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GGPP 2: LEA IBILBIDEA

Markina- Xemein, 29 February 2024

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Description of the GGPP:

The Lea River is one of the best preserved rivers in the Basque Country. It belongs to the Natura 2000 network. Its natural and heritage values are considered as a **Monumental Site - Industrial Landscape**. It is also one of the variants of the **Historic Wine and Fish Route**.

Along **23 km**, the path along the riverbank has been set up to enhance the value of these resources. The resources are being interpreted and interpretation centres have been set up for visitors. It crosses the 6 municipalities of the region and distributes the flow of tourists through the valley.

With a large number of historical infrastructures linked to the ferro-molinera and naval activity developed in pre-industrial and industrial times, the elements that in the future will have a more effective preservation are scattered by Munitibar, Aulesti, Gizaburuaga, Ispaster, Amoroto, Lekeitio and Mendexa.

With 2212 inhabitants, the effort to protect and value your heritage through the trail is an example of good practices.



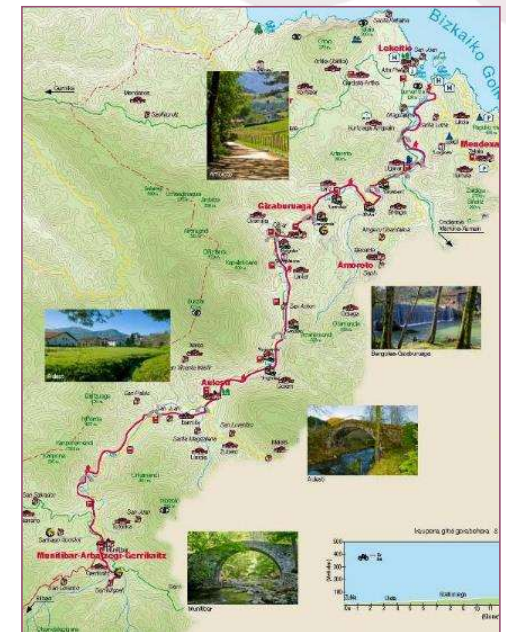
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What is the problem addressed?

The Lea Valley has a wealth of natural and heritage resources. The creation of the footpath has meant the enhancement of resources that have also served as a vehicle for the revitalisation of the area through tourism. New businesses have been created and it has also helped to distribute the flow of tourists through the region.

The Commonwealth of Lea Ibarra has been the driving force behind the product. As we have already mentioned, with a small population, they have worked to achieve a sustainable tourist development that also allows for the recovery and enhancement of many elements of their heritage.

In fact, they have been beneficiaries of NEXT GENERATION funds to improve the infrastructures associated with the trail and give it more strength from a tourism point of view, with a plan for the recovery of natural spaces, energy efficiency, digitalisation and communication and business competitiveness.



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Objectives:

- ✓ Disseminate, communicate, promote and position the resources of Lea Artibai within the tourism framework of the Basque Country, as a region that has great potential in tourism that is already being worked on to value.
- ✓ Improve visitor interaction and the tourist experience. Obtaining greater visitor satisfaction. Reinforce new motivations for visiting the region.
- ✓ Increase the number of visitors to the region, without compromising the carrying capacity of the destination.
- ✓ Distribute the flow of tourists throughout the region. Give an overview of the offer.
- ✓ Adapt tourist information.
- ✓ Deseasonalize demand. Through the launch of new products, routes and experiences, the aim is to increase visits throughout the year and link them to different motivations: gastronomic, naturalistic, sporting or cultural. Marketing actions help to position these products.
- ✓ Generate employment and wealth in the tourism sector.
- ✓ Encourage private initiative and the participation of companies in the development of tourism in Lea Artibai
- ✓ To highlight and interpret the outstanding tourist resources of Bizkaia, using digital media that respond to new tourism trends and the demands of the target market.
- ✓ Promote cultural preservation, emphasizing identity and sustainability as the cornerstones of the tourism product.
- ✓ To communicate, promote and publicise the actions that are developed around tourism in Lea Artibai, to encourage the identification of our region with the values and the story defined in our tourism strategy.

How does the practice achieve its objectives and how is it implemented?

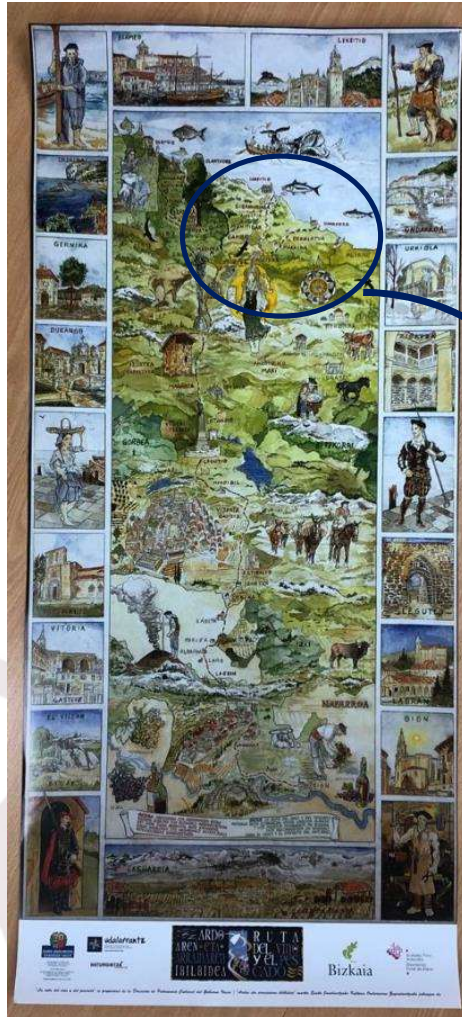
The objectives are achieved through the joint work between the county administrations - destinations, the town councils and the Basque Government, which has worked to protect the territory. The historical trail has been integrated into a wider project to enhance its value, such as the Wine and Fish Route. The investments to be made with the **NEXT GENERATION funds** will facilitate the creation of a tourist product that will generate wealth in the region.

Who are the main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the practice?

The main stakeholders are the **citizens of the region themselves**, who have been able to maintain their important natural and cultural heritage and enhance it for future generations. The effort made will activate the economic development of the region based on sustainable tourism.



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NEXT GENERATION main purpose:

Activate the GR38 (WINE AND FISH ROUTE) - LEA IBILBIDEA, a tourist product that respects nature, as the backbone of the Lea-Artibai tourist destination, through which landscape, heritage and cultural elements will be put to good use, in accordance with criteria of environmental, economic and social sustainability.



Leartibai Fundazioa 2023

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Objectives to achieve with the NEXT GENERATION project:

1

To **make progress in the development** of a proposal for sustainable and territorially balanced tourism, drawing up a differentiated and specific plan that will enable Lea Artibai to be better positioned as a tourist reference point on the Basque coast and in the Basque Country in general.

2

To **enhance the value** of natural and cultural resources linked to the historical trails, the landscape and the heritage of the region in order to boost the local offer and generate new products, which allow a balance to be achieved between the preservation and the exploitation of these resources.

3

To **advance in the digital transition** of the territory, the green transition, energy efficiency and the competitiveness of the destination, advocating principles of action that allow the territory to be developed for tourism and at the same time preserve it for future generations.

4

To **guide a process to promote tourism, the articulation of the offer and its development in the region**, which sets a working guideline trying to counteract the weaknesses detected, continue to enhance the strengths and take advantage of the possibilities offered by the resources, products, experiences and tourist services of the region as a whole.

5

Involve the largest possible number of agents, directly or indirectly, in tourism activity: municipal politicians, members of the Tourism Board, public-private tourism agents, groups and associations of interest and those responsible for tourism at supra-regional level: Provincial Council of Bizkaia and Basquetour.

6

The definition of a practical, operative and realistic roadmap in a region with a unique offer already identified and which has developed pioneering projects in recent years related to heritage, especially in the case of Lekeitio. It is a model that has been able to integrate the resources and the cultural, natural, landscape and food and wine offer, valuing both tangible and intangible heritage.

Actions developed:

AXIS		ACTIONS
Axis 1. Green and sustainable transition	1	Environmental restoration and fitting out of a bathing and recreation area in Bengola.
	2	Environmental restoration and fitting out of a bathing and recreation area in Hiruzubi
	3	Environmental restoration and creation of recreational area in Motrollu
		Total EJE 1
Axis 2. Improving energy efficiency	4	Safety improvements to wooden walkways and paving on the Leako Ibilbidea footpath (accessibility).
	5	Restoration of the Bengola Park footbridge
	6	Sustainable rehabilitation of shelters (Munitibar)
		Total EJE 2
Axis 3. Digital transition	7	Design and implementation of the Route digitisation plan.
	8	Redesigning and digitalising the interpretative contents of the Bengola interpretation centre.
		Total EJE 3
Axis 4. Competitiveness	9	Purchase and rehabilitation of the monumental complex of Bengolea (mill, forge, dam).
	10	Project governance and monitoring
		Total EJE 4

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Evidence of success:

- ✓ Distribution of flows from points of high tourist influx
- ✓ Connection between both points of the valley
- ✓ Connection with other routes or contribution to the network of trails in the region
- ✓ Enhancement of heritage elements, such as the Industrial Landscape and its natural and cultural resources
- ✓ Creation of tourist product and economic activity
- ✓ Governance as it is a project developed between very small municipalities in the region, with a common spirit and with shared objectives...

Communication and dissemination plan:

Historiaren oinatzak jarraituz · Siguiendo las huellas de la historia

www.leartibaiturismo.com

GR38

Lea Artibai

Ardoa eta Arrainaren Ibilbidea
Ruta del **Vino** y del **Pescado**



Eskerrik asko

Nekane Irusta

nirusta@leartibaifundazioa.eus

kaixo@leartibaifundazioa.eus

Tel. 94 616 91 72

<https://leartibaifundazioa.eus>

Xemein Etorbidea, 12-A
Lea-Artibai Berrikuntza Gunea, Markina Xemein
(BIZKAIA)