

Newsletter 3 - 06/2014

Iron Curtain Trail “Sustainable mobility along the newest EuroVelo route, the Iron Curtain Trail”, South East Europe Programme



Iron Curtain Trail project events

- Study Tour in the Greek part

The Iron Curtain Trail project **study tour in the Greek part** was organised by ANTIGONE-Information and Documentation Center on Racism, Ecology, Peace and Non Violence (ERDF PP6, Greece) on Saturday, **March 30th 2014**. Cyclists organisations, tourist agencies and transportation services representatives, as well as independent cyclists and other stakeholders, all participated in the event that took place in the region south of the Greek Bulgarian part of EuroVelo 13 cycling route close to Kerkini Lake.

The study tour started early in the morning with all participant cyclists gathering at the Railway Station of Thessaloniki. After having loaded their bicycles to the train compartment, cyclists boarded on the train to Vironeia. In Vironeia, they also met other participants interested to the study tour, who had combined the study tour with an overnight stay and had spent the previous night in cyclists friendly accommodations at Strimonas area. ANTIGONE 's study tour was along the Iron Curtain Trail (EuroVelo 13) Greek cycling route, from the Roupel Fort and the thermal baths of Agistro and Sidirokastro regions. There, cyclists had the opportunity to participate in a number of activities.

Giorgos Farfaras, the representative of ANTIGONE for Iron Curtain Trail activities, presented the project to all participants. He informed on EuroVelo 13 cycling route that extends from the Barents Sea until the Black Sea following the historical former Iron Curtain Trail. He

stressed the attention to the fact that under the framework of Iron Curtain Trail project activities, tourist packages related to sustainable combined transports, accommodations, food services as well as visitors, specific points of interest can be supported and promoted. As far as it concerns the Greek part of Iron Curtain Trail cycling route in particular, ANTIGONE has started a fruitful collaboration with Dr. Nikolaos Athanasopoulos, the Strategic Planning Senior Adviser of the Greek train company TRAINOSE, in collaboration with whom the plan is to organise an upcoming sustainable mobility and cycling event along the EuroVelo 13 cycling route during July 2014.

More information in relation to the study tour are available in the following links:

<http://www.antigone.gr/en/projects/project/1/description/>

<http://ict13gr.blogspot.gr/>

- Study Tour in the Slovak part

The **study tour** of Iron Curtain Trail in the **Slovak section** was organised by Ekopolis Foundation (ERDF PP2) in Bratislava region along the EuroVelo 13 Iron Curtain Trail cycling route on Friday, **April 25th 2014**.

26 participants from Hungary, Austria, Czech republic and Slovakia, all representatives of project partners, stakeholders of various resorts, regional development agencies, public transportation companies, private businesses, transportation agencies as well as other NGOs, started their 46 km. cycling trip along Iron Curtain Trail section from Zahorska Ves to Bratislava. During the study tour, participants made a number of stops related



to various aspects of sustainable transportation and trail management, trail marking and signposting, ownership and



maintenance, services and businesses along the trail, obstacles and problems concerning trail development, the EuroVelo network, as well as the natural heritage and its protection, the main industries of the region, the new Cyclebridge of Freedom, the history of the region and other topics.

- Study Tour in the Slovenian part

On Monday, **May 19th 2014**, around 30 cyclists from 6 countries participated in the study tour of Iron Curtain Trail project organised by Regional Development Agency Mura Ltd **in the Slovenian part of the route** (ERDF PP4, Slovenia). Participants gathered in Pomurje region to begin their trip along the Slovenian section of EuroVelo 13 cycling route.

Iron Curtain Trail project partners and regional stakeholders started their cycling from Hodos, a small village next to Slovenian Hungarian border and visited Iron Curtain Trail guarding tower. Project activities and further planning were presented by the organisation to Hodos Municipality representatives as well as other participant stakeholders.

Next stops were the beautiful rural area of Pomurje and Casar's mill where local providers presented to the participants their experiences concerning combined sustainable transportation and cycling related tourist services. The study tour continued to Bukovnica lake where Mr. Igor Soltes, Slovenian EU Parliament member representative, welcomed and informed the participants on the well developed regional tourist spot.

The 36 km. cycling trip ended at Tesanovci where participants shared experiences and information regarding cycling connected transportation options, sustainable mobility as well as regional and tourism development actions and relevant potential

partnerships.



- Study Tour and Promotional Workshop in the Romanian part

The National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism

(ERDF PP11, Romania) organised a **National Awareness Raising and Promotional Workshop** in Orșova, the Mehedinți county, on **Thursday 19th June 2014**. The workshop was followed on **20th June** by a **study tour** along the Orșova – Eșelnița – Dubova route.

The purpose of this workshop was to share information and raise awareness of the relevant target groups (central, regional and local authorities, regional development agencies, associations and organisations, private companies, universities, etc. with an active role in the development and promoting of sustainable transport and cycle tourism in Romania) about the growing importance of bicycle tourism, its benefits and regional economic impact, as well as the importance of developing the Iron Curtain Trail – Eurovelo 13.

The workshop included presentations and interactive discussions on the following topics: Romanian National Cycle Route Network, signposting/marketing system in Romania, cycling tourism in Romania - best practices, services available, sustainable public transport connections, Iron Curtain Trail – EuroVelo 13 - project target, objectives, activities, expected results, etc.

The study tour included:

- 30 km of medium difficulty cycling from Orșova to Dubova.

- visit to the main objectives along the route: the Decebal Statue, the Mraconia Monastery, "Cazanele Mari" (the Big Gorges) and "Cazanele Mici" (the Small Gorges).

- boat visit (the Veterani and Poncova Caves, Tabula

Traiana).

- Upcoming event for the Hungarian - Austrian section of Iron Curtain Trail



Austrian-Hungarian border section of the Trail will be officially opened on 19th August 2014, the 25th anniversary of the

Paneuropean Picnic, a symbolic event for the fall of the Iron Curtain.

This event will be followed by an international cycling trip and festival organised by the Hungarian Cycling Alliance (ERDF PP3, Hungary). The trail mostly follows low traffic asphalted public roads along the old Iron Curtain, passing the Austrian-Hungarian borders several times. The cycling trip is sponsored by the South East Europe Program within the ICT-project and the local railway company GYSEV Zrt.

The trip will start from two destinations on the morning of 19th August 2014: Sopron, Hungary, and Letenye, Hungary, near the Croatian-Slovenian-Hungarian border meeting point. The two groups will cycle two days on the new EuroVelo trail, and meet in Szentgotthárd on the 20th August, where they celebrate the opening of the trail with a party.

More information available in the following links:

<http://kmsz.hu/eurovelo13-opening-tour-for-the-hungarian-austrian-section/>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/EuroVelo13-ATHU-opening-tour/1455171044727202?fref=ts>



Iron Curtain Trail project promotional workshops and trainings

- Training in Szombathely, Hungary

Hungarian Cyclists Alliance (ERDF PP3, Hungary) in collaboration with West Pannon Regional and Economic Development Nonprofit Ltd (LP, Hungary) held a training at Szombathely, Hungary, on November 29th, with the participation of local and regional stakeholders (LEADER groups, TDM members, public transport companies, local municipalities and others).

After a detailed introduction on the itinerary and status of the Hungarian Austrian section of Iron Curtain Trail cycling route, the training included sessions on local and regional action plans, funding and development possibilities for the period 2014-2020 as well as awareness raising on cycling tourism and development of cycling in cities and towns.



- Workshop in Eisenstadt, Austria

Land Burgenland (PP1, Austria) organised a workshop on sustainable mobility offers in tourism in Eisenstadt, Austria, on November 6th. The participants of the workshop discussed with regional touristic stakeholders on the developments of Iron Curtain Trail projects as well as on further common activities.

After having discussed about the itinerary at the Austrian-Hungarian section of Iron Curtain Trail route, the participants worked on signposting, positioning information panels on touristic and historical hot spots

etc. In the workshop, it was decided that Iron Curtain Trail route would be included into the touristic bike routes network based on "Burgenland Tourismus" marketing tools. Furthermore, participant stakeholders decided on three projects that should be further developed within the framework of Iron Curtain Trail project.

project partners.

The points discussed by the group of participants were the following:

West Pannon (LP, Hungary) planning of the elaboration of a cross border touristic package based on GIS application that will include attractions, accommodations, cycling friendly services and sustainable transport offers.

Land Burgenland (ERDF PP1, Austria) presentation of existing sustainable tourism and combined transport offers in the area, their strong and weak aspects, and tasks for the development of offers in the framework of Iron Curtain Trail project.

Workshop's presentations and information on the Austrian-Hungarian section of the route are available in the Iron Curtain Trail official website in the following link:

<http://www.ict13.eu/news/cross-border-iron-curtain-trail-workshop-in-szombathely-on-sustainable-offers-in-transport-and-tourism---region-at-hu-souther-part>

Information on past Iron Curtain Trail promotional trainings / workshops are available in project newsletter II, in the official project website as well as in partners' national sub-sites and blogs created for Iron Curtain Trail project.



- Training in Lenti, Hungary

Local and regional stakeholders from regions of Hungary, on December 11th 2013, participated in another training organised by Hungarian Cyclists Alliance (ERDF PP3, Hungary) in collaboration with West Pannon Regional and Economic Development Nonprofit Ltd (LP, Hungary).

The content of the training concerned the itinerary and status of both the Hungarian-Austrian and the Hungarian-Slovenian parts of Iron Curtain Trail route while the participants also discussed on funding possibilities, existing and upcoming action plans, promotion and development of cycling in various regions etc.

- Workshop in Szombathely, Hungary

On Tuesday, March 11th 2014, a cross border workshop on Iron Curtain Trail project activities under Work Package 4 -Sustainable offers in transport and tourism- took place in Szombathely, Hungary with the participation of representatives of transport providers, tourist organisations, local municipalities and



5th Iron Curtain Trail project partners meeting in Grad, Slovenia

The partners of Iron Curtain Trail project held their 5th project meeting on **May 20th 2014 in Grad, Slovenia**. All participants discussed the progress of the project

activities and coordinated their future steps under the framework of ICT project.

In the meeting, national surveys of the route and national action plans were presented per partner while the first steps for the creation of the transnational action plan were set. Partners presented and discussed their national sustainable tourism and transport offers while they fixed the dates and activities of upcoming promotional events and study tours. All partners activities were discussed per work package with special consideration being given to the completion of the communication plan, EuroVelo websites and portals.

As far as it concerns project communication activities, partners were engaged to keep on updating ICT official website with information on relevant activities.

Under the framework of the meeting, ICT partners also discussed their further steps concerning the evaluation of the project outcomes, the monitoring of the running activities as well as the follow up activities that are to be organised with the completion of Iron Curtain Trail project.

As far as it concerns the next partners meeting and Final Conference, both are going to be held in Hungary (Croatian border area) on September 2014.

An additional meeting for the purposes of ICT project between the project work package leaders was held in Tesanovci village in Slovenia, on May 19th 2014.

Iron Curtain Trail leaflet

The leaflets describe the context, the goals and the activities of the project in partners' national languages and are all downloadable in PDF at the address:

<http://www.ict13.eu/publication/other-publications>

Iron Curtain Trail project subsites / blogs in partners' national languages

In Hungarian language:

[by West Pannon Regional and Economic Development Nonprofit Ltd \(LP\)](#)

[by Hungarian Cycling Alliance \(ERDF PP3\)](#)

[by South Transdanubian Regional Development Agency Nonprofit Limited Liability Company \(ERDF PP7\)](#)

In German language:

[by Regional Management Burgenland \(ERDF PP1\)](#)

In Slovak language:

[by Ekopolis Foundation \(ERDF PP2\)](#)

In Slovenian language:

[by Regional Development Agency Mura Ltd \(ERDF PP4\)](#)

In Bulgarian language:

[by Bulgarian Cycling Association \(ERDF PP5\)](#)

[by Association of South Western Municipalities \(ERDF PP9\)](#)

[by Bulgarian Association for Alternative Tourism \(ERDF PP10\)](#)

In Greek language:

[by ANTIGONE - Information and Documentation Center on Racism, Ecology, Peace and Non Violence \(ERDF PP6\)](#)
<http://ict13gr.blogspot.gr/>

In Romanian language:

[by National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism \(ERDF PP11\)](#)

In Croatian language:

[by Tourist Authority of Koprivnica \(IPA-I PP4\)](#)



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In Serbian language:

[by Danube Competence Center \(IPA-I PP5\)](#)

