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Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Certification cycle 2024-2025

Regular Evaluation:
AENEAS ROUTE
Independent expert report

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



Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Evaluation cycle 2024-2025

Independent expert report

AENEAS ROUTE

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**The views expressed in this report by independent experts are those of the author and do not relate to the Council of Europe's Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes.*

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1. Executive Summary

The Aeneas Route, under the management of the Aeneas Route Association in Italy, retraces the legendary journey of Aeneas, connecting significant cultural and archaeological sites across Turkey, Greece, Albania, Tunisia, and Italy. Established in 2018 and certified by the Council of Europe in 2021, the Route represents an ambitious initiative to promote Mediterranean heritage, intercultural dialogue, and sustainable tourism. The network has grown to encompass 113 members from 8 countries, reflecting a broad commitment to fostering cultural exchange and regional development. However, some specific challenges persist, particularly regarding governance, inclusivity, and financial sustainability.

One of the key issues is the Route's heavy reliance on European funding, which has led to financial discontinuity and restricted the development of a dedicated operational structure. This limitation has partially hindered strategic planning, reduced the continuity of activities, and restricted the Route's capacity to engage meaningfully with its members. Diversifying funding sources and establishing a stable financial foundation will be crucial to ensuring long-term operational coherence and strategic capacity.

Moreover, the Route's activities to date have largely focused on historical and literary research, primarily targeting academic audiences. While these efforts underscore the Route's scholarly value, they do still little to enhance youth engagement or to promote the cultural tourism potential of the sites along the Route. There is a clear need to develop youth-oriented initiatives, such as educational exchanges and immersive experiences, to foster a deeper connection between younger generations and the shared Mediterranean heritage. A stronger effort should be addressed towards the implementation of international cultural exchanges for youth and students through the organization of cultural/creative challenges amongst students by producing innovative cultural contents (i.e. video, web contents, blogs, other similar) that can be used also to promote the Route over the web. These initiatives could be promoted along with the organization of the flagship initiative of the Route, the FIRE Festival, provided that the latter will be held in future in each of the involved countries of the Route.

A critical oversight is the underutilization of maritime heritage, which is central to Aeneas narrative and a unique asset for the Route. The travel of Aeneas through the Mediterranean and its shores is an important part of the Virgilian narrative, but despite this, the sea heritage and its attractive potential towards visitors is only partially enhanced by the operational work of the Route. The Route's Association should address this issue by supporting the adhering local institutions to implement a more effective representation of the cultural and tourist offer, in the nearby of their harbours and marinas. An improved representation of these destinations' tourist offers would contribute to the economic development of local communities under a sustainable and cultural perspective. Prioritizing the development of land and sea itineraries that combine renowned and lesser-known locations - complemented by resources like a "Pilot Book" - could significantly enhance the accessibility and visibility of key sites.

Improved governance, the creation of a "Tour Operators Network," and enhanced collaboration through events like the traveling FIRE festival could also address current limitations. Establishing a cohesive communication plan and diversifying member activities will be critical in ensuring the Route's future growth and alignment with Council of Europe certification criteria.

To address these challenges, the next five years should focus on diversifying membership to ensure broader geographic and sectoral representation, particularly from underrepresented countries like Greece, Tunisia, and Albania. Strengthening governance through increased international participation in decision-making bodies and fostering better communication among members will also be essential. Developing a comprehensive tourism and sustainability strategy, including a Tour Operators Network, can help standardize and expand tourism services across the Mediterranean.

Balancing scholarly pursuits with practical cultural tourism initiatives and youth engagement programs will allow the Aeneas Route to achieve its full potential. By addressing financial vulnerabilities, maritime underrepresentation, and governance imbalances, the Route can solidify its position as a vibrant platform for Mediterranean heritage and intercultural exchange, fully aligning with the Council of Europe's criteria for Cultural Routes.

Criteria	Excellent	Very good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Evaluation
<i>Fulfilment of the eligibility criteria for the topics listed in Resolution CM/Res(2023)2, I. List of eligibility criteria for themes.</i>		X				Very good
<i>Fulfilment of the eligibility criteria for the actions listed in Resolution CM/Res(2023)2, II. List of priority areas for action.</i>			X			Satisfactory
<i>Fulfilment of the eligibility criteria for the networks listed in Resolution CM/Res(2023)2, III. List of network policies.</i>			X			Satisfactory
<i>The Cultural Route implements the Guidelines for the use of the "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe" logo</i>		X				Very good

2. Introduction

The Aeneas Route (referred to as "the Route") traces the journey of Aeneas from Troy through the Mediterranean, ending in Italy, where he is said to lay the foundations of Roman culture. This cultural route links key sites in Turkey, Greece, Albania, Tunisia and Italy, where archaeological sites and unique landscapes highlight the Mediterranean heritage.

Celebrating ancient maritime history, the Route invites travellers to experience both the mythological and modern identities of the crossed regions.

Established in 2018, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Route is organized by the Rotta di Enea Association in Rome. Officially recognized by the Council of Europe in 2021 as a European Cultural Route, it aims to promote sustainable tourism, cross-border cultural exchange and regional development.

The Route's network has grown to 103 members, including 9 associations, 6 institutions, 32 municipalities, 4 heritage sites, 2 chambers of commerce, 3 tourism stakeholders, 2 small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs), 1 nature park, 36 private individuals, 7 museums, 8 universities and 3 other entities. These members support the sustainable tourism objectives of the Route and strengthen the link between historical sites and modern cultural identity.

Currently, institutions expressing interest in joining the network include the Ministry of Culture and the American University of Beirut in Lebanon, as well as the Institute National du Patrimoine and ARCS in Tunisia. In addition, the Chambers of Commerce of Vibo Valentia, Catanzaro and Crotone in Italy are engaged in accession discussions, reflecting the growing interest from entities committed to enhancing the Route's cultural and tourism footprint across the Mediterranean.

The following sections of the report illustrate the results of the Route's formative years (2021-2023), highlighting the main achievements, challenges and development opportunities for the future of the Aeneas Route as an essential component of European cultural heritage.

3. Main Body Assessment

The sections below summarize the main findings of the present evaluation, compared with the insights of the initial assessment carried out in 2020, when the Aeneas Route was certified as a European Cultural Route by the Council of Europe.

3.1 Theme of the Cultural Route

3.1.1 Definition of the theme of the path.

The cultural theme of Aeneas' Route is based on the mythological journey of Aeneas, the Trojan hero who travelled from Troy to Italy. This narrative not only underscores the legendary passage of Aeneas but also symbolizes the shared cultural heritage and intertwined histories of Mediterranean civilizations.

By following Aeneas' sea path, the Route celebrates the enduring connection between the Eastern and Western Mediterranean regions, both of which have significantly shaped the formation of Europe's historical and contemporary identities. The Route highlights key destinations associated with Aeneas' journey, encouraging travellers to explore regions that reveal Greek, Trojan, and Roman influences through ancient artifacts, literature, and long-standing cultural traditions.

3.1.2 Historical and cultural context.

The Mediterranean Sea, at the centre of Aeneas' legendary journey, serves as the "unifying path" of the Route, linking various regions where ancient civilizations have left a legacy.

The Aeneas Route takes travellers through places that illustrate the historical importance of the Mediterranean as a cultural crossroads, enriched by the narratives and interactions of different civilizations. Beyond its mythological core, the Route also celebrates the vital role of the Mediterranean in ancient maritime trade, a network through which goods, ideas and customs circulated widely. This trade heritage serves as a complementary sub-theme, adding depth to the visitor experience without detracting from the central mythological focus. Together, these elements form a coherent cultural journey that presents both the legendary narrative of Aeneas and the historical realities that shaped the Mediterranean region.

3.1.3 The values of the Council of Europe represented by the theme.

The Aeneas Route embodies values in line with the objectives of the Council of Europe, emphasizing cultural exchange, transnational connection, and historical preservation.

The theme of the Route reinforces the idea of a shared European identity, rooted in the diversity and blending of cultures across geographical borders. Reflecting on the mythological and historical elements of Aeneas' narrative, the Route connects the past to the present, fostering a sense of continuity that resonates with the Council's dedication to preserving and celebrating Europe's common heritage.

3.2 Fields of action

3.2.1 Cooperation in research and development.

Over the last three to four years, the Aeneas Route has increased its collaborative activity in research, involving academics from member universities and affiliated research centres. These initiatives brought together historical and cultural expertise from different countries along the Route, strengthening its role as a collaborative platform promoting shared cultural identity in the Mediterranean region. In line with this commitment, the Rotta di Enea Association has organized three key research events that underscore its dedication to the academic exploration of Mediterranean history and mythology.

In 2021, the scientific conference "Navigation in the Mediterranean in the Age of Homeric Heroes" was held in Gaeta, Italy, which brought together experts to discuss ancient navigation and the mythological context of Aeneas' voyage. The following year, "A Thousand Ways We'll Find: Aeneas from Troy to London" took place in Siena, Italy, focusing on the widespread cultural and historical influence of the myth of Aeneas throughout Europe. In 2023, the series of conferences "Aeneas' Journey: from to Rome", organized by the Colosseum Archaeological Park in Rome and supported by the Aeneas Route Association, made it possible to deepen Aeneas' path in Italy, examining its archaeological and mythological importance. In addition, the 2022 publication "Aeneas in the Troas and Lazio Regions - Mythology and Archaeology" has further enriched the academic resources on the Itinerary, offering insights into both the mythological and archaeological dimensions of Aeneas' journey.

The initial evaluation highlighted the potential of the Route to serve as a solid research platform, while also suggesting that a broader academic network could be useful in improving cultural and historical interpretations of Aeneas' narrative. Following these recommendations, the Route of Aeneas Association has expanded its Scientific Committee to include more partnerships between universities and research institutes. To improve access to the research results of the Route, a dedicated section on the official website of the Route now presents

academic publications and ongoing research, increasing public and academic access to studies relevant to the cultural themes of the Route.

Results of the previous evaluation	Follow-up of the 2024 evaluation
He recommended closer engagement with academic partners and the expansion of the Scientific Committee. Potential for growth as a research platform, which needs a stronger academic network for the development of the theme.	Partnerships with universities and research institutes have increased, with academic results accessible online. Progress has been made, but further integration of research into strategic planning is recommended.

3.2.2 Enhancement of European memory, history and heritage.

During this evaluation period, around 35% of activities have been focused on enhancing the memory, history and heritage of Mediterranean cultures, underlining the Route's commitment to preserving historical narratives in its sites. Notable recent initiatives include interactive exhibits and narrative installations in key locations, making the cultural heritage of Aeneas' Route accessible to both local and international audiences. These exhibits have contributed to the promotion of the Route at international tourism fairs, obtaining wider recognition.

However, challenges remain for the full integration of the intangible cultural heritage of ethnic and social minorities. While the Aeneas Route Association refers to international standards of cultural preservation, such as the UNESCO and ICOMOS conventions, future plans should more explicitly incorporate these guidelines into long-term development strategies. A structured approach to the integration of these standards, with the contribution of the Scientific Committee, could help to refine the cultural narrative of the Route and improve its alignment with the Council of Europe's heritage promotion standards.

Results of the previous evaluation	Follow-up of the 2024 evaluation
The Aeneas Itinerary celebrates the lasting impact of the Aeneid on European culture by organizing events and partnerships in all member countries, with activities ranging from exhibitions and theatrical performances to international meetings and collaborations, mainly in Italy and Turkey, highlighting the role of the Itinerary in European memory, history and heritage.	Around 35% of recent activities have focused on Mediterranean heritage, with notable exhibitions increasing international visibility, although greater integration of intangible heritage and alignment with UNESCO standards could increase the cultural impact of the Route. The Route should strengthen the active involvement of members from countries other than Italy and Turkey.

3.2.3 Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans.

In Turkey, the *Aeneid* is not part of the standard curriculum, and the Route has sparked interest among young Turkish students in this new theme, which not only fosters integration with Europe, but also reinforces a sense of historical and cultural identity tied to the myth of Aeneas. This unique cultural connection highlights the potential of the Aeneas Route in promoting meaningful exchanges among young Europeans, although, to date, only one initiative – a student visit in 2023 to a key site of the Route – has included youth-focused exchanges.

To capitalize on this potential, the Route's next activity plan should prioritize partnerships with educational institutions and incorporate specific programs geared toward youth engagement. Such programs would highlight the shared Mediterranean heritage associated with Aeneas' story, promoting cultural understanding and intercultural dialogue among younger generations.

Results of the previous evaluation	Follow-up of the 2024 evaluation
Youth engagement has been identified as a weak area due to the relatively recent establishment of the route network, which has limited opportunities for activities dedicated to young people.	Minimal progress with a registered initiative; Future action plans should address this area specifically.

3.2.4 Contemporary cultural and artistic practice.

The Aeneas Route has recently enriched its contemporary cultural and artistic practices through some key events focused on the creative expressions related to the journey of Aeneas. Notably, the "Festival Internazionale Rotta di Enea (FIRE)" has taken place every year since 2021, with co-organized events held mainly in Italy in culturally significant places such as the Campi Flegrei - Naples and Sorrento - Cuma. Each festival combines artistic elements such as light installations, music, and performances, blending historical themes with modern interpretations. However, FIRE currently remains a predominantly local and Italian initiative, led by the direction of the Route, with the aim of deepening public engagement and connecting cultural heritage with contemporary artistic practices. These activities illustrate the Route's commitment to promoting cultural continuity and innovation, encouraging local and international audiences to explore the history of the Mediterranean through accessible and evolving art forms.

Results of the previous evaluation	Follow-up of the 2024 evaluation
Various cultural activities, including festivals, musical and literary events related to the theme of Aeneas, took place in different locations, and the Itineraries network began to integrate these events to promote the Aeneas Itineraries, with the planning of an "Aeneas Festival" in Edremit and additional exhibitions and performances.	To further elevate the FIRE festival, it could be transformed into a traveling festival for the Aeneas Route, with each annual event held in a different destination along the mythological route. Ideally, this approach would bring FIRE to a new country every year, making it a flagship project for the Route. Such an itinerant format would enhance the cultural impact and visibility of the festival, engage local communities along the Itinerary, and invite international audiences to experience Aeneas' journey through different cultural lenses. This evolution of FIRE could position it as a dynamic symbol of the Aeneas Route's commitment to cultural exchange and Mediterranean heritage.

3.2.5 Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development.

The Aeneas Route has demonstrated the commitment to cultural tourism and sustainable development, positioning itself as an example for cultural itineraries. However, logistical challenges, such as accessibility to remote sites on the Route, continue to hinder the full tourism potential of the Route. Many sites require long journeys, impacting visitor flow, and efforts to improve accessibility through targeted entry points face ongoing logistical and administrative barriers.

Despite these limitations, the Route has made great strides in enhancing its historical sites and promoting local tourism partnerships. Upcoming efforts should include working with local

stakeholders to enhance infrastructure and develop standardized tourism practices across all locations. This approach will create a more unified experience for visitors, reinforcing the Route's position as a distinctive cultural tourist destination that embodies a European identity.

To further enhance this experience, the Route should aim to create figurative and informational groups of "Things to see/Places to visit" at each major stage of its mythological route. This would establish a consolidated tourism offer, encouraging travellers to plan short stays that include an overnight stay, thus extending their involvement with local culture and history.

In addition, the Route could enhance the role of ports and yachting as gateways for maritime access to these short-lived experiences. By leveraging the marinas along the Aeneas Route as entry points, the Route would encourage sailors to explore nearby sites during port stops, whether due to inclement weather, refuelling needs, or simply for the chance to explore. This approach ties into an authentic maritime component, allowing modern travellers to experience the region in ways that echo Aeneas' coastal voyage, thus deepening both the cultural resonance and accessibility of the Route.

The feedback from member organisations shows satisfaction with the Route's approach to promoting sustainable tourism. However, greater coordination with tour operators and targeted infrastructure improvements at key sites will be essential to support the sustainable growth of visitors.

Results of the previous evaluation	Follow-up of the 2024 evaluation
The Aeneas Route has developed cultural tourism and sustainable practices through nautical and naturalistic itineraries, involving local operators and enhancing well-known and lesser-known heritage sites in Turkey, Greece, Albania, Tunisia and Italy to foster tourism and cultural awareness.	The Aeneas Route is dedicated to sustainable cultural tourism, working with local partners to improve site accessibility and visitor experiences, though most events have concentrated in Italy and Turkey. Future efforts focus on enhancing infrastructure, engaging tour operators, and developing regional attractions to foster a cohesive, accessible Route across member countries. There is currently no evidence of progress on some initiatives mentioned in the previous report, such as the "Pilot Book" or the creation of an "Aeneas Cultural Itinerary Tour Operators Network."

3.3 Network of Cultural Routes

3.3.1 Overview of the institutional/legal structure of the network.

The Aeneas Route is managed by an Italian Association that organizes the activities of the network according to the cultural and tourist standards of the Council of Europe. Its governance, led mainly by Italy, includes an Executive Committee (with a President, a Vice President and a Treasurer) and a Scientific Committee, composed mainly of Italian experts and archaeologists from five partner countries. Membership is divided into four categories:

- Founding Members (original constituents),
- Ordinary Members (regularly paying dues),
- Honorary members (prominent supporters, often financial),

- Supporting members (economic contributors).

The Members' Assembly is composed of Founding Members and Ordinary Members with the right to vote. The Strategic Committee of Local Authorities collaborates on local development and tourism projects, with the participation of local authorities with or without membership fees, thus affecting voting rights but allowing strategic involvement.

This structure fosters collaboration with various bodies, including governments, museums and universities, although non-Italian participation is limited, resulting in Italy-centred governance. Nevertheless, the flexible model allows local authorities to engage with the objectives of the Route based on available resources.

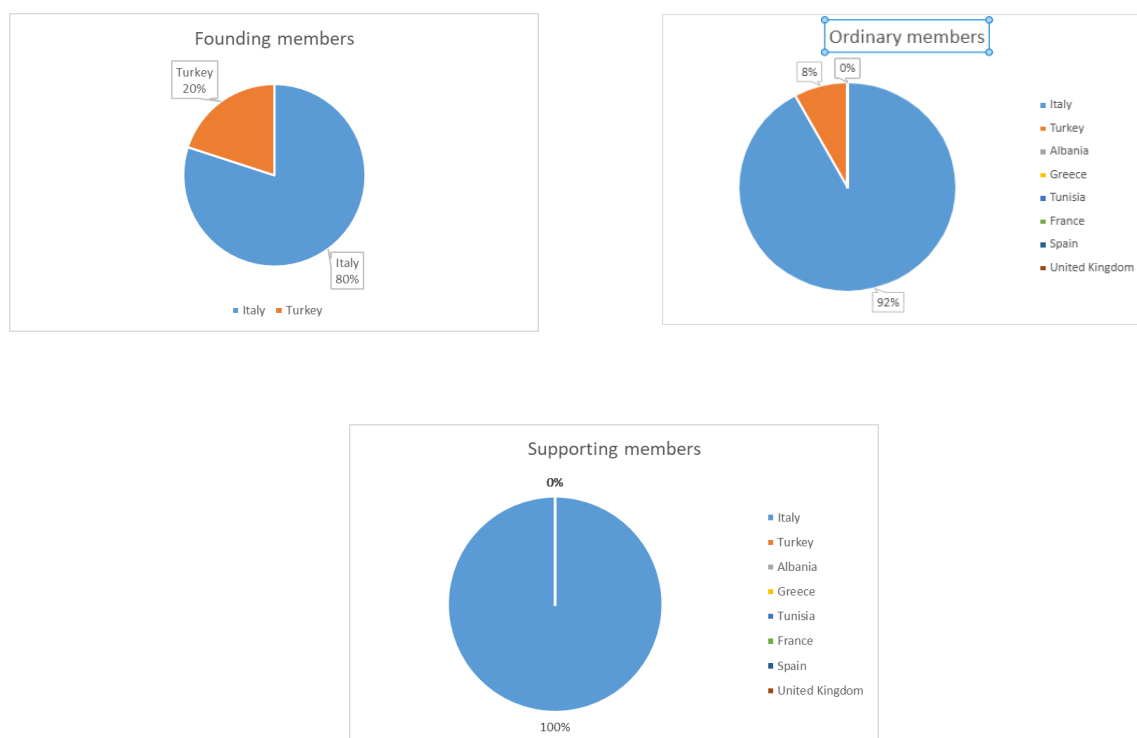


Figure 1 – Distribution of Route's network

3.3.2 Overview of the financial situation of the network.

The data shows significant fluctuations in the Aeneas Route's revenue sources from 2021 to 2024, totalling €156,400.54. Membership fees contributed €20,000, with the highest collection in 2022. Granted projects, largely concentrated in 2021 (€90,217.84), dominate overall funding but are notably absent in 2022 and 2024. Other contributions provided €45,682.70, showing modest consistency across years.

The funding reliance on external grants, particularly in 2021, highlights the need for diversification. The declining trend in membership fees and grants indicates a need for sustainable financial strategies to stabilize funding streams.

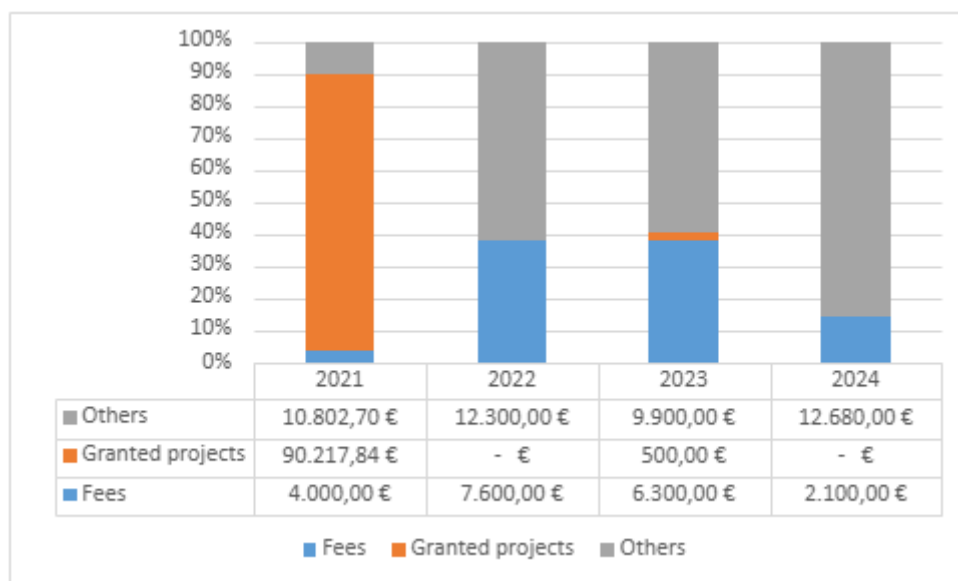


Figure 2 – Distribution of financial resources of the Route per kind of contribution and period

3.3.3 Current network composition by country and type of member.

As of 2024, the Aeneas Route's network includes various institutions and partners across the primary countries featured in the Aeneid narrative: Turkey, Italy, Greece, Albania and Tunisia.

The network's composition includes academic institutions, cultural heritage organisations, tour operators and municipal administrations.

Italy and Turkey hold the largest share of members, encompassing a wide range of entities, from archaeological sites and cultural institutions to tourism boards and local councils.

Other countries have a smaller presence, often limited to key heritage sites and stakeholders at the municipal level.

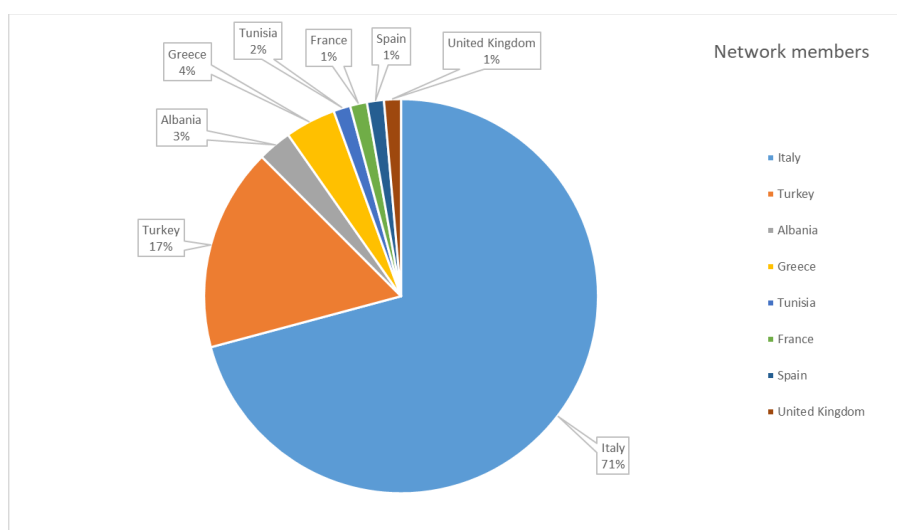


Figure 3 – Distribution of Route's members per country of origin

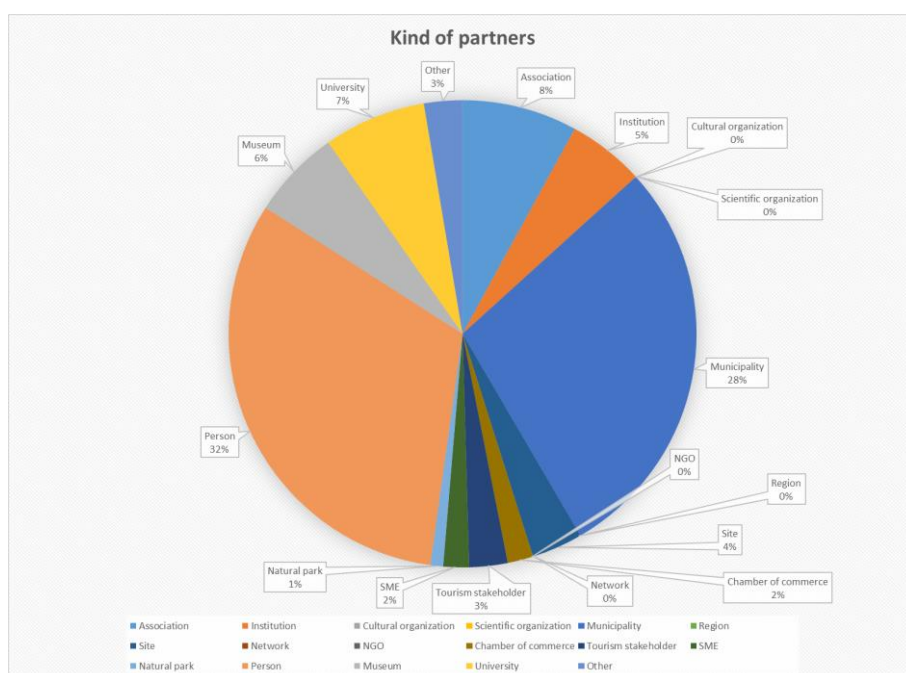


Figure 4 - Distribution of Route's member per kind of subject/institution

3.3.4 Network extension since last assessment.

Since the previous assessment, the Aeneas Route network has seen moderate expansion, mainly through the addition of new partners in Italy and Turkey, such as tour operators and municipal entities. However, due to historical reasons, the Route cannot expand significantly beyond its current scope, as the relevant locations are those mentioned in Virgil's *Aeneid*. Consequently, future memberships will have to focus mainly on those historical sites referred to in the *Aeneid* where there is tangible and intangible evidence of the myth of Aeneas. That said, there have been affiliations from countries such as the United Kingdom and Spain, where Aeneas has never been present, yet they can contribute in an associative way to increase the relevance and notoriety of the Route. Despite efforts to expand the network, progress in other member countries has been limited, with expansion in Greece and Albania remaining slower than expected and the focus remaining on consolidating activities in well-established regions.

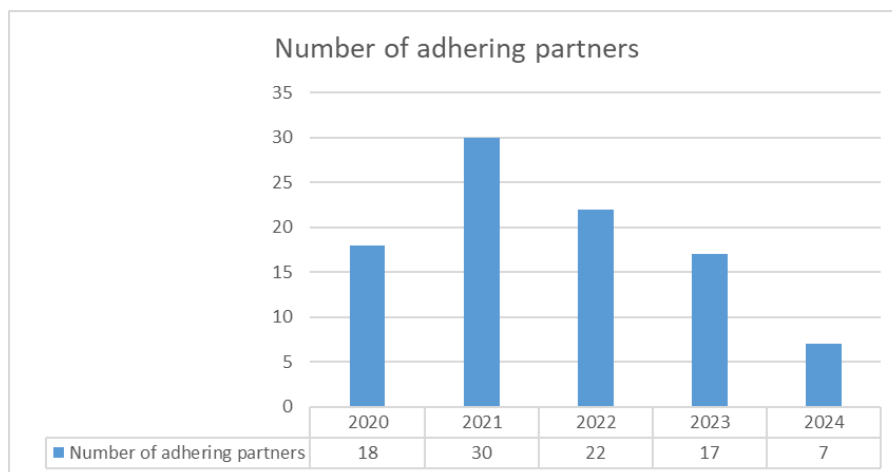


Figure 5 – Distribution of Route’s members per year of adhesion to the Route Association

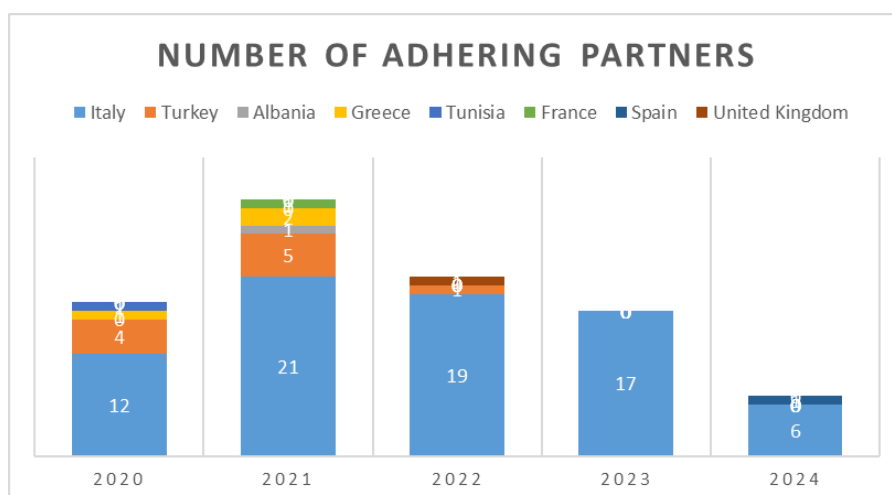


Figure 6 - Distribution of Route’s members per year of adhesion and country of origin

3.4.5 Strategy for the extension of the network over the next three years.

Over the next three years, the Aeneas Route Association aims to expand its network through strategic partnerships with countries historically and culturally linked to Aeneas and other Mediterranean myths. While a specific roadmap for adding new members has yet to be developed, the Association is proactively building relationships in regions such as Lebanon and Spain. Currently, it is in dialogue with multiple Lebanese institutions, including the Ministry of Culture and the American University of Beirut, as well as with the National Heritage Institute in Tunisia. In addition to these international efforts, the Aeneas Route seeks to consolidate and grow its presence in Greece and Tunisia, where it plans to increase the number of local partners. This will involve strengthening existing relationships with authorities and cultural organizations to promote local participation and engagement with the Route.

Here are some institutions currently in the process of accession or expressing interest:

- Lebanon
 - *Ministry of Culture of Lebanon* : Governmental, Beirut

- *American University of Beirut* : University, Beirut
- Tunisia
 - *Tunisia National Heritage Institute* : Governmental, Tunis
 - *ARCS Tunisia*: Civil Society Organisation, Tunis
- Italy
 - *Chamber of Commerce of Vibo Valentia* : Public Body, Vibo Valentia
 - *Chamber of Commerce of Catanzaro* : Public Body, Catanzaro
 - *Crotone Chamber of Commerce* : Public Body, Crotone

3.4 Communication tools

3.4.1 Current state of the communication tools developed by the network (graphic charter, communication materials, logos, communication channels, signage, maps, etc.).

The Aeneas Route has implemented a unified visual identity that aligns with its cultural objectives and follows the Council of Europe's guidelines for cultural routes. The branding is consistently reflected in physical signage, information materials, and digital platforms, with a main website, www.aeneasroute.org, serving as a central hub for mission information, events, and route-specific details of the route. Visual storytelling elements, including images, videos, and interactive maps, have been incorporated to improve engagement, especially with younger audiences.

The YouTube channel of the Aeneas Route Association, born on 18.12.2020, currently has 11 subscribers and has uploaded a total of 6 videos (one video was uploaded three years ago, two videos were uploaded two years ago, and the remaining two videos were published five months ago), achieving a total of 298 views. The videos focus on presenting the historical and cultural significance of the sites related to Aeneas' journey.

The Instagram account @aeneasroute was created in October 2019. She currently has 508 followers, follows 242 pages, and has published 142 posts. Since the beginning of 2024, 12 new pieces of content have been uploaded. Both platforms use visually appealing visuals to engage the public and raise awareness of the cultural heritage of the Aeneas Route.¹

All in all, the activity of the Route on said social media results quite few dynamic and attractive for curious and new visitors

3.4.2 Compliance with the Guidelines for the use of the "Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe" logo.

The visual identity of the Aeneas Route fully adheres to the logo guidelines of the Council of Europe, creating a cohesive and recognizable presence through signage, digital media and printed materials, thus strengthening the visibility standards of the Cultural Routes program. However, a unified policy for logo use by all members of the network must be established to avoid uncontrolled or inconsistent enforcement. The Association is advised to implement stricter oversight, ensuring that it is constantly informed and approves the use of the logo in all network communications.

¹ Data as of 04/11/24.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

Despite the Aeneas Route's active engagement and the objective challenges, it faces since its establishment (such as COVID-19 and political instability in some participating countries), it shows signs of a weak governance structure driven predominantly by Italian interests. The Association operates without employees, relying on volunteers and with limited funding from membership fees and external sponsorships.

This underdeveloped governance is also highlighted by the inconsistencies and gaps in the data observed during the review of the submitted materials. While the Route's President was responsive in providing additional information, the documentation received was generally disorganized, lacking clarity, and contained numerous inaccuracies that complicated the evaluation process. In addition, the Route faces critical challenges in financial management, partner coordination, and communication. Addressing these areas with clearer strategies and structured planning would help establish a stronger operational foundation to support cohesive growth and consistent outreach.

I. List of eligibility criteria for topics

In light of the eligibility criteria, it is recommended that the Route establish a cohesive group of multidisciplinary experts (particularly in the domains of cultural/sustainable tourism and cultural communication/enhancement) from the participating countries who are dedicated to researching and advancing the topics relevant to the Pathway. This would help position the Route as a hub for research and scientific exchange, supporting its academic credibility and collaborative goals. Additionally, the materials produced should facilitate innovative projects in the field of cultural tourism and sustainable development, with a strong focus on collaboration and full involvement of the network's partnerships.

II. List of priority areas for action

1. Cooperation in research and development

To enhance the role of the Aeneas Route's as a research platform, some steps are recommended. Firstly, expanding partnerships with universities and research institutes across the Mediterranean would enrich the Route's understanding of regional cultural heritage. Subsequently, the Route website could be regularly updated to include the latest academic research, increasing access to valuable insights for both scholars and the public. In addition, integrating these research findings into the Route's strategic plans could help align academic work with its broader goals. Lastly, the promotion of upcoming research events would foster international awareness and youth engagement.

2. Enhancement of European memory, history and heritage

To strengthen the Aeneas Route's focus on cultural heritage, some recommendations are advised. Given the limited amount of material heritage directly linked to the legend of Aeneas, a strategic approach to highlight and enhance smaller cultural sites would be essential. Incorporating intangible cultural heritage, particularly from ethnic and social minorities, would add a richer and more inclusive narrative. Embedding UNESCO and ICOMOS standards into long-term strategies would support this, together with a structured collaboration with the Scientific Committee to ensure exhibits and storytelling are in line with best practices in cultural preservation and Council of Europe standards.

3. Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans

To strengthen youth engagement with the Aeneas Route, prioritizing partnerships with educational institutions in all countries involved in the Route could be transformative. Specific initiatives, such as study exchanges, immersive site visits, cultural/creative challenges and curricula-based projects, would highlight the shared cultural heritage associated with Aeneas and improve young people's understanding of Mediterranean history. Integrating these programmes into the Route's Action Plan would promote intercultural dialogue and foster a stronger connection between students with European and Mediterranean identities, broadening the scope and educational impact of the Route.

4. Contemporary cultural and artistic practice

To broaden the impact of the "Festival Internazionale Rotta di Enea (FIRE)" and strengthen its cultural resonance, consider turning it into a traveling festival that moves to several key locations along the Aeneas Route each year. By hosting the festival in a new country each year, FIRE could deepen cultural engagement, foster a sense of shared Mediterranean heritage, and attract an international audience to experience the legacy of the Route in unique settings. This approach would position FIRE as an emblem of intercultural exchange and historical continuity throughout the Mediterranean.

5. Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development

To enhance the accessibility and tourism potential of the Aeneas Route, it is essential to address the logistical issues affecting remote sites access by collaborating with local authorities to improve infrastructure and entry points. Developing "Things to see/places to visit" clusters at major sites would create a unified tourism offering, promoting extended stays that encourage deeper engagement with local culture.

Expanding maritime focus by leveraging ports and marinas as access points can also provide travellers with a unique and immersive way to experience the Route's coastal narrative. Moreover, although the sea forms the essence of the myth of Aeneas, it currently serves as a background rather than a central element of the Route. To address this, a map could be created outlining Aeneas' various sea routes, combining land and sea itineraries to encourage visits to both renowned and lesser-known locations (such as Butrint, Pozzuoli and Edremit). These routes should be designed to be sustainable and accessible to all types of travellers. In addition, the Route should prioritize the creation of resources such as the "Pilot Book" and establish a "Tour Operator Network" to standardize and expand tourism services. This approach, together with partnerships with tour operators, would help create a unified and sustainable experience for visitors across the Mediterranean.

III. List of criteria for networks

The Aeneas Route has made significant strides towards meeting the Council of Europe's certification criteria but needs to be further developed in specific areas. Below are key recommendations:

1. Expand members diversity: Although Italy and Turkey dominate, greater geographical balance and representation across network countries, particularly from Greece, Tunisia and Albania, is essential.

2. Broaden sector participation: Encourage the inclusion of members from different sectors, such as local SMEs, universities and organisations focused on gastronomy, heritage and conservation, to support tourism and cultural goals.
3. Enhance governance balance: Increasing non-Italian representation within the Scientific and Executive Committees could improve the network inclusivity and align with the goal of broad-based, multinational governance.
4. Clarify roles and communication: Strengthen internal communication and clarify the role expectations for members, especially regarding local authorities. Structured communication and regular updates can improve engagement and alignment.
5. Strengthen strategic partnerships: leverage partnerships with institutions in countries historically associated with the legend of Aeneas. Prioritize expansion in regions such as Lebanon and Spain, where relevant organizations have expressed interest, and consolidate ties in Greece and Tunisia.
6. Develop a clear expansion strategy: Formulate a multi-year plan that strategically includes historical sites and regions connected to Enea, promoting the involvement of both traditional and new members.

Communication

To boost communication and content reach for the Aeneas Route, a cohesive, shareable communication plan across the partnership is essential. Establishing profiles on popular channels like Facebook, X (Twitter), and TikTok could improve engagement. For existing YouTube and Instagram accounts, strategies such as regular posting schedules, using short-form videos, and creating visually appealing content tailored to broader audiences are recommended. Cross-promotion with other cultural itineraries or travel influencers would further connect with cultural and mythological tourism enthusiasts, maximizing the Route's visibility and outreach.

POLICY	Previous evaluation recommendations 2020-2021	Has the route complied with the recommendations since the last evaluation?		Current Evaluation Recommendations 2024-2025
		YES	NO	
I. Theme of the cultural itinerary	No recommendations.	☒	☐	To meet the eligibility criteria, the Route should form a multidisciplinary group of experts from partner countries to boost research, credibility and collaboration, producing outputs that drive cultural tourism and sustainable development.

POLICY		Previous evaluation recommendations 2020-2021	Has the route complied with the recommendations since the last evaluation?		Current Evaluation Recommendations 2024-2025
			YES	NO	
II. Priority areas for action	Cooperation in research and development	Recommendations to expand research in areas like conservation, heritage interpretation and environmental projects.	☒		The Route should strengthen university partnerships, update its website with recent research, align studies with strategic objectives, and promote research events to enhance international visibility and engagement.
	Enhancement of European memory, history and heritage	Further improvement could focus on under-recognised sites on Edremit and rural landscapes.		☒	To strengthen the Aeneas Route's cultural heritage focus, prioritize smaller sites, include diverse intangible heritages and align with UNESCO and ICOMOS standards through collaboration with the Scientific Committee.
	Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans	More partnerships with schools and universities, along with heritage organizations, are encouraged.	☒		Partnering with educational institutions for exchanges, site visits and projects would enhance youth engagement with the Aeneas Route and the Mediterranean heritage.
	Contemporary cultural and artistic practice	Further promotion through festivals and cultural events is recommended to increase visibility.	☒		The "Festival Internazionale Rotta di Enea (FIRE)" could be transformed into a traveling event, held annually in different countries along the Aeneas Route, to deepen cultural engagement, highlight the shared Mediterranean heritage and attract an international audience.

POLICY	Previous evaluation recommendations 2020-2021	Has the route complied with the recommendations since the last evaluation?		Current Evaluation Recommendations 2024-2025
		YES	NO	
<i>Cultural Tourism and Sustainable Cultural Development</i>	Recommendations include the revitalization of archaeological sites, the encouragement of affordable nautical routes, and the involvement of local communities in heritage and product initiatives, which would support slow and sustainable tourism and local economic growth.		☒	To improve the accessibility of the Aeneas Route, it is crucial to address logistical issues, improve infrastructure with local authorities, and develop tourism clusters at key sites. Expanding maritime access points and creating combined land and sea itineraries would provide travellers with a more immersive experience.
<i>III. Cultural Route Network</i>	Recommendations include inviting organisations from the heritage, tourism and gastronomy sectors and fostering cross-member communication, such as town twinning for cultural exchange. Specific outreach is suggested for new members in Turkey and Tunisia to strengthen local participation and expertise.	☒		The Aeneas Route network should focus on expanding geographical and sectoral diversity, balancing international representation, improving communication between members, and forming a clear multi-year strategy for sustainable growth and inclusivity.
<i>Communication tools</i>	Recommendation to expand with Facebook and Twitter accounts to reach diverse audiences. All posted information should be carefully verified to prevent scientific inaccuracies		☒	To enhance the Aeneas Route's visibility, a unified communication strategy should be adopted, including accounts on Facebook, X, and TikTok, along with regular, engaging content on existing YouTube and Instagram profiles; partnerships with

POLICY	Previous evaluation recommendations 2020-2021	Has the route complied with the recommendations since the last evaluation?		Current Evaluation Recommendations 2024-2025
		YES	NO	
				other cultural routes or travel influencers could also increase reach among cultural tourism enthusiasts.

5. List of references

- General information (Annex 1 ITA)
- Responsible Network (Annex 2 ITA-ENG)
- Compliance with eligibility criteria by theme (Annex 3 ITA)
- Activities implemented by the Network in the last three years (Annex 4 ENG)
- Visibility (Annex 5 ITA-ENG)
- Certification Form 2024-2025 (ENG)
- Repertoire of Acts of Constitution; Statute 2022 (ITA); Statute 2024
- List of shareholders as of October 15, 2024
- Members of the Aeneas Route 2024 network
- Minutes of General Assembly (ITA-ENG)
- Aeneas Route Report 2021, 2022 and 2023. (ITA-ENG)
- Budgets for the next three years 2025, 2026, 2027
- 3-year forecast activity programme 2025, 2026, 2027
- Publication by Sandra Gatti "Aeneas in the Troad and Lazio Regions" (ENG)
- BIG SEE Tourism Design Award 2022: Winner, Creative History and Identity as Experience _ Cultural Route of Aeneas' Route (ENG)
- Brochure Festival "FIRE" 2021, 2022, 2023 (ITA)
- Flyer exhibition "Aeneas' journey from to Rome" (ITA-ENG)
- Minutes of the Board of Directors 2019, 2020, 2021, 2023
- Entries for the Enea Path 2021, 2022, 2023
- Miscellaneous funds income Aeneas' Route 2021, 2022, 2023 (ITA)
- Previous evaluation report of Ph.D. Ayşegül Yilmaz (ENG)
- Website of the Association Vie di Enea (<https://www.aeneasroute.org/>) (ITA-ENG)
- Instagram account of the Way of Aeneas (ITA-ENG)

All the documents necessary for the evaluation have been duly submitted by the Route's Association.

6. Annex 1: Field visit by experts and interviews with the Network Management and Members

During the evaluation process, a first meeting was held in person with the Route's president, Mr Giovanni Cafiero at the headquarter of the Route's Association in Rome (Italy) on October 14th, 2024. This first meeting allowed the evaluator to have a brief introduction about the Route's operational activity during the last three-year period and to know also Ms Elisa Falcini (via remote connection) as Turkish correspondent of the Route in Edremit (Turkey).

During the visit, it was possible to positively check the presence of a plate titled the Route, along with the availability of information materials for potential visitors.

After this meeting, the evaluator organized, with the support of the Route's Association, the field visit foreseen in the CoE's resolution. To this end, it was first assessed the possibility of visiting a site of the Route different from the Edremit municipality which was visited during the certification process. Considering the above, it was identified the site of Butrint in Albania and the sites of Area Flegrea (Italy) as potential destinations for the field visit.

The option of Butrint was excluded by considering that, since the end of the summer period, connections between Italy and Corfu (the nearest airport) are not available by causing significant difficulties in reaching the site of Butrint from Italy.

That said, the field visit was planned in the sites Area Flegrea (in the nearby of Naples – Italy) on November 22-23, 2024.

Here below the program for the field visit:

November 22nd, 2024:

- Visit of Lyceum "Virgilio" and meeting with the school manager Manuela Putzu (Pozzuoli);
- Visit of Archaeological Park of «Cuma Acropoli» and meeting with the staff of the park (Cuma);
- Visit of artistic murals « Enea- Anchise » dedicated to the Aeneas's mythological figure and meeting with the Municipality Councillor of Bacoli, Mr Cucco.

November 23rd, 2024

- Visit of Lega Navale Italiana (Marina of Pozzuoli) and meeting with Ms Iria De Marco (Attaché for cultural affairs);
- Visit of Archaeologic Museum of Campi Flegrei (Baia)
- Meeting with Municipality Councillor of Quarto, Ms Raffaella De Vivo;
- Visit of the Rione Terra (ancient sea fortress part of the municipal territory of Pozzuoli) and meeting of the Director of great public works of the Region of Campania, Mr Fabrizio Manduca.

All the visit was made with the support of Ms Maria Teresa Di Fraia (Route's representative) who kindly helped the evaluator to reach all the sites and meet all the representatives involved.

The visit to the Lyceum "Virgilio" of Pozzuoli allowed the evaluator to look at the cultural activities carried out by this school in cooperation with students to discover the Virgilian memory of Aeneas and its significant sites and mythological scenes through the organization of theatrical initiatives and the realization of short videos recorded in most significant sites of the Aeneas tradition in the Area of Campi Flegrei. These cultural products are very interesting and effective in promoting the knowledge of Aeneas towards youths and attracting visitors to the sites of the Route. Currently, these products are still not available for consultation on the Route's official website nor on the social media channels of the Route because the school Manager must require and obtain permission from students (now adults) to use them.

This kind of cultural formats, if available also in English, French or other foreign languages, can be replicated amongst other schools located in the sites of the Route by fostering the promotional activity of the Route Association towards curious and potential visitors. The same format could give the floor for the organization of future international cultural exchanges or challenges amongst students coming from different countries.

As for the visit to the Marina of Pozzuoli, this allowed the evaluator to check the initiatives carried out by the local Lega Navale Italiana supporting the achievement of the Route's purposes. In this respect, the latter is regularly involved in local initiatives (i.e. FIRE) promoted by the Route Association, but also it implements by itself further initiatives concerning the promotion of nautical paths at the discovery of the Aeneas' sites.

Currently, the harbour of Pozzuoli and its marinas are subject to an important infrastructure refurbishment that will allow in future to improve the offer for nautical charters and yachtsmen, with the aim of strengthening the attractiveness of local marinas for boat owners interested in visiting the cultural sites of the Area Flegrea along with its nearby.

In this respect, the evaluation suggests the Route to implement information materials aimed at allowing nautical visitors to discover the nautical services and cultural attractions (things to see/visit) in the nearby of marinas located at the Route's sites.

The visit to these sites also showed significant issues in terms of accessibility and mobility within the area. It must be noted that without a private car, it is very difficult to reach these sites because local public transport infrastructures are not fully effective.

The visit to Pozzuoli included also a visit to the famous and amazing "Rione Terra"; the latter is still under works but will be ready for visitors and tourist soon. This amazing cultural site could be a gateway for tourists interested in visiting the Area Flegrea.

The field visit puts to light how several cultural sites located in the Area Flegrea are currently not available for visits because they are under maintenance and/or affected by organizational issues. This is a crucial issue that should be urgently overcome by local administrations. To this end they should cooperate by sharing a common strategy for enhancing the cultural and touristic offer of this area under a sustainable perspective and according to a "Destination Management Organization – DMO" approach. A similar approach should be implemented in each of the cultural sites of the Route; the Route Association should work to foster this goal in the future, with the aim of supporting the economic and sustainable development of the local communities.

As for the visual identity of the Route in the different cultural sites visited, it must be outlined that the official signs of the Route were available not in all of them. The Route Association should work toward the implementation of information panels/totems to be placed into each of the cultural sites of the Route, to promote the cultural offer of the destinations, by supplying the visitors with information about what to see and how to reach the different available cultural attractions. The use of the official Route's and CoE's logos will testify of the cultural relevance of the sites and the quality of tourist services promoted. The same promotional materials should be also available on the official website of the Route Association.

7. Annex 2: Checklist for expert evaluation

EXPERT ASSESSMENT CHECK-LIST					
QUESTIONS			Yes	No	Comments (if any)
3.1 THEME	1	Does the theme of the Route represent a common value (historical, cultural, or heritage) to several European countries?	1		
	2	Does the theme of the route offer a solid basis for youth cultural and educational exchanges?	1		

EXPERT ASSESSMENT CHECK-LIST					
QUESTIONS			Yes	No	Comments (if any)
3.2 FIELDS OF ACTION		3	Does the theme of the route offer a solid basis for innovative activities?	1	
		4	Does the theme of the route offer a solid basis for cultural tourism products development?	1	
		5	Has the theme been researched/developed by academics/experts from different regions of Europe?	1	
	3.2.1 Co-operation in research and development	6	Does the Route offer a platform for co-operation in research and development of European cultural themes/values?	1	
		7	Does the Route play a unifying role around major European themes, enabling dispersed knowledge to be brought together?	1	
		8	Does the Route show how these themes are representative of European values shared by several European countries?	1	
		9	Does the Route illustrate the development of these values and the variety of forms they may take in Europe?	1	
		10	Does the Route have a network of universities and research center working on its theme at the European level?	1	The Route should collect and archive copies of minutes of the Scientific Committee works/meetings
		11	Does the Route have a multidisciplinary Scientific Committee?	1	Partially! The Scientific Committee composition is more focused on historical and archaeological skills
		12	Does the Scientific Committee work on its theme at the European level?	1	Despite a nominal involvement of members coming from different countries, most part of the SC works are carried out by Italian and Turkish members
		13	Does the Scientific Committee carry out research and analysis of the issues relevant to its theme and/or activities on the theoretical level?	1	The SC should reserve wider attention towards themes different than the historical and archaeological ones (i.e. sustainable tourism, cultural innovation, similar)
		14	Does the Scientific Committee carry out research and analysis of the issues relevant to its theme and/or activities on the practical level?	1	See comment above
	3.2.2 Enhancement of the memory, history and European heritage	15	Do the Route activities take into account and explain the historical significance of tangible and intangible European heritage?	1	
		16	Do the Route activities promote the values of the Council of Europe?	1	
		17	Do the Route activities promote the brand of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe?	1	
		18	Does the route work in conformity with international charters and conventions on cultural heritage preservation?	1	There isn't clear evidence of the work done towards the adherence to international charters (i.e. ICOMOS, UNESCO)
		19	Do the Route activities identify, preserve and develop European heritage sites in rural destinations?	1	There isn't any evidence of the work done by the Route in this domain

EXPERT ASSESSMENT CHECK-LIST						
QUESTIONS				Yes	No	Comments (if any)
		20	Do the Route activities identify, preserve and develop European heritage sites in industrial areas in the process of economic restructuring?		1	There isn't any evidence of the Route's work in this domain. During the field visit, it was possible to take note of possible initiatives to be implemented in the restructuring of the industrial area of Pozzuoli (Italy) aimed at allowing citizens to pass through the industrial area positioned along the seashore
		21	Do the Route activities valorize the heritage of ethnic or social minorities in Europe?		1	
		22	Do the Route activities contribute to a better understanding of the concept of cultural heritage, the importance of its preservation and sustainable development?	1		
		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		
		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	See comment at point 14
	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	The route has not carried out any specific initiative in this domain so far. The evaluation put a specific recommendation to implement similar initiatives in the future
		26	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to emphasize the value of new personal experience through visiting diverse places?		1	See comment above
		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	See comment above
		28	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to offer collaborative opportunities for educational institutions at various levels?		1	See comment above
		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	See comment above
		30	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to set up pilot schemes with several participating countries?		1	See comment above
		31	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to give rise to co-operation activities which involve educational institutions at various levels?		1	See comment above
	3.2.4 Contemporary cultural and	32	Do the Route's cultural activities promote intercultural dialogue and multidisciplinary exchange between various artistic expressions in European countries?	1		
		33	Do the Route's cultural activities encourage artistic projects that establish links between cultural heritage and contemporary culture?	1		

EXPERT ASSESSMENT CHECK-LIST						
QUESTIONS				Yes	No	Comments (if any)
3.2.5 Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development		34	Do the Route's cultural activities encourage innovative cultural and contemporary art practices* connecting them with the history of skills development?	1		
		35	Do the Route's cultural activities encourage collaboration between culture amateurs and professionals via relevant activities and networks creation?*	1		
		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		
		37	Do the Route's cultural activities encourage activities and artistic projects which explore the links between heritage and contemporary culture?	1		
		38	Do the Route's cultural activities highlight the most innovative and creative practices?	1		
		39	Do the Route's cultural activities link these innovative and creative practices with the history of skills development?***	1		The Route was able to carry out innovative initiatives in the domain of cultural and creative practices by involving local schools in Pozzuoli municipality (i.e. short videos involving students)
		40	Do the Route's activities (relevant to sustainable cultural tourism development) assist in local, regional, national and/ or European identity formation?	1		Some initiatives were carried out in Turkey by involving local schools in the discovery of the Aenean's mythologic figure by supporting the strengthening of their historical roots and the awareness of being part of European history/foundation
		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	
		42	Do the Route's activities promote dialogue between urban and rural communities and cultures?		1	
		43	Do the Route's activities promote dialogue between developed and disadvantaged regions?		1	
		44	Do the Route's activities promote dialogue between different regions (south, north, east, west) of Europe?	1		
		45	Do the Route's activities promote dialogue between majority and minority (or native and immigrant) cultures?		1	
		46	Do the Route's activities open possibilities for co-operation between Europe and other continents?	1		The Route represents an important axis for strengthening institutional and cultural relation with Turkey, Lebanon (Country not included in the members of the Council of Europe) and Albania in respect to the future adhesion of these counties to the European Union
		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		

EXPERT ASSESSMENT CHECK-LIST					
QUESTIONS			Yes	No	Comments (if any)
		48	Do the Route's activities aim to diversify cultural product, service and activities offers?		1 The Route's work has been, so far, focused on the historical rediscovery of the Aenean's cultural theme and its related sites. A stronger effort should be dedicated in future towards the diversification of cultural products, services and activities, particularly in the domain of cross-border cooperation among the adhering countries
		49	Do the Route's activities develop and offer quality cultural tourism products, services or activities transnationally?		1 The evaluation puts specific recommendations towards strengthening the Route's work towards the development of sustainable and cultural tourism in the involved sites, by putting in light the local tourist offer and the way it can be visited/discovered by tourists. Stronger attention should be addressed toward nautical tourism as an effective way to allow the rediscovering of remote destinations and/or the visit of sites with limited land accessibility
		50	Do the Route's activities develop partnerships with public and private organisations active in the field of tourism?	1	The Route's network includes the nominal involvement of different tourist operators, but the survey carried out during the evaluation showed that some of them were not adequately informed and/or involved by the Route by allowing them to contribute in the implementation of initiatives
		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 This is probably the most important shortcoming of the Route that must be addressed in future
		52	Does the Route represent a network involving at least three Council of Europe's member states?	1	Despite a nominal involvement of members coming from different countries, only a very limited part of them (Italy and Turkey) played an active role in the Route's operational activity
3.3 NETWORK		53	Was the theme of the route chosen and accepted by the network members?	1	
		54	Was the conceptual framework of the route founded on a scientific basis?	1	
		55	Does the network involve several Council of Europe member states in all or part of its projects?		1 Despite a nominal involvement of members coming from different countries, only a very limited part of them (Italy and Turkey) played an active role in the Route's operational activity

EXPERT ASSESSMENT CHECK-LIST							
QUESTIONS			Yes	No	Comments (if any)		
	56	Is the network financially sustainable?	1		Partially! The Route budget shows limited financial contribution by its adhering members. Most of its entrances are related to grants achieved by the EC for the implementation of cultural projects and sponsorships related to the organization of specific initiatives. This does not allow the Route to rely on a stable financial contribution to engage dedicated staff for its operational activities		
	57	Does the network have a legal status (association, federation of associations, EEIG,...)?	1				
	58	Does the network operate democratically?	1		The involvement of members different than Italian and Turkish ones is still limited		
	59	Does the network specify its objectives and working methods?		1	There is not clear evidence of the operational programme for the forthcoming years		
	60	Does the network specify the regions concerned by the project?	1				
	61	Does the network specify its partners and participating countries?	1				
	62	Does the network specify the fields of action involved?	1				
	63	Does the network specify its overall strategy in the short and long term?		1	See comment above		
	64	Does the network identify potential participants and partners in Council of Europe member states and/or other world countries?	1				
	65	Does the network provide details of its financing (financial reports and/or activity budgets)?	1				
	66	Does the network provide details of its operational plan?		1			
	67	Does the network append the basic text(s) confirming its legal status?	1				
	3.4 COMMUNICATION TOOLS		68	Does the Route have its own logo?	1		
			69	Do all partners of the network use the logo on their communication tools?	1		
			70	Does the Route have its own dedicated website?	1		
71			Is it the website available in English and French?		1	Only Italian and English version are currently available	
72			Is it the website available in other languages?	1		Italian	
73			Does the network use effectively social networks and web 2.0?		1	The use of social media is very limited (Instagram and YouTube) with a few followers and a very limited number of posts/news	
74			Does the network publish brochures on the Route?	1			
75			If yes, are the brochures available in English?	1			
76			If yes, are the brochures available in French?		1		
		For certified Cultural	77	Is the title of “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” present on all communication materials (including press releases, webpages, publications, etc.)?	1		

EXPERT ASSESSMENT CHECK-LIST					
QUESTIONS			Yes	No	Comments (if any)
	78	Is the certification logo present on all communication materials?	1		
	79	Is the certification logo used in accordance to the guidelines for its use (size and position, ...)?	1		
	80	Are the logos (Cultural Route + certification logo) provided to all the members of the Route?	1		It was possible to check the presence of logos only on a limited number of materials
	81	Does the Council of Europe certification logo appear on road signs/ boards indicating the cultural route?	1		
SCORE			53	28	
Please insert 1 for every positive answer and 0 for a negative one. Note: 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					

8. Annex 3: List of figures

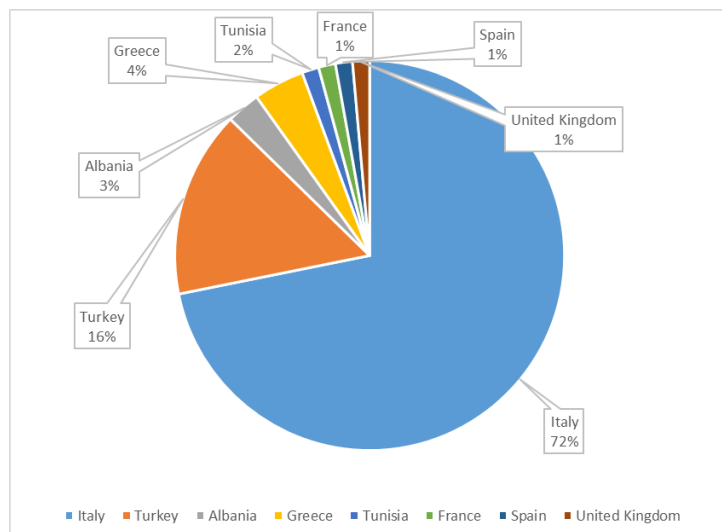
Figure 1 – Distribution of Route’s network	12
Figure 2 – Distribution of financial resources of the Route per kind of contribution and period	13
Figure 3 – Distribution of Route’s members per country of origin.....	13
Figure 4 - Distribution of Route’s member per kind of subject/institution.....	14
Figure 5 – Distribution of Route’s members per year of adhesion to the Route Association..	15
Figure 6 - Distribution of Route’s members per year of adhesion and country of origin	15

9. Annex 4: Findings of the Survey carried out by the evaluator

As part of this report, network members of the Aeneas Route were invited to participate in an online survey created with Google Forms. The survey was sent to the email addresses provided by the Route. It's important to note that not all partners had a designated email address, and some inboxes were not configured to receive messages.

Ultimately, the survey received 12 responses (13% of the overall adhering Route members).

The e-mails received showed the following geographic distribution:



Below are the survey responses:



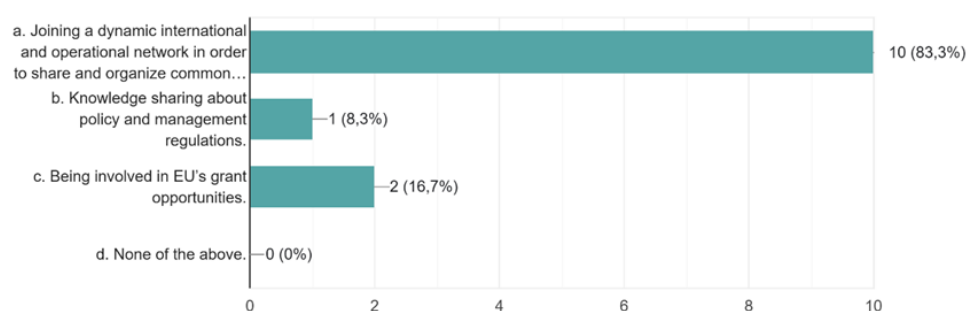
1. Which was the main reason that brought your Institution to join the Route? (tick only your main reply)

12 risposte



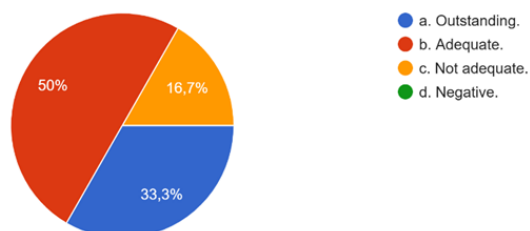
2. Which were your expectations on the Route? (tick only your main reply)

12 risposte



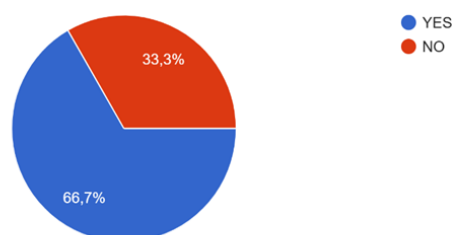
3. Considering your answers to the previous questions, how do you evaluate your experience as an active member of the Route?

12 risposte



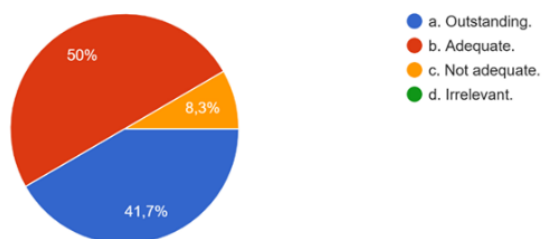
4. Have you ever been directly involved by the Route Association into the organization of promotional and/or cultural activities during the last three year period?

12 risposte



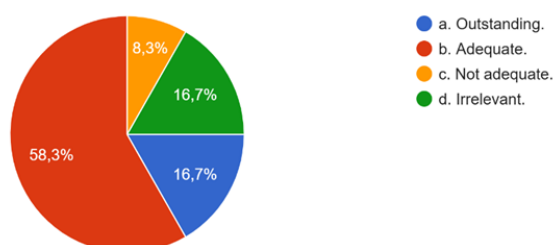
6. How do you assess the Route operational contribution towards the protection, promotion and the dissemination of its cultural heritage?

12 risposte



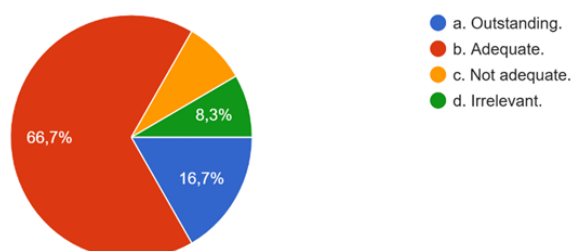
7. How do you assess the Route operational contribution towards the enhancement of business development into the Tourism sector in yours territories?

12 risposte



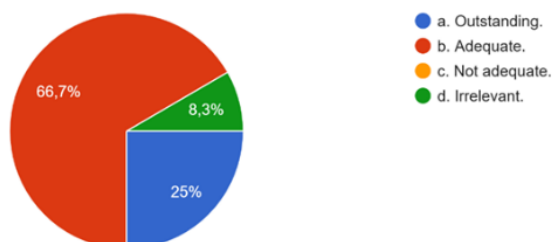
8. How do you assess the Route operational contribution towards the promotion of relevant cultural exchanges among citizen living in different EU/extra-UE countries?

12 risposte



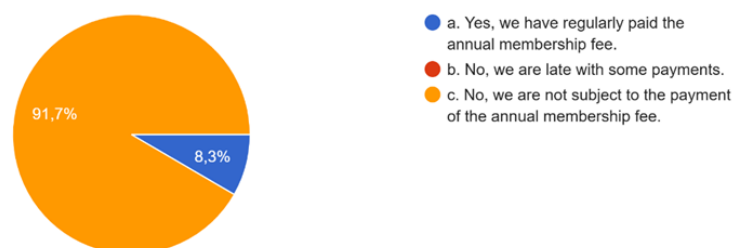
9. How do you assess the Route operational contribution towards the promotion of tourism development of your territorial destination into a cultural and sustainable perspective?

12 risposte



10. Do you financially contribute to the functioning of the Association?

12 risposte



11. How do you assess the Route overall contribution compared to its institutional purposes?

12 risposte

