities before World War II: Szeged (HU, acting as Lead partner), Banja Luka (BA), Galati (RO), Kotor (ME), Murska Sobota (SI), Osijek (HR), Regensburg (DE), Subotica (RS) and Timisoara (RO).

Thematic project partners are Institute for Culture, Tourism and Sport Murska Sobota (SI); Municipal Museum of Subotica (RS) and Szeged and Surroundings Tourism Nonprofit Ltd. (HU)

Thematic associated strategic partners (ASPs) are: Jewish Community of Banja Luka (BA); Jewish Community of Montenegro; Jewish Community of Osijek (HR); Jewish Community of

Core local portfolio Banja Luka Szeged (HU); Jewish Community Timisoara (RO); Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities.

The project implementation started on June 1, 2018, and will last for a total of 36 months, until May 31, 2021. The total project budget is EUR 1.846.346, 45.

The involvement of locations with different historic economic background also enables the creation of solutions applicable for various other contexts, supporting transferability. Key outputs, like Joint Visibility Strategy, or Community-sourced Jewish Cultural Heritage Valorization Handbook help to replicate the initiative in further cities of the Danube Region.

The local portfolio includes the content bellow:

1. Short abstract about the Rediscover project and content of the portfolio
2. Outputs of each Workshop within the workshop series (evaluation)
3. City/region profile
4. Status of Jewish Cultural Heritage products and services (case studies) – what we have/missing
5. Potential connections to other local/partnership level initiatives (cross-country thematic routes)
6. All ideas and products with description of message, target groups and activities, visibility
7. Implementation ideas (development)

2. Outputs of each Workshop within the workshop series

2.1. Output of the Inventory Workshop

The Inventory Workshop in Banja Luka was held on April 24, 2019 in Jewish Cultural Center. The participants were the members of our local stakeholder group, members of Jewish Community, representatives of tourist agencies and tourist guides.

At the beginning of the meeting, the project manager presented the objectives and expected results of the project, along with the working packages and the roles and responsibilities of the members of the local stakeholder group during the implementation of the project. The group was presented with all the workshops foreseen during the project and their expected role in development of tourist packages.

After the presentation of the project, Ph.D. Marija Knezevic presented examples of good practice from the PP cities and Jewish cultural heritage of Banja Luka.

Both tangible and intangible Jewish cultural heritage of Banja Luka is identified. The tangible JCH in Banja Luka was destroyed either before the World War II or afterwards. The most important elements of destroyed JCH are 4 synagogues, Jewish cemetery, Jewish shops that were in the very city center and houses of the famous Jewish families. A history professor, LSG

Core local portfolio Banja Luka member, concluded that the most important Jewish house is the house of Poljokan family, famous Jewish family from Banja Luka, whose members were murdered under mysterious circumstances. The only JCH element that exists is Jewish Cultural Center built 2014, whose integral parts are: synagogue, hotel accommodation and modern and excellently equipped conference room. Although, its main purpose is to preserve Jewish tradition, one of its goals is to gather intellectual elite and artists from the region no matter which their religion is. Jewish Community members concluded it is very convenient for permanent exhibitions, although representatives of tourist guides argued it is not convenient for those purposes because it is not in the city center.

Regarding intangible JCH there are storytelling and few Jewish songs.

Afterwards Ph.D. Marija Knezevic led discussion on tourist potential of the presented JCH. During the discussion participants agree that the following elements of JCH have potential to become tourist attractions:

Four synagogues, although they are destroyed, they could be presented to tourists. Some of the ways to present them to tourists are either to place boards with QR codes on the places where the synagogues were, or to place one big board in Jewish Street (Jevrejska ulica) in the city center with the information and pictures of all four synagogues at one place. One of the participants suggested to make a mini model of how Banja Luka looked like in 1930s with highlighted elements of JCH.

Participants suggested family stories with some family belongings or sound effects could be used to make a permanent exhibition that would be interesting for tourists. The participants also suggested to use Jewish songs as a tourist attraction. One of the suggestions was to place a machine, which would play those songs.

After the discussion on JCH the conclusion was that the elements with the highest tourist potential, which could attract mainstream tourists are four destroyed synagogues and the house of the Poljokan family. Although the house of Poljokan family is destroyed too, a board with QR code could be placed with the information about the family, their mysterious murder and the pictures.

The conclusion of the workshop is that JCH in Banja Luka, although it is destroyed, it could have tourist potential if exploited in creative and innovative way. The participants together prioritized elements of JCH with the highest tourist potential and gave suggestions how to make it visible.

2.2. Output of the Capacity Building Workshop

The Capacity Building Workshop was held on June 13th, 2019 in Jewish Cultural Center in Banja Luka.

The participants of the workshop were representatives of LSG, representatives of the City of Banja Luka, representatives of Tourist Board Banja Luka, tourist guides and tourist agencies.

The facilitator of the workshop was Ph.D. Aleksandar Djuric, who works in the Department of Tourism in the Government of Brcko District, BiH.

During the skill development methodology training, first the different kinds of culture were defined. Afterwards, it was explained what cultural tourism means and what are its advantages and disadvantages. Trends in cultural tourism were discussed too.

In Banja Luka and its region, cultural tourism is based mostly on festivals, i.e. on cultural manifestations. There are many music festivals in Banja Luka and its region. Several festivals attract great number of international tourists (Demofest in Banja Luka, Fresh Wave in Banja Luka and OK Fest on the Sutjeska Mountain). There are also gastro festivals that attract great number of tourists from the region. The most famous is *Cevap Fest*. Although there are a lot of cultural heritage in Banja Luka region, most tourists consider it as secondary reason of their visit. Nevertheless great number of tourists specifically come to visit music festivals and other cultural manifestations.

During the product methodology training, the participants discussed whether to fit in the JCH in standard tourist routes along the city or to create special thematic route just for JCH. The discussion was also about the question whether to include only JCH in the very city center in a tourist route or to include JCH that is not in the very city center too. Although Banja Luka is not big city, that question raised because tourism stakeholders claimed that most tourist maybe would not like to walk too much.

It was concluded that as the first step of business planning, a product or a service should be defined. The participants suggested several ideas for cultural tourism products to be developed. Having in mind that most of JCH in Banja Luka does not exist anymore, the most challenging task is to make it visible. There are some ideas how to make JCH visible:

- To make a model of Banja Luka used to be in 1930s and to mark the location where JCH used to be
- To place info board on the place where Jewish cultural centre used to be in the city centre, the suggestions for info board were to be interactive and to contain maps, photos, animations of how JCH used to like, etc.
- To place info boards with basic information on the places where JCH used to be or to place info boards with QR codes.
- To create virtual walk through chosen locations of JCH on the Internet
- To place stolpersteins and to create a map with stolperstein locations
- To create a memorial room or a museum of JCH

The challenges for the development of the products mentioned above are to consider the possibility of providing free wi fi on the locations of QR boards, to consider possibility of the use of VR and AR techniques, to preserve info boards from vandals, and the biggest challenge for the museum of JCH is to find a place for it.

It was concluded the attractive design would be necessary for the product development and that experts in the field of graphic design should be included in the process of product development.

The most interesting discussion referred to the ideas on how to make JCH visible. There are some ideas how to make JCH visible:

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- To place info boards with basic information on the places where JCH used to be or to place info boards with QR codes.
- To create virtual walk through chosen locations of JCH on the Internet
- To place stolpersteins and to create a map with stolperstein locations
- To create a memorial room or a museum of JCH

Many participants expressed interest to be involved during the product development process.

2.3. Output of the Match-Making Workshop

The match-making workshop was held on June 19th, 2019 in Jewish Cultural Center in Banja Luka.

The participants of the workshop were representatives of LSG, representatives of the City of Banja Luka, representatives of Tourist Board Banja Luka, tourist guides, tourist agencies and representatives of IT companies.

The facilitator of the workshop was history professor Zoran Pejasinovic, who has dedicated his work to researching of Jewish families from Banja Luka and done several lectures on that topic.

After the presentation of the project, Mr. Pejasinovic presented the most attractive locations in city where Jewish cultural heritage used to be located. Among presented JCH, there were a few synagogues, Jewish Cultural Center, Jewish cemetery, the first cinema, several stores that were located in the main pedestrian zone in the city, houses of prominent Jews from Banja Luka, etc. The original presentation is attached. Considering the fact, the Jewish cultural heritage in Banja Luka was destroyed, Mr. Pejasinovic suggested to use information technologies in order to visualize destroyed JCH at the original locations and in that way to create attractive tourist products.

After the presentation, he opened the discussion.

During the discussion, participants of the workshop suggested creative several ideas for revival of JCH in Banja Luka. The suggestions were as follows

- To make a model of how Banja Luka used to be in 1930s and to mark the location of JCH in 3D modeling
- To place info board on the place where Jewish cultural centre used to be in the city centre, the suggestions for info board were to be interactive and to contain maps, photos, animations of how JCH used to like, etc.

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- To place info boards with basic information on the places where JCH used to be or to place info boards with QR codes.
- To create mobile application with mapped and described locations
- To create virtual walk through chosen locations of JCH on the Internet
- To place stolpersteins and to create a map with stolperstein locations
- To create a memorial room or a museum of JCH
- To organize the concert of Jewish music or similar cultural manifestations

In the second part of the workshop, there was discussion about the feasibility of suggested ideas.

It was concluded that possibilities of using VR and AR techniques should be tested. It was also concluded all chosen locations should be covered with wi fi and special attention should be dedicated to attractive design. For that reason all participants agreed, experts from the field of graphic design should be included in the product development process.

The final conclusion was that a portfolio of potential tourist offer should be developed and professionals from different fields should be included as consultants in the product development process.

3.City/Region

Banja Luka is the second largest city in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the de facto capital of its Republika Srpska entity. It is the traditional center of the densely-forested Bosanska Krajina region located in northwestern Bosnia. According to the 2013 census, the city proper has a population of 138,963, while its administrative area comprises a total of 199,963 inhabitants.

The city is home to the University of Banja Luka as well as numerous state and entity institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The city lies on the Vrbas River and is well known in the countries of the former Yugoslavia for being full of tree-lined avenues, boulevards, gardens, and parks.

The name 'Banja Luka' was first mentioned in a document dated to 6 February 1494 by Ladislaus II of Hungary. The name is interpreted as the 'Ban's meadow', from the words ban (a mediaeval noble title), and luka ('valley' or 'meadow'). The identity of the ban and the meadow in question remain uncertain, and popular etymology combines the modern words banja ('bath' or 'spa'), or bajna ('marvelous') and luka ('port'). A different interpretation is suggested by the Hungarian name Lukácsbánya, in English 'Luke's Mine', which is also the meaning of the Slovak baňa Luka. In modern usage, the name is pronounced and usually declined (u Banjaluci) as one word, and often written as such. The citizens reportedly prefer the form with inflected adjective (u Banjoj Luci).

Banja Luka covers some 96.2 km² (37.1 sq mi) of land in Bosnia and Herzegovina and is situated on either bank of the Vrbas in the Banja Luka valley, which is characteristically flat within the otherwise hilly region. Banja Luka's centre lies 163 m (534.78 ft) above sea level.

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The source of the Vrbas River is about 90 km (56 mi) to the south at the Vranica Mountain. Its tributaries—the Suturlija, the Crkvena, and the Vrbanja—flow into the Vrbas at various points in the city. A number of springs can be found nearby.

The area around Banja Luka is mostly woodland, although there are mountains a little further from the city. The most notable of these mountains are Manjača (1,214 m), Čemernica (1,338 m), and Tisovac. These are all part of the Dinaric Alps mountain range.

Banja Luka plays an important role on different levels of Bosnia and Herzegovina's government structures. Banja Luka is the centre of the government for the Municipality of Banja Luka. A number of entity and state institutions are seated in the city. The Republika Srpska Government and the National Assembly are based in Banja Luka.

The Bosnia and Herzegovina State Agencies based in the city include the Indirect Taxation (VAT) Authority, the Deposit Insurance Agency as well as a branch of the Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina (formerly the National Bank of Republika Srpska). Austria, Croatia, France, Germany, Serbia, the United Kingdom and the United States maintain diplomatic representation through consulates-general in Banja Luka.

In 1981 Banja Luka's GDP per capita was 97% of the Yugoslav average.

Although the city itself was not directly affected by the Bosnian war in the early 1990s, its economy was. In this period Banja Luka fell behind the world in key areas such as technology, resulting in a rather stagnant economy. However, in recent years, the financial services sector has gained in importance in the city. In 2002, the trading began on the newly established Banja Luka Stock Exchange. The number of companies listed, the trading volume and the number of investors have increased significantly. A number of big companies such as Telekom Srpske, Rafinerija ulja Modriča, Banjalučka Pivara and Vitaminka are all listed on the exchange and are traded regularly. Investors, apart from those from Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia, now include a number of investment funds from the EU, and from Norway, the United States, Japan and China.

A number of financial services regulators, such as the Republika Srpska Securities Commission and the RS Banking Agency are headquartered in Banja Luka. This, along with the fact that some of the major banks in Bosnia, the Deposit Insurance Agency and the value-added tax (VAT) authority are all based in the city, has helped Banja Luka establish itself as a major financial center of the country.

The Museum of Republika Srpska inherited the Ethnographic Museum established in 1930, and broadened its setting with collections of archeology, history, art history and nature. The Museum of Modern Art of Republika Srpska, also called MSURS, the Museum of Contemporary Art, displays exhibitions of both domestic and worldwide artists.

Banja Luka is home to the National Theatre and National Library, both dating from the first half of the 20th century, and of numerous other theatres. The headquarters of the Archives of Republika Srpska is situated in the building known as Carska kuća or Imperial House, built around 1880. It has been in continuous public use longer than any other structure in Banja Luka.

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One of the most famous cultural sites in Banja Luka is the cultural center of "Banski Dvor" (Halls of the Ban), built in the 1930s as the residence for the Bans of the Vrbas Banovina.

In the city there are many Cultural Artistic Associations. The oldest is CAA "Pelagić" (founded 1927), one of the oldest institutions of this kind in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

4. Status of Jewish Cultural Heritage

4.1. History of Jewish Community Banja Luka

The historian Bogumil Hrabak wrote about Banja Luka in the XVI century: "In Banja Luka from 80's of the XVI century, there were permanently settled Jewish merchants and doctors as well. But Jews were not as typical for the Banja Luka Charsija (Turkish word for business district) as they were for the Sarajevo Charsija ". Bogumil Hrabak further mentions the names of two Jewish tradesmen from Banja Luka, some Jusuf (most likely Jozeph) and Baruh. This coincides with the rapid economic development of the city on the Vrbas in the second half of the XVI century, immediately after moving the centre of the Bosnian Sandzak in Banja Luka during the rule of Ferhad-Pasha Sokolovic who in 1579 built the famous Banja Luka Mosque Ferhadija. There are no written documents on the presence of a large number of Jews in Banja Luka at the transition from the XVI to the XVII century, but as we see, there are documents on the initial presence of a small number of the Jewish merchants. Since the Split wholesale trade of that time was mostly in the hands of the Venetians and Turks, whose territories reached the hinterland of Split, the Split Jews initially took over the role of small traders / agents and subjects from both sides. The Split Prince Giacomo Michiel unsuccessfully complained to the Venetians "that the Split Jews are everywhere and most of them do not live in the ghetto, because of their commercial ties with the inland provinces and that they simply do not contribute to development of the trade the Split ferry, but even perform the role of the Turkish spies, because they can freely move and trade in their sandzak (Turkish word for region)". The most of thirty Jewish families who lived in Split in the XVI century, because of impossibility to carry out large transit trade, kept small trading shops in the city, supplying goods from the wholesalers Jews from the East and West that later sold to the merchants and caravan drivers. Vid Morpurgo had collected hundreds of documents of that time which described the crucial role of Jews and Daniel Rodrigo for development of quay and lazaretto i.e. transit harbour in Split, which undoubtedly indicated that just the development of living trade in Split, its surroundings and toward inland, was one of the key moments for initial arrival of Jews in Banjaluka.

Hrabak stated that at the end of the XVI century some Jews came from Split to Banja Luka and that in the mentioned period one Jewish doctor was sent from Dubrovnik and ended his life in the city on the river Vrbas.

Influence of the Sarajevo Jewish merchants, who supported the trade links with seaports on the Adriatic coast, was huge and forced Penso to travel for Sarajevo as well. All these statements from the archived documents in Banja Luka, Dubrovnik, and Split provided very good insight into the organization of transit trade and complex trade networks spread along the roads and crossroads between Thessaloniki, Istanbul, Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Split and Venice and cities of the Northern Europe. In relation to this, it is interesting to note that many historians have divergent opinions about the arrival, stay and direction of movement Sephardic Jews in the

Core local portfolio Banja Luka inland of Bosnia after the exodus from Perinea Peninsula. It seems that regarding the arrival of the Banja Luka Jews both theories could be accepted, but the arrival of Jews in Banja Luka in small numbers at the turn of the XVI in XVII century is connected to the development of the trade through Split and Dubrovnik, and the greater number is connected with reduction of the port trade because of the fall of Venice in 1797, what at the beginning of the XIX century led to greater emigration of Jews from the Dalmatian cities to the inland of Bosnia and Croatia. Massive arrival of Sephardic Jews in Banja Luka at the beginning of the XIX century from the direction of Sarajevo, Skopje and Bitola is linked to post emancipation period of Jews in Bosnia, after the adoption of the Decree of Sultan Abdul Mejid in 1840, which recognized civil rights to Jews and Christians, with the possibility of building religious premises, synagogues and churches, and the opening of primary and secondary schools in existing languages.

Massive arrival of the Ashkenazi Jews in Banja Luka is linked to all Draconian laws of the Emperor Joseph II with limited settlement and residence of Jews in the country under the rule of Austro-Hungary and the Annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the second half of the XIX century. Because of its exceptional geo-strategic importance within the triangle between the Venetian Dalmatia, Hungary, Posavina and Bosnian Sandzak, Banja Luka was increasingly exposed to constant pressures and conflicts of the opposed sides. The only possible breakthrough of the Turkish army from the Vrbas region was over Lika and Kordun into the Austrian Krajina and further to Europe. In permanent military forces of both Military Borders (Krajina) entered the local population. It is this historical fact, because of the large number of remains and fortifications around the city on the Vrbas, that distinguished Banjaluka as one of the strongholds of the Turkish army, what had strategic importance for Porta, with a note that already in 1573 during the rule of Ferhad Pasha Sokolovic, the centre of the Bosnian Pashaluk moved from Travnik into the city on the river Vrbas.

There are no written traces on the presence of specific location that was continuously inhabited by Jews in Banja Luka in the XVII century, but on the basis of later sites of the built Jewish houses it can be assumed that it was close to the Govedarnica and the market place (Bezistan). Jews originally came as traders, and later on, by provision of the necessary conditions, brought the rest of their families.

In all this economic moment was decisive, which led to the rapid growth of the trade and strengthening of the continental trading links. Due to the war situation in the wider region, and in search for more stable areas of trade and business, a new population moved to Banja Luka. Slightly higher number of the Jewish families moved from Sarajevo to Banjaluka which became an advanced Charsija.

Under the pressure of the Great Powers Turkey accessed to key reforms in Bosnia. Sultan Abdul Medjid issued Hatisherif in 1840 which abolished the old feudal system and proclaimed legal equality for all the citizens of the Turkish state, regardless of religious and ethnic background. This reinforced the rights of building the religious premises (churches and synagogues) and the opening of schools, which was a key element which greatly contributed to the further development and emancipation of Jews and the Jewish communities in the Bosnian towns. The result was an increased number of Jews in Banja Luka in the mid-nineteenth century. Confirmation of this is found in the statement left by the professor Stojan Bjeli?, which stated that Haim Poljokan Salamon, who arrived in 1860 to Banja Luka, found three coreligionists, natives, some Baruh, Isak Papo alias Papi and Mento Levi, the treasurer in the Jewish Sephardic Community, founded in 1848. B. Pinto is almost concordant with this assertion, by which the Banja Luka Jewish Community was founded already around 1850, what is in a favour of the Bjeli?'s data on the date of establishment of the Jewish Community Banja Luka, with some small corrections – reliable.

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In regard to all above mentioned it could be concluded that the founders of slightly more numerous Jewish Sephardic Community in Banja Luka were previously mentioned four Jews: Baruh, Isak Papo, Mento Levi and Salamon Poljokan, the tradesman. The settlement of Jews in Banja Luka matched with numerous difficult living conditions of the Serbia Jews, what by issuance of the law on prohibition against the settlement of Jews brought to sudden conversion to the Christianity and migration of Jews from Serbia toward Zemun and Bosnia.

The Alliance Izraelite Universelle founded in 1860, with a number of schools in the Balkans, fought for civil rights and the emancipation of Jews in Europe, and the Congress of Berlin in 1878 set a question of civil rights of Jews in the Balkans. According the census of 1870 presented by Galib Šljivo was mentioned that even then the Jewish school with ten pupils operated in Banja Luka. On the basis of Turkish sources this information is confirmed by the Zagreb newspaper “Horizon” which in 1878 published a data on the work of the Jewish school with 23 boys, in Sephardic Synagogue built in 1870 on the left bank of the river Crkvena (location of current market place). The Jewish Primary School in Banja Luka where pupils gained the first level of the traditional Jewish education was heder which might be attended only by male children. Its existence in an indirect way shows the relative numerous members of the Jewish community.

By the time the Austrian occupation of 1878 in Banja Luka together with native population lived exclusively ethnic group of the Sephardic Jews, originally from Spain and Portugal. Their main occupations, thanks to training and knowledge of languages, primarily were the craftsmanship and trade. Those who were relatively poor dedicated themselves to handicrafts, while those with some more money mostly performed intermediary and commercial affairs.

And while Sephardic Jews staying in England, Netherlands and in other advanced regions in Europe, after the exodus from Perinea Peninsula through two full centuries of persistent work and education enriched the cultural heritage of their ancestors from Spain, at the same time Sephardic Jews in Bosnia under the Turks were directed at each other, and thus received characteristics of one conservative community in a matter of education, language and culture. They gradually sank into passive and cultural decadency. The Banjaluka Jews were not exceptional, especially having in mind the fact that their number was still insignificant. But after the adoption of Decree from the Sultan Abdul Medjid in 1840 by which Jews and Christians got civil rights and the right to build places of worship and open confessional schools, conditions were changed. The emancipation of Jews in Bosnia was in substantial rise of the 1860, after foundation of the Alliance Izraelite Universelle which was active in the Balkans and awakened the Sephardic community from the dream. Until then, the Vilayet Government in relation to education took care only for the Muslim population, but the entry of Serif Topal Osman Pasha in the position of the Bosnian vizier in 1861, the educational opportunities were changed. Secondary schools Ruzdija were founded and could be attended by Jews and Christians. In 1861 the Ottoman’s Government issued the law on education which should introduce compulsory public school in the entire territory of the Ottoman Empire, but this law in Bosnia and Herzegovina has never come into effect.

The Centre of the Jewish religious life in Bosnia was Sarajevo which managed to preserve the unity of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Jewish community for a long period of time by activities of a series Jewish educational and cultural associations (La Lira, La Gloria, Matatija) and first of all of educational – cultural association La Benevolentia founded in 1894 and operated on the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with the Sarajevo Talmud Torah, Ješivot and the Jewish weeklies, at the beginning La Alborada (Dawn) and later traditional Zionistic the Jewish Consciousness and the Jewish Life – the newspapers of the Sephardic movement that in 1928 merged into the Jewish Voice.

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Great contribution to the further development of the city on the Vrbas in all spheres of social and cultural life, though in the beginning small in numbers, with their education, work and persistent efforts gave members of the Banja Luka Jewish community. By the time of the Austrian occupation in Banja Luka lived mostly Sephardic Jews originally from Spain and Portugal, with their traditional Jewish-Spanish (Ladino) language. Of Sephardic families which will later be described in details and which marked and were permanently linked to Banjaluka and by whom the Jewish circles in Banja Luka were known – in the first place were distinguished families, Poljokan[3], Sarafi?, Baruch, Levi, Papo, Atijas, Altarac, Montias and Nachmias (immigrants from Serbia). These first two surnames, as it could be seen, are not in the slightest the Jewish, but were created as a result of a long term life of Sephardic Jews in these areas, what also indicated these Bosnian – Turkish coins and alluded to the acquired characteristics of individuals or the trade they practiced. Thus the Poljokans were originally named Levi and surname Poljokan (half eyed), according the narration of Luna Albahari who lived in Banja Luka from 1906 to 1916 was created in a way when father of Bohor, Rafo, Isak-Kue, Dudo and Salomon, as a little boy lost his eye in game and his descendants became the Poljokans, while the surname Sarafi was developed by the actual nature of the work the family Salom was engaged in – sarafluk (Turkish word for exchange operations/taxation-treasurer's job) .

Only by annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and with the arrival of the capitalist mode of economy, a horizon of Sephardic community was more and more opened outward and aspiration toward modernization was inevitable. New economic flows and new modes of production and trade slowly brought to the knowledge that because of the backwardness of the environment, existing funds of knowledge objectively couldn't meet or follow the general developmental needs and progress of each individual. Talking freely, all the upcoming processes of the Jewish community were actually related to the field of trade, crafts and extensive modern industrial work, which after the Austrian annexation received more significance. This was the basis for the acquisition of the Jewish working capital which gradually provided a broad education and further education of talented Jewish youth abroad, who frequently went to Vienna which was the intellectual centre of the Balkan Sephardic Jews. In Vienna, they established academic association „ESPERANSA“ whose members by their own learning and literary engagement in 1923 launched „El Mundo Sefardi “(the Sephardic World) the Journal for socio-cultural life and the Jewish education, including in it the communal spirit of modern Sephardic movement, which was the main lever of progress and revival of Sephardic culture in our environment. Therefore, the 1878 represents turning point in the life of Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Annexation of this former Turkish province by the Austro-Hungary, the life of Jews in Banja Luka headed upward what enabled stronger economic, cultural and every other progress of the Jewish community and improvement of general social life of each member. Thus was achieved the level of advanced Jewish communities in far more developed European countries.

Arrival of Austro Hungary authorities caused massive arrival of ethnical group of Ashkenazi Jews[9] in Banja Luka. Firstly their predecessors came with Austro Hungary troops, as the main suppliers of the Austrian army with weapons, ammunition and food, what they also did during the World War I, then as agents and commercial travellers of large commercial stores and more as state employees in administrative services. Their migration from different parts of the Habsburg Monarchy has lasted for decades after 1878. Most of them came to Banja Luka [10] from the neighbouring Slavic provinces of Croatia, Slavonia, Hungary, Slovakia, Bohemia, Galicia, Bukovina, Moravia and other parts of Europe. The key motives that have led to their migration were primarily economic in nature, because of the fact that occupied territory

Core local portfolio Banja Luka

represented from the economic point of view one technical – technologically undeveloped but extremely rich area in a matter of resources (timber, mineral wealth) which gave possibility of double challenge – to the rich capitalists to become more reach and to the poor who searched better job to find their hideout.

However, the main reason that led to the final decision on the migration of Ashkenazi Jews is phenomenon of arrival the anti-Semitism in the former countries of their residence. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the Germans in their arrogance and conviction that they are untouchable looked to other nations of the dual Monarchy with contempt, especially on Ashkenazi Jews. Anti-Semitism became a bad dream of Monarchy due to activity of various, so-called “Christian parties “. The Ashkenazy, although they came from different countries and were of a different background and occupations, and united only by religion (rituals), however, the faster and better than Sephardic Jews communicated with the domiciled population, primarily due to the knowledge of some of the Slavic languages. After a while, Ashkenazi settlers numerically represented almost a third of the total Jewish population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According the census of 1895, from a total number of 8 213 Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina there were 5 729 Sephardic Jews (70%), and Ashkenazy 2 484 (30%). Even later, this ratio was not changed. This ratio for Banja Luka represents the table based on reports on the census carried out during the Austro-Hungary.

The table shows that the numerical increase of the Jewish population is significant and from 1879 to 1895 was increased for 140 persons or about 75%. This numerical explosion is in direct connection with arrival of Ashkenazi Jews from the Dual Monarchy to Banjaluka. This process was decreased in a period from 1885-1895 as a result of change the residence of several new formed families from Banjaluka toward surrounding places Prijedor, Sanski Most, Novi and Gradiška. The Jewish families from these places were also in some family ties with those from Banjaluka. So-called the Austro Hungary Jews besides their Yiddish[13] have also spoken the other languages as good as their own native language (German, Hungarian, Czech etc.). German language was the basic language that all Ashkenazi immigrants tied and linked together and therefore in the occupied country during a census in the most cases they nationally declared themselves as Hungarians or Germans and they were mostly the protagonists of social, economic, cultural and political ideas of the occupier and exercised a certain influence on the domestic Sephardic.

Soon after arrival Ashkenazi Jews founded their community in Banja Luka in 1883 and in 1884 the State Government approved its Statute. Statute was identical in all previously formed Ashkenazi communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina – for Sarajevo, Visoko, Travnik, and Bijeljina and for Banja Luka as well. At the inaugural assembly the outstanding role had pharmacist Brammer, the Rabbi Herzler and the famous Ashkenazi families: Castl, Fischer, Bruckner, Herzog, Gottlieb, Schnitzler and Grünwald. These families according their professional orientation fit into the existing framework of their occupations, whose range was quite wide, with a preponderance of those who were highly educated governmental officials on high positions, financial and banking experts, lawyers, mechanical engineers, secondary school professors, doctors, dentists, pharmacists and obstetricians, veterinarians, although, on the whole, this number was not large.

The Ashkenazi contributed a lot to the economic and social development of Banja Luka at that time. They supplemented shortage in specific, insufficient and highly specialised occupations of the city.

Among the pioneers in certain sectors were: Dr Gizella Kun-Januševski, Jeti Rosenrauch, obstetrician, Jozef Bajor and Jozef Zaloscer – lawyers. The first factory owner was Moritz Grünwald (production of soda water) and Moritz Gottlieb, watchmaker and jeweller who

Core local portfolio Banja Luka

opened on May 20th 1911 the first modern electro cinema in Banjaluka and thus enriched cultural life of the city. Soon afterwards he sold the Cinema to Ashkenazi Jew Ignac Faulweter. A trade was and remained a major economic sector, mostly carried out by Jews. They greatly contributed to its rapid development and improvement. Numerically strengthened, they were represented in all commercial sectors in Banja Luka (the most of them were small and medium tradesmen). Foreign trade was exclusively in the hands of Sephardic traders, who in relation to the Turkish period (up to 1878) carried out drastic changes and redirected trade routes to industrially developed economic centres of the Dual Monarchy (Vienna, Budapest, Brno and Prague), putting the old trade routes from the coastal towns in another plan. Trieste as the main export port of the Austria – Hungary Monarchy in international trade got a dominant significance. When we talk about commercial shops in Banja Luka of that time, it can be freely said that the equipment and the supply of those owned by Jews were among the best ones. According the list of prestige and specialised shops in Banjaluka in 1915 the status was the following: of total number of five excellent grocery stores – two were the Jewish, of seven shops in fashionable goods – three were the Jewish, and out of ten shops in colonial and groceries products – four were the Jewish ownership. They opened their shops in houses or buildings where they lived, but the ground floor was usually reserved for grocery store or handicraft workshop. A large number of shops were in Gospodska Street, now also the most famous street in Banjaluka. According former Registry of Shops, even 50% shops belonged to Jews. They had the additional residential buildings with business premises, located on the outskirts of the city.

The most respectable shop in fashionable goods was in Gospodska Street in Banja Luka, founded long time ago in 1881, owned by M. Schnitzler and Georg Kohn (the Republic of Srpska Archive in Banja Luka)

Braco Poljokan distinguished himself among them with his knowledge, fresh spirit and rational perception of life's problems and reality. He spent his youth in Banja Luka, academic title obtained in Vienna and Paris, built his knowledge and experience in Sephardic movement, expressed his ideas in the newspaper the Jewish Life, later in the Jewish Voice in Sarajevo – and by all this he attained the character of the Jewish national worker.

The Jewish national spirit, carried by a mass of the Jewish poor, more and more sought solution of the Jewish question over international Zionistic organisations, which after the Balfour Declaration in 1917 and British support to establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine, greatly gained in its importance. In order to resist anti-Semitism, the total assimilation and denationalization and break the shackles of the past, Jews around the world provided support to the Zionist movement, which turned into a global political organization that sought the establishment of the Jewish State. These ideas, teachings and movements have expressed interests, needs and mood of the Jewish youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which later led to the establishment of the Zionist Youth Association in Banja Luka, which operated within the Jewish Youth League in B&H. Despite the large contribution to economic and cultural development of Banja Luka, their participation in politics has always been questionable and marginally. But Jews have always had a loyal attitude towards the current government and open attitude towards other religions, what was caused by their specific position and fewness, why they were not significantly organized in politics on a national-confessional basis.

The centres of the Jewish life in general were the Jewish communities, as self-organizational units in the territory of a city or beyond. In the Jewish municipalities were kept the registers (pinekasi) which recorded every significant event within the community. This work was Rabbi's duty. In new statutes approved by the National Government, it was explicitly pointed out the right of state control on the work of communities, which was not the case during the

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Ottoman's rule, which didn't openly interfere in their work. The Statute prescribed the obligations of believers that in accordance with personal incomes, give contributions for the maintenance of community and synagogue, as well as to give sadaka (Turkish word for charity) for socially vulnerable members.

Approval of Government which supported the Jewish institutions with very modest funds was necessary for selection and replacement of the rabbis and teachers of religion in the Jewish schools.

The Sephardic, domestic and Ashkenazy parties, because of permanent intolerance, operated separately in Banja Luka, what can be easily explained by the fact that Sephardic Jews after the exodus lived in these areas for centuries and became connected to the Bosnian State and its nations, felt the State as their own, what was not the case with the Ashkenazi, in regard to their origin. The Sephardic Jews founded as we have already said their community named the Sephardic Israelite Religious Community in the period between 1848 and 1850. Since Jews in Banja Luka were in small numbers, their prayers were for a short period held in a rented space in the city. They built their first synagogue of wooden construction in 1870 – even during the Turkish period, on the left bank of the river Crkvena, where today is the city's marketplace. Immediately after the attacks of Austro – Hungary troops in the summer 1878 it was burned to the ground.

Construction of the second Sephardic synagogue personally led Josef Nahmias the first Rabbi of the Sephardic community. It was built at the end of 1880 in Juki?eva Street, almost in the very centre of a city. Meldar (the Jewish primary school) was also located inside a synagogue; in the building over there was municipal area and Rabbi's flat.

One interesting thing is related to this synagogue – regarding the position of Aron (h) a kodesh (Hebr. case) the Holy Ark or hollow in a wall where the scrolls of the Torah were placed, which in accordance to tradition must be turned toward Jerusalem, at Sephardic on southern and at Ashkenazi on eastern side. According to Hadzi Rafo Poljokan's narration, the construction of the temple was technically possible to be completed only if a case was facing east. The Sarajevo Rabbi was asked for an advice. The Answer was: „Besiman tov“ (Hebr. good luck) and a case remained on an eastern side.

The picture of Banja luka Jewish culture center from 1937, who partial destroyed 1944, after bombard on the II World War and complete destroyed 1969 an earthquake hit Banja luka city Community protocol, (pinkas) began to be kept only from the 1905 thanks to the Solomon A. Poljokan Chairman of the Jewish Community of that time. The first records on Sephardic religious community were kept by Dr I. Izrael. The Temple was operational almost to the end of 1936 when the construction of a new one started what will be discussed in a separate chapter. Although small in number, Ashkenazy community was much richer and better equipped and organized, and the protocol was conducted of the 1883 and after approval of the Statute by the authorities. Until the construction of community building and synagogue, by all accounts, Ashkenazi used for prayers and for office the rented house in the former Street Vojvode Putnika, near the present Electro technical school. Chairmen were: R. Brammer, A. Mitler and M. Hertzog, and Rabbis M. Hercler, P. Keller[20], M. Frankfurter and Sigmund Kohn.

Afterwards, in a very short period between 1900 and 1902 Ashkenazi built a temple of an extraordinary beauty. Both Banja Luka Jewish communities had organised service “Hevra kadisa” that took care on funeral rituals. The only common property of these two communities was a Jewish cemetery in the quarter Borik, of 2.820 m², with small chapel and drinking fountain, formed in 1883 thanks to engagement of public official Bernard Neubach. On the left side the cemetery was fenced with high stone's fence bordered on the Orthodox cemetery and on the right side was a pasture of 2.200 m² ownership of both communities intended to be a

spare room for cemetery – it was nationalised by the strength of the socialist regime and will certainly be a subject of expected restitution.

According to the census of the Kingdom of SHS from the 1921 in its territory lived 64.159 Jews. When before the end of the World War I began to be perceived the contours of the dissolution and definitive disappearance of the Monarchy, among Jews, who until then were quite passive and apolitical, mostly appeared the awakening of national consciousness which was launched exclusively by the intellectual power of younger generations of Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews. They promoted their advanced ideas and aspirations for the unification of Jews all over the world through Zionist organizations and associations in home Jewish communities. Their number, in striving to achieve reunification as soon as possible, in all major cities of Europe was rapidly growing. According the opinion of many eminent historians, the Zionist movement in regard of emancipation and prosperity, significantly contributed to reconciliation and rapprochement the views of two Jewish ethnic groups. This also occurred in Banjaluka.

After the First Jewish Conference of the Kingdom of SHS in 1919, in 1920 comes to the First Foundation Congress and the establishment of the Federation of Jewish Communities the Kingdom of SHS, with strict rules and with headquarters in Belgrade. The Zionist Hugo Spicer from Osijek was elected for President of the Federation and Dr Pops was elected for the Chairman of the Executive Committee. Great merits in that had prominent and already distinguished the Supreme Rabbi Dr. Isaac Alkalaj and very active the Chief Rabbi Ignjat Slang. New founded Kingdom recognized equality to all the citizens and to Jews as well, which they also previously had, and Judaism as a religion got the same treatment as larger and more numerous religious communities. After a while it contributed that the participation of Jews in public and cultural life of B&H and in Banja Luka finally moved upward.

When it comes to the economy in Banja Luka, Jews participated in almost all segments of current economical life. Increased number of Jews in Banja Luka after establishment of the Kingdom of SHS, because of migration of Ashkenazi families from Europe, brought more dynamism and vibrancy to the Jewish community and to economic trends of the city which was in constant progress.

The presence of Jews in Banja Luka opened the possibility of business modernization and faster penetration of the world's latest technical and technological achievements, the establishment of banks and brokerage and development of modern commodity-monetary sector.

Listed trade and handicraft shops the ownership of the Banjaluka Jews was just some of previously established or renewed in Banja Luka.

The Jews were meritorious for the development of a modern banking sector, shareholder companies with domestic and foreign capital, and management of financial enterprises in Banja Luka. Among the founders of the First Banjaluka Savings Bank d.d. (stock company) which started to operate in 1894 is Ashkenazi Jew Robert Brammer, the Pharmacist. Majority of founders of the Bosnian Bank (in 1927) were Jews. The Bank for Trade and Crafts founded in 1911 became an integral part of this Bank in Banjaluka. Among the founders of this Bank were also two of the most prominent Jews of that time, Arnold Fischer and Salomon Poljokan, who were the first directors. In the Bosnian joint stock Company for the Exploitation of Wood in Banja Luka, of nine members of the Management – three were Jews.

Share capital of 30 million dinars was invested in the exploitation of the Bosnian forests with concession to 1942. In the Bosnian joint stock company for the exploitation of timber and steam sawmill, with headquarters in Banja Luka – Jews were also present. The Company was founded before the First World War in 1914 by fusion of industrial enterprises of that time “Vrbanja” a.d. and “Gec”. It had its own forest railway tracks in a length of 100 km. “Babi” Wood Industry

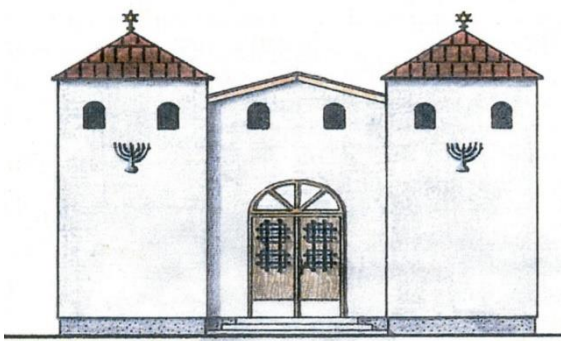
Core local portfolio Banja Luka
d.d. Banja Luka, with joint Jewish capital was founded in 1914 and was derived from the Company of Spasoje Babi.

4.2. Jewish Cultural Heritage

Most of tangible Jewish cultural heritage in Banja Luka is destroyed during the wars. There is an overview of tangible and intangible Jewish cultural heritage in the City of Banja Luka.

1) Ashkenazi Temple

Ashkenazi synagogue, built in 1903, it was placed on left side from the Red Cross building. After Austrian occupation, it was taken over from the Jews and transformed into the workshop.



2) The first Sephardic Synagogue

The first Sephardic Synagogue was built on the place of the city market in 1870. Its integral part was Jewish elementary school. After occupation of Austria, it was burned in 1878.

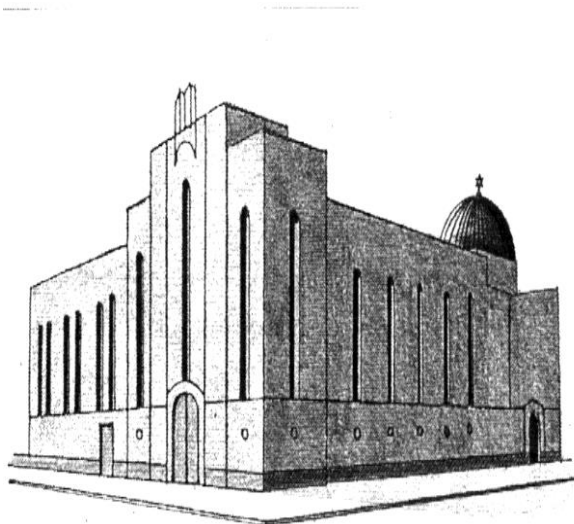
3) The second Sephardic Synagogue

The second Sephard Synagogue, built in late 1880s in I.F.Jukica Street. Its integral part was Jewish elementary school, and in the building across the street there were the rooms of Jewish Community and Rabi`s flat. It was in the function until 1936, when it was removed due to the new spatial plan.



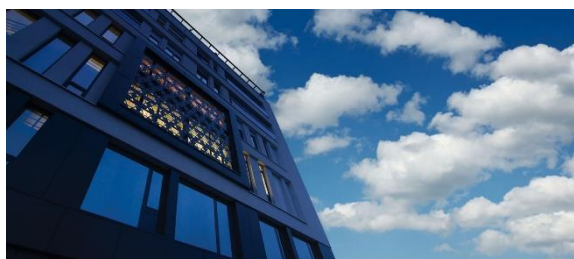
4) Jewish Cultural Center with Sephardic Synagogue

The building of Jewish Cultural Center started in 1936, and it was completed in 1937. its integral parts were: Sephard Synagogue, Jewish elementary school, library, conference room, concert hall, several offices and rabi`s flat. It was placed on the corner of I.F. Jukica Street and Princ Pavle street- which is today called Jewish Street (Jevrejska ulica), as a memory of the temple.



5) Jewish Cultural Center "Arie Livne"

Jewish Cultural Center "Arie Livne", built in 2014. in Gavre Vuckovica Street on the land that belonged to a Jewish family, which does not have any successors. It is the first object of this kind built on the Balkans after the World War II. Its integral parts are: synagogue, hotel accommodation and modern and excellently equipped conference room. Although, its main purpose is to preserve Jewish tradition, one of its goals is to gather intellectual elite and artists from the region no matter which their religion is.



6) Jewish cemetery

Jewish cemetery in was placed in the part of the city named Borik and it was eliminated in 1976, due to the new spatial plan. The bodies were transferred to the common tomb at the New Cemetery.



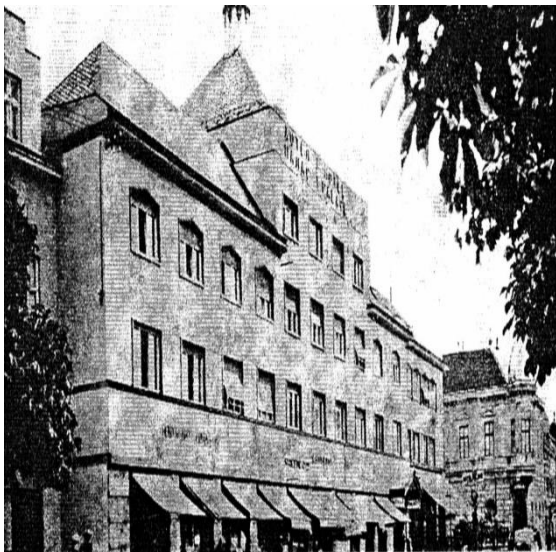
7) Common Jewish Tomb

After elimination of old Jewish cemetery in 1976, the bodies were transferred to the common tomb at the city cemetery, which was called New Cemetery.



8) The house of Isak Solomon Poljokan

The house of Isak Solomon Poljokan, the famous Jewish salesman from Banja Luka. The house was built before 1880. At the very beginning of the World War II Poljokan family was murdered in that house. The house was placed at the current parking lot in front of Palace Hotel. The house was crashed after the big earthquake, that happened in Banja Luka in 1969.



9) Jewish stores

Jewish stores in Gospodska Street in the very city center. The stores were: watch-maker and jewelry store of Moritz Gottlieb, established in 1907., burned in the fire in 1911.; grocery store of Moric Hercog-registered in 1900.; jewelry store of Arona A. Salom, registered in 1916.; fashion store of M. Šnicler and G. Kon- established in 1881.



10) Sephard`s songs

The songs that the part of Sephard music tradition and that have, as the time went by, become the national songs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Those are the following songs: Ruse kose curo imas- traditional Sephard song that is being sung for Shabat, Sosana- the song that is being sung at Jewish weddings, there are also songs Kad ja podjoh na Bembasu and Bolujem ja, bolujes ti.

11) Story of Levi Family

The story of old Sephard family Levi from Banja Luka. Story is told by Irena Levi Đorđević. The story is about Jewish tradition, family origin, events from the World War II, family library that has books dated from 1900s, about the right to regain Spanish citizenship, about Spanish language learning, and about current position of Jews in Banja Luka and about their contribution to the cultural development of the city.

12) Story of Mikes Family

The story of Ashkenazi family Mikes. Story told by Đorđe Mikeš- director of Jewish Cultural Center in Banja Luka. The story is about the history of Jewish Community in Banja Luka, prominent Jews who contributed to the development of the city, murder of famous Jewish family Poljokan- what is considered as the beginning of the World War II in Banja Luka, about elimination of Jewish cemetery in Banja Luka and about building and goals of current Jewish Cultural Center in Banja Luka.

13) Story of Katan Family

The story is about family origin, events from the World War II, about the life of Jews during the Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

14) Poljokan file

Police file with the statements of witnesses of the murder of famous Jewish family Poljokan at the very beginning of the World War II. There are about 100 statements in the file.

5. Ideas, services and products

5.1. Permanent tourist route

Message: Jewish cultural heritage as an important part of Banja Luka heritage

Target groups: Tourists, participants to the conferences, sports events and similar events, local inhabitants

This will be the main tourist product and guideline applicable to other products.

Info panel and tables

These will be placed at several locations in downtown. The main interactive panel will be located in Jewish Street, which will contain maps, texts, photos and will represent a journey through the history of the Jewish community of Banja Luka. At the location of the former Poljokan family house, a model house will be located with an info table that would reconstruct the mysterious murder of the Poljokan family that shaped the public of that time and remains a mystery to date. The shops in the pedestrian street, as well as the house of the famous Kastl family that was located on the main city square, will be presented as additional items on the existing multimedia panel, in order to have a slide show of photos while the visitors listen to the historical stories of the famous families.



Info panel



Jewish shops in Pedestrian Street



Pedestrian Street



Poljokan Family house

Visit to the Levi house

This house is a rare tangible Jewish heritage that could be interesting to tourists for its originality and authenticity and hides the rich history of the most famous Banja Luka Jewish family. In front of the house a show case will be placed with prospects and brochures of the family history and information that present history of Jewish community sorted by the different historical segments. By casting a coin the visitors will choose a brochure or a pamphlet that interests them.



Remainder of the Levi house



Fragment at the entrance to the house

Family stories

This part will contain stories of the Jewish families that made a significant contribution in the city's development in different fields, such as trade, industry, health, culture etc.

The story of old Sephardic family Levi from Banja Luka will be told by Irena Levi Đorđević. The story is about Jewish tradition, family origin, events from the World War II, family library that has books dated from 1900s, about the right to regain Spanish citizenship, about Spanish language learning, and about current position of Jews in Banja Luka and about their contribution to the cultural development of the city.

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Ancestors of the Levi family

The story of the murder of Poljokan family, back then the richest family in Banja Luka, stays until today unresolved mystery. The 18 year old cinema doorman witnessed that on the night between 17th and 18th October 1940 around 3 am he heard a noise coming from the yard of the Poljokan family and afterwards saw three men entering the house.

Solomon Haim Poljokan, the wealthy trader and manufacturer, his wife Micika and his ill son Isak that night were slaughtered by the unknown criminals. The bodies were found in the

Core local portfolio Banja Luka morning by their servant who called the police. Hundreds of citizens gathered in front of the Poljokan house the next day. Dozens of witnesses were questioned by the police, but the investigation did not give any results. Six months after the murder, the army of Independent State of Croatia, an ally to Nazi Germany entered the city and the investigation was never finalized.



The house of Poljokan family

Visit to the Museum of Republika Srpska

Organised visit to the Museum and permanent exhibition dedicated to the Holocaust Organizovana posjeta Muzeju Republikie Srpske i stalnoj izložbenoj postavci. Facultative visits to the memorial center Jasenovac and Stara Gradina, the biggest concentration camps in the Balkans. (the camps are around 80km away from Banja Luka).

Visit to the Jewish Cultural Centre and Synagogue Ilona Vajs

This is one of the rare remaining tangible Jewish heritages, within which there is a synagogue Ilona Vajs. The visit will include presentation of traditional dance, songs, kosher meals etc.

Cycling route

This would encompass visit to the Jewish graveyard that is located several kilometers away from the center of the town.

5.2.School project

Message: Introduction to the Jewish culture in the Banja Luka area

Target groups: The pupils and students, but also their teachers

Multimedia projections

Through these projections pupils, students and teachers would be educated on the history of Jewish community of Banja Luka. On multimedia panel, the walk about the town would be presented visiting tangible heritage that no longer exists and telling interesting stories about Jewish families, as a virtual walk through the city.

Interactive games

Pupils and students could creative interesting Q&A games aimed at learning more about history of Jewish community of Banja Luka.

Workshops

Through interactive workshops a lot could be learned about Jewish cuisine, folklore, canon laws, traditional crafts etc. The eminent lecturers would teach about different segments of Jewish community life.

Competitions

The studetns could participate to competition, for instance to create a postcard that would in a most interesting way present the cultural heritage of the Jewish community of Banja Luka.

Learning the language

Short, interactive and interesting courses of Hebrew can be organized for groups of students.

5.3.Artistic performances

Message: Presentation of Jewish folklore through different cultural events

Target groups: B&H citizens, tourists

Through song and dance

Organization of concerts of traditional Jewish songs and dances.

Literary nights

Organization of literary nights of reading and discussing the most significant Jewish authors.

Theater performance

Production of theater plays by Jewish authors or with content related to Jewish culture.

5.4. Route intended for citizens from partner countries

Message: Exchange of information on cultural and historical heritage

Target group: Tourists from partner countries

All abovementioned can be applicable in creation of this route.

6. Implementation

All projects will be implemented during the 2020 and 2021 in the order that follows:

1. Setting up the info tables, multimedia panels and models
2. Development of brochures and pamphlets and setting up of show cases (mini libraries)
3. Restauration of Levi house in the form of either museum or a memorial room
4. Memorial room in the Jewish Cultural Centre
5. Production of cultural events
6. Visibiliy campaign