



KICK-OFF MEETING OF THE “ROUTES4U” PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

MINUTES - Tuesday 27 March 2018 (10:00 – 13:00)

VIP Room Beaulieu 1, European Commission, Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, Avenue de Beaulieu 1, 1049 Brussels, Belgium

The kick-off meeting of the Routes4U Project Steering Committee, gathered for the first time several different stakeholders involved in the Project. Routes4U and the Project Team were presented, each participant put forth his/her own stance in view of collaboration within the framework of the Project. The active involvement of all the participants and the exchange of view which arose laid the foundations for a fruitful collaboration.

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING

- ***HALKIN Jean-Pierre*** – *Head of Unit, Competence Centre Macro-regions and European Territorial Cooperation, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission, EUROPEAN UNION* opened the meeting welcoming the participants and providing an introduction on:
 - **EU Macro-regional strategies** (EUSDR, EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR): tackle macro-regional challenges through cooperation and coordination beyond the local, the regional, the national governance level; build trust and confidence among stakeholders; create common commitment on values; promote natural assets and cultural heritage as resources of sustainable growth, deal with the issue of reconciliation; build governance
 - **Cultural heritage potential to promote new form of economic development**, in innovative ways
 - Paramount important of this Joint Programme for DG REGIO, for the European Commission

- ***ONIDA Marco*** – *Coordinator EU Strategy for the Danube region, Competence Centre Macro-regions and European Territorial Cooperation, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission, EUROPEAN UNION* drew the attention on:
 - The need to **bring together the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe and the Macro-regions’ dimension and strategies**, in view of Routes4U Project
 - The challenge of developing new cultural routes shedding the light on the **Macro-regions’ identities and heritage** and making them visible
 - Primary role of representatives from the Macro-regions in providing inputs
 - **The Steering Committee advisory and consultative role**: provide advice and recommendations, exchange of information, make links

- **DOMINIONI Stefano** – Executive Secretary, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes, Directorate-General of Democracy, COUNCIL OF EUROPE provided an overview about:
 - Routes4U Project within the framework of **well-established and long standing cooperation with the European Commission** (Joint Programs), 1st cooperation with DG REGIO
 - The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe and EU Macro-regions : main **partners** and main **beneficiaries** in the Project
 - The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe within a **multi-level governance context**: from the local, to the national, to the macro-regional, to the European level; importance of stakeholders at all these different levels
 - The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe as real European products serving as tools for cultural, tourism and macro-regional **development** and **integration**; focus on lesser-known destinations

II. ROUTES4U PRESENTATION: OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

- **METZGER Constanze** – Senior Project Officer, Routes4U Project, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes, Directorate-General of Democracy, COUNCIL OF EUROPE presented to the participants in the meeting:
 - The methodology of Routes4U implementation (30 months)
 - **The beneficiaries** of the 4 EU Macro-regions: local communities, project of cultural routes, certified Cultural Routes, tourism stakeholders, cultural stakeholders, economic stakeholders, regional and local authorities
 - Routes4U overall and specific **objectives: regional development, cultural cooperation, social participation**; extend existing **Cultural Routes**, develop new Cultural Routes, develop innovative solutions for **accessible cultural heritage**, promote educational and vocational training and **capacity-building** in cultural tourism, foster **competitiveness** for **sustainable economic growth**
 - Routes4U **actions**: digital platform, Cultural Routes card, grant system, trainings and e-learning, tourism products, communication material, product brand, knowledge exchange, policies
 - **The experts' database** (call already launched on Routes4U website), to refer to in order to choose professionals in the different domains of the Project, for developing guidelines, preparing workshops...

- **DE ROUX Denise** – Communication Officer, Routes4U Project, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes, Directorate-General of Democracy, COUNCIL OF EUROPE explained the communication strategy of the Project, focusing on:

- **Routes4U website¹** : to provide information about the Project (institutional framework, objectives, implementation, governance), the stakeholders involved (Cultural Routes and EU Macro-regions), the activities implemented, the events and the news, additional resources (e-learning materials, reference documents and links, dissemination material, interviews ...) and contacts
- **The Friday Facebook² quiz**
- **The testimonies** of Cultural Routes in the Macro-regions, on **Instagram³**
- **Mapping** of the Cultural Routes' members in the Macro-regions (currently underway)
- The launching of a **consultation** (beginning of April) to get to know about who are the **tourism stakeholders** (tour operators, national tourism boards...) in the Macro-regions, in relation to the Cultural Routes, in view of involvement in Routes4U activities

III. 10:50 PARTICIPANTS' ROUNDTABLE IN VIEW OF ROUTES4U COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

EU MACRO-REGIONS:

EUSDR – EU Strategy for the Danube Region

- **SIRAKOV Lyubomir** – *EUSDR PA 3⁴, Bulgaria* referred to:
 - **Bulgaria Presidency for EUSDR** this year
 - The Project “**CultPlatForm_21 Danube Culture Platform**” to map and support hidden sites in the Macro-region and to give stories to visible and invisible cultural heritage, which might offer room for cooperation with the Cultural Routes
 - The question of which role is expected in Routes4U from the Macro-regions

METZGER Constanze answered to the question:

- The **Macro-regions have a network of stakeholders** that is important to share it with the Project team, to involve relevant stakeholders in the project
- Routes4U team's consultation with the Macro-regions will be meant to ensure that the **activities implemented** in the context of Routes4U are **consistent with the Macro-regional strategies**

ONIDA Marco provided with additional information, stressing the fact that:

- Bulgaria presidency has identified culture and tourism as priorities, the annual forum to take place in Sofia (18-19 October) will focus on these topics

EUSBSR – EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

¹ www.coe.int/routes4U

² #Routes4U www.facebook.com/CultureRoutes/?ref=hl

³ @Routes4U www.instagram.com/culturalroutes

⁴ Priority Area 3 - to promote culture and tourism, people to people contacts.

- **CHYBALSKI Filip** – Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland to the European Union, EUSBSR PA Culture spoke about:
 - Poland activism and interest for cooperation at macro-regional level, possibilities of synergies: previous involvement within the framework of **Interreg**
 - **Baltic Heritage Atlas** implemented in the past

The written contribution⁵ by **LEHTIMÄKI Marianne** - Baltic Region Heritage Committee, Finland focuses on:

- The importance for the BRHC to follow and assist, if possible, in Routes4U to **link regional heritage assets to regional development** as well as to **regional and European narratives**
- **Poland and Finland** lately membership in the EPA; **Lithuania, Germany and Norway** are already active members, **Latvia** considers joining seriously, **Estonia** is also considering
- The request to Routes4U team to disseminate an accurate "information package" to the BRHC members before BRHC meeting on 17 April

EUSALP – EU Strategy for the Alpine Region

- **WHITAKER Sarah** – EUSALP AG1⁶ talked about:
 - The focus of AG1 on **research and innovation**, other AG focuses more on natural and cultural heritage
 - Contacts of EUSALP are accessible on the website
 - The underway launching of a **knowledge platform** could give a way for the involvement of the Cultural Routes

METZGER Constanze explained that:

- The capacity workshops are particularly important in this first year of Routes4U. They will take place in the Macro-regions. The experts involved in the training will be those selected through the call, but the workshops will be open to the stakeholders of the Macro-regions.

The written contribution⁷ by **BADINO Carlo** - EUSALP, Val d'Aosta –Italy highlights:

- The 7 Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe crossing EUSALP
- The relevance of **religious heritage** in EUSALP, in view of the possible development of a new cultural route

EUSAIR – EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region

- **BELOŠEVIĆ Blanka** – EUSAIR TSG4⁸ Pillar Coordinator, Croatia expressed:
 - The need to **discuss proposals for Routes4U within EUSAIR TSG4**; the relevance of **consultation with the Macro-region** to decide what should be done for EUSAIR
 - The importance of not reinventing what is already existing

⁵ Submitted to Routes4U team.

⁶ Action Group 1 - to develop an effective research and innovation ecosystem.

⁷ Submitted to Routes4U team.

⁸ Pillar 4 - Sustainable tourism.

- The identification by the Macro-region of **the Olive Tree Route**, as certified Cultural Route to be rejuvenated and further strengthened
- Croatia will have the next Chairmanship within the Council of Europe (October experts' event will be dedicated to the Olive Tree Route), since January 2018 has taken on the Presidency of the Central European Initiative
- The invitation of Routes4U team to participate in the upcoming TSG4 meeting (19-20 April) to explain the Project and what is expected from EUSAIR

DOMINIONI Stefano provided information on the selection of new cultural routes project to be developed within Routes4U:

- Each **Macro-region will provide a list of proposals** (Cultural Routes to be strengthened and new cultural routes of interest to be develop)
- **This list will be the basis of a feasibility study on each proposal**
- A decision will then be taken taking into consideration both the proposals of the Macro-regions (political wishes) as well as the analysis of the independent expert (scientific evidence)

BELOŠEVIĆ Blanka referred to another proposal advanced within EUSAIR:

- Possibility to extend The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route to EUSAIR

ONIDA Marco made it clear:

- Although it is not intended to “fraction” the Cultural Routes to limit them to the given Macro-region, the idea is that the new projects developed within Routes4U by the Macro-regions should be limited to the Macro-regions concerned. The cultural routes may of course well be developed beyond the Macro-regions' borders, but there must be a clear Macroregional approach and dimension
- Given the overlapping among the Macro-regions **joint activities** are welcomed

EUSDR – EU Strategy for the Danube Region

- **FLOREA Mihaela** – EUSDR PA 3, Romania spoke about:
 - The priority to develop new cultural routes as well as to further support existing certified Cultural Routes
 - The crucial potential of the Routes4U Project in view of **connecting local communities**

DG EAC AND DG GROW:

- **HOFMAN Maciej** – DG EAC Culture/ Cultural and creative Industries referred to:
 - **Several possibilities to explore synergies** in the context of Routes4U, beyond the cooperation already in place (e.g. within the framework of EYCH: importance to produce a legacy extending beyond 2018; possible involvement of EYCH national coordinators, due to DG EAC coordination of the network)
 - The focus on **cultural heritage, social inclusion, cultural sustainable tourism**

DOMINIONI Stefano further stressed that:

- Routes4U activities involving and targeting **young people** can provide room for cooperation with DG EAC
- **ANUSKEVICIUTE Girma** – DG GROW Unit Tourism, Emerging and Creative industries made some remarks concerning:
 - The cultural routes as popular touristic products
 - The priority to **diversify sustainable transnational tourism offers** and to support **small destinations**
 - The cooperation in place this year with UNESCO, which could bring in cooperation possibilities in the context of Routes4U

GOVERNING BOARD OF THE ENLARGED PARTIAL AGREEMENT ON CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE:

- **MATTERO Anne** – Finland, Ministry of Education and Culture drew the attention on:
 - The recent membership of Finland to the EPA on Cultural Routes (effective since 1 January 2018)
 - The **Cultural Routes** of the Council of Europe as **focus area in Finland**
2017 publication on “Cultural Route as a joint platform; Background study on the Council of Europe’s Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes”
 - **The launching event** of the Cultural Routes in Finland, upcoming in spring 2018
 - How to take on the challenge of **sustainable tourism**, in relation to the Cultural Routes, to Routes4U, to the macro-regional dimension?

METZGER Constanze answered to the question, stating that:

- Routes4U activities will address this challenge (e.g. through dedicated trainings to explore the issue and learn from existing good practices, peer-to-peer exchange among different stakeholders; experts’ researches to provide actions with a sound scientific basis; development of guidelines...)

CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE:

- **HARLEVI Inger** – The Hansa presented the Cultural Route, focusing on:
 - The activities at **local, regional, national, transnational level**. Extensive and well-established network, even in Russia
 - The **Hansetic Day**, which, once every year, as in Medieval time, brings together all the Hanseatic cities (consistent with The Hansa motto of bringing citizens together)

- The relevance of **regional development**. Recent Interreg implemented in Sweden and Latvia: cross-border activities to emphasise shared history, culture, heritage to develop new touristic products
 - The activism in the domain of **contemporary art practices**
- **BRUSCHI Luca** – Via Francigena provided with information about the Cultural Route, stressing in particular:
 - The activism of the **European Committee of Interregional Technical Coordination** on the Via Francigena in supporting the exchange of good practice among the Cultural Route network members
 - The “**Guidance** on European Common path and accommodation standards on the Via Francigena”
 - Several partnerships already in place with **private companies and SMEs** to provide pilgrims with plenty of services (local food products, accommodation, transportation...)
 - The App with geo-location, maps, visit suggestions, info...; blog, website, social media...
- **STEVNS MATZON Ea** – The Viking Routes made a presentation about the Cultural Route, referring to:
 - “**Follow the Vikings**” 4-years transnational project: to create a large and lasting network among cultural actors involved in Viking heritage, to promote heritage tourism, to broaden the audience to major and lesser-known sites
 - Priorities to **make heritage accessible** and to develop **borderless tourism** destinations
 - Strong presence in **EUSBR** , presence in **EUSALP**
 - Best practice guides, on-line media, marketing materials, 3D models, a graphic novel, social media, podcast...
- **PLAMENAC Gordana** – The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route remarked the Cultural Route’s actions consistent with the Project, considering:
 - The strong cooperation already in place with the **private sector**
 - The Danube Competence Centre close work with **EUSDR** in relation to **PA 3**
 - The Importance of enhancing our common roots and to stimulate a sense of ownership towards heritage, through private and public partnerships, local-national-European joint ventures. Relevance in view of **social cohesion** and integration
 - The focus on **cross-border and green tourism**, activities targeting young people and children
- **KLOMPMACHER Hein** – The European Route of Megalithic Culture presented the Cultural Route, stressing:
 - The focus on the **Route** itself, on the **monuments** along it, on the **museums** and other institutions along it; the strong cooperation with museums, archaeological and ecological centres and geo-parks
 - The annual event “**European Day of Megalithic Culture**” and its strong educational purpose
 - The strong presence at **regional level**

- The priority of “**low-impact tourism**”; focus on the promotion of an inclusive identity, exchange programs for children and young people
- **SIMONS Paul** – *The European Route of Historic Thermal Towns* provided with information about the Cultural Route and about:
 - The tourism offers which bring together **leisure and health**. Engagement with schools and with young people to convey health **education**
 - The cooperation of EHTTA with European SPA Association
 - The initiative “Cafes of Europe”
 - The application for H2020 call for proposals, to enhance the potential of the **thermal heritage of Europe as a sustainable tool for socio-economic growth** on the basis of the creation of an international integrated network formed by all branches of the sector
 - **GIS mapping**
- **PANKE Emanuela** – *Iter Vitis* shed the light on some features of the Cultural Route she represents, and in particular about:
 - The fact that the Federation, which brings together different national associations, crosses **all the 4 EU Macro-regions**
 - The geographical coverage reaching out even to Middle-East countries
 - The promotion of tourism related to **wine culture, not only wine consumption**, through also conferences, research programs...
 - **Cooperation with other Cultural Routes** of the Council of Europe (e.g. The Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Routes)

COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS:

- **HOBJILA Doru** provided with reflections and information concerning:
 - **Importance of local and regional authorities** in view of Routes4U
 - **Upcoming events** of interest in view of the Project (e.g. May seminar on “The Role of Cultural heritage in Building a Europe of citizens”, October event with DG REGIO)
 - Relevant in view of the Project: the **European Grouping on Territorial Cooperation**, cooperation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

Few additional causes for reflection were made after the presentation of all participants in the meeting. Those related to the possibility and the relevance of finding links among the Cultural Routes and to develop products as real Cultural Routes products, the statistical analysis of the Project outcomes.

IV. 13:00 CLOSE OF THE MEETING

NEXT STEPS

- **Identification of new cultural routes** to be developed **and of Cultural Routes** to be strengthened in the Macro-regions
- **Identification and selection of experts** on the basis of the call launched on the Routes4U website
- Launch of the **webpage** containing relevant information on Routes4U, the Macro-regions, stakeholders etc.
- Launch of the **call for proposals of the grant system** awarded for selected actions in the framework of the Routes4U project (in April)
- Creation and publication, in cooperation with a selected university, of the **first e-learning module** on the development, management and protection of Cultural Routes.
- Development of **communication** measures such as the creation of a network of young professionals
- Launching of a **Cultural Routes Card** in cooperation with the European Youth Card Association

NEXT MEETINGS

- **Routes4U meetings in the Macro-regions:**
 - **EUSAIR:** 6 June 2018, Venice (Italy) (tbc)
 - **EUSBSR:** 6-7 September 2018, Oslo (Norway) (tbc)

Upcoming Routes4U Steering Committee meeting: October, Luxembourg (tbc)

TO DO

- **ALL MACRO-REGIONS:** Provide a list of proposals of new cultural routes to develop and of Cultural Routes to strengthen
- **EUSALP, EUSDR, EUSBSR, EUSALP:** Identify a country, willing to host Routes4U meeting in the Macro-region

Attachement

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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PARTICIPANTS AND CONTACTS - Tuesday 27 March 2018 (10:00 – 12:45)

VIP Room Beaulieu 1, European Commission, Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, Avenue de Beaulieu 1, 1049 Brussels, Belgium

EUROPEAN UNION

European Commission, DG REGIO	HALKIN Jean-Pierre	jean-pierre.halkin@ec.europa.eu
European Commission, DG REGIO	ONIDA Marco	marco.onida@ec.europa.eu
European Commission, DG GROW	ANUSKEVICIUTE Girma	girma.anuskeviciute@ec.europa.eu
European Commission, DG EAC	HOFMAN Maciej	maciej.hofman@ec.europa.eu
Committee of the Regions	HOBJILA Doru	doru.hobjila@cor.europa.eu

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes, Directorate-General of Democracy	DOMINIONI Stefano	stefano.dominioni@coe.int
Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes, Directorate-General of Democracy	METZGER Constanze	constanze.metzger@coe.int
Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes, Directorate-General of Democracy	LIGAZZOLO Laura	laura.ligazzolo@coe.int
Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes, Directorate-General of Democracy	DE ROUX Denise	denise.de-roux@coe.int
Liason Office to the European Union	GORI Gisella	gisella.gori@coe.int

EU MACRO-REGIONS

EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)	LYUBOMIR Sirakov	l.sirakov@tourism.government.bg
	FLOREA Mihaela	mihaela.florea@mdrap.ro
EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)	CHYBALSKI Filip	filip.chybalski@msz.gov.pl
EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)	WHITAKER Sarah	sarah.henry.whitaker@emory.edu
EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR)	BELOŠEVIĆ Blanka	blanka.belosevic@mint.hr

GOVERNING BOARD OF THE ENLARGED PARTIAL AGREEMENT ON CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Finland, Ministry of Education	MATTERO Anne	anne.mattero@minedu.fi
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and Culture		
Poland, Permanent Representation to the EU	CHYBALSKI Filip	filip.chybalski@msz.gov.pl

CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Via Francigena	TEDESCHI Massimo BRUSCHI Luca	presidenteaevf@gmail.com luca.bruschi@viefrancigene.org
The Viking Routes	STEVNS MATZON Ea	esm@vestmuseum.dk
The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route	PLAMENAC Gordana ĆOSIĆ Danko	gordana.plamenac@gmail.com danko.cosic@danubecc.org
The Hansa	HARLEVI Inger	inger.harlevi@balticness.se
The European Route of Megalithic Culture	KLOMPMAKER Hein	hklompmaker@hunebedcentrum.nl
The European Route of Historic Thermal Towns	SIMONS Paul	paul@simonsassociates.co.uk
Iter Vitis	ZAMBON Floriano PANKE Emanuela	zambon.f@gmail.com emanuelapanke@gmail.com