

First Routes4U meeting for the Adriatic and Ionian region (EUSAIR)

"Fostering regional development through the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe"

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(Centro Congressi San Servolo, San Servolo Island)

Workshop 3: Marketing strategies for the visibility of heritage

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INTRODUCTION INTO THE TOPIC

As the largest economic activity in the Adriatic and Ionian Region (AIR) countries, **the tourism industry boasts the greatest potential for the EUSAIR economy in the Adriatic and Ionian region.**

Transnational tourism will continue to grow and it will be structured according to themes: experiences, emotions, values. An excellent way for this is through cultural routes.

Cultural Routes certified by the Council of Europe play a vital role in this context. The definition of Cultural Route is "a cultural, educational heritage and tourism co-operation project aiming at the development and promotion of an itinerary or a series of itineraries based on a historic route, a cultural concept, figure or phenomenon with a transnational importance and significance whose historical, artistic or social interest is patently European."

Today more than in the past, **tourists seek authentic cultural products and communications** that dazzle senses, stimulate minds and touch hearts (Schmitt, 1999; Prentice, 2001; Lagiewski and Zekan, 2006; Majdoub, 2011). Furthermore, **world-wide easy internet access, the booming industry of affordable air travel to small regional airports and the digital economy allowing individuals to create their personalized cultural experience are all trends supporting the growth of this type of tourism:** authentic, off-the-beaten track, sustainable (stefano-dominioni-director-european-institute-of-cultural-routes).

Those tourism trends impose a **major challenge for the management of cultural routes.** According to the study on the impact of European Cultural Routes by the Council of Europe (available online at <https://rm.coe.int/1680706995>) some of the main challenges of the cultural routes are related the **market orientation of those routes and the integration of marketing and promotion and the development of a common and truly 'shared' brand** (e.g. lack of dedicated resources for marketing, absence of skills capacity in marketing poor differentiation between consumer-oriented and industry-oriented actions, ect).

So, **marketing is now widely recognized as a critical factor for a long-term success and sustainability of the cultural routes** (Hardy 2003; Hayes and MacLeod 2006; Nagy 2012; Moscardo 2005). The marketing process consists of analyzing marketing opportunities, developing marketing strategies, planning marketing programs, and managing the marketing effort (Kotler 2003).

This workshop targets in producing concrete cross-national marketing recommendations for maximizing the visibility of cultural tourism in order to strengthen regional development thought the Cultural Routes in the Adriatic and Ionian Region.

Routes4U Project

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EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Implemented
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MAIN OBJECTIVES

The workshop aims to formulate **concrete tourism marketing recommendations in order to improve the visibility of the Cultural Routes in the Adriatic and Ionian Region.**

The main objectives of this workshop, with regards to the overall objective of strengthening regional development through the Cultural Routes in the Adriatic and Ionian Region, are the following:

1. to discuss the **main problematic points/ challenges related to tourism management and marketing of the Adriatic and Ionian Region with regard to the Cultural Routes** (eg. lack of market orientation of the routes, lack of dedicated resources for marketing, absence of skills capacity in marketing poor differentiation between consumer-oriented and industry-oriented actions, etc).
2. to **identify overall marketing goals, target markets and objectives** at establishing an Adriatic-Ionian brand for cultural tourism.
3. to formulate **marketing and promotional recommendations on visibility strategies**, meant at increasing the visibility of cultural heritage in the Adriatic and Ionian Region.
4. to integrate **digital marketing and ICT strategies and tactics in the communication activities and channels** for the promotion of the Cultural Routes.
5. to set out the **critical points related to proposed activities, as well as key performance indicators and funding sources**; and to establish and maintain mechanisms for effective and timely communication to the stakeholders involved from two Regions in general.

KEY QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

In relation to the aim and objectives of the workshop, the main challenges to be addressed during the workshop, are:

1. ***How to evaluate the current visibility and marketing actions related to tourism management and marketing of the Adriatic and Ionian Region with regard to the cultural tourism and routes?*** This involves development of marketing assessment metrics and market intelligence to ensure that market orientation issues, along with other weaknesses would be accurately, timely and efficiently identified (e.g. lack of dedicated resources for marketing, absence of skills capacity, etc).
2. ***What are the preparatory steps required for setting overall marketing goals, selecting target markets and establishing the identity for an Adriatic-Ionian brand for cultural tourism and routes?*** This is very important in order to secure that marketing and promotion of cultural tourism and routes in the Region will be clear, efficient for the development of a common and truly 'shared' brand and in full compliance with the overall Program goals.
3. ***What is needed to formulate marketing and promotional recommendations on visibility strategies, meant at increasing the visibility of cultural heritage in the Adriatic and Ionian Region?*** The core issue at this step is establishing what can and should be done centrally – thus clarifying strategies, tactics, processes, backup investments and responsibilities – in order to improve the visibility of the Cultural Routes in the Adriatic and Ionian Region.
4. ***What are the main considerations needed in order to integrate digital marketing and ICT strategies and tactics in the promotion of the cultural tourism and routes in the area?***

5. **What are the critical points related to proposed activities and can be set as key performance indicators?** Matters of mechanisms for effective and timely communication to the stakeholders involved and to the two Regions, joint promotion provide assistance and guidance to businesses and customers, to promote partnerships, and aligning all available EU, international, national and private funding of relevance are important in this part of the discussion.

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