

**ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING EXCHANGE INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE
HOSPITALITY SMEs IN THE BALKAN-MEDITERRANEAN REGION**

Subsidy Contract No. BMP1/1.3/2616/2017

Company name: "Iri Hissar" hunting lodge



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Source: <https://www.facebook.com>

Country/region of operation: village of Osen, Silistra region, Bulgaria

Sustainability dimension: environmental, experiential tourism, facility management

Description of the enterprise/initiative:

Bulgaria is considered to be among the best destinations for hunting tourism in Europe and "Voden-Iri Hissar" is one of the enterprises offering great hunting and accommodation opportunities.

A long tradition of wildlife husbandry has allowed the region to support a rich variety of big game species. The hunt is conducted mainly on an individual basis in the presence of a hunting guide. A characteristic feature of the Enterprise is that it is a forest area, dotted with open spaces in the form of game fields, meadows and pastures. The whole area is a forestry island, located among the vast agricultural blocks of Ludogorie. The goal of most hunting activities is to create optimum conditions for the development of the game, thereby reducing migration outside the Enterprise. The location and conditions ensure quality feeding and a peaceful environment, this all helps to avoid predators (including dogs) allowing the animals to thrive.

The hunting lodge in Iri Hissar offers its guests 7 rooms, a dining room and a living room with a huge fireplace around which the whole building is "build". Its creator, Grandpa Dacho, called her "The bear's lair". In 2014, the building was partially renovated and a

barbecue was built in the vicinity, which adds extra color to the place and predisposes for pleasant outdoor hours.

Social/ community impact sought:

Protecting the environment and the wild life, promoting the hunting tourism in Bulgaria

Stakeholders: hunters from Bulgaria and abroad

Approach applied:

The territory of "Voden-Iri Hissar" is famous for one of the strongest populations of red deer in the world. Several successive world records in red deer's trophies have written the Enterprise in the world's trophy book with capital letters. Unfortunately, since Bulgaria has become democratic, there have been dramatic increases in the variety of methods used by poachers which not only decreased the populations of the red reed but also the ones of roe deer, fallow deer, mouflons, wild boar and European bison. Given that, one of the main activities of the enterprise on a day to day basis is the protection of the game from poaching. Great attention is also paid to the restoration of wild overgrown areas and keeping the forest roads intact by human presence.

Innovation applied:

As hunting tourism has become popular and wealthy hunters started to visit the place, the game itself wasn't sufficient to attract that kind of visitors to the place. The demand for comfortable and higher-quality accommodation made the managers take actions in direction to upgrade the facility, therefore sauna, a hot tub, a steam bath and a bar have been made available for the visitors.

Another innovation is the opportunity for hunting with sleigh and horse run. Only in Voden the visitors can enjoy the pleasure of hunting, combined with the smooth running of the sled and the proximity and the smell of horses.

Social impact and business results achieved:

As the hunting area of Iri Hissar holds the national records for fallow deer and mouflon trophies, the place has always been preferred destination for hunting tourism but with the reconstruction and renovation of the houses for accommodation the hunting lodge has increased its capacities and welcomes more visitors than before. For example, for the past 2017, a total of 53 trophies were obtained on the territory of TPS "Voden-Iri Hisar", 17 of them with medals.

Financial situation / sustainability of the business model:

The sustainability of the business model is ensured by the regulated flow of tourists/hunters. The financial resources entering the enterprise are used for facility

management. Specialized equipment is being bought and used at the abandoned fields in the region to "digest" the existing biomass and spreading it back over the area. The taxes payed by the hunters are used for the overall maintenance of the lodge and the game habitat. The sustainability of the wild animals' populations is a key factor for ensuring the sustainability of the business.

Key success factors: Sustainability of game population, regulation of visitors

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Challenges and problems: The most serious problem are the poachers who use variety of methods such as search light hunting from vehicles, quiet driven hunts and local techniques with specially trained dogs catching the game and the poachers killing them with knives, as well as combination of these. Nobody can accurately give account of the amount of damage that has been caused, but undoubtedly this is enormous.

Year when the enterprise was created: 1973

References (web-site, intent links, video, etc.):

<https://scdp.bg/booking/hotels/iri-hisar-20>

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