

The Iron Curtain Trail as a EuroVelo route – strengths and weaknesses



Results from the EuroVelo study

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The Iron Curtain Trail

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Germany, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia

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EuroVelo study



- A study by the Institute of Transport and Tourism, University of Central Lancashire (UK) & NHTV CSTT (NL)
- Requested and funded by the EP's Committee on Transport and Tourism
- Key aims:
 1. Determine the current scale and scope of cycle tourism in Europe
 2. Evaluate the extent to which EuroVelo can be developed as a sustainable tourism network
 3. Investigate the potential of the Iron Curtain Trail



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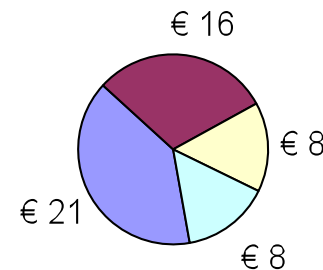


Estimating demand and economic impact



- Demand model: number of cycle tourists dependent on bed density in NUTS 3 regions; number of day cyclists dependent on population density in NUTS 3 regions
- Economic impact estimated by using weighted averages of (daily) spending (12 national & regional studies)
- Cycle tourists spend €53 per day on average, divided over →
- Cycle tourists spend € 353 per trip on average
- Day excursion cyclists spend almost €16 per day on average
 - 60-75% on food & drinks

Daily spending cycle tourists



European cycle tourism



- European cycle tourism estimates (per year):
 - 2.8 billion cycle tourism trips in Europe
 - 25,6 million overnight trips = 3% of total tourist trips by EU population
 - Total economic impact of €54 billion
- EuroVelo potential – if network is developed:
 - Estimated 12.5 million holiday trips per year
 - Estimated 33.3 million day excursions per year
 - Potential total direct revenue of almost €5 billion per year



Potential Iron Curtain Trail



- If developed as a part of the EuroVelo network:
 - 849,000 holiday trips per year
 - 3,3 million day excursions per year
 - €355 million in direct revenues per year
- Uneven distribution due to:
 - Distance of ICT per country
 - Large variations in touristic infrastructure (bed density) & population density
- Not possible to estimate the source markets for the ICT, but main cycle tourism markets (D, NL, DK) will be important



Potential ICT per country



Country	Dist Km	Holiday trips		Day excursion		Total	
		Trips	Rev. (mill. €)	Trips	Rev. (mill. €)	Trip days	Rev. (mill. €)
Germany	1098	372.000	132	944.000	15	3.400.000	147
Czech	506	75.000	26	161.000	3	652.000	29

For other countries estimates still need to be calculated, based on current route in ICT-Bikeline guide. Dependent on:

- Number of holiday trips (tourists) will be high where there is a high bed density
- Number of day cyclists (mainly locals) will be high where there is a high population density
- **Updated estimates can/will be mailed to workshop participants!**



Strengths & Opportunities

- Cycle tourism can be an ideal form of slow travel with a minimal ecological impact, while retaining local economic impacts
- ICT can generate additional tourism in underdeveloped regional economies
- Strong historic, cultural and natural appeal with insight into both East and West → unique cycle route worldwide
- Large settlements along the route provide cyclists, heritage and good rail, coach and ferry connections
- As part of the EuroVelo network the ICT can benefit from managerial experience of route development
- Support by European Parliament!
- Positive effects on local quality of life – additional opportunity for physical recreation and better health



Weaknesses & Threats

- Northern and southern extremes of the ICT have a low population density, so demand will be unevenly distributed → higher demand in the central part!
- Uneven tourism infrastructure along the route
- Currently no management framework for the project
- Lack of cooperation between various ICT projects would be a threat
- Financial resources and investments may be small
- Marketing long-haul markets (e.g. to remote areas) can eliminate the positive ecological advantage of cycle tourism due to high air travel emissions
- Many competing sustainable tourism projects in Europe



Generating added value



- Stakeholder involvement = more than tourism: integrating interfacing sectors like tourism, sport, transport & local economy increases visibility and functioning
- Encourage both local and cross-border cooperation → profit from local and cross-cultural knowledge
- Strong ties with local communities can substantially increase local use of the route and increase both economic impacts and local well-being
- Develop other sustainable tourism opportunities along the ICT (e.g. cultural heritage & nature conservation)
- Encourage cycle tourists that prefer local food and accommodation - it stimulates local supply chains
- Northern section could be marketed as wilderness tourism
- ➔ **Make use of best-practice cases (e.g. in EuroVelo report) – no need to re-invent the wheel**





The author in the Harz mountains, 1988

Thank you for your attention!

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