

***ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING EXCHANGE INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE  
HOSPITALITY SMEs IN THE BALKAN-MEDITERRANEAN REGION***

Subsidy Contract No. BMP1/1.3/2616/2017

**Company name: Koprivshtitsa Architectural and Historical Reserve**

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**Source:**

<https://bg.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%9A%D0%BE%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%B2%D1%89%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B0>

**Country/region of operation: Koprivshtitsa, Bulgaria**

**Sustainability dimension: environmental, social, economic, cultural**

**Description of the enterprise/initiative:** The town of Koprivshtitsa is located in the heart of the Sredna Gora mountain range. In 1952, it was declared the only city-museum in the country, and since 1971 it has been an architectural and historical reserve, with a total of 388 architectural, historical, artistic, and ethnographic monuments. In 1978, it was recognized as a national architectural reserve of international importance and as an international tourist destination. There are many hotels and guesthouses in Koprivshtitsa that offer visitors an authentic folk atmosphere. There are also numerous dining facilities offering a wide range of Bulgarian dishes prepared according to local recipes.

Koprivshtitsa has always been of historical interest, since it is associated with the rise of the Bulgarian people during the country's Age of Awakening (18th – 19th centuries). The architecture in Koprivshtitsa reflects the historical development growth of Bulgarian traditional architecture that can still be observed in its various forms at present.

In 1956, a museum directorate was established in Koprivshitsa with the goal of saving, preserving, and popularizing the town's cultural and historical heritage. Among the museums and local attractions are The Oslekov House, The Lyutova House, The Todor Kableshkov Museum, The Dimcho Debelyanov Museum, The Georgi Benkovski Museum, and The Liuben Karavelov Museum.

Besides visiting its historic houses and enjoying the invigorating natural surroundings, visitors may refresh themselves at Koprivshitsa's more than 40 wells that were constructed during different eras. These wells are generally decorated with stones carvings of six-sided stars, sea creatures, flowers, and other images. Two of the oldest are the Benevska and Chalakova Wells.

Also very attractive are the town's many bridges, mainly vaulted stone, erected over small brooks and streams that flow into the Topolnitsa River. The most popular is the Kalachev Bridge, also known as The First Shot Bridge. It was here in 1786 that the first shot was heard that signaled the start of the April Uprising, as Bulgarians fought to free themselves from Ottoman oppression.

In the vicinity of Koprivshitsa there are nature preserves for those interested in eco-tourism. The Bogdan Preserve, as it has been known since 1972, is home to an age-old beech forest, the historically important Clover Field, and the highest peak in the Sredna Gora Mountains, Bogdan Peak (1604 meters). Another nature preserve in the region is the Donkin Forest (declared a protected area in 1979). Here it is possible to catch a glimpse of one of the world's rare endangered birds, The Eastern Imperial Eagle (*Aquila heliaca*).

**Social/ community impact sought:** preserving the cultural heritage, attracting tourists to the region, raising visitors' awareness on the history and cultural significance of the town.

**Stakeholders:** visitors, society

**Approach applied:** cultural heritage preservation, resource utilization

**Innovation applied:** The whole town is recognised as a national architectural reserve of international importance and new type of building and construction is not allowed in the town premises.

**Social impact and business results achieved:** protected architecture with cultural and historical significance, protected heritage of the inhabitants and the Bulgarians in general, added value to the place as a tourist destination, enhanced popularity

**Financial situation / sustainability of the business model:** The sustainability of the business model is ensured by the national and international funding, the national legislations and regulations on building and construction, the cultural and historical significance that drive visitors in Koprivshitsa and the environment and architecture preservation measures.

**Key success factors:** the national legislations and regulations, uniqueness of the place, affordable prices

**Challenges and problems:** The problems/challenges are related with the unused potential of renewable energy resources - restriction on solar panels installation on the building roofs. In addition, the electrical system has not been changed since the town's recognition as a national architectural reserve of international importance /1978/ and as result nowadays it is difficult to support all electrical appliances plugged in the network.

**Year when the enterprise was created: 1978**

**References (web-site, intent links, video, etc.):** <https://koprivshitsa-bg.com/>