

INTRODUCTION AND JUSTIFICATION

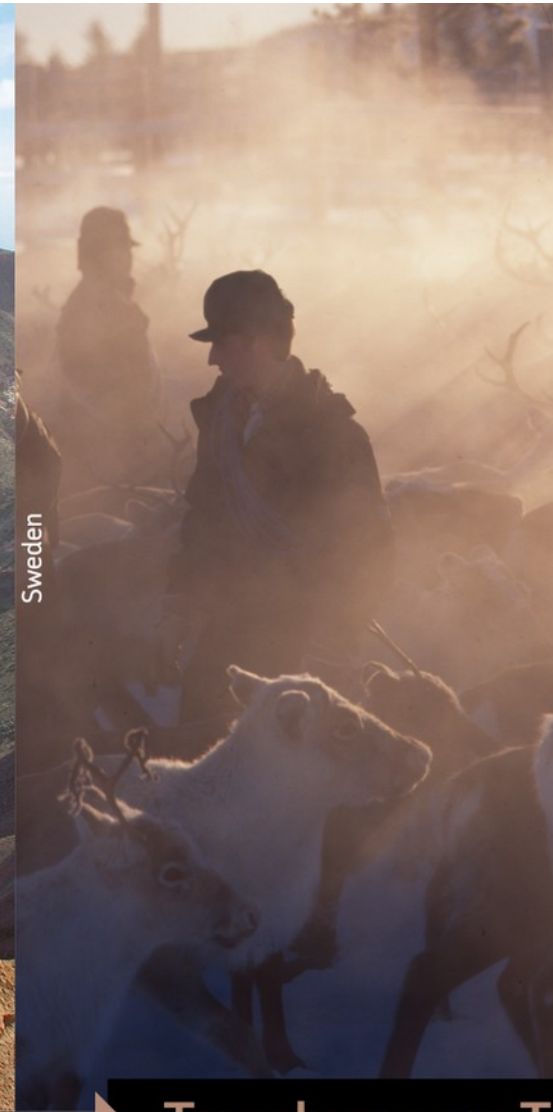
Transhumance is a specialized and complex form of animal breeding which uses the climatic and geographical complementary situation between mountains and close-lying coastal land in order to gain optimal grazing all year round. It is a global phenomenon that has been practiced since man started taming ruminant animals such as sheep, goat, reindeer, horse, cattle. The movements of men and herds resulted in a net of codified trails, many of which are still used today, often converted into important highways linking distant regions.

Transhumance routes constitute a true common European cultural heritage which unites the northern and southern countries from their earliest forms of civilized life. They have created a cultural landscape of pastures, meadows, fords, and springs as well as a mental landscape of stories, myths, ideologies, and mentalities, deeply rooted in our collective memory and expressed in art, literature, music and consumption during millennia.

In some parts of Europe the transhumance has already disappeared as an economic sector, in others parts it is still alive. The recovery and reinvention of historical trails and rural roads is a matter of great concern for landscape protection and evaluation.



Spain



Sweden



Italy

Transhumance Trails and Rural Roads, A European Network of Traditional Itineraries

Coorganize



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MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The project aims to promote European identity and integration through the awareness of transhumance routes as a common cultural legacy. The intention is to create a net of cultural links between itineraries with similar histories preserving and reinventing a cultural landscape of pastures and meadows produced through millennia by the constant interaction between man and nature.

Traditions and functional aspects of a pastoral life-style foster the awareness of our common cultural roots and should be preserved and/or reinvented in case traditional know-how being endangered. The project will promote activities complementing traditional pastoralism, such as sustainable and creative tourism, educational and therapeutic activities related to the interaction between man and animal.

Locally produced food of high quality and farmers' market, will be sustained. Due to its flexibility, the traditional pastoralism, usually organized on family level, offers the best organizational structure entity for this enterprise. Supporting activities, such as tourism, would provide extra income for the farmers and provide economic means for the younger generation.

Finally, international cultural projects proffer the superlative implement for fostering and implementing European integration, to raise awareness of shared cultural roots, fundamental for a common identity.

THE PROJECT

"Transhumance Trails & Rural Roads. A European network of traditional itineraries" was initiated in 2016 as an international and multidisciplinary research project originating from three transhumance systems, showing the diversity from northern Europe to its southernmost region, and including three nations, Sweden, Italy, and Spain. The research areas are:

- the reindeer transhumance or semi-nomadism in Sapmi, Sweden
- the Mediterranean transhumance of sheep and cattle in Italy
- the goat keeping system of the vulcanic Canarian Islands, Spain

Two international seminars have been organized by the Parco Regionale Via Appia Antica in Rome, 2016 and 2017 and a third in 2018 organized by Area of General Management of Cultural Heritage of the Canary Islands Government and Department of Historical Heritage of Tenerife Island Government in order to promote the project as a candidate for certification as a Cultural Route (Council of Europe).

Further, workshops and excursions related to the project have been organized during 2018 in all three countries: in the municipality of Blera, (Viterbo, Italy); at The Ajtte Museum (Jokkmokk, Sweden), center for Sami culture, including Lapponia, UNESCO World Heritage center; on the island of Tenerife.

In September the International Association of Transhumance Trails & Rural Roads (TT & RR) was formally implemented at the University of La Laguna, Tenerife, Spain, which is the reference institution and the official collaborative link between the three parties. Further signatory entities are the Swedish Institute of Classical Studies in Rome and the Ajtte Museum for Sami Culture, Jokkmokk, Sweden.

The actual research group, which initiated the network, is formed by scholars and specialists from the universities La Sapienza and Roma Tre, in Rome, from Parco Regionale Via Appia Antica, Rome, Italy, and from Universities of Uppsala and Umeå, Sweden, and La Laguna, Spain.

Future development will add other institutions and entities, such as town councils and voluntary organizations of regional and transnational character to the network.

From the promoting entities and institutions, it is expected that other entities, town councils, collectives and European institutions will be added so that this Association can be consolidated with insular, regional, national, European and international character (since in this last case, the possibility of adding Latin American countries).

