



# Lobby Strategy for the EuroVelo13 – Iron Curtain Trail

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## 1. Introduction

This strategy aims to help to project partners of the Iron Curtain Trail Project in efficiently influencing the stakeholders for the opening and developing of the EuroVelo13, the Iron Curtain Trail.

EuroVelo13 is the only EuroVelo route focusing on historical event and historical memory. Lobby activities for this route are extremely important and diverse, as our aim here is not only influencing the infrastructural and touristic development, but exposing the cultural and historical heritage as well.

**Lobbying (definiton):** Lobby activities aim, communicate (and influence), network, maintaine connections, defend negative measures and support advantages within legal frames, in order to to advocate an issue.

The goal of the lobby activity is to influence stakeholders and institutions in the way that they become the „fans“ of the EV13-trails and support and execute all kind of measures – a given program, financial support, measure or law – which are advantageous for the image, accessibility, development of infrastructural or other conditions of the trail.

This lobby strategy aims to give a broad knowledge of tools for the organizations working for EuroVelo13 – but the knowledge of the contents of this document is not sufficient for a successful lobby. A successful lobby can be achieved by choosing the right tools, planned and systematic work and continuous communication.

### What do we want to achieve?

Our goal with the EuroVelo13 cycling trail is that the trail should be safe (accessible), good quality (easily rideable), attractive (full of experiences) and that there should be a detailed informational web page, brochure and map available in every country in more than one language.



## 2. What is lobbying? Who is a good lobbyist?

Lobbying means influencing, mostly the decision-makers. The primary tool for lobby is communication.

It is important to have an ideal vision about the Iron Curtain Trail, which should contain the following:

- an interactive web site, brochure and map with transparent touristic informations;
- the trail is beyond the official, central touristic offers;
- the trail is comfortably cyclable, maintained and safe to ride;
- the trail is accessible from bigger cities with sustainable transport;
- The EV13 trail is included in the tourism development projects and communication of the settlements neighbouring it;
- development of the trail is included in the country and EU development plans;
- there is a cross-border development plan for the trail accepted by both parties;
- the whole trail is signposted;
- both transport and tourism governmental organizations know about the trail;
- the national cycling (EuroVelo) coordinator of the countries knows about and maintains the trail ;
- there is continuous counting of cyclists and other researches along the trail;
- the condition and offers of the cultural institutions and memorial places are good enough for cycling tourists;
- the international methodology is adapted.

A good lobbyist understands what kind of documentation is needed in decision-making institutions of different fields, and works for them, meaning creating documentations most convincing for the institution in question. The lobbyist created the documentation in the way that the activity or tool he is advocating would be the best choice.

Example:

- A. For the transport department of the Ministry of Environment, the lobbyist has to create a documentation stressing that the EuroVelo 13 trail is a perfect tool for promoting sustainable transport. He shows how to combine the public transportation with cyclists' demands, how to promote it, and how much carbon-dioxide would be saved.
- B. A documentation created for the Ministry of Tourism would include how much better guest a cycling tourist is than a tourist riding a car (the cyclist spends more, gets to know more places and has a longer season). Besides, he presents the settlements, points of interests and cultural institutions where the number of tourists would increase by developing and promoting the EuroVelo 13.
- C. The organization dealing with development of infrastructure has to receive detailed maps and trail descriptions, which includes the state of the trail and the desired



situation on every kilometre, also presenting the advantages of the development of the route on transport and accessibility development.

As shown above, all organizations have to receive different documentations from the lobbyist, which shows the interest in a comprehensible way within the system of the given organization.

The lobbyist also recognizes other organizations who can back him and agree his goals, and/or has an interest in the development. Consequently, the main resource of the lobbyist is his network.

A good lobbyist doesn't only speak, but act in the same way as well, he is an authentic person who rides the bicycle as well.

The lobbyist cannot be authentic without the detailed knowledge of the trail. He has to ride through the trail many times, know the neighbouring settlements and points of interest.

A good lobbyist is independent from parties.



### 3. Elaboration

Lobby activities start with mapping the network of the area. The first step towards success is networking. It is good to have a table with our contacts with information beside them (what did they do before and what we would like them to do). Anyone who has an influence on our aim can be a target.

#### 3.1 Organizations and programs of the European Union

Lobbying on the high level of the institutions of the European Union is a whole profession and „industry“. It is not impossible to get into this, but it is more efficient if we leave this to the professionals – this, in our case, is the European Cyclists' Federation. We can become a member of the Bruxelles-based organization, support their lobby with our activities on the national level, and spread, promote and use their lobby documentations at home.

Still, there are some fields of lobbying which are open for a national organization as well, or rather through which you can get into the European scene if you know and know how to use them.

#### Some of these include:

1. The European Parliament

National delegates active in committees related to the topic (transport, environment, tourism)

2. EU Funds

##### a, Directly from the EU

- Trans-European Transport Network and Connecting Europe Facility are resources aiming European accessibility
- Horizon 2020 funds project related to energy efficiency and climate protection
- Erasmus+ (education and trainings)

##### b, Cross-Border and Regional Cooperations

- Interreg and Central Eastern Europe programs (regional cooperations, transport, tourism)

##### c, Cohesion Fund

- in different fields (Operative Programmes)

##### d, Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development

#### 3.2 Fields of Activity and Connection Points on the National Level

As every country has a different system of ministries with different responsibilities, we only collected the most important fields of activity:

1. Environment Protection

- sustainable tourism, national parks, water managements (dams)

2. Development of Infrastructure and Transport



- roads, signposts, intermodality

### 3. Tourism

- cycling tourism, communication

### 4. EU and Cross-Border Cooperation

- accessibility, culture, tourism

### 5. Culture

- Iron Curtain Trail memorial places, cultural experiences

### 6. Education

- presenting the times of the Iron Curtain Trail

### 7. EuroVelo or other national and international cycling coordination

- cooperation in change of information

### 8. Rural Development

- service development (cyclist-friendly services)

- LEADER network

### 9. cooperation with neighbouring countries

## 3.3 Levels and Organizations of Decision-Making:

- Government and Ministries
- Regional authorities
- Municipalities

### Governmental authorities

- E.g. Centre for Transport Coordination

### Government-owned Companies:

- Road management companies, railway companies
- National Parks
- Regional Development Agencies
- tourism offices and agencies

## 3.4 Companies, NGOs and other stakeholders

### Regional organizations:

- Tourism Destination Management or Tourinform-organizations
- Leader-groups, other organizations dealing with rural development

### Companies



- cycle repairers, cycle services
- hotel traders
- accomodations
- local economic initiatives dealing with local brands, local food industry, pottery
- tour operators, health tourism agencies

#### NGOs

- organizations on the national and local level, e.g. TDM Alliance, local cycling associations

#### Media

##### *European level*

- newsletters of ECF and Eurovelo.org

European Greenway Association

##### *National level*

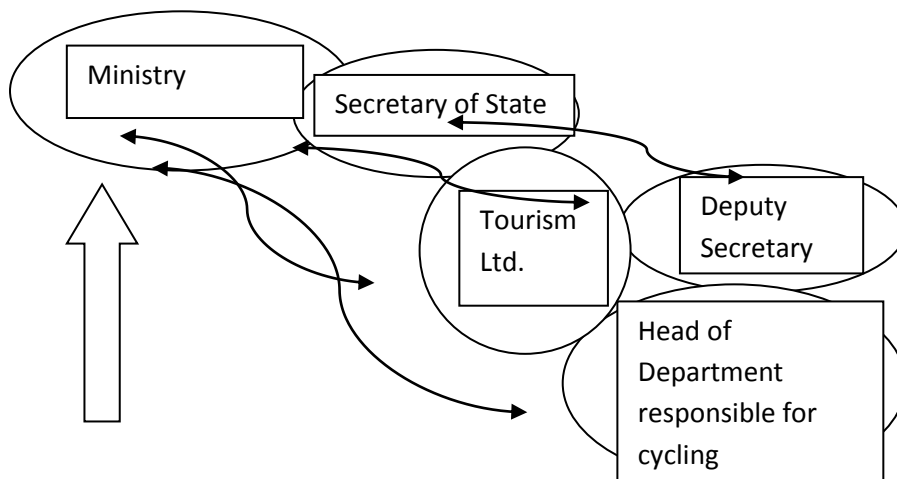
- cycling media (Velo.hu, Bikemag.hu)
- tourism (sustainable-, eco- and health-)
- local media





## 4. The Process of Lobbying

Lobby activities should be planned. It is good to make a „map” of the connections between the relevant organizations.



EV13 Action Plan

The process of the lobby activities should be documented constantly.

### Written documents:

Introduction letter, where we introduce ourselves and our goals: the lobbyist introduces himself and his goals, and asks for a personal meeting. Example:

*XYZ started to design the EV13 – Iron Curtain in 2010 within an international project. EuroVelo trails are the cycling highways of Europe; EuroVelo 13 is the only thematic trail, commemorating the times of the Iron Curtain Trail, and leads from Finland to Turkey. Hungary is very rich in memories of the Iron Curtain Trail, and there are many other cultural, wellness and natural points of interest on the trail attached. We would like to ask the help of ZYX to make the EuroVelo13*

*.....be attractive for more tourists*

*....become part of the regional development plans*

*... be signposted*



...etc.

In the second half of the letter, the lobbyist enumerates the related activities of the organization, and and explains how this connect with the topic.

In the third part of the letter, we raise attention on the documents attached, and ask for a personal meeting.

#### Documents attached:

The lobbyist keeps notes of the documents sent to different organizations. Documents can be as following:

1. EuroVelo13 Action Plan
2. Why do we needEuroVelo13?
3. Maps, printed materials
4. Explanation of previous events, activities and outputs
5. How does the trail connect to other activities of the organization?
6. About the EuroVelo
7. How is the development of the trail going elsewhere?
8. Supporting documents and letters

#### Personal meeting

The most important thing to stress on a personal meeting is the successes the trail has achieved in other countries and on the international level (signposting, promotion, construction, number of users, spending of users, increase of accessibit). Another important task is to convince our future partner that our organization is competent, and has clear and plausible requests from the organization.

It is important to give a good impression, possibly arrive by bicycle and not to occupy our partner for a long time.

The output of a successful meeting is a clear understanding of what our partner needs in order to help us in our goals, and get to know other organizations to contact with. In order to make a good impression, it is advised to arrive by bike, or give a small present related to cycling. Always have a card and always be prepared (map, invitation etc.)

#### Telephone contact

It is advised to stay in contact via phone after meeting in person.



## 5. Tools of Lobbying

All forms of communication can be a tool of lobbying. Here are some examples:

1. Conference, workshop

Regional and national conferences, meetings are very useful for the acknowledgment and promotion of the trail

2. Press, média

Informative articles in the press are important because it increases knowledge about the route and generates more pressure on its development.

3. Professional roundtables

It is worth to have thematic discussions together with organizations and professionals of one specific field.

4. Personal meetings

Personal convincement is always most effective.

5. Letters

Paper-based mailing still has primary importance in certain governmental bodies.

6. Emails

This is the most effective way of keeping in touch.

7. Telephone

Telephone should be used only for reasonable and urgent matters.

8. Social media

We can use this tool to increase the support of the people.

9. Organizing tours

Thematic, hobby, or PR-events.

A lobbyist doesn't use the following tools: demonstraton, protest, other strong communication tools.

10. Events



An event can be a conference, a press release or a cycle trip support and/or opened by a high-level politician, relating to an anniversary or an implemented investment. In Hungary, for example, the Austrian-Hungarian border section of the EuroVelo 13 Iron Curtain Trail was opened on the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain Trail at the Paneuropean Picnic Memorial Site on 19th August 2014.

### 11. Designing Projects

Development of infrastructure, touristic attractions and services should be applied for in the next (2014-2020) period of the European Union fundings, together with other national and regional stakeholders.



## 6. Evaluating the Lobby Activities

The success of the lobby activities can be measured mostly by the publicity and recognition of the trail.

We can measure the success with the following indicators:

How many and what kind of strategic plans and programs have the EuroVelo 13 become part of?

How many and what kind of applications and programs have been written in order to develop the EuroVelo 13 cycling trail?

How many and what kind of professional gatherings and meetings have been conducted?

How many and what kind of cooperation agreements have been signed?

How many and what kind of media appearances were for the trail?

How many and what kind of investments have been made?

How many and what kind of orders or other legal frameworks help the development of the trail?

How many and what kind of conferences and meetings are we invited to (other than those we initiate)?

How many and what kind of promotional and/or touristic packages have been released?

How many municipalities, national parks and other organizations present information about the route?

How many institutions and companies indicate the EuroVelo 13 – Iron Curtain Trail on their own websites, and if they indicate it, what is the form of it?

How many and what kind of services are available?

How many projects, communication, events and meetings have been organized?

How did the user rate change (if there is data available)?

Number of visitors of the website.

Number of project applications submitted.



## 7. Special Fields for the EuroVelo13 Cycling Trail

When developing the EuroVelo 13 – Iron Curtain Trail, one has to consider it as part of a bigger whole. All common methodologies and promotional elements should be adapted.

This is one of the hardest task of the lobbyist, because sometimes he has to work on methodologies which contradict with regulations and/or have never been used before.

Firstly, the EuroVelo 13- Iron Curtain Trail is part of an international system with its own methodologies and corporate design. According to this methodology, there should be a national EuroVelo coordinator not only maintaining the common European page, but the national coordination and communication activities. In those countries where there is a national coordinator, this organization is fulfilling the lobby activities as well. If we aim to lobby for the trail on a local or regional level, we have to first contact the national coordinator (if there is one).

The corporate design of the EuroVelo 13 is similar to the other routes of the EuroVelo system. The design is detailed in a flexible, but easily understandable manual, which you can download from the website of ECF.



The corporate design impacts the signposting as well.



The website Eurovelo.org is maintained by the ECF, where every country information has to be updated regularly.



ECF gives recommendations on the favourable way of maintaining the route. Providers of maintenance can of course be different in different regions and countries. To achieve regular maintenance and corrections is an important and probably the hardest task of the lobbyist.

Useful links:

[www.ecf.org](http://www.ecf.org)

[www.eurovelo.org](http://www.eurovelo.org)

[http://www.aevv-egwa.org/site/hp\\_en.asp](http://www.aevv-egwa.org/site/hp_en.asp)

<http://www.eltis.org/>

[http://ec.europa.eu/transport/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/index_en.htm)

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/index_en.htm)

How the EU works: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VvIPSY\\_Sbfg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VvIPSY_Sbfg)