FROM SEA TO MOUNTAIN IN ELEVEN MINUTES: ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST SPECTACULAR ROPEWAYS IN THE HEART OF MONTENEGRO

Superlative ropeway project begins: spanning a distance of 3.9 kilometers and 1,316 vertical meters, a LEITNER system will soon connect the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Kotor with Lovćen National Park. Montenegro's Prime Minister Dritan Abazovic has described the project as being "of major strategic importance to the country's development as a tourist destination." Martin Leitner also considers the new ropeway strongly indicative of the future of the region: "Green mobility means sustainable economic growth."

In Montenegro, work began in recent days on the first sea-to-mountain gondola lift on the Adriatic, which the South Tyrolean company LEITNER will build and operate for the next 30 years together with a consortium formed around local construction enterprise Novi Volvox. The ropeway is expected to open in summer 2023.

The new route runs from Kotor to Kuk, a point on Mount Lovćen 1,348 meters above sea level in one of Dalmatia's most spectacular natural preserves. Gondolas will travel the 3.9-kilometer route in less than eleven minutes.

"Our aim is to make the country even more attractive, and this project will play a major part in making this vision a reality," said Montenegro's Prime Minister Dritan Abazovic at the groundbreaking ceremony. "The ropeway will become one of the finest facilities of its kind in Europe, and it will also be of considerable strategic importance, since it will directly connect two of Montenegro's most emblematic places: the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Kotor and Lovćen National Park."

LEITNER board member Martin Leitner concurs. "We are extremely proud – and very aware of the responsibility it entails – to breathe genuine life into an idea that has been described as iconic since the design stage." He believes that the ropeway will be a major driver of tourist development and an expression of a far-sighted strategy for the future. "We're convinced that true growth can only occur in this visually and architecturally stunning environment in conjunction if it is tied to the development of sustainable mobility," Leitner says.

A gondola lift which will drive tourism and help the environment

There are very few direct links from the sea to the mountains in Europe. But there will soon be one in Montenegro. The ropeway will begin in the village of Dub within the coastal municipality of Kotor, very near the road tunnel which connects Kotor with Tivat. Just under four kilometers up the rope, the ropeway reaches Kuk on Mount Lovćen, 1,348 meters above sea level. This journey covers a vertical distance of no less than 1,316 meters between the bottom and top stations. The ropeway is expected to be

able to carry 1,200 passengers per hour, and the predicted number of passengers in the first year of operation is around 400,000. The installation will have 40 cabins, each with a capacity of ten people, and the journey time from the bottom station in Dub to the top station in Kuk will be less than eleven minutes, which is much less time than it currently takes by car. Equally noteworthy are the environmental benefits in an environment as sensitive as the Lovćen National Park. Constructing the ropeway will almost completely eliminate the use of the winding old Njeguš road, and that will significantly reduce carbon emissions from cars and buses because it will cut down motorized traffic to a minimum. Passengers arriving at the top station will enjoy one of the world's most beautiful views: the Bay of Kotor, a place which, through the development of port infrastructure, has become a highly favored destination of international tourists.

Stability Through Public-Private Partnership

The project involves a planned investment of €24.2 million. As in the case of the urban ropeways in Berlin and Pisa, LEITNER is not limiting itself to providing ropeway expertise. As part of a public-private partnership closely connected to the government of Montenegro, LEITNER, in a project consortium with local enterprise Novi Volvox, is responsible not only for overseeing construction, but also for maintaining and operating the ropeway.

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