

Title of the project: *EuroVelo 13 – Iron Curtain Trail Experience*

Acronym of the project: *ICTE*

Project duration and start date: *18 months, started on 18/09/2015*

Short description of project

The mission of EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail (EV13) is to experience the history of Europe by bike. The route leads from the Barents Sea to the Black Sea and is more than 10,400 km long (approximately 8,800 km of which is inside the EU and 1,600 km is located outside).

EV13 was officially made part of EuroVelo, the European cycle route network, in 2011. This network of high-quality cycling routes linking all countries in Europe can be used by long-distance cycle tourists, as well as by local people making daily journeys or leisure trips.

The project's main outputs are:

- **Manual on the EV13-ICTE** – A common communication and promotional transnational strategy for the route will be presented in a new manual, which can be used by relevant SMEs; national, regional and local authorities; and cycling NGOs and other stakeholders working on the route.
- **Publication of the GPS tracking and mapping** – To ensure a trustworthy source for online mapping data and the existence of GPS tracks can be a major attraction for potential visitors.
- **Professional photos along the route**
- **Promotional video on the ICT**
- **Experience based application for e-devices**
- **Reward system for users who complete all or a major section of the route** – A 'pilgrims passport' can encourage visitors to pay repeat visits to other sections of the route.
- **Long term management agreements** – To ensure the ongoing sustainability of all the actions.

Main objectives:

The main objective of the project is to diversify the European tourism offer and to contribute to economic regeneration and job creation in declining (post) industrial regions through the promotion of a touristic product based on a long distance cycle route following the former 'Iron Curtain'.

Specific objectives are:

- **Design of tourism strategies** - the current project will bring together stakeholders from 8 countries in the most developed sections of the route (Latvia, Poland, Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary) in order to improve the promotion of this touristic product with a common communication and promotional strategy.
- **Promoting tourism in regions in conversion in order to boost employment and growth** - cycling tourism is one of the largest growing segments of the tourism sector, generating 2.3 billion cycle tourism day trips every year in Europe. All of the regions that the route passes through are located on the former Iron Curtain and therefore saw little development over a 50 year period. Promoting EV13 as a long distance cycle route will therefore help to bring in an alternative source of income for these regions in conversion.
- **Diversification of the European tourism offer** - EV13 brings to life a unique part of Europe's heritage (division and unification) and consequently acts as a reminder of the Cold War as well as the achievements of the new democratic order in Europe. The use of this

history and 'brand' will be highly attractive in transnational tourism markets if promoted and communicated effectively, particularly because cycling itself is closely associated with Europe.

- **Facilitate and stimulate public-private partnership and the integration of enterprises of the cultural tourism sector into regional development strategies** - with the consortium containing both public authorities and private organisations the project will facilitate and stimulate the creation of public-private partnerships, particularly through the creation of a long-term management system designed to maintain the project outputs after the project finishes in September 2016. In addition, the partners from the public sector will be encouraged to help integrate enterprises related to EV13 into relevant regional development strategies.
- **Improve the quality of the European tourism offer by strengthened cross-border cooperation** - by focusing on the most developed sections of EV13, the project will bring together those partners that are ready to focus on improving the quality of the promotion and marketing of the route. As all but one of the countries involved are geographically connected, strengthened cross-border cooperation will help to achieve this objective.
- **Strengthen the management skills of public and private bodies in charge of developing thematic tourism products.** - during the project the public and private sector partners will be supported in developing the necessary management skills to ensure the successful realisation of the promotion and marketing tools needed for EV13.

Lead partner/coordinator:

Nyugat-Pannon Nonprofit Kft. (Hungary)

Partners:

Vidzemes Turisma Asociacija (Latvia)
European Cyclists Federation (Belgium)
Polska Organizacja Turystyczna (Poland)
Ekopolis Foundation (Slovakia)
Radlobby AT (Austria)
Jankó Kerékpáros Csapata Bt. (Hungary)
Nadace Partnerství CDV (Czech Republic)
Camping Apalkalns (Latvia)

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