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Wine route Križevci-Kalnik-Orehovec expanded to the area of Municipality of Gornja Rijeka and renamed into "Wine route of Križevci Prigorje"

On Wednesday 9th November 2022 a meeting was held in the Development Center and Technology Park in Križevci on the topic of expansion of the Wine route Križevci-Kalnik-Orehovec to the area of the Municipality of Gornja Rijeka, acceptance of new members and change of the wine route name.



The meeting was conducted by the Head of the Administrative Department for Economy, Finance, EU Funds and Public Procurement of Town of Križevci and project coordinator **Ivan Biškup**, who thanked all existing and potential members of the Wine route for their participation at the meeting and previous co-operation.

He pointed out that Town of Križevci, Municipality of Kalnik and Municipality of Sveti Petar Orehovec have had an excellent co-operation so far on the development of wine tourism, and that 9 years after the establishment of the Wine route Križevci-Kalnik-Orehovec the idea of Wine route extension the area of the Municipality of Gornja Rijeka has emerged, as a natural geographic continuation of the Wine route and Križevci gravity area.

In addition, there is considerable interest from potential new members in the already included municipalities on the Wine route, and it is expected that this extension will significantly improve the offer of the Wine route and the general tourist offer of Križevci Prigorje.



In the introductory part of the meeting, Town of Križevci mayor **Mario Rajn** addressed the audience and emphasized the interdependence of Town of Križevci, Municipality of Kalnik, Municipality of Sveti Petar Orehovec and Municipality of Gornja Rijeka in terms of economy, culture and tourism, where all units must act together, beyond administrative boundaries, in order to achieve a synergistic effect for the benefit of the entire wider Križevci area.



The mayor pointed out that Town of Križevci has so far provided support for the improvement of the Wine route offer, increase of its recognition in the surroundings and positioning on the market, as well as activities of the development of viticulture and winemaking and the organization of wine-tourism events, and that it will continue to do so in the future, through programs and activities of town departments and institutions and by providing means for the development of the Wine route through funds and calls for proposals.

Municipality of Gornja Rijeka mayor **Darko Fištrović** expressed his satisfaction with the proposal to include the territory of Gornja Rijeka Municipality on the wine route of the Križevci area.

The Municipality of Gornja Rijeka has several active registered winegrowers and winemakers, and is increasingly developing the accompanying offer and accommodation facilities.

The mayor pointed out he expects that the inclusion of Gornja Rijeka in the offer of the Wine route will give new momentum to the development of wine tourism in the wider Križevci area.



The senior adviser for budget and finance in the Town of Križevci and project manager **Marija Podolski** spoke about the EU projects within the framework of which the story of wine tourism in Križevci and its surroundings began and through which it has been developing until now, reminding that the first initiative for the establishment of the wine route started about 15 years ago by the members of the Association "Bilikum", after what in 2012 Town of Križevci established co-operation with the Hungarian Pécs-Mecsek Wine route and the Association of Wine Cellars Mecseknádasd, and with associated partners the Municipality of Kalnik and the Municipality of Sveti Petar Orehovec submitted the project **"From wine tradition to wine tourism - creating cross-border wine routes"** to the call for proposals within the IPA Cross-border Co-operation Programme Hungary-Croatia.



The project was approved for financing and its implementation began in February 2013 with the aim of launching the idea and programmes of wine tourism development in the area of Križevci and its surroundings based on Hungarian experiences.

As part of the "Cross-border wine routes" project, the founding meeting of the Wine route Križevci-Kalnik-Orehovec was held on 24th September 2013, with the participation of 13 founders and the Tourist Board City of Križevci, which was chosen as the legal entity authorized to represent the wine route. In January 2014, in accordance with the Rulebook on Wine routes of Koprivnica-Križevci County, Wine route Križevci-Kalnik-Orehovec was officially declared by the County Committee for wine routes.

After the implementation of the project "Cross-border wine routes", activities related to wine events and co-operation with members of the wine route were continued by the Tourist Board City of Križevci and the "Bilikum" Association.

In order to provide additional funds for the development of the Wine route, in 2019 Town of Križevci established co-operation with one of the most famous Hungarian wine regions - the Villány wine region and the Wine route Villány-Siklós, and prepared new project **"From wine routes to joint HUHR tourism brand – creating the recognizable cross-border wine region image with acronym "Cross-border wine routes 2"**, aiming to improve offer of the wine routes and increase their recognition as part of the tourist offer.

The implementation of the project "Cross-Border wine routes 2" has begun in September 2020 and will end on 31st December 2022 and the extension of the Wine route was not planned in the project. However, during the project implementation, through cooperation and communication with members of the Wine route and other entities that participate as support in the organization of wine events and programs and actively work to attract visitors to the wider Križevci area, the idea of expanding the wine route and accepting new members has been developed.

In the central part of the meeting, **Olinka Gjigaš**, director of the Tourist Board of the City of Križevci, as a legal entity authorized to represent the wine route, presented the Rulebook on Wine routes of the Koprivnica-Križevci County, which regulates the significance of the wine route, the minimum requirements that must be met by the wine route, the procedure for declaring certain wine route and minimum conditions for providing catering services on the wine route. This was followed by the presentation of the Decision on the extension of the Wine route Križevci-Kalnik-Orehovec to the area of Municipality of Gornja Rijeka and the new name "Wine route of Križevci Prigorje".



By this Decision, the Wine route Križevci-Kalnik-Orehovec, which includes the territory of the local self-governments of Town of Križevci, Kalnik Municipality and Sveti Petar Orehovec Municipality is extended to the territory of Municipality of Gornja Rijeka and new members are to be accepted.

The full name of the wine route "Wine route Križevci-Kalnik-Orehovec" is changed to "**Wine route Križevci-Kalnik-Sveti Petar Orehovec-Gornja Rijeka**", while the abbreviated name of the wine route is "**Wine route of Križevci Prigorje**". The legal entity authorized to represent the wine road remains the Tourist Board City of Križevci and the headquarters of the wine route is also located at the address of the Tourist Board - Trg J. J. Strossmayer 5, Križevci.

The modified logo of the Wine route was presented, after what discussion was opened and the Decision on the extension of the Wine route Križevci-Kalnik-Orehovec to the area of the Municipality of Gornja Rijeka and the new name "Wine route of Križevci Prigorje" was presented and adopted unanimously.

