The ‘Iron Curtain Trail’
Sustainable tourism along the former death strip

Presentation by Michael Cramer
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The Iron Curtain Trail – a model for sustainable tourism in Europe
A ride through European History

- from the Barents Sea to the Black Sea
- along the western border of the former Warsaw Pact states
- more than 7,000 kilometers
- through 20 countries, 14 of which are now EU Member States

The Iron Curtain Trail – a model for sustainable tourism in Europe
The route

- as close as possible to the former border
- on comfortable paths
- avoiding highly frequented roads
- frequently crossing the former border
- integrating numerous historic monuments

The course is still a “work in progress“.
...a European project – an EU project

“The Iron Curtain Trail should be supported as an example of Soft Mobility and as a symbol of the reunification of Europe.”

European Parliament resolution from 8th of September 2005 on new prospects and new challenges for sustainable European tourism

The Iron Curtain Trail – a model for sustainable tourism in Europe
The model : « The Berlin Wall Trail »

160 km around former West-Berlin
The Brandenburg Gate 1961 / 1989

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Memorials for the victims of the Wall

Chris Gueffroy

Peter Fechter

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» The Berlin Wall tours » - discovering the former border strip

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The Berlin Wall Trail

In German ...

...and English

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The Iron Curtain Trail – a model for sustainable tourism in Europe

The Northern part

Composed of…

• the Russian-Norwegian border

• the Russian-Finnish border

…and the Baltic Coast:

• Estonia

• Latvia

• Lithuania

• Kaliningrad exclave

• Poland

• the former GDR
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**Norway:** starting point of the trail at Grense Jakobselv

**Norway:** Kirkenes
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**Finland: border near Raatteen tie**

**Finland: Jyränkoski memorial**
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Estonia: The Narva river marks the EU border with Russia

Estonia: Tallinn
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Latvia: Freedom Monument in Riga

Latvia: The Museum of the Occupation of Latvia in Riga
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The Northern part

Lithuania: Sventoji, starting point of the cycle trail R 10

Lithuania: Courland Spit
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The Northern part

Lithuania: Biketrail between Juodkrante and Nida

Lithuania: Courland Spit
The Baltics and the Kaliningrad exclave

**Lithuania:** Coast in Lithuania

**Kaliningrad / Poland:** Just before the Mamonovo checkpoint

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**Poland:** City center of Gdańsk

**Poland:** Solidarność memorial in Gdańsk
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Poland: Remains of a church near Rewal

Poland: Former German military infrastructure

Along the Polish coast
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Poland: Mrzeżyno military zone

Poland: Dolgie-Wilkie lake
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Poland: Railway Station in Świnoujście

Poland/Germany: Crossing the Swine river
Along the coast of the former GDR

Rerik between the Baltic Sea and a lagoon

Wismar: the old university town

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Through Central Europe

The former German-German border and the borders between

- Czech Republic / Germany
- Czech Republic / Austria
- Slovakia / Austria
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Before 1989: The Baltic Sea near Priwall at Travemünde

After 1989: The open border near Priwall at Travemünde

Along the former inner-German border
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Before 1989: a border patrol boat near Bleckede

After 1989: a ferry-service near Bleckede
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Before 1989: Mödlareuth then called „Little Berlin“ with the wall

After 1989: Mödlareuth today without the wall
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Before 1989: Lindewerra with watch tower and broken bridge

After 1989: Lindewerra with the bridge instead of a watch tower

Along the former inner-German border
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Point Alpha: Former death strip with US and Soviet watchtower

Point Alpha: Remnants of the border fence in the open-air museum
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**Before 1989:** Görsdorf with the death strip

**After 1989:** Nature is back again in Görsdorf

Along the former inner-German border
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Through South-East Europe

The borders between...

- Hungary - Austria,
- Hungary - Slovenia
- Hungary – Croatia
- Hungary - Serbia
- Romania – Serbia
- Bulgaria - Serbia
- Bulgaria - Macedonia
- Bulgaria - Greece
- Bulgaria - Turkey
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Czech Republic: Memorial for the victims of the Iron Curtain near Svätý Kríž

Czech Republic: The Iron Curtain near Cheb (around 1980)
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The Greens | European Free Alliance in the European Parliament

Through Central Europe

Czech Republic: Sculpture near the border point of Dolní Hraničná

Slovakia: remnants of the barbed wire
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Through Central Europe

Austria: Iron Curtain Memorial near Guglwald

Hungary: Alois Mock and Gyula Horn cutting the fence on 27/06/1989
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Hungary: Open door memorial in Sopron

Hungary: Memorial ‘Umbruch’ (upheaval) in Sopron
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**Slovenia:** beautiful scenery near Lendava

**Croatia:** memorial near Batina
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Serbia: Tabula Traiana

Romania: Decibal sculpture
Romania & Serbia:
Trajan’s Bridge on 19 arches and 20 pillars (105 A.D.)

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Through South-East Europe

**Serbia:** War Monument in Halovo

**Bulgaria:** Watch tower at the Serbian-Bulgarian border near Halovo
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Through South-East Europe

**Macedonia:** The border near Novo Selo without barbed wire

**Bulgaria:** The Bulgarian border near Novo Selo
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Through South-East Europe

**Macedonia:** The former Yugoslavian watch tower

**Bulgaria:** Bulgarian watch tower near Novo Selo
Macedonia: Endpoint of a day trip along the Iron Curtain Trail

Greece: The village of Petrotá

The Iron Curtain Trail – a model for sustainable tourism in Europe
Edirne: Bridges across Meric Nehri River (Evros), constructed between 1554-1560

The Iron Curtain Trail – a model for sustainable tourism in Europe
Edirne: Selimiye Mosque (1575) with highest minarets of Turkey (71m)

The Iron Curtain Trail – a model for sustainable tourism in Europe
Bulgarian watchtower at the border between Turkey and Bulgaria

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The Iron Curtain Trail – a model for sustainable tourism in Europe

Turkish watchtower at the border between Turkey and Bulgaria

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National parks along the ICT

- Finnish-Russian National Park
- GE-CZ Bavarian Forest – Sumava
- AT-CZ Thayatal – Podyjí
- AT-HU Fertő-Hansag (Neusiedler See)

NB: Moving patterns of deer at the German-Czech border

The Iron Curtain Trail – a model for sustainable tourism in Europe
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- An ecological network under the umbrella of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN)
- Symbolizes the global effort for joint, cross border activities in nature conservation and sustainable development
- Connects National Parks, Nature Parks, Biosphere Reserves and transboundary protected areas along or across borders
- Patron: Mikhail Gorbachev, President of Green Cross International
- The Iron Curtain Trail creates a sustainable way to access the Green Belt
Developments in 2011

The Iron Curtain Trail – a model for sustainable tourism in Europe
Article 195 of the Lisbon Treaty

TOURISM

(1) The Union shall complement the action of the Member States in the tourism sector […]

To that end, Union action shall be aimed at:

a) encouraging the creation of a favourable environment for the development of undertakings in this sector;

b) promoting cooperation between the Member States, particularly by the exchange of good practice.
Available EU funding in the 2011 budget

- Preparatory action – Sustainable tourism
  Total budget: 1 mio. EUR

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
  Total budget: more than 1 billion EUR

- Cross-border cooperation (INTERREG)
  Total budget: 50 mio. EUR
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Hungary leads the way: It uses 2% of EU funding for cycling

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The European Cycle Route Network EuroVelo

- Study to evaluate the challenges and opportunities of developing a cycle tourism network across Europe
- “Iron Curtain Trail“ is expressly mentioned
- history as the only potential for tourism in remote regions
Transnational workshops on the Iron Curtain Trail in 2009/2010

Organised by the European Commission:

• Warsaw
• Sopron (Hungary)
• Sofia

Organised by the German development agency (GTZ):

• Macedonia: Memorandum of Understanding

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The EuroVelo routes

1. Atlantic Coast Route
2. Capitals Route
3. Pilgrims Route
4. Central Europe Route
5. Via Romea Francigena Route
6. Rivers Route
7. Sun Route
8. Mediterranean Route
9. Amber Route
10. Hansa Circuit
11. East Europe Route
12. North Sea Cycle Route
13. Iron Curtain Trail

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Aims for the development of the ICT

• Integration on local, regional and national level

• Signposting with

• Updating in a bicycle friendly manner

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The *Iron Curtain Trail* – a model for sustainable tourism in Europe
Thank you for your attention!

Find out more on www.ironcurtaintrail.eu

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