



## Sustainable Transport / Tourism Offers – Template for New Offers

### IPA PP6: Elaboration of the regional tourism facilities and opportunities offered alongside the route

Title:	<b>NATURAL BEAUTIES BIKE TOUR</b>
Partner:	<i>PROMO IDEA - STRUMICA, IPA PP6</i>
Overview	
Country:	<i>Republic of Macedonia (NUTS1)</i>
Region:	<i>Republic of Macedonia (NUTS2)/ East region and South-East region (NUTS3)</i>
Short description:	<i>Cycling tourists who are coming to the East and South-East region of the Republic of Macedonia are offered exciting bike tour for exploring the national beauties alongside the ICT route (natural waterfalls, artificial lake, springs, etc.). This offer includes mini-bus rented by the operator, transport of the tourists from the capital city of Skopje to the main attractions (without access by rail) and their accommodation in the hotels in Berovo and Strumica.</i>
Objectives	<i>To offer the cyclists and cycling tourists exciting bike tour in the area of Maleshevski mountains and Belasica mountain that integrates and facilitates the visit to all natural beauties alongside the route.</i>
Target groups	<i>Cycling tourists from the region of the capital city of Skopje (mainly families and recreational cyclists on weekends) with middle and high income and foreign tourists arriving in Skopje (via bus, rail or plane). Also cycling tourists from Thessaloniki, Greece and its wider region and foreign tourists arriving in Thessaloniki (via bus, rail or plane) are considered.</i>
Phase	<i>The offer is in a conceptual phase. Contacts have been established with hotels in Berovo and Strumica, Cycling clubs as well as with tourist agencies in Skopje and Strumica. The future offer will contain: transportation of the tourists and their bikes by mini-bus to the tourist attractions, luggage transport, bike rental services, accommodation, food and beverages, and tour guide.</i>
Operator, contact	<i>Possible “operators” of the “offer” are the Travel Agency Laguna travel – Strumica and VELOEVROPA – Skopje. Further information: Tourist Agency Laguna travel – Strumica; Mob.: +389 78 291 370; <a href="http://lagunatravel.mk">http://lagunatravel.mk</a></i>



<p>Cost and benefits</p>	<p><i>The rental services (the bus, the trailer, the bikes, the guide), the accommodation and food services will be subcontracted. If we estimate that at the beginning there will be one booked offer in March, April and October, and 2 booked offers per month in the period May - September, the profit in terms of agency provision will be cca 2.200 Euro. The initial investment is estimated at 1.000 Euro for printed materials, renting of stands at 2 events and web hosting and up-dating. This means that the initial investment can be recovered already during the first year. It is therefore worthwhile to consider the option of buying a trailer instead of renting it. Concerning the additional benefits, it is expected that the number of cycling tourists and leisure cyclists will increase as the infrastructure and services along the ICT improve. Besides the estimated profit of the operator, this offer will bring additional profit for the bike rental company, the tourist guides as well as for the hotels and restaurants. In terms of indirect revenue, it brings benefits to the tourist attractions (e.g. archaeological sites, museums, events, etc.) and the possibility to sell complementary products (e.g. local products, souvenirs, etc.).</i></p>
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Marketing Analysis I.	
“Product” - detailed description of the services	<p><i>This package (which will be promoted on the operator’s web site) offers a natural beauties bike experience along the Macedonian sections of the Iron Curtain Trail. The itinerary will last 3 days and will cover almost 170 km. The operator will offer to groups of tourists (minimum 8 persons (e.g. 2 families)) an itinerary who will include:</i></p> <p><i>Day 1: Skopje – Delchevo - Berovo (56,6 km)</i>  <i>Arrival at Skopje airport (optional from the main bus or the central railway station). The operator will organize transfer with minibus from Skopje Airport to the city of Delchevo. In Delchevo the tourists will get their rented bikes. The tour starts with a bicycle drive on the regional road Delchevo – Pehchevo. Accompanied by a local guide the tourists will drive from Pehchevo towards the tourist settlement Ravna reka and will visit Pehchevo waterfalls. From there a gravel mountain road leads towards tourist settlement Ablanica and from there to Berovo along the asphalt road. Accommodation in hotel in Berovo. Dinner. Overnight.</i></p> <p><i>Day 2: Berovo – Berovo Lake - Strumica (76,2 km)</i>  <i>Breakfast in the hotel. The tour continues with a bicycle drive to the Berovo Lake and back where the tourist will have opportunity to enjoy Maleshevski mountains and artificial Berovo Lake. After the lunch in a restaurant the bicycle ride continues along the regional road Berovo – Strumica surrounded by beautiful landscapes of Maleshevo mountains. Arrival in Strumica. Accommodation in hotel in Strumica. Dinner. Overnight.</i></p> <p><i>Day 3: Strumica – waterfalls - Skopje (35,2 km)</i>  <i>Breakfast in the hotel. Bicycle drive on the local asphalt road Kuklish - Svidovica – Bansko. Afterwards the tour continues along the slopes of Belasica mountain paying a visit to Gabrovo and Koleshino waterfalls as well as Mokrino springs and Smolare waterfalls. Sites with natural beauties are marked with road signs. From Smolare waterfalls tourists are transferred to Skopje.</i></p>
“Place” – market analysis	<p><i>This offer will be bookable from March to October when the weather conditions are more favorable. In order for this offer to be profitable for the operator, it is necessary to gather a group of at least 8 cyclists.</i></p>



	<p><i>If the group is eventually bigger, the price will be cheaper. At present the Iron Curtain Trail has not been included in any offers of the Macedonian tour-operators. So, this offer/package can be considered as first of this kind.</i></p>
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Marketing Analysis II.	
Price	<i>We estimate that the price of all services included in the offer is 240 Euro per person, valid for groups of minimum 8 tourists. All entrances are included in the itinerary.</i>
Sales	<i>After analyzing the on-line offer, the tourists can get in touch with the operator by e-mail or phone, in order to express their agreement to purchase the services. The payment can be done via bank transfer after issuing an invoice.</i>
Promotion	<i>It is essential that the offer to be well promoted on-line, in a very attractive manner, both on the operator's website (with updated information and prices), but also at travel fairs (at national and international level) and with printed materials (distributed in the hotels in the East and South-east region in Macedonia and in the capital city of Skopje, in the bike shops, in the tourist info centres, etc.). First, priority should be given to materials available on-line, because they are more quickly accessible and can be more easily updated.</i>



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Implementation plan I.	
Detailed description of the technical solution	<i>The mini-bus must have at least 8 seats + driver, must be equipped with air conditioning, luggage compartment, audio station with microphone, reclining chairs and GPS monitoring system. The trailer must be lightweight (750 kg) and must be equipped with professional bike carriers in order to transport at least 8 bikes. Also, the trailer should offer the possibility to lock the bikes individually and to be able to carry them without touching to avoid damage.</i>
Actions to take	<i>The operator will have to sign collaboration agreements for renting the mini-bus, the bicycle trailer and the bicycles, for the travel guide as well as for the accommodation and food services. The promotional activities are specified as follows:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>- Design, printing and dissemination of printed materials;</i></li> <li><i>- Placing and promoting the offer on the web site of the operator;</i></li> <li><i>- Participation of the operator at the fairs and events in the country and abroad (identifying fairs and events, renting stands, preparing promotional materials, etc.).</i></li> <li><i>- Dissemination of printed materials to the national tourist agency for presentation at international tourism fairs.</i></li> </ul>



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Implementation plan II.	
Costs of development and operation	<p><i>For a tour that lasts 3 days and includes 8 people, the costs are: the mini-bus rental cost is 300 Euro (3 days x 100 Euro), the trailer rental cost is 100 Euro (for 3 days), 8 bicycle rental cost is 360 euro (8 bikes x 3 days x 15 Euro/day), renting a travel guide costs 150 euro (3 days x 50 Euro/day), the accommodation with half board (HB) costs is 576 euro (8 persons x 2 HB x 36 Euro), 2 lunches costs 192 Euro (8 persons x 2 lunches x 12 Euro). The travel agency commission will be 10%.</i></p> <p><i>The costs for the promotion activities are: Printed materials = 38,5 Euro (500 Euro/ 13 tours in the 1<sup>st</sup> year); Placing of the tour on the website of the operator is for free; Renting stands at the fairs costs 30 Euro (400 Euro (2 events x 200 Euro/event)/ 13 tours in the 1<sup>st</sup> year).</i></p>
Time plan for the realization	<p><i>Signing of agreement for cooperation will be in the first two weeks. After that the operator will be place the offer on its website. Printed materials will be designed, printed and disseminated after one month. Afterwards they will be distributed to National Agency for tourism which participates at international tourism fairs. In the first 3 months the operator will promote the offer on at least 2 events.</i></p>
Stakeholders and organisation	<p><i>Main stakeholders will be: Travel Agency Laguna travel - Strumica and VELOEVROPA - Skopje. Local tourist guides, hotels and restaurants will also have an important role to play.</i></p>