Cycling as a sustainable way of travelling

-Measuring positive and negative impacts

IRON CURTAIN TRAIL

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Iron Curtain Trail

- Long-distance cycling trail

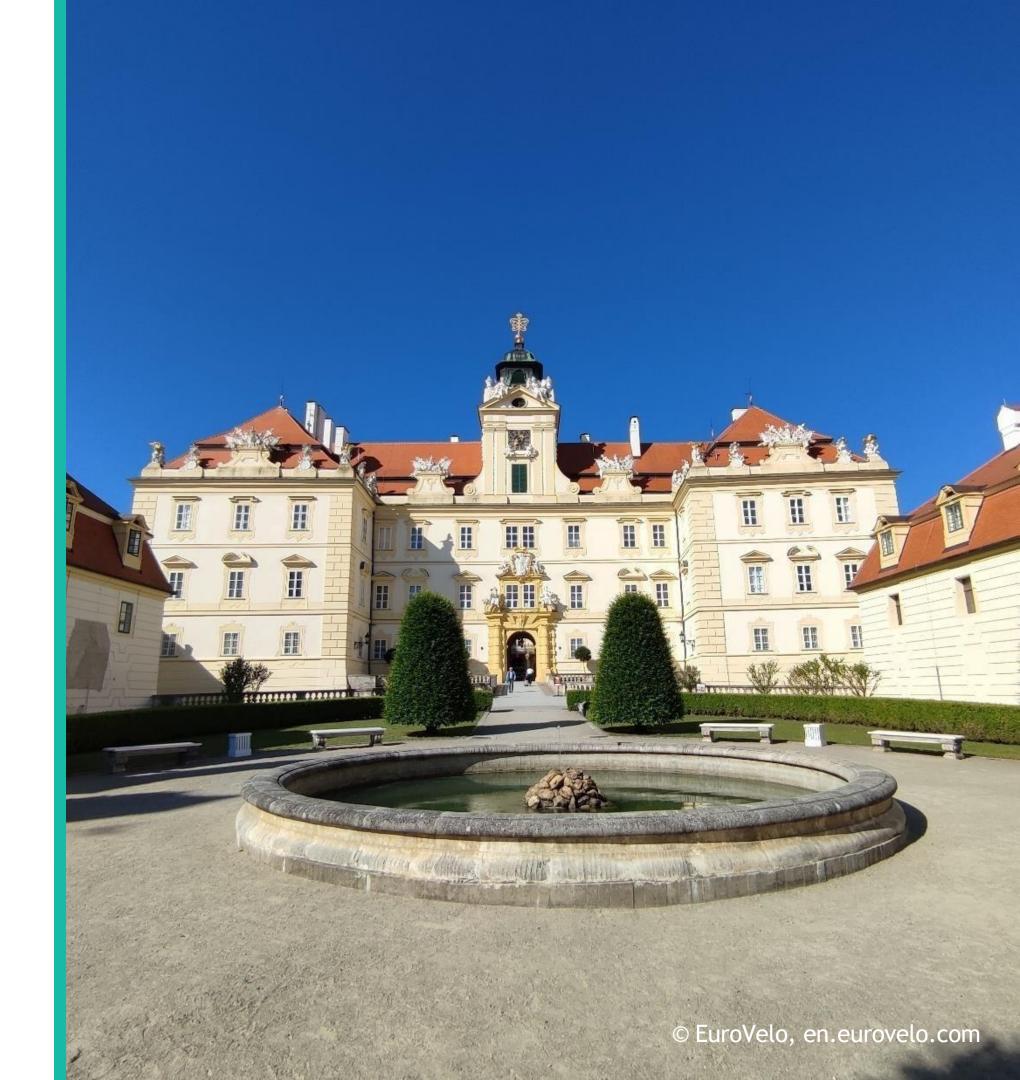- EuroVelo 13 – over 10.000 km long, (3.000 km in the CE region)

- Crosses 20 countries

Rich cultural and natural heritage

- Scenic diverse countryside, national parks, and urban areas

- Remnants of the Iron Curtain

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Cultural Route of the Council of Europe in 2019

14 UNESCO World Heritage Sites along the route

Overlaps with the European Green Belt

- An initiative of the European Union to protect natural heritage and areas such as forests, moors, mountains and river valleys along the former Iron Curtain

- A habitat for many endangered species of flora and fauna

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The ICTr promotes

- Sustainability

- Environmental awareness

- Cross-border cooperation

- Preservation of cultural, historical, and ecological values

ICTr – CE
PROJECT

RECEPTION

ICTr – CE project - Innovative participatory sustainable business model for cycling along the Iron Curtain Trail
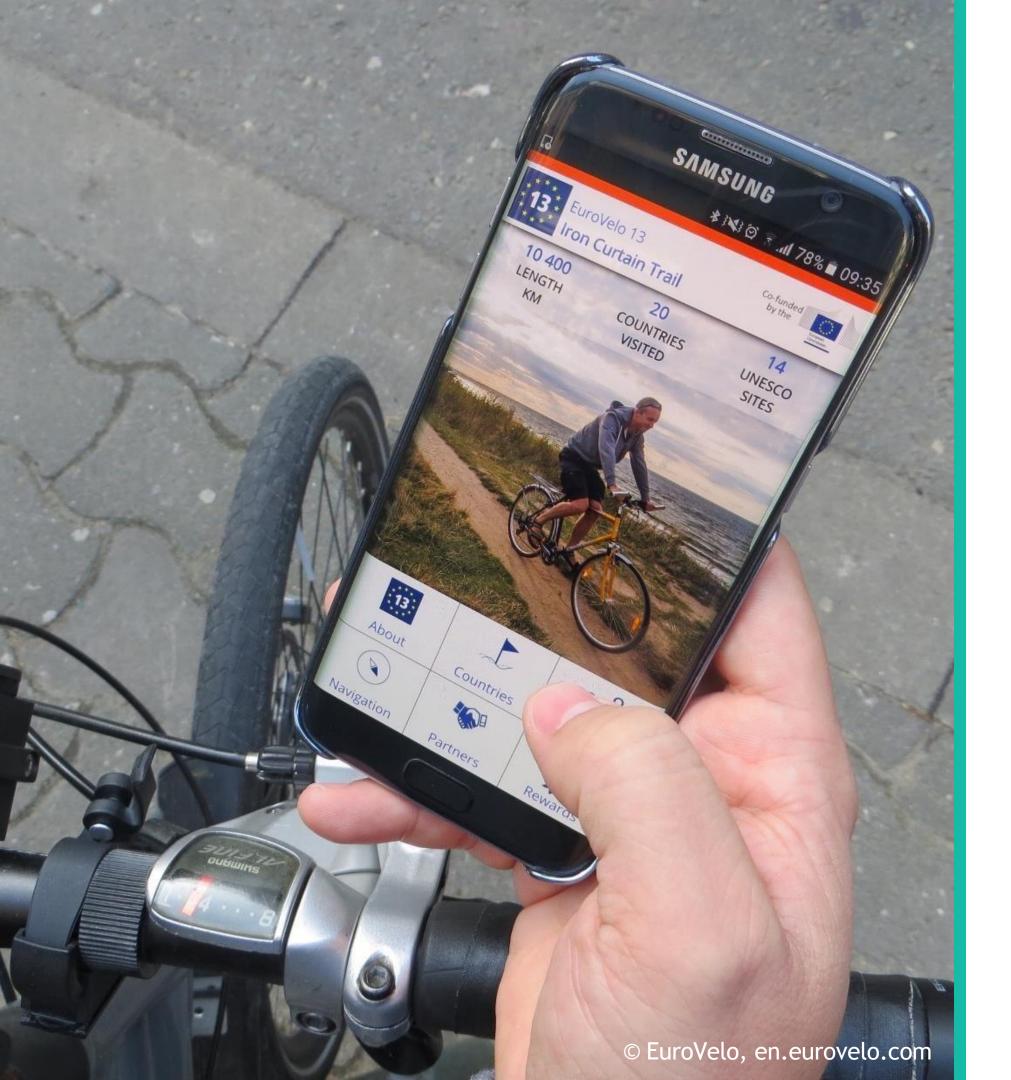
- Duration: 03/2023 – 02/2026 (36 months)
- Project budget: 2,67 M EUR
- 12 Partners from 8 countries (PL, DE, HR, HU, SI, AT, SK, CZ)
- Lead Partner: Westpannon
- Co-funded by the Interreg CentralEurope Programme

Aims of the project

- Develop participatory business model - unite tourism service providers (accommodations, restaurants, attractions, etc.) along ICTr under the Iron Curtain Trail brand (bookability & joint marketing)

- Create and promote unique cycling vacation packages

- Tackle the socio-economic and environmental impacts of the tourism sector

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Aims of the project

- Strengthen local and international partnerships by fostering collaboration among SMEs, tourism boards, and other business support organisations

- Provide training to tourism SMEs to enhance their digital skills and foster co-creation, networking and new tourism offer development

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Benefits for SMEs

- Increased visibility
- Extended tourist season
- Enhanced digital innovation uptake
- Improved collaboration with stakeholders
- Active contribution to sustainable tourism practices aligning with the EU's green transition goals (reducing the negative environmental impact of travel; and increasing its positive societal and ecological contributions)

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Carbon Footprint Calculator - Introduction of Carmacal

CARMACAL

is an innovative, B2B software developed for the tourism sector to help operators accurately measure and manage the carbon footprint of accommodation packages. This tool enables the design of sustainable travel packages, taking into account transport, accommodation and activities
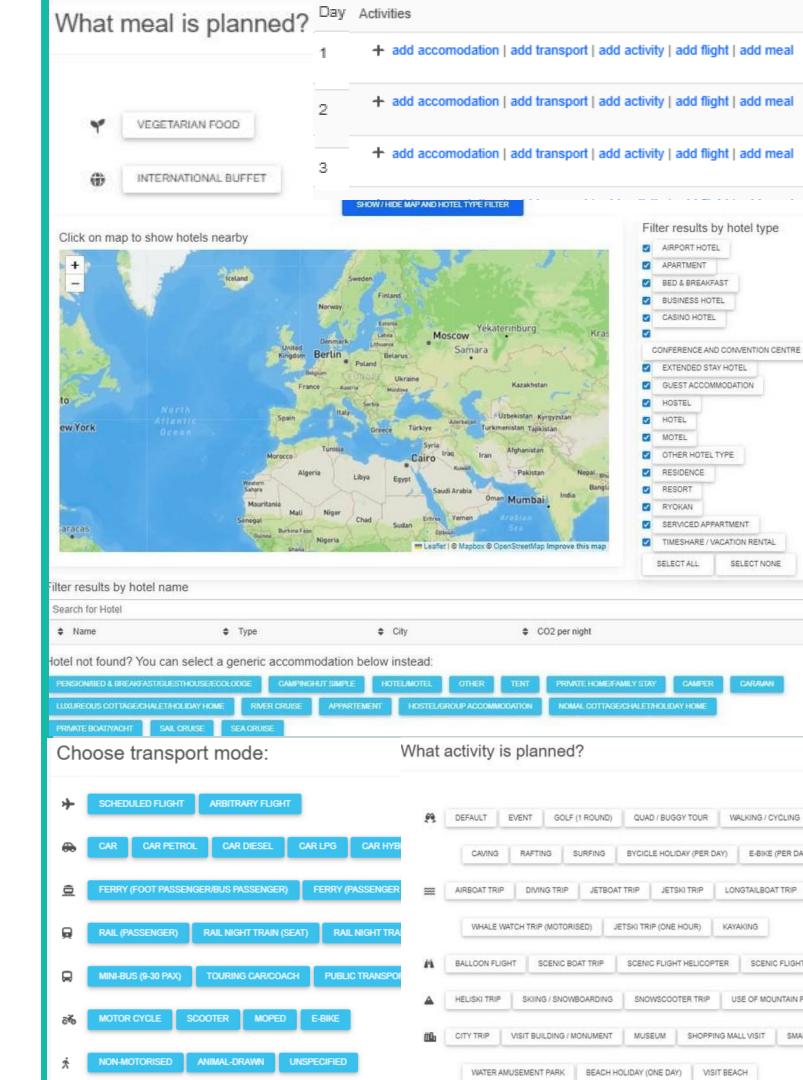
Key Features

Transport: 25 different transport modes can be selected, allowing for more accurate estimates.

Accommodation: includes the carbon footprint of more than 1million accommodation units and allows you to estimate the carbon footprint of accommodation units that are not included in the database.

Activities: provides the carbon footprint of 21 different activities that have the largest impact on CO2 emissions.

Meal: you can choose between "vegetarian meals" (made from whole grains,pulses, fruits and vegetables) and "international cuisine" (more than 8 types of international dishes), which also add their carbon footprint to the calculation

Carbon Footprint Calculator - Use of Carmacal

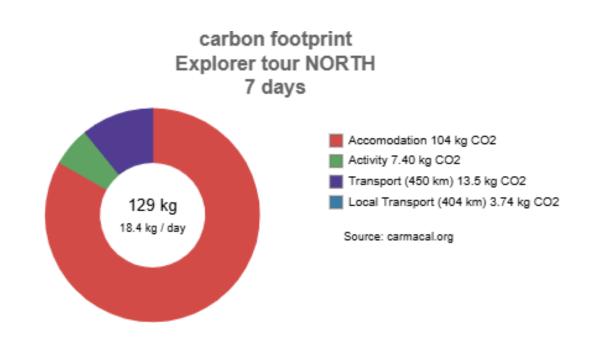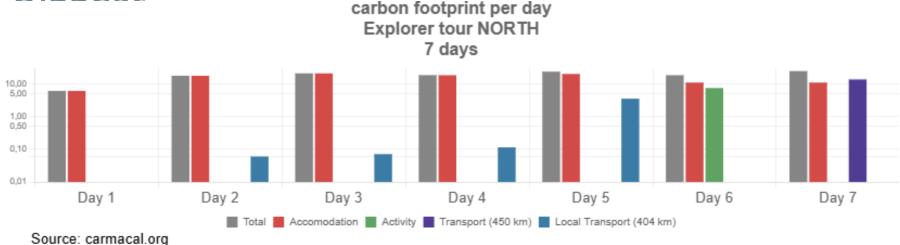**Registration:** to start using it, you need to register on the Carmacal site.

Data entry: Users enter their accommodation package details, including transport, accommodation and activities.

Calculation: the system calculates the total carbon footprint, taking into account all the data entered.

Analysis of results: Users can view a detailed analysis of the carbon footprint, which helps identify the biggest emitters and optimise packages.

Carbon neutrality: Carmacal also helps to achieve carbon neutrality by allowing users to select carbon offset projects.

carbon footprint
Explorer tour NORTH
7 days

129 kg
18.4 kg / day

- Accomodation 104 kg CO2
- Activity 7.40 kg CO2
- Transport (450 km) 13.5 kg CO2
- Local Transport (404 km) 3.74 kg CO2

Source: carmacal.org

carbon footprint per day
Explorer tour NORTH
7 days

Total   Accomodation   Activity   Transport (450 km)   Local Transport (404 km)

Source: carmacal.org

Impact Measurement System

- The Impact Measurement System is designed to evaluate the sustainability of long-distance tourism cycling packages along the ICTr.

- Global Indicators:
    Booking center services
    Accomodation
    Food and beverages
    Transportation on-site and related services
    Activities
    Tour operator / Tour Guide

Booking Center Services

Indicator | Description

The booking centre holds relevant certifications such as ISO, EMAS, or other internationally recognised standards for quality and environmental management.

The booking centre and/or tour operator selling the package is certified by recognised standards, that meet high sustainability criteria.

Accommodation

Indicator | Description

The tour includes, as much as possible, and based on availability, accommodations that are certified or labelled for sustainability, focusing on e.g. energy efficiency, waste reduction, and water conservation.

The tour package includes service providers, such as accommodations, that are locally owned and operated.

Accommodations included in the tour have been certified, recognised or demonstrate adherence to fair labour practices.

Accommodations selected demonstrate a commitment to inclusivity, providing accessibility features for participants of diverse ages, abilities, genders, and ethnicities. This includes integrating wheelchair-accessible facilities, gender-neutral accommodations, and culturally sensitive programming.

The accommodation predominantly employs staff and contractors from local communities.

Food and Beverages

Indicator | Description

Selected accommodations provide plastic-free bottles, crockery, and cutlery.

Meals at the accommodations offer options including vegetarian, vegan, non-vegetarian, combo choices, gluten-free, and lactose-free diets.

The tour package incorporates food from local producers to support local economies and reduce carbon emissions.

Transportation on-site and related services

Indicator | Description

The tour includes bicycles that are regularly maintained and inspected for safety.

The tour operator provides reusable bottles or encourages participants to use their own to minimise single - use plastics.

If the tour operator offers personal or luggage transportation options other than public transit then only by
battery electric vehicles (BEV) to minimise environmental impact.

Activities

Indicator | Description

The tour itinerary includes cultural exchange activities hosted by local communities, facilitating
interactions between tour participants and local residents.

The tour includes activities that support heritage preservation along the cycling route.

The cycling package includes initiatives that contribute directly to the economic well-being of local communities.

The cycling package incorporates measures to preserve and promote local cultural heritage, traditions, and practices.

The tour considers traffic conditions along selected routes, prioritising quieter roads or dedicated cycling paths to enhance safety.

The tour packages ensure access to emergency services along the routes, including medical assistance and support in case of accidents or emergencies.

Tour Operator / Tour Guide

Indicator | Description

The tour predominantly employs staff and contractors from local communities.

Tour operators included in the tour have been certified, recognised or demonstrate adherence to fair labour practices.

Tour guides provide cultural orientation sessions to participants, emphasising respect for local cultures, traditions, heritage, and specific Iron Curtain-related sights and stories.

The tour package includes guides certified in first aid, capable of responding to medical emergencies.

Guides are either locals or possess knowledge about local regulations and customs, enhancing the authenticity and safety of the tour experience. The tour includes bicycles that are regularly maintained and inspected for safety.

Good Impact Programme

Grant scheme for reducing the negative environmental, social, and economic impacts of cycle tourism on nature and society along the route.

Client pays additional surcharge to the price, based on the Carbom footprint calculator and Impact Measurement System

Collected funds are delivered to civic organizations and communities along the route to support project focused on migitation of negatove impacts of cycle tourism.

Tree planting

Local product chains

Route bypasses

Heritage interpretation

Defrag prevention

Awareness raising

Traffic calming

User conflict prevention

Support of local culture

Support of locally owned SME

… and more