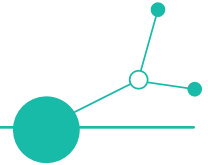


## D3.1.3

### Specialised trainings for ICTr booking centers Center and South



Final Version

02/2026





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# D3.1.3

## Specialised trainings for ICTr booking centers Center and South



## 1. About the document D3.1.3

D3.1.3 describes the specialised training programme developed for the ICTr Booking Centres in the and Pilot Areas Central and South. The programme is designed to prepare the “EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail - Official Info- & Buchungscener” – to assume the operational responsibilities associated with managing the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail booking services and delivering the newly developed Good Impact Cycling products. The training acknowledges that these centres must go beyond standard tour operator skills and acquire additional expertise related to the European dimension of the trail, product development, and sustainability-based innovation tools.

The training curriculum is structured into several complementary modules. These modules introduce the booking centres to the European context of the EuroVelo network, the specific history and characteristics of EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail, and the responsibilities of the European Cyclists’ Federation (ECF) as the managing body. The “EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail - Official Info- & Booking Centres” receive an overview of the EuroVelo quality framework, governance structures, and certification standards, ensuring that Booking Centres understand the broader strategic and operational context in which they will operate.

Further modules describe the legal requirements and obligations of Official ICTr Booking Centres. The training outlines the national legal frameworks for tour operators, including necessary licences, insurance coverage, and full compliance with the EU Package Travel Directive. Participants are informed that they must ensure transparent booking processes, traveller protection, safe service delivery, accurate communication, and reliable management of accommodation and mobility partners. Once the project shifts into the Full Operational Phase, booking centres will assume additional duties such as reporting, product development, and participating in B2B resale networks.

The training also covers the operational tasks and benefits associated with becoming an Official ICTr Booking Centre. During the Project Phase, the centres are required to manage requests and bookings, coordinate service providers, and engage in product testing and quality management. In return, they benefit from official branding as EuroVelo 13 Booking Centres, visibility on EuroVelo platforms, and participation in joint marketing activities. They also receive professional development opportunities, including participation in a guided group tour facilitated by the project.

D3.1.3 further explains ICTr product development requirements. The training helps booking centre staff build upon their existing expertise while learning to integrate the specific design elements of the Good Impact Cycling products. This includes experience design based on the Iron Curtain Trail narrative, service design with a low-carbon focus, sustainability design incorporating new digital tools, and implementation design for integration into Bookyourtrail.com and EuroVelo.com.

Core operational processes are addressed through training on the B2C customer journey (Request & Booking Management) and the B2B service-provider journey (Service Provider Management). These modules familiarise booking centres with the workflow from inspiration and planning to booking, travel support, and reflection. Similar transparency and quality assurance processes are trained for coordinating accommodation, mobility services, and other local partners.



Finally, Section 3.1.3 introduces the technical and sustainability tools essential for delivering Good Impact Cycling products. This includes training in the use of the digital booking system Bookyourtrail.com, the integration workflow for exporting and importing product data, and the operation of key sustainability assessment tools such as the Carmacal Carbon Footprint Calculator, the Impact Measurement System (IMS), and the pricing logic for the sustainability contribution. These tools enable evidence-based assessment of cycling trips and provide the foundation for transparent sustainability communication.

In summary, Section 3.1.3 outlines a comprehensive multi-module training programme designed to ensure that Booking Centres in the Pilot Areas Center and South possess the legal, operational, technical, and sustainability-related expertise required to manage EuroVelo 13 products professionally. The training prepares the centres not only for project-phase responsibilities but also for their long-term role within the participatory ICTr business model and the EuroVelo 13 Partnership.



## 2. Selection process for appointing “EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail - Official Info- & Booking Centre” and Milestones

### The selection process

The selection process for establishing an Official Info- & Booking Centre along EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail was conducted through an open invitation organized by Trail Angels GmbH within the framework of the INTERREG project Innovative ICTr Cycling (CE0100401). The purpose of this process was to identify qualified tour operators within the designated Pilot Areas who could professionally manage booking operations and contribute to the long-term stewardship of the Iron Curtain Trail.

The open invitation was directed at tour operators based in the Pilot Areas Center and South, with one Booking Centre to be selected for each area during the Project-Phase from March 2025 to February 2026. All submissions had to be provided by email to Trail Angels GmbH no later than 14 March 2025.

A transnational jury was established to ensure a fair and balanced evaluation process. This jury consisted of one representative from each country belonging to the relevant Pilot Area, together with Trail Angels GmbH as the topical project partner responsible for coordinating the procedure.

The evaluation followed a strictly points-based system in which each jury member independently assessed whether the submission met the defined expectations. Two overarching categories were used for scoring: “Company and References,” weighted at 30 points, and “Design of the Bookable Cycling Package,” weighted at 70 points. The points awarded by all jury members were added together, and the company achieving the highest total score in each Pilot Area was selected as the Official Booking Centre. The detailed selection criteria can be found in the appendix.

To participate in the process, applicants were required to submit a completed application form together with a detailed pitch deck and a full design draft of a bookable cycling package along the designated route. The pitch deck needed to include comprehensive company information, team qualifications, operational workflows, and references from relevant cycling tourism projects. The design draft had to present the itinerary, key visual materials, included services, selected service providers, pricing, and all conditions for travellers.

Following the evaluation, the highest-scoring applicant per Pilot Area was appointed as the “Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centre” for the “Project-Phase”. Once selected, the Booking Centre would subsequently join the project’s capacity-building programme and participate in the testing of ICTr tools and services throughout 2025 to prepare for full operational responsibilities after the project’s completion.



## Evaluation of the applicants and fixing the participating tour operators

Two companies applied in Pilot Area Center: AktivBike (AT) and BikeSlovakia (SK) and three submitted applicants in the Pilot Area South: NajTura (SLO), Helian NaTour (HR), and Ride Goricko (SLO).

### Evaluation Summary Pilot Area Center:

- **AktivBike (AT)** achieved a total of 81 points, demonstrating strong performance in company experience, booking management, and traveler conditions. Minor point reductions were applied due to missing sustainability certification and lack of detailed information in the service-provider section, although some criteria were assumed fulfilled based on national standards.
- **BikeSlovakia (SK)** received a total of 71 points. The company performed well in operational readiness and cycling tourism experience. However, several “no information” entries reduced points in accommodation and mobility sections, where only partial assumptions could be made.

### Pilot Area South:

- **NajTura (SLO)** achieved 81 points, indicating a strong overall submission with complete company information and well-developed customer conditions. Minor missing details in the accommodation and food sections led to moderate deductions, though criteria were partly assumed fulfilled.
- **Helian NaTour (HR)** received 76 points. The company met all fundamental operational criteria but received point reductions due to missing or incomplete information in accommodation, food, and terms-of-service documentation.
- **Ride Goricko (SLO)** achieved 64 points, the lowest score in the South area. Several evaluation domains lacked concrete information, particularly for accommodations, mobility services, pricing, and terms of service. Assumptions could only partially compensate for missing documentation.

## Fixing of Selected Tour Operators

Based on the final scores, AktivBike (AT) and NajTura (SLO) was identified as the highest-ranking applicant in the Pilot Area Center & the Pilot Area South and thus selected to act as the participating tour operator.

### Withdrawal NajTura

Following completion of the scoring procedure for the South Pilot Area, NajTura emerged as the highest-scoring applicant and was therefore identified as the participating tour operator in line with the established ranking methodology.

Subsequently, NajTura transmitted a formal withdrawal letter to the contracting body, citing capacity constraints for the Interim Phase and confirming its decision to step back from participation in the ICTR Booking Centre implementation.

In accordance with the rules of the open invitation and the documented ranking, the second-ranked tour operator—Helian NaTour—was invited to assume the role. The owner of the company Helian NaTour Gabor Benovics agreed and took over the role of an official Booking Centre.



## Conclusion

The evaluation process for the selection of the participating tour operators in each Pilot Area was completed on the basis of a transparent, criteria-based scoring system. In the Center Pilot Area, AktivBike achieved the highest total score and was therefore confirmed as the selected tour operator.

In the South Pilot Area, NajTura initially ranked first with the highest evaluation score. However, after the evaluation results were communicated, NajTura formally decided to withdraw its participation in the ICTr Booking Centre implementation. As a result, the selection process required the activation of the next eligible candidate based on ranking.

Following the withdrawal, the second-ranked company, Helian NaTour, which had achieved the next highest overall score in the South Pilot Area, was invited to take over the role. The company agreed to participate and therefore Helian NaTour was fixed as the official tour operator for the Pilot Area South.

This ensures that both Pilot Areas are represented by qualified and committed operators, maintaining the continuity of the ICTr Booking Centre implementation despite the unexpected withdrawal of the initial top-ranked applicant. The special training for ICTr booking centers Center and South has been started with both tour operators.



### 3. Specialised trainings for ICTr booking center Center and South

The specialised training programme for the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Booking Centres comprises several complementary modules designed to meet the increasing requirements associated with managing the newly developed Good Impact Cycling products. This means that the teams in the booking centres must not only master the core tasks of a specialised tour operator (request and booking management; coordination and management of service providers), but also build additional expertise. This applies in particular to integration into the European EuroVelo network as well as to the specific demands arising from the development and implementation of evidence-based Good Impact Cycling products, including their integrated digital sustainability tools.

Accordingly, the training sessions are structured into the following modules:

- The European dimension of the EuroVelo network
- General tasks, responsibilities, rights and obligations of the booking centres
- Trail-specific tasks related to product development
- Special requirements linked to the implementation of the Good Impact Cycling products

#### a. EuroVelo and the Iron Curtain Trail

This training module provides an introduction to the full route of EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail, its European anchoring within the EuroVelo network, and the responsibilities of the managing organisation, the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF). The module is complemented by essential insights into the relevant Interreg ICTr-CE project.

#### I. The EuroVelo network & European Cyclist Federation

##### The EuroVelo Network

The EuroVelo network represents the central trans-European long-distance cycling infrastructure and currently comprises 17 cross-border cycle routes that connect regions across Europe and are planned to exceed a total length of over 90,000 km. These routes serve both long-distance cycling tourism and daily mobility needs, providing a coherent, safe, and high-quality cycling infrastructure. The network aims to strengthen sustainable mobility, increase cycling rates, and enhance the integration of existing national and regional cycling networks.

EuroVelo is built upon a clearly defined quality framework supported by the European Certification Standard (ECS). This methodology ensures uniform route assessment, harmonises European infrastructure standards, and enables a certification system that improves transparency for users and planners alike.



Beyond infrastructure development, EuroVelo has evolved into a strategic instrument for European tourism and mobility policy. It supports sustainable tourism, contributes to regional economic development, and strengthens rural areas through increased visitor flows. Reports show that the expansion of the network significantly contributes to the economic relevance of cycling tourism, reaching millions of users annually.

Furthermore, EuroVelo plays a crucial role within the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), where the integration of cycling infrastructure is increasingly recognised as a key component of climate-neutral transport systems. The continued development of the EuroVelo network reflects both the growing importance of cycling as a mode of transport and the European Union's commitment to systematically expanding sustainable mobility.

### European Cyclists' Federation (ECF)

The European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) is the central umbrella organisation for cycling associations across Europe. As an independent, Brussels-based non-profit organisation, it represents more than 70 member organisations with a combined membership of over half a million cyclists. Since its founding in 1983, the ECF has worked to systematically promote cycling in Europe, improve political and regulatory frameworks, and strengthen sustainable mobility across all sectors.

A core responsibility of the ECF is the development, coordination, and quality assurance of the EuroVelo network. The ECF provides strategic leadership, while National EuroVelo Coordination Centres manage implementation at regional and national levels. Governance structures such as the EuroVelo Council serve as advisory bodies, and the EuroVelo Management Team oversees operational tasks, including infrastructure development, service standards, marketing, monitoring, and financial administration.

The ECF also developed the European Certification Standard (ECS), a widely recognised methodology for assessing the quality of long-distance cycle routes. Through regular training of specialised inspectors, the ECF ensures compliance with quality requirements, encourages ongoing improvement, and harmonises standards across Europe.

In addition, the ECF plays a leading role in European transport policy, advocating for the integration of cycling into the TEN-T network. It supports policymakers with analyses, data, and recommendations to anchor cycling as a climate-friendly mobility option. Finally, the ECF acts as a driving force in promoting cycling tourism, advancing sustainable mobility strategies, and strengthening the visibility of cycling throughout Europe.

It is important to highlight that ECF fulfils additional defined responsibilities that are crucial for the success of the participatory ICTr business model. These responsibilities include direct interfaces with the daily work of the booking centres:

- Design of management agreements with the EV13 Partnership



- Execution of the tasks and services defined in these agreements, including marketing for the EV13 - Iron Curtain Trail
- Development of licence agreements for the booking centres on behalf of the EV13 Partnership
- Serving as the main point of contact for the booking centres within the framework of licensing agreements (evaluation, customer feedback, quality management)

## II. Iron Curtain Trail EuroVelo 13

EuroVelo 13 - The Iron Curtain Trail is one of Europe's most historically significant long-distance cycling routes, tracing the former Cold War border that divided the continent for nearly half a century. Stretching over 10,600 km across 20 countries from the Barents Sea to the Black Sea, the route offers a unique combination of political history, cultural heritage and diverse natural landscapes. EuroVelo 13 - The Iron Curtain Trail ranks as the second longest cycle route within the EuroVelo network, covering 20 countries and 14 UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The trail follows long sections of the former restricted border zone, now part of the European Green Belt, one of Europe's most extensive ecological corridors. Cyclists encounter coastal regions, floodplains, forests, vineyards, and historic towns with numerous museums, memorial sites and interpretive installations along the corridor document Cold War history and the continent's path toward reconciliation. EuroVelo 13 route represents segments ranging from fully developed, signposted infrastructure to sections still under development.

In addition to these characteristics, EuroVelo 13 is officially certified as a European Cultural Route, recognizing its exceptional role in preserving shared European memory, promoting cultural exchange, and strengthening cross-border cooperation.

Finally, it should be noted that the training programme places particular emphasis on building strong regional expertise in each pilot region. It is essential that booking centres possess in-depth knowledge of the entire route section—covering at least ten daily stages including all service providers and points of interest (POIs) within their respective pilot region.

## III. The ICTr central Europe project

One module of the training programme also conveys basic knowledge about the ICTr-CE Interreg project, its primary goals and achieved project results. While these are not detailed again here, it is important to emphasise that the expertise gained by the booking centres focuses on the two main outcomes:

- the Participative ICTr Business Model, and
- the Innovative ICTr Cycling Product (respectively “Good Impact Cycling Product”).

This focus is essential, as booking centres are integral components of the participatory business model and bear significant responsibility for ensuring high-quality delivery of the Good Impact Cycling products.



## b. Official ICTr booking centre

The operation of an Official Booking Centre along EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail is based on a clearly defined set of legal, operational, and organisational requirements designed to ensure high-quality service delivery and the long-term sustainability of the ICTr cycling product. Booking Centres must comply with all national legal obligations for tour operators, including holding the necessary licences and insurance coverage to organise multi-day cycling tours, while also fulfilling the requirements of the EU Package Travel Directive. This framework establishes responsibilities for traveller protection, booking transparency, accurate information provision, and the safe and lawful delivery of all travel services.

In addition to these legal requirements, Booking Centres carry extensive operational duties throughout both the Project-Phase and the Full Operational-Phase. Their responsibilities include managing inquiries and bookings, coordinating regional service providers, ensuring quality management, implementing innovation components such as the carbon-footprint and impact-measurement systems, and providing long-term customer and partner support. Once the Full Operational-Phase begins, they assume further obligations defined in the licence usage contract with the EuroVelo 13 Partnership, including reporting, product development, B2B cooperation, and financial contributions that secure continued access to the EuroVelo brand and joint marketing activities.

The role of each Booking Centre is embedded in the broader EuroVelo 13 Partnership, which forms the strategic backbone of the participative ICTr Business Model. Booking Centres are expected to collaborate closely with the European Cyclists' Federation and regional partners, support marketing and communication activities, contribute to the development of Good Impact Cycling products, and share expertise across Pilot Areas and other EuroVelo routes. This cooperative approach ensures consistency in quality, strengthens the trail's visibility, and contributes to the long-term success of the Iron Curtain Trail.

The following chapters outline the content of each module in detail and describe their relevance for the successful implementation of Booking Centre operations.

### I. Legal requirements and liabilities

The role of an Official Booking Centre along the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail requires full compliance with the national legal framework governing tour operators. Each participating organisation must demonstrate that it holds all legally mandated licenses and insurance policies necessary to operate as a tour operator and to organise multi-day cycling tours in its respective country. This includes fulfilling the statutory obligations related to consumer protection, safety standards, and the lawful provision of travel services.

In addition to possessing the required legal authorisations, the Booking Centre is obligated to comply fully with the EU Package Travel Directive, which prescribes rules on booking transparency, traveller rights, liability for service provision, and traveller protection in the event of insolvency or non-performance. The Official Booking Centre must ensure that all information provided to travellers is accurate, complete, and aligned with the Directive, and must be able to support customers throughout the entire duration of their



journey. This includes timely communication, proper handling of booking changes or cancellations, and adherence to all conditions of carriage and service.

The Official Booking Centre also carries operational responsibilities that create additional liabilities. It must ensure proper management of service providers, including accommodation partners and mobility companies, and verify that these partners comply with national legal requirements, such as licensing, hygiene regulations, and safety standards. The Booking Centre remains responsible for the quality and safety of these services, as well as for ensuring that luggage transfers, passenger transport, and accommodation standards are delivered reliably and securely.

Upon entering the “Full Operational-Phase” after project completion, the Booking Centre assumes further ongoing obligations defined in the licence agreement with the EuroVelo 13 Partnership. These responsibilities include

- acting as an official information hub,
- undertaking continuous product development,
- fulfilling reporting duties, and
- participating in B2B reselling activities.

The Centre is also liable for the financial contribution required to maintain the rights to the brand, network membership, and joint marketing activities. These liabilities are contractually defined and must be upheld for the Centre to retain its official status.

Overall, the legal requirements and liabilities of an Official Booking Centre combine statutory obligations of a licensed tour operator with the operational and contractual duties defined by the ICTr organisational framework. This ensures that customer safety, service quality, compliance with European regulations, and long-term stewardship of the Iron Curtain Trail are all upheld to a consistently high standard.

## II. Tasks, duties, responsibilities and benefits of an “Official ICTr booking centre”

The EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centre plays a central operational role within the ICTr organisational model and is entrusted with a set of tasks and responsibilities that ensure the functioning, quality, and long-term sustainability of the Iron Curtain Trail product.

During the “Project-Phase” (March 2025 to February 2026), the Booking Centre is responsible for

- delivering sophisticated inquiry and booking management services,
- coordinating local service providers, and
- quality management across all involved stakeholders.



It is additionally required to

- implement project-related tasks linked to the development and
- testing of the innovative ICTr Cycling product, including the carbon footprint and impact measurement systems, as part of the capacity-building process supervised by Trail Angels.

Following completion of the project, in the “Full Operational-Phase”, the Booking Centre assumes further long-term responsibilities. These include serving as an information hub for the EuroVelo 13 Partnership, ensuring both customer and service-provider support, and engaging in ongoing product development to strengthen the cycling tourism offer along the Iron Curtain Trail. The Booking Centre is also responsible for regular evaluation and reporting to the EuroVelo 13 Partnership and for managing B2B reselling cooperation with international travel agencies. Moreover, it is obliged to contribute financially to the EuroVelo 13 Partnership in exchange for continued use of the official licence, participation in the EuroVelo network, and access to joint marketing and branding activities.

The role also entails specific organisational and operational duties that support the overall Participative ICTr business model. The Booking Centre must work collaboratively with project partners, allocate staff resources for capacity-building and specialised training, follow clearly defined booking-management procedures, and ensure that all technical equipment required for operating an e-travel booking platform is available and functional. Furthermore, the Booking Centre must demonstrate a willingness to take responsibility for the ICTr product, acting in line with the shared business model for the Iron Curtain Trail.

In return for fulfilling these tasks and responsibilities, the Booking Centre gains several strategic **benefits**. It is officially branded as an “**EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centre**” and recognised as a partner of the EuroVelo network.

- The Centre receives a prominent presence on the official EuroVelo website in all project languages and
- benefits from joint marketing activities implemented by the EuroVelo Partnership and the European Cyclists’ Federation (ECF) across digital, print, and social media channels.
- It also enjoys prioritised presentation of its bookable cycling packages on the EuroVelo website.
- During the project period, the Booking Centre is additionally offered participation in a joint guided group tour, with all associated costs covered by the project.

After entering the “Full Operational-Phase”, the Booking Centre continues to benefit from increasing customer flows generated by the improved visibility and strengthened market position resulting from the ICTr project outputs.

### III. EuroVelo 13 partnership

The EuroVelo 13 Partnership represents the central organisational structure for the Participative ICTr Business Model. This alliance for the further development of EV13 - the Iron Curtain Trail - goes far beyond the management contract between regional tourism organisations and the European Cyclists’ Federation.



With the personnel and financial resources made available, it ensures the achievement of the objectives defined for the Participative ICTr Business Model.

For the booking centres, it is particularly important in this context to understand the mechanisms of the partnership, to actively contribute to the processes related to the further development of the long-distance cycling route, and to play an active role in shaping the concrete cooperation with the EV13 Partnership. The training sessions in this area therefore focus primarily on practice-oriented management tasks, which can be summarised as follows:

- Shared responsibility for shaping the licence usage contract concluded between the EV13 Partnership and the respective booking centre.
- Close coordination with the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) and the members of the EV13 Partnership in fulfilling the licence usage contract.
- Support of European Cyclists' Federation with reference to the marketing activities of the EV13 - Iron Curtain Trail.
- Close coordination with the European Cyclists' Federation and the members of the EV13 Partnership in communicating the Good Impact Cycling products and the supported projects within the Good Impact Programme to end customers.
- Evaluation of and proposals for improving both the Good Impact Cycling products and the cornerstones of the Participative ICTr Business Model.
- Willingness to provide expertise for transferring the experience gained to the Pilot Area North and to other EuroVelo routes.

In conclusion, it should be highlighted that this module—and the resulting awareness among the booking centres regarding the need for intensive and cooperative collaboration with the EuroVelo 13 Partnership—constitutes one of the key prerequisites for the overall success of the business model.



## c. ICTr product development, management and implementation

### I. Product development

Ongoing product development is among the key tasks of any Trail Information and Booking Centre. This priority is even more relevant for the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centre, as designing Good Impact Cycling products entails very specific challenges.

The selected specialised tour operators for the booking centres are companies with long-standing, product-specific experience, including in product development. The approach taken during the training sessions was therefore to carefully link the tour operators' undoubtedly existing expertise with the particular challenges mentioned above. This means building on the operators' competencies while adding the skills required for the development and delivery of the Good Impact Cycling products.

In summary, the sub-modules for an integrated product development approach for Good Impact Cycling products, including a brief description of their key elements, can be outlined as follows:

#### **Experience Design**

Focus on the cycling experience along the original route of the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail; structured into daily stages achievable for average cyclists; emphasis on integrating points of interest related to the core narrative of the "Iron Curtain"; focus on individualised experience, including flexible arrival dates, bookable from one person upwards, and options for accommodation and food.

#### **Service Design**

Focus on providing defined services for individual cycle travellers under a "low-carbon design"; integration of bookable experiences along the long-distance cycle route that relate to the "Iron Curtain" core narrative; clear priority on involving local SMEs in the business model.

#### **Sustainability Design**

Focus on enhancing the product design through evidence-based sustainability tools such as the Carbon Footprint (Carmacal Footprint Calculator), the Impact Score (Impact Measurement System), and the calculation and inclusion of the Sustainability Contribution for the Good Impact Programme.

#### **Implementation Design**

Focus on implementing the developed Good Impact Cycling products into the provided online Trail Information, Booking and Management System "Bookyourtrail", as well as integrating the offers into the official web platform of the EuroVelo network at eurovelo.com.



## II. Service provider requirements and international quality standards

The ICTr organisational framework defines a clear set of requirements that all service providers involved in the delivery of the Iron Curtain Trail cycling packages must meet. These requirements ensure that the Official Booking Centres can maintain a consistent and reliable service chain and uphold the international quality standards expected in a transnational tourism product. According to the evaluation criteria for the bookable cycling packages, accommodation providers, mobility service companies, and additional service partners must comply with national legal regulations and fulfil standards of safety, professionalism, and customer care.

**Accommodation providers** are required to hold the legally mandated operating licences in their respective countries. They must comply with hygiene regulations and deliver accommodation conditions that meet recognised hospitality standards. The ICTr framework emphasises the preference for small-scale, family-run accommodations located along the official EV13 route within the designated Pilot Areas. These accommodations are expected to provide reliable service quality and, wherever possible, offer food options based on natural and local products to support regional value creation and sustainable tourism practices.

**Mobility and luggage-transfer companies** must also demonstrate compliance with national legislation governing passenger transport. This includes holding the required transport licences, maintaining their vehicles in good technical condition, and ensuring that drivers prioritise guest safety and demonstrate professional conduct. Luggage transfers must be carried out with due care, guaranteeing secure handling and appropriate storage of customer belongings throughout the journey. These expectations reflect international safety and quality standards for mobility services within the tourism sector.

The ICTr model additionally requires that all service providers demonstrate reliability, customer-orientation, and operational professionalism. Even where providers do not submit detailed documentation, the evaluation procedure assumes compliance with national standard regulations and the general principles of international tourism service quality. This includes punctual delivery of services, transparent communication, and the ability to respond effectively to traveller needs during the tour.

Overall, the requirements ensure that all service providers engaged by an Official ICTr Booking Centre contribute to a consistent, safe, and high-quality cycling experience along the Iron Curtain Trail. These standards serve as the operational foundation for the participative ICTr Business Model and support the long-term development of a sustainable, internationally competitive cycling tourism product.

## III. Request and Booking Management along the defined Customer Journey

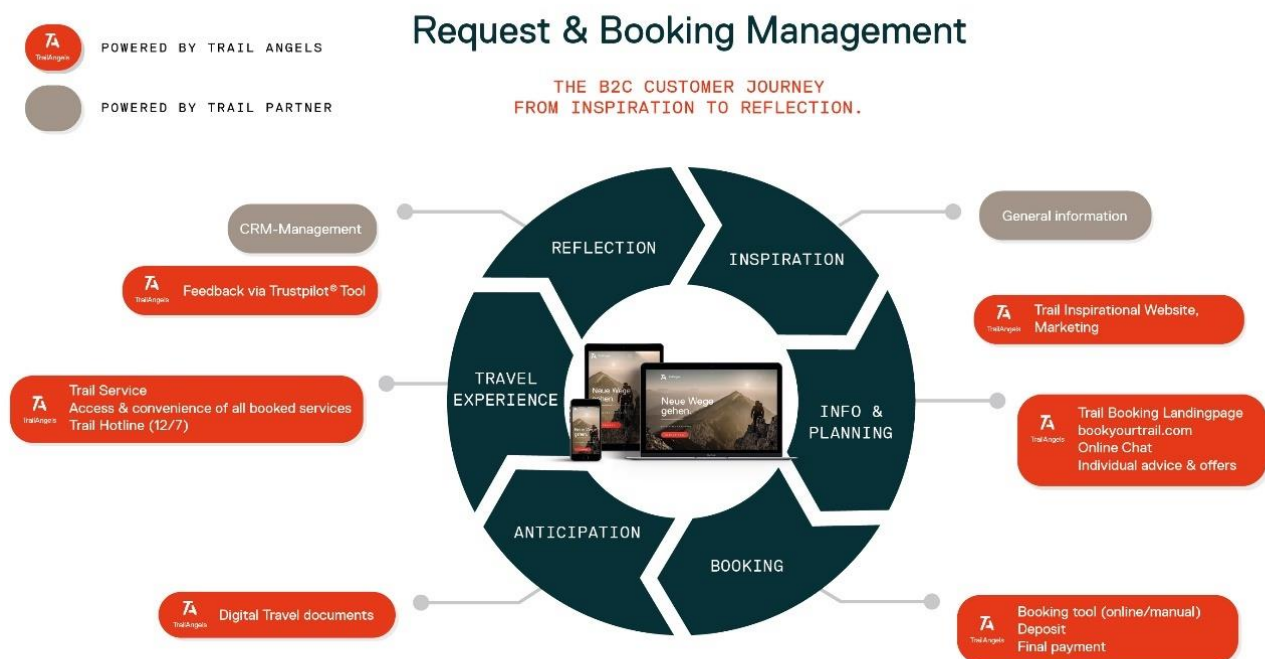
The operational framework for the Iron Curtain Trail Booking Centres is built upon two interlinked process landscapes that together ensure a seamless and high-quality delivery of the ICTr product.



- On the one hand, the Request & Booking Management represents the B2C Customer Journey and describes the structured sequence of interactions that guide travellers from their initial inspiration through planning, booking and anticipation, into their on-route experience and final reflection. This journey illustrates how the Booking Centre accompanies and supports customers across all stages, ensuring legally compliant procedures, reliable service provision and a consistently positive travel experience.
- On the other hand, the Service Provider Management follows a B2B Customer Journey that defines how the Booking Centre collaborates with accommodation partners, mobility providers and other service suppliers. This process ensures that all partners are properly informed, contractually onboarded, operationally prepared and continuously evaluated. Through this coordinated workflow, the Booking Centre maintains service readiness, quality assurance and a stable network of reliable providers along the Iron Curtain Trail.

Together, these two journeys form the operational backbone of the Eurovelo 13 Booking Centre model and provide the procedural clarity required for both customer-facing excellence and efficient cooperation within the wider service network.

### Request & Booking Management - the B2C Customer Journey



BOOKYOURTRAIL® CREATED & POWERED BY TRAIL ANGELS

### 1. Inspiration

At the beginning of the customer journey, travellers enter the inspiration phase, where they first encounter the Iron Curtain Trail as a potential travel destination. This phase is supported by the European Cyclists' Federation and the EuroVelo Partnership 13 - partners. During this stage, the focus lies on



generating interest, distributing high-quality content, and positioning the Iron Curtain Trail as an attractive and meaningful travel experience. Customers typically engage with visual storytelling, route descriptions, and thematic travel ideas that motivate them to explore the offer further.

## 2. Information & Planning

Once interest has been generated, customers transition to the information and planning stage. Here, the Booking Centre provides detailed travel information. At this stage, customers seek clarity regarding travel packages, route details, services included, and logistical aspects. The Booking Centre plays a key role by responding promptly to inquiries, offering tailored advice, and helping travellers identify the package most suitable to their needs. This phase is decisive for converting initial inspiration into a concrete travel plan.

## 3. Booking

During the booking stage, customers confirm their travel decision and initiate the formal booking process. The Booking Centre manages the deposit process, issues payment instructions, and ensures that all legal requirements—such as the terms of service under the EU Package Travel Directive—are communicated to the traveller. The clarity and reliability of this stage are essential for generating trust and ensuring compliance with legal and financial procedures.

## 4. Anticipation

The anticipation phase begins once the booking is confirmed and extends until the start of the journey. During this period, the Booking Centre provides customers with digital travel documents. These documents include itineraries, accommodation details, emergency contacts, and additional travel information. The Booking Centre also ensures that all booked services are ready for delivery and that any questions or adjustments raised by the customer in the run-up to the journey are addressed promptly. This stage supports customer confidence and prepares them for a smooth travel experience.

## 5. Travel Experience

During the journey itself, the Booking Centre ensures access and availability of all booked services. This includes customer support via the Trail Hotline, which operates 12 hours per day, seven days a week, and provides assistance in case of logistical issues, last-minute changes, or travel disruptions. The operational focus of this phase lies in service reliability, safety assurance, and responsive problem-solving. The Booking Centre thereby ensures that the customer is never left without guidance or support during their travel along the Iron Curtain Trail.

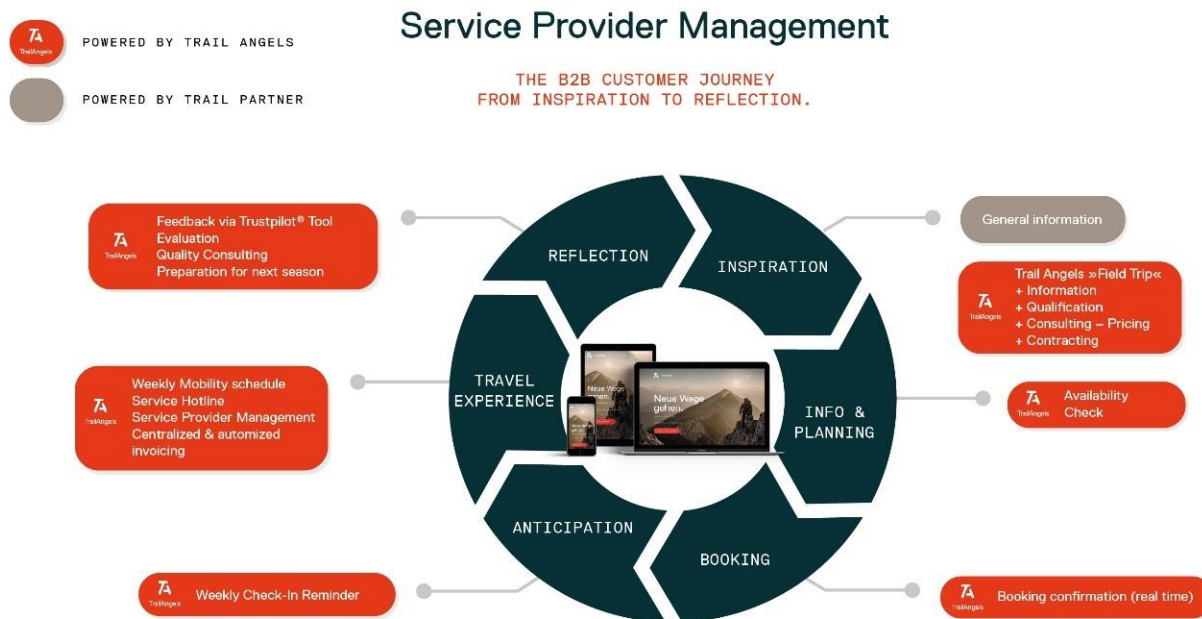
## 6. Reflection

After the journey is completed, customers enter the reflection phase, which is supported through structured follow-up processes. Trail Angels manages feedback collection via the Trustpilot® Tool, and recommend that the Booking Centre also use this or implement a similar tool. This feedback is then used to improve service quality, optimise products, and strengthen long-term customer engagement. The



reflection phase also plays an important role in closing the customer journey, enhancing customer satisfaction, and securing positive recommendations for future travellers.

## Service Provider Management - the B2B Customer Journey



### 1. Inspiration

The service provider journey begins with the inspiration phase, where potential or existing partners are introduced to the Iron Curtain Trail product and the operational framework of the ICTr Booking Centre system. EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centre supports this phase by offering general information and conducting field trips that provide insight into the route, customer expectations, and required service standards. This initial engagement helps service providers understand the scope, quality principles, and collaborative requirements of joining the ICTr network and motivates them to participate in a highly organised and internationally marketed tourism product.

### 2. Information & Planning

In the information and planning stage, service providers receive detailed guidance on the standards, pricing structures, and contractual requirements that govern cooperation within the ICTr model. EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centre delivers targeted consulting, supports providers in pricing and product definition, and accompanies them through the necessary qualification steps. An important tool in this stage is the availability check, which allows for real-time coordination of capacities and alignment between service providers and the Booking Centre. This stage ensures that all providers are fully informed and operationally prepared before they become part of the active booking process.



### 3. Booking

Once a service provider has been fully onboarded, the booking stage focuses on the confirmation and allocation of services requested by travellers. Bookings are transmitted in real time using the centralised system managed by EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centre. This guarantees that service providers receive timely and accurate information regarding upcoming reservations, customer requirements, and operational instructions. The booking stage forms the operational backbone of service coordination and ensures that all contracted services are properly assigned and documented.

### 4. Anticipation

During the anticipation stage, service providers receive weekly check-in reminders from EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centre. These reminders ensure that all accommodation providers, mobility companies, and other service partners are fully prepared to deliver their services in accordance with the travel schedule. This process strengthens operational reliability by confirming availability, verifying readiness, and preventing potential service gaps before travellers arrive. The anticipation stage is therefore essential for ensuring smooth travel execution.

### 5. Travel Experience

During the travel experience phase, EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centre provides weekly mobility schedules and ensures service delivery oversight through a centralised management structure. Service providers also gain access to a dedicated service hotline to resolve operational questions quickly and efficiently. The booking centre supports the coordination of customer needs in real time and ensures that all service partners deliver reliably and according to recognised international quality standards. Centralised and automated invoicing further streamlines administrative processes and ensures that service partners are compensated correctly and efficiently.

### 6. Reflection

Following the completion of the travel season or individual customer stays, the reflection stage enables a structured evaluation of service quality. EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centre collects and analyses customer feedback through the Trustpilot® tool and prepares evaluations that help providers understand their performance and identify improvement opportunities. This phase may also include quality consulting sessions to support service upgrades and the preparation of providers for the next travel season. The reflection phase thus closes the quality loop and ensures long-term continuous improvement within the ICTr service provider network.



## IV. Technical implementation of the Good Impact Cycling Products

### Technical Design of the Digital Solution

The technical design of the digital solution is based on two central components that together provide the foundation for the presentation, management, and dissemination of the Good Impact Cycling products.

- The first component is the upgrade of the online trail information, booking, and management system [Bookyourtrail.com](https://www.bookyourtrail.com), operated by Trail Angels, which ensures that Good Impact Cycling products are easily and digitally accessible.
- The second component is the integration of the product portfolio into the official EuroVelo platform, [eurovelo.com](https://www.eurovelo.com), operated by the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF), which guarantees broad dissemination and a strong presence in the European cycling tourism market. Together, these two elements form the digital backbone of the Good Impact Cycling Product ecosystem and enable smooth interoperability with sustainability assessment tools.

### Bookyourtrail.com

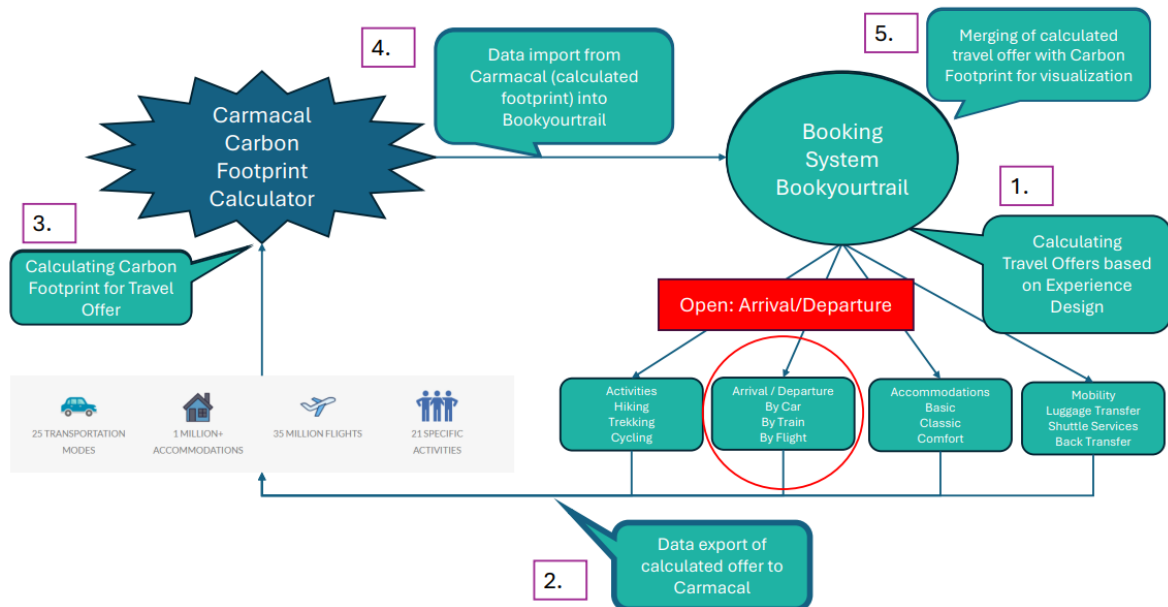
The technical upgrade of [Bookyourtrail.com](https://www.bookyourtrail.com) focuses on the integration of three key sustainability-related functionalities:

- **Carmacal Carbon Footprint Calculator**, enabling automated carbon footprint calculations for travel products.
- **Impact Score generated by the Impact Measurement System (IMS)**, enabling automated impact score calculations.
- **Pricing logic for the sustainability contribution**, included within the final published travel price.

These enhancements allow for to the greatest extent possible automated, evidence-based sustainability assessments integrated directly into the product configuration and booking workflow.

### Technical Design

The design for the integration of carbon footprint and impact score calculations follow a streamlined workflow structured around five main steps:



### Step 1: Generation of the Travel Offer

Bookyourtrail creates structured travel offers by combining predefined experience-design elements such as accommodation category (Basic, Classic, Comfort), mobility services, and additional services including cultural or activity-based experiences.

### Step 2: Export of Structured Data

The structured data are exported into the sustainability tools, either to the Carmacal Carbon Footprint Calculator or the internally developed Excel-based calculator, and to the IMS. The export follows a standardised format to ensure interoperability.

### Step 3: Calculation of Sustainability Indicators

The tools calculate the carbon footprint and the corresponding impact score based on the exported parameters. The resulting datasets are returned to Bookyourtrail in a format prepared for seamless re-import.

### Step 4: Re-Import and Integration

Bookyourtrail merges the travel offer with the carbon-footprint and impact-score results. The system visualises these indicators transparently within the booking interface, allowing customers to understand the sustainability profile of their chosen package.

### Step 5: Calculation of the Sustainability Contribution

A tailored digital tool calculates the sustainability contribution for each travel offer and subsequently for each booking. This value is integrated into the customer-facing price and contributes to the underlying sustainability strategy.



### Benefits of the Methodology

This structured methodology ensures that sustainability data are integrated seamlessly into the product presentation and the customer booking process. Customers receive clear, transparent, and comprehensible information about the environmental impact of their travel choices. Standardised data formats reduce the need for time-intensive database adaptations and secure efficient communication between systems. Additionally, the design remains flexible, allowing for future updates, new data standards, or evolving sustainability tools.

### Future Development Prospects

In the long term, a fully integrated database solution that merges Bookyourtrail or comparable booking systems with the Carbon Footprint Calculator and the IMS into a single platform represents a promising development scenario. Achieving such integration would require significant resources and agile software development efforts, but it would offer substantial potential for safeguarding and further developing the project results.



## d. Innovative ICTr Cycling product

### I. Goals, mission and vision

The implementation of the Innovative ICTr Cycling Product, as defined in the requirements of the Application Form, represents one of the central outputs of the ICTr-CE project in the form of the “Good Impact Cycling Products”. From the perspective of the Work Package Leader, Good Impact Cycling constitutes a genuine innovation within the tourism market, introducing new approaches to product development in several respects. At first glance, these new approaches - particularly from the viewpoint of a tour operator - do not necessarily promise immediate economic benefit, but rather appear to entail additional operational workload.

Within the framework of the specialised trainings, it is therefore essential to inform the booking centre teams about this innovative product portfolio, to inspire them, and to engage them as key contributors to its high-quality implementation. Consequently, it was important to communicate the goals, mission, and long-term vision associated with Good Impact Cycling.

#### Goals

The joint objective of the Good Impact Cycling Products is to develop bookable cycling tour packages that feature a measurably low ecological footprint (carbon footprint) and, additionally, reflect the overall sustainability performance of the cycling product through the evidence-based Impact Score (Impact Measurement System). By integrating both indicators, a sustainability contribution is calculated and allocated—through the Good Impact Programme—to selected ecological and social projects along the long-distance cycle route.

#### Mission

With the Good Impact Cycling Products, we are pioneers and designers of evidence-based sustainable products in cycling tourism, which we offer along EuroVelo 13 - the Iron Curtain Trail, one of the longest long-distance cycle routes in Europe.

#### Vision

With the Good Impact Cycling Products, we will effectively transform cycling tourism towards greater sustainability across all EuroVelo long-distance cycle routes in Europe, thereby contributing to a greener Europe.

## II. Carmacal Footprint calculator

The specialised training provided to the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres placed a strong emphasis on enabling staff to work confidently and independently with the Carmacal Carbon Footprint Calculator, which plays a central role in determining the environmental footprint of cycling tour packages. The training introduced Carmacal as a comprehensive web-based tool designed for calculating the full CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of a trip, covering all key components such as transportation, accommodation, meals and activities.

During the sessions, the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres staff learned that Carmacal incorporates detailed emission factors for a wide range of transport modes—including flights, trains, buses, cars and ferries—enabling precise calculations tailored to each day of a tour. The training also highlighted that the system includes over 550,000 accommodation options, differentiated meal types,



and 47 activity categories, making it possible to develop highly accurate CO<sub>2</sub> profiles for even complex itineraries.

The training guided EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres staff step-by-step through the process of creating a full travel product within Carmacal. They practiced entering all trip components day by day, including overnight stays, transport distances, meals and planned activities. Trainers emphasised how Carmacal automatically calculates the daily and total emissions of a trip and how these emissions can be reviewed and compared across different versions of a tour. Through hands-on exercises, participants learned how to analyse these results in order to identify the components that contribute most to emissions, such as motorised luggage transfers or certain meal options.

In addition to the web-based Carmacal platform, the training included instruction on the Excel-based digital tool developed by CROST, which mirrors Carmacal's underlying emission factors and logic but functions offline. The EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres staff learned how to use this digital taylor-made Tool (Excel) to enter transport, activity, accommodation, and meal data into predefined worksheets. The digital taylor-made Tool (Excel) then automatically generated total and daily CO<sub>2</sub> values, allowing staff to work more efficiently when preparing or modifying tours. The training showed how this offline tool can be used both as an alternative and as a cross-check against Carmacal calculations.

Another part of the training focused on manual CO<sub>2</sub> measurement during a trip. The EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres staff were instructed in documenting distances, accommodation types and activities, using GPS or mobile apps where needed. They were shown how to look up emission factors and perform manual multiplications to verify or compare against Carmacal data. This ensured that booking centre staff would be able to assess emissions even in situations where digital tools are not available.

Throughout the training, practical examples were used to illustrate how variations in traveller type or optional services affect emissions. For instance, replacing an e-bike with a conventional bicycle reduces emissions, while certain optional services—such as luggage transport or return transfers—can significantly increase the CO<sub>2</sub> footprint of a tour. Participants gained experience adjusting these variables and observing how Carmacal reflects the changes in its output.

Overall, the training enabled EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres staff to competently apply the Carmacal Footprint Calculator in their daily work. They learned to calculate full emission profiles for cycling tour packages, adjust input parameters, compare alternative tour designs, and validate results manually when necessary. This provided the booking centres with the technical foundation needed to manage environmentally transparent and data-driven cycling products along the EuroVelo 13.

### III. Impact Measurement system

The training delivered to the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres included a dedicated module on the Impact Measurement System (IMS), a tailor-made digital tool developed to assess the sustainability performance of cycling tour products. The purpose of this training was to equip EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres staff with the skills necessary to collect, verify and evaluate sustainability-related information for each tour in a consistent and structured manner.

The training began with an introduction to the IMS as a practical and product-level evaluation system combining ecological and socio-economic indicators. The IMS was presented as a tool that measures the impacts of a cycling tour on the environment, local communities, and the regional economy. Trainers stressed that the IMS works at the level of individual tour packages and not at the destination level, ensuring that each travel product can be assessed on its own merits.



A central part of the training was devoted to understanding the six global indicator areas that form the structure of the IMS. These indicators include:

- Booking centre services,
- Accommodation,
- Food and drinks,
- Transport on site,
- Activities, and
- Tour operators and guides.

Each area contains multiple sub-indicators that reflect aspects such as sustainability certification, social fairness, local sourcing, safety, cultural value and benefits to local communities. Trainees were taught how these indicators contribute to an overall sustainability score through a weighted scoring methodology.

The training continued with detailed instruction on data collection procedures, which are essential for completing the IMS assessment. EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres learned how to gather information from service providers, particularly accommodation partners. They were shown how to conduct personal interviews, retrieve data from tour scripts and follow structured questionnaires. Trainers also emphasised the importance of building a complete and reliable database of service providers that feed into the development of new or improved tour products.

Another important element of the training focused on data verification. EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres staff were instructed on the necessity of validating self-declared data from service providers by performing on-site checks or conducting interviews. This step was highlighted as crucial to ensure accuracy and credibility in the sustainability evaluation. The training encouraged booking centres to approach verification in a systematic and transparent way to maintain the integrity of the IMS scoring process.

Following data collection and verification, participants were trained in how to apply the IMS during product development. They learned how to use the available data to identify the accommodation partners and service providers that contribute the strongest sustainability performance. Trainers guided them through the process of selecting higher-scoring partners where possible and integrating guides and other service providers into the assessment. The training demonstrated how booking centres can adjust or refine existing tour itineraries to reflect more sustainable choices and improve the overall sustainability score of the product.

A further element of the training addressed the communication and interpretation of IMS results. Booking centres learned how to interpret the generated sustainability scores and how the IMS output can be used internally to compare different service providers and cycling packages. While the detailed result papers are primarily intended for internal use, the training also explained that simplified versions may be shared with tourists if needed and, upon request, with regional destination management organisations—always in compliance with GDPR regulations.

Overall, the training equipped the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres with the necessary competencies to operate the Impact Measurement System effectively. By mastering data collection, verification, assessment and interpretation, the booking centres gained the ability to evaluate sustainability performance systematically and apply these insights to strengthen the development and management of cycling tour products along the EuroVelo 13.

## IV. Good Impact Programme

The training for the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres included a dedicated section on the Good Impact Programme Contribution, which represents the financial mechanism linked to the



sustainability performance of each cycling tour product. During the training, the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres staff were introduced to the purpose and calculation logic of this contribution, which serves as a core component of the Good Impact Cycling concept. The contribution is designed to transform measurable environmental and sustainability outcomes into a financial commitment that supports ecological and social projects along the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail.

The training explained that the Good Impact Programme Contribution is calculated using two distinct elements:

1. The carbon footprint of the tour, expressed in kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub>, and
2. The sustainability performance, represented by the number of missing points compared to the maximum possible score in the underlying assessment framework.

Although the sustainability scoring framework itself was not the focus of this training module, participants were taught that the missing points contribute to the financial value of the Good Impact Programme Contribution.

For the carbon footprint component, the training outlined the project's predefined monetary valuation of emissions. The guideline sets the financial value of one tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> at €70, corresponding to €0.07 per kilogram. This conversion allows booking centres to translate the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of a cycling trip into a monetary figure that forms the first part of the contribution. Trainers used concrete examples during the sessions to demonstrate this conversion, showing participants how to apply the rate consistently across different tour types. For example, a tour generating 261 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> results in a carbon-based contribution of €18.27.

The second component of the calculation is based on the number of missing sustainability points, defined as the difference between the achieved score and the maximum score of 152 points. The financial value assigned to each missing point was set at € 0.50 during the programme's start-up phase. The training illustrated how this factor is applied. In the example used during the training, a tour that is 46 points below the maximum contributes € 23.00 through this component.

Booking centre staff were instructed in how to add both components together to arrive at the final Good Impact Programme Contribution. Using the example provided in the guideline, the combined total of €18.27 (carbon footprint) and €23.00 (sustainability gap) results in €41.27, which is then rounded to €41.00. The training emphasised clarity and consistency in applying this formula, ensuring that all booking centres calculate contributions uniformly across regions and tour types.

Further guidance during the training addressed the factors that may influence the final contribution. Participants learned that any change in optional services, accommodation selection, or traveller type may alter the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions or sustainability score, thereby affecting the final calculated amount. Examples presented during the training included the addition of luggage transport, the choice of travel modes for transfers, or changes to meal preferences, each of which can modify the underlying data used in the calculation. This enabled booking centres to understand the operational impact of service adjustments on the financial contribution.

The training also explained that the Good Impact Programme Contribution will support ecological or social projects along the EuroVelo 13 route. Until these investments formally begin in 2027, the contributions are held in trust by the respective non-profit organisations managing the pilot regions. While this part of the process is not directly managed by booking centres, it was introduced to provide context and reinforce the purpose of accurate calculations.

By the end of the module, booking centre staff were able to apply the calculation method confidently and understood how changes within a tour package influence the resulting contribution. The training ensured that all centres are equipped to implement the Good Impact Programme Contribution in a transparent and consistent manner, supporting the overarching goals of the Good Impact Cycling initiative.



## 4. Insights into the Transferability Action Plan for Pilot Area North

As has been noted on several occasions, the ICT-CE project, in accordance with the Application Form, established the foundations for developing both a Participatory ICTr Business Model and an Innovative ICTr Cycling Product in Pilot Area North (PL & DE) through methodological and empirical data collection (Desk Research, Field Trips). However, their concrete design and implementation were not part of the project scope.

To nonetheless facilitate such implementation after the end of the project and to provide a methodological guideline for this purpose, a Transferability Action Plan was developed for Pilot Area North. This Transferability Action Plan is presented here in the same form in which it was introduced to the teams of the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres.

Although the activities described within the Transferability Action Plan do not fall under the core responsibilities of the teams of the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres, it is advantageous for them to gain insight into the overarching system of licensed booking centres. This understanding also helps clarify that the expansion and intensification of this business model does not create new competition; rather, it strengthens the overall system and the benefits arising from it. EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail will only be able to unfold its full market potential and innovative power once the entire trail is covered by Official Booking Centres offering Good Impact Cycling products.

Accordingly, the training sessions first focused on the defined procedure for expanding the booking centre model to additional sections of the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail:

- Refinement of the requirements and criteria for applying as an Official Booking Centre, serving also as the basis for commissioning (point-based evaluation system)
- Public call for tender issued by the EV13 Partnership for delivering the defined services of an Official Booking Centre
- Awarding of this function to the best bidder (based on total points achieved) by the EV13 Partnership
- Signing of a licensing agreement for a duration of three years between the EV13 Partnership and the selected tour operator
- Completion of a mandatory training programme (comparable to the one presented here) to acquire the specific competencies required to manage Good Impact Cycling products
- Ongoing quality assurance and, if necessary, qualification measures carried out by the EV13 Partnership

Beyond this procedural overview and the presentation of the activities within the Transferability Action Plan (see subsequent sections), the training sessions also focused on fostering understanding of and identification with the **Participatory ICTr Business Model**. The more comprehensive and professional the service network of the EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail Official Booking Centres, including accessibility of Good Impact Cycling products, become, the more resilient and value-creating the Participatory ICTr Business Model will develop.

This evolution brings numerous benefits for the booking centres involved: knowledge transfer, participation in innovation, specialisation, improved positioning, differentiation and profiling, and



ultimately higher value creation. If these benefits are well understood, this perspective should continue to motivate and inspire tour operators - beyond the end of the project - to get involved in the Participatory ICTr Business Model.

## Overlook: Transferability Action Plan für Pilot Area North

### Introduction

In contrast to the Central and Southern pilot areas, the implementation of Good Impact Cycling products and the establishment of an Official Booking Centre are not mandatory requirements for Pilot Area North (Poland and Germany). Nevertheless, the solutions developed within the project can be transferred to this region, as the underlying data collection has been completed (Desk Research; Field Trips; Travel Report) and the Good Impact Cycling product architecture is designed to be scalable.

This chapter presents a structured and practical set of guidelines for transferring the project results tested in the Central and Southern pilot areas to Pilot Area North. The recommendations translate the fine-tuning insights from previous chapters into actionable steps tailored to the current conditions in the Northern region.

### 1. Establish the Organisational Preconditions

To ensure transferability, Pilot Area North should replicate the organisational foundations that proved essential for implementing the Participatory ICTr Business Model in the Central and Southern regions.

#### 1.1 Participation in the EuroVelo 13 Partnership

Pilot Area North should:

- ensure full representation of the Polish and German sections within the EuroVelo 13 Partnership;
- assign regional tourism organisations (DMOs or equivalent institutions) as official partners;
- commit staff resources, coordination capacity and financial contributions required for the three-year management cycle with ECF;
- align with the cooperation agreement established by ECF.

#### 1.2 Collaboration Framework with the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF)

ECF acts as the coordinator, technical secretariat, and lead organisation for communication and marketing. Pilot Area North should therefore establish regular communication procedures with ECF covering:

- strategic route development,
- branding and communication alignment,
- ongoing product and content development,
- preparatory steps for future Booking Centre integration,
- quality management procedures.

#### 1.3 Preparing the Ground for Future “Official Booking Centres”

Although no Booking Centre will be established during the current project period, Pilot Area North should prepare the necessary preconditions by:

- identifying potential tour operators with experience in cycling tourism;



- familiarising them with future licensing requirements, including standards and the training model used in the Central and Southern regions;
- ensuring early alignment with:
  - the Good Impact Cycling product architecture,
  - sustainability requirements,
  - Bookyourtrail.com and EuroVelo.com data workflows,
  - SME involvement procedures,
  - compliance and reporting obligations.

## 2. Implement the “Good Impact Cycling” Product Architecture

Pilot Area North should adopt the same product architecture, design principles, and sustainability frameworks successfully implemented in the Central and Southern pilot regions.

### 2.1 Adoption of the Core Architecture

The following structural elements should be applied:

- strict adherence to the original EuroVelo 13 route,
- a daily stage-based structure (with emphasis on 5- and 10-stage formats),
- development of at least:
  - one 10-stage long-distance product, and
  - two 5-stage short-distance products.

This approach ensures consistency with the dynamic packaging model used in the other pilot regions.

### 2.2 Application of Experience Design Standards

Pilot Area North should implement:

- the storytelling and heritage principles of the Iron Curtain Trail;
- integration of relevant Points of Interest, based on the completed desk research and field trips;
- the established service standards for individual cycling travel, including luggage transport, transfer services, 24/7 hotline access, and digital travel documents.

### 2.3 Integration of the Sustainability Framework

The following tools must be incorporated into final product development:

1. Carmacal Carbon Footprint Calculator
2. Impact Measurement System (IMS)
3. Good Impact Programme (GIP)

Pilot Area North should:

- structure all product data according to Bookyourtrail requirements,
- apply the sustainability scoring methodology,
- calculate a sustainability contribution for each travel offer,



- visualise carbon and impact scores within Bookyourtrail.com and EuroVelo.com.

### 3. Apply the Established Product Development Methodology

Pilot Areas South and Central successfully used a four-step development approach comprising Desk Research, Field Trips, Guided Explorer Tours, and a final Travel Report. As these steps have already been completed for Pilot Area North, the results can be efficiently utilised for product development without repeating earlier stages.

### 4. Prepare for Digital Integration

Digital integration is a key requirement for future scalability and must follow the technical model implemented in the Central and Southern pilot areas.

#### 4.1 Implementation of the Data Exchange Workflow

Pilot Area North should adopt the standardised workflow used in the other regions:

1. Create structured travel offers in Bookyourtrail.
2. Export data to the Carmacal calculation sheet and the IMS online tool.
3. Import the calculated carbon and impact scores.
4. Calculate and visualise the sustainability contribution.

This uniform workflow ensures comparability and seamless integration across regions.

#### 4.2 Preparation for Integration into EuroVelo.com

Pilot Area North should:

- adapt Good Impact Cycling product content to EuroVelo.com templates,
- contribute additional content (e.g. articles, updates),
- comply with ECF requirements for product presentation, branding, and sustainability communication.

### 5. Long-Term Scaling and Readiness for Booking Centre Activation

Although Good Impact Cycling products are not yet bookable in Pilot Area North and no Booking Centre is currently established, all structural conditions for future activation should be prepared.

#### 5.1 Regional SME Integration

Pilot Area North should:

- map accommodation providers, restaurants, bike services, and mobility partners;
- engage SMEs and introduce them to Good Impact standards;
- provide training on sustainability contribution communication and quality expectations.

#### 5.2 Governance Readiness

Governance preparation includes:

- full participation in the EV13 Partnership,
- ensuring data availability for product and sustainability development,



- establishing communication routines with ECF,
- identifying potential future Booking Centre candidates.

## 6. Recommended Implementation Timeline

### Phase 1 - Foundation (0-6 months)

- Join the EV13 Partnership.
- Identify SMEs and potential Booking Centre operators.
- Establish cooperation routines with ECF.

### Phase 2 - Product Development (6-12 months)

- Begin development based on the Good Impact Cycling product architecture.
- Create at least three Good Impact Cycling packages, mirroring the structure used in Central and South.
- Prepare structured data and content for Bookyourtrail and EuroVelo.com.

### Phase 3 - Technical and Sustainability Integration (6-12 months, parallel)

- Conduct carbon footprint and IMS calculations.
- Integrate sustainability scores and contributions into all packages.
- Prepare visualisation for Bookyourtrail and EuroVelo.com.

### Phase 4 - Pre-Commercial Readiness (12-18 months)

- Evaluate and finalise the Good Impact Cycling product design.
- Align with ECF standards for marketing and communication.
- Prepare for future activation of Booking Centre operations.

## Final Summary

The step-by-step guidelines included in the Transferability Action Plan for Pilot Area North provide a clear and actionable blueprint for transferring the solutions developed in the Central and Southern pilot regions. Successful replication requires:

- establishing the organisational foundations (EV13 Partnership, cooperation with ECF, future Booking Centre),
- adopting the Good Impact Cycling product architecture,
- integrating sustainability scoring tools (Carmacal, IMS, GIP),
- preparing structured data for Bookyourtrail and EuroVelo.com, and
- strengthening SME networks and readiness conditions.

These guidelines ensure complete transferability and scalability not only for Pilot Area North but also for the entire EuroVelo 13 - Iron Curtain Trail. Long-term implementation will require sustained commitment and adequate resources, but the strategic foundations for future expansion are fully in place.



## 5. Annexes

### I. Detailed selection criteria of open invitation

The company with the best score wins the open invitation of each Pilot Area. The following criteria are used for the ranking:

<b>The Company and references</b>	<b>30 points</b>
<p>The company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The interested party has all national legal requirements (licenses, insurances) to run a tour operator and to organize multi-day cycling tours.</li> <li>The Headquarter or branch office is in one of the countries of the pilot area.</li> <li>Sustainability certification based on an international or at least national label</li> <li>The interested party is experienced in booking management and respect and follows the EU Package travel directives.</li> <li>Sufficient English talking staff resources are available for the capacity building as well as the specific trainings on the job.</li> </ul>	15 points (max.)
<p>References &amp; USP of the company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The interested party is experienced in cycling tourism</li> <li>A high commitment to work together with the Innovative ICTr Cycling project partners is required.</li> <li>Willingness to be included in a general business model for the Iron Curtain Trail, taking responsibility for the product in its entirety.</li> </ul>	15 points (max.)
<b>Design of the bookable cycling package for individuals along the ICTr</b>	<b>70 points</b>
<p>Experience Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Route is along the designated area, Pilot Area</li> <li>Focus on attractiveness of the bookable cycling Package</li> <li>Low carbon experience design</li> </ul>	30 points (max.)
<p>Included services, selected service providers</p> <p>Accommodations &amp; food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overnight stays in official designated accommodations along the Iron Curtain Trail (EuroVelo 13, Pilot Area); small scale family run preferred</li> <li>The owner has a national legal requirement (license) to run an accommodation. Hygiene standards must be observed.</li> <li>Food - natural and local products as much as possible</li> </ul> <p>Mobility services &amp; luggage transfer</p>	25 points (max.)



<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The company has a national legal requirement (license) to provide shuttle services</li><li>• The busses/cars for the passenger transport are in good condition and are maintained regularly</li><li>• The driver drives carefully and is concerned about the safety of the guests</li><li>• Luggage transfers by car: The luggage must be handled well and be stored safely</li><li>• Further services, starter kit (optional)</li></ul>	
<p>Condition for travellers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Price performance per person for individual cycling tour</li><li>• Arrival day can be selected flexible by the customer along the designated travel time</li><li>• Terms of services are inline with the EU package travel directives</li></ul>	15 points (max.)



## II. D1.3.1 Integrated product development of ICTr for pilot testing in pilot areas



D1.3.1 - Integrated  
product development



### III. Output 2.1 - Impact measurement system for cycling tourism product



O2.1\_Impact  
Measurement System



## IV. Output 2.3 - ICTr Good Impact Programme



O2.3 ICTr Good  
Impact programme.pdf



## V. Good Impact Cycling Guideline



ICT-CE\_Booking  
Center - Good Impact



## VI. Calculation Good Impact Contribution (Excel)



ICT-CE\_Calculation  
Good Impact Contribu