

Pan-Baltic hiking on-line conference  
November 9, 2021

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# THE BALTIC TRAILS - *experiences, challenges, solutions, future plans and expectations*

Asnāte Ziemele,  
Latvian country tourism association  
„Lauku ceļotājs”



# Baltic Trails within ERA network



BALTIC  
COASTAL  
HIKING

## Baltic Coastal Hiking Route

*RU/LT border in Nida – Tallinn (EE)*



1419 km



BALTIC FOREST  
HIKING

## Forest Trail

*PL/LT border in Lazdijai – Tallinn (EE)*



2141 km

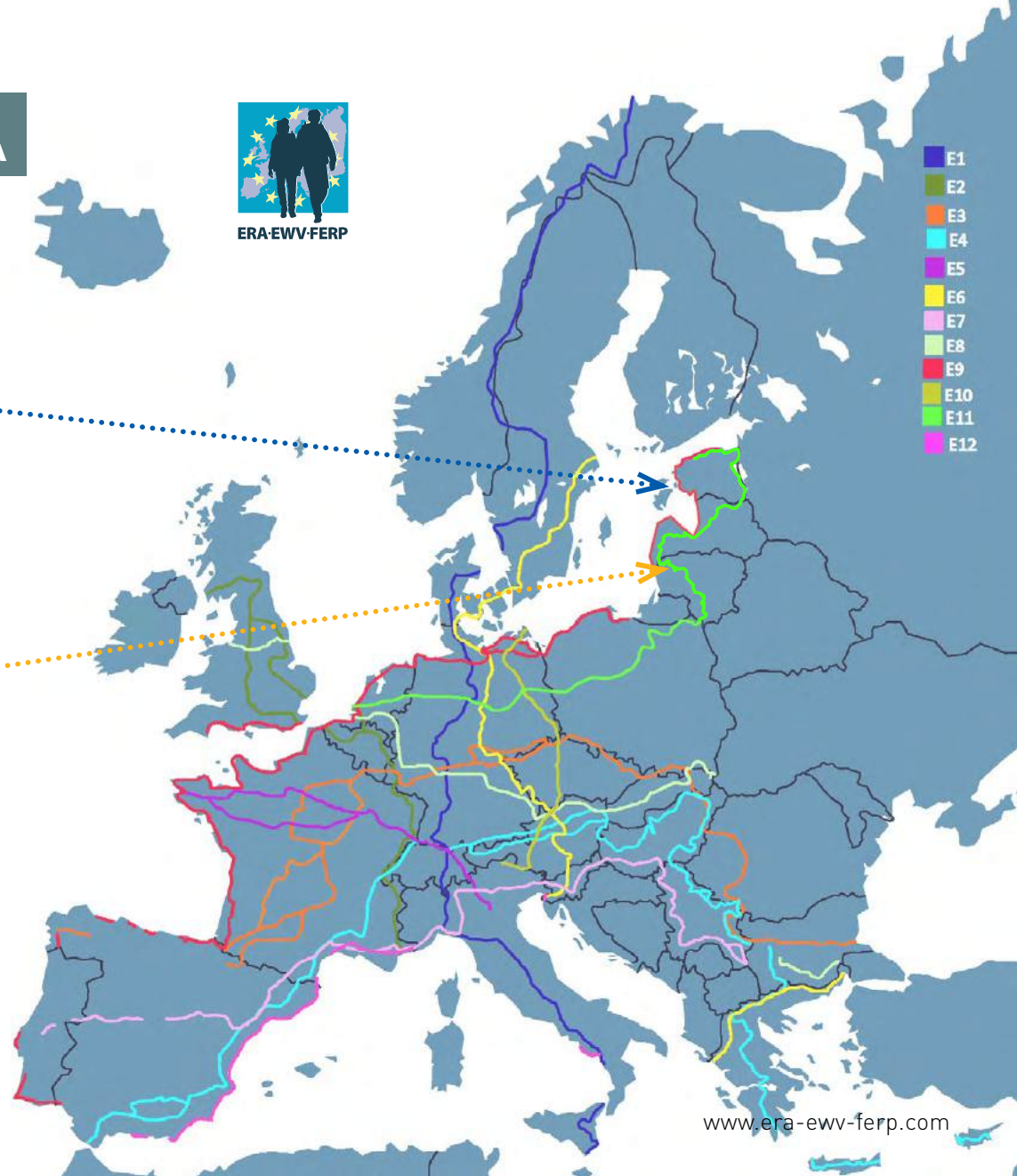


Southern part: Lazdijai (LT) - Riga  
Northern part: Riga - Tallinn

- E1
- E2
- E3
- E4
- E5
- E6
- E7
- E8
- E9
- E10
- E11
- E12

[WWW.BALTICTRAILS.EU](http://WWW.BALTICTRAILS.EU)

[www.era-ewv-ferp.com](http://www.era-ewv-ferp.com)



# BALTIC COASTAL HIKING ROUTE & FOREST TRAIL



Crossing Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania  
Total distance:  
**3560 km / ~ 6 months to walk**

*The distance of 3560 km compares to:*

- *the length of the Appalachian trail in the USA;*
- *straight line distance between Riga and Morocco in Africa;*
- *all residents of Latvia standing in a single line, with a 2m distance.*



# NATURE VALUES

The Baltic trails visit:

**9**  
national  
parks

**1**  
biosphere  
reserve

**~100** other  
protected  
nature areas



# 4 UNESCO world heritage sites:

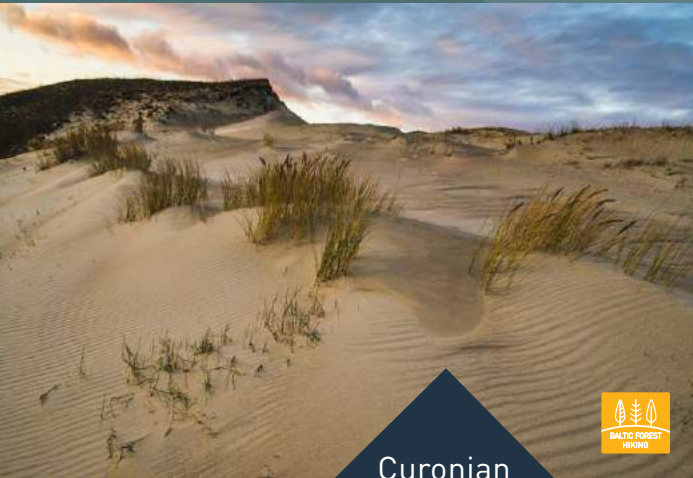
Old  
Town  
Kaunas  
(LT)



Old  
Town  
Riga  
(LV)



Curonian  
spit  
(LT)



Old  
Town  
Tallinn  
(EE)



# TRAIL DEVELOPMENT ON-SITE INSPECTION HIKES:



Loss of weight:  
**10 kg** per  
1000 km



Hiking shoes  
worn out:  
**3 pairs**



Total number  
of steps:  
**~ 4,7 mlj**



Total distance  
walked:  
**~ 3860 km**

# HIKING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TRAIL INSPECTION HIKES

Total  
number of  
participants:  
**>600**



Hikers from  
5 countries



The youngest/oldest  
participant: **2/69**  
years

# NEW INFRASTRUCTURE



**137**  
information stands

**57**  
information signs

**272**  
signposts

**304**  
waterproof trail poster maps

Rest stops and footbridges



# SERVICE PROVIDERS:



- ◆ 1465 objects of natural, historical and cultural interest
- ◆ 899 accommodations
- ◆ 96 camping sites
- ◆ 431 food service providers
- ◆ 293 shops
- ◆ 111 tourist information centres
- ◆ 138 other services

In total  
~**2000** service providers  
operate en route  
of both trails



# HIKER-FRIENDLY LABEL:

- Pan-Baltic
- Common criteria and guideline



[WWW.BALTICTRAILS.EU](http://WWW.BALTICTRAILS.EU)

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# The Baltic trails in Facebook LV/ EE/ LT:



more than  
**10 000** followers



more than  
**8500** followers



Coastal hiking  
Forest trail

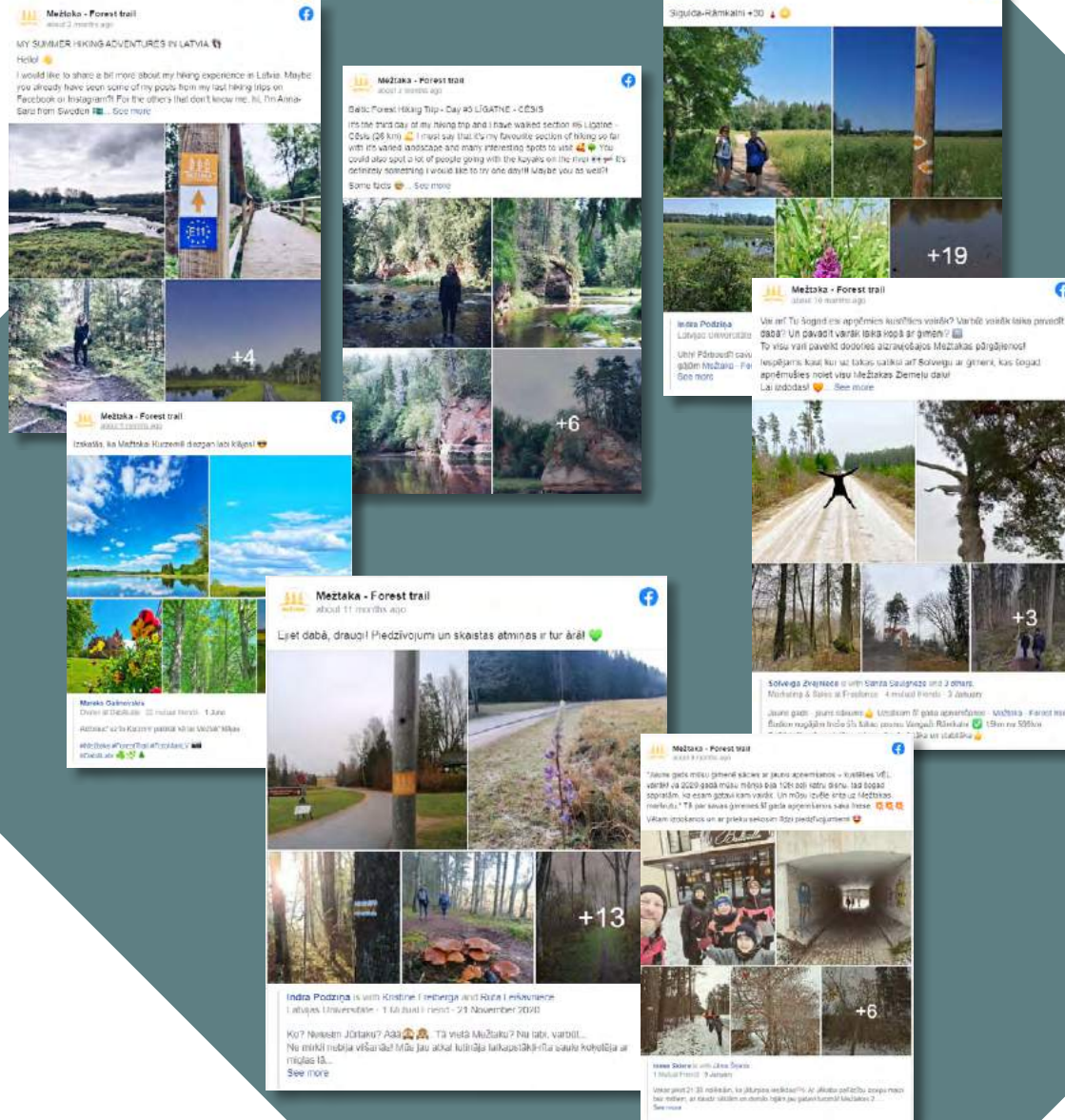


Forest trail / Metsa matkarada  
Mežtaka / Jurtaka  
Miško takas / Jūrų takas



Metsa matkarada - Forest trail / Ranniku matkarada  
Mežtaka - Forest Trail / Jūrtaka  
Baltictrails LT: Miško takas - Jūrų takas

[www.countryholidays.lv](http://www.countryholidays.lv)





# INITIATIVES, inspired by the Baltic Trails in LV:

Mobile  
footbridges on  
4 small rivers on the  
Baltic Coastal Hiking Route  
in Vidzeme region – Nature  
Conservation  
Agency.

Long  
distance hiking  
route “Ezertaka”  
(the Lake Trail,  
1070 km) in Latgale  
region (LV).

Suspension  
bridge on the River  
Irbe in Ventspils  
region.

Waste  
monitoring and  
removal in Vidzeme  
forests - “Latvia’s State  
Forests”  
(LVM).

SMEs  
develop new  
services for hiking  
tourists and initiate  
alternative route  
options.

# EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES, SOLUTIONS, EXPECTATIONS

Local acceptance and support: how to build strong local hiking communities along the long distance hiking trails involving local stakeholders and supporters.

**Sustainability:**  
how to manage and maintain long distance hiking trails after the end of project funding.

**Benefits:**  
how local businesses can use the opportunities provided by long distance hiking routes; how to understand hikers' needs and provide services.

**Added value:**  
how development of long distance hiking routes can impact the preservation of cultural and natural heritage.

Stay tuned for  
the Baltic trails  
southern part official  
opening in  
May 2022!

 FOLLOW US ON  
**FACEBOOK**

@Mežtaka - Forest trail

@Jurtaka

@Baltictrails LT: Miško takas - Jūry takas

@Metsa matkarada - Forest trail

@Ranniku Matkarada



BALTIC  
COASTAL  
HIKING

RANNIKU MATKARADA

JŪRTAKA

JŪRŪ TAKAS







METSA MATKARADA  
MEŽTAKA  
MIŠKO TAKAS



## PROJECT PARTNERS:

### LEAD PARTNER:



**Latvian Country Tourism Association  
"Lauku Ceļotājs"**  
Kalnciema street 40  
Riga, LV-1046, Latvia  
T: +371 67617600;  
E-mail: lauku@celotajs.lv  
www.celotajs.lv

### PROJECT PARTNERS:

LATVIA



ESTONIA



The project "The long-distance cross-border hiking route FOREST TRAIL" (04/01/2019 - 06/30/2021) is partly funded by the European Union and the Central Baltic Programme 2014-2020 of the European Regional Development Fund.



**EUROPEAN UNION**  
European Regional Development Fund



## PROJECT PARTNERS:

### LEAD PARTNER:



Kaunas Regional Development Agency

### PROJECT PARTNERS:

LATVIA



Latvian Country Tourism Association "Lauku ceļotājs"



Kurzeme Planning Region



Kuldīga County Council

LITHUANIA



Lithuanian Countryside Tourism Association



Žemaitija National Park Directorate



Curonian Spit national park Administration

Project LLI-448 "Development of Forest trail in Latvia and Lithuania and expanding the Baltic Coastal Hiking route in Lithuania" (Hiking project) is being implemented with the support of the European Union Interreg V-A Latvia–Lithuania Cross Border Cooperation Programme 2014–2020. Total costs of the project are EUR 788,104. Co-funding by the European Regional Development Fund is EUR 669,888.



EUROPEAN UNION



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