

Pilot experience: Argonauts' return

*As a “Cultural Route of the Council of
Europe”*



WP:5

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“Cultural Route of the Council of Europe”
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Introduction

- **Communication on Tourism COM (2010) 352:**
Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination
- **Resolution CM/Res 2010(53) – Council of Europe:** Closer co-operation between states particularly interested in the development of Cultural Routes.
- **European Institute of Cultural Routes (EICR):**
examine applications for new projects, monitor activities in the field and co-ordinate the work of partner organisations, disseminate and archive information documents.

COM (2010) 352

ACTION 1: Develop a coherent strategy for diversifying the promotion of tourist services and capitalise on Europe's common heritage, particularly by creating a European Heritage Label, alongside actions such as European Heritage Days or the European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage. Encourage the integration into tourism strategies of 'natural' heritage, which will also benefit from labelling initiatives.

ACTIONS 6: Provide a voluntary tourism exchange mechanism between Member States, enabling in particular certain key groups such as young or elderly people, people with reduced mobility and low-income families to travel, particularly during the low season. Develop a voluntary online information exchange mechanism to improve the coordination of school holidays in the Member States, without prejudice to their cultural traditions. |

Cultural Routes

- A cultural, educational heritage and tourism co-operation project aiming at the development and promotion of an itinerary or a series of itineraries based on a historic route, a cultural concept, figure or phenomenon with a transnational importance and significance for the understanding and respect of common European values.
- The Cultural Routes programme was launched by the Council of Europe in 1987. Its objective is to demonstrate, by means of a journey through space and time, how the heritage of the different countries and cultures of Europe contributes to a shared cultural heritage.
- Cultural Routes put into practice the fundamental principles of the Council of Europe: human rights, cultural democracy, cultural diversity and identity, dialogue, mutual exchange and enrichment across boundaries and centuries.

I. Existing Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

- The Santiago De Compostela Pilgrim Routes (1987)
- The Hansa (1991)
- The Heinrich Schickhardt Route (1992)
- The Viking Route (1993)
- The Via Francigena (1994)
- The Vauban and Wenzel Routes (1995)
- The Routes of El Legado of Andalusí (1997)
- European Mozart Ways (2002)
- The Phoenicians' Route (2003)
- The Iron Route in the Pyrenees (2004)
- The Saint Martin of Tours Route (2005)
- The Cluniac Sites in Europe (2005)
- The Routes of The Olive Tree (2005)

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II. Existing Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

- The Via Regia (2005)
- Transromanica (2007)
- The Iter Vitis Route (2009)
- The Route of Cistercian abbeys (2010)
- European Cemeteries Routes (2010)
- Prehistoric Rock Art Trail (2010)
- European Route of Historical Thermal Towns (2010)
- The Route of Saint Olav Ways (2010)
- The European Route of Jewish Heritage (2010-2011)
- The Casadean Sites (2012)
- The European Route of Ceramics (2012)
- The European Route of Megalithic Culture (2013)
- The Huguenot and Waidensian trail (2013)

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Cultural Routes in the making

1. Route of Roma Culture and Heritage
2. Cultural Routes in the South
Caucasus



❖ Target: “Argonauts’ Return” a
candidate Cultural Route

I. Eligibility Criteria

For a theme to be eligible for the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes Programme, it must satisfy all of the following criteria:

1. the theme must be representative of European values and common to several countries of Europe;
2. the theme must be researched and developed by groups of multidisciplinary experts from different regions of Europe so as to ensure that the activities and projects which illustrate it are based on consensus;
3. the theme must be illustrative of European memory, history and heritage, refer to at least one of the three topics in the general conceptual framework proposed by the programme (peoples, migrations, broad currents of civilisation) and contribute to an interpretation of the diversity of present-day Europe;

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II. Eligibility Criteria

4. the theme must lend itself to cultural and educational exchanges for young people and hence be in line with the Council of Europe's ideas and concerns in these fields;
5. the theme must permit the development of initiatives and exemplary and innovative projects in the field of cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development;
6. the theme must lend itself to the development of tourist products in partnership with tourist agencies and operators aimed at different publics, including school groups;
7. the theme must permit the implementation of long-term, multilateral, co-operative projects in various fields of action.

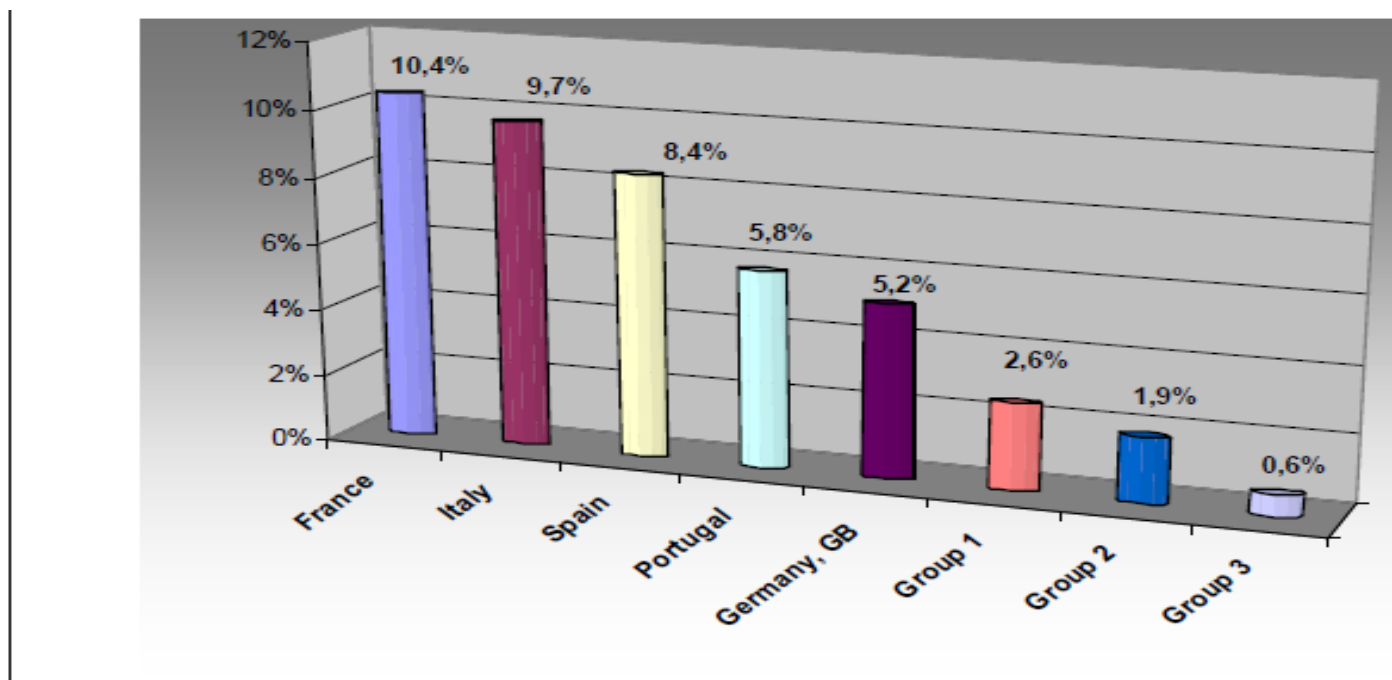
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Cultural Routes in a Graph

- The Cultural Routes programme of the Council of Europe comprises 29 certified Routes that cover 70 countries.
- Statistical analysis of the Cultural Routes traversing these countries demonstrates visually the density of the Cultural Routes networks.
- Graph 1 below illustrates the percentage share of the Routes network by country.
 - France (10.4%) heads the list followed by Italy (9.7%),
 - Spain (8.4%), Portugal (5.8%), Germany (5.2%) and Great Britain (5.2%).
 - The rest of the countries each comprise 2.6% or smaller percentages.
- ❖ These nations form three large groups, which represent the unexploited development potential of the Council's Cultural Routes programme.

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Figure 1: Cultural Routes-Share per Country, 2011



Group 1: Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Norway, Poland, Sweden and Switzerland.

Group 2: Algeria, Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Lebanon, Morocco, Netherlands, Slovenia and Tunisia.

Group 3: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Jordan, Lithuania, Malta, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Syria, Turkey and Ukraine.

Impact of European Cultural Routes on SMEs' innovation and competitiveness

There is collaboration emerging between the **Cultural Routes** and **tourism SMEs** to develop **cultural tourism**. Examples include:

- the development of interactive guides (Transromanica)
- links to new audiences via **social media** (Transromanica, Hansa Youth);
- new celebrations (for example, Hansa International Festival);
- new heritage merchandise (all Routes);
- joint marketing with hotels and restaurants (all Routes);
- joint promotion with transport providers (Hansa);
- gastronomic tourism (Olive Tree);
- **Agri-tourism/eco-tourism** (Via Francigena, al-Andalus).

And in the new landscape of cultural tourism, the Cultural Routes have a new and important role to play:

- the increasing importance of showcase exhibitions and of European capitals for culture;
- the increasing importance of industrial heritage sites;
- the increasing importance of military architecture sites;
- the increasing importance of sites of memory;
- the increasing importance of natural and historic parks;
- the increasing importance of celebrations, namely those of prominent local, national or European figures;
- the increasing importance of annual themes co-ordinating a common policy for territories;

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- co-creation;
- increasing linkages between suppliers and consumers;
- increased contact with the local culture;
- increased emphasis on the everyday and intangible heritage;
- a shift towards events as a means of valorising place;
- creative spaces;
- holistic, spiritual approaches;
- new grounds for authenticity (a move away from authority towards context, originality and user-generated content).

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Accessible Tourism

- Disabled people represent a large and growing market in the EU, for both business and leisure travel.
- In the European Union, about 37 million people are disabled.
- Around 120 million disabled or elderly people in Europe would welcome improved access.
- Many disabled people are keen to travel, but wide variation in the level of access within destinations and across the European Union generally, combined with poor information and negative experiences, discourages potential customers.
- Improved accessibility will not only result in economic benefits to the tourism industry but will also assist the move towards full social integration.

Accessible Tourism in Europe

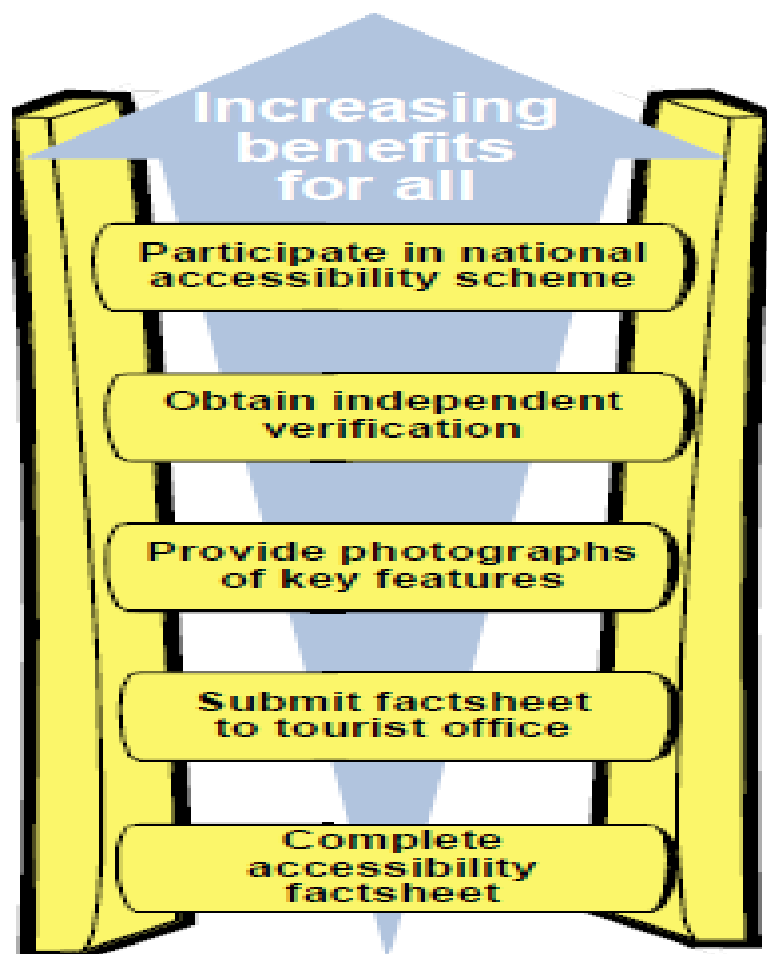
- The European Commission celebrated on 3 and 4 December the 'European Day of Persons with Disabilities' and the 'European Tourism Day' 2013 with the Joint Conference on 'Accessible Tourism in Europe'



Accessible Tourism in Europe

- The conference showed:
 - examples of good practices of Tourism for All and possible solutions for the obstacles most frequently encountered,
 - covered the practical, political and economic aspects of these issues, focusing on how to overcome barriers that are limiting the potential of a more open Europe to international tourism and benefit from the tourism industry

Improving information on accessible tourism for disabled people



Role of EKPOL GR – PP4 in CLEAR Project

- *Realisation of Pilot Experience n. 5 - **New Media tools Campaign** (Facebook, Social Media, etc)*
- *Informative Campaign related to accessibility of CVs for gaining new CV visitors & increase CV knowledge & fresh perception of heritages.*

❖ **Facebook: Argonauts Return** 

Why 'Argonauts' Return' a Cultural Route?

- Noting that the identification of European values and a common European cultural heritage may be achieved via cultural routes tracing the history of peoples, migrations and the spread of the major European currents of civilisation
- EKPOL has investigated the feasibility of a Cultural Route through SEE based on the **Argonauts' Return** from the Black Sea through the Danube to the Adriatic Sea and beyond.

What has be done before CLEAR?

- Previously, all actions relating to the 'Argonautic Expedition' were limited to the onward journey from ancient Iolkos (city of Volos) to Colchis (Poti / Batumi in Georgia, or Sochi in Russia)
- But the ARGONAUTS' RETURN constitutes the basis for 'Cultural Values' in countries of South East Europe.

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Argonautica footprint in SEE

- Similar boats in Black Sea Coast settlements (Mesimvria-Nesebar, Sozopolis-Sozopol, Anghialos-Pomorie)
- Through Danube river from Black Sea to Adriatic
- Boat in the Woods in Gabrovo, Bulgaria
- Jason as Lublijana's founder
- Festivals on the Adriatic Dalmatia Coast Croatia down to Corfu (Drepano island)
- Po river in Italy (old Eridanos river)
- Route through Rhone

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There are many different versions of 1. “the Argonauts’ Return” to Thessalia



2.



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3.



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4.



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5.



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6.



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7.



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8.



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The route given by Apollonius Rhodius



was chosen as:

- it represents a theme common to several countries of **SEE** where **CLEAR** project is being implemented.



Plan for Action

❖ Argonauts' Return as a candidate Cultural Route of the Council of Europe:

- to be approved by the Board Members of EKPOL – Thessalia Region



- get the approval of the Governor of Thessalia Region and the Regional Board Council



- Next, Greek Ministry of Tourism & Culture supporting and promoting the nomination



- European Institute of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in order to get the certification “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe”

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Conclusion

- Tourism development (accessible tourism, cultural tourism, creative tourism) through the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe
- Cultural Routes' impact on SMEs, European, national, regional and local authorities
- Financial motivational power of “the Argonauts’ Return” to be a candidate Cultural Route, achieved by the Cultural Routes programme of the Council of Europe.
- Possibilities for a new partnership among the countries of SEE.

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