

## Project Factsheet

# TOUR GUIDES FOR PROTECTED AREAS IN BULGARIA



### Current situation

Protected areas in Bulgaria are the backbone for the protection of unique European landscapes and are of increasing importance for expanding nature tourism, especially hiking activities. The current situation is characterized by the facts, that protected areas serve as attractive destinations for tour operators, whereas tourists themselves often don't realize that they are hiking, biking or residing in a protected area. Additionally, the protected areas, themselves do not participate very much in the monetary benefit (added value) tourism may create in a certain region.

### Project objective

The main project objective is to improve this situation for both, tourists and protected areas, by the implementation of enhanced visitor guiding systems.

The following sub-goals are in the project's focus:

- Generation of local touristic added value by appreciation and utilization of local nature-protection-expertise;
- Promotion of protected areas in Bulgaria for the target group of (German) hiking tourists;
- Reduction of damages to flora and fauna caused by visitors;
- Enhancement of the visibility of protected areas for hiking tourists;
- Qualification of protected areas staff members to act as nature tour guides for individual tourists and groups;
- Qualification of local young adults to act as accompanying English speaking interpreters (creation of tandem-team-tour guides);
- Development and testing of a specialized internet-platform, working as an intermediate agency between tour guides and (esp. German) tourists. (This platform will not act as a tour operator, but as a tool for individual tour guide marketing); and
- Development and testing of marketing strategies in Bulgaria for one-day-tourists.

The project intends to generate added value on the ground by using the specialized nature-know-how of experts and staff members of protected areas who are willing and able to work as hiking tour guides besides their regular duties.

### Project partners:

**Terolog GmbH**, Germany  
(Lead partner)



**Pirin Tourism Forum**,  
Bulgaria



**BTE, Tourism and Regional Consulting**, Germany



**Rila Nature Park**, Bulgaria

### Funding organization:

**German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU)**  
(104.554 € = 50% of project costs)



### Project duration:

18 months