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Project "Joint adventure on mountain paths" code ROBG-384
Financed under Interreg V-A Romania - Bulgaria Programme

## STUDY

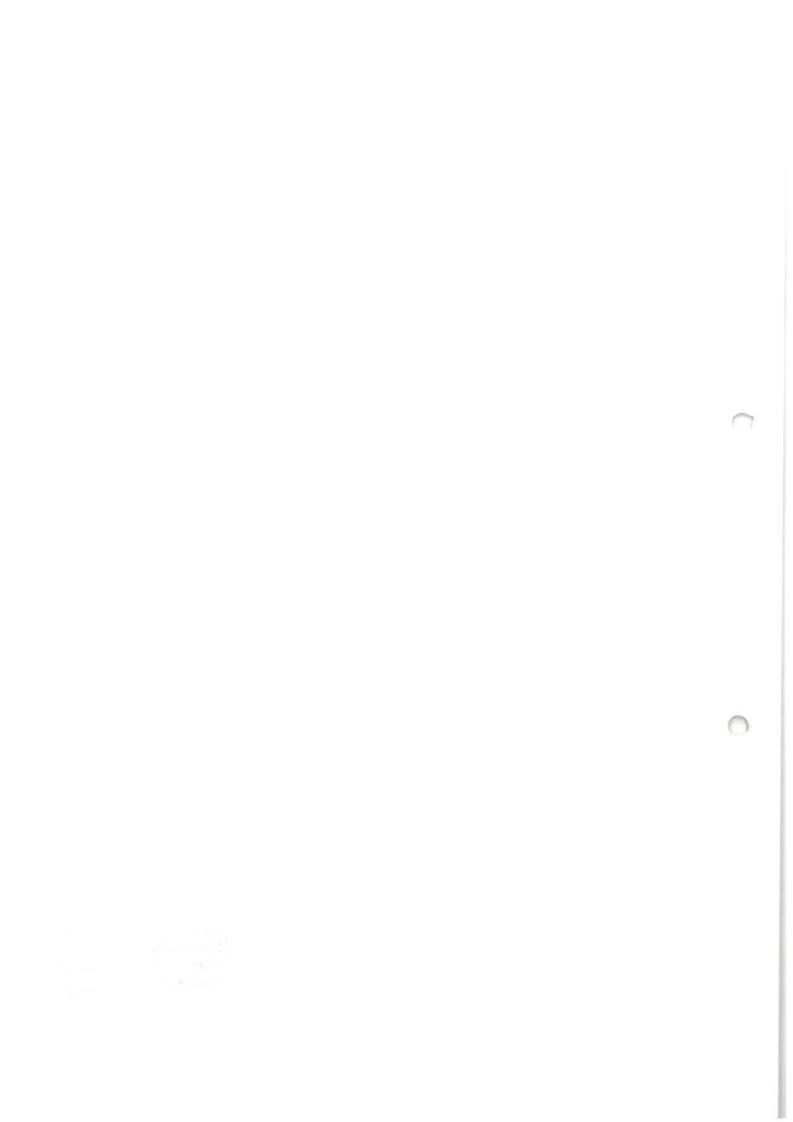
# For identification of mountain e-bike routes

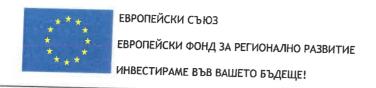
District VIDIN

January, 2019r. Made by association BG Events and Guiding



Код на проекта 1036—38 У Номер искане ПНК: 2 Искана сума:









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#### 1. Objective of the study:

The purpose of the study is to identify in detail the routes for mountain biking with electric bikes of varying degrees of difficulty in the region of Vidin in order to improve the sustainable use of mountain resources and natural heritage and to explore the natural potential in the mountain regions of each of the three project target areas /Mehedinti County in Romania, Vidin and Montana regions in Bulgaria /.

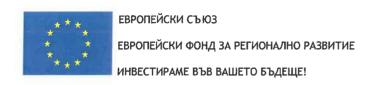
The study was carried out within the framework of the project "Joint Adventure on the Mountain Paths" code ROBG-384, financed under the INTERREG V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme. The aim of this project is to support the sustainable development of tourism in the cross-border region of Romania - Bulgaria and to promote the mountain region of the Mehedinti region of Romania, Vidin and Montana districts from Bulgaria by creating new tourist products through the direct involvement of stakeholders in the field of tourism and to result in an increase in the number of tourists.

The following methodology was used in the survey:

- collected and presented by official sources information of the mountainous region of Vidin district, including information on geographical location and population, tourist information regarding the accommodation capacity of the region; Presence of reserves and protected areas; Existence of natural landmarks that would be of interest to tourists practicing mountain biking with electric bikes.
- Based on the collected information as well as on our own surveys of the mountain region of Vidin as a part of the mountain region of Northwestern Bulgaria, we have developed an assessment of the potential for sustainable development of the mountainous region and of organizing various sporting events, including tourism development in the area. This assessment and its findings have led us to a selection of 11 routes with different levels of difficulty, which use and show to a large extent the full potential for development of the e-bike tourism in the area.

## 2. Natural potential in the mountain region of Vidin district









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#### Map of district Vidin

#### 2.1. Geographical location and population

The mountainous region of Vidin is located mainly in the southern part of the district - part of Stara Planina and in particular the Western Balkans. This area covers mainly the municipalities of Belogradchik and Chuprene and a small part of the Makresh municipality.

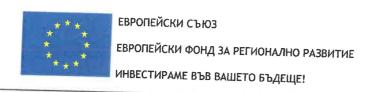
The municipalities Belogradchik and Chuprene are from the large municipalities in the district in terms of area. The Municipality of Belogradchik covers 410 km<sup>2</sup> and Chuprene is 327 km<sup>2</sup>, and both municipalities fall almost entirely in the mountainous part of Vidin region - Balkan and Prebalkan. The Makresh Municipality occupies 228 square kilometers, but no more than 1/3 of its area is a mountainous area. With 3054 square kilometers of Vidin region, it can be said that the mountainous area of the area covers about ¼ of its territory.

At the same time, the population of the district of nearly 87,000 people as of

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31.12.2017 is unevenly distributed throughout the region, with the least populated areas being mountainous areas and some rural areas. For example, Belogradchik Municipality has an average of about 14 persons per sq km, in Chuprene and Makresh Municipality - 5 people, and in Vidin Municipality - 107, with an average of 28 in the district.









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Typical of the whole mountainous region of Vidin is that it borders on the east with the state border of the Republic of Serbia, which passes through the highest part of the Balkan Mountain, spreading the highest peak in the Western Balkans - Midgur /2168m./

Table 1. Population and area of Vidin district Source: National Statistical Institute

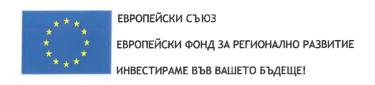
District Vidin	population	surface	population density per sq. km 28		
Vidin	86927	3054,405			
Belogradchik	5726	410,665	14		
Boynitsa	996	187,361	5		
Bregovo	4659	179,223	26		
Vidin	54737	512,932	107		
Gramada	1820	184,213	10		
Dimovo	5804	402,493	14		
Kula	3788	279,37	14		
Makresh	1310	228,79	6		
Novo selo	2593	109,487	24		
Ruzhintsi	3710	232,555	16		
Chuprene	1784	327,316	5		

Apart from the fact that the mountain region of Vidin is sparsely populated, it is also in a process of aging of the population and depopulation of some villages. As a whole, for the area, the largest number is the population aged 65-69, followed by the age group 70-74, and the over-70s live mainly in the villages, including the mountainous region of Vidin.

Table 2. Population and surface of Vidin district. Population of Vidin District as of 31.12.2017. Source: www.nsi.bg

District/ Age groups		Total			In the towns			In the villages		
	all	men	women	all		women	all	1		
Vidin	86 927	42 411	44 544	F4 000				men	women	
•		72 411	44 516	56 000	27 199	28 801	30 927	15 212	15 71	
0	573	291	282	380	188	192	193			
1 - 4	2 367	1 216	4.454				.,,	103	90	
	2 307	1 210	1 151	1 693	855	838	674	361	313	









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3 603	1 858	1 745	2 665	1 395	1 270	938	463	475
3 875	2 025	1 850	2 791	1 454	1 337	1 084	571	513
3 751	1 887	1 864	2 701	1 356	1 345	1 050	531	519
3 134	1 628	1 506	2 198	1 118	1 080	936	510	426
3 693	2 016	1 677	2 560	1 372	1 188	1 133	644	489
4 333	2 313	2 020	3 120	1 614	1 506	1 213	699	514
4 866	2 566	2 300	3 611	1 848	1 763	1 255	718	537
6 256	3 292	2 964	4 665	2 357	2 308	1 591	935	656
6 849	3 635	3 214	5 018	2 569	2 449	1 831	1 066	765
5 689	3 024	2 665	4 056	2 093	1 963	1 633	931	702
5 959	3 121	2 838	4 124	2 074	2 050	1 835	1 047	788
6 520	3 151	3 369	4 230	1 986	2 244	2 290	1 165	1 125
7 902	3 471	4 431	4 482	1 910	2 572	3 420	1 561	1 859
7 129	3 062	4 067	3 514	1 500	2 014	3 615	1 562	2 053
4 559	1 796	2 763	1 944	732	1 212	2 615	1 064	1 551
3 446	1 239	2 207	1 372	479	893	2 074	760	1 314
1 814	641	1 173	649	230	419	1 165	411	754
544	161	383	199	60	139	345	101	244
65	18	47	28	9	19	37	9	28
-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
	3 875 3 751 3 134 3 693 4 333 4 866 6 256 6 849 5 689 5 959 6 520 7 902 7 129 4 559 3 446 1 814 544	3 875  2 025 3 751  1 887 3 134  1 628 3 693  2 016 4 333  2 313 4 866  2 566 6 256  3 292 6 849  3 635 5 689  3 024 5 959  3 121 6 520  3 151 7 902  3 471 7 129  3 062 4 559  1 796 3 446  1 239 1 814  641 544  161	3 875     2 025     1 850       3 751     1 887     1 864       3 134     1 628     1 506       3 693     2 016     1 677       4 333     2 313     2 020       4 866     2 566     2 300       6 256     3 292     2 964       6 849     3 635     3 214       5 689     3 024     2 665       5 959     3 121     2 838       6 520     3 151     3 369       7 902     3 471     4 431       7 129     3 062     4 067       4 559     1 796     2 763       3 446     1 239     2 207       1 814     641     1 173       544     161     383	3 875         2 025         1 850         2 791           3 751         1 887         1 864         2 701           3 134         1 628         1 506         2 198           3 693         2 016         1 677         2 560           4 333         2 313         2 020         3 120           4 866         2 566         2 300         3 611           6 256         3 292         2 964         4 665           6 849         3 635         3 214         5 018           5 689         3 024         2 665         4 056           5 959         3 121         2 838         4 124           6 520         3 151         3 369         4 230           7 902         3 471         4 431         4 482           7 129         3 062         4 067         3 514           4 559         1 796         2 763         1 944           3 446         1 239         2 207         1 372           1 814         641         1 173         649           544         161         383         199	3 875         2 025         1 850         2 791         1 454           3 751         1 887         1 864         2 701         1 356           3 134         1 628         1 506         2 198         1 118           3 693         2 016         1 677         2 560         1 372           4 333         2 313         2 020         3 120         1 614           4 866         2 566         2 300         3 611         1 848           6 256         3 292         2 964         4 665         2 357           6 849         3 635         3 214         5 018         2 569           5 689         3 024         2 665         4 056         2 093           5 959         3 121         2 838         4 124         2 074           6 520         3 151         3 369         4 230         1 986           7 902         3 471         4 431         4 482         1 910           7 129         3 062         4 067         3 514         1 500           4 559         1 796         2 763         1 944         732           3 446         1 239         2 207         1 372         479           1 814	3 875         2 025         1 850         2 791         1 454         1 337           3 751         1 887         1 864         2 701         1 356         1 345           3 134         1 628         1 506         2 198         1 118         1 080           3 693         2 016         1 677         2 560         1 372         1 188           4 333         2 313         2 020         3 120         1 614         1 506           4 866         2 566         2 300         3 611         1 848         1 763           6 256         3 292         2 964         4 665         2 357         2 308           6 849         3 635         3 214         5 018         2 569         2 449           5 689         3 024         2 665         4 056         2 093         1 963           5 959         3 121         2 838         4 124         2 074         2 050           6 520         3 151         3 369         4 230         1 986         2 244           7 902         3 471         4 431         4 482         1 910         2 572           7 129         3 062         4 067         3 514         1 500         2 014	3 875         2 025         1 850         2 791         1 454         1 337         1 084           3 751         1 887         1 864         2 701         1 356         1 345         1 050           3 134         1 628         1 506         2 198         1 118         1 080         936           3 693         2 016         1 677         2 560         1 372         1 188         1 133           4 333         2 313         2 020         3 120         1 614         1 506         1 213           4 866         2 566         2 300         3 611         1 848         1 763         1 255           6 256         3 292         2 964         4 665         2 357         2 308         1 591           6 849         3 635         3 214         5 018         2 569         2 449         1 831           5 689         3 024         2 665         4 056         2 093         1 963         1 633           5 959         3 121         2 838         4 124         2 074         2 050         1 835           6 520         3 151         3 369         4 230         1 986         2 244         2 290           7 902         3 471 <td< td=""><td>3 875         2 025         1 850         2 791         1 454         1 337         1 084         571           3 751         1 887         1 864         2 701         1 356         1 345         1 050         531           3 134         1 628         1 506         2 198         1 118         1 080         936         510           3 693         2 016         1 677         2 560         1 372         1 188         1 133         644           4 333         2 313         2 020         3 120         1 614         1 506         1 213         699           4 866         2 566         2 300         3 611         1 848         1 763         1 255         718           6 256         3 292         2 964         4 665         2 357         2 308         1 591         935           6 849         3 635         3 214         5 018         2 569         2 449         1 831         1 066           5 689         3 024         2 665         4 056         2 093         1 963         1 633         931           5 959         3 121         2 838         4 124         2 074         2 050         1 835         1 047           6 520</td></td<>	3 875         2 025         1 850         2 791         1 454         1 337         1 084         571           3 751         1 887         1 864         2 701         1 356         1 345         1 050         531           3 134         1 628         1 506         2 198         1 118         1 080         936         510           3 693         2 016         1 677         2 560         1 372         1 188         1 133         644           4 333         2 313         2 020         3 120         1 614         1 506         1 213         699           4 866         2 566         2 300         3 611         1 848         1 763         1 255         718           6 256         3 292         2 964         4 665         2 357         2 308         1 591         935           6 849         3 635         3 214         5 018         2 569         2 449         1 831         1 066           5 689         3 024         2 665         4 056         2 093         1 963         1 633         931           5 959         3 121         2 838         4 124         2 074         2 050         1 835         1 047           6 520

#### 2.2. Tourism

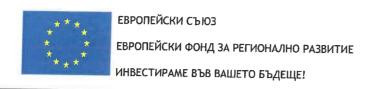
In the mountain region of Vidin the accommodation capacity is concentrated in the municipality of Belogradchik.

The total number of registered accommodations in Belogradchik municipality, according to information from the official site of the municipality /http://belogradchik.bg/ is 55 with a capacity of 492 beds.

This bed capacity is allocated as follows:

Belogradchik: 320 beds;Village Chiflik: 69 beds;Village Rabisha: 50 beds;









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Village Stakevtsi: 22 beds; Village Borovitsa: 17 beds: Village Dabravka: 9 beds; Village Granitovo: 5 beds

Apart from this, in close proximity to the Belogradchik municipality in Falkovec there are 2 accommodation places with a capacity of 60 beds.

On the territory of Chuprene municipality /https:/

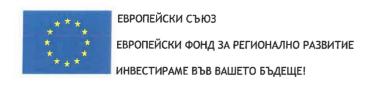
Map of accommodation capacity in the mountain region of Vidin:

hunting lodge and 2 huts situated in the Balkan Mountains at the foot of the Midgur peak with a total capacity of 63 beds and a hostel in the village of Chuprene with capacity of 15 beds. Together with guest houses. respectively in the villages of Varbovo, Chuprene, Sredogriv and Gorni Lom, the accommodation capacity in the municipality Chuprene amounts about 130 beds.

In municipality Makresh there is 1 place for accommodation in the village of Podgore with a capacity of 20 beds.





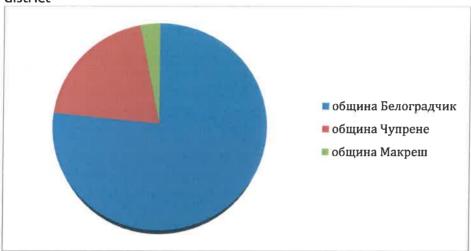






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Diagram 1. Share of accommodation capacity in the three mountain municipalities of Vidin district



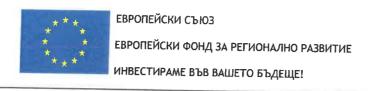
#### 2.3. Presence of reserves and protected areas

In the mountain region of Vidin there are the following officially recognized by the Ministry of Environment and Water reserves, natural landmarks and protected areas:

- 1. BELOGRADCHIK ROCKS Category: natural landmark Location:
  - Municipality: Belogradchik, Town: Belogradchik, Borovitsa village, Chiflik village
  - Municipality: Chuprene, Location: village of Varbovo
- 2. BOROV STONE Category: natural landmark

Location: Municipality: Belogradchik, Borovitsa village









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3. WATERFALL OF STAVEVSKA RIVER IN AREA WHITE WATER Category: natural landmark

Location: Municipality: Belogradchik, Stakevtsi village

4. GARDATA Category: natural landmark

Location: Municipality: Chuprene, village of Protopopintsi

5. MIDGUR Category: Protected area

Location: Municipality: Chuprene, village Gorni Lom

6. CAVE MAGURATA Category: natural landmark Location:

• Municipality Belogradchik, village Rabisha

Municipality Makresh, village Tolovitsa

7. CAVE VENETS IN THE AREA CHUKARA Category: natural landmark Location: Municipality Dimovo, village Oreshets

8. CAVES LEFT AND RIGHT DRY PECH Категория: Category: natural landmark Location: Municipality: Chuprene, village Dolni Lom

9. RAKOVITSA MONASTERY Category: Protected area Location: Municipality Makresh, village Rakovitsa

10. CHUPRENE Category: Reserve Location:

• Municipality Belogradchik, village Stakevtsi;

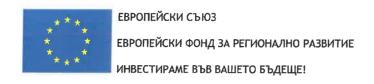
Municipality: Chuprene, village Gorni Lom, Replyana, Chuprene

11. CHUPRENE WOODS Category: Protected area Location:

Municipality Belogradchik, village Stakevtsi;

• Municipality: Chuprene, village Gorni Lom, Replyana, Chuprene









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It is noteworthy that out of all 17 protected areas in Vidin District 11 are located in the three mountain municipalities and Dimovo Municipality.

However, if an expert assessment of the natural attractions from the point of view of mountain e-biking should be made, we should draw the following important natural landmarks, around which will be subsequently developed and routes for cycling with electric bikes:

#### 2.4. Presence of natural landmarks:

The main natural landmark of Vidin and the Western Balkans, and we would add a natural sight of a world character, is undoubtedly the Belogradchik rocks. Belogradchik rocks are situated over 95% on the territory of Belogradchik municipality, a very small part in the municipalities of Chuprene, Dimovo and Rujintsi.

The Belogradchik Rocks are fantastic rock formations that extend about 30 square kilometers around the town of Belogradchik. The rocks were formed about 220 million years ago and there are many legends about them.

Their reddish colour of the rocks is due to the iron oxide inside them.

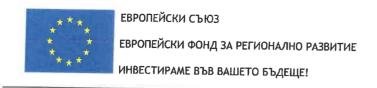
They are diverse in shape and size, rising to more than 100 m in height.

The first group of rocks is situated around the town of Belogradchik and bears the common name central group. The names of the most famous of them are Horseman, Madonna, Dervisha, Adam and Eve, Mushrooms, Lion, Monks, Bear, Castle, Shepherd. The student girl is one of the emblems of Belogradchik.

To this group of rocks belongs the most popular - the rocks of Kaleto fortress located in Belogradchik.

Kaleto fortress is one of the best preserved in the country. Utilizing the natural inaccessibility of the rocks, in the 1st-3rd century the Romans maintained here a









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fortress to guard the strategic roads that cross the area. Nearly 80,000 tourists visit the fortress annually.

Another group of rocks called Zbegove is located to the west of the city. The most famous rocks here are the Zbegove, Ekruypria /rock bridge/ and Borich. These rocks may be reached by a dirt road suitable for cycling. Together with the huge parallel rocks, deep cliffs can also be seen here. Here is also the most interesting stone composition - Gemini, Small and Big Zbeg, which were used for fortifications. The rocks were used as a natural defense by Byzantines, Bulgarians, and Ottomans in different ages. In the past, hundreds of steps have been carved here, some of which are still preserved today. Remnants of buildings, walls, pieces of bricks, fragments of ceramics are also visible in many places.

Around Zbegove and Borich there are rocks with the most striking forms resembling giant sphinxes, monkey heads, mummies, minarets dragons, etc.

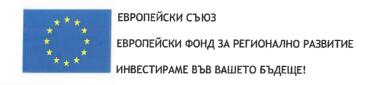
About 4 km east of the city is a third group that covers the rocks around the Latin Kale and the Lepenitsa cave. This is the Markashnitsa area. It is rich in stunning rock formations, including the Colossus, the Star map, the Resonators, several Markashnitsa sanctuaries, the Markashnitsa Sphinx, the Mother Goddess Rock, and the Rock of the Fallen in Love, etc.

The fourth group stretches between the villages of Borovitsa and Falkovets. Here are the famous Borov stone, Pchelin stone, Torlak, Momina Skala. Here we have to mention the Borovitsa Sanctuary Complex as well as the proximity of the Red Church "St. Trinity". Near village Falkovets is situated the famous red canyon of Lomska River, where the water has sculpted the red rocks in bizarre shapes.

The last fifth group of rocks is situated around the villages of Gyurgich and Belotintsi.

The characteristic feature of the Belogradchik Rocks is that it contains many natural landmarks, including Chachin Stone, which is a small group of rocks east of the city with carved petroglyphs and ritual wells.









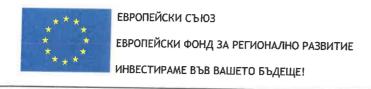
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Among the other landmarks in the area, which are of real tourist interest for cycling groups, can be distinguished:

- Chuprene Biosphere Reserve it is a strictly guarded territory for the protection of the northern coniferous forests of Bulgaria. About 90% of it is covered with coniferous, deciduous and mixed forests of spruce, fir, plain beech, mountain maple and white birch, and the rest is occupied by high-mountain pastures, stone rivers and unspoiled stretches;
- The white water Waterfall near Stakevtsi village located on the river Stakevska, with a height of 15 meters;
- Magura Cave here is the largest ancient drawings site in Europe. And in its depths is produced the only sparkling wine in Bulgaria, which matures for 3 years under natural conditions. It is located 20 km from Belogradchik, near the village of Rabisha. "Magura" hides another surprise for its visitors. In its realm lies the largest stalagmite found in our country the fallen pine with its 11m height.
- Veneta Cave a relatively small but incredibly beautiful and well-crafted cave. It can be seen all kinds of secondary calcitic formations that nature can create with its unique fantasy. The cave is usually entered by small groups of 10 to 15 people equipped with helmets, and the tour takes about an hour. It is located in Dimovo Municipality;
- The Lepenitza cave (4km from Belogradchik in Markashnitsa area) is considered part of the natural phenomenon of the Belogradchik rocks and is probably at an age close to that of the formations. Its walls are painted in the same brown-red color that flashes the structures above the ground. The cave is horizontal and the entrance chamber is intersected on two floors.
  - Rabisha Lake the largest indoor lake in Bulgaria. Its depth reaches 35-40m and offers ideal conditions for surfing and swimming. Here you can catch carp, cobweb, white amur and catfish.

Other less significant natural landmarks, which are still worth mentioning, are: Repliana, Chuprene and Varbovo hills - exceptionally beautiful hills without clearly marked dirt roads, eco-trails around Rakovishki Monastery; Formation Gardata close to the village of Protopopintsi, an eco-path to mount Midgur /which is not suitable for mountain biking due to the very steep road/









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## 2.5 Assessment of the potential for sustainable development of mountain tourism in the area

The potential for sustainable development of mountain tourism in the region of Vidin is enormous. The main tourist sites - Kaleto Fortress, Magura Cave and Venetsa Cave, for which statistics are kept on the number of visitors form a tourist flow of about 140000 visits per year.

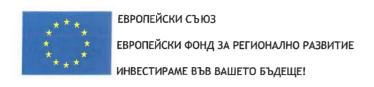
Unfortunately, the number of tourists visiting the other natural sites for which there is no entrance fee can not be measured, but it is obviously smaller. Here is also the huge potential for tourism development in the area. The Belogradchik Rocks as the biggest natural landmark are located at nearly 30 sq. km. With a good management of this natural landmark of this vast territory, nature-friendly activities can be identified for at least 3000 people at the same time without the effect of over-population. Various forms of activity can be practiced here, including:

- hiking;
- Mountain cycling;
- Jeep tours
- horseback riding;
- discovery of caves:
- Orientation
- Hot-air balloon ride;
- organization of various outdoor competitions;
- rock climbing:
- yoga sessions:
- outdoor painting pavilions;

The above-mentioned forms of various activities that could contribute to the development of tourism in a sustainable and long-term way can be realized under the following conditions:

- The paths in the Belogradchik Rocks region are always well maintained, regularly cleaned from bushes and thorns, which make them often inaccessible during the summer season;
  - Cards with positioning of all the rocks in the area are made;
  - A single marking of forest roads is maintained;









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• A serious private initiative is available to offer different forms of activities of the required quality, provided with the necessary staff, guides and necessary equipment

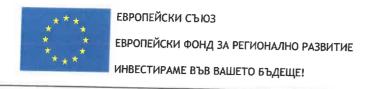
Within the framework of the project "Joint Adventure on Mountain Paths", funded under INTERREG V-A Romania-Bulgaria Program, 50 mountain electric bicycles are planned to be allocated to 10 different operators at 5 ebikes each. In this way, the effects of the project for group tourists will be automatically lost. It is unlikely for a group of tourists to visit 10 different sites, sometimes even in different locations, to rent bikes to ride along paths among the rocks. The same group tourists account for over 70% of all tourists in the area. They need guides, suggestions for organized tours. In this respect, we believe that the highly effective implementation of the project can be achieved optimally under the following conditions:

- All 50 mountain electric bicycles are concentrated in one place in the town of Belogradchik. Belogradchik is the natural center of the whole mountainous region of Vidin, which is about 20 km west of the Magura cave, about 20 km to the south to the village of Chuprene, 20 km to the southwest to the village of Stakevtsi and 15 km to the southeast to the village of Borovitsa. All these distances are within the range of electric bicycles that can travel about 100km on average;

The organization that accepts to host the bikes should be 1 and it should be engaged with the following main functions:

- To maintain the equipment in good technical condition;
- To offer the electric bicycle rental service in a central location in the town of Belogradchik;
- To maintain mountain biking trails in good condition, regularly cleaning them from aggressive vegetation;
- To provide timely and quality service for groups of tourists, offering guide, technical support during the tour, information materials, etc.;
- Supports active digital marketing of Mountain Electric Bicycle Rental by actively publishing up-to-date information on the project site and making regularly well-targeted publications with adequate social networking content;
- Work actively with local authorities for follow-up advertising campaigns, overall marking of routes, mapping of rocks, organizing various events, including cycling competitions









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The advantages of all electric bicycles being concentrated in one place are the following:

- Operator control can be performed more efficiently;

- Large groups of tourists of up to 50 people can benefit simultaneously from the e-bike rental service!!
- An easy bicycle reservation mechanism can be created (as all e-bikes will be in one place). The alternative is to call 10 individual bicycle operators until they are available for reservation.
- All individual accommodation and tourist sites in the region can send guests to this one e-mountain biking center. This applies to tourists who choose to spend their holidays in Belogradchik, Rabisha, Chuprene, Chiflik, Dabravka and even Gorni Lom, since from Belogradchik to each of these places can be reached with one battery charge

Tourist products based on these purchased 50 electric mountain bikes can be developed in a variety of form and duration. These products can include a variety of routes with visits to various tourist sites - natural and historical, different accommodation places and restaurants, including additional activities and attractions.

#### 2.6. Transport to Belogradchik

Transport by car to Belogradchik - from Sofia on E-79 to Ruzhintsi village, then turn left to Belogradchik or if you come from Vidin before Bella, go straight to Belogradchik. When traveling by train on the Sofia - Vidin line, it stops at Oreshets station, from where there is a connection to Belogradchik by taxi - 10 km. Belogradchik can also be reached by bus. A bus travels daily from Sofia and 3 times a day from Vidin.

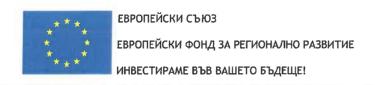
#### 2.7. Tourist sites with entrance fee

The main tourist sites in the mountainous region of Belogradchik are:

#### BELOGRADCHIK FORTRESS

Monument of culture of national importance and one of the most preserved fortresses in the country, dating from I c. In the 14th century it served as the summer residence of the Bulgarian Tsar Ivan Sratsimir.









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Tel .: +359 936 53022

**ENTRANCE FEES:** 

students, students, pensioners after proving with a relevant document - 4.00 BGN VAT included;

citizens / Bulgarians and foreigners / - BGN 6.00 VAT included;

family ticket / parents with children up to 18 years / - 12.00 BGN VAT included.

For groups of 10 and more than 10 persons presented by the leader of the group, at the cashier of the site, the official name list with signature and stamp of the institution:

students, pensioners after proving with a relevant document - 3.00 BGN VAT included:

citizens / Bulgarians and foreigners / - 5.00 BGN VAT included.

In case of a contract with tour operators for visits to groups / over 18 years / - 4.80 BGN with VAT / in effect from 01.01.2017 /.

#### MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

The only one in northwest Bulgaria. It has a total fund of 3000 exhibits. Many endemic and relict species from the Balkans and Europe are present in the exhibition.

Opening hours: 08: 00-12: 00, 13: 00-17: 00;

Phone: +359 93149168

#### **ENTRANCE FEES:**

for persons under 18 years of age - BGN 2.00;

for persons over 18 years old - 3.00 BGN

For disabled people and children, after submitting the necessary documents from the attendants, the entrance for all sites is free of charge.

Single price for a guide on each of the sites of the Historical Museum - Belogradchik: 5.00 lv.

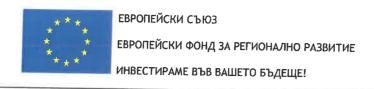
#### ART GALLERY "VALCHO VALCHEV"

The gallery has more than 269 canvases - graphics and painting, some of which are painted on the annually held in Belogradchik and its vicinity events.

Opening hours: 8: 00-12: 00, 13: 00-17: 00;

Tel .: 0936 53042









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#### **ENTRANCE FEES:**

for persons under 18 years of age - BGN 2.00;

for persons over 18 years old - 3.00 BGN

For disabled people and children, after submitting the necessary documents from the attendants, the entrance for all sites is free of charge.

Single price for a guide on each of the sites of the Historical Museum - Belogradchik:  $5.00\ lv$ .

#### MUSEUM OF HISTORY

The Panova House, as a museum, has a fund of over 8,000 exhibits from the ages: prehistory, antiquity and the Middle Ages. It can be seen exhibits found in the Kozarnika cave, prehistoric bones, hyena, wild horse and others.

Opening hours: 08: 00-12: 00, 13: 00-17: 00;

Tel .: +359 936 53469

#### **ENTRANCE FEES:**

for persons under 18 years of age - BGN 2.00;

for persons over 18 years of age - 3.00 BGN

For disabled people and children, after submitting the necessary documents from the attendants, the entrance for all sites is free of charge.

Single price for a guide on each of the objects of the Historical Museum - Belogradchik: 5.00 lv.

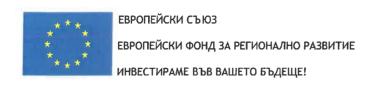
#### ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY

Branch of the Institute of Astronomy at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. It has three telescopes, one of which is the second largest in Bulgaria. Its main functions are the conduct of fundamental astronomical and astro-physical research and popularization of astronomy. Tel.: 0936 53372; 0878 602 682

#### THE CAVE "MAGURA"

Monument of Culture and Natural Longevity of National Importance. Its total length is 2.5 km. On the walls of one of the galleries can be seen paintings of different epochs - neolithic, bronze age, as well as a unique solar calendar with 366 days.









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Phone: + 359 93296677

WORKING TIME of the tourist sites on the territory of the municipality of Belogradchik

#### **ENTRANCE FEES:**

students, students, pensioners after proving with a relevant document - BGN 8.00 VAT;

citizens / Bulgarians and foreigners / - 10.00 BGN VAT included; family ticket / parents with children up to 18 years / - 20,00 BGN VAT included.

For groups of 10 and more persons presented by the leader of the group, at the cashier of the site, with the official name list with signature and stamp of the institution:

students, students, pensioners after proving with a relevant document - BGN 7.00 VAT:

citizens / Bulgarians and foreigners / - 9.00 BGN VAT included.

With a contract with tour operators for visits to groups / over 18 years / - 9.00 BGN VAT included.

First entry for the day - 10.00. Last entry for the day - 16.30.

#### **PARKING:**

Fee for parking in front of Belogradchik fortress - 2.40 lv / hour with VAT, for buses - 6.00 lv / hour with VAT.

More and more information can be found on the site of the historical museum - Belogradchik: http://www.muzeibelogradchik.com/

THE VENEZA CAVE

Work time:

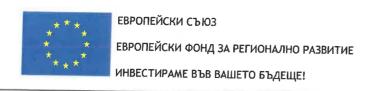
from Monday to Sunday: from 9:00 to 17:00. Entry takes place every hour. The last group enters at 16:00

Tel: 0884572372

**ENTRANCE FEES:** 

Adults - 8lv;









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Seniors - 5 BGN; Students - 4lv For groups (over 10 people with a tour operator list): Adults - 6lv; Pensioners - 4lv; Students - 3lv For disabled guests and their escorts - free of charge

TOURIST INFORMATION CENTER - BELOGRADCHIK
3900 Belogradchik, 1A Poruchik Dvoranov Str,
tel : +359 877 881 283: 0 mail: tourism 0 halo mail:

tel .: +359 877 881 283; e-mail: tourism@belogradchik.bg

Working hours: 08.00 - 17.00 hours without interruption every day, incl. Saturday, Sunday and public holidays

TOURIST INFORMATION CENTER - Gorni Lom:

tel .: 0885 2448 62 tic\_gornilom@abv.bg

#### 2.8. ATTRACTIONS

#### **BIKE RACE ROCKS 'N ROLL**

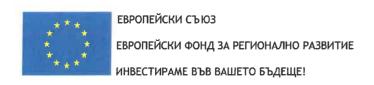
Annually in Belogradchik is organized by Velo Club Skala in the beginning of April the bike race ROCKS 'N ROLL.

The race passes over 40 km of Belogradchik's center along the Chachin stone, the well, the northern part of Markashnitsa, the Subashin fountain to the fortress, the Zbegove rocks, Prauzda village and back to the Belogradchik square. With more than 1500 m positive elevation his is one of the most popular biking events in Bulgaria and the number of participants reaches about 150.

For more information or rent of mountain bike - http://clubskala.org

#### **HOT-AIR BALLOON RIDE**









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A flight with a hot air balloon above the Belogradchik Rocks, a tethered flight or bungee jump from a balloon - this is one of the new attractions in the mountain region of Vidin. For more information - http://balloonadventure.eu

SUMMER FESTIVAL OPERA OF THE PEAKS Traditionally, Sofia Opera and Ballet organize in July and August the summer Opera Festival of the Peaks.

Performances are held at the fortress Kaleto and in the Magura Cave.

For more information: www.operasofia.bg



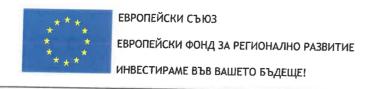
Summer Festival Opera of the Peaks

#### **HUNTING TOURISM**

The Midgur hunting lodge is situated on 19,500 hectares on the slopes of the Western Stara Planina Mountains and the Danube Plain. The distance from the capital Sofia is 170 km. The terrain is varied, mostly mountainous, with the highest point at Midzhur peak - 2168 m and only 86 m. - in the Bozhuritsa locality, situated in the Danube Plain. The climate is moderate continental.

The main game species here are the red deer, the wild boar, the roe deer, the wolf, the fox and the wild cat. In the buffer zone of the Chuprene Biosphere Reserve, which is within the hunting area, the capercaillie lives.









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The hunting houses "Yazovo", "Stakevtsi", "Bozhuritsa", as well as the hunting lodge "Rayanovtsi" are at the disposal of the guests. Along with hunting, the Midjour hunting farm offers photo and ecotourism.

Rent of mountain bikes: inn "Madona", village Falkovets, GSM:+359 898457198 guesthouse "Ghetto", GSM: +359 888782892 , Hotel "Skalite", phone +359 884514154,

An attractive road-train trip from the central square of Belogradchik to the Kaleto fortress. Starts from the square of Belogradchik.

Buggy tour among Belogradchik rocks, GSM: +359 899907997

4x4 Safari and Binoculars for rent, GSM: +359 888713539, +359 896365353, +359 879466143

Group horse-riding in the mountain area of Stakevtsi village, GSM: +359 888764423

Photography and Phototourism in the village of Stakevtsi, Boyan Minkov, GSM: +359 888764423, email: boqnminkov@abv.bg, www.stakevci.com

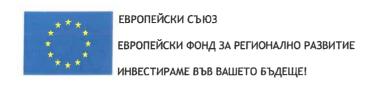
Summer camps for children aged 8-12. Duration 7 days, Stakevski Houses, GSM: +359 888764423, www.stakevci.com

Rabisha Lake / about 20 km from Belogradchik / - perfect conditions for surfing, swimming and fishing. Nice place to relax on a tent.

Dabravka dam / about 7 km from Belogradchik / offers opportunities for fishing and picnics among cool forest vegetation.

Rabisha Lake - attractions: a jeep tour around the lake and Magura hill; Archery; wine tasting from the region of Vidin; boat hire; wind surf; kite surf; rent of tourist kayaks.





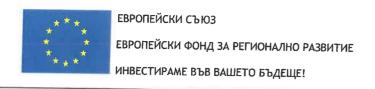




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Tel: +359 878 485 495, e-mail: complex\_magura@abv.bg, www.complexmagura.com









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- 3. Routes for mountain biking with electric bikes in the mountain region of Vidin
- 3.1. Route from Belogradchik to Borovitsa

GPX trace of the Route:

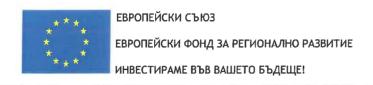
https://drive.google.com/open?id=15ctQAPrAQ1e1CZ3iQkrqRtqGXxJlqBpp

#### Map of the route



Elevation diagram









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#### Description

Mountain-biking route for e-mountain bikes, difficulty - average, distance 8.5 km, total climb 144 m, total descent 400 m. This is a route that will take you through the fairy paths passing around some of the Belogradchik rocks. Breathtaking views of the rocks are constantly around. On the itinerary you will see some interesting places like Borov Kamak, the Red Church and for the final you will have the opportunity to visit the Borovitsa cellar where you can enjoy superb wines.

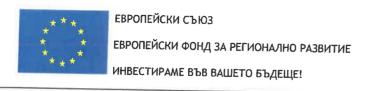
Borov kamak /Pine stone/ represent a truly impressive rock formed by erosion over millions of years. Although it is part of the Belogradchik Rocks, Borov Kamak is distinguished by its majestic size - 113 m in height, 180 m in length and 120 m in width. The rock is divided into two, the eastern part being larger in size and height. The western is lower and is marked by a sharp end.

The name of the rock is from ancient times and originates from the pine trees on its ridge, which have been there since countless years. From these pines comes the name of the village of Borovitsa.

The "Red Church" near the village of Borovitsa is distinguished by a unique structure and architecture, built entirely of red stone, cut by the local rocks, the temple was built by Italian masters and local stonemasons in 1866. The name of the church is Holy Trinity and it is located under the majestic Pine Stone.

Starting point: Belogradchik









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## View from Lepenitsa cave



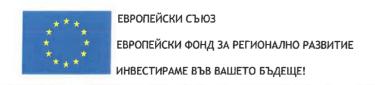
## 3.2. Route Belogradchik-Dabravka-Weshtitsa-Rabisha

GPX trace: <a href="https://drive.google.com/open?id=10yTaClM0T0A4j72qvyLfJvrvSLUOw2Dh">https://drive.google.com/open?id=10yTaClM0T0A4j72qvyLfJvrvSLUOw2Dh</a>

#### Elevation diagram











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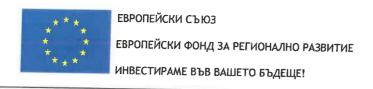
#### Map of the route



#### **Description:**

Route for e-mountain bikes with a length of 22km with an ascent of 330m and a descent of 630m. The route is light and suitable for beginners and intermediate level bikers. It starts from the center of the town of Belogradchik and passes through the fortress. It continues along the second largest Observatory in Bulgaria, all the time the route is on broad terrain. While traveling, you will see many and varied amazing rock formations. The first stop along the route is the village of Dabravka, known for its production of dairy delicacies in an ecologically clean environment. Next to the route is the village with the most interesting name in Bulgaria - Witch, where you can meet with fabulous heroes ... The last village is the









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village of Rabisha, famous with the Rabisha Lake with crystal clear waters springing from the Magura cave. The cave has interesting rock paintings from antiquity. If you get tired of walking, you can stay for relaxing or overnight in Magura complex, where you will enjoy superb cuisine, spa and massages. Starting point: Belogradchik

#### Rabisha Lake at sunset

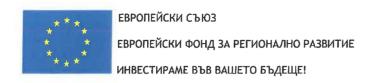


View at Rabisha lake



Mysterious drawings of ancient times in the Magura cave





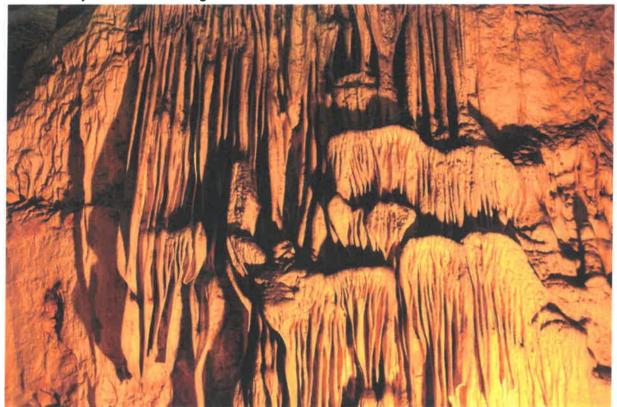




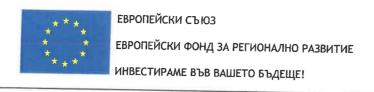
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Sedimentary formations in Magura cave











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## 3.3. Route Belogradchik-Lepenica-Isvos

GPS trace of the route

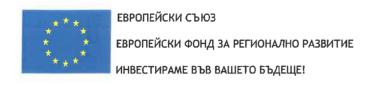
https://drive.google.com/open?id=1DdZ3CPS4IVoto1-vqNKEzzG\_2NuMHBKC

#### Map of the route:



Elevation diagram

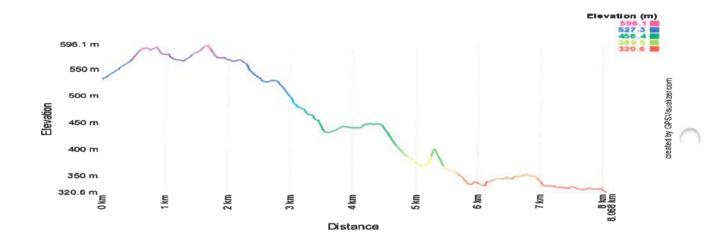








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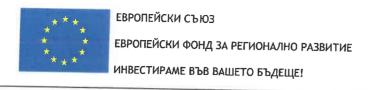
#### Description:

The route for mountain electric bikes is 8 km long, 140 m ascent and 350 m downhill. The route is suitable for moderately advanced. The route starts from the town of Belogradchik, passes through breathtaking views to the rocks, and through the magical Lepenica cave, which will make you feel like the time has come back a few millennia ago.

Lepenitsa Cave is located in Markashnitsa and has the same reddish color as the Belogradchik Rocks. The cave is horizontal and easily accessible for visitors. There are 2 floors and the second one forms a wonderful panoramic veranda overlooking some of the beautiful Belogradchik rocks. The top of the vault is rounded, which guarantees outstanding acoustics. The rocks above the cave have an ancient sanctuary and an astronomical map carved into the stone. It is estimated at 8000-8500 years, with the oldest artifacts found in it at about 7000 years. Along the entrance of Lepenica, the Belogradchik Archaeological Society has built a small hut full of natural materials, a model of the ancient prehistoric dwellings. The route finishes in the village of Izvos, 4 km. from Belogradchik.

Starting point: Belogradchik



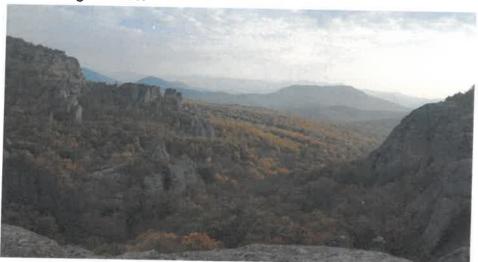






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#### Views along the route



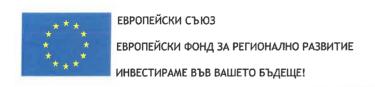
## 3.4. Route Borovitsa winery

Gps trace of the route

https://drive.google.com/open?id=15ctQAPrAQ1e1CZ3iQkrqRtqGXxJlqBpp 4km 120m+

Map of the route





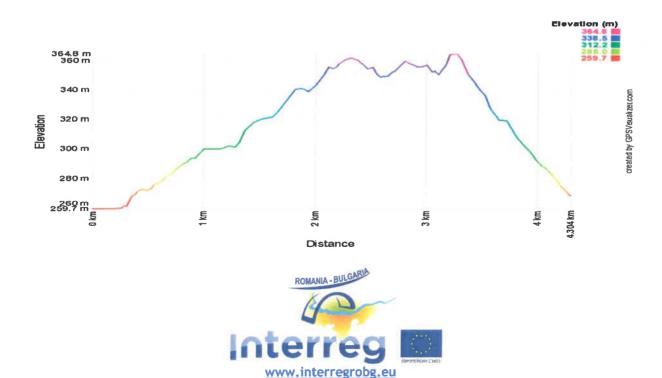


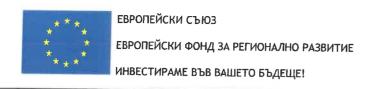


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#### Elevation diagram









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#### Description:

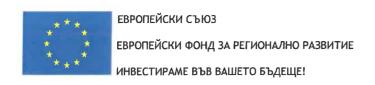
Mountain bike trail for beginner e-bikers, distance 4.5 km, total climb 120 m. You will see some interesting places on the itinerary - Borov Kamak, Red Church and for the final you will have the opportunity to visit the Borovitsa wine cellar where you will have the opportunity to enjoy superb wines.

Pine stone represents a truly impressive rock formed by erosion for millions of years. Although it is part of the Belogradchik rocks, Borov stone is distinguished by its majestic dimensions - 113 m height, 180 m long and 120 m wide. The rock is divided into two, the eastern part being larger in area and height. The western is lower and is marked by a tapering tail. The name of the rock has since ancient times been derived from the pines on its ridge, which have been on its top it for countless years. From these pines comes the name of the village of Borovitsa.

The "Red Church" near the village of Borovitsa is distinguished by a unique structure and architecture, built entirely of red stone, cut from the local rocks, the temple was built by Italian masters and local stonemasons in 1866. The name of the church is the Holy Trinity and it is located under the majestic Pine Stone.

Starting point: Borovitsa village. Borovitsa village is located about 10 km before the town of Belogradchik on the road Belogradchik - Ruzhintsi. No railway station. There is a bus stop, where buses coming from Montana or Sofia could drop you.









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The red church "St. Trinity" near village Borovitsa

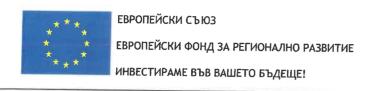


#### 3.5. Route Rabisha-Magura Cave

Gps trace of the route

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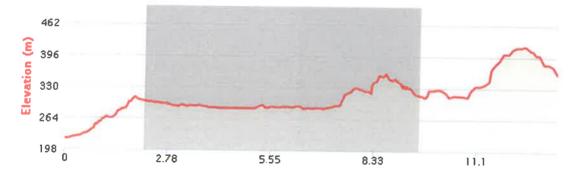


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#### Map of the route

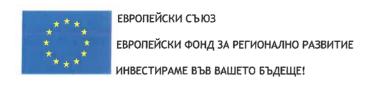


#### Elevation diagram



#### Description:









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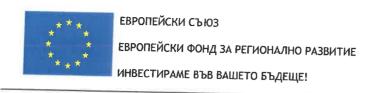
A 14-kilometer long mountain bike trail, 200 meters total positive elevation and 200 meters negative one. The route passes around some of the biggest sights in northwestern Bulgaria - the Magura Cave, famous for its prehistoric drawings and mysterious stories. Scientists have discovered, analyzing found artifacts, that the cave was inhabited 12,000 years ago. Nearby is the karst lake Rabisha, which crystal clear waters spring from the bowels of the Magura cave. The place has many legends and is filled with a special kind of magic and charm. Rabisha's waters are perfect for swimming and fishing. Nearby is also the Complex Magura, where tourists could relax or just overnight. The complex has a restaurant, a spa and an outdoor pool.

Starting point: village of Rabisha. There is a bus from Belogradchik 2 times a week to the village of Rabisha, but it is wise to plan a trip by car, bicycle or taxi. Rabisha is located at a distance of 22km from Belogradchik and 45km from Vidin.

#### View of Rabisha Lake











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## 3.6. Route Inn Madona - Venetsa Cave

Gps Route trace: <a href="https://drive.google.com/open?id=1A7NJmjWB8-c8XtrcXmhV9rp35GAU-SG4">https://drive.google.com/open?id=1A7NJmjWB8-c8XtrcXmhV9rp35GAU-SG4</a>

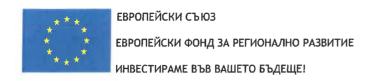
### Map of the route:



### Elevation diagram











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#### Description:

Route for mountain e-bikes with a length of 8 km and a total positive elevation of 180 m. The route is very light and is suitable even for beginners on an asphalt road.

The route starts from inn Madonna, which provides an ideal place for recreation in the region, with a large garden and campgrounds for campers and tents, and many accommodation rooms and a restaurant.

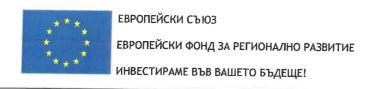
The end point is Venetsa cave, one of the most beautiful caves in Bulgaria. For several years it has been opened for tourists and fully operational.

Starting point: inn Madona, Falkovets village. It is located 5km away from the village of Ruzhintsi on the way to Belogradchik. There is no bus stop or railway station.

The cozy atmosphere in inn Madonna









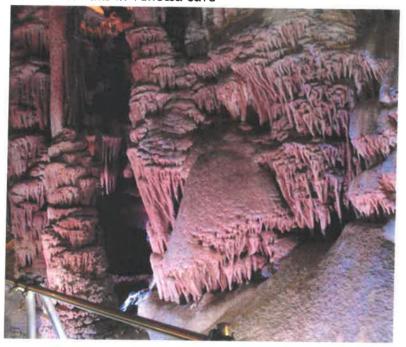


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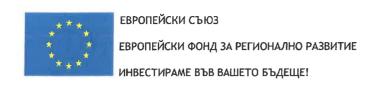
### Cave corals in Venetsa cave



Cave waterfalls in Venetsa cave











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## 3.7. route the Fortress and rocks around Belogradchik

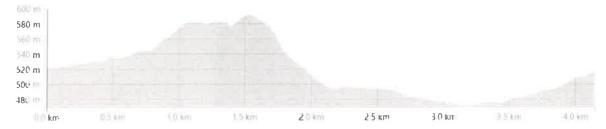
#### GPS trace of the route

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1E3fFsPPK2eP3F6oJuFnqEUxUVJZDDOMz

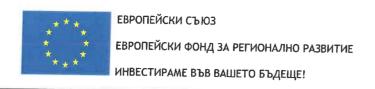
#### Map of the route



### Elevation diagram











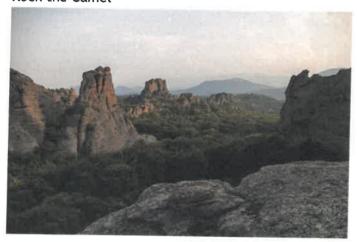
България, 3700 гр. Видин, ул. "Христо Ботев" №77, тел./факс: +359 94 600 017 Ел. поща: office@bcvidin.org; Интернет страница: www.bcvidin.org

## **Route Description**

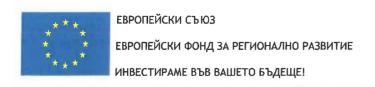
The Itinerary around Belogradchik Fortress has a length of 4km and a total positive elevation of 130m. Suitable for intermediate level e-bikers. The route starts from the city center, reaching the Belogradchik fortress, which you can explore. After the fortress follows a steep descent and passes along many interesting rocks, such as the Camel, the Madonna and others, for which there are fabulous legends.

Starting point: Belogradchik

#### Rock the Camel





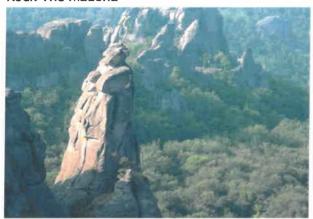






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#### Rock The Madona

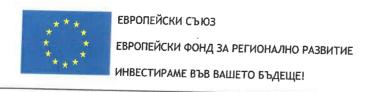




### 3.8. Route The Dagger and the Lion

GPS trace: https://drive.google.com/open?id=1f-0QYKU8wg6M8ibeBpLt8AcCirJQr64B







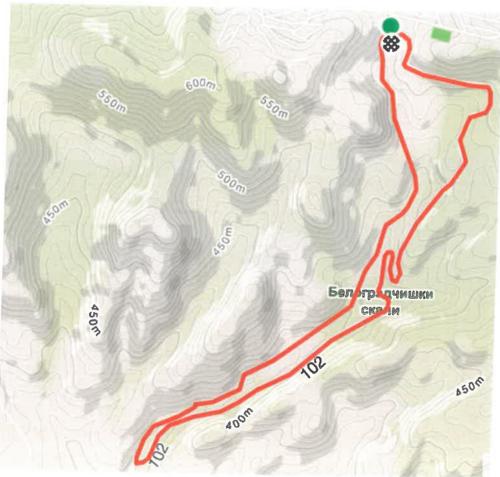


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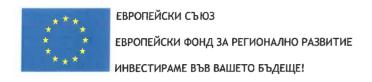
## Elevation diagram



## Map of the route











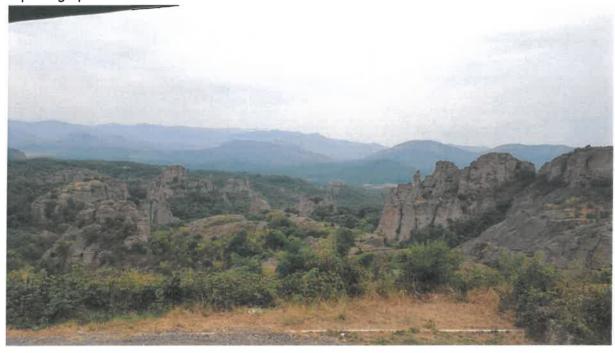
България, 3700 гр. Видин, ул. "Христо Ботев" №77, тел./факс: +359 94 600 017 Ел. поща: office@bcvidin.org; Интернет страница: www.bcvidin.org

#### Route description:

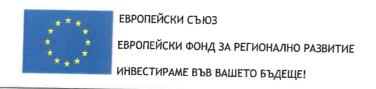
Itinerary for mountain electic bikes suitable for beginners with a length of 7 km with 170 m ascent and the same descent. The route passes through part of the stunning Belogradchik Rocks, where you can see many fairy forms. The majestic red giants, contrasting with the green background of the beautiful natural landscape, create a fabulous natural combination of shapes, shadows and colors, in one word - magic. Because of its exceptional and unique beauty, Belogradchik Rocks are nominated as the Bulgarian candidate for one of the New Seven Wonders of the World. The itinerary passes along the rocks of the Lion and the Dagger which the participants could photograph for their memories.

Starting point: Belogradchik

A photograph of the route











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# 3.9. Route Chuprene - Gorski Raj hut

### Gps trace:

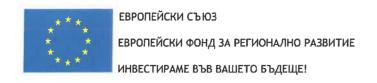
https://drive.google.com/open?id=1uJBRZTlHYNYbZ656pE7CGf\_SYr4LV-yx

## Route map



Elevation diagram









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#### Route description:

Route for mountain electric bikes of intermediate level. The route starts from the center of the pretty village of Chuprene and continues along a wide forest road to Gorski Rai hut. With a prior reservation in the lodge, you can stay there and enjoy the fresh air, breathtaking views and the wonderful cuisine that cooks only with natural products from the area.

The hut "Forest Paradise" is one of the most modern chalets in northwestern Bulgaria, but at the same time has preserved the authentic Balkan spirit. It is located in the northwestern part of the Balkan Mountains, rising at 1,450 m above sea level in the immediate vicinity of the Chuprene Biosphere Reserve. The unspoiled forest paradise is only 17km away from the village of Chuprene and 35km from the town of Belogradchik. "Forest Paradise" offers contemporary conditions for accommodation, cleanliness, coziness and relaxed atmosphere among the pine forests of Stara Planina. The hut has 38 beds, internal sanitary units and central heating, water supply and electricity generator with satellite TV.

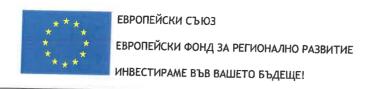
Starting point: Chuprene village

The Chuprene village can be reached easily by a private car or organized coach transport.

There is a bus line from Belogradchik

The clock tower in the village of Chuprene







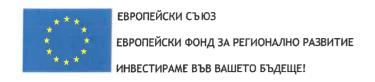


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## 3.10.Route for advanced - Belogradchik

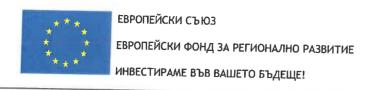
#### Gps trace:

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#### Route map





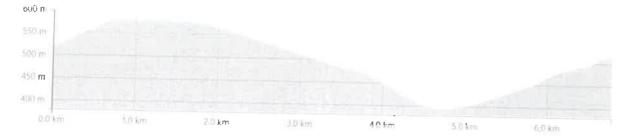






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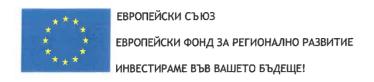
#### Elevation diagram



Description: The mountain biking route is suitable for advanced mountain e-biking because the downhill runs along a steep and technical trail. The path passes along many interesting rock formations typical of the area and creates a fabulous sensation. The length of the route is 7km with 180 meters of climbing. There are about 2 km of a very technical trail that moves between the rocks and which reveals incredibly beautiful sights.

Starting point: Belogradchik







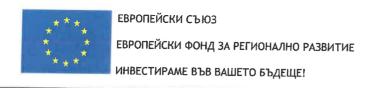


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### Photos from the itinerary











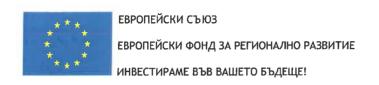
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## 3.11. Route Belogradchik - The TV tower

GPX trace of the route: <a href="https://drive.google.com/open?id=1mSidKilw-b3K3e7cKfrKaiHemzgdoDmB">https://drive.google.com/open?id=1mSidKilw-b3K3e7cKfrKaiHemzgdoDmB</a>







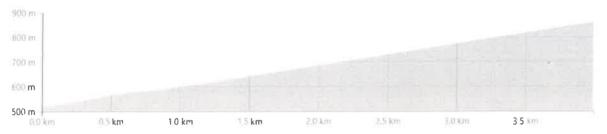


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#### Map of the route:



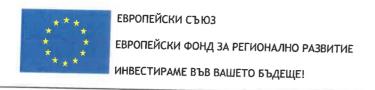
### Elevation diagram



#### Description:

A mountain bike trail suitable for beginners. Route length 4km. Starts from the city center to the TV Tower. The route is going on an erosive asphalt road, suitable for wide-tyre bicycles. From the tower there are views of the Belogradchik Rocks, Rabisha Lake, Magura Cave, and even the Danube River and the Danube Plain at the right time.









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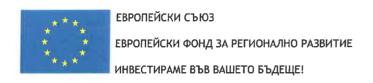
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Starting point: Belogradchik

View from the tower











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#### Sources of Information:

- 1. Map of Vidin district <a href="http://www.e-vidin.com/vidin-map.html">http://www.e-vidin.com/vidin-map.html</a>
- 2. https://bg.wikipedia.org
- 3. http://www.nsi.bg/
- 4. Municipality Belogradchik http://belogradchik.bg
- 5. Municipality Chuprene <a href="https://chuprene.com/?cat=20">https://chuprene.com/?cat=20</a>
- 6. www.booking.com
- 7. Ministry of environment and waters <a href="http://eea.government.bg">http://eea.government.bg</a>
- 8. Official tourist portal of Bulgaria <a href="http://www.bulgariatravel.org">http://www.bulgariatravel.org</a>
- 9. Website for nature landmarks of Bulgaria https://opoznai.bg
- 10. Velo Club Skala <a href="http://clubskala.org/">http://clubskala.org/</a>

