

6.8. External Positioning and Marketing

The Zestafoni Municipality is located on the highway connecting Europe and Asia (Baku-Batumi), which makes the municipality more attractive. Proximity to Poti Port and Kutaisi Airport creates favorable conditions for improvement of local investment climate.

It is important that the Zestafoni municipality has a memorandum on mutual cooperation with various municipalities of **foreign** countries: Kiryat Bialik municipality (Israel); Tchevi municipality (Poland); Tauragese municipality (Lithuania). Within the frames of the memorandum, many activities and other important projects have already been implemented at the municipality level, which had positive impacted on the socio-economic situation of the municipality.

On the basis of the conclusions held at the polls and meetings, it is clear that the main directions of economic development of Zestafoni municipality are based on the integrity of traditional farming and cultural values. Therefore, the target area of the plan should be: **Winemaking; Clay crafting and Ceramics; Culinary / gastronomy and places to eat (restaurants, cafes and others).**

It was underlined that Zestafoni is not only remarkable in terms of size and efficiency of its industrial enterprises, also with its cultural traditions and achievements (Specific facts: music, singing culture, theatrical traditions and actors; Annual festival "Suliko" and others). According this were identified themes and trends for Zestafoni municipality: melody (festival "Suliko");

- Tradition and Culture of Hospitality; „Kvevri” wine (wine is saved in big clay pot) and Imeretian grape varieties, Tsitska, Tsolikauri and Otskhanuri sapari; Georgian and namely Imeretian culinary; Clay crafts and ceramic items made in the village Shrosha; Theatrical tradition and cultural life; Historical monuments (Shorapani castle and others);

The Zestafoni municipality has a great potential to awareness its name with unique wines. For the first stage, we can make active preparation and marketing works in the friendly cities (in the respective countries). We can organize and take part in festivals (such can be “Varinkoba”/”Suliko” on spring/may and traditional festival “Zestafoni” in autumn/octobre).

It will be helpful if the business-forum will be held for potential investors and interested entrepreneurs in the above-mentioned days (maybe separate), can be organasied business meetings and presentation of various business projects. Also competitions will be held to identify the best local products and honor to carry the name / coat of the Zestafoni municipality ("branding").

The above mentioned activities will promote the awareness of the city, which will significantly increase the number of tourists and make Zestafoni municipality competitive to others. On the other hand, **we should support Zestafoni as one of the main areas of Imereti region and to establish the image of the main economic and cultural center of Upper Imereti.**

7. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis

Strong sides

- One of the most picturesque, unique and recognizable municipalities of Imereti;
- Convenient geographic location / internationally important auto and railway roads, airport /;

Weaknesses

- Insufficient level of decentralization;
- Limitation of budgetary resources of the municipality, lack of own revenue;