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Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe  
Certification cycle 2020-2021

Candidate Route:

# IRON AGE DANUBE ROUTE

Independent expert report

Cultural route  
of the Council of Europe  
Itinéraire culturel  
du Conseil de l'Europe



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*\*The opinions expressed in this independent expert report are those of the author, and do not engage the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe*

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## **1. Executive Summary**

The first concept for the Iron Age Danube Route (IADR) stems from the Interreg Danube Transnational Project “Monumentalized Early Iron Age Landscapes in the Danube River Basin”, a RegioStars finalist for 2018. Twenty partner institutions from Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia that collaborated on the project, put forward the idea of a joint approach in researching, managing and protecting complex prehistoric landscapes. After the Iron-Age-Danube project finished, the partnership continued with the support of the Routes4U project of the Council of Europe.

Linking existing sources of knowledge and forming a strong interdisciplinary and international network of expert institutions and local stakeholders from Austria, Croatia, Hungary and Slovenia in the fields of archaeology, cultural heritage protection and tourism, the Iron Age Danube Route Association (IADR Association) was established in July 2020 with the aim of further development and management of the IADR.

In addition to the efforts of the Iron Age Danube Route Association, the Iron Age Danube Route will be promoted through the Interreg Danube Transnational project “Virtual Archaeological Landscapes of the Danube Region” (July 2020 - December 2022). This project focuses on making archaeological landscapes of the Danube region more visible and attractive for their successful integration into sustainable cultural tourism at the regional, national and international level.

Network partners are currently in a transition phase between the end of the first Interreg project (2017–2019) and the following Interreg project (2020–2022). This represents a solid financial base and sufficient time to strengthen further development and sustainability of the Route in the future. Many activities have already been successfully accomplished through previously implemented projects and those in progress. The partnership is strong, the financing is secured and future activities are being planned. The aims as well as recent and planned activities of the network clearly correspond with CM/Res(2013)67. Therefore, the recommendation for certification as “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” should be awarded.

## 2. Introduction

The foundation of the Iron Age Danube Route was developed in the project “Monumentalised Early Iron Age Landscapes in the Danube River Basin”, abbreviated as Iron-Age-Danube, which was co-funded by the Interreg Danube Transnational Programme (DTP) of the European Union. The project focused on monumental archaeological landscapes of the Early Iron Age, characterised, for example, by fortified hilltop settlements and large burial mound (tumuli) cemeteries, from the era between the 9<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. The project involved a partnership between twenty institutions from Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia, which also had the necessary expertise in archaeological heritage management and cultural tourism. The partners shared a vision of joint approaches to research, management and protection of complex (pre)historic landscapes and their integration into sustainable tourism. During the Iron-Age-Danube project, the partners were encouraged to develop a new transnational cultural route with the support of the Routes4U project of the European Council. It is important to note that the development of the Iron Age Danube Route started already in 2017, as the network had many activities planned (such as archaeology camps, tourist app, joint publications. . .) in order to create a long-term sustainable route as early as 2016 for the Iron Age Danube project. The Routes4u activities in 2019 merely linked the planned route in a slightly different direction (the decision to form a legal entity instead of having only a partnership agreement).

The Iron Age Danube Route aims to connect and jointly promote regions, sites and museums, which present Iron Age heritage from the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC in the Danube region. In order to do so, high standards for protection, research and presentation of this heritage have been established. It is up to the partnership of the Iron Age Danube Route to make this heritage more visible and accessible in the Danube region in order to create and add economic and cultural benefits for today’s inhabitants of the region.

The Iron Age Danube Route addresses one of the most fragile, though imposing and attractive prehistoric archaeological phenomena, the Iron Age landscapes. Characterized by monumental structures, such as burial mound cemeteries, flat cemeteries, fortified hilltop settlements and oppida, as well as elements indicating the complex organization of space, Iron Age landscapes belong to the period between the 9<sup>th</sup> and the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. In addition, the Iron Age is a period marked by an extraordinary corpus of movable, as well as intangible heritage, which is kept in numerous museums of the Danube region, including the most important regional and national institutions.

One of the major goals of the IADR, guided by high standards of protection, research and presentation of archaeological heritage, is to connect and promote the Danube region, along with the sites and museums in which their common heritage is located and kept, primarily through the development of a strong international and interdisciplinary partnership, thorough education and collaboration with a wide range of local stakeholders as well as promotion and presentation of the heritage that the network aims to make more visible and accessible in the Danube region in order to create and add economic and cultural benefits for today’s inhabitants of the region.

The aims of the IADR Association are (Article 8 of the IADR Association’s Statute):

1. Supporting common transnational approaches of the protection and exploration of prehistoric landscapes, in particular monumental monuments from the Early Iron Age.
2. Joint promotion of sustainable tourism on the Iron Age Danube Route as well as monuments of archaeological cultural heritage on the Route and the countries and regions in which they are located.
3. Raising public awareness of the archaeological heritage in the Danube countries.

4. Promoting cooperation with other organizations with similar goals.
5. Active commitment and work on the prevention of damage, elimination of already incurred damage and harmful effects, and acting with the purpose of comprehensive protection of archaeological heritage in the Danube countries.
6. Development and promotion of new products, activities and activities of cultural tourism.
7. Participation in archaeological research and scientific publications.

The network currently has 11 members (1 from Austria, 5 from Croatia, 2 from Hungary and 2 from Slovenia) mainly comprising museums, universities and one municipality. There are 16 members in the process of acceding to the network from Romania, Czech-Republic, Germany, Serbia, Bulgaria and Slovakia, mostly museums, universities and local authorities.

The IADR is managed by the IADR Association which is a voluntary, non-governmental, non-profit, professional, scientific and cultural association (Article 2 of the Statute). The bodies of the Association are: Assembly, Management Board, Scientific Committee, President and Secretary (Article 20 of the Statute). The seat of the Association is in Zagreb (Article 4 of the Statute). The headquarters of the IADR Association are based and hosted by the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb and this institution offers free working space for the IADR Association. The headquarters are clearly marked and signs in the museum visibly mark the way to the headquarters offices.

### 3. Main Body Evaluation

#### 3.1 Cultural Route Theme

The theme of IADR complies with criteria established in Resolution CM/Res(2013)67.

(1) Due to the universal character of archaeology, which goes beyond modern borders, this heritage touches many different themes and can be included in transmitting different messages, amongst others to promote European identity, unity and diversity. Iron Age heritage is very diversely represented in the European countries. It is connected to the historical period and represents the technological and cultural progress in almost all of Europe. The heritage elements (tumuli, settlements etc.) are similar in all countries of the Danube region and are also recognized in all countries.

Archaeological heritage is partially already incorporated in some cultural routes but currently no other cultural route is dedicated to this crucial period of European prehistory and therefore the Iron Age Danube Route carries the potential to become one of the major promoters of values inherent in the prehistoric heritage in Europe.

(2) Iron Age research has a large scientific community across Europe. This is visible in the themes of the annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists. The Iron Age has been in focus of the archaeological, but also philological, anthropological and historical research for almost two centuries in all of Europe. The Iron Age Danube project saw the cooperation of experts from 5 countries of the Danube region.

(3) The theme is illustrative of European memory, history and heritage and contributes to the interpretation of the diversity of present-day Europe. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Iron Age has been important for the understanding of European history and is part of any history schoolbook in Europe. In the past, it was not only a subject of research, but also shaped national identities. Many of the Iron Age sites can be found in rural areas, some are also specific to entire landscapes and provide a unique experience for visitors.

(4) The Iron Age theme lends itself useful to cultural and educational exchanges for young people. Prehistory and Iron Age are part of the school curricula in all countries and research into the presence of archaeological heritage in schools is currently being carried out in the EU-project Danube's Archaeological eLandscapes. In addition, many activities aimed at young people were carried out in the course of the Iron Age Danube project, continuing when the Association was established and these will be carried out simultaneously in the course of Iron Age Danube Route Day in all member countries (an annual event to be held at the end of June).

(5) Also, the theme enables the development of initiatives, exemplary and innovative projects in the field of cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development, especially living archaeology (Iron Age) and new digital tools can always offer fresh approaches. Experimental archaeology enables us to partly reconstruct life in the past and develop new products for the present, which are building on this knowledge.

(6) Archaeological monuments of different kinds are already strongly integrated in the tourist offer of many countries. A new approach fostered by the Iron Age Danube Route is to comprehend the archaeological heritage, not only as individual objects or sites, but also as a part of whole landscapes with their natural environment. Therefore, the Route places great emphasis on exciting experiences beyond museums, which are mostly tourist hotspots and starting points for exploration of the country's history, by shifting it towards rural and remote areas with very well preserved natural and archaeological heritage. Connecting the knowledge

based archaeological heritage with outdoor activities in beautiful natural environment creates new opportunities for cultural tourism. The Iron Age Danube Route has a solid basis for developing tourist products in partnership with tourist agencies and operators aimed at different types of public. This fact is partly already implemented via the Routes4u grant awarded to Universalmuseum Joanneum. They offer thematic "Iron Age" products by SMEs at selling points in the members facilities of different participating countries.



Figure 1: example of a selling point

The Iron Age heritage is present and well represented in all the Danube countries since, during the Iron Age the region was part of Hallstatt (in the Early Iron Age) and La Tene (in the Late Iron Age) cultural circles. Even though the communities inhabiting these areas show certain diversities, the main characteristics of the Iron Age are the same (monumental burial mound cemeteries, flat cemeteries, hillfort settlements, oppida).

The Iron Age theme can be related to the present context as this period represents one of the first attempts to unite European territories, an undertaking reflected centuries later in the formation of the European Union.

There is a solid basis for innovation. New research methods were and are being constantly introduced on the Iron Age sites. Modern research includes different prospection methods, like air photography, LIDAR, geophysics, archaeobiological research, like archaeobotany and archaeozoology and archaeological excavation with 3D documentation, which involves the work of researchers originating in various disciplines, which continuously contribute to the core science of archaeology. Partners of the Iron Age Danube route have recently published an overview of these new methods. With the development of new technologies, the focus from single sites and objects is changed to landscapes as a whole.

There is also a solid basis for the development of cultural tourism products. With new Iron Age landscape research, the sites and excavations are provided with a wider context and new interpretations. This enables new presentations and the development of new experiences for visitors. By creating new interpretations, reconstructions and visualisations based on scientific research, the Iron Age heritage becomes more visible and immerses visitors in its environment, thus making it more eligible for sustainable tourism use and for creating new tourist products, especially in collaboration with local communities. In addition, it becomes more applicable in education and for cultural exchange. Furthermore, part of the experience is created by experimental archaeology, which is also based on scientific results and aims to reconstruct processes of the past, such as cooking, mining, iron production, pottery. . . etc. Through



experimental archaeology, visitors can get a glimpse of the intangible heritage of the Iron Age. Iron Age heritage is an integral part of our common history and will remain so in the following centuries, since many high-profile archaeological sites and landscapes are still unexplored. The theme has a long history of being thoroughly researched at the highest academic level.

## **3.2 Fields of Action**

### **3.2.1 Co-operation in research and development**

The Route offers a platform for co-operation in research and development of European cultural themes. Members of the route are renowned research institutions with major researchers in the field. Annual meetings will be accompanied by a scientific conference. The Route will continue to manage a database on Iron Age heritage ([www.iron-age-danube.eu](http://www.iron-age-danube.eu)), which enables members to present their heritage to other researchers. The IADR Association offers support in publishing research on this subject.

Following the establishment of the IADR Association, several initiatives have been undertaken to improve the cooperation between members across all the countries involved. The Iron Age Danube Route's Days (tentatively planned for the end of June) are being established as an annual event during which members will simultaneously create a number of special programmes aimed at young people, the general public and experts from multiple fields connected to the Route in order to present the Iron Age heritage, educate the public about this subject and discuss issues concerning research, protection, tourism and sustainable development.

Furthermore, an annual publication (Iron Age Danube Route Journal) is being prepared. Each year the Journal will publish papers within the scope of the Association's activities in popular science articles, as well as papers and discussions on the topic of cultural route management from a multidisciplinary point of view. The aim of the publication is to promote archaeological cultural heritage on the Trail of the Iron Age of the Danube region and activities that the Association is engaged in. The covered topics will present archaeological sites on the Route, new methodologies for researching archaeological landscapes, ways of increasing their visibility and presentation, issues concerning heritage preservation and its integration into sustainable tourism, as well as the role and activities of local stakeholders in regions in which the heritage is located.

Writers for the Journal are experts dealing with the preservation, presentation and research of archaeological heritage in the member countries, as well as museum curators and experts from other areas complementary to the work of the Association (tourism experts, small and medium enterprises, architecture. . .).

Figure 2: Cover page of the Journal's first issue to be published in January 2021

The IADR plays a unifying role for major European themes enabling dispersed knowledge to be brought together, as archaeological research of the Iron Age tackles different topics in modern Europe (borders, migration, economy, exchange and communication, centre and periphery, heritage protection. . .). The Iron Age is a European phenomenon which has a unifying character and therefore does not promote nationalisms of individual countries. Research is also very interdisciplinary, since archaeology cooperates with different disciplines (botany, zoology, chemistry, physics, geology. . .). The resulting knowledge can be combined in the iron-age-danube.eu database, which will offer information on Iron Age heritage in participating countries and beyond.

The Iron Age society existed beyond modern national borders and connected areas within different countries. This heritage is part of the national heritage displayed in major national museums. The Iron Age theme can be related to the modern context. It can be considered as one of the first attempts to unite certain European territories, an undertaking much older than modern states and the European Union. Borders, as we know them today, are a result of historical events in the previous centuries. During historic periods these borders have often changed and, if we want to understand archaeological heritage dating back to 2,500 years ago, we need to start by thinking and working beyond modern national state borders. The awareness that modern states with their borders and the European unity of today have emerged after millennia of interactions between inhabitants of Europe, is the main message that archaeological heritage connected in the Iron Age Danube Route can transmit. This message has to find its way to European inhabitants, especially young people, in order to find an anchor in the constantly changing global world. In addition, the format of archaeological camps developed in the course of the Iron-Age-Danube project offers a great platform for Youth and cultural exchange.



**BATTA LIFE IN PREHISTORY**

**DATE/TIME**  
**July 25.**  
**10.00 – 17.00**

**LOCALE**  
**Archaeological Park**  
 Székelybatta, Poroszlai Hídkő út 2.

**Let's start the investigation! – Find the prehistoric owner of the bag! · Crafts learning · Food tasting · Tale-telling**

**PROGRAMME**

**10.00-11.00**  
 Let's start the investigation! – Find the prehistoric owner of the bag! – Game in the Park

**11.00-12.00**  
 Prehistoric craft learning

**12.00-12.30**  
 Tasting food prepared according to ancient recipes – Stone Age dish

**12.30-13.00**  
 Tale-telling (by Zsuzsanna Téti)

**13.00-14.00**  
 Prehistoric craft learning

**TICKETS**  
 Individual: 2000 HUF/person  
 Family ticket: 5000 HUF (max. 5 people)

Figure 3: Example of an event at an archaeological park

Due to the universal character of archaeology, which goes beyond modern borders, this heritage touches many different themes and can be involved in transmitting different messages, amongst others to promote European identity, unity and diversity. It aims to show that modern Europe is an ever-changing landscape of cultures, which have had different ways of co-existing and interacting. The Iron Age is a good period for showing how the development of modern society in Europe started millennia ago.

At the moment the IADR is partly multidisciplinary as members come from the field of archaeology and publishing. The Scientific Committee has 11 members in total, of which 5 are currently occupied. The remaining should be provided for new members outside the field of archaeology (such as museology, tourism, heritage management. . .) and from a larger geographic scope.

All members of the Scientific Committee are internationally renowned researchers, e.g. leaders or contributors of sessions at Annual meetings of the European Association of Archaeologists and published authors of numerous scientific papers.

The Scientific Committee carries out research and analysis on issues relevant to its theme at the theoretical and practical level, as can be seen from the list of publications in the Application form. E.g. joint Archaeology camps - a format developed in the Iron Age Danube Project. It links researchers and students from participating countries on joint research in a particular Iron Age region. The research is accompanied by public events, workshops and presentations. Archaeology camp Austria (May - June) and Croatia (September - October) were held in 2017. In 2018 Archaeology camps were organized in Slovenia (April - June) and Hungary (September - October). There are plans to continue with this project in the future.

### 3.2.2 Enhancement of the memory, history and European heritage

IADR mostly represents tangible heritage (objects in museums, archaeological sites, historical landscapes), which belong to the common history and heritage and fully implements measures for raising awareness on the importance of heritage.

The Iron Age Danube Route, takes the principles of existing conventions in Europe as its starting point, and is particularly in alignment with the Council of Europe's European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st century (Strategy 21). The elaborated strategies combine a bottom-up analytical approach in four countries with a top-down approach by integrating recommendations of Strategy 21. The Route follows strategies, action plans and revitalisation

plans of the Iron Age Danube project, which are built on the European strategies (<https://zenodo.org/record/3601139#.X61vdFAxk2w>).

The focus of the Iron-Age-Danube project and of the Iron Age Danube Route is not on individual archaeological sites but on the wider cultural and natural landscapes, which is in line with the Council of Europe's Landscape Convention (2000), aiming to promote the protection, management and planning of European landscapes. The project also adhered to the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (La Valletta Convention, 1992), which underlines the use of non-destructive methods in archaeological investigations and is clearly recognizable in the project's proposal. The IADR program follows the basic principles of the La Valletta Convention both in the areas of protection, research, collection and dissemination of scientific information and promotion of public awareness. The Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention 2005) provided substantial help for formulating the IADR program. It highlighted that awareness raising, long-term maintenance and enjoyment of the Iron Age heritage is hardly achievable without dialogue and cooperation by the local communities. During the Iron Age Danube project, the possible involvement of innovative small businesses was also explored as one factor in sustainable economic development. In the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) the project Iron-Age-Danube tackled the pillar Connect the region with the Priority area 3 (Culture and Tourism) and the pillar Protecting the environment with the Priority area 6 (Biodiversity). The Iron Age Danube Route is explicitly mentioned in the latest Action plan of the EUSDR.

Besides these thematically linked conventions and recommendations, the Iron Age Danube Route supports Article 9 (Freedom of thought, conscience and religion) of the European Human Rights convention, by underlining religious diversity in Europe throughout history, and Article 14 (Prohibition of discrimination), by setting high standards and non-discrimination measures in the partnership. Since the Iron Age heritage is present in all countries of the Danube region and beyond, the Iron Age Danube Route contributes to the shared cultural heritage of Europe.

Route activities always promote the brand of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe by using logos on publications, presentations, sign, boards, roll ups etc.

Route activities strongly identify, preserve and develop European heritage sites in rural destinations because the best-preserved Iron Age landscapes are in rural areas. Although they are also present in industrial areas this is not the focus of this particular theme.

IADR is strongly inclusive for minorities, since it communicates not only the heritage of the modern state, but the heritage and history of a geographical area in which different modern states evolved. However, the Route activities do not valorise the heritage in relation to ethnic or social minorities in Europe because archaeological heritage goes beyond modern states, nations and ethnic and social minorities, since it represents the history of the landscape in which we live today.

### **3.2.3 Cultural and educational exchanges of young Europeans**

The Iron Age Danube Route will continue to implement some of the successful formats for Youth inclusion developed during the Iron Age Danube project. For example, "Archaeological camps", which were introduced as a combination of research activities and public events in four countries of the Danube region, strongly support the exchange of archaeology students and involvement of schools in ongoing research activities. D. Modl (ed.) has published school programmes with interactive workshops tested during the camps under the title "Iron Age Experience – Educational workshops and museum programmes from the Iron-Age-Danube project (Budapest 2019)." Additionally, a magazine for children called "Iron Age Kids" was

edited by A. Hellmuth-Kramberger and is being used for the promotion of Iron Age heritage amongst young people.



Figure 4: Examples of publications promoting youth programmes

Youth exchanges (cultural and educational) are planned to encourage social integration and communication among young people coming from different social backgrounds and regions of Europe. Archaeological camps provide an international and open format available to young people from all social backgrounds. The format covers all costs of participation and is promoted in member countries (in schools and universities).

Youth exchanges (cultural and educational) are planned to offer collaborative opportunities for educational institutions at various levels. Schools, as well as universities were involved in organization activities of archaeological camps in each micro-region and member country. Through the activities of the camp they were brought together and were able to exchange experience, knowledge and know-how.

Also, youth exchanges are planned to emphasize personal and real experiences through the use of places and contacts. A wide range of research activities in experimental archaeology centres (working with clay and metals, exploring the technologies of making tools, weapons and jewellery, reconstructing plant cultivation and animal husbandry, as well as various burial rites, together with associated artefacts in the museums) help present-day visitors to gain a better insight and understanding of the experience of living thousand years before Roman rule.

Elementary and high school students often visited these sites, and various family-oriented programs were held (Celtic festival, education days, family days, or travelling by bike, by foot or by canoe) that facilitate learning outside schools and provide active and meaningful leisure time. New forms of digital educational material and films are also important tools for providing easily accessible knowledge.

Archaeological camp activities were held on actual archaeological sites in each micro-region and in museums allowing the participants to experience the heritage. Also, workshops were organized in which participants were directly engaged, such as Little school of archaeology (where school children used the instruments and tools used during archaeological research, documented finds. . . etc), experimental archaeology workshops where they made pottery, built wattle and daub houses. On higher education levels students were involved in photogrammetry workshops and participated in actual excavations.



### **3.2.4 Contemporary cultural and artistic practice**

Cultural activities of the Route promote intercultural dialogue and multidisciplinary exchange since Iron Age goes beyond modern borders and shows different cultures exchanging in the past. Part of the Iron Age heritage is also ancient art, which is unique in different regions despite other cultural similarities.

Enhancement of contemporary cultural and artistic practice is not a formulated goal in the statute of the association. However, cultural activities of the Route encourage more innovative cultural practices and less contemporary art practice. At the moment most innovations are developed in the digital field and the cultural activities not only highlight but co-create innovative practices.

Organised workshops based on experimental archaeology are a good example ("Iron Age Experience – Educational workshops and museum programmes from the Iron-Age-Danube project (Budapest 2019), which offered a unique format where in recreating Iron Age objects archaeology is combined with other disciplines (weaving, engineering, architecture. . . etc.) and, at the same time an artistic outlet is provided for participants who can create their unique pieces based on Iron Age art. Workshops based on experimental archaeology did include certain skillsets such as crafting and architecture. It can be stated that association itself does not intentionally encourage contemporary practice and exchanges, but museums within the route do foster the theme, as some exhibitions in e.g. Museum Großklein or Archaeology museum Graz incorporate modern art.

Another important point is that cultural activities of the Route encourage debate and exchange - in a multidisciplinary and intercultural perspective - between various cultural and artistic expressions in different European countries by organising Archaeology camps.

The Route's activities link these innovative and creative practices with the history of skills development such as creative crafts e.g. SMEs products developed by the Routes4u grant.

### **3.2.5 Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development**

The Iron Age Danube Route's activities are completely relevant to sustainable cultural tourism development, as is explicitly indicated in the statute of the IADR association (Article 8) and assist in local, regional, national and European identity formation since they follow a joint international Strategy, national action plans and local revitalisation plans.

The Route's activities on all levels are published in a series of publications, promotional films and an application have been developed, the website is active and the Route has a presence in the social media (<https://www.ironagedanuberoute.com/projecto-1> )

The aim of the Route is to promote well preserved landscapes which are located mostly in rural areas. Major museums in cities have launched initiatives to connect visitors to major tourist hotspots with landscapes from which the heritage evolves. There is strong emphasis on collaboration with local stakeholders and this has been achieved in all activities taking place on or near archaeological sites (the majority of them). Many of the micro-regions where the sites are located are underdeveloped in comparison with regions hosting seats of museums or research institutions. By extensive collaboration with local stakeholders when implementing the Route's activities, a dialogue is established by default.

Also, the Universalmuseum Joanneum, member of the Iron Age Danube Route Association, was awarded a grant for the development of promotional products for the new Iron Age Danube

Route in 2019–2020. For this purpose, the Joanneum created a network of producers from different countries and a network of selling points for these products at facilities of other network members. The 10 promotional products, ranging from printed materials, pottery and metal souvenirs and herb mixtures, were developed in cooperation with different SMEs, which will also continue to produce these products for selling points in the future. The developed products are presented in shops of major museums with the Iron-Age focus in four countries (Universalmuseum Joanneum, Dolenjski muzej Novo mesto, Narodni muzej Slovenije Ljubljana, Arheološki muzej Zagreb, Hungarian National Museum). Additionally, other museums will be engaged to position the products in their shops along the Route. Printed material provides presence for the Association at various regional events and exhibitions. Producers of cuisine products will be invited to prepare catering at museum events in the region with focus on IADR products. All products are based on scientific expertise, include information about the Iron Age period and heritage, are based on a selection of original reference objects and support the transformation from museums objects to promotion products. The knowledge-based development and quality of the materials provide high value and authenticity of the products.

They also promote cultural routes of the CoE, as selling points contribute to signposting and souvenirs are labelled with the logos.

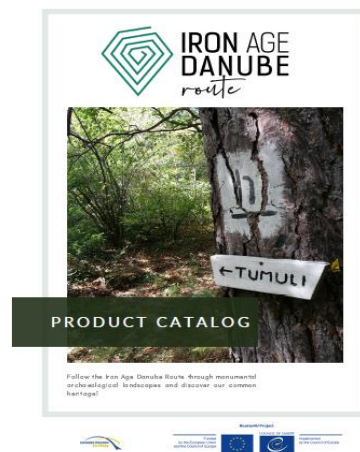


Figure 5: Product catalogue IADR

The following products are available:

- Printed material: a printed booklet, as a combination of a guidebook, fact-book about the Iron Age and the Route and a cook-book with Iron Age recipes, which can also be used for education purposes in schools and museums; a calendar; postcards; printed map (The main producer and distributor of the printed materials is Archaeolingua, a publishing company from Budapest)
- Craft products: ceramic pendant and set of vessels produced by Christian Keramik; metal pendants produced by Andreas Proksch
- Cuisine products: special herb-mix (venison, meat and bread mix) and plants mixture is produced by Dorka's Herb House; "Iron Age Experience dinner" which contains catered food from Iron Age recipes, which are based on experimental archaeology are offered at Stari Fenjeri, a restaurant in the Kaptol region in Croatia



Figure 6: Example of a promotional voucher and pendant with logo

Also, a local bike shop (in Požega, Croatia) is promoting Kaptol's Route "In the footsteps of the Warriors-Early Iron Age in the Požega Valley" and has established collaboration on (annual) events like Hallstatt Days, Celtic festival, education day and family days.

All of the above supports the fact that Cultural Routes are making and could make, a contribution to local communities in terms of economic development and employment via tourism SMEs creating and implementing a variety of innovative practices.

Activities of the Route currently promote dialogue in the EUSDR macro region and this can easily be expanded to other parts of Europe. There is great potential for the route to become pan-European. At the moment there is no possibility for co-operation between Europe and other continents.

Partnerships with public and private organizations active in the field of tourism are still missing in the case of IADR. Small partnerships have been developed with Tourist Boards of the Požega-Slavonia County (Croatia) but this is by no means enough. The fact is that the members of the route are mostly museums, academic communities and research centres, there is a lack of stakeholders from the tourism sector such as DMO, DMC, tour operators, as well as municipalities and archaeological parks. Furthermore, the members of the Scientific Board are mainly archaeologists, so the IADR Association should make additional efforts on these issues and strengthen its multidisciplinary profile as well as the number of representatives of the tourism sector among its members.

The network prepares and uses tools along the route to raise the number of visitors, and the Iron Age Danube App has been developed, to be expanded when new members join the association. Educational-information boards have also been set on sites on the route (Kaptol (CRO), Sopron (HU), Stúttó (HU), Poštela (SI), Cvinger (SI), Grossklein (AT) and Strettweg (AT)).



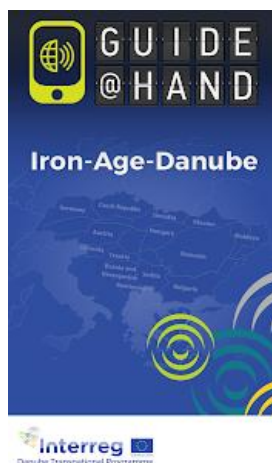


Figure 7: Iron-Age-Danube app

### 3.3. Cultural Route Network

#### 3.3.1 Network extension in the three years to come

IADR represent a network involving countries that are members of the Council of Europe. At the moment 11 member institutions come from Austria (1), Croatia (5), Hungary (2) and Slovenia (1). In the course of the Interreg project Danube's Virtual eLandscapes (2020–2022), 16 institutions from other partner countries are planned to join as well (Bulgaria, Romania, Germany, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Serbia). Their intention is to be present in the entire Danube region in the next 3 years.

The theme of the route was chosen and accepted by the members through activities of the Iron-Age-Danube project and confirmed on the IADR Associations Founding Assembly unanimously by all members.

The conceptual framework of the route stems from project activities of the Iron-Age-Danube project and is based on scientific research of Early Iron Age landscapes of the Danube region.

IADR Association was founded in June 2020 and in the submitted documents the budget for the previous three years is missing. Upon request, it was explained by the association that this did not exist because the association had just been established. The idea of creating a route came about during the first Interreg project. The network is organized as a legal entity, and it is a voluntary, non-governmental, non-profit, professional, scientific and cultural association (Article 2 of the Statute).

During the four months following the establishment, the IADR Association received positive feedback from institutions based in the aforementioned countries which are currently in the process of joining the Association. The country structure of pending members is as follows: 1 from Romania, 1 from Czech Republic, 1 from Germany, 1 from Bulgaria, 1 from Slovenia, 2 from Slovakia, 2 from Serbia, 2 from Austria, 2 from Croatia and 3 from Hungary.

List of the pending members is as follows:

1. Muzeul National de Istorie a Romaniei/ National History Museum of Romania (RO)
2. Národní muzeum/ National Museum (CZ)
3. Landesamt für Denkmalpflege im Regierungspräsidium Stuttgart / State Office for Cultural Heritage Baden-Württemberg (DE)

4. Регионален исторически музей – Русе/ Rousse Regional Museum of History (BG)
5. Technická univerzita v Košicach/ Technical University of Kosice (SK)
6. Gradski muzej Vršac/ City Museum Vršac (RS)
7. Federal Monuments Agency of Austria (AT)
8. Institute for Anthropological Research, Zagreb (HR)
9. Donja Voća Municipality (HR)
10. Public Institute for the Management of Heritage and Tourism Pivka, Park of Military History (SI)
11. Council of village Nemesvámos (HU)
12. Local government of Vértesszőlős (HU)
13. Veszprem-Balaton 2023 Plc. (HU)
14. Centre for Studies in Cultural Development (RS)
15. University of Graz - Centre for Information Modelling - Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities (AT)
16. Košice Self-governing Region (SK)

At the moment, IADR Association has developed a financial plan until 2023. The proposed financing plan after 2023 through memberships and grants is going to sustain the operations of the IADR. Membership is paid by every member at the end of the calendar year for the following year and secures the vote at the general assembly and full involvement of the stakeholder in the planning and execution of association activities. Memberships are divided according to organisation type (monument protection institutions and museums, municipalities, NGOs, national and nature parks, research organisations, SMEs, tourism stakeholders, state and regional administration) and to A and B countries (<https://www.ironagedanuberoute.com/membership>).

Due to the late establishment and the limitation in activities due to the COVID 19 crisis, the members decided not to collect membership fees for 2020. The financial sources for 2020 are provided by donations from partners in form of financial and in-kind contribution. Due to the COVID 19 crisis, membership fees reduced by 25% will be paid for 2021, since activities of the Association will also be limited. Full membership fees will be collected in 2022. The second major source of the Association in the years 2020–2022 are the allocated funds of the EU project Danube’s Archaeological eLandscapes

The IADR Association operates democratically through its Bodies (President, Vice-president, Management Board, Secretary) elected democratically by the majority votes by the Assembly (constituted from all paying members). The Scientific Committee is elected with the majority of votes by the Management Board (Articles 22–29 of the Statute).

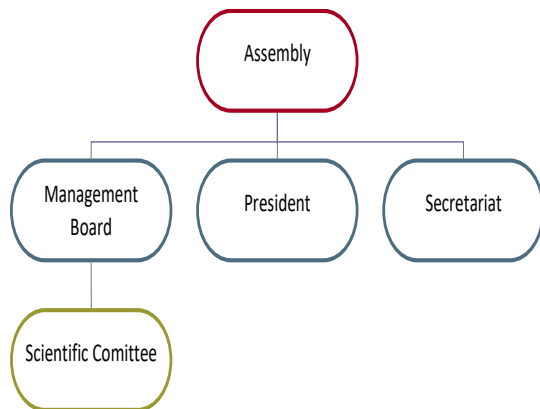


Figure 8: Organizational structure



Figure 9: Signposting for the headquarters

Activities of the Association are based on the principle of independence, the principle of non-profit, the principle of publicity and the principle of democratic organization (Article 3 of the Statute)

The network specifies its objectives and working methods. The vision and mission are clearly defined by the Statute of the IADR association (Article 8 and 9). Activities for pursuing the objectives are:

- transfer of available relevant professional, scientific and cultural information between members of the international archaeological community, cultural, tourism, local and regional authorities, civil society organizations, nature parks and national parks and other institutions and institutions in the Danube countries that manage areas where there is or can be found archaeological cultural heritage;
- scientific and professional conferences, conferences, round tables and lectures, and popular lectures;
- publishing;
- assistance to professional and scientific progress of members;
- representation of the archaeological profession and science with the competent ministries and other bodies of the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Austria, Hungary, the Republic of Slovenia, bodies of other Danube countries as well as bodies of the European Union;
- assistance in the protection of the archaeological heritage and mediation between the profession and the competent institutions in connection with the protection of the archaeological heritage;
- assistance and incentives for exhibitions, digital and audio-visual content, publishing, practical courses and events that will improve the general knowledge of the archaeological heritage and cultural tourism of the Danube countries and popularize it;
- popularization and promotion of archaeological heritage
- building and management of databases
- research and experimental development in humanities and social sciences
- market research and public opinion polls

Economic activities of the Association are: publishing, sale of self-made items, in accordance with the Trade Act, organization of scientific and professional conferences, round tables and lectures, organization of tourist events, professional, educational, adventure guides, and excursions.

The association operates on the territory of the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Austria, Hungary and the Republic of Slovenia, as well as other Danube countries. The Danube countries also include the Republic of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany (Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria), Romania, the Slovak Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, the Republic of Serbia and Ukraine (Chernivtsi Oblast, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, Zakarpattia Oblast and Odessa Oblast), as defined in the European Strategy for the Danube Region (EUDSR). Partners and participating countries are not specified. The IADR Association is open to all partners from all countries.

The major goal of the IADR Association is to support the participating members in joint research, protection and tourist promotion of the Iron Age heritage at the international level and the following groups of activities are carried out:

- Administrative tasks (management of the legal body, contracting new partners, fund raising, preparation of certification documents and management of reviews)
- Development of contents and establishment of visual identity
- Digital activities
- Events and Conferences
- Publications and other Promotion products
- Activities of single members with cooperation of the Iron Age Danube Route

The network specifies its overall strategy in the short term (2020–2022) and long term (2023–2025) for each groups of activities as previously stated. Long term activities are only outlined and a detailed plan of activities will be defined by the participating members in general assembly each year. The focus is on updating the sales network, including more SMEs, broader promotion and new income resources for the Route which will mostly come from membership fees and fund raising.

The IADR Association provides activity plan and budget overview, operational plan and basic texts confirming its legal status (Statute and Founding Assembly Minutes).

### **3.4 Communication tools**

The Route has solid communication tools (better offline than online channels). The IADR has developed a complete visual identity created by the Biro Biro studio from Maribor (SLO) with funding from the Routes4U project. A corporate identity manual including the logo and style guide has been shared with all members and communication material published by several members is in alignment with the defined elements.

Its specific logo is clearly presented in all communication channels, including social media networks (Facebook, Instagram).

The website of the route has been developed ([www.ironagedanuberoute.com](http://www.ironagedanuberoute.com)) and is partially under construction. Currently, the website is available in English only, further languages are planned (Croatian, French, German, Hungarian and Slovenian).

For now, the website presents a mix of two Interreg projects and Routes4U project, partnership information and outputs of the first Interreg project (Monumentalized Early Iron Age Landscapes in the Danube River) such as short video presentations, publications in .pdf format.

The website is clear and provides basic information such as: About the route, Projects, News, Iron Age heritage, Merchandise.

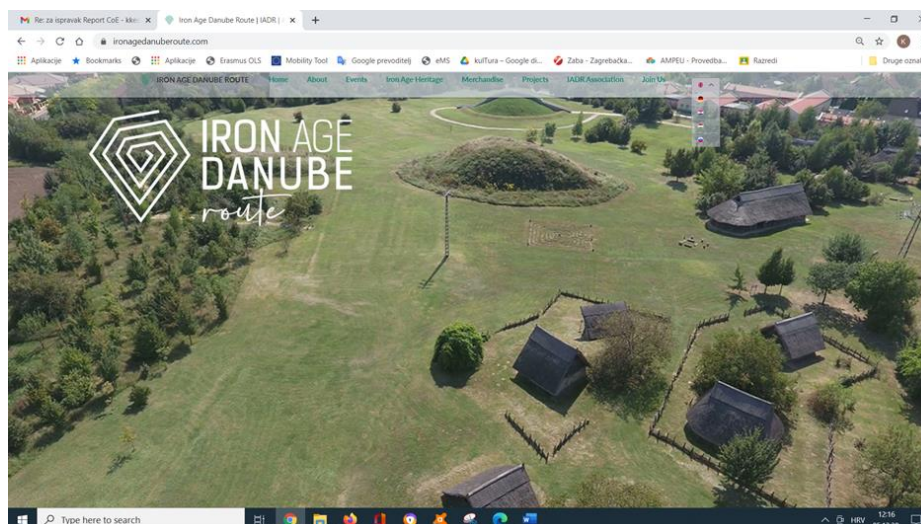


Figure 10: Website IADR

A special section for the IADR Association is indicated with related documents (the Statute of the Association, Founding Assembly Meeting Minutes), founding members and management team. Membership application form for the Iron Age Danube Route Association is also available with indicated membership fees.

Still, there is an impression that the website has not been adequately developed as regards the purpose, vision and mission of the network, i.e. route. The list of current members is missing as well as possible benefits of joining. Product development is of crucial importance and in order to attract interest and broaden its appeal beyond those who already have a direct interest in the route, it must consider how to create a new product through which the route itself can run as a central theme.

Only one themed experience product is visible at this moment, "Discover our common heritage and enjoy the Iron age experience dinner". This is a product funded by Route4U, a joint programme of the Council of Europe and the European Union.

The Route has published a IADR product catalogue with selling point contact where it is possible to buy or pre-order souvenirs: spice mix, iron age experience dinner, tourist map, IADR postcards and calendars, metal or ceramic pendants, miniature pottery vessel set, multilingual booklet with Iron age recipes etc. All of the above have the route logo.

The network has solid communication channels but these need to be further developed and improved with added content focusing specifically on potential beneficiaries (science/education, culture, tourism stakeholders. . .)

Communication should be more visible through increased use of all the tools (website and social media). A more interactive approach is needed as well as developing products such as route itineraries, themed trips, themed experience, loyalty rewards and packages. The Route can develop such products only in collaboration with tourism stakeholders. As much as the people behind a Cultural Route are passionate advocates for what they do, consumers probably are not, so promotion is all about reaching the customers and providing them with enough information to make a decision.



## 4. Conclusions and recommendations

Figure 11: SWOT Analysis of the IADR

### Strengths

- Cultural route theme: well established theme in Europe; currently the only one promoting Iron Age heritage in Europe
- Cooperation in research and development: 200 years of research traditions; strong scientific community; renowned members of the Scientific Committee; joint programmes across all member countries; is a platform on which multi- and interdisciplinary fields of study, methods and know-how can be discussed, enhanced and shared between all levels of stakeholders
- Enhancement of memory, history and European heritage: tested and established programmes; provides better recognition and explains the value of heritage to local, regional and international communities alike
- Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans: publications with museums programmes and Iron Age kids; Archaeology camps, crafting workshops based on the theme
- Contemporary cultural and artistic practice: innovative approach of the network with possibilities for cooperation
- Cultural Tourism and Sustainable Cultural development: connecting major tourist hotspots with rural areas; selling network for IADR souvenirs, promoting and facilitating cooperation between local SMEs, co-creating programmes for heritage promotion with tourism boards
- Cultural Route Network: strong core in 4 countries; project connecting 10 countries in the Danube region
- Communication Tools: videos; website; social media; publications; on site boards in the micro-regions, Journal of the Iron Age Danube Route

### Weaknesses

- Cultural route theme: Not as well known as the Roman or Palaeolithic period
- Cooperation in research and development: multidisciplinary (expansion of the SC needed)
- Enhancement of memory, history and European heritage: more joint activities needed
- Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans: ERASMUS is missing
- Contemporary cultural and artistic practice: not their primary aim
- Cultural Tourism and Sustainable Cultural development: expansion of the selling points network and products; cooperation with tour operators for fixed packages
- Cultural Route Network: momentarily regionally limited to 4 countries
- Communication Tools: need better social media coverage

### Opportunities

- Cultural route theme: the theme has a huge potential for further development; theme is very versatile and adaptable to new approaches in heritage presentation and sustainable management; promotes multi- and interdisciplinarity
- Cooperation in research and development: strengthening the multidisciplinary by open spaces in the SC; building cooperation between local SME's and NGOs and big centralized organizations and tourist boards
- Enhancement of memory, history and European heritage: development of new public programmes building on existing experience; dissemination of knowledge and promotion through Iron Age Danube Route Days and Journal of Iron Age Danube Route
- Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans: offer programmes for the ERASMUS network, coordinating guest lectures, building a strong network in local schools, as well as other schools in the region through offering guest programmes as extracurricular activities
- Contemporary cultural and artistic practice: exhibitions or landscape interventions with contemporary artists, reconstructions of Iron Age life
- Cultural Tourism and Sustainable Cultural development: new members can provide expansion for the selling network and touristic packages
- Cultural Route Network: project Danube's Archaeological eLandscapes connects new partners/members which will enable expansions
- Communication Tools: Social media activities by fixed personnel; existing APP and database, which can be easily expanded; joint programme book

### Threats

- Cultural route theme: prehistory is too abstract for the wider public; public doesn't differentiate well between various periods of prehistory; Roman and Middle Ages periods are overrepresented
- Cooperation in research and development: not reaching the multidisciplinary
- Enhancement of memory, history and European heritage: the theme is not present enough in the local communities, communities are unaware of their own heritage
- Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans: not appealing to schools, not being able to fit into their schedule
- Contemporary cultural and artistic practice: failing to establish rapport with contemporary artists
- Cultural Tourism and Sustainable Cultural development: not attractive enough for tourism providers
- Cultural Route Network: not being able to expand enough and to be present in all countries
- Communication Tools: not enough resources for quality social media coverage

#### **4.1 Eligibility criteria for themes**

Due to the universal character of archaeology, which does not depend on modern borders, Iron Age heritage incorporates various themes and can be used for the dissemination of different messages, including the promotion of European identity, unity and diversity. Iron Age heritage is very diversely represented in European countries. It is connected to the historical period and is representative of technological and cultural progress in almost all of Europe. Therefore, no additional recommendations can be provided for this route.

#### **4.2 Priority fields of action**

##### **(1) Co-operation in research and development**

The Route offers a platform for co-operation in the research and development of European cultural themes. Members of the route are renowned research institutions with major researchers in the field of archaeology. The Route has a network of universities and research centres in each country. Membership fees differ in accordance with the institution type.

##### **(2) Enhancement of memory, history and European heritage**

IADR mostly represents tangible heritage (objects in museums, archaeological sites, historical landscapes), which are part of the common history and heritage and they fully implement measures for raising the awareness on the heritage.

##### **(3) Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans**

The Route promotes an engagement of young people and stimulates in-depth exchanges aimed at developing the concept of European citizenship while also placing an emphasis on personal and real experience through the use of places and contacts. Archaeological camp activities were held on actual archaeological sites in each micro-region and in museums allowing the participants to experience the heritage. Also, workshops were organized where the participants were directly engaged.

##### **(4) Contemporary cultural and artistic practice**

The Route's cultural activities promote intercultural dialogue and multidisciplinary exchange since Iron Age goes beyond modern borders and shows different cultures exchanging in the past. The enhancement of contemporary cultural and artistic practice is not a formulated goal in the statute of the association. However, cultural activities of the Route encourage more innovative cultural practices and less contemporary art practice. At the moment most innovations are developed in the digital field and the cultural activities not only highlight but co-create innovative practices.

##### **(5) Cultural tourism and sustainable development**

The Iron Age Danube Route's activities are completely relevant to sustainable cultural tourism development and assist in local, regional, national and European identity formation since they follow a joint international Strategy, national action plans and local revitalisation plans. They promote well preserved landscapes which lay mostly in the rural areas. Major museum in the cities make initiatives to link the visitors of major touristic hotspots with the landscapes from which the heritage evolves. A strong emphasis is made on collaboration with local stakeholders and this has been achieved in all the activities that took place on or near archaeological sites (majority of them). Many of the micro-regions where the sites are located are underdeveloped in comparison with the regions where the seats of the museums or research institutions are placed. By extensive collaboration with local stakeholders when implementing the Route's activities a dialogue is established by default.

#### Recommendations:

- Scientific board of the Route should be interdisciplinary and bring together different researchers from different fields (history, geography, ethnology, anthropology, but also economics, management, communications etc.) to create the conditions of producing knowledge not only limited to one field such as archaeology. The IADR Association has 11 members in the Scientific committee and these have not yet been filled (currently there are only 5 members with a specialization in archaeology or publishing) and it is necessary to include other scientific fields.
- IADR has a solid number of Universities and research centres involved in scientific work of the Route (7 but limited to 4 countries: Austria, Croatia, Hungary and Slovenia). Co-operation at the level of universities is needed within countries of the Danube Region dealing with Cultural Routes within the Erasmus+ framework, particularly with regard to Key Action 2 relating to: transnational strategic partnerships, focusing on the development of initiatives in one or more areas of education, training, promoting innovation, exchange of experience and knowledge; joining knowledge among higher education institutions and enterprises aiming to encourage innovation, entrepreneurship, creativity, employability and a multidisciplinary approach to the Cultural Routes within the Danube Region; as well as capacity-building projects supporting co-operation with partner states in the field of higher education and young people.
- There is no involvement of tourism stakeholders. The Route should seek partnership with public and private organisations active in the field of tourism in order to develop tourist products and tools targeting the potential public.
- Greater visibility of the Route should be secured in order to attract prospective members and specific benefits of joining the association should be more clearly defined

### 4.3 Criteria for networks

IADR represent a network involving countries that are members of Council of Europe but only 4 countries at the moment (Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Slovenia). The theme of the route was chosen and accepted by the members through the activities of the Iron-Age-Danube project and confirmed on the IADR Associations Founding Assembly unanimously by all members.

The conceptual framework of the route stems from the project activities of the Iron-Age-Danube project and is based on scientific research of Early Iron Age landscapes of the Danube region. IADR Association was founded in June 2020 and in the submitted documents the budget for the previous three years is missing. At the moment, IADR Association has developed a financial plan until 2023. The proposed financing plan after 2023 through memberships and grants is going to sustain the operations of the IADR.

The IADR Association operates democratically through its Bodies and activities are on the principle of independence, the principle of non-profit, the principle of publicity and the principle of democratic organization.

The network specifies its objectives and working methods. The economic activities of the Association are emphasized.

The network specifies its overall strategy in the short term (2020–2022) and long term (2023–2025) for each groups of activities as previously stated. The IADR Association provide activity plan and budget overview, operational plan and basic texts confirming its legal status (Statute and Founding Assembly Minutes).

The Route has solid communication tools but need improvement (website, social media to be more dynamic, up to date).



Recommendations:

- The Iron Age Danube Route carries the potential to become one of the major promoters of the values of prehistoric heritage in Europe. The network currently has merely a regional character as it includes only four countries. This should be enlarged and it would be beneficial if countries from other regions also joined, thus extending the theme to a larger European context.
- At the moment the Route has 20 members consisting mainly of museums and universities. Other types of stakeholders should also be included, such as archaeological parks, municipalities, DMOs, DMCs, NGOs and public-private partnerships should be promoted thus ensuring further integration of the network.
- It is recommended to improve communication tools (especially online marketing). The content of the website should be critically revised and its usability for the target groups addressed (cultural tourism products and benefits for potential users, future members of the Route, availability in different languages etc.).
- Visual identity should be more consistent in communication materials.
- The Route should consider organizing trainings and raising awareness on the importance of a shared cultural heritage with the view of contributing to the development of cultural tourism and heritage interpretation
- Ensure financial viability through membership fees, i.e. increasing the number of association members (due to the COVID-19 crisis financial inflow has been limited as members were not required to pay the fees for 2020, and fees for the next year are to be reduced)

Figure 12: Summary of conclusions

| CRITERIA                              | Fulfilment of certification criteria by the Route   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <p><b>I. Cultural route theme</b></p> | <p>Iron Age heritage is represented in all European countries regardless of modern borders and its themes of technological and cultural progress can be used to promote European identity, unity and diversity. Archaeological heritage is partially already incorporated in some cultural routes but currently no other cultural route is dedicated to this crucial period of European prehistory. The Iron Age Danube Route therefore carries the potential to become major promoter of this period.</p> <p>Iron Age research includes a large scientific community across Europe incorporating archaeological, philological, anthropological and historical research. The theme is illustrative of European memory, history and heritage and contributes to the interpretation of the diversity of present-day Europe. The Iron Age theme also lends itself useful to cultural and educational exchanges for young people. The theme promotes the development of initiatives and innovative projects in the field of cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development, especially living archaeology and using new digital tools.</p> <p>A new approach fostered by the Iron Age Danube Route is to comprehend the archaeological heritage, not only as single objects or sites, but also as a part of whole landscapes with their natural environment which provides visitors with a unique experience. The Route develops experiences beyond museums, which can serve merely as starting points for exploration of the country's history,</p> |

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  |   | shifting the perspective towards rural and remote areas with very well preserved natural and archaeological heritage. Outdoor activities in nature create new opportunities for cultural tourism and cooperation with the tourism sector.   |
| <b>II.<br/>Priority<br/>fields<br/>of<br/>action</b> | <b>Cooperation in research and development</b>                | The Route offers a platform for co-operation in research and development of European cultural themes as it unifies research institutions from several countries. Iron Age Danube Route's Days are to be organized every year with simultaneous events in all member institutions. The first issue of Iron Age Danube Route Journal is being prepared, a publication to be published annually, covering activities of the Association, cultural route management, heritage preservation and new research methodologies. The Association is partly multidisciplinary with members from the fields of archaeology and publishing, comprising of researches valued in their field. Archaeology camps are an example of connecting researches and students from different countries on joint research accompanied by public events, workshops and presentations.   |
|  | <b>Enhancement of memory, history and European heritage</b>   | The Route highlights shared European heritage, as the Iron Age covered territories regardless of their modern national borders, and promotes a pan-European identity and tolerance in the face of disintegration and nationalisms of the modern era.<br>IADR mostly represents tangible heritage (objects in museums, archaeological sites, historical landscapes) however its focus is not on individual archaeological sites but the wider cultural and natural landscapes.<br>Iron Age heritage is present in all countries of the Danube region and beyond, thus the Route contributes to the shared cultural heritage of Europe as a whole.  |
|  | <b>Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans</b> | The Iron Age Danube Route will continue to implement successful formats for Youth inclusion developed during the Iron Age Danube project such as archaeological camps, introduced as a combination of research activities and public events which support the exchange of archaeology students and involvement of schools in ongoing research activities. Interactive workshops were held during the previous project and a children's magazine issued promoting Iron Age heritage.<br>Youth exchanges (cultural and educational) are planned to offer collaborative opportunities for educational institutions and encourage social integration and communication among young people coming from different social backgrounds and regions of Europe. All costs of participation would be covered and the programme promoted at schools and universities of member countries.<br>A wide range of research activities in experimental archaeology centres enable present-day visitors to gain a better insight and understanding of the actual experience of living during the Iron Age. |
|  | <b>Contemporary cultural and artistic practice</b>            | The enhancement of contemporary cultural and artistic practice is not a formulated goal in the statute of the association. However, cultural activities of the Route encourage innovative cultural practices.<br>Cultural activities of the Route promote intercultural dialogue and multidisciplinary exchange.  |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  | Workshops based on experimental archaeology have been organized as part of the previous project as well as activities in which recreating Iron Age objects archaeology was combined with other disciplines (weaving, engineering, architecture. . . etc.) providing an artistic outlet for participants who could create their unique pieces based on Iron Age art. Such workshops and activities are to be continued by the newly formed association.   |
|  | <b>Cultural Tourism and Sustainable Cultural development</b> | <p>The relevance of the Iron Age Danube Route and its activities for the development of sustainable cultural tourism is clearly visible in the statute of the IADR association.</p> <p>The Route promotes well preserved landscapes mainly located in rural areas, thus reducing the pressure on museums as tourist hotspots. The success of activities taking place on or near archaeological sites also depends on good cooperation with local stakeholders in locations less developed than the cities in which museums and research institutions are located, and this quality collaboration has been achieved in the Route's activities. Small partnerships have been developed with Tourist Boards of the Požega-Slavonia County (Croatia) for example. One member of the Association, the Universalmuseum Joanneum has established a network of producers from different countries, with products ranging from printed materials, pottery and metal souvenirs and herb mixtures, and these are sold in museums in 4 countries of the Route. The Route contributes to local communities in terms of economic development and employment via tourism SMEs creating and implementing a variety of innovative practices.</p> <p>Activities of the Route currently promote dialogue in the EUSDR macro region which can be expanded to other parts of Europe. There is great potential for the route to become pan-European.</p> <p>Members of the route are mostly museums, academic communities and research centres, and there is a lack of stakeholders from the tourism sector such as DMO, DMC, tour operators, as well as municipalities and archaeological parks but these are planned to be included as the membership increases.</p> |
|  | <b>III. Cultural Route Network</b>                           | <p>IADR represents a network of countries that are members of the Council of Europe. At the moment 11 member institutions come from Austria (1), Croatia (5), Hungary (2) and Slovenia (1) and 16 institutions from other partner countries are planned to join as well (Bulgaria, Romania, Germany, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Serbia).</p> <p>The IADR Association was founded in June 2020. Memberships are divided according to organisation type (monument protection institutions and museums, municipalities, NGOs, national and nature parks, research organisations, SMEs, tourism stakeholders, state and regional administration).</p> <p>The major goal of the IADR Association is to support the participating members in joint research, protection and tourist promotion of the Iron Age heritage at the international level.</p>   |
|  | <b>Communication Tools</b>                                   | The Route has solid communication tools, a website in English as well as a Facebook and Instagram page. For now, the website presents a mix of two Interreg projects and Routes4U project, partnership information and outputs of the first Interreg project. The  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>website could be still considered to be under construction, as languages other than English are not available, and the list of current members or the benefits of joining the association are not included. The website is clear and provides basic information such as: About the route, Projects, News, Iron Age heritage, Merchandise. A more interactive approach is needed as well as developing products such as route itineraries, themed trips, themed experience, loyalty rewards and packages.</p> |
|--|---|

## 5. List of references

The analysis was carried out on the basis of the IADR documents provided by the European Institute of Cultural Routes.

All documents required for the evaluation had been duly submitted by IADR.

The following documents were analysed by the expert and provided by IADR:

- Application Form as “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” for the certification cycle 2020–2021
- Statute of the IADR Association as accepted by the members in the general assembly
- Minutes of the General Assembly of the IADR Association held on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020
- Youth: Iron Age Kids: [http://www.interreg-danube.eu/uploads/media/approved\\_project\\_output/0001/23/809607afffae4525b7fd449dc037d34853515faa.pdf](http://www.interreg-danube.eu/uploads/media/approved_project_output/0001/23/809607afffae4525b7fd449dc037d34853515faa.pdf)
- Iron Age museums workshops: [http://www.interreg-danube.eu/uploads/media/approved\\_project\\_output/0001/36/23a151f8fdb260804f017d0b117dbc7982c43d8e.pdf](http://www.interreg-danube.eu/uploads/media/approved_project_output/0001/36/23a151f8fdb260804f017d0b117dbc7982c43d8e.pdf)
- Innovation: Iron Age App:  
[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=hu.sztaki.guideathand\\_ironage&hl=en](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=hu.sztaki.guideathand_ironage&hl=en)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DqecOZpJ\\_o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DqecOZpJ_o)  
<https://guideathand.com/hu/content/iron-age-danube>
- Iron Age eLearning: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/iron-age-danube/id1479690480>  
[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=at.axtesys.iron\\_age\\_danube](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=at.axtesys.iron_age_danube)
- Website <https://www.ironagedanuberoute.com>,  
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Iron-Age-Danube-Route-115262343567900/>  
Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/ironagedanuberoute/>
- Strategies for monumentalized (pre)historic landscapes in the Danube Region (Interreg Danube Transnational Programme -Iron Age Danube):  
<https://zenodo.org/record/3601139#.X7vGNmhKhPZ>

During the field visit several other documentation needs were identified and the IADR offices provided additional information, reviewed as a part of the evaluation:

- (A) Annex to the list of members of the Network (Letters of Intent to Join the IADR Association)
- (B) Annex to the list of members of the Network (List of new membership applications)

### List of Figures:

Figure 1: Example of a selling point

Figure 2: Cover page of the Journal's first issue to be published in January 2021

Figure 3: Example of an event at an archaeological park

Figure 4: Examples of publications promoting youth programmes

Figure 5: Product catalogue IADR

Figure 6: Example of a promotional voucher and pendant with logo

Figure 7: Iron-Age-Danube app

Figure 8: Organizational structure IADR Association

Figure 9: Signposting for the headquarters

Figure 10: Website IADR

Figure 11: SWOT Analysis of the IADR

Figure 12: Summary of conclusions

**6. Annex 1: Online interviews with the network management and members**

| <b>Name</b>      | <b>Role within the network</b>   | <b>Email address</b>   | <b>Date</b>              |
|------------------|--|--|--------------------------|
| Mihelić, Sanjin  | President of the IADR Association  | <a href="mailto:smihelic@amz.hr">smihelic@amz.hr</a>                             | 07/11/2020<br>13/11/2020 |
| Rakvin, Marta    | Secretary of the IADR Association  | <a href="mailto:martarakvin@gmail.com">martarakvin@gmail.com</a>                 | 07/11/2020               |
| Mele, Marko      | Member of the Scientific Committee/Member Universalmuseum Joanneum   | <a href="mailto:marko.mele@museum-joanneum.at">marko.mele@museum-joanneum.at</a> | 11/11/2020<br>13/11/2020 |
| Črešnar, Matija  | Member of the Management Board/member Public Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for the Protection of Cultural Heritage | <a href="mailto:matija.cresnar@ff.uni-lj.si">matija.cresnar@ff.uni-lj.si</a>     | 24/11/2020               |
| Szabolcs, Czifra | Member of the Scientific Committee/member, Hungarian National Museum   | <a href="mailto:czifra.szabolcz@hnm.hu">czifra.szabolcz@hnm.hu</a>               | 23/11/2020               |

Extensive email communication with: Marta Rakvin (Secretary of the IADR Association), Marko Mele (Member of the Scientific Committee)

## 7. Annex 2: Expert assessment checklist

|                             |   | QUESTIONS   | Yes   | No   |   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| <b>3.1 THEME</b>            | <b>1</b>  | Does the theme of the Route represent a common value (historical, cultural, or heritage) to several European countries? | 1   | 0  |   |
|                             | <b>2</b>  | Does the theme of the route offer a solid basis for youth cultural and educational exchanges?                           | 1   | 0  |   |
|                             | <b>3</b>  | Does the theme of the route offer a solid basis for innovative activities?  | 1   | 0  |   |
|                             | <b>4</b>  | Does the theme of the route offer a solid basis for cultural tourism products development?                              | 1   | 0  |   |
|                             | <b>5</b>  | Has the theme been researched/developed by academics/experts from different regions of Europe?                          | 1   | 0  |   |
| <b>3.2 FIELDS OF ACTION</b> | <b>3.2.1 Co-operation in research and development</b> | <b>6</b>  | Does the Route offer a platform for co-operation in research and development of European cultural themes/values?  | 1  | 0 |
|                             |   | <b>7</b>  | Does the Route play a unifying role around major European themes, enabling dispersed knowledge to be brought together?  | 1  | 0 |
|                             |   | <b>8</b>  | Does the Route show how these themes are representative of European values shared by several European countries?  | 1  | 0 |
|                             |   | <b>9</b>  | Does the Route illustrate the development of these values and the variety of forms they may take in Europe?   | 1  | 0 |
|                             |   | <b>10</b>   | Does the Route have a network of universities and research center working on its theme at the European level?   | 1  | 0 |
|                             |   | <b>11</b>   | Does the Route have a multidisciplinary Scientific Committee?   | 0  | 1 |
|                             |   | <b>12</b>   | Does the Scientific Committee work on its theme at the European level?  | 1  | 0 |
|                             |   | <b>13</b>   | Does the Scientific Committee carry out research and analysis of the issues relevant to its theme and/or activities on the theoretical level?                     | 1  | 0 |
|                             |   | <b>14</b>   | Does the Scientific Committee carry out research and analysis of the issues relevant to its theme and/or activities on the practical level?                       | 1  | 0 |
|                             |   | <b>3.2.2 Enhancement of the memory, history and European heritage</b>   | <b>15</b>   | Do the Route activities take into account and explain the historical significance of tangible and intangible European heritage ? | 1 |
|                             | <b>16</b>   |   | Do the Route activities promote the values of the Council of Europe?  | 1  | 0 |
|                             | <b>17</b>   |   | Do the Route activities promote the brand of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe?  | 1  | 0 |
|                             | <b>18</b>   |   | Does the route work in conformity with international charters and conventions on cultural heritage preservation?  | 1  | 0 |
|                             | <b>19</b>   |   | Do the Route activities identify, preserve and develop European heritage sites in rural destinations?   | 1  | 0 |
|                             | <b>20</b>   |   | Do the Route activities identify, preserve and develop European heritage sites in industrial areas in the process of economic restructuring?                      | 0  | 1 |
|                             | <b>21</b>   |   | Do the Route activities valorize the heritage of ethnic or social minorities in Europe?   | 0  | 1 |
|                             | <b>22</b>   |   | Do the Route activities contribute to a better understanding of the concept of cultural heritage, the importance of its preservation and sustainable development? | 1  | 0 |

|  |   |   |  |  |   |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|
|  |   | 23  | Do the Route activities enhance physical and intangible heritage, explain its historical significance and highlight its similarities in the different regions of Europe?   | 1  | 0 |
|  |   | 24  | Do the Route activities take account of and promote the charters, conventions, recommendations and work of the Council of Europe, UNESCO and ICOMOS relating to heritage restoration, protection and enhancement, landscape and spatial planning (European Cultural Convention, Faro convention, European Landscape Convention, World Heritage Convention, . . .)? | 1  | 0 |
|  | 3.2.3 Cultural and educational exchanges of young Europeans | 25  | Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to develop a better understanding of the concept of European citizenship?   | 1  | 0 |
|  |   | 26  | Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to emphasize the value of new personal experience through visiting diverse places?  | 1  | 0 |
|  |   | 27  | Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to encourage social integration and exchanges of young people from different social backgrounds and regions of Europe?  | 1  | 0 |
|  |   | 28  | Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to offer collaborative opportunities for educational institutions at various levels?  | 1  | 0 |
|  |   | 29  | Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to place the emphasis on personal and real experiences through the use of places and contacts?  | 1  | 0 |
|  |   | 30  | Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to set up pilot schemes with several participating countries?   | 1  | 0 |
|  |   | 31  | Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to give rise to co-operation activities which involve educational institutions at various levels?   | 1  | 0 |
|  |   | 3.2.4 Contemporary cultural and artistic practice | 32   | Do the Route's cultural activities promote intercultural dialogue and multidisciplinary exchange between various artistic expressions in European countries? | 0 |
|  | 33  |   | Do the Route's cultural activities encourage artistic projects that establish links between cultural heritage and contemporary culture?  | 1  | 0 |
|  | 34  |   | Do the Route's cultural activities encourage innovative cultural and contemporary art practices* connecting them with the history of skills development?   | 1  | 0 |
|  | 35  |   | Do the Route's cultural activities encourage collaboration between culture amateurs and professionals via relevant activities and networks creation?**   | 1  | 0 |
|  | 36  |   | Do the Route's cultural activities encourage debate and exchange - in a multidisciplinary and intercultural perspective - between various cultural and artistic expressions in different countries of Europe?  | 1  | 0 |
|  | 37  |   | Do the Route's cultural activities encourage activities and artistic projects which explore the links between heritage and contemporary culture?   | 1  | 0 |
|  | 38  |   | Do the Route's cultural activities highlight the most innovative and creative practices?   | 1  | 0 |



|             |   |    |   |  |   |
|-------------|---|----|---|--|---|
|             |   | 39 | Do the Route's cultural activities link these innovative and creative practices with the history of skills development?***  | 1  | 0 |
|             | 3.2.5 Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development | 40 | Do the Route's activities (relevant to sustainable cultural tourism development) assist in local, regional, national and/ or European identity formation?   | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 41 | Do the Route's activities (relevant to sustainable cultural tourism development) actively involve 3 major means to raise awareness of their cultural projects: print, broadcast and social media? | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 42 | Do the Route's activities promote dialogue between urban and rural communities and cultures?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 43 | Do the Route's activities promote dialogue between developed and disadvantaged regions?   | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 44 | Do the Route's activities promote dialogue between different regions (south, north, east, west) of Europe?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 45 | Do the Route's activities promote dialogue between majority and minority (or native and immigrant) cultures?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 46 | Do the Route's activities open possibilities for co-operation between Europe and other continents?  | 0  | 1 |
|             |   | 47 | Do the Route's activities draw decision makers' attention to the necessity of protecting heritage as part of the sustainable development of the territory?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 48 | Do the Route's activities aim to diversify cultural product, service and activities offers?   | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 49 | Do the Route's activities develop and offer quality cultural tourism products, services or activities transnationally?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 50 | Do the Route's activities develop partnerships with public and private organisations active in the field of tourism?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 51 | Did the network prepare and use tools along the route to raise the number of visitors and the economic impacts of the route on the territories crossed?   | 1  | 0 |
| 3.3 NETWORK |   |    | 52  | Does the Route represent a network involving at least three Council of Europe's member states? | 1 |
|             |   | 53 | Was the theme of the route chosen and accepted by the network members?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 54 | Was the conceptual framework of the route founded on a scientific basis?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 55 | Does the network involve several Council of Europe member states in all or part of its projects?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 56 | Is the network financially sustainable?   | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 57 | Does the network have a legal status (association, federation of associations, EEIG, . . .)?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 58 | Does the network operate democratically?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 59 | Does the network specify its objectives and working methods?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 60 | Does the network specify the regions concerned by the project?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 61 | Does the network specify its partners and participating countries?  | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 62 | Does the network specify the fields of action involved?   | 1  | 0 |
|             |   | 63 | Does the network specify its overall strategy in the short and long term?   | 1  | 0 |

|                         |   |   |  |           |          |
|-------------------------|---|---|--|-----------|----------|
|                         |   | 64  | Does the network identify potential participants and partners in Council of Europe member states and/or other world countries?                             | 1         | 0        |
|                         |   | 65  | Does the network provide details of its financing (financial reports and/or activity budgets)?   | 1         | 0        |
|                         |   | 66  | Does the network provide details of its operational plan?  | 1         | 0        |
|                         |   | 67  | Does the network append the basic text(s) confirming its legal status?   | 1         | 0        |
| 3.4 COMMUNICATION TOOLS |   | 68  | Does the Route have its own logo?  | 1         | 0        |
|                         |   | 69  | Do all partners of the network use the logo on their communication tools?  | 1         | 0        |
|                         |   | 70  | Does the Route have its own dedicated website ?  | 1         | 0        |
|                         |   | 71  | Is it the website available in English and French?   | 0         | 1        |
|                         |   | 72  | Is it the website available in other languages?  | 0         | 1        |
|                         |   | 73  | Does the network use effectively social networks and web 2.0?  | 0         | 1        |
|                         |   | 74  | Does the network publish brochures on the Route?   | 1         | 0        |
|                         |   | 75  | If yes, are the brochures available in English?  | 1         | 0        |
|                         | 76  | If yes, are the brochures available in French?  | 0  | 1         |          |
|                         | For certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe only | 77  | Is the title of "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe" present on all communication materials (including press releases, webpages, publications, etc.)? |           |          |
|                         |   | 78  | Is the certification logo present on all communication materials?  |           |          |
|                         |   | 79  | Is the certification logo used in accordance to the guidelines for its use (size and position, . . .)?   |           |          |
|                         |   | 80  | Are the logos (Cultural Route + certification logo) provided to all the members of the Route?  |           |          |
| 81                      |   | Does the Council of Europe certification logo appear on road signs/ boards indicating the cultural route? |  |           |          |
| <b>SCORE</b>            |   |   |  | <b>67</b> | <b>9</b> |

**Note:**

Please insert 1 for every positive answer and 0 for a negative one. See your total score at the bottom of the column.

\* E.g. visual arts, the performing arts, creative crafts, architecture, music, literature, poetry or any other form of cultural expression

\*\*Particularly in terms of instruction for young Europeans in the relevant fields

\*\*\*Whether these fields include visual arts, performing arts, creative crafts, architecture, music, literature or any other field