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**Tourism Development Plan in Five Municipalities Located** **in the Area of Mount Majevica and Its Foothills**

*Note: This document was developed on the basis of information and material collected by members of the Intermunicipal Working Group Majevica, as well as on the basis of analyses and discussions held during thematic meetings of the Working Group. This is a working document which has not been adopted by representative bodies of the five local communities. Instead, it serves as a basis for the development of annual activity plans of the Working Group and for the planning of joint projects and activities.*

**Introduction**

1. **Five Municipalities Tourism Development Co-operation Initiative**

With the aim of increasing the existing economic effects in reference to tourism and tourist economy, as well as of creating preconditions for long-term and sustainable tourism development in the area of Mount Majevica and its foothills, five municipalities (Čelić, Lopare, Sapna, Teočak and Ugljevik) started their co-operation in this field in 2019. The goal of the co-operation has been to lay the foundation for a systematic, coordinated and plans-based tourism development in the area of Mount Majevica and its foothills, which encompasses these five municipalities. The co-operation began with a meeting of five mayors on 19 February 2019 in Lopare, at which the *Letter of Intent* was signed regarding future co-operation. It was decided at that meeting and endorsed in the signed document that a joint Intermunicipal Working Group would be formed and would work on the implementation of the endorsed co-operation principles. The Working Group started to hold meetings actively in March 2019, and thus far it implemented a large number of joint activities, including the preparation of the data and of an analysis of the situation necessary for the development of this document, designation of the bicycle track *Via Majevica* that goes through the territory of all the five municipalities, development of a web site in co-operation with young people coming from the five local communities, development of promotional material (a flyer, a film entitled “Majevica – Something Else”), meeting of entrepreneurs in the field of tourism, development of a joint tourist package, etc. Municipal signatories were of the opinion that this form of intermunicipal and inter-entity co-operation was the best way to join resources with the aim of implementing a joint vision of tourism development endorsed by this document. Although the functioning of the municipalities in different legal and administrative contexts may be viewed as an obstacle standing in the way of achieving the goals, the participating municipalities still think that all their differences represent not only an advantage but also multiple available opportunities to implement the vision.

1. **Co-operation Plan Development Methodology**

The structure and function of this document were agreed at regular meetings of the Intermunicipal Working Group and at two expanded meetings. Through the discussion of all the representatives present at the meetings, we arrived at the development of the SWOT analysis and at the formulation of the Vision of Tourism Development in the Area of Mount Majevica and Its Foothills. On the basis of the above, we defined the directions of development to be implemented by participating municipalities both jointly and individually. Participating municipalities individually collected all the relevant information necessary for the section *Majevica – Analysis of the Current Situation*. All the collected information was later collated and abridged.

1. **Majevica – Analysis of Resources**
2. **Location**

**Majevica** is a mountain in northeast Bosnia and Herzegovina. Morphologically and structurally, it is a [horst](https://bs.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Horst&action=edit&redlink=1) - [anticlinorium](https://bs.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Antiklinorijum&action=edit&redlink=1) in the northwest – southeast direction, located between Posavina plain in the north, Semberija plain in the northeast and east, Spreča River valley in the south, Mount [Ratiš](https://bs.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Rati%C5%A1&action=edit&redlink=1) and Tinja River valley in the west. It is 50 km long, with a maximum width of up to 25 km. The highest peak, Stolice (elevation 916 m), is located at the far southeast section of the mountain. According to most morphometric classifications, Majevica is regarded as a low mountain.

Čelić is a municipality in the northeast part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, on hilly and slightly mountainous slopes of Mount Majevica and parts of Posavina, with elevation between 140-711 meters. The municipality covers the area of 136.23 km2. In the east, it borders the municipality of Lopare, Brčko District in the north, in the west it borders the municipality of Srebrenik and in the south the city of Tuzla. The municipality of Čelić consists of the following settlements: Čelić, Ratkovići, Brnjik, Vražići, Velino Selo, Šibošnica, Nahvioci, Humci, Sitari, Lukavica, Miladići, Brezje, Visori and Drijenča. Čelić is the administrative, cultural and economic centre, located along the Tuzla-Brčko Road, at the confluence of rivers Gnjica and Šibošnica. The average population density in the municipality of Čelić is 91.96 persons/km2.

Municipality of Lopare is located in the northeast part of Bosnia and Herzegovina and is part of the Entity of the Republika Srpska. The current municipality of Lopare covers the area of 299.8 km². The municipality of Lopare is located between 44°38'5.93" north and 18°50'36.24" east. The average elevation of the settlement of Lopare is 235 meters. Population density is 56.63 persons per km2. The municipality of Lopare is located where Mount Majevica transitions into the plains of Semberija and Posavina, in the northeast of the Republika Srpska and of Bosnia and Herzegovina and it represents the centre of this part of Majevica foothills. The Tuzla-Brčko Road and the Bijeljina-Tuzla Road pass through the municipality, as well as the rivers of Gnjica, Janja and Jablanička Rijeka.

The municipality of Lopare borders municipalities of Ugljevik and Bijeljina in RS, as well as Teočak, Sapna, Tuzla and Čelić in FBiH, and the Brčko District. The municipality of Lopare consists of 29 settlements, organised into 25 local communities (Bobetino Brdo, Brusnica, Jablanica, Konjikovići, Koraj, Koretaši, Kozjak, Labucka, Lipovice, Lopare, Mačkovac, Milino Selo, Mirosavci, Mrtvica, Peljave, Piperi, Pirkovci, Podgora, Priboj, Pukiš, Puškovac, Tobut, Vakuf, Vukosavci and Završje).

In administrative terms, the municipality of Sapna is one of the thirteen municipalities of the Tuzla Canton. The municipality encompasses the eastern slopes of Mount Majevica and the upper stream of the Sapna River, which is the left-hand tributary of the Drina River. The municipality of Sapna covers the area of 118 km2, i.e., 4.45 % of the territory of the Tuzla Canton. The biggest population density is found in the southern part of the municipality, around the Sapna River and closest to the centre of Sapna, while the area with the highest elevation, i.e., parts of Mount Majevica, is very sparsely populated. The municipality of Sapna mostly follows the north-south direction. The municipal border is 59 km long, bordering four municipalities: Teočak in the north, Kalesija in the south, Lopare in the west and Zvornik in the east. The central part of the municipality is located along the Zvornik-Sapna-Priboj Road and Sapna-Kalesija-Tuzla Road. In geographical terms, the municipality of Sapna is located between 44° 24“and 44° 40“north and 18° 50” and 19° 7” east. The lowest elevation is in the valley of the Sapna River, approximately 147 meters, while the highest elevation is at the same time the highest peak of Mount Majevica (Stolice 916 meters). The number of settlements in the municipality of Sapna is 16, while the number of local communities in the municipality of Sapna is 14. Population density is one of the most important characteristics in urban planning, because it covers both the space and the population, i.e., natural resources and human resources. The average population density in the municipality of Sapna is 102.2 persons per km2.

Municipality of Teočak is located in northeast BiH and it borders the municipalities of Sapna (FBiH), Lopare, Ugljevik and Zvornik (RS). The lowest elevation is in the settlement of Jasikovac, approximately 300 meters, while the highest elevation is 675 meters at the location called Praznitorba. The municipality of Teočak covers the area of 30.85 km². The number of settlements in the municipality of Teočak is 10, while the number of local communities is 7. The spatial distribution of population is rather balanced throughout the territory of the municipality. The highest population density in the municipality of Teočak is in the municipal centre. The average population density (according to the 2013 Census) is 243.81 persons/km²

The municipality of Ugljevik is located in northeast Republika Srpska, between 44º 41' north and 18º 59' east, on the eastern slopes of Mount Majevica, just where it starts to transition into the plain of Semberija. In the east and north, it borders the city of Bijeljina, in the west the municipality of Lopare, and in the south the municipalities of Zvornik and Teočak. From the territorial aspect, the area of this municipality mostly falls under the eastern Majevica region, from the Janja River in the west and north to the Drina River in the east. The southern and western parts of the municipality are located on the slopes of Mount Majevica, while the northern and eastern part are plains. This area has a favourable geographic position. It is relatively well-connected by road with Bijeljina, Tuzla and Zvornik, and onward with the rest of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as with neighbouring Serbia and Croatia. The municipality covers the area of 164 km², and it is one of the smaller municipalities in the Republika Srpska. The municipality is 22 km away from Bijeljina, 49 km from Tuzla, 30 km from Brčko, 165 km from Sarajevo, 160 km from Belgrade, and 144 km from Novi Sad. Approximately 70 km from Ugljevik is the intersection with the Pan-European Corridor 10, i.e., E70 Belgrade – Zagreb highway. This highway is the shortest link with those two cities and thus with Western/Central Europe and with the south/east of the Balkan peninsula.

1. **Climate**

The area is characterised by a temperate continental climate. The climate is favourable, with sunny days throughout most of the year and with mild winters and snow during winter days. The depth of snow is mostly 20-40 cm. Having in mind the developed road network, if prepared correctly and timely, all the major roads can be readied for unhindered traffic. The snowy conditions last approximately for 50 days, except in higher elevations where they last for over 80 days per year, with the average depth of approximately 40 cm. Since this is an agricultural area, the duration of snowy conditions is very important. The snow protects the crops from major frost and creates large quantities of water in the soil. The average vegetation period is 150-200 days. Average air temperature during the vegetation period is 16-18 ºC, which makes this area, from an agricultural point of view, a moderately favourable area in the region. The highest level of precipitation occurs in April and May, when river levels suddenly rise, and the lowest level of precipitation is in August, when a large number of riverbeds dry up and the water level of the Snježničko Lake decreases significantly. The average annual level of precipitation is approximately 900 mm, which is a sufficient quantity of water, but it is not equally distributed, which in turn affects the crops. In terms of precipitation, there are no significant droughts. The maximum precipitation occurs in the beginning of the summer, and the minimum occurs in October and January. Insolation is high enough for numerous agricultural products, especially for fruit which this area is famous for.

Temperature amplitudes are significant, and the four seasons are clearly distinct. In this type of climate, relative humidity and cloudiness have their summer minimum and winter maximum. The average annual temperature is 9-10 degrees Celsius; the minimum temperature is -20 and the maximum temperature goes up to 40 degrees Celsius. The hottest month is July, with an average air temperature of 20-22 ºC, and the coldest month is January, with average temperatures of between -1 and -2 ºC. Due to the proximity and effects of the Pannonian Plain, the average temperature deviation is significant, 21-24 º C.

1. **Flora and Fauna**

This area is important as a migratory corridor for birds from northern and central Europe towards Africa, which use this area to rest and feed. The meadows and forest vegetation provide favourable conditions for the development of fauna. Animals living in the area are brown bear, wolf, wild boar, roe deer, badger, skunk, weasel, squirrel and rabbit. When it comes to birds, one can find hawk, wild duck, pheasant, magpie, crow and owl. Forests and forest land represent one of the most important natural resources amounting to, in the area of the municipality of Čelić, 6,468.65 m2, i.e., 47.78% of the territory of the municipality. The total area covered with forest in the municipality of Teočak is 905.1 ha. Out of the total area of the municipality of Lopare, 39% of the territory is covered with forests. Most of the municipality of Sapna is covered with forests – no less than 5,867 hectares. In the Majevica area, there are oak woods, beech woods, hornbeam, and also some linden, hazelnut, elm and robinia. The biggest issue in the forests of Majevica is the existence of mined areas as a consequence of the last war. Favourable climate and environmental characteristics were decisive in the agricultural production, especially of fruit, vegetables and some types of cereals.

1. **Environmental Protection and Regulations**

Environmental protection implies prevention of detrimental consequences of destruction and pollution of the environment, as well as remediation of consequences of technical and technological accidents in the fields of industry and transport, as well as of other disasters which may jeopardise the environment and the natural resources, of the release of harmful and other matters in the environment from industrial facilities, motor vehicles and household fire flame stoves, in quantities which cause emission concentrations in the water, air and soil, above allowed maximum values, removal of communal, industrial, technological and other types of solid and liquid waste and of inclement weather effects on the environment (snowfall, floods, drought, landslides and other natural disasters). By analysing the state of environment in the area of Mount Majevica, we noted that settlements near major roads are prone to excessive air pollution, and a problem is also inadequate animal waste management. Negative effects may be mitigated through thorough planning and even more detailed and careful implementation of planned measures and activities, relying on the establishment of a unified system to monitor the state of environment both at the local level and at higher levels, as well as on raising awareness of the local community about the importance of environmental protection.

1. **Access to Mount Majevica**

At the moment, access to Mount Majevica and to the settlements in the vicinity is possible mostly by road. By rail, one could access Tuzla (the distance from Tuzla by road is 24 km), and Brčko (the distance from Brčko by road is 30 km). Brčko can also be accessed by boat along the Sava River, and continue towards Mount Majevica by road. The Dubrave (Tuzla) Airport is 45 km away, and one can also continue towards Mount Majevica by road. The Belgrade - Zagreb highway is 60 km away.

1. **Infrastructure and Public Utilities**

Public utility companies exist in the five municipalities and they are in charge of the following: supplying legal and natural persons with potable water, collection and disposal of solid communal waste from legal and natural persons, cleaning and maintenance of public spaces. All the settlements in the area of Mount Majevica are connected to the electrical power grid, except Visori (municipality of Čelić) in which the demining activities have not been completed. The situation regarding the heating is characterised by individual heating systems, mostly coal and wood fire stoves, followed by heating oil and electrical power-based heating. Commercial, social and public facilities are heated via their own boiler rooms. Potable water is provided to the population through town water supply systems directly from local springs. Other potable water supply facilities in the five municipalities are wells, reservoirs with proper equipment, potable water purification facilities, pipelines and other auxiliary facilities.

In the Mount Majevica area, human waste disposal and waste water disposal were mostly dealt with in various ways, most often through the use of a sewage system, without the installed purification equipment, into river and creek basins and through the construction of individual cesspits. In settlements which do not have sewage systems there are individual or group collection and disposal systems with insufficient diameters of maintenance shafts.

Our assessment is that the percentage of coverage by mobile phone signal in the municipalities stands at 95 %. In their urban segment, the municipalities have a sufficient number of parking places which meet the everyday needs of the population, which is a result of investment in this part of infrastructure, leading to the increase in the number of parking places in the last few years.

The existing telecommunication infrastructure meets all the needs for contemporary communications. In the five municipalities, all the settlements are covered with a landline telephone network. Mobile phone network covers over 95% of the territory with 2G signal and approximately 90% of the area with 3G signal.

1. **Tourism Infrastructure**

Limited accommodation capacities exist on the territory of five municipalities. In addition, there are no designated areas for cycling, skiing or other similar activities.

At the moment, there is no tourism infrastructure in terms of skiing facilities and cable car infrastructure. These facilities are planned within the project of construction of “Busija” resort in the period ahead. In terms of catering facilities, the majority are small scale restaurants, but there are some higher-capacity restaurants as well.

1. **Tourist Attractions**

Mountainous forest area of five municipalities is suitable for development of an attractive destination featuring different sport and recreational facilities. When it comes to development of tourism with the focus on cultural heritage or natural landscapes, which encompasses ecotourism, cultural tourism and agricultural tourism, we are planning to primarily focus on outing tourism.

All five municipalities have potential for development of outing tourism, and the following locations are best suited for that purpose:

* Brnjik area, Čelić municipality – alluvial plain between the river of Šibošnica and the road connecting Čelić with Šibošnica,
* “Brana” location on the territory of Vražići local community,
* Humac Lake, above the village of Humac, Čelić municipality, covering the area of 4,500.00 m2.
* Outing site “Busija”, Lopare municipality;
* Sources of mineral-rich and sulphur-rich water;
* Mezgraja Lake;
* Skakac waterfall, Gornja Trnova;
* Mountain lodge and marked hiking trail Tavna-Krćina-GornjaTrnova;
* Hollow rock in Krćina;
* Circular hiking-cycling trail Kolone BB Ugljevik;
* The cave of Hajduk Novak in Krćina;
* Cycling trail Via Majevica which connects the territory of five municipalities.

With regard to significant cultural and historic sites, the following locations should be highlighted:

* “Vukosavci” memorial park, Lopare municipality;
* Tavna monastery from 13th century;
* Medieval tombstones at several locations;
* Monument to participants of Maleševci battle in WWII (Đuro’s HQ);
* Cemetery-memorial site dedicated to fallen partisans and victims of fascists’ terror in Donja Trnova;
* Church of St. Elijah in Zabrđe, built in early 20th century;
* Culture Centre building – replica of the Coalmine Directorate building from 1921.

In addition to locations in the countryside, also relevant for sports and recreational tourism are the following locations:

* Ugljevik stadium – capacity: 6.000 persons;
* Mrkaljević pools, situated in Čelić local community;
* Sports-recreational centre Ugljevik pools (town sports hall with the capacity of 2,000 persons, football pitch, tennis and volleyball courts).
* “Octopus” pools in Lopare.

The most important **events** of relevance to tourism development organised annually within the territory of five municipalities include:

* Commercial event titled: **“Dani jagodičastog voća”** (Berry Days) organised to symbolically recognise and promote Čelić municipality and all of its potential;
* **“Majevičko posijelo”** (Majevica community get-together) cultural event organised annually by SPKD “Prosveta” of Lopare municipality since 2005**;**
* **“Đurđevdanske svečanosti”** (St. George’s Day Festivities)event organised by Lopare Municipality on the occasion day of patron saint of Lopare Municipality;
* **“Dani dijaspore”** (Days of Diaspora)event organised annually by Lopare Municipality since 2012, to promote cultural, sport and other activities and facilitate social interaction among individuals to encourage them to get to know one another and maintain tradition. The event is organised annually during the summer holiday season, in the last week of July;
* **“Likovni sabor”** (Visual Arts Colony)organised annually in the last week of June by “Atelje 313”;
* Hill race;
* Motorcycle race;
* **“Folklorom do pomirenja”** (Reconciliation Through Folk Dancing),folk dancing festival bringing together participants from Serbia, Croatia and BiH;
* Summer in Sapna;
* Apples and Jam Day (Dan jabuke i pekmeza);
* Cherry Picking Day (Trešnjarevo);
* International Accordion Festival, Ugljevik;
* International Folk Dancing Festival, Ugljevik;
* Cultural event titled: “Višnjićevi dani”, Ugljevik;
* International Street Race, Ugljevik;
* International Plums and Honey Festival, Ugljevik;
* International Hikers Convention “Tavna” Gornja Trnova, Ugljevik municipality;
* Days of Old Town of Ugljevik.
1. **Tourism Organisations and Their Competences**

On the territory of five municipalities, two tourism organisations operate at the moment, specifically: Lopare Tourism Organisation and Ugljevik Tourism Organisation.

Lopare Municipality Tourism Organisation was established in early 2014. It focuses on organisation of different events at the territory of Lopare municipality, as well as organisation of travels all over Europe. Hiking Club operates within Lopare Municipality Tourism Organisation. Ugljevik Municipality Tourism Organisation was established in 2021.

1. **Key Institutions for Majevica Area**

Municipalities of Čelić, Lopare, Sapna, Teočak and Ugljevik, as well as other institutions on the territory of five municipalities participating in the project of inter-municipal cooperation in the area of tourism, and all other institutions planning to take part in the implementation of this plan.

1. **SWOT Analysis**

The table below specifies the most important strengths and weaknesses in the area of tourism development in Majevica area. The analysis is based on prior experience and knowledge of members of Inter-municipal Working Group and other representatives of municipal authorities and institutions, as well as representatives of civil society organisations operating in five municipalities.

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| **S – strengths (internal)*** Harmonious multi-ethnic life in the area
* Vicinity of densely populated town area (Tuzla, Bijeljina, Brčko)
* Human capital
* Favourable traffic connections
* Relatively good altitude (Stolice, 915 m)
* Interest by potential investors
* Rich cultural and historical heritage
* Favourable hydrological aspect (lakes, rivers, streams, water sources)
* Culinary diversity
* Potential for hunting and fishing tourism
* Safe environment
 | **W - weaknesses (internal)*** Insufficiently recognised area
* Poor accommodation capacities
* Poor traffic infrastructure
* Lack of tourism-related contents
* Emigration of population
* Uninformed population
* Inadequate utility infrastructure
* Low living standard
* Lack of structure of tourist agencies or institutions
* **Mined areas**
 |
| **O - opportunities (external)*** Good traffic connections

(close airport and road communications)* Potential for cycling tourism
* Agro-tourism (gastronomy, high level of accommodation capacities, healthy food – small value chains…)
* Events (sports, culture…)
* Potential for health tourism (forest-spa, hiking)
* Development of hunting and fishing tourism
* Religious and historical tourism

(churches, mosques, memorials)* Foundations
* Diaspora (investment promotion)
 | **T - threats (external)*** Demographic problem (aging population, departure of young people)
* Disharmony in laws
* Lack of (inter-entity) co-ordination bodies
* Logging
 |

1. **VISION**

**On the basis of the analysis and data collected from all areas relevant for tourism development, defined is the following vision of tourism development in the Majevica and sub-Majevica areas:**

***Majevica is a harmony of diversities – a tourist destination recognisable for its blend of cultural and historical heritage, natural beauty and hospitable people.***

1. **DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

On the basis of the future vision for Majevica, seven strategic goals have been set including both individual and collective activities of five municipalities:

1. **Demining Majevica as a strategic prerequisite for tourism development**
2. **Improvement of local environment protection systems and promotion of sustainable use of energy and other resources**
3. Co-ordinated establishment of a new and environmentally sustainable system of sorting and processing waste in five local communities;
4. Installing solar lighting system at all locations of tourist interest;
5. Raising awareness amongst population on the importance of environment protection and sustainable approach to natural resources.
6. **Improvement of tourism capacities in five local communities**
7. Encouragement of population to engage in tourism
* Providing incentives (local budgets, consumer protection law, ministries – lesser taxes);
* Marketing (presentations, website, media, brochures, applications);
* Leasing business premises under favourable terms for a limited time period.
1. Restoration of cultural and historical monuments
* Medieval tombstones;
* Religious facilities;
* Monuments.
1. Construction and reconstruction of infrastructure
* Traffic;
* Sports;
* River banks;
* Improvement of existing infrastructure (tourist signalisation, cycling trails);
* Picnic/outing locations;
* Parking;
* Connecting existing and recognised picnic/outing locations with related promotional activities (cycling competitions, fishing, and culinary events).
1. Improvement of culinary offerings
* Branding indigenous drinks and dishes;
* Producers’ meetings.
1. Creation of conditions for recreational and sports tourism
2. Increased accommodation capacities
* Expert, informational and financial assistance to service providers;
* Tax relief.
1. Presentation of tourist activities
* Fairs;
* Marketing (webpage, media, brochures, applications);
* Personnel training.
1. **Plan implementation and further steps**

The Co-operation Plan is a framework document describing the vision of development of tourism and development goals stemming from the vision. The Co-operation Plan encompasses the period of 2019-2024 and shall be implemented through the following instruments:

* Continued work of the Inter-municipal Working Group within at least four meetings on an annual basis and the adoption of Action Plans to be based upon the Co-operation Plan and current needs and opportunities in this area;
* Joint application for international donors’ funds and those of the BiH institutions;
* Joint implementation of activities and projects aimed at achieving development goals and implementing annual Action Plans;
* Management and use of joint profiles on social networks (Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, Instagram, etc.) and website [*www.visitmajevica.com*](http://www.visitmajevica.com)*;*
* Individual activities by one or more municipalities on the implementation of goals set and annual Action Plans adopted;
* Drafting reports on the progress of implementation of the Co-operation Plan to be prepared by the Inter-municipal Working Group to be delivered to the governing bodies of all five participating municipalities.

Manner of consideration and potential adoption of the Co-operation Plan shall be left to discretion and internal procedures of each of the five participating municipalities. Each promotion, results evaluation and modifications to the Co-operation Plan and joint documents stemming from it, shall be co-ordinated amongst the participating municipalities.