

The Éislek on its way to becoming the FIRST Leading Hiking Region

The marking has begun!

The Éislek offers ideal conditions for becoming one of the top hiking regions in Europe, which is exactly what the Regional Tourism Board Éislek is working towards within the framework of the LEADER project "Qualitéitswanderregioun Éislek". After intensive coordination with the partners of the region, the planning work has been completed so far and the infrastructural work on the hiking trails has begun. The intention is to strengthen the region even more and to increase the hiking experience for locals as well as for guests.

Efforts are being made to obtain the "**Leading Hiking Region**" label, which is being awarded for the first time by the European Ramblers' Association to an outstanding hiking region. This is based on a large number of quality criteria that relate to a wide variety of areas. Central criteria relate directly to the hiking trails, others concern the integration of gastronomy and accommodation establishments, services and information possibilities for hikers as well as the background organisation.

True to the philosophy of "quality instead of quantity", the routes of the hiking trails in the Éislek have been changed and made more attractive based on the existing hiking trails, thus the total number of hiking trails has been reduced. A new category is going to join the revised hiking trails: the "Éislek Pied". These 18 quality tours promise the best hiking quality.

In addition to the revision of the trail routes, the new uniform signing of the hiking trails is the main component of the project. Currently, the hiking trails are being marked and equipped with about 2000 signposts. The installation is being carried out, under the direction of the ORT Éislek, by the Syndicats d'Initiative, the 24 partner municipalities of the project, the Nature Parks Our and Upper-Sûre, the Forum pour l'Emploi and the CNDS. For further orientation and visibility of the hiking offer, an information board which shows all paths around a specific area is installed at each starting point. A total of 82 of these information boards are going to be set throughout the region.

To guarantee the quality of the hiking experience on about 1887 km of hiking trails, the development and implementation of the so-called trail management is another important component of this project. This involves regular inspections and maintenance of the hiking trails. There is going to be a feedback function in the Éislek App allowing hikers to conveniently report problem areas on hiking trails in the Éislek region.

New print and online media, adapted to the national design (Luxembourg for Tourism), serve the uniform communication of the hiking region. At the beginning of the season, 10 topographic hiking maps as well as a booklet with 33 selected hiking tips and a brochure with hiking inspirations are going to be available in all tourist offices. Online, all hiking trails are going to be clearly displayed on the website www.visit-eislek.lu and in the Éislek app via a tour portal. This will make it easier for

hikers to choose and plan their hiking experience.

This project can only be realised thanks to the intensive cooperation between regional partners and public agencies.

Hiking highlights

Real hiking highlights in the Éislek are already the Escapardenne Lee and Eislek Trail, which has been labelled "Leading Quality Trail - Best of Europe", and the "Nat`Our Routen", which have been certified as "premium hiking trails". In addition to that, the Circuit du Lac around the Upper-Sûre Lake and the Sentier Adrien Ries around the Nordstad offer a special experience.

The significance of hiking

Hiking has a long history and tradition in the Éislek. The beginnings of hiking tourism can be traced back to the early 1930s. Today, more than ever, outdoor exercise fulfils an important recreational function. In a society increasingly disconnected from nature, hiking in the forest also makes a decisive contribution to environmental education. Last but not least, hiking tourism is an important economic factor in the rural area of the Éislek.

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