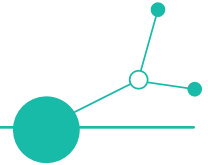


D1.3.2

ICTr Explorer Promotion tours for different target groups



Final Version

12/2025





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D1.3.2

ICTr Explorer Promotion tours for different target groups



1. About the document D1.3.2

This document is developed in the frame of WP 1 “Developing innovative ICTr cycling product and participatory digital tourism business model”, of the Innovative participatory sustainable business model for cycling along the Iron Curtain Trail - ICTr-CE, CE0100401 - project, funded by the INTERREG Central Europe programme.

Within WP1 we jointly developed and tested with the regional partners the innovative participatory business model and the ICTr cycling product in the three designated Pilot Areas North, Center and South based on digital information management system with instant booking functionality.

In course of the cross-border **ICTr Explorer promotion tours** we presented the already tested ICTr product to **different target groups** such as **power-user audience of cycling fans** and **the niche and special-interest tourism media** to accompany the launch of the ICTr product and the conceptualised business model. All in all, the following ICTr Explorer Promotion tours took place in the Pilot Areas

- **Pilot Area North: ICTr Explorer Promotion tour covered by PP7 Westpomeranian Region**
Date: 14th of September 2024 to 21st of September 2024
- **Pilot Area North: ICTr Explorer Promotion tour covered by PP8 City of Gdansk**
Date: 07th of April 2025 to 11th of April 2025
- **Pilot Area Center: ICTr Explorer Promotion tour covered by PP6 Partnerstvi**
Date: 08th of June 2024 to 15th June 2024
- **Pilot Area South: ICTr Explorer Promotion tour covered by LP Westpannon**
Date: 27th of August 2024 to 02nd of September 2024

The aim of these ICTr Explorer promotional tours was to promote the Iron Curtain Trail in general and to gather feedback on the itinerary and route conditions along the route. To collect feedback from the target groups, a print-format evaluation form was developed in collaboration with regional partners.

WP1 “Developing innovative ICTr cycling product and participatory digital tourism business model” is strongly linked with WP2 “Creating impact measurement system for climate neutral travel”. Based on the ICTr cycling product the digital tools (“environmental footprint calculator” and the “impact measurement system”) were jointly developed. The reason for this lies in the integrative design of the innovative ICTr cycling product. It is the firm goal and central cornerstone of the Innovative ICTr Cycling Product to link the bookable offers for cycling tours along EuroVelo 13 with the innovative tools demonstrating their sustainability. These tools include the online Carbon Footprint Calculator Carmacal and the specially developed Impact Measurement System (IMS) created as part of this project.

In applies to the chosen methodology - see D2.4.1. “Design of the pilot testing of the environmental footprint calculator and impact measurement system”, the innovative ICTr cycling product was tested within the “Guided Explorer tours” in the Pilot Area Center and South. The “Guided Explorer Tour” was organized by the selected booking centers (supervised by PP5 Trail Angels) to test the cross-border ICTr cycling product, the whole booking process, and the innovative digital tools:

- **Pilot Area Center: Guided explorer tour**
Date: 15th of September 2025 to 21st of September 2025
Booking Center: AktivBike Radreisen



- **Pilot Area South: Guided Explorer tour**
Date: 03rd of October 2025 to 07th of October 2025
Booking Center: Helian NaTour Ltd.

The primary **target group** for the “**Guided Explorer Tours**” consisted of invited **real guests and cycling enthusiasts**

An evaluation form for the ICTr experience design was created in collaboration with regional partners to assess the product’s user experience. The form was prepared in advance of the online meetings held in each Pilot Area and was subsequently digitised using Google Forms. The digital version was then distributed to travellers by the ICTr booking centres to fill out. The questions to the evaluation form you see under the chapter 8 Annexes, b Questions to ICTr Experience Design.

The aim of this document D1.3.2 “ICTr explorer Promotion tours for different target groups” is to give a comprehensive overview about the pilot testing for different target groups such as power-user audience, special interest tourism media and real guests in the framework of Work Package 1 and Work Package 2 based on the application form.



2. Pilot Area North: ICTr Explorer Promotion, cross-border

Covered Pilot AREA: Pilot Area North (PL, DE)

Type of test users: 4 x power-user audience
5 x special-interest tourism media

Date and duration of
ICTr Explorer Promotion tour:
14th of September 2024 to 21st of September 2024

Route: Wolgast (DE) to Ustka (PL)

Name of participants:

- Magda - special-interest tourism media
- Bartek - special-interest tourism media
- Sylwia - power-user audience
- Wanda - power-user audience
- Rudi - special-interest tourism media
- Janusz - power-user audience
- Roman - special-interest tourism media
- Ola - power-user audience
- Rafał - special-interest tourism media

Partners involved

Responsible partner: PP7 Westpomeranian Region

Supporting partner: PP12 OETE
PP8 City of Gdansk



Itinerary stage by stage

DATE	STAGE STARTING POINT	STAGE END POINT	DISTANCE
14 TH of Sept. 24	Arrival		
15 th of Sept. 24	Wolgast (DE)	Swinoujscie (PL)	50 km
16 th of Sept. 24	Świnoujście (PL)	Pobierowo (PL)	70 km
17 th of Sept. 24	Pobierowo (PL)	Kołobrzeg (PL)	52 km
18 th of Sept. 24	Kołobrzeg (PL)	Mielno (PL)	40 km
19 th of Sept. 24	Mielno (PL)	Darłowo (PL)	38 km
20 th of Sept. 24	Darłowo (PL)	Ustka (PL)	38 km
21 th of Sept. 24	Departure		

Impressions ICTr Explorer Promotion tour







Feedback to the ICTr Explorer Promotion tour, cross-border in the Pilot Area North

1. Overall Ratings

Scale: 1 = Poor | 5 = Excellent

Category	Average Rating
Overall travel program	4.9
Trail maintenance	4.9
Signposting (EuroVelo13)	4.9
Scenery of landscape	5.0
Accommodation & boarding quality	5.0
POIs and border stories	4.9
Additional experience program	4.8
Guide	4.9
Cycling-friendly stops (refreshments)	5.0
Overall organization	5.0

Observation: Ratings are consistently high, with most categories scoring between “Good” and “Excellent.” Scenery, accommodation, and organization achieved perfect scores.

2. Recommendation

- 100% of participants would recommend the tour to friends and family.
- Common reasons:
 - Safe conditions and excellent signage
 - Picturesque and culturally enriching route
 - Well-organized program with good services

3. Improvement Suggestions

- Include more flexibility in the schedule to allow leisure time.
- Add a rule requiring participants to carry spare parts for their bicycles.
- Consider cheaper accommodation options for less demanding travelers.
- Introduce additional points of interest and small attractions along the route.
- Explore program variations for different traveler profiles.

4. Key Strengths

- High-quality accommodation and boarding.
- Scenic landscapes and cultural experiences.
- Strong organization and safety measures.
- Positive perception of guides and support services.



3. Pilot Area North: ICTr Explorer Promotion tour, Poland

Covered Pilot AREA: Pilot Area North (PL, DE) - special Focus on Poland

Type of test users: 4 x power-user audience
3 x special-interest tourism media

Date and duration of
ICTr Explorer Promotion tour:
07th of April 2025 to 11st of April 2025

Route: Ustka (PL) to Gdansk (PL)

Name of participants:

- Tomasz Legutko - power-user audience
- Remigiusz Kitlinski - power-user audience
- Izabela Biala - special-interest tourism media
- Mariusz Ochocki - power-user audience
- Radoslaw Kaminski - special-interest tourism media
- Anna Klinkosz - power-user audience
- Magdalena Bielińska - special-interest tourism media

Partners involved

Responsible partner: PP8 City of Gdansk

Supporting partner: PP7 Westpomeranian Region
PP12 OETE



Itinerary stage by stage

DATE	STAGE STARTING POINT	STAGE END POINT	DISTANCE
07 th of April 25	Arrival		
08 th of April 25	Ustka (PL)	Leba (PL)	70 km
09 th of April 25	Leba (PL)	Karwia (PL)	50 km
10 th of April 25	Karwia (PL)	Ostionino (PL)	37 km
11 th of April 25	Ostionino (PL)	Gdansk (PL)	40 km

Impressions ICTr Explorer Promotion tour







Feedback to the ICTr Explorer Promotion tour in Poland, Pilot Area North

1. Overall Ratings

Scale: 1 = Poor | 5 = Excellent

Category	Average Rating
Overall travel program	4.8
Trail maintenance	3.6
Signposting (EuroVelo13)	4.2
Scenery of landscape	4.8
Accommodation & boarding quality	4.4
POIs and border stories	3.6
Additional experience program	4.0
Guide	4.8
Cycling-friendly stops (refreshments)	4.2
Overall organization	4.4

Observation: The highest ratings were for Scenery, Guide, and Overall Travel Program (4.8), indicating strong satisfaction with the experience and guiding quality. The lowest ratings were for Trail Maintenance and POIs & Border Stories (3.6), suggesting infrastructure and thematic content need improvement.

2. Recommendations

- Highly recommended for combining cycling with sightseeing and cultural heritage.
- Attractive for both individual tourists and organized groups.
- Scenic landscapes and direct access to the sea are major highlights.
- Suitable for history and nature enthusiasts.
- Worth promoting on a broader scale due to its historical background.

3. Improvement Suggestions

- Repair sections with poor infrastructure (avoid sandy, stony, or concrete slab surfaces).
- Increase density of cyclist-friendly pitstops and refreshment points.
- Strengthen EV13 branding and promotion, especially where it overlaps with EV10.
- Provide more historical interpretation and educational content about the Iron Curtain.
- Collaborate with local tourist organizations for better information and guide availability.
- Offer cycling trip packages on regional portals (e.g., pomorskie.travel).

4. Key Strengths

- Beautiful scenery and landscapes along the route.
- Diverse experience combining cycling, sightseeing, history, and nature.
- Professional guiding support rated excellent.
- Well-organized program with good accommodation and services.
- Direct access to the sea and sparsely populated areas enhancing appeal.



4. Pilot Area Center: ICTr Explorer Promotion tour

Covered Pilot AREA: Pilot Area Center (CZ, SK, AT)

Type of test users: 9 x power-user audience

Date and duration of
ICTr Explorer Promotion tour:
08th of June 2024 to 15st of June 2024

Route: Slavonice (CZ) to Retz (AT) to Bratislava (sk)

Name of participants:

- Johann Wurz - power-user audience
- Roman Wanko - power-user audience
- Vilem Vanke - power-user audience
- Juan Huitz - power-user audience
- Rudolf Wurth - power-user audience
- Pavel Landa - power-user audience
- Filip Ranos - power-user audience
- Jan Rohac - power-user audience
- Daniel Mourek - power-user audience

Partners involved

Responsible partner: PP6 Partnerství o.p.s

Supporting partner: PP9 Ekopolis Foundation
PP5 Trail Angels GmbH



Itinerary stage by stage

DATE	STAGE STARTING POINT	STAGE END POINT	DISTANCE
08 th of June 24	Arrival to Slavnice (CZ)		
09 th of June 24	Slavonice (CZ)	Drosendorf (AT)	39 km
10 th of June 24	Drosendorf (AT)	Hardegg (AT)	36 km
11 th of June 24	Hardegg (AT) via Znaim (CZ)	Retz (AT)	51 km
12 TH of June 24	Retz (AT)	Laa (AT)	50 km
13 th of June 24	Laa (AT)	Valtice (CZ)	42 km
14 th of June 24	Valtice (CZ)	Mannersdorf (AT)	65 km
15 th of June 24	Mannersdorf (AT)	Bratislava (SK)	51 km

Impressions ICTr Explorer Promotion tour







Feedback to the ICTr Explorer Promotion tour in the Pilot Area Center

1. Overall Ratings

Scale: 1 = Poor | 5 = Excellent

Category	Average Rating
Overall travel program	4.9
Trail maintenance	4.8
Signposting (EuroVelo13)	4.8
Scenery of landscape	5.0
Accommodation & boarding quality	4.9
POIs and border stories	4.8
Additional experience program	4.6
Guide	4.9
Cycling-friendly stops (refreshments)	4.9
Overall organization	5.0

Observation: Ratings are consistently high, with most categories scoring between “Good” and “Excellent.” Scenery, overall organization, and accommodation achieved near-perfect scores.

2. Recommendation

- 100% of participants would recommend the tour to friends and family.
- Common reasons:
- Safe and well-organized conditions
- Picturesque landscapes and cultural enrichment
- Excellent signage and support services

3. Improvement Suggestions

- Allow more flexibility in the schedule to avoid rushing.
- Require participants to carry basic spare parts for bicycles.
- Offer program variations for different traveler profiles (e.g., budget-friendly options).
- Add more points of interest and small attractions along the route.
- Ensure multilingual information at historical sites (especially English for international guests).
- Highlight additional cultural aspects, such as Jewish heritage in certain regions.

4. Key Strengths

- High-quality accommodation and boarding.
- Scenic landscapes and historical depth.
- Strong organization and safety measures.
- Positive perception of guides and overall service.



5. Pilot Area South: ICTr Explorer Promotion tour

Covered Pilot AREA: Pilot Area South (HU, SI, HR)

Type of test users: 2 x special-interest tourism media

Date and duration of
ICTr Explorer Promotion tour:
27th of August 2024 to 2nd of September 2024

Route: Szentgotthard (HU) via Lendava (SI) via Koprivnica (HR) to Villany (HU)

Name of participants:

- Naomi Vedinas- special-interest tourism media
- Violin Vedinas - special-interest tourism media

Partners involved

Responsible partner: LP Westpannon

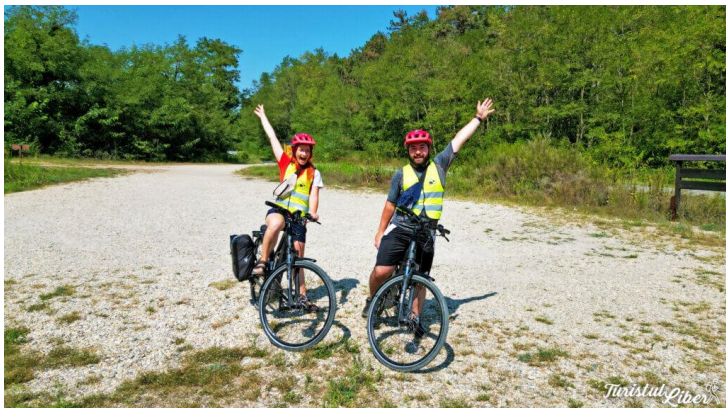
Supporting partner: PP2 CROST
PP3 Iskriva
PP11 Koprivnica

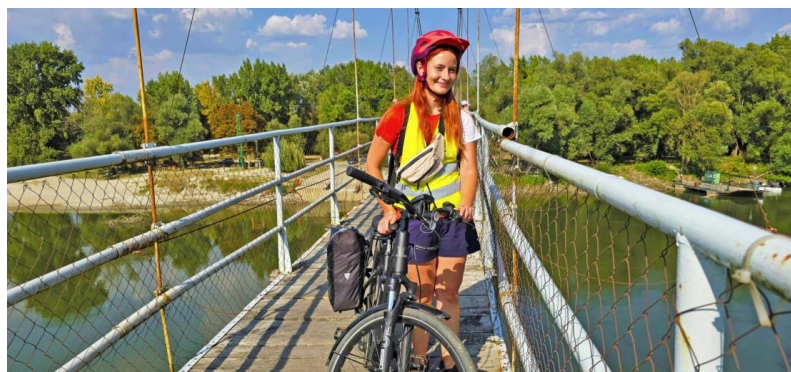
Itinerary stage by stage

DATE	STAGE STARTING POINT	STAGE END POINT	DISTANCE
27 th of August 24	Szentgotthárd (HU)	Lendava (SI)	65 km
28 th of August 24	Lendava (SI)	Letenye (HU)	28 km
29 th of August 24	Letenye (HU)	Koprivnica (HR)	35 km
30 th of August 24	Koprivnica (HR)	Đurđevac (HR)	45 km
31 th of August 24	Đurđevac (HR)	Katélyosdombó (HU)	50 km
1 st of Sept. 24	Katélyosdombó (HU)	Kémes (HU)	45 km
2 nd of Sept. 24	Kémes (HU)	Villány (HU)	48 km



Impressions ICTr Explorer Promotion tour







Feedback to the ICTr Explorer Promotion tour in the Pilot Area South

1. Overall Ratings

Scale: 1 = Poor | 5 = Excellent

Category	Average Rating
Overall travel program	5.0
Trail maintenance	4.6
Signposting (EuroVelo13)	4.8
Scenery of landscape	5.0
Accommodation & boarding quality	4.8
POIs and border stories	4.6
Additional experience program	4.8
Guide	Self-guided
Cycling-friendly stops (refreshments)	4.6
Overall organization	5.0

Observation: Ratings are consistently high, with most categories scoring between “Good” and “Excellent.” Scenery and overall organization achieved perfect scores, while guides and POIs show slight room for improvement.

2. Recommendation

- 100% of participants would recommend the tour to friends and family.
- Common reasons:
- Unique opportunity to learn about historical events
- Picturesque landscapes and cultural experiences
- Well-organized program and quality accommodations

3. Improvement Suggestions

- Improve road conditions in certain sections (holes, rough surfaces).
- Ensure consistent signposting along the entire route.
- Enhance guide engagement and knowledge sharing during tours.
- Provide better hotel amenities (basic toiletries, hair dryer).
- Offer more flexibility in the schedule to allow breaks and leisure time.
- Consider multilingual information at cultural sites for international guests.

4. Key Strengths

- High-quality accommodation and boarding in most locations.
- Scenic landscapes and immersive cultural experiences.
- Strong organization and safety measures throughout the tour.
- Positive feedback on passionate and knowledgeable guides (where present).



6. Pilot Area Center: Guided explorer tour

Covered Pilot AREA: Pilot Area Cener (CZ, AT, SK)

Type of test users: 6 x real guests/ cycling enthusiasts

Date and duration of

ICTr Guided explorer tour:

15th of September 2025 to 21th of September 2025

Route: Znaim (CZ) via Retz (AT) to Bratislava (SK)

Booking Center/

Tour Operator: HELIAN NaTour Kft.

Partners involved

PP6 Partnerství o.p.s

PP9 Ekopolis Foundation

PP5 Trail Angels (Supervisor)

Itinerary stage by stage and overview tested service providers & POI

DATE	STAGE STARTING POINT	STAGE END POINT	Distance (km)	SERVICE PROVIDERS & POIS TESTED
Sept. 15th	EV 13 Etappe 5 Hardegg	Znaim	27,83	<p>Visited Experiences gained during the Iron Curtain Trail Guided explorer tour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationalpark Thayatal • There are dozens of bunkers and fortresses along the entire route, which were built before the Second World War <p>Included service providers along the Iron Curtain Trail Guides explorer tour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight with breakfast <p>Accommodation: Penzion Kaplank Restaurant for dinner: Tusto Znojmo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luggage Service <p>Autotype: e-auto Mobility partner: Reisebüro Genser, Bad Gleichenberg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further included services: no



Sept. 16th	EV 13 Etappe 6 Znaim	Retz	19,75	<p>Visited Experiences gained during the Iron Curtain Trail Guided explorer tour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit of bunker Satov • Visit of Austria´s largest connected wine cellar, Weingut Retz <p>Included service providers along the Iron Curtain Trail Guides explorer tour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight with breakfast and dinner <p>Accommodation: Althof Retz</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luggage Service <p>Autotype: e-auto Mobility partner: Reisebüro Genser, Bad Gleichenberg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further included services: Ticket to the largest connected wine cellar, Weingut Retz
Sept. 17th	EV 13 Etappe 7 Retz	Laa	50,4	<p>Visited Experiences gained during the Iron Curtain Trail Guided explorer tour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trip to the to largest historical water mill in South Moravia <p>Included service providers along the Iron Curtain Trail Guides explorer tour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight with breakfast and dinner <p>Accommodation: Hotel Freilich</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luggage Service <p>Autotype: e-auto Mobility partner: Reisebüro Genser, Bad Gleichenberg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further included services: Ticket water mill in South Moravia
Sept. 18th	EV 13 Etappe 8 Laa	Valtice	43,25	<p>Visited Experiences gained during the Iron Curtain Trail Guided explorer tour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit the Dietrichstein tomb • Visit the Baroque chateau with its museum <p>Included service providers along the Iron Curtain Trail Guides explorer tour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight with breakfast and dinner <p>Accommodation: Resort Valtberg Valtice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luggage Service <p>Autotype: e-auto Mobility partner: Reisebüro Genser, Bad Gleichenberg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further included services: Ticket Borque chateau including the museum



September 19th	EV13 Etappe 9 Valtice	Grub an der March	71,75	<p>Visited Experiences gained during the Iron Curtain Trail Guided explorer tour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit bird sanctuary at the confluence of the Thaya and Morava rivers in the tri-border area (AT-CZ-SK) <p>Included service providers along the Iron Curtain Trail Guides explorer tour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight with breakfast and dinner <p>Accommodation: Winzerhotel Küssler</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luggage Service <p>Autotype: e-auto Mobility partner: Reisebüro Genser, Bad Gleichenberg http://www.genser-reisen.at/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further included services: no
Sept. 20th	EV 13 Etappe 10 Grub and der March	Bratislava	49,55	<p>Included service providers along the Iron Curtain Trail Guides explorer tour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight with half board <p>Accommodation: Falkensteiner Hotel Bratislava https://www.falkensteiner.com/en/hotel-bratislava</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luggage Service <p>Autotype: e-auto Mobility partner: Reisebüro Genser, Bad Gleichenberg http://www.genser-reisen.at/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further included services: No
Sept. 21th	Departure to Hardegg			



Impressions ICTr Guided explorer tour





Feedback to the ICTr Guided explorer tour in the Pilot Area Center

GENERAL EXPERIENCES

As part of the Iron Curtain Trail (ICTr) project, the Guided Explorer Tour successfully took place from 15-21 September 2025, offering a real-world test of the newly developed cycling tourism product. The seven-day itinerary covered 263 kilometers along the iconic EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail, connecting Hardegg (Austria) with Bratislava (Slovakia) and passing through scenic regions of Austria, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia.

Purpose and Design:

The tour was designed by AktivBike Radreisen together Trail Angels as supervisor and the regional support of Ekopolis Foundation and Partnerstvi, with a strong focus on:

- Sustainability: Low-carbon mobility and accommodations.
- Regional Identity: Showcasing cultural heritage, natural landscapes, and historical sites.
- Pilot Area Integration: Ensuring the route aligned with the Central pilot region.

AktivBike managed all logistics, including bike transport, accommodation, and restaurant bookings, guiding services, and coordination with local stakeholders

Tour Experience:

Participants explored picturesque villages, historic castles, wine cellar streets, and cultural landmarks, while immersing themselves in the legacy of the Iron Curtain era. Highlights included. Evenings featured regional cuisine and wine tastings, reinforcing the authentic local experience.

Testing the innovative tools:

- **CARMACAL** - the selected **Online Carbon Footprint Calculator** for the project. It was tested by the travellers and the Booking Center to assess its practical suitability for future use by booking centers in calculating emissions for cycling packages.
- **IMS (Impact Measurement System)** - an online tool developed by project partner **OETE** to measure overall sustainability of cycling trips on EuroVelo 13. Unlike CARMACAL, IMS goes beyond ecological aspects and includes social and economic sustainability indicators.

Both tools proved valuable for integrating sustainability metrics into product development and will support transparent reporting and continuous improvement.

Evaluation and Feedback:

Travelers assessed every aspect of the package:

- Service: Accommodations rated highly (4-5/5), with secure bike storage and e-bike charging. Language skills and hospitality were praised.
- Infrastructure: Routes were scenic and well-maintained, combining gravel and asphalt. Physical demand was moderate, signage clear, and surface quality good to excellent.
- POIs: Interpretation and accessibility of cultural and historical sites were rated very high (4-5), with strong appreciation for sustainability and local traditions.



Key Insights:

The Guided Explorer Tour confirmed the feasibility and attractiveness of the ICTr cycling product. It successfully combined cycling adventure, cultural immersion, and eco-friendly travel, meeting the project's objectives. Feedback will inform refinements to enhance user experience, service quality, and sustainability, ensuring the product becomes even more compelling for future travelers,

In addition, the two innovative tools CARMACAL and IMS demonstrate a strong ability to integrate sustainability indicators into development processes and also to measure them, thereby supporting data-driven reporting and iterative optimisation in product development.

Weaknesses or areas for improvement (Details, please take a look on the table):

Infrastructure:

- Route was generally described as pleasant and well-rideable with comments such as “perfect for graveling”, “easy along the river”
- Unpaved/gravel: 41-60%; should be reduced

Service providers:

- Across all seven days, accommodation satisfaction was consistently high, with ratings between 4 and 5.
- Cycling-friendly services were well provided: closed bike storage was available at every stop and rated excellent. Language skills of staff were generally good, ranging from 4 to 5, ensuring smooth communication.

Strengths:

- Experience value: The Explorer Tour programme stands out for its diverse and well-balanced design, combining cultural and historical experiences, culinary highlights, and engaging insights into Europe's recent history of division along the Iron Curtain.
- Service providers: the high quality of regional food and the outstanding hospitality of all tested providers are particularly noteworthy.
- Digital tools: Customers considered the approach of measuring the carbon footprint and regional impact of a cycling trip to be innovative and interesting.
- By testing Carmacal and IMS, the booking centre was able to improve its expertise in the field of ecological and socio-economic assessment. The Excel version of Carmacal was found to be simpler and more user-friendly.

Key recommendations (Top 5):

- The booking centre recommends consistent integration of the tools (IMS + Carmacal) and further trainings
- Furthermore, the booking centre points out that simplified integration into booking management should be considered.
- To improve understanding of the ICTr business model, consideration should also be given to providing training for service partners
- Remark from the Guide of the Guided explorer tour: Some sections require improved wayfinding, as signage for EuroVelo 13 is often missing or insufficient;



- It is recommended that funding opportunities be found for the booking centres so that the necessary resources for international certification can be made available.

DAY-TO-DAY EXPERIENCE

DATE	STAGE STARTING POINT	STAGE END POINT	Distance (km)	DAY-TO-DAY EXPERIENCE
Sept. 15th	EV 13 Etappe 5 Hardegg	Znaim	27,83	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route Rideability: Generally good; described as perfect for graveling, nice gravel sections, and impressive roads. • Physical Demand: Rated 2 (moderate). • Surface Condition: Good (ratings 4-5). • Trail Composition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Public roads: 21-60%. o Unpaved/gravel: 41-60%. • Signage: EuroVelo 13 signs rated 4-5; no major navigation challenges.
Sept. 16th	EV 13 Etappe 6 Znaim	Retz	19,75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route Rideability: Described as very nice roads, gravel section south of Znojmo, and pleasant route. • Physical Demand: Moderate (3-4). • Surface Condition: Good (4-5). • Trail Composition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Public roads: 41-60%. o Unpaved/gravel: 41-60%. • Signage: EuroVelo 13 signs rated 4-5; no major navigation challenges.
Sept. 17th	EV 13 Etappe 7 Retz	Laa	50,4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route Rideability: Described as very nice landscape, easy through wine region, nice gravel sections in Austria, and pleasant roads at the border. • Physical Demand: Low to moderate (4). • Surface Condition: Excellent (5/5). • Trail Composition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Public roads: 41-60%. o Unpaved/gravel: 41-60%. • Signage: EuroVelo 13 signs rated 4-5;
Sept. 18th	EV 13 Etappe 8 Laa	Valtice	43,25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route Rideability: Described as very nice tour, nice gravel section, and pleasant roads with stunning views. • Physical Demand: Moderate (4). • Surface Condition: Excellent (5/5). • Trail Composition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public roads: 41-60%. • Unpaved/gravel: 41-60%. • Signage: EuroVelo 13 signs rated 4-5;



September 19th	EV13 Etappe 9 Valtice	Grub an der March	71,75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route Rideability: Described as easy along the March, nice gravel section, and pleasant roads. • Physical Demand: Moderate (3-4). • Surface Condition: Good (4-5). • Trail Composition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Public roads: 41-60%. o Unpaved/gravel: 41-60%. • Signage: EuroVelo 13 signs rated 4-5;
Sept. 20th	EV 13 Etappe 10 Grub and der March	Bratislava	49,55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route Rideability: Generally good; described as perfect for graveling, nice gravel sections, and impressive roads. • Physical Demand: Rated 2 (moderate). • Surface Condition: Good (ratings 4-5). • Trail Composition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Public roads: 21-60%. o Unpaved/gravel: 41-60%. • Signage: EuroVelo 13 signs rated 4-5; no major navigation challenges.
Sept. 21th	Departure to Hardegg			

CARBON FOOTPRINT (CARMACAL)

CARMACAL, the online CO₂ calculator selected for this project, was used and tested by the booking centre and evaluated for its practical suitability for future application. All emission-relevant activities were recorded to calculate the most realistic possible CO₂ footprint for the excursion. It should also be noted that the booking centre designed the experience in a way that ensures the cycling tour already has a low carbon footprint and meets the requirements of a “low-carbon trip.”

The experience with CARMACAL can be summarised as follows: system accessibility, user-friendliness, clarity of data input, and comparative impressions in relation to the customised digital tool -

- **Ease of registration and user-friendliness:** The booking centre reported a smooth registration process and assessed the tool as user-friendly, citing its simplicity and practical structure. Navigation within the system was intuitive, supporting its recommendation for future specialised use.
- **Clarity of data entry:** The Carmacal database was deemed well-structured for data input. However, the evaluation of certain activities was not always transparent, indicating potential for improvement in this area.
- **Interpretability of results:** No significant technical difficulties were encountered. Nonetheless, the categorisation of meals and activities was described as occasionally unclear, affecting the straightforward interpretation of results.



- **Recommendations**

- Provide clearer guidance on activity ratings and meal categorisation
- Consider integrating features of the tailor-made tool to improve usability and communication for non-expert users.
- Ongoing process: Enhance the CARMACAL registration process and streamline interface navigation.

Calculated Carbon Footprint in CO₂/kg: 290,00 kg

IMPACT MEASUREMENT SYSTEM (IMS)

The IMS (Impact Measurement System) is an online tool developed by project partner OETE in accordance with project requirements and in collaboration with all ICTr project partners. Its purpose is to assess the overall sustainability of cycling tours along EuroVelo 13, extending beyond ecological aspects such as the CO₂ footprint.

The IMS tool was evaluated by the booking centre from the Central Pilot Area. The feedback can be summarized as followed:

- **Ease of use:** The booking centre rated the tool's user interface as acceptable to very good, noting that no technical issues were encountered during use.
- **Clarity of data input:** All instructions were perceived as clear and well structured. The booking centre also noted that the time required to complete the tool was generally considered "okay."
- **Interpretability of results:** While the final IMS score was viewed as clear, the booking centre reported challenges in communicating the meaning of the score to travellers—particularly as the largest point deduction stemmed from the booking centre itself not being certified, which was difficult to explain.
- **Usefulness and transferability;** The booking centre considers the IMS tool suitable for measuring the socio-economic impact of sustainable tourism products and can envision applying it to other travel products within its portfolio.
- **Recommendations**
 - On-going process: Consistent integration of sustainability tools (Carmacal and IMS) to position and profile EuroVelo 13 as a sustainable long-distance cycle route.
 - The IMS tool represents a significant advancement in impact measurement for EuroVelo 13; however, the Booking Center identified the need for improvements in visual design and result interpretation for the travelers

IMS Calculated Overall Impact Score: 112,67



7. Pilot Area South: Guided explorer tour

Covered Pilot AREA: Pilot Area South (HU, SI, HR)

Type of test users: 5 x real guests/ cycling enthusiasts and active cyclists from the Vándortábor team

Date and duration of

ICTr Guided explorer tour:

3rd of October 2025 to 7th of October 2025

Route: Durdevac (HR) to Mohacs (HU)

Booking Center/

Tour Operator: HELIAN NaTour Kft.

Partners involved

LP Westpannon
PP2 CROST
PP3 Iskriva
PP11 Koprivnica
PP5 Trail Angels (Supervisor)

Itinerary stage by stage and overview tested service providers & POI

DATE	STAGE STARTING POINT	STAGE END POINT	Distance (km)	SERVICE PROVIDERS & POIS TESTED
October 03, 2025	Đurđevac (HR)	Koprivnica (HR)	approx. 46 km	POIs: Đurđevac Sands Visitor Center, Church in Molve (symbol of resistance), Naive Art Gallery in Hlebine. Accommodation: B&B Drava (Koprivnica).
October 04, 2025	Koprivnica (HR)	Barcs (HU)	approx. 110 km	POIs: Skela Brodić (Drava River banks), Križnica (suspension bridge). Accommodation: Pleasant apartment in the city center (Barcs).
October 05, 2025	Barcs (HU)	Szaporca (HU)	approx. 60 km	POIs: Révfalu (deserted village, sad legacy of Iron Curtain), panoramic lookout tower in Drávasztára. Accommodation: Kolokán Hostel (Szaporca). Dinner: Kémesi Halászsárda.



October 06, 2025	Szaporca (HU)	Villány (HU)	approx. 50 km	POIs: Ormánság House (Szaporca), Siklós Castle (medieval fortification), Accommodation/Service: Blum Winery (Villány) (wine tasting, dinner).
October 07, 2025	Villány (HU)	Mohács (HU)	approx. 50 km	POIs: Swabian heritage house (Kisjakabfalva), traditional indigo dye workshop (Nagynyárád), Mohács National Memorial (viewed outside), Busóudvar carnival center (Mohács), KultúrKikötő.

Impressions ICTr Guided explorer tour





Feedback to the ICTr Guided explorer tour in the Pilot Area South

GENERAL EXPERIENCES

The five-day Guided Explorer Tour provided a comprehensive overview of the southern pilot area of the Iron Curtain Trail, covering route quality, physical difficulties, cycling services, and terrain experience. The 307-kilometer adventure spanned Croatia and Hungary, combining cycling with cultural, historical, and natural values. The tour successfully demonstrated that the southern area is "not just a bike tour, but a cultural and historical adventure full of experiences".

Weaknesses or Areas for Improvement

Signage: The quality of the EuroVelo 13 signage system needs improvement. Daily average ratings for signage ranged between 2.4 and 3.6 points, indicating that signs are incomplete or unclear in some places.



Infrastructure Quality: The road surface condition varied considerably. Some sections were identified as neglected and difficult-to-navigate, specifically mentioning the road between Kisbudmér and Bóly.

Water and Facilities: The availability of drinking water facilities is severely limited along the route, except for larger settlements, presenting a serious shortcoming on all sections, especially during long stages or hot periods.

Certificates: Most accommodations did not display any environmental or bicycle-friendly certification.

Interpretation: The historical presentation of sites, the placement of information boards, or the interpretation related to the Iron Curtain theme was often incomplete and in need of improvement.

Strengths or What Already Worked Well

Accommodation and Hospitality: Accommodations received a very high average score of 4.8 to 5 from participants each day, highlighting cleanliness, comfort, and hospitality. Secure storage for bicycles was generally provided.

Gastronomy: Restaurant dinners and breakfasts received maximum points almost every day. Participants praised the local, abundant, and high-quality hospitality, ensuring a cultural gastronomic experience.

Experience Value: The tour provided a rich program of cultural attractions and active local guided tours. The quality of attractions visited (such as Siklós Castle and the Hlebine Naive Art Gallery) was rated highly, between 4.2 and 5 points, showing a steadily improving trend.

Rideability: The overall average passability score for the route was consistently high, ranging between 4 and 4.85 points.

Key Recommendations

Improve and standardize the EuroVelo 13 signage system.

Address the severe shortage of drinking water facilities along the route.

Improve the visibility and consistency of cyclist-friendly ratings and certificates among service providers.

Continue to combine cultural heritage, natural landscapes, and gastronomy into cross-border packages to reinforce the unique selling points of the Iron Curtain Trail.



DAY-TO-DAY EXPERIENCE

DATE	STAGE STARTING POINT	STAGE END POINT	Distance (km)	DAY-TO-DAY EXPERIENCE
October 03, 2025	Đurđevac (HR)	Koprivnica (HR)	approx. 46 km	The tour began with a transfer to Đurđevac. Accommodation satisfaction was high (4.8/5), but the only bicycle storage was in the hotel's enclosed stairwell. EV 13 signage received the lowest rating (2.8/5).
October 04, 2025	Koprivnica (HR)	Barcs (HU)	approx. 110 km	This was the longest stage. A rest area charging station for electronic devices was vandalized and unusable. The suspension bridge at Križnica was in poor condition. EV 13 signage improved slightly (3.2 points). Water facilities severely limited.
October 05, 2025	Barcs (HU)	Szaporca (HU)	approx. 60 km	Stage completed in rainy and windy weather. Participants noted that there were no information boards related to the Iron Curtain at the sights. Road surface quality was rated 3.4/5.
October 06, 2025	Szaporca (HU)	Villány (HU)	approx. 50 km	Accommodation received a maximum 5/5 rating. Route surface was stable and well-maintained (4.8/5). However, the EV13 signage system received the lowest score of the tour (2.4 points), indicating poor visibility or installation.
October 07, 2025	Villány (HU)	Mohács (HU)	approx. 50 km	All visited sights received a 5/5 satisfaction rating. The road between Kisbudmér and Bóly was highlighted as being very neglected. Road surface quality was medium (2.8 points). Accommodation service was not used on this day.



CARBON FOOTPRINT (CARMACAL)

CARMACAL, the selected Online Carbon Footprint Calculator, was utilized to determine the most realistic CO₂ footprint for the tourism package. Activities recorded included walking/cycling, visiting buildings/monuments, museums, city trips, transportation, meals (vegetarian or international), and accommodation.

Experience Summary: The CARMACAL system provides a comprehensive, user-friendly solution with a very large database covering transport and accommodation options. Results are displayed in great detail, broken down by specific activities and presented on daily and aggregate levels.

Weaknesses/Improvements: Using the online interface is time-consuming because the system reloads and returns to the top of the screen with every change. Furthermore, once the transport mode is specified, it cannot be modified without being deleted and re-entered.

Recommendations: Due to increasing electric vehicle use, electric cars are missing and should be added as a mode of transport. For sustainability, preference should be given to public transport. Meals could also be supplemented with vegan options.

Calculated Carbon Footprint in CO₂/kg: 276 kg.

IMPACT MEASUREMENT SYSTEM (IMS)

The IMS is an online tool developed to measure the overall sustainability of cycling trips on EuroVelo 13, extending beyond ecological concerns to include socio-economic impact.

Experience Summary: The IMS system bases its evaluation on an extremely detailed set of criteria, providing a thorough and detailed picture of service providers and regions.

Weaknesses/Improvements: The system only shows final values and does not provide information on the underlying shortcomings that require improvement. Knowledge of the IMS Guideline is essential, and filling out the form would be easier if information bubbles were placed next to the cells to provide explanations.

Recommendations: The weighting system needs to be clarified (e.g., merging the first two categories that yield the same result). It would also be helpful to have an explanation of which certificates are accepted across Europe. A short user guide and video tutorial should be prepared for the interface.

IMS Calculated Overall Impact Score: 99.9.



8. Annexes

a. Annex 1 Iron Curtain Trail: ICTr Promotion Explorer Tour Evaluation Form

To gather feedback from target groups for the ICTr Promotion Explorer tour, a print-based evaluation form was developed in collaboration with regional partners.

IRON CURTAIN TRAIL

Explorer Tour Central



07.06.2024
15.06.2024

Feedback





1. Personal Data

First and last name: _____

Address: _____

Country: _____

eMail: _____

I agree to my data being used for marketing purposes in accordance with the data protection regulations. I can revoke this at any time.

2. Feedback

Please rate the following components of your Iron Curtain Trail Explorer Tour:

(1 = poor; 2 = unsatisfactory; 3 = moderate; 4 = good; 5 = excellent)

Category	1	2	3	4	5
Overall travel program					
Trail maintenance					
Signposting of the Trail (EuroVelo13)					
Scenery of landscape					
Quality of accommodation and boarding					
POIs and border stories					
Additional experience program					
Guide					
Availability of cycling friendly stops (incl. refreshments and restaurants)					
Overall organization of the trip					



ICTr-CE



ICTr-CE

Would you recommend this trip to your friends and family? Yes, why? And if no, why not?

Do you have any other recommendations for improving the Iron Curtain Trail Explorer Tour in your opinion?

Thank you for cycling with us at the Iron Curtain Trail Explorer Tour Central!



b. Annex 2 Questions to ICTr Experience Design

An evaluation form for the ICTr experience design was developed in collaboration with regional partners to assess the experience design of the ICTr product. The form was prepared prior to the online meetings in each pilot region and later digitised using Google Forms. The digital version was sent to travellers by the ICTr booking centres.

The following questions were evaluated by the real guests for each stage of the process:

1. Services:

- Accommodation:
 - Name of the accommodation:
 - How satisfied were you with the accommodation (clean, comfort etc.) (bad:1, good 5)
 - Did you see any certification (cycling-friendly, green) in the accommodation?
 - If possible, please try to categorise the type of certification (on topically, and the type of certification: international, national, regional)
 - Did you discover any cycling-friendly related service related to the accommodation during your stay (e.g. bike rental, laundry service, bike storage)? If yes, please specify
 - Did you need any cycling friendly services? If yes, what kind of?
 - Communication in English (1: bad, 5: very good)
 - Did the accommodation provide dinner at the day of arrival?
 - If yes, did they offer vegetarian option?
 - If yes, did they offer vegan option?
 - In general, how satisfied you are with the dinner/breakfast (1: not satisfied, 5: very satisfied)
- Transport service
 - Did you need any transport-related service (e.g. shuttle service or luggage transfer)? If yes, please specify the details.
 - If yes, was it an e-car?
 - If yes, did they speak English?



2. POIs

- Did you visit any Iron Curtain Trail-related sight? (in case of multiple sights, please describe all)
 - If yes, please name it
 - how satisfied are you with the guide/sight? (1: not satisfied, 5: it was really great experience)
 - How accessible was this sight? (e.g. easily accessible for all, or it is not accessible for people with disabilities etc.)
 - Did you see any educational/touristic information (e.g. info board related to the sight/POI) in the close vicinity of the visited sight?
 - Did you see any marketing material (brochure, leaflet etc.) at the sight?
 - Other attractions:
 - Did you visit any important, additional sights?
 - If yes, please name them (in case of multiple sights, please describe all)
 - how satisfied are you with the guide/sight? (1: not satisfied, 5: it was really great experience)
 - How accessible was this sight? (e.g. easily accessible for all, or it is not accessible for people with disabilities etc.)
 - What do you think about the additional sights: Did you know more about the region and its cultural history thanks to visit the attraction?
 - What do you think about the additional sights: The attraction you visited is representing the general principle of the ICTr cycling product (sustainability, local traditions etc.)
 - Restaurants:
 - Did you have a lunch during the trip?
 - If Yes, please name them
 - If yes, did they offer vegetarian option?
 - If Yes, did they offer vegan option?
 - In general, how satisfied you are with the dinner/breakfast (1: not satisfied, 5: very satisfied)



3. Infrastructure:

- How rideable was the daily stage in general? (1: not really rideable, 5: very well rideable)
- How challenging was the daily stage (e.g. due to ascend-descend etc.)? (1: very challenging, 5: not challenging at all)
- How satisfied are you with the general condition of the route surface? (1: not satisfied, 5: very satisfied)
- Could you estimate the following characteristics of the route surface per stage in %:
 - % of the trail on public roads
 - % of the trail on gravel and/or dirt roads (unpaved)
- Did you experienced major differences regarding the route surface, the rideability compared to the received desk research document?
- Was the route signposted with EuroVelo 13 signs?
 - If yes, were the signs installed correctly? Did you face any challenge to follow the route?
- Did you see/use any cycling-friendly infrastructure along your journey (e.g. roofed resting place, e-bike charger, bike repair station, etc.)? If yes, please specify.