

Routes4U Project

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Information on macro-regional priorities for new Cultural Routes supported by Routes4U

One of the objectives of the Routes4U Project is the assistance to cultural routes projects in view of the certification "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe" and the assistance to the certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in view of their extension in the EU macro-regions. For each macro-region flagship priorities, have been defined. Recommendations and actions are implemented by the Routes4U Project, in order to follow-up on these priorities.

Cultural Routes priorities in the Adriatic and Ionian Region

In the framework of the Routes4U Project, a consultation procedure was launched within the EUSAIR Thematic Steering Group 4 on Sustainable Tourism to identify cultural routes priorities. The Steering Group 4 voted in favour of two projects: **the Routes of the Olive Tree and the Roman Emperors Route.**

- The **Routes of the Olive Tree** was certified "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe" in 2005. The Cultural Foundation Routes of the Olive Tree established in Kalamata (Greece) acts since 2003 as the lead-partner of the network. The Cultural Route aim is to promote the cultural heritage related to the olive tree, a strong symbol of Mediterranean identity, with particular reference to its history, landscape management, folkloric traditions, art and gastronomy linked to the Mediterranean diet. The priority for this Cultural Routes is to strengthen and broaden its network to ensure its stability and vital role in the macro-region.
- No **Roman Emperors Route** encompassing the Roman heritage in general in the Adriatic-Ionian Region exists so far. Although the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route passes through several countries which are also part of the Adriatic-Ionian Region, it was argued that this Cultural Route could not be extended in the Adriatic-Ionian Region as one of its main theme is its relation to the Danube River. Therefore a study was conducted to research, track and demonstrate the richness of the Roman heritage in the Adriatic-Ionian Region and its importance for the Region.



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European Institute of Cultural Routes
28, Rue Münster, L-2160 Luxembourg

Mail ► routes4u@coe.int
Tel ► +352 24 12 50 39
Site ► www.coe.int/routes4u

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Cultural Routes priorities in the Alpine Region

In the framework of Routes4U, the following projects are identified as priorities for the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region: **Mountain heritage/Via Alpina and Via Claudia Augusta.**

- The **Via Alpina** gathers five mountain trails crossing all the eight countries in the Alps. The project was initiated in 1999 and carried out thanks to two consecutive Interreg project. By connecting all the countries of the Alps, it offers a unique way to witness the natural and cultural diversity of the Alpine Region. In view of the development of this project consistently with the Council of Europe criteria for Cultural Routes, it is first necessary to list its tangible and intangible heritage, as well as the various stakeholders who could support the application for certification "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe".
- First taken by Etruscans, Raets and Celts, the **Via Claudia Augusta** was developed by Romans 2000 years ago. Since then, this way has been an important vector of transalpine exchanges, commercial, but also cultural. Nowadays, the European Economic and Interest Association Via Claudia Augusta Transnational is strengthening this way through the Alps to develop, among others, common heritage of its members. Routes4U is seeing great opportunities for the macro-region in the certification of this Cultural Route.

Cultural Routes priorities in the Baltic Sea Region

Through consultations between Routes4U team with the EUSBSR and other stakeholders from the Baltic Sea Region two priority cultural routes projects were identified: one based on the modern architect **Alvar Aalto and Modern Architecture** and the other on the **Maritime and Ice Age Heritage Route.**

- The Finnish **Alvar Aalto route** was created by the Alvar Aalto Foundation in the Spring of 2018. The route reflects the life and work of the Finnish architect and designer Alvar Aalto (1898-1976). It follows his footsteps, from classicism to modernism, and from brick architecture to monumentalism, and offers insight into the cityscape and architecture of Jyväskylä. Within the framework of Routes4U the priorities consist of the extension the route to other countries of the Baltic Sea Region and its certification as "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe".
- An **Ice Age Route or Maritime Heritage Route** do not exist so far. However ice age heritage and maritime heritage are interesting themes that should be further studied and developed in view of the development of new Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in the Baltic Sea Region.. Travellers will discover the traces of first prehistoric inhabitants of the Baltic Sea Region, when the area was not covered by the sea yet, and they will learn about their life and what remains from their age in archaeological sites and museum.



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Cultural Routes priorities in the Danube Region

In the framework of Routes4U, the co-ordinators of Priority Area 3 "Culture and tourism, people to people" of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) launched a consultation process to define the priorities for new Cultural Routes to be developed. The following two priorities were defined: **Iron Age Route** and **Cyril and Methodius Route**.

- The theme of the **Iron Age** is not reflected among the certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. It sheds however the light on important archaeological sites in the Danube Region. These very fragile, prehistoric landscapes in the Danube Region remain partly hidden and not well integrated into cultural tourism. The certification of an Iron Age Route would contribute to the protection and give more visibility to this valuable heritage.
- The European **Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius** is an association of legal entities established in 2013. The Saints Cyril and Methodius influenced the local culture through dialogue, listening and observing relationships. They also organised local customs by contributing their knowledge and creating new cultural rules that respected the autonomy of the local people.

The route connects significant places and institutions through cultural and pilgrimage trails and offers different cultural-educational events along them. Within the framework of Routes4U this cultural route will be the object of an expert study, in order to research and map additional stakeholders and sites related to the saints Cyril and Methodius, in view of the expansion of the network in other countries of the Danube Region.