

D.5.3.4 WEBSITE FOR CYCLE TOURISM IN DUBROVNIK- NERETVA COUNTY

Working Package n:	WP5 Developing tools and harmonizing services for a sustainable intermodal mobility
Activity (n. and description):	5.3 Enhancing green transport modalities and the interconnections from the nodes and the cycling axis
Deliverable (n. and description):	5.3.4. No. 1 Website for Cycle Tourism in Dubrovnik-Neretva County
Responsible Partner:	PP11
Status:	Final
Deadline (as from the original AF):	11/2022
Finalized on:	11/2022

1. Background, scope and description of the pilot action

Cycle tourism at the European level represents a rapidly growing trend with more than 60 million active cyclists in Europe. The possibility of developing and consolidating the cycle tourism offer at the level of Dubrovnik-Neretva County is also recognized by the Department for entrepreneurship, tourism and sea of the County. Cycling tourism development in Dubrovnik-Neretva County is faced with many challenges mainly due to its natural features and infrastructural restrictions. Thanks to the Operational plan of cycle tourism development (see D.5.3.2 of the MIMOSA project) and active communication with the stakeholders carried out during its preparation the challenges, needs and gaps are identified.

The Operational Plan of cycle tourism development is a strategic document focused on proposing measures (actions) in Dubrovnik-Neretva County that aim to develop modern and safe bike infrastructure, create supporting services for cyclists, and promote cycling as an alternative transportation mode for both tourists and local people.

One of the activities in the MIMOSA project envisaged to be carried out in the area of Dubrovnik-Neretva County is represented by the present pilot action, which envisages the creation and maintenance of the cycle tourism website in the area of Dubrovnik-Neretva County. The website includes creating the structure and content of the site, its design, basic identity, design and programming of the site. The website includes all bicycle paths and info points in the area of Dubrovnik-Neretva County.

2. Implementation of the pilot action (including a description of the externalized services/supplies/works)

One of the recommendations of the Operational plan for the development of cycle tourism for Dubrovnik-Neretva County was the creation of a website for cycle tourism for the area of our county. After the signed contract with the contractor, working meetings were held for stakeholders in cycle tourism, where different levels of development of cycle paths in the Dubrovnik-Neretva County and different approaches to the development of paths by tourist boards, local self-government units and cycling clubs were determined. Taking into account different approaches to the level of development of cycle tourism, the relief of the county, and the location and characteristics of individual cycle paths, a uniform approach and presentation of cycle paths were agreed upon.

The most extensive work was related to the collection of data and the creation of a uniform representation of the existing bicycle paths. Also, the formation of a base of potential bicycle paths, through further investment and equipment, is planned for the future.

The website is the result of close cooperation between representatives of the Dubrovnik-Neretva County and tourist boards and cycling clubs. Everyone contributed to the implementation by sharing knowledge and available information.

In addition to the creation of the website itself, this activity resulted in a Working group with the goal of further development of cycle tourism and bicycle paths in the area of Dubrovnik-Neretva County. The working group consists of representatives of the Dubrovnik-Neretva County, tourist boards and cycling clubs.

When creating the website, all the recommendations of the INTERREG Italy-Croatia Programme and the settings necessary for the proper operation of the website were taken into account. Transparency and special measures for the use of the website were also taken care of. The page is endowed with functionalities that encompass the possibility for the user to select the font size in three variants to allow adaptation for visually impaired people.

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<https://mimosa.edubrovnik.org/>



3. Information about stakeholders role/involvement

Tourist boards and cycling clubs have provided information about trails and tours related to our county. Furthermore, tourist boards have provided insight into the services available to cyclists, such as info points, services, etc.

Tourist boards provided information on events, details of promotional tools used and other tourist activities. Cycling clubs provided information and dates on how the infrastructure was aligned with the needs, habits, preferences of cyclists and other data for new potential cycling routes.

The following participated in the creation of the Dubrovnik-Neretva County cycle tourism website:

- Blato municipality Tourist board
- City of Dubrovnik Tourist board
- City of Korčula Tourist board
- City of Metković municipality Tourist board
- City of Opuzen Tourist board
- City of Ploče Tourist board
- Croatian Cycling Federation
- Cycling club Konavle
- Cycling club Metković
- Cycling club Pedala
- Cycling club Relaks
- Dubrovačko primorje municipality Tourist board
- Dubrovnik-Neretva Tourist board
- Janjina municipality Tourist board
- Konavle municipality Tourist board
- Lastovo municipality Tourist board
- Lumbarda municipality Tourist board
- Mljet municipality Tourist board
- Orebić municipality Tourist board
- Public institution National park Mljet
- Public institution Nature park Lastovo islands
- Regional Development Agency of Dubrovnik-Neretva County
- Slivno municipality Tourist board
- Smokvica municipality Tourist board
- Ston municipality Tourist board
- Trpanj municipality Tourist board

- Vela Luka municipality Tourist board
- Župa dubrovačka municipality Tourist board

4. Lessons learnt and conclusions

One of the most important lessons learned while building a website is its applicability to local and foreign populations. However, the goal of creating the website is to raise the level of awareness of citizens and tourists about the beauty of cycling, to encourage people to use bicycles and to show what Dubrovnik-Neretva County has to offer.

The development of cycle tourism must be connected with other sectors such as traffic management, spatial planning, urban planning, etc. Through the website, everyone can see the wealth of our county for cyclists, local and foreign.

Communication established with stakeholders during the development phase was open and active.

It should always be emphasized that care is taken about necessary to familiarize the local community as much as possible with the advantages of cycle tourism.

5. Problems found and adopted solutions

The local population is not well informed about the trends and potentials of cycle tourism in the region. Therefore, creating a website is a good example of communication, knowledge exchange, active involvement and cooperation among stakeholders. Such initiatives should be promoted in the future.

Dubrovnik-Neretva County is an attractive destination with heavy traffic on public roads that are not suitable for tourists.

Strategic documents at the regional and local levels are not focused on cycling infrastructure. Development plans and other similar strategic documents should include sustainable mobility as one of the priorities that will enable policymakers and local stakeholders to create and implement cycling-friendly initiatives. The creation of the website should bring cycling tourism closer to the local population as well as foreigners and show the breadth of our county's offer.

6. Expected follow up (after project closure)

Thanks to the cycle tourism website, it is possible to implement the following measures in the future:

- Provide targeted financial support to local entrepreneurs who introduce bicycle-friendly offers in their portfolios (additional offer on the web)
- Organize trainings, races and other similar activities
- Invite and select local cyclists for the implementation of the developed cycle tourism standards
- Introducing bike sharing points, creating incentives for buying e-bikes and bikes
- Increase the use of technology in promoting the destination and sharing information about the tourist offer by creating modern mobile applications, digital cycling maps, etc.
- Develop different means of communication and dialogue with the local population to promote alternative transport models such as bicycles and help them understand the benefits for the environment, health, image, etc.
- Have constant communication with experts and local residents regarding new bike paths and new routes.