

Proposal for workshop/seminar/conference

In order to develop cycle infrastructure and tourism in your country

Nowadays bicycle tourism is a growing mode of tourism activities. Many countries have recognised the importance of bicycle tourism and have made significant efforts to develop infrastructure of this mode of tourism. Summer 1995 was a very significant time. European Cyclists Federation created an EuroVelo working group to develop European bicycle tourism network. The chairman of this working group was Jens Erik Larsen, Rein Lepik was one of the members. At this time several countries as Denmark, The Netherlands, Germany etc. had well developed bicycle routes networks but often there were no connections on the borders.

Most of East and South European countries did not have anything. It was a great opportunity to develop high quality long distance cycling routes through Europe, so that all countries should be involved (<https://ecf.com/projects/EuroVelo>). At the same time, it was a wonderful new chance to develop National Bicycle Routes Networks in East and South European countries. For example, the EuroVelo idea was warmly welcomed in Estonia where by the initiatives of Rein Lepik the EuroVelo routes and the National Bicycle Routes Network were created and signposted in 2001.



According to different studies bicycle tourism has a significant economical impact especially in countryside. A research indicates that in average a bicycle tourist spends 58 EURO per day, there are hundreds of cyclists cycling on the most popular routes (Danube route) each day during the season. But the tourists will not come if there is no good infrastructure. In addition to many other aspects, a good tourism infrastructure is a sign of well developed European country.

Jens Erik Larsen and Rein Lepik were not only the founding members of EuroVelo project. Jens Erik Larsen is still the member of EuroVelo Council, he has acted as bicycle tourism advisor and expert in many European countries. Rein Lepik is maintaining the Bicycle Routes Network in Estonia, he has worked as an expert in Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Belorussia.

Jens Erik Larsen and Rein Lepik together have held workshops and seminars in Finland, Latvia and Belorussia. In Finland, the result was that now the routes are signed in much better way, in Latvia few years ago the Road Administration was not supporting the idea to create the bicycle routes using existing roads. After our activities, they have decided to support development of these routes.



Another success was in Belorussia where ministries and police were totally against to develop bicycle routes but after a series of seminars and joint bicycle rides at last the officials agreed to support these activities.

The main idea of the proposed workshop is to bring together many relevant organisations and governmental bodies: Ministries responsible for economy, tourism, environment, Road Administration, National Tourism Board, municipalities, tourism organisations and companies, cycling clubs etc. We should give overview of bicycle tourism development of several countries, positive experience and mistakes, main needs of bicycle tourists, route standards, signposting examples. It should be necessary to organise a big seminar (or conference) with participation of above mentioned bodies. In addition to our presentations some presentations of tourism and cyclist organisations from your country are appreciated. The second part of the workshop should be a study tour (few days, partly by bicycles, if possible) and discussions with interested people in the evenings.

The aim of the workshop is to bring together the key persons, to learn the current situation, to find the interested organisations in your country, to give ideas how to support bicycle tourism in next few years and in the longer period.



We know that your country is a beautiful and friendly country, the cyclists should like it.
Looking forward for good cooperation.

Jens Erik Larsen and Rein Lepik

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