

2024/25 ENG

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

Regular Evaluation: **EUROPEAN ROUTE D'ARTAGNAN** 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

European Route d'Artagnan

Author's information:

Roberto Reis

University of Maia

CEGOT | Centre of Studies in Geography and Spatial Planning



The European Route
d'Artagnan
La Route Européenne
d'Artagnan

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



**The opinions expressed in this independent expert report are those of the author, and do not engage the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary	5
2. Introduction	7
3. Main Body Evaluation	10
3.1 Cultural Route Theme	10
3.2 Fields of Action	14
3.3 Cultural Route Network	24
3.4 Communication tools	32
4. Conclusions and Recommendations	33
5. List of references	46
6. Annex 1: Expert field visit and interviews with the network management and members	48
7. Annex 2: Expert assessment checklist	52
8. Annex 3: List of acronyms, figures and tables	57

1. Executive Summary

Patrimonialisation (also known as heritage recovery, heritage valorisation, or patrimonialisation) is the process of attributing value to certain manifestations of nature or culture, which results in their institutional recognition as heritage. This process is social in nature, operating primarily at the collective level. This process entails a selection, whereby a series of manifestations with diverse values are identified. These values may be historical, aesthetic, identity-related, environmental, scientific, and so forth. The objective of the attribution is variable, although it typically involves the consideration of a specific set of references, namely the heritage of a community. This is a valuable legacy that must be safeguarded for future generations.

As a social process, it involves the participation of numerous groups, although their respective roles and capacities for action vary considerably. In many cases, the impetus for such initiatives originates from intellectual elites, frequently affiliated with academic institutions, who discern these values in diverse manifestations of culture or nature, including edifices, paintings, trees, and landscapes. The heritage discourse subsequently permeates the different levels of government from these spheres. The deployment of public action, which involves the sanctioning of heritage as a common good, may be observed to occur in a variety of ways. This entails the creation of an inventory of relevant items, which are then selected for inclusion in the local, regional, national and global heritage corpus. Specific protection regimes are then put in place to guarantee the conservation of these selected items. If feasible, maintenance, recovery, enhancement and public access are undertaken. By means of formal education and institutional propaganda, the official discourse on heritage becomes embedded in society at large, whereby these references are internalised and become a set of elements and manifestations that help to shape identity at different levels. While heritage is typically a process initiated by intellectual elites and endorsed by government action, there are instances where local communities themselves play a pivotal role in defining and assigning value to heritage. Furthermore, the process may have an internal or external origin, which lends itself to the phenomenon of travel.

The process of patrimonialisation has its origins in the dawn of the Contemporary Age, when our society first came into being. There are precedents, but it was at this time that the intellectuals of the Romantic movement became aware of the rapid transformation of the planet's surface. This transformation, which entailed the eradication of all preceding elements, was sustained by the discourse of modernity. In response, the conservation of buildings, landscapes and other manifestations of culture and nature was promoted on the grounds that certain values, which transcended immediate utility, should be attributed to them. This process commenced in locations where the most significant transformation was evident. Travellers from these societies undertook extensive journeys, seeking out picturesque scenery that they perceived to be at risk of disappearing. The Romantic traveller can be considered the inaugural cultural and natural tourist, acting as a conduit for the process of heritage commodification. From the local perspective, these manifestations become tourist resources, which, in turn, facilitates the assumption of the values associated with heritage by the community. In consequence of this, churches, castles and palaces are designated as monuments; ruins are treated as archaeological remains; old urban centres are transformed into historic centres; and the wildest mountain areas are declared national parks.

This process has deepened over time. Concurrently, the range of attributes that permit the incorporation of an element of nature or culture into the heritage ensemble has expanded. Conversely, expressions of interest have been identified across the entire surface of the planet. To a significant extent, the process of heritage conservation remains an elitist, institutionally sanctioned and externally driven one. In addition to governmental bodies operating at different levels, entities such as UNESCO, IUCN and ICOMOS have been instrumental in driving heritage processes at the international level. Indeed, the designation of World Heritage and

Biosphere Reserve status serves to distinguish territories with implications extending beyond the purely patrimonial.

As was the case in the past, tourism is associated with this process. The arrival of visitors has a favourable impact on heritage conservation, and in many instances, institutional action in favour of it is driven by the objective of tourism growth. Nevertheless, the selectivity of the tourist gaze implies that tourist use is confined to a limited portion of the cultural and natural manifestations that are the subject of heritage conservation, particularly at the local level.

In this case The European Route D'Artagnan is dedicated to the culture of the Musketeers. It is a physical and linear itinerary, created thanks to the contribution of a scientific committee, based on historical and literary documents retracing the saga of Charles de Batz de Castelmor, Count D'Artagnan, completed by a network of high points where D'Artagnan passed. The musketeers who accompanied d'Artagnan or who have a link with this route have enriched this theme.

The route is based on the story of Charles de Batz de Castelmor, who was born in Lupiac in Gascony (FR) around 1611-1615 and died during the siege of Maastricht (NL) on 25 June 1673. He was a Gascon cadet who became a Musketeer under King Louis XIV and, thanks to his courage and loyalty, was made Captain-Lieutenant of the Company of Musketeers. It follows the Musketeer's journeys, accompanying King Louis XIV on all his journeys in the 17th century, as well as the routes he took on special missions entrusted to him by the King or Cardinal Mazarin, his Prime Minister, during the Fronde. Attached is the presentation sheet for the Musketeers' Route. For each of the 6 routes, a fact sheet will be prepared.

The route is also based on the literary heroes of the novels written in the 19th century by Alexandre Dumas (1802-1870) and his collaborator Auguste Maquet: *Les Trois Mousquetaires* (1844), *Vingt ans après* (1845) and *Le vicomte de Bragelonne* (1847), inspired by a work published in 1700 by Gatien Courtilz de Sandras, *Les Mémoires de Monsieur d'Artagnan - Apocryphes*. This trilogy established the Musketeer as a hero of French literature whose immediate success spread throughout the world, and his character became part of popular culture through numerous adaptations throughout the world (films, cartoons, novels, plays, musicals, comics, manga, etc.). Finally, the European Route D'Artagnan is based on the horsemanship of the Musketeers, 17th century soldiers who travelled and escorted the King on horseback, with two companies distinguished by the colour of their horses, the grey Musketeers (Grand Musketeers) and the black Musketeers (Petit Musketeers).

The aim of this gentle itinerary is to become Europe's leading equestrian route, with 10,000 kilometres marked or in the process of being marked in 6 countries and 17 regions, promoting the heritage, tradition and culture of the horse.

The d'Artagnan European Route: REA involve 6 countries: France, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Italy; 17 regions; 60 departments and provinces and 50 Pays and Pôles d'Équilibre Territoriaux et Ruraux (PETR) in France; 400 communities of communes (EPCI) 172 historical, literary and equestrian landmarks; Zones: metropolises, conurbations, rural town centres.

The Musketeer theme highlights the inspiring and positive values that are universally shared and embodied by these eternal heroes: courage, merit, friendship and courage, illustrated by their motto "All for one, one for all". In Europe, it complements the European Union's motto 'United in diversity', which will be promoted through various tools to anchor this theme in Europe's heritage.

En conclusion, la Route européenne d'Artagnan paraît apte à recevoir la certification Itinéraire Culturel du Conseil de l'Europe

Criteria	Excellent	Very good	Satisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Assessment
Compliance with the eligibility criteria for	X					Excellent

themes listed in Resolution CM/Res(2023)2, I. List of eligibility criteria for themes.						
Compliance with the eligibility criteria for actions listed in Resolution CM/Res(2023)2, II. List of priority fields of action.	X					Excellent
Compliance with the eligibility criteria for networks listed in Resolution CM/Res(2023)2, III. List of criteria for networks.	X					Excellent
The Cultural Route implements the Guidelines for the Use of the Logo “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe”	X					Excellent

2. Introduction

Heritage route with its own meaning, the result of exchanges between people throughout history. It crosses a specific territory rich in heritage and cultural resources. Normally, it has a linear route and involves various tangible and intangible elements related to an ancient communication route, a pilgrimage route, the memory of a culture or language, the memory of an emblematic character or the existence of a product of historical and present importance, among other possibilities.

The transnational character of many of these historically rooted routes makes cultural routes potential motors for cooperation, collaboration and the construction of a common identity. With this inspiration, the Council of Europe recognises them as a heritage category to refer to routes and itineraries that offer a heritage content on mobility and human exchanges, developed through communication routes that facilitated their flow and that were used or deliberately placed at the service of a purpose. For ICOMOS (2008), a cultural route can be based on a path that was laid out expressly to serve such a purpose or on a route that made use, in whole or in part, of pre-existing paths used for various purposes. But what really differentiates these routes is their historical use for a specific purpose and the fact that they have generated associated heritage elements that unequivocally reflect the existence of reciprocal influences between different cultural groups over a long period of the past.

The creation of this category represented a qualitative change in the principles of heritage conservation, by broadening the concept of monument from its consideration as an isolated work to introduce ensembles, centres, neighbourhoods and interrelated cultural landscapes as new heritage categories. Cultural routes do not conflict with other categories already existing in that territory, but include them in their layout, thereby recognising and extending their significance in an integrating framework.

The declaration of cultural routes was promoted by the Council of Europe with the recognition in 1987 of the Way of St. James as the First European Cultural Route. According to the Council of Europe, the elements that make up the cultural routes and differentiate them from other routes are:

1. the existence of a road network structure and a pre-existing material substrate;
- 2) the historical factual evidence of its use in the service of a purpose;
3. the communication elements along its route;
- 4) constructions associated with their functionality to serve their specific purpose;
5. the existence of cultural manifestations of shared origin along the route or at specific points along the route;
6. the presence of common religious, ritual, linguistic, linguistic, festive, culinary, etc. practices, traditions, customs and usages, and
- 7) the reciprocal influence on various cultural manifestations such as music, literature, architecture, plastic arts, crafts, science, technology, as well as on other tangible and intangible cultural assets, the full understanding of which is related to the historical functionality of the itinerary.

In this concept, the primary function is not only the creation of tourist or cultural products, despite their importance, but also the protection of cultural values, the promotion of exchanges between people and the enhancement of dispersed heritage or the establishment of international cooperation programmes. Nevertheless, these interregional or transnational itineraries serve as an argument for the development of new thematic tourist circuits, which respond to the needs of the diversity of the demand for cultural tourism.

The historical and Europeanist cross-cutting essence of the concept is reflected in the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes certification guidelines, according to which new projects can be proposed if the proposed theme fulfils the following requirements:

1. be representative of European values and common to at least three European countries;
- 2) be a theme researched and developed by multidisciplinary groups of experts from different regions of Europe;
- 3) be illustrative of European memory, history and heritage and contribute to an interpretation of the diversity of today's Europe;
- 4) lend itself to cultural and educational exchanges for young people;
- 5) enable the development of exemplary and innovative initiatives and projects in the field of cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development;
- 6) encourage the development of tourism products in partnership with agencies and tour operators targeting different audiences, including school groups.

As a result, the Council of Europe has numerous certified cultural routes that evoke different themes related to European memory, history and heritage. Some of these itineraries that demonstrate the diversity of approaches are:

- 1) historical itineraries such as the Way of St. James, Hansa, Route of the Vikings, Route of the Phoenicians, Jewish Heritage Route, Charles V;
- 2) manifestations of art, with the routes of prehistoric cave art or the Andalusian legacy;
- 3) linked to historical figures, such as the routes of Mozart, Charles V or Le Corbusier;
- 4) linked to the world of agriculture and industry, such as the Olive Tree Route, the Ceramics Route or the Industrial Heritage Route;
- 5) other thematic groupings such as the Cemeteries Route or the Historic Thermal Cities Route, for example.

But the first European equestrian route certified by the Council of Europe, the European Route D'Artagnan is a physical and linear walking route, based on historical and literary D'Artagnan, the epic of Charles de Batz de Castelmor, born in Lupiac in Gascony around who was born in Lupiac in Gascony (FR) around 1615 and died during the siege of Maastricht (NL) on 25th June 1673. The lives of the Musketeers who accompanied D'Artagnan or who have a connection with this who accompanied D'Artagnan or who had some connection with this route. Historically, the route follows the journeys of the captain and lieutenant of the First Company of Musketeers who accompanied King Louis XIV on all his journeys in the 17th century.

17th century, as well as the routes taken on "special missions" entrusted by the King or by Cardinal Mazarin, his Prime Minister. in 6 countries and 15 regions.

On a literary level, D'Artagnan became famous thanks to the three novels by Alexandre Dumas, published in the 19th century: *Les Trois Mousquetaires* (1844), *Vingt ans après* (1845) and *Le vicomte de Bragelonne* (1847). The novels of Alexandre Dumas have been translated into many languages and have been the subject of numerous adaptations (films, animated films, cartoons, novels, plays, musicals, comics, manga, etc.), which have popularised the character and made him a "swashbuckling hero" known all over the world.

D'Artagnan is a distinctive historical figure, an instantly recognisable musketeer silhouette, with a finely trimmed moustache and beard, indicative of an era that has withstood the test of time without losing its strength or modernity. It evokes a particular state of mind and an image of the 17th century that continues to inspire dreams.

In accordance with the theme and objectives, the European Route D'Artagnan was certified in May 2021 as a "cultural itinerary of the Council of Europe." This certification can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.coe.int/fr/web/cultural-Routes>.

The D'Artagnan European Route Association (AERA) was established in November 2014 by Alain Libérons with the support of 20 funding members across the six countries traversed by the route. The AERA headquarters are located in Auch (Gers), where the organisation's primary objective is to "create, manage, develop and promote the Route". In 2015, European funding (COSME programme) enabled the project to be established through the implementation of activities conducted over 18 months by a consortium of 12 partners, led by the French Equestrian Federation. In accordance with the specified requirements, AERA assumed responsibility for the project's governance at the conclusion of 2017. The objective is to facilitate a transnational equestrian.

The European Route D'Artagnan, the inaugural European equestrian route, connects Lupiac in Gascony (France) via Wallonia in Belgium with extensions in Germany, Italy, and Spain for historical or literary reasons to Maastricht in the Netherlands. D'Artagnan is undoubtedly one of the most famous characters in the world. He is the subject of numerous literary works, including the stories written by Alexandre Dumas, as well as numerous films and comics. Through these works, he has come to embody positive qualities such as panache, bravery, and solidarity, which transcend the boundaries of time.

The European Route D'Artagnan proffers an unparalleled experience, tracing the footsteps of the renowned Musketeer as he traversed Europe on horseback in the service of King Louis XIV. The route is designed for long-distance hikers, equestrians, individual animators, and other individuals with a penchant for authentic and occasionally unconventional adventures, with the assistance of soft roaming professionals.

D'Artagnan was an experienced rider and a great traveller. This invitation is extended to all those who would care to rediscover the paths traversed throughout his life. The European Route D'Artagnan enables visitors to gain insight into the historical events of the 17th century, during the reign of Louis XIV and the formation of the Musketeers, while also exploring the diverse landscapes, local identities, heritage, gastronomy and variety of landscapes in 15 regions and 6 member countries of the European Union.

The European Route D'Artagnan comprises six itineraries, with no fixed rules other than those pertaining to the users' own discretion. It encompasses over 8,000 km, traversing a network of clearly marked and regularly maintained routes.

In France: (10 French regions and 54 départements); In Belgium: (Wallonië); In The Netherlands: (Limbourg); In Spain (Navarra and Irún); In Italy (Piedmont); In Germany (North Rhine -Westphalia).

These six routes offer an immersive experience of the history of France and Europe, allowing visitors to engage with the epic narratives of some of the world's most renowned historical figures.

3. Main Body Evaluation

3.1 Cultural Route Theme

3.1.1 Definition of the theme of the route

The European Route d'Artagnan is dedicated to the culture of the Musketeers. It is a physical and linear itinerary, created thanks to the contribution of a scientific committee, based on historical and literary documents retracing the saga of Charles de Batz de Castelmor, Count d'Artagnan, completed by a network of high points where d'Artagnan passed. The musketeers who accompanied d'Artagnan or who have a link with this route have enriched this theme.

The route is based on the story of Charles de Batz de Castelmor, who was born in Lupiac in Gascony (FR) around 1611-1615 and died during the siege of Maastricht (NL) on 25 June 1673. He was a Gascon cadet who became a Musketeer under King Louis XIV and, thanks to his courage and loyalty, was made Captain-Lieutenant of the Company of Musketeers. It follows the Musketeer's journeys, accompanying King Louis XIV on all his journeys in the 17th century, as well as the routes he took on special missions entrusted to him by the King or Cardinal Mazarin, his Prime Minister, during the Fronde. Attached is the presentation sheet for the Musketeers' Route. For each of the 6 routes, a fact sheet will be prepared.

The Musketeer theme highlights the inspiring and positive values that are universally shared and embodied by these eternal heroes: courage, merit, friendship and courage, illustrated by their motto "All for one, one for all". In Europe, it complements the European Union's motto 'United in diversity', which will be promoted through various tools to anchor this theme in Europe's heritage.

According to what we have been explaining, the Route Européenne d'Artagnan (REA), Europe's leading equestrian route, also open to pedestrians and cyclists. Has developed innovative projects in the field of cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development. EJME (Ecole des jeunes Mousquetaires Européens) : educating young people about horse riding, fencing and European citizenship, particularly the role of the Council of Europe, the European Parliament and the European Commission in relation to young people, etc... The Erasmus+ project: young people discover the culture of other countries and become aware of commonalities and similarities despite cultural differences; projection towards a shared cultural heritage while respecting differences. A shared heritage: the HLHLE (Hauts Lieux Historiques Littéraires et Equestres - High Historic, Literary and Equestrian Sites) - a distinctive feature of our itinerary, which is based on a heritage listed in 6 countries, with a unique theme: Musketeer culture, based on 3 themes: the history of the Musketeers in 17th and 18th century Europe, their worldwide fame thanks to the 3 novels by Alexandre Dumas published in the 19th century, and the equestrian dimension based on gentle roaming and Europe's tangible and intangible equestrian heritage. Proposals for quality events in the regions are of great interest to the general public : this was the case for the 'Rencontres Européennes d'Artagnan' over the period 2022- 2024, which will be continued by the 'Rencontres Mousquetaires Territoriales' launched in 2024 at the Château de Porthos. AERA will be launching a 'call for expressions of interest' from the Hauts Historiques et Littéraires for the period 2025-2027, with a view to increasing the number of such events, with the aim of mobilising territories around our theme in synergy with other interested ICCEs, in the spirit of the actions developed in the Carrefours d'Itinéraires européens programme organised in France with the support of the Ministry of Culture. Annual meetings of ICCEs: AERA is very active in these meetings to help promote cultural tourism, cooperation between ICCEs and their visibility to the general public. Example : In Visegrad (Hungary), AERA gave a detailed presentation of its educational project, which was well received because of its innovative nature and its potential to mobilise young people, families,

the educational community, sports operators (horse riding, fencing, walking, cycling), the European dimension with the support of the Maisons de l'Europe, the international potential with the Association des Ecoles Françaises à l'étranger and the French-speaking community.

3.1.2 Historical and cultural context

D'Artagnan provides a comprehensive account of the 17th century, encompassing the reign of Louis XIV. Given that d'Artagnan was born shortly before 1615 and died in 1673, this allows for a detailed exploration of the entirety of the century. The historical context is therefore particularly rich.

Consequently, the REA's Scientific Committee is made up of 4 commissions: the Historical and Cultural Commission (CHC), the Educational and Social Commission, the Infrastructure and Tourism Commission and the Economic and Heritage Commission (the latter will include the environmental dimension from 2025).

The CHC has carried out a major research project to define the Historic, Literary and Equestrian High Points in relation to the theme of the Route as defined above in relation to Musketeer Culture, in the broadest sense. These places have been used in particular to determine the points of passage for soft itineraries, proposals for events on the Route and the preparation of the Guide du Routard culturel.

The Commission is made up of historian-researchers from the 6 countries of the REA and people specialising in cultural and literary tourism, who make the links between history and literature.

In addition to soft itineraries, the CHC is developing historical and cultural itineraries in major cities. For example, the Lille itinerary has already been conceptualised and is due to be promoted by local operators. Other routes are planned in other major cities such as Paris, Toulouse, Bordeaux and Dijon

Julien WILMART is an active advisor on the REA Scientific Committee: Doctor of History (Sorbonne-UCL.) Author of an outstanding thesis and a book on the companies of the Musketeers (1622-1815). He is also a scientific adviser for documentaries, films and television programmes on the subject of the Musketeers.

Odile Bordaz is the author of several books, including a trilogy on d'Artagnan and the King's Musketeers, as well as a study of the roads and high places crossed by the road.

A very important piece of work with a highly professional approach, which is regularly supplemented according to the state of research undertaken in cooperation with the various territories concerned.

Focus on what makes La Rochelle so special

5 historical and literary sites have been identified in Charente Maritime: Brouage, Saintes, St Jean d'Angély, Jonzac and La Rochelle.

- La Rochelle : A major historical and literary centre.

During the siege of La Rochelle (Louis XIII and Richelieu), the first d'Artagnan made history (Jean de Montesquiou, d'Artagnan's maternal uncle). Despite the ban on duelling, they fought over and over again with impunity. King Louis 13, to whom d'Artagnan was a close friend, forgave him all his misdemeanours, and it was in memory of this officer killed during the siege of the city in 1628 that the king asked the young Charles de Batz de Castelmor to take the name d'Artagnan, which was that of his maternal family.

The Charente Maritime departmental archives hold the burial certificate of one of d'Artagnan's grandsons, Louis Jean Baptiste de Batz de Castelmor. An officer garrisoned at the citadel of Saint Martin en Ré, he died in 1729 at the age of 18 and was buried in the church of Saint Martin.

In Chamouillac, Château de la Hoguette was, in the 17th century, the stronghold of Philippe Fortin de la Hoguette. The author of various publications, he was almost chosen as governor of the young Louis 14.

He had three sons, one of whom, Hardouin, was archbishop of Sens, and the other two musketeers. They were among d'Artagnan's closest officers. They were part of the company of grey musketeers. The eldest, Armand, was killed in 1669 at the siege of Candia (Crete). His younger son, Charles, accompanied d'Artagnan on his most delicate missions, notably the arrest of Fouquet. He was killed in 1693 at the siege of Marsallia, near Pinerolo (Italia), and buried in a church in the town, with his heart taken to Sens Cathedral.

King Louis XIV came to Brouage in June 1660 on his way back from his wedding in St Jean de Luz to mourn his childhood sweetheart Marie Mancini, whom he had wanted to marry before marrying the Infanta of Spain.

Jarnac, in the Charente region of France, was the birthplace of Guy de Chabot, inventor of the Jarnac shot in fencing.

The Charente Maritime was crossed by the royal procession between 1659 and 1660.

Odile works a lot with the media to present her work:

- 2020: shooting of a documentary on D'Artagnan. Several members of the committee took part in this documentary, which was broadcast on ARTE.
- Several television programmes, in particular with Stéphane BERN : Secrets d'histoire, Laissez-vous guider ...
- Exhibition on D'Artagnan and the King's Musketeers (Château de Chantilly) 2023-2024.
- 'En Garde' Monte Cristo Castle 2024

The films 'The Three Musketeers' and 'Milady', in which Julien WILMART was consulted about the historical aspect.

La Rochelle is a very important place in the novel: the second part of The Three Musketeers takes place at the siege of La Rochelle, after the adventure of the ferrets, where Milady tried to have D'Artagnan murdered in revenge.

The royal troops were billeted outside: the company of guards to which D'Artagnan belonged was housed at Les Minimes, the King was sometimes at Etrée, sometimes at La Jarrie, Monsieur was at Dompierre, the Cardinal on the dunes, at Pont de la Pierre.

At the Auberge du Colombier Rouge, on the road to La Jarrie, the Cardinal meets Milady and orders her to prevent the Duke of Buckingham from reinforcing the Rochelois. Then Milady and Athos face each other.

The Bastion Saint-Gervais : to devise a plan of action without arousing suspicion, the four friends bet that they would hold out for an hour at the Bastion Saint-Gervais, facing the Rochelais. They won the wager, and after this bravado, Cardinal de Richelieu asked Captain de Treville to take D'Artagnan with the Musketeers, as he was inseparable from his three friends. So it was in La Rochelle that D'Artagnan became a Musketeer. At the end of the novel, on his return from Bethune, after the deaths of Constance and Milady, the Cardinal gives D'Artagnan a commission as a lieutenant in the Musketeers.

3.1.3 Council of Europe values represented by the theme

A path or route taken to reach a place for recreational or tourist purposes. Unlike the journey, the route may not be relevant to reach a place or a spot, but rather to travel along a specific path. In this case, the journey is made using any means of locomotion or on foot, which makes it possible to enjoy both the path itself and the landscapes and resources found in the areas travelled. Colloquially, to make a route implies several meanings:

- 1) in a generic way, it designates the route of variable length and duration that is made for leisure purposes;
- 2) it is also the layout of an itinerary, path or trail, linear or circular, which may or may not be signposted;
- 3) it also refers to the set of resources and services that can be found along the route.

The consideration of a route as a tourist product implies a territorial organisation, generally by public initiative, of a series of tourist resources arranged around a thematic axis, with a direction, an objective and a message or argument. In this way, a route makes it possible to

integrate into a single proposal different elements that individually would not be of sufficient interest to generate tourist attraction or that would encounter problems for their marketing and promotion. In the case of routes lasting several days, incorporating several visits and services and based on business management, we refer to tourist circuits.

Different proposals can be found around the word's itinerary, route, traverse or tour that have similarities, in that they all propose routes that connect elements of cultural or natural heritage, which can be tangible or intangible, and which may or may not be based on a tourist motivation. They can be of varying territorial scope, from local or regional to continental or intercontinental in scope. This is the case, for example, of the long-distance footpaths (GR) which run for hundreds or even thousands of kilometres throughout Europe, linking distant points by means of paths with signs and markings. These great re-runs are defined by the stages that pass through various locations where they are supplied, and which facilitate their total or partial completion. Also in this group of major routes are the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes, more than thirty transnational routes that propose itineraries linked to a historical and heritage legacy shared by regions and countries.

Routes are created by grouping certain elements that can be associated by virtue of multiple criteria: historical, functional, social, natural or cultural, among others. The degree of depth and coherence in the arguments that weave together the different proposals allows us to distinguish between thematic routes and simple tourist routes.

In the case of the thematic routes, there is a central storyline, and they are usually created for tourist purposes, although they can also have a pre-tourist cultural and historical significance and link elements of heritage and culture with the territory in which they take place. This is the case of religious pilgrimage routes, routes of commercial tradition or those related to places where the experiences of certain characters who left a mark on the history of an environment took place. Routes can also be created around other diverse elements, be they natural or the product of the aggregation of various social or cultural items. In this case, the relationship between industrial or artisanal resources; or that brings closer the recognition of the functioning of ecosystems or the valuation of the complexity of relationships in urban or rural areas, and the understanding of social behaviour patterns. Despite their existence since the origins of tourism, routes are currently presented as something new and constitute a tourism policy tool that contributes to creating or reinforcing a destination's image. They are frequently used as an argument for the activation of heritage elements, both in emerging territories that intend to initiate tourism activity and in consolidated tourist areas that start their own processes of diversification and differentiation if the approach to development is appropriate and balanced from the perspective of heritage management, thanks to the coordination and integration of resources, the routes contribute to improving knowledge and understanding of the territory, increase the enjoyment of residents and visitors and, therefore, also help to conserve it and strengthen the links between the elements that consolidate cultural identity. However, without a correct articulation and adequate planning for their creation, the routes cease to be satisfactory experiences and become proposals whose objective is merely promotional. In this case, there may be routes that consist of a succession of visits, without an objective or a message to convey, and sometimes without an adequate structure of times and services or a control of the carrying capacity. The result is tourist routes that are proposed simply by juxtaposition of various elements, without sometimes the minimum conditions of physical and intellectual accessibility or the presence of infrastructures or basic services, and which generate a limited benefit and an incoherent image of the environment to be developed.

In view of the above the theme reflect the values of the Council of Europe (<https://www.coe.int/fr/web/about-us/values>): *"The aim of the European Route d'Artagnan is to promote cultural and human links between the different countries crossed by the route, in the respect of human rights, the rule of law and democracy. Friendship, solidarity, courage and loyalty are values symbolised by the Musketeers and which can be found in those advocated*

by the Council of Europe. The route presents a strong unifying theme that embodies fundamental European values such as unity, respect for others, solidarity and mutual aid, which can be summarized in the famous Musketeer motto "All for one, one for all". The values of the Musketeers and the European values often coincide: friendship, solidarity, courage, loyalty, courage, the Musketeer values par excellence are reminiscent of the values of the Council of Europe and the European Union.

Its design methods, based on a model of gentle itinerary and on integrated and inclusive tools for promoting the route;

A method of participatory cooperation between public and private partners with open, flexible and voluntary multiannual partnership contracts, highlighting the rich tourist and cultural heritage of the areas crossed by means of specific partnership agreements to involve public and private operators in the long term;

A strong unifying theme with a figure who, through his loyalty and courage, helped to embody the values in which all citizens in Europe and around the world identify with the famous motto "All for one, one for all".

The social and sporting values he promotes through riding, fencing, walking and cycling, which are widely shared by our contemporaries and are becoming increasingly important in the current health and climate context throughout Europe.

The aim of the route is to promote cultural and human relations between the different countries it crosses, while respecting human rights, the rule of law and democracy, in accordance with the statutory provisions of the AERA. The route promotes the cultural diversity of the territories it crosses through exchanges between users, be they riders, cyclists or pedestrians.

The network is open to all public and private partners who wish to contribute to the consolidation of the route in accordance with its statutes and values, with particular emphasis in our democratic body on freedom of expression, professionalism, integrity and respect for equality. The main objective is to serve the general interest of the Route by making it an exceptional transnational cultural and tourist product for the greatest possible number of users, without discrimination of any kind, with openness to people with disabilities through the social aspect of the Route. The D'Artagnan European Route, Europe's first equestrian route, develops this unique aspect on a European scale with an international vocation. The equestrian character of the Route highlights above all the values associated with equestrianism, the school of the discipline: "respect, the welfare of the horse, loyalty, team spirit, solidarity and tolerance, pleasure and commitment" (FFE Charter). Equestrianism has a strong tradition in many countries and the history of equestrianism is inextricably linked to the history and culture of Europe. The REA is a 10,000 km equestrian tourism route currently being signposted in six countries, intended for riders, with certain sections for horse-drawn carriages to welcome all audiences along the route. The aim is to make horse riding more accessible to the public and to develop the equestrian ecosystem (accommodation, blacksmiths, vets, etc.) by relying on the network of riding schools in rural and peri-urban areas.

3.2 Fields of Action

3.2.1 Co-operation in research and development

Annual meetings of ICCEs: AERA is very active in these meetings to help promote cultural tourism, cooperation between ICCEs and their visibility to the public.

Participation in the Visibility and Cooperation of Routes working group. (See the appendix to the certification file for the report and prospects for cooperation with other ICCEs).

To strengthen territorial cooperation, an agreement has been signed with the Association nationale des Pôles territoriaux et des Pays - ANPP (National Association of Territorial Poles and Countries), a means of contracting with the PETRs, which can carry out European projects and therefore receive European funding. On the other hand, the REA develops equestrian culture: it promotes the history of equestrianism (university network), the evolution of the place

of the horse in contemporary societies (university working groups, Horizon Europe application) and participates in the development of equestrian culture and tradition in the regions (IFCE - French Institute for Equestrian Culture). Finally, in its role as a "mediator" for people in difficulty (integration, e.g. the "Le pied à l'étrier" association to help people back to work; young people: open holiday and learning school programmes, etc.) and people with physical or mental disabilities (equitherapy, carriage driving, etc.), the REA is committed to developing activities related to horses. The aim of the REA's approach is to help spread the practice of horse riding and to change an 'elitist' vision of horse riding, so that young people from the age of 7 can be introduced to this discipline through the educational aspect of the REA developed below: the Ecole des Jeunes Mousquetaires Européens (EJME).

The REA is based on the principles of equality and parity in its conception and management: the President and founder was keen to include parity in all the activities of the Route. As a result, two of the routes are dedicated to women: the Route de Madame d'Artagnan and the Route de l'Infante. What's more, equestrianism is a gender-balanced discipline and most licence-holders are women (80% of licence-holders are women).

The Route is developing a social and solidarity-based tourism section for vulnerable groups, including families with limited financial resources, young people facing challenges, individuals enrolled in integration programmes, isolated older adults, and individuals with disabilities. The Route is striving to enhance accessibility by enabling individuals to traverse selected segments via carriage and facilitating access to cultural resources for individuals with disabilities, including adapted tours, specialized documentation, and websites. In early 2019, AERA became a member of the International Organisation of Social Tourism (OITS/ISTO) with the objective of developing actions in favour of the aforementioned audiences. This was done in close consultation with public authorities as part of an international vision of social and solidarity tourism. The mission of the OITS is to promote tourism for all, with nearly 200 organisations in 41 member countries.

A partnership is currently being developed with the Maisons de l'Europe. The Maison de l'Europe in Angers and Maine et Loire has been engaged in this initiative for a considerable number of years, as has the Maison de l'Europe in Toulouse with regard to the educational aspect. The Maison de l'Europe in Paris will be hosting the REA for the European Heritage Days on 21 September 2024, with a focus on the heritage of the ICCE. The Maison de l'Europe in Bordeaux is set to become a future partner in this endeavour.

3.1.4 Enhancement of the memory, history and European heritage

A broad set of assets and manifestations, natural and cultural, that a society considers to be the part of its heritage that should be preserved or safeguarded. The term comes from the Latin *patrimonium*, a family's assets, usually real estate, which was passed on by the head of the family. First of all, patrimony and wealth are associated. It is a wealth that we received from our ancestors, which we must increase through our work and which we must pass on in the best possible conditions to future generations. Secondly, heritage is a collective asset. Regardless of its beneficial ownership, the responsibility for its stewardship belongs to the whole collectivity, be it a local community, a nation or humanity as a whole. Thirdly, heritage is a social construct. At each historical moment, society has decided which assets and manifestations are worthy of this consideration, making up its heritage collection. And, fourthly, heritage is the repository of multiple values: historical, as documents that are testimonies of the past; aesthetic, linked to contemplation; symbolic-identity, due to its identification with a community; and use, due to the possibility of its current productive use (tourism and other activities).

Although this way of understanding heritage is intimately associated with contemporary times, it has a long history. Thus, the Romans collected Greek works of art, the medieval Church treasured objects in temples and monasteries, and the Renaissance saw the first archaeological excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum. Beyond these antecedents, the concept of heritage as we know it today has its origins in the 19th century. The new order that emerged with the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution entailed a process of transformation of the face of the earth that was unprecedented in its intensity and speed. In the face of this transformation, defended by many in terms of progress and modernity, the first voices emerged to defend the heritage of the past beyond its immediate usefulness. Thus, the concept of heritage was born, the collective legacy on which national identity is based. As collective assets of the nation, limits were placed on the right of ownership and government bodies were entrusted with the responsibility for their custody, conservation and even enhancement. At the same time, the focus turns to natural areas that have been less transformed by human action. In 1872, the first national park in the world was declared: Yellowstone, in the United States. Its example was soon followed by other countries in the New World and even in Old Europe (Parque Nacional de la Montana de Covadonga, in Asturias, the first Spanish national park to be declared in 1916).

The doctrine of patrimonialisation has been fully consolidated since the mid-twentieth century. Since then, the range and number of manifestations subject to heritage conservation has expanded. Alongside monuments, gardens, archaeological sites and historical ensembles, a new industrial, landscape and intangible heritage is emerging. Similarly, protected natural spaces include areas that stand out for the uniqueness or representativeness of the heritage they contain, beyond the spectacular landscape criteria of the first declarations. There has also been an overflow of the national scale, with the emergence of local, regional and even global approaches. Of relevance in this process is UNESCO and the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, which recognises the responsibility of all mankind for the conservation of those sites of outstanding value. The Convention is interpreted in accordance with practical guidelines for its application that are renewed from time to time, advised by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Sites recognised as being of outstanding value are placed on the World Heritage List, which comprises cultural, natural and mixed properties. Other UNESCO initiatives of heritage significance include Biosphere Reserves (MaB Programme) and the Representative List of Intangible Heritage (2003 Convention).

As a whole, this body of doctrine makes it possible to differentiate the major categories of heritage in most common use. Firstly, natural heritage, whose maximum expression corresponds to protected natural spaces (National Parks, Natural Monuments, Ramsar Wetlands and other national and international figures). Secondly, cultural heritage is divided into three types: immovable heritage, which includes everything from buildings to cultural landscapes; movable heritage, managed as collections in museums; and intangible heritage, which includes the traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors, such as oral traditions, rituals, festive events, and the knowledge and techniques linked to craftsmanship. Heritage and tourism are closely linked. Since the 19th century, first romantic travellers and then high society tourists have travelled the world in search of monumental ruins, old cities and exotic traditions. In countries such as Spain, the embryo of tourism policy, developed in the first decades of the 20th century, focused on historical heritage, for a long time the main factor in attracting foreign visitors. With funds from the tourist administration, museums were set up, guidebooks were published, and the tourist industry was able to offer a wide range of services. The first national parks were also declared with this orientation. The declaration of the first national parks also has this orientation. As the country's great sanctuaries of nature, it is proposed that they should have conditions of accessibility and use that are susceptible to generalised tourist use. Although with nuances, the consideration of heritage as a tourist

resource continues to be an argument present in the official discourse of heritage and tourism institutions, from international bodies to entities operating at the local level.

Although heritage is at the basis of many tourism development processes, there are certain factors that limit its exploitation. Firstly, the tourist gaze is, by definition, fleeting and selective. Of the heritage of a country, a region or a community, the visitor focuses his or her attention on a limited number of manifestations that embody the tourist identity of the place. If these manifestations are monumental, exotic, recreational and accessible in terms of destination and resource, the selection process is reinforced. Therefore, many actions to adapt heritage for tourist use are doomed to failure. Focusing the tourist gaze on a few references will determine the concentration of visitors on some manifestations and their absence on others, the majority. The second limit to the use of tourism derives from this tendency towards concentration, since the massive presence of visitors can lead to a deterioration of the heritage that threatens its preservation as a natural and/or cultural legacy and even its maintenance as a tourist resource. This is why the control of the intensity of tourist use of these sites has been a central element in the discourse of heritage organisations since the seventies of the last century.

It's only natural that with this contextualisation of heritage the Musketeers, an elite corps under the kings Louis XIII and Louis XIV, made a significant impact on 17th-century history with their exemplary conduct and courage on the battlefields of northern France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. The musketeers were popularised by Alexandre Dumas in his musketeer trilogy in the 19th century (*Les Trois Mousquetaires*, *Vingt ans après*, *Le vicomte de Bragelonne*), who transformed them into internationally successful heroes who became part of the universal popular imagination. Their distinctive signs, which have become mythical, include their values, their motto and their helmet.

Over the centuries, the works of Alexandre Dumas have inspired a multitude of adaptations in various forms, including sequels, books, films, series, plays, musicals, comic strips, manga and animated films, in numerous countries worldwide. AERA is engaged in the dissemination of knowledge regarding the historical figure of d'Artagnan through the examination of archival materials and literary works by Alexandre Dumas and Courtilz de Sandras. These are complemented by cultural events, such as the *Rencontres européennes*, and urban itineraries, particularly in key locations, which serve to highlight the various historical and literary sites associated with d'Artagnan to the public. In this way, the European Route aims to contribute to the development of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the 17th century.

To achieve greater accuracy in the portrayal of Louis XIV's Musketeers, the Historical Commission has defined an official uniform based on a synthesis of archive documents and period descriptions (1657-1668). Furthermore, it is involved in the design of the *Rencontres européennes D'Artagnan*, which encompasses the definition of topics, the proposal of speakers, and other related activities. Additionally, it provides support for the 'd'Artagnan territorial project', which aims to promote the heritage of local communities and enhance the profile of the Musketeers within their respective regions.

As a partner of the *Compagnie des Mousquetaires d'Armagnac*, AERA has entered into a partnership agreement with the objective of promoting musketeer culture and the Route on a global scale. The organisation is forging a closer relationship with the *Société des Amis d'Alexandre Dumas*, with the two entities organising joint events.

Furthermore, specific events will be held at esteemed locations on a regular basis, including historical re-enactments, festivals, and performances (Chambord, Versailles, Fontainebleau, Maastricht, Fontarabie, Pinerolo, and others). Furthermore, AERA will propose a network of castles, museums, and other points of interest along the route.

Adding value to work, the d'Artagnan European Route is the inaugural European route to be adapted for equestrian use. The horse has been a constant presence in European history, serving as a symbol of wealth, strength, and prestige in high equestrian schools and as a leisure activity in equestrian centres that adhere to the principles of animal welfare (ethology). Additionally, the horse has been rehabilitated for specific tasks in rural areas and small towns, including work in vineyards, forests, and waste management. Additionally, the horse serves as

a mediator for individuals with physical or mental disabilities, or those on the margins of society, through equitherapy.

The horse and equestrian traditions had a significant impact on the formation of nation states in Europe from the 16th century onwards. They were employed as instruments of power (in warfare) and wealth (in displays of opulence) in royal courts, with the establishment of the National Stud in France by Colbert (1665) and the development of equestrian academies in Europe from the 15th century onwards (Portugal, Spain, Italy, France, England, Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, Austria, the Netherlands, etc.). This heritage is shared by all Member States.

The practice of horse riding has undergone significant transformations throughout history, particularly following the cessation of equine utilisation in warfare. The sport subsequently developed and became more accessible with the advent of leisure riding in the mid-twentieth century.

Historically, horses were employed as a means of consolidating the power of nation-states through the instruments of war and diplomacy. In the present era, the objective is to contribute to the construction of Europe through the promotion of tourism, culture and regional development, while respecting the shared values that underpin the European Union. The Route Européenne d'Artagnan is committed to the creation of a European equestrian academy, with discussions currently underway with the French, Portuguese and Spanish Hautes Écoles Equestres regarding the establishment of this institution.

In the present era, equestrianism is experiencing a surge in popularity, with 6 million riders in Europe and 20 million worldwide. Additionally, equestrianism is a "school of discipline," imparting lessons in self-control and horse management, respect for animals and fellow riders, sharing paths with other users, solidarity and mutual aid in challenging times, and active listening to diverse perspectives. These values align with the European humanist tradition and contribute to the development of a just and compassionate society.

Furthermore, equestrianism is a sport in which women are significantly represented (80% of licences). This is a notable aspect for the Route and its Founder-President, who sought to establish parity in the Route's activities from the project's inception. This was achieved through the creation of the Route de Madame d'Artagnan and the Route de l'Infante, which were developed alongside the four other itineraries that were historically more aligned with masculine traditions and customs.

Furthermore, the 'dartagnane', which is the diploma awarded to users who have travelled more than 100 km on the Route, is presented at the birth and death places of Monsieur and Madame d'Artagnan (Lupiac/Maastricht and Champlecly/Ste Croix en Bresse respectively), as well as at official inaugurations, which have been increasingly numerous since the first one in Chantilly in 2017. In 2022, the Route de Madame d'Artagnan will be inaugurated in Château-Guillaume (Centre Val de Loire), Lupiac (Gers), Charente-Maritime, Berry, Gascony, Bigorre, the Basque Country, Anjou and Béarn.

3.1.5 Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans

Reminder of the origins of the commission and choice of direction for the educational aspect, which is an essential element in the development of the REA to enable a connection between territories, through exchanges between young European citizens on common bases. It's about networking.

A fun and innovative educational tool that reminds us that the values symbolised by the Musketeers are those advocated by Europe: friendship between peoples, solidarity, mutual aid, sharing, courage, respect and understanding of others,

This is an original way of looking at the story of D'Artagnan and the Musketeers in a European context, based on the territories that are the crucible of cultural diversity in Europe, as expressed in the European motto: 'United in diversity'.

A communication tool for the benefit of the ICCE in terms of their values and the diversity of their projects. By 'trickling down', convincing young people also means convincing their parents and those around them.

The School of Young European Musketeers was created by AERA, in partnership with Réseau CANOPÉ, FFEquitation and FFEscime, and is the subject of a partnership agreement. Maison de l'Europe participates in exchanges of best practice

Its aim? To introduce young people aged 8 to 18 to the story of d'Artagnan and the Musketeers, combining learning and physical activities, the history of Europe and the French and European Grand Siècle through 145 educational sheets. 3 training modules have been developed: - horse riding - artistic fencing and European citizenship and a d'Artagnan Escape Game.

The EJME's multi-disciplinary, multi-purpose tools are designed to be used by teachers and youth workers in schools and/or extra-curricular activities.

D'Artagnan and his friends, the King's Musketeers, eternal heroes of history and literature, cinema, comic strips and even manga, have a motto: 'All for one, one for all'. Their story permeates world culture and inspires every generation.

This is an original way of looking at the story of D'Artagnan and the Musketeers in a European context, based on the territories that are the melting pot of cultural diversity in Europe, as expressed in the European motto: 'United in diversity'.

On the strength of its 'beta-tester' experiments, the Route Européenne d'Artagnan aims, through this educational programme, to :

- Passing on these common European values to young Europeans

Guide to good practice

- Promoting cultural diversity and European citizenship

Erasmus DAYS France – Germany

- Contributing to the development of young people, particularly those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds

Ecoles Ouvertes partner

- Develop exchanges between young people from ICCE member countries, in particular through the EU's ERASMUS+ programme.

Partner Département du GERS Erasmus+ 'De d'Artagnan à Napoléon l'Europe d'Alexandre Dumas' 4 countries Italy, Georgia, Czech Republic and France

- Raising awareness of the ICCE, its richness and diversity

Villers-Cotterêts seminar, birthplace of a travel writer Alexandre DUMAS, exchanges of good practice, development of projects. (Works deposited at the documentation centre of the European Parliament in Brussels-B)

We must give importance to the fact that the Ecole des Jeunes Mousquetaires Européens (EJME) was established by AERA as part of its educational commission in collaboration with Réseau CANOPÉ, Fédération Française d'Equitation and Fédération Française d'Escrime. The intention is to engage the sports federations and educational organisations of the five other countries between 2025 and 2030.

The EJME's objective is to introduce young people aged 8 and above to the story of d'Artagnan and the Musketeers through a combination of learning and physical activities, European history, and the French and European Grand Siècle. A total of 145 teaching sheets on a variety of themes are associated with these disciplines, as well as with horse riding and artistic fencing. The EJME tools are designed to be used by teachers and activity leaders in school and/or extra-curricular settings, in a manner that is consistent with the specificities of their country, teaching method and resources. They are intended to be used in a multidisciplinary and versatile manner.

AERA has established a collaborative relationship with the AEFE (Agence pour l'Enseignement du Français à l'Etranger) with the objective of developing the EJME within this

international network. The collaboration with the Cité internationale de la langue française in Villers-Cotterêts (the birthplace of Alexandre Dumas) paves the way for initiatives with French-speaking countries.

In order to disseminate this culture, the EJME makes use of the media that are particularly popular with young people, including cinema, cartoons, comic strips and manga, as well as the mottoes: The motto "All for one, one for all" is exemplified by the Musketeers, while the EU's "United in diversity" encapsulates a similar sentiment.

The objective of the Route Européenne d'Artagnan educational programme is to:

The programme aims to:

1. Pass on these common European values to young Europeans
2. Promote civic skills
3. Encourage young people, whether at school or not, to develop their full potential through this approach, which is rich in philosophy and diverse activities

The teaching sequences are as follows:

The following topics and activities, based on the characters of Les Mousquetaires, have been adapted into 145 sheets (the sheets can be accessed via the following link: <https://gers-atelier.canoprof.fr/eleve/fiches-pedagogiques/route-d-artagnan/>).

The practice of riding has been demonstrated to facilitate the growth and development of children.

The connection with animals possesses advantages at all stages of life. As part of a holistic approach to child development, equestrian activities have been shown to foster a sense of responsibility, empathy and sensitivity. Riding has been demonstrated to assist individuals experiencing elevated levels of agitation to achieve a state of calm, and those who are introverted to develop their communication skills. In conclusion, equine-assisted activities facilitate the development of self-confidence and assertiveness while promoting respect for others and animals.

Fencing, respect for others and creativity:

The practice of artistic fencing fosters the development of values such as respect for others, active listening, and observational skills. The ideal synchronisation that fencing partners endeavour to achieve necessitates concentration, collaboration and the utilisation of both verbal and non-verbal communication. The construction of the choreography also stimulates creativity, as the sequence of movements is imagined.

Similarly, both cascade and artistic fencing can be considered as forms of the same battle. It is therefore proposed that the fencing workshop be combined with stunts. These two disciplines are frequently employed in conjunction in combat scenarios and are regarded as being complementary to one another. They are both based on the same principle of choreography and synchronisation.

The Escape Game d'Artagnan EGA represents an innovative approach to raising awareness among the teaching community, young people and families of the European scheme, which is designed to strengthen European citizenship and promote cultural diversity in the regions in an engaging and accessible manner. The objective of the EGA is to enhance the visibility of our European cultural itinerary among the general public. The demand for this programme is growing among the regions to which we provide it through a brand licence .

Please refer to the programme for the visit of the French cultural routes to Ste Croix en Bresse on 26 October 2024, which forms part of the FFICE General Assembly. A specific action has been launched with the support of the Ministry of Culture, entitled 'the ICCE at school' .

The project involves cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans.

The 'Open School' scheme provides a comprehensive programme for young people who do not have the opportunity to take a holiday, offering them a balanced curriculum comprising academic reinforcement, sports and cultural activities. Over the course of a week, approximately forty young people from three secondary schools and a primary school participated in the EJME programme with the assistance of an equestrian centre, a master-at-arms, and an association that taught them the fundamentals of theatre and stunts. These

activities were designed to promote the spirit and values conveyed by the Musketeers. These activities provided an opportunity for the young people to reacquaint themselves with the values of sharing, exchange and effort.

3.2.4 Contemporary cultural and artistic practice

AERA has established important networks which allows implement innovative activities and projects pertaining to five main priority fields of action: co-operation in research and development; enhancement of memory, history and European heritage; cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans; contemporary cultural and artistic practice; cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development. In this sense, we have been able to identify the following activities that fall within these objectives:

1. Title of activities: Film The true story of d'Artagnan

Description of activities: ARTE documentary on the real life of Charles de Batz de Castelmor
Date (dd/mm/yyyy): 2020

URL Link to the programme and visibility material: <https://www.arte.tv/fr/videos/096273-000-A/la-veritable-histoire-de-d-artagnan/>

2. Title of activities: The Three Musketeers films (d'Artagnan and Milady)

Description of activities: Participation in the promotion of films requested by Pathé's communications company.

Members of the impliquees network: REA FF escrime artistique and Julien Wiilmart historical advisor

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): 2023

URL Link to the programme and visibility material:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_CLdbJnGlw

3. Title of activities : Scénies-en-Monts shows

Description of activities: Route des Cadinaux show

Network members involved: AERA S2M

Location (City and country): Montlieu-la-Garde

Number of participants: 700 per year

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): 21-22-23

URL Link to the programme and visibility material:

<https://www.sceniesen2monts.org/index.php/actu/>

4. Title of activities: Lames sur Seine shows

Description of activities: Les Trois Mousquetaires

Members of the network involved: Michel Olivier

Location (City and country): Lupiac, Festival d'Artagnan - Arrette (64) - Villers-Cotterêts

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): annual

URL Link to the programme and visibility material: <https://www.escrime-artistique.com/les-spectacles-old/2022/7/31/dxenxvnozi2h2gsav110vxnz0hk0mi-m3yz7-75a8h-leaza>

5. Activity title: Estocade

Description of activities: shows, events

Members of the network involved: Jean-Noël Hautefaye

Location (city and country): Barbizon (Training Academy 2023), Villers Cotterêts (2024), Saint Germain en Laye, Château de Monte Cristo 2024 and Sainte Croix en Bresse 2024 (October)

URL Link to the programme and visibility material: <https://www.estocade.org/animation>

6. Activity title: The play box

Description of activities: D'Artagnan mon héros show

URL Link to the programme and visibility material: <https://www.laboiteajouer.fr/my-product/dartagnan-mon-heros/>

7. Title of business: La Compagnie des Mousquetaires d'Armagnac

Description of activities: Induction of REA members Mention of the REA in the media

Network members involved :

Location (City and country): Condom (France) Brussels, Madrid, Compostela and Istanbul

URL Link to the programme and visibility material: <https://www.route-dartagnan.eu/actu/intronisation-de-l-aera-a-condom.--52.html>

8. Title of activities: Société des Amis d'Alexandre Dumas

Description of activities: Joint projects on the literary musketeers 350th anniversary of the death of d'Artagnan

180th anniversary of Les Trois Mousquetaires publication

Members of the network involved: Alain Libéros, Odile Bordaz and Corinne Battistig

Location (City and country): Paris

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): 25/11/2023 and November 2024

URL Link to the programme and visibility material: <https://amisdumas.com/la-statue-du-general-dumas-de-retour-a-paris/>

9. Title of activities: Maison de l'Europe Paris

Description of activities: JEP REA

Network members involved: Odile Bordaz, Corinne Battistig, Bruno Battistini and Martine Valleys

Location (City and country): Paris 16th

Number of participants:

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): 21-9-2024

URL Link to the programme and visibility material: <https://paris-europe.eu/evenements/journees-europeennes-du-patrimoine-patrimoine-des-itineraires-reseaux-et-connexions-dartagnan/>

10. Title of activities : Gascons de Paris

Description of activities: Update on REA progress and activities

Network members involved: Alexandre de Montesquiou, Odile Bordaz and Corinne Battistig

Location (City and country): Paris

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): regular

11. Activity title: Olympic Flame

Description of activities: Passage de la Flamme

Network members involved: Alain Libéros, CC Retz en Valois

Location (Town and country): Villers Cotterêts

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): 17/07/2024

3.2.5 Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development.

1. Title of the activity: "D'Artagnan at full gallop in Valençay".

Description of activities: Inauguration of the Royal Route in Indre. Equestrian and cloak-and-dagger shows, farmers' market, fencing initiation, Ride&Run, educational farm.

Network members involved: CRE Centre-Val de Loire, Indre Departmental Council, Berry Province, Valençay Tourist Office

Location (town and country): Valençay (36)

Number of participants : 60 riders and more than 2000 spectators

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): 10/09/2023

URL Link to the programme and publicity material:

http://www.valencay-tourisme.fr/Catalog/27/actualites/detail/i,7963/d-artagnan_au_galop_a_valencay.html

2. Title of the activity: "The European Musketeers on the trail of smugglers".

Description of activities: Excursions and parade in costume along the Musketeers' route.

Network members involved: ADTE 64

Location (town and country): Saint-Palais, Iholdy, Saint-Martin-d'Arrossa, Bidarray, Ainhoa

Date (dd/mm/yyyy) : 22/09/2023

URL Link to the programme and promotional material:

<https://www.tourisme64.com/animation/iholdy/FMAAQU064V5BPS0L-randonnee-equestre-route-dartagnan-sentier-des-contrebandiers/>

3. Title of the activities: "Un pour tous, tous en Anjou" (One for all, all in Anjou)

Description of the activities: An event organised over three days in three different towns. On the programme: horse shows, rides, fencing initiation, exhibition village, cloak and dagger shows, pony rides, etc.

Network members involved : Anjou tourism, CRTE Pays de la Loire

Location (town and countryside) : Beaupréau-en-Mauges, Rochefort-sur-Loire, Saumur

Number of participants : Around a hundred riders per day and more than 20,000 spectators over the three days.

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): from 9 to 11 May 2024

URL Link to the programme and promotional material: <https://www.anjou-tourisme.com/fr/agenda/temps-forts/route-europeenne-dartagnan>

4. Title of the activities: Topoguide de la Route des Mousquetaires

Description of the activities: Tourist guide to the Route of the Musketeers. This guide describes the route, the stops and the local services for walkers. It also highlights the tourist attractions and historical and cultural highlights along the route.

Network members involved: CD Gers, CD Hautes-Pyrénées, CD Pyrénées Atlantique, Province of Navarre (Spain).

Location (urban and rural) : The departments of Gers, Hautes-Pyrénées, Pyrénées Atlantique and the province of Navarre (Spain).

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): Publication in June 2024

URL Link to the programme and promotional material: <https://editions.ouest-france.fr/la%20route%20des%20mousquetaires%20-%20de%20lupiac%20a%20saint-jean-de-luz-9782737390289.html>

5. Title of the activities : Topoguide de la boucle Gersoise

Description of the activities: Hiking guide in the Gers on the d'Artagnan European Route

Network members involved Gers Departmental Council

Location (town and country) :Gers

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): 2024

URL Link to programme and promotional material: coming soon

6. Title of the activity: Roots and Wings

Activity description: Television programme

Network members involved: Odile Bordaz and Julien Wilmart

Location (town and country) : Basque Country

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): Published on 25 November 2015

URL Link to the programme and publicity material

<https://tvmag.lefigaro.fr/programme-tv/article/television/89889/des-racines-et-des-ailes-au-pays-de-d-artagnan.html>

Title of the activities: Echappée Belle Programme in the Basque Country

Description of the activities:

Location (town and country) :Basque Country

Date (dd/mm/yyyy) :22-03-2024

URL Link to the programme and visibility material:
<https://youtu.be/J8ma8Inu3HE?si=JPdaX6B7hy5wQwUy>

3.3 Cultural Route Network

3.3.1 Overview of institutional /legal structure of the network

The European Association of the D'Artagnan Route (AERA) was established in 2014 with the objective of establishing a structured framework for the implementation of the route and ensuring its governance at the European level, based on the model of the Pilgrim's Way to Santiago de Compostela, in the footsteps of the famous Musketeer.

The European Association of the Route D'Artagnan has also developed the label "Etape de la Route Européenne D'Artagnan". This label is awarded to accommodation providers who offer riders and horses board and lodging, based on compliance with the criteria of the "REA Accommodation Providers' Charter". This gives them better visibility and greater attractiveness due to the quality of the services offered but also an opportunity to discover the European cultural diversity, heritage, gastronomy and variety of landscapes in 6 member countries of the European Union. The Route is also open to mountain bikers and pedestrians.

In addition, the European Route D'Artagnan enables the territories to be anchored in a European dimension to contribute to their tourist and cultural development, particularly through the process undertaken with a view to obtaining the label "European Cultural Route" from the Council of Europe.

Finally, equestrian activity is sustainable tourism, since hiking contributes to the respect and preservation of landscapes through the maintenance of hiking trails.

The mission of the organisation is to guarantee the long-term viability of the project by establishing a consortium of public and private partners from the European Union and other countries. The objective of this consortium is to facilitate the advancement of the project's economic, social and cultural dimensions.

Furthermore, the objective is to convene the local authorities involved, as well as organisations with shared knowledge and expertise in cultural routes, the equine industry and the character of D'Artagnan.

The Association is constituted as a legal entity under the terms of the 1901 law, with articles of association filed with the Gers Prefecture following the constituent General Assembly in November 2014. The articles of association were validated in February 2015 by the Gers Prefecture. The European Association of the D'Artagnan Route (AERA) was established in 2014 during a constitutive general assembly convened in Brussels. A total of 29 partners signed the articles of association, comprising 24 French, 2 Belgian, 2 Dutch, and 1 Spanish entity.

In May 2021, the Association was bestowed with the esteemed 'Council of Europe Cultural Route' label. The route, which is currently being developed in the 15 regions and 6 countries concerned, will eventually offer more than 8,000 km of riding for horse riders and other users (pedestrians, cyclists, etc.) around 6 themed routes.

The d'Artagnan European Route offers an opportunity for travellers to engage in a process of discovery, traversing a landscape characterised by remarkable natural and cultural heritage. The route allows walkers to traverse a variety of landscapes, including verdant valleys, cultivated plains, forest tracks and snow-covered mountains. The route offers exceptional panoramas and is accompanied by ten topographical guides to assist walkers in preparing for their journey and in discovering the numerous tourist and cultural treasures that can be found along the way.

The association, presided over by Alain Liberos, is headquartered in an office and is comprised of a scientific committee and three commissions. The Economic Commission, the Historical Commission and the Educational Committee

It is comprised of approximately a hundred active members distributed across all European routes and is supported by its member organisations and local authorities.

AERA is supported by a diverse range of partners, including sports federations, historical and cultural associations, international organisations, public and private operators, and tourist institutions. Each entity fulfils a distinct role and is indispensable to the success of this ambitious project.

The purpose of the association is to: The objective is to perpetuate the memory of D'Artagnan by establishing and maintaining a signposted route from Lupiac, the birthplace of d'Artagnan, to Maastricht, where he died. To contribute to the economic development of the areas traversed, from Maastricht to Lupiac via Auch, the central axis of this route, with extensions contingent upon the peregrinations of the celebrated musketeer, particularly towards Italy (Pinerolo), Spain (Ile des Faisans) via Béarn, the provenance of numerous musketeers, and Germany (Brühl). The association's objective is to create, manage, develop and promote the d'Artagnan European route. It also aims to foster relations between its members and the public and private partners associated with this project, as well as with the European authorities. Initially, the route will be designed for horse riders, with the intention of allowing access for carriages, cyclists and walkers on sections of the route.

I would like to share the example of Val de Loire (CVL) region, a founding member of AERA since 2014 works on the development of tourism for long-distance itineraries by bike, horse and on foot over a perimeter of 6 départements.

It took part in the design of the COSME dossier with the steering of the tourism business plan for the European d'Artagnan project.

Historically, the CVL region has not been a recognised area for equestrian tourism. However, it is systematically referenced by international equestrian tour operators as the Val de Loire, a 'dream' equestrian destination with a unique density of world-famous châteaux. With this in mind, the region has set up a partnership with the Comité Régional d'Equitation (CRE) based in Lamotte Beuvron, the national headquarters of the French Equestrian Federation (FFE), with 2 projects in mind.

The referencing and qualification of 2,500 km of equestrian routes, mainly organised into loops that can be covered over 2 to 5 days, and their promotion on a dedicated website.

- The design and regional experimentation over 2 years with the FFE of a cartographic GIS (Geographic Information System) to identify, monitor and promote signposted and maintained equestrian routes. This experimental GIS has become the national GEOCHEVAL site used by the d'Artagnan project.

3rd objective was to develop an equestrian itinerary in the Loire Valley. The d'Artagnan project came at just the right time to develop a route offering an enriched tourist experience of cultural discovery of the Loire Valley, guided by d'Artagnan, the Musketeers and the Grand Siècle, with an open approach to Europe.

In the field of cycle tourism, the CVL region was a pioneer with the creation (in cooperation with the neighbouring Pays de la Loire region) of France's 1st historic cycle route. In 2025, the route will celebrate 20 years of tourist activity. Key figures :

- Since COVID, visitor numbers have increased, with annual growth of 10%.
- 2023 1.9 million cyclists, 2x the number since 2015
- 2023 : 55.6m, up 80% since 2015
- 1 in 2 cyclists comes from the region
- 56% tourists
- 80% French and 20% international
- Customer segmentation: 20% touring, 60% leisure, 15% sport, 5% everyday cycling

It should be noted that this project is part of European cycle route no. 6, which links the Atlantic to the Black Sea. In this context, the CVL region has supported the largest INTERREG project devoted to the development of cycle tourism between the Loire and the Danube by bike, which has helped to consolidate the tourism model of the 'EUROVELO' network.

The aim of the special partnership between AERA and the CVL region was to adapt the experience gained in cycle tourism versus equestrian tourism by applying this know-how to the Route D'Artagnan. The challenge was to share a common method for researching equestrian itineraries capable of gradually evolving towards welcoming riders and organising the services on offer while respecting cultural fundamentals.

The AERA model is certainly one of the most successful and ambitious in Europe when it comes to providing a touring tourism experience. It has been able to capitalise on what has been achieved in the field of walking (mapping out, maintaining and marking out routes) and cycle tourism (qualifying tourism service providers and developing related services and facilities on cycle routes), while enriching the educational, cultural and sporting aspects.

In the region as a whole, the route is managed by the CRE CVL with financial support from the Regional Council. It is organised around annualised action plans of the order of €50,000, with regional support varying between 80% and 50%, making it possible to

- training volunteers to explore routes and collect data
- Equipping volunteers (laptop, GPS, map licences, electric bike, etc.)
- Coordinating teams
- Collect, qualify and enhance digital data (route, soil type, land ownership, local tourist and equestrian offer, hard point, etc.)
- Raising awareness and mobilising local authorities
- Register the paths with the PDIPR

Mark out

Identify and qualify accommodation providers with the AERA accommodation charter

....

At the same time, the region has encouraged the regional cycling and walking committees to sign an agreement to work together to develop the various activities and monitor and maintain the route.

In 2021, all the areas crossed by the equestrian routes have set up an 18-month LEADER cooperation programme to strengthen the structuring and coordination of the area, with the recruitment of a coordinator. The post of equestrian tourism officer within the CRE has been consolidated to continue the work of coordinating the routes. The CRE has announced that all 587 km of the CVL region will be completed by June 2025. At the same time, work to raise awareness among tourist service providers is continuing.

In terms of aid for tourist accommodation, the region is particularly supportive of accommodation that specialises in welcoming itinerants and is involved in qualification schemes such as the AERA equestrian accommodation scheme. The region is encouraging the development of bivouac sites, which meet the new demands of both Gravel (the fast-growing adventure bike on rural paths) and horse riders. They are simple and easy to set up, and are particularly well suited to small towns with a few shops for supplies. The development of Gravel has a bright future on the roads of d'Artagnan. The arrival of this new sport will consolidate visitor numbers and economic spin-offs.

In 2023, the Region, the CRE and the 4 départements worked on a model bilateral partnership agreement with AERA at regional and département level. The regional agreement was adopted in 2023.

3.3.2 Overview of the financial situation of the network

Financial statement

Partnership agreements

AERA undertakes to lead the tourism implementation phase on the basis of departmental steering committees and a three-year roadmap approved by all the partners, The partner undertakes to organise cooperation with stakeholders on its territory in accordance with the fundamentals of the REA, on the basis of documents drawn up by AERA, and to propose actions for the development of soft itinerancy on the Route as well as its tourist and cultural enhancement (co-construction). A budget is proposed by AERA in the following sheet to support the whole scheme over the long term:

2011-2014 Project design - visits to the Haras Nationaux, equestrian federations, meetings with representatives of the regions of the 6 countries in Brussels with the support of MEPs, visits to the Institut de Luxembourg, drafting of statutes, composition of the consortium for the COSME project, organisation of a "Carrefour d'Europe des ICCE" in Toulouse in 2013 ...)- personal investment by the Founder-Chairman of around €20,000

2015-2023 - Phase 1: Setting up infrastructures and tools to promote the Route Creation of the association in 2014 and preparation of the COSME project from 2015 to 2016

- personal investment by the founding president of around €15,000 (costs not eligible under COSME):

- support from the founding members of AERA of the order of 30,000 euros per year

Creation of the business model and development tools in 2016-2017:

- COSME funding: €250,000 over 18 months, of which only 70% was used due to the implementation of the NOTRe Law in France)+ funding for AERA members over the period 2016-2017 (€40,000 per year)

- governance by the FFE for phase 1 in cooperation with the other equestrian federations setting up the fundamentals of REA with a view to certification by the Council of Europe, - preparation of routes, purchase of beacons + communication products

Phase 1 has been extended to 2021 due to delays caused by the implementation of the NOTRe law and COVID 19.

- INTERREG, LEADER, ERASMUS+, Ministry of Culture grants committed . during this period of around €1 million

AERA to take over governance in 2022 to launch the Route's tourism phase in all départements and regions

2023-2026: Phase 2: implementation of tourism on the basis of partnership agreements with the departments and their tourist offices, via department steering committees Setting up route committees for each topoguide as and when the 6 routes are opened in their entirety, with the involvement of the regions.

2026-2028: Phase 3: large-scale promotion and communication at local, departmental, regional, national, European and international level, with tourist offices and tour operators in particular.

To be prepared from 2024 onwards, from the start of marketing in each territory.

Human resources based on departmental contributions to AERA: 4 posts - 1 Infrastructure and networking project manager Monitoring the installation of infrastructure, signposting and agreements with accommodation providers; 1 Tourism development officer Monitoring and organising departmental steering committees and interdepartmental coordination to prepare for the setting up of route Committees 1 REA Communication and Promotion Officer Communication (website, social networks, newsletter) and promotion through events organised on the route; 1 Financial and Administrative Assistant Monitoring of partnership agreements and administrative support for project managers.

Financia statement

Recipes	2024-2026	2027-2028	Expenses	year 2026	year 2028
Subscriptions from departmental partners or their tourist offices or attraction agencies (3500 per year per	—	—	1 Infrastructure and networking project manager	32,00 €	32,00 €

structure). The recruitment of project managers will be based on the number of agreements signed from 2023.					
57 departments/provinces involved in the 2024-2026 period, out of the 6 countries concerned (57 x 3,500 = €199,500) pm: 62 departments/provinces in total out of the 17 regions in the 2026-2028 period (62 x 3500 = €217,000) -	199,500 €	217000,00€	1 Tourism development officer	32000,00 €	32000,00 €
Contribution from the regions when the route committees are set up (contribution to the drafting of topographical guides) and for the launch of phase 3 to promote the Route (15 regions at €5,000 = €75,000) Over 2025-2026: 5 regions (6 x €5,000 = €30,000).	30000,00 €	75000,00€	1 REA Communication and Promotion Officer Part-time over the period 2024-2026	16 000,00 €	32000,00 €
NB: the people shown on the ID card are all volunteers and will remain so!	_____	_____	1 administrative and financial assistant	32 000,00 €	32000,00 €
The REA's economic model provides for a contribution from the accommodation providers under agreement with AERA based on the number of visitors to the route, as soon as each of the 6 routes is fully open. 1 accommodation is needed every 25 km, over 10,000 km -2024-2026 period: 300 hours x €300 = €90,000 -2026-2028 period: 400 H x €500 = €200,000 The estimated average amounts will be adjusted according to the level of use of each route.	90000,00 €	20000,00€	Mission expenses in the 6 countries	50000,00 €	50000,00€
			Rental of administrative headquarters, IT equipment, website, accounting and legal support	30000,00 €	40000,00€
			Co-organisation of and participation in 15 annual events in the départements + support for educational, social and promotional initiatives in the regions	127 500 €	244,00€
Total	319,500 €	492,00€	Total	319,500 €	492,00€

3.3.3 Current composition of the network by country and type of member¹

Members are listed page 14 to 34 with in total 132 members, splitted in 4 pillars :

- 1) 29 public authorities
- 2) 16 sport federations
- 3) 13 associations

¹ This section should also specify if the network has members in the Russian Federation and their nature (public, private, NGO, etc). It should also shade light on any decisions taken by the network following the cessation of membership of the Russian Federation from the Council of Europe and activities carried out by Russian network member. For more information, please refer to the Committee of Ministers Resolution [CM/Res\(2022\)3](#) on legal and financial consequences of the cessation of membership of the Russian Federation in the Council of Europe.

4) 74 individuals

3.3.4 Network extension since last evaluation

The number of institutional members (authorities, sports federations and associations) has been increased in the last periods from 18 in 2014, to 39 in 2021 to reach 58 in 2024.

If you need more information on this part I can send to you the table included in the certification file prepared for the 1st certification in 2020.

In addition, REA explain in the current certification file (page 35 to 38) their strategy to increase significantly membership in the tourism implementation phase as the process is mainly based on partnership agreements with departments and provinces as explained in La Rochelle.

Potentially REA expect to attract about 30 to 40 additional departments/provinces during the period 2025-2027.

3.3.5 Strategy for the network extension in the three years to come

For this point it's very important see the document "Three-Year Forecast Business Plan (2025-2027)". This development plan is based on the REA's tourism development strategy, which was defined and validated at the Versailles Annual General Assembly in February 2022.

The strategy is explained in detail in the certification file and the accompanying annexes, with reference to the PowerPoint presentations given during bilateral meetings with representatives from each department and their respective tourist offices.

The strategy is integrated:

1. all the administrative levels concerned in each territory, including municipalities, provinces, communities of municipalities, and territorial communities.
2. deploying actions on the six axes of the value chain for tourism, culture, education, social services, the environment, and heritage.

The overarching framework is as follows: The REA's objective is to align itself with the tenets set forth in the Sibiu Declaration on Cultural Tourism. "Tourist and cultural activities in which the motivation of visitors is to learn, discover, experience, and enjoy products and attractions in relation to the tangible and intangible heritage of various destinations on the same theme of the real and romanticised life of d'Artagnan and the Musketeers, which are anchored in the collective imagination." The provision of authentic experiences and participatory activities in the learning of the arts, as well as the rediscovery of equestrian heritage associated with these mythical characters, facilitate a reconnection with local populations and contribute to the strengthening of cultural diversity in a dynamic manner.

Phase II of the project will entail the implementation of a series of actions. The development of tourism (Phase I, 2017-2021: infrastructure development)

The deployment of these actions is already underway in a large majority of departments/provinces (53 out of 65). However, further consolidation is required through the establishment of departmental management based on a model deployed in Charente Maritime (see Annex 2).

- It is essential to disseminate a comprehensive understanding of the pertinent road throughout the department to facilitate its advancement and optimise the utilisation of the instruments devised by AERA across the REA value chain.
- The finalisation of the itineraries and their incorporation into the Development Plan for the Roads of Hiking will enable the optimal utilisation of the historical resources. The department lists several literary and equestrian highlights, which contribute to the development of tourism on the Route. This is achieved through the provision of quality, well-signposted and maintained routes in close cooperation with equestrian, pedestrian and cycling federations active in the territory.
- The accommodation essential for the reception of hikers has been identified and validated. In particular, equestrian accommodation providers who are approved by AERA based on a specific charter of hosting providers shall: Furthermore, the creation of a booking site, the implementation of GPX track management tools, the development of promotional and communication strategies, the organisation of animation projects and the organisation of annual events dedicated to mobilising the European Structural Funds (ERDF, EAFRD, LEADER, INTERREG) are also key objectives.
- The following actions are to be undertaken: It is also necessary to identify actions to be developed at the European and international levels that are of interest to the stakeholders. These could include ERASMUS+ actions, the special links to be developed with this or that Council of Europe country that supports CCIs, or internationally.
- Furthermore, all public and private actors likely to provide expertise to strengthen the economic model of the Road must be mobilised. This can be achieved through the Balancing Poles and Rural Territories (PETR) and Regional and National Parks (PNRN). Furthermore, the Grands Sites de France, which are present in the territory, collaborate with the network of Cities of Character identified on the Route.
- They also participate in the establishment of an "AERA club," which is responsible for disseminating information and providing training to private partners in the territory. This is achieved using digital tools, including the web AERA, under the guidance of the departmental steering committees.
- Contribute to historical and literary research to reinforce the theme of the Route at the departmental level, utilising departmental archives and historians. This will be achieved through the network of the AERA Historical and Cultural Commission and itinerary committees.
- The departmental partner will assist in the development of the REA as a tourist and cultural product of the highest quality, capable of supporting the tourism and cultural development strategy, as well as the equestrian and environmental aspects of the department. Given the reputation of the ICCE, already registered in the Destination France plan, and the fact that it is the subject of a more extensive European initiative with the support of the Ministry of Culture and ATOUT France, it seems feasible to reproduce this system in other countries. The next step is to study and set up a system for observing road traffic with the aim of evaluating the development of the route, measuring the effectiveness of investments and improving our knowledge of customers, while also responding to their needs. This will be achieved with the support of an AMO (assistance to project management of the University in Tourism type) and simple monitoring indicators (hosting surveys, data analysis, online questionnaires, etc.).

III- The third phase will focus on the promotion of the REA at the local, regional, national and European levels, with an initial focus on the 2026 elections and a subsequent strengthening of efforts during the 2028-2030 period.

- The objective is to increase the notoriety of the Routes by leveraging a high-performance web system and effective referencing with influence networks, including blogs and forums.
- The website should be revisited and animated in accordance with the developments of the various components of the tourism industry, including heritage, education, social activities and events.
- To enhance the reputation of the Routes, it is essential to implement effective promotional and marketing strategies. These should be directed towards the markets of the 17 regions concerned, the 6 associated countries, and to the European and global levels. In addition, the development of a digital topo guide collection compatible with "equestrian, cycling and pedestrian" is a crucial step. This should be made available for download on our website as GPX tracks.
- Furthermore, it is vital to promote demonstrations and events in as many territories as possible. This initiative commenced in 2017 with the official inauguration ceremonies, as outlined in the certification strategy document. Furthermore, a more assertive strategy was implemented in collaboration with the HLHLE (Historic High Places, Literary, Equestrian).
- The promotion of local products in the colours of D'Artagnan (gastronomic products, equestrian equipment, publications, films and documentaries, D'Artagnan's comic strips, musketeer, marketing products such as musketeers' coats, bandanas, T-shirts, saddle pads with the effigy of the REA) was also undertaken. ... For sale on site or in line

The methodology and roadmap 2025-2027

The advancement of tourism should facilitate the stimulation of the other developmental axes of the Road, and vice versa. This is to be achieved on the basis of the roadmaps defined by the territories in each partnership, in accordance with the guidelines set by AERA.

A monitoring table for this system will be presented to the Executive Board in November 2024 for presentation and adoption at the 2024 AGM scheduled for February 2025.

The implementation timeline for the introduction of tourism, with the support of the Infrastructure and Tourism Commission, is as follows:

- In 2022, the tourism strategy was distributed to the territories. In 2023, bilateral meetings were organised by AERA with each department/province.
- In 2024, letters were sent to the Presidents of the departments and provinces to launch the signing of partnership agreements, which will continue in 2025.
- The objective is to sign a dozen agreements in 2025, about thirty in 2026, and the 25 in 2027. (See Appendix 3 for the monitoring table for the tourism phase.)

The other thematic commissions provide support and reinforce this system.

The pedagogical commission, for instance, has developed a plan for the consolidation of actions in collaboration with the Escape Game d'Artagnan (EGA) and the Schools of Young European Musketeers (EJME). appendix3.10

- Implementation of Webinar training for facilitators (EGA)
- Creation of Escape Game D'Artagnan 100% digital

In consequence of the inaugural cycle of the D'Artagnan European meetings 2022-2024, the Historical and Cultural Commission will inaugurate a programme designated 'Territorial Musketeer Events' (TME) on the HLHLE. This programme will be based on a call for interest and will encompass the six routes of the REA.

- The TME will be scheduled based on anniversary dates of events on these sites, with the objective of supporting the finalisation of the Routard Guide, which is scheduled for publication in 2026. This cultural guide will be based on a selection of 100 HLHLEs from a total of 250.

Pilot projects will be initiated at the provincial level. In Béarn, Gascony, Bigorre, Touraine, Anjou, a cross-border approach will be favoured, as will that taken in the Ardennes and Luxembourg, Piedmont and Dauphiné, the land of the three borders around Blegny, the Mines between NL, BE, and DE, and so on.

The Economic and Heritage Commission will integrate the Culture Committee of the IFCE under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture. Its purpose will be to promote the equestrian heritage in a European dimension. It will do so in 7 working groups (out of 9) listed in the Certification file. These include notable equestrian locations, equestrian displays, the advancement of horse-drawn traditions (including pastoral land riding), the enhancement of archives pertaining to horses, the representation of horses in art, and the examination of the historical relationship between humans and horses.

The new system will be accompanied by the conclusion of new partnership agreements, for example with the "Cité Internationale de la Langue Française". In addition, the existing partnerships with our main partners will be updated.

1) The integration of innovations resulting from the development of tourism in the territories, based on their specific practices, will be facilitated.

2) Sports and cultural associations will be involved alongside local populations to ensure that this musketeer culture is embraced in a spirit of openness and promotion of the cultural diversity of the territories.

A regular update will be provided on the progress of these various actions, particularly during the two semi-annual executive boards and the annual general meeting of AERA.

3.4 Communication tools

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

Communication is via the association's website <https://www.route-dartagnan.eu/> on the home page for news and on the social networks where La Route D'Artagnan is present:

Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/routedartagnan/>

Instagram : https://www.instagram.com/route_dartagnan/

They are currently thinking about creating a TIKTOK account. (as part of the evolving European policy on this type of social network).

A variety of promotional materials were created, including flyers, posters, kakemonos, and merchandise, which were utilized at AERA-related events and sold as official merchandise. The merchandise included bandanas, saddle pads, polo shirts, and official musketeer helmets, among other items

3.4.2 Compliance with the Guidelines for the Use of the Logo “Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe”

The lettering used on all documents includes the AERA logo and the certification logo.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The European Route D'Artagnan is clearly an exceptional example of good practice that deserves to be disseminated by other Council of Europe Cultural Routes or by routes wishing to be certified. As the network aims to bring its range of activities to the highest level of tourism, in my opinion, the route could focus on the following areas: Sustainability and Responsible Tourism, Taking advantage of the work carried out by universities (The cultural mission of the University Network for Cultural Routes Studies) and disseminating knowledge to other networks; Gender Equality Towards a Union of Equality; Culture Routes in the Sustainable Development Goals; Culture Routes in the Sustainable Development Goals; The role of tourism in healthy aging and Promotion of interfaith dialogue and reconciliation: creating and sustaining spaces of encounter.

Recent studies have identified a shift in travel trends towards sustainability, personalisation and the pursuit of wellbeing. This shift is evident in the increasing interest among travellers in authentic and meaningful experiences that respect the environment and benefit local communities. In response to these trends, tour operators can offer services that not only meet the needs of customers, but also contribute positively to the world we explore.

I purpose those recommendations for these The European Route D'Artagnan:

- **Sustainability and Responsible Tourism**

Sustainability continues to be a growing priority for travellers around the world. In 2024 and 2025, there will be a substantial surge in demand for travel options that reduce environmental impact and support local communities.

Tourists will be seeking: Green accommodation: Hotels and resorts that utilise renewable energy, manage waste responsibly and offer sustainable tourism experiences. Green transport: A preference for low-carbon modes of transport, such as trains and electric vehicles. Local experiences: Tours that promote local culture, support local artisans and businesses, and reduce mass tourism. Wellness and Health Travel Personal wellness has become a key motivation for travel. Destinations and experiences that promote physical and mental health are gaining popularity. Travellers are opting for: Yoga and meditation retreats: Tranquil locations offering wellness and relaxation programmes. Spas and spas: Destinations known for their hot springs and rejuvenating treatments. Outdoor activities: Hiking, cycling and water sports excursions that combine adventure and wellness. Personalised and Tailor-Made Trips Personalisation is a growing trend, with travellers seeking unique experiences tailored to their interests and needs. Travel agencies and operators are offering Tailor-made Itineraries: Personalised travel plans that consider individual preferences, from accommodation to specific activities.

Exclusive Experiences: Access to private events, behind-the-scenes tours and unique activities not available to the public. Expert Advice: Travel consultants to provide personalised recommendations based on in-depth knowledge of destinations.

Tourism and New trends - Emerging Destinations and Lesser-Known Routes

The desire to explore new and less saturated places continues to grow. In 2024 and 2025, some of the emerging destinations include:

Central Asia: Countries such as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are gaining popularity for their rich history and breathtaking landscapes.

West Africa: Destinations such as Ghana and Senegal offer a blend of vibrant culture, beautiful beaches and unique safaris. Eastern Europe: Countries such as Albania and Georgia are capturing travellers' attention for their natural beauty and cultural heritage.

Technology and Digital Travel

Technology continues to transform the travel experience, making it easier to plan and more convenient to travel. Technology trends include Travel Apps: Apps that help manage itineraries, bookings and provide real-time information. Virtual and augmented reality: These allow travellers to explore destinations virtually before physically visiting them. Contactless payments and digital currencies facilitate secure and convenient transactions during travel.

Adventure tourism and extreme experiences continue to be a major trend for thrill-seekers.

Travellers are looking for extreme sports, such as paragliding, cave diving and mountain climbing, challenging routes, such as trekking and hiking trails in remote and less explored places, and polar expeditions. Travellers are venturing to the Arctic and Antarctic regions to experience the beauty and challenge of extreme environments.

Travel trends for 2024 and 2025 reflect a shift towards sustainability, personalisation and the pursuit of wellness. Travellers are more interested than ever in authentic and meaningful experiences that respect the environment and benefit local communities. By keeping up with these trends, tour operators can offer services that not only meet customers' needs, but also contribute positively to the world we explore.

Some European examples of themed tourist routes

France now has over three hundred themed tourist routes. Normandy alone has more than forty, including the Route des Colombiers Cauchois, the Route des Chaumières, the Route de la Terre, the Route des Dentelles Normandes, the Route des Parcs et Jardins de Basse-Normandie and the Route des Ivoires. Calvados has introduced the Route des Moulins, the Route des Gorges de la Vire, the Route des Traditions, the Route de la Suisse Normande and the Route du Cidre. In Auvergne, there's the Route des Châteaux and the Route des Fromages AOC, and in Burgundy, the Route Historique des Ducs de Bourgogne and the Route Touristique des Grands Crus. Vineyards are obviously very popular. Among the dozens of itineraries devoted to them are the Route des Vins d'Alsace, the Route des Vins Mâconnais-Beaujolais (South Burgundy), the Route Touristique des Vignobles du Cœur de France (Loire Valley), the Route des Vins (Provence) and the Route Touristique du Champagne. But these are not the only local products that have attracted attention. There's the Route du Sapin de l'Aude, the Route Touristique de la Forêt de La Coubre (Charente-Maritime), the Route du Blé (Beauce), the Route de la Lavande and the Route de l'Olivier (Provence), and the Route de la Noix (Périgord). History and heritage have also been put to good use, with the Route des Rois d'Angleterre and the Route Historique des Plantagenêts (Maine, Anjou, Touraine, Poitou and Charente), the Route Historique La route du fleuve, Saint-Irénée, Charlevoix Photo : François Rivard / Association touristique régionale de Charlevoix Téoros Été 2003 Dossier Les Routes à thèmes François 1er, la Route des Communes (Franche-Comté), la Route des Phares (Bretagne), les Routes Tranquilles de Perche, la Route du Baroque (AlpesMaritimes), la Route Touristique Prince de Bretagne, la Route des Villes d'Eaux (Massif Central), la Route des Cathédrales (Picardie), la Route des Antiquaires (Nyons region), la Route des Haras et des Châteaux de l'Orne, la Route des Peintres de la Lumière (Provence). Several personalities are also mentioned along the routes dedicated to them. Examples include the Route Napoléon,

the Route de Madame de Sévigné and the Route Touristique Jean Jaurès. Germany, for its part, has defined nineteen national routes, including the German Alps Route, the Romanesque Route, the Castles Route, the Industrial Heritage Route, the Timber-framed Houses Route, the Tree Tunnels Route, the Alps and Baltic Holiday Route, the German Wine Route, the Fairy Tales Route, the Glass Route, the Old Salt Route and the Goethe Route. In Scotland, you can follow the Whisky Route, the Castle Route, the Northeast Coastal Route and the Wool Route of the Scottish Borders and Trassachs.

Portugal offers the Santiago Route, the Almansa Route, the Roman Route and the Merchants' Route. There's the Luxury and Design Route in Switzerland, the Beer Route in the Liège region, the Fire Route in the Liège region and the Forest Route in the province of Luxembourg (Belgium), as well as the Eagle Route, the Troll Route and the Atlantic Route in Norway. There are also several initiatives aimed at organising cross-border tourist routes. These include the Chestnut Route in the Italian regions of Emilia Romagna, Campania and Calabria, in Corsica, and in the Rhône-Alpes and Languedoc-Roussillon regions. Initiatives such as these are, incidentally, on the agenda of the European Council for Cultural Cooperation, which launched a programme of cultural routes in 1987. Since 1987, the European Institute of Cultural Routes has been responsible for developing and implementing cultural route projects, including the pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela, the Viking routes, the European silk and textile routes, the Parks and Gardens Route and the Territories of Memory.

The concept of a themed tourist route as already mentioned the concept of a themed tourist route covers a wide range of events. This diversity is due to the almost unlimited variety of themes chosen, but it is also due to the ways in which the routes are designed.

This definition is more in line with the European approach to themed tourist routes: the principle of a themed route is to create a system of links between similar types of heritage, to design a product capable of boosting a region's tourist economy. Increasing visitor numbers, organising them and spreading them out over time, while generating direct and indirect economic benefits along the route, enhancing the value of a particular heritage, finding additional outlets for producers, extending the length of stays... are often among the main objectives behind the creation of this type of product. The discovery of a simple, coherent theme is the common thread running through the route, and is applied to the various points of interest along the way (natural sites, built heritage, arts and crafts, local produce, etc.) (Carlier, 2000).

. From the outset, tourist routes aim to boost the local or regional tourist economy. The motivations of the initiators of themed tourist route projects (municipalities, groups of agricultural producers or craftsmen, owners of historic sites or monuments, tourist associations, economic development organisations, etc.), which are often explicit in the presentation of the routes, confirm the importance of the economic development aspect. The designation of tourist routes makes it possible to channel visitor numbers, organise reception facilities, mobilise economic players, even revitalise moribund sectors of activity, and better distribute the economic spin-offs. In a few cases, it is also a catalyst for spatial development, insofar as certain development initiatives find the creation of a tourist route a favourable breeding ground and economic lever. This dissociation of the road network and the predominance of the economic aspect were not, however, taken for granted from the outset; rather, they are the result of a gradual evolution. In Europe, the themed tourist routes designated at the end of the 1970s often consisted of simple signposting. From this point of view, they were more akin to an opportunistic territorial marketing exercise than a genuine tourism development operation. Nowadays, the concept of a tourist route is based more on a geographical definition. In its broadest sense, the term 'route' refers to long-distance trade routes. These are land, river or sea routes used to transport precious goods for trade. The toponym generally evokes the idea of a long-distance route, a specific spatial feature and an

object. Among the best-known examples of such routes are the Silk and Spice Routes, used from the second century BC, the East India Route, opened at the end of the fifteenth century, and the Slave Route, used from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. In Quebec, the Copper Route refers to the communication route that linked Tadoussac and the Great Lakes in the sixteenth century, passing through the Laurentian hinterland. The transposition of such a designation to the field of tourism dates to 1932 in France, when the Route Napoléon became the first historic tourist route. Although the name was attached to the Nationale 85, it was more of a route than a road, as there was no road at the time when Napoleon made his journey from Cannes to Grenoble. In the early 1950s, chateaux owners and winegrowers in the Loire Valley got together to create the Route des Châteaux in the heart of France. A few years later, winegrowers launched the Route des Vins d'Alsace. Several other historic routes were created in the late 1960s, but many themed tourist routes, in France as elsewhere in Europe, were created in the 1970s.

The proliferation of tourist routes since the 1990s has been accompanied by a transformation in their conception and role. While the initial designations were aimed at personalising a destination-region by evoking a specific historical, geo-graphical, cultural, artisanal, industrial or cultural feature, they increasingly seem to be part of a policy of differentiation and enhancement based on a voluntary planning approach supported by regional engineering. The themed tourist route is a device that must be distinguished from hiking or discovery circuits, landscape routes or itineraries whose role is simply to indicate the route to follow to get from one place to another. In other words, themed tourist routes are more like emergences from the substance of a place than methods of access to the resource. Recent studies have identified several key travel trends for 2025, including visits to detour destinations and observation of natural phenomena. Destinations that offer stress reduction and increased proximity to nature have been identified as trending for 2025. Researchers have analysed booking data to identify trends that are likely to dominate in 2025.

While some holiday habits appear to persist indefinitely, such as city breaks and summer sun, each year seems to bring a new craze and a plethora of buzzwords to boot.

For 2025, holiday experts have identified 'JOMO trips' and detour destinations as their predictions.

- **Walking Tour and Free Walking Tour**

In the globalised world in which we live, where the capitalist system reigns supreme and technology continues to change frantically, it is necessary to rethink innovative options in all areas, and tourism, as an important market segment, needs to keep up with these changes and reinvent itself. The walking tour can be categorised as cultural tourism, as it covers the tangible part of cultural heritage through the architecture of the tourist attractions and the intangible part through the history and culture narrated during the tour. This type of walking tour gives visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves in and enjoy the lifestyle of the local inhabitants, the surrounding areas and the aspects that determine their identity and character. The culture and customs of a people are differentiators that enhance the competitiveness of tourism products and routes, as well as reaffirming the values and identity of the community. *Walking tours offer new experiences with professional guides who put the group at ease and can even negotiate and change the itinerary to make the most of the walking experience. The places visited, the length of the visit and the stories told vary according to the profile of the tourist groups, as the act of walking gives them more control over the experience* (GENTRY, 2007, p. 234).

Tourist itineraries in which tourists are the actors define the experience lived in a particular place, the social and spatial contexts that are written and interpreted. The manipulation of the

history and culture of these areas ends up creating a unique and attractive environment, creating an emotional attachment on the part of both tourists and residents. They can be used to contextualise the existing attractions in a destination and provide the visitor with a different experience than if they did so without any indication or guidance. They are important tools for tourists to understand the current socio-cultural reality of a community. The Walking Tour concept was founded by Chris Sandeman in 2003, who started this type of tour in the city of Berlin, creating a company called SANDEMANs, which is still in business today, providing the same service in various European cities. The walking tour has emerged to fill the gap created by the concern to create innovative itineraries that seek alternatives to capture the interest of tourists and new ways of including the population with its characteristics and peculiarities. It is understood that this type of itinerary can provide tourists with the experience of having contact with local history, and thus benefit the community, the tourist themselves, as well as the public and private sectors, through the insertion into the market of a product based on participatory tourism planning.

Participating in the growth process of a city or country is a condition that no citizen escapes, or can give up, either through participatory action or exclusion, so it is essential that residents know and value their culture, their city and their heritage, from the one that is listed to the one that resists, the material and the immaterial, the profitable or the ignored, the one that is understood or the one that is not accessible. In short, all of a people's heritage must be valued, publicised, strengthened and also used, so as not to freeze places or cities in the name of preservation. On the contrary, the sustainable use of heritage contributes to its conservation by turning it into an asset that the local community identifies with and therefore values and safeguards, because man, when he makes good use of his talent, manages, through creativity and tolerance, to live together in harmony. These walking tours usually take place in areas close to each other, allowing you to travel between attractions without the use of transport, just by walking, so that you can experience the whole experience. Some common examples of places where these tours take place are historic city centres. Walking tours are of short duration (an average of two hours) and are based on the attractions in a specific area that may be of interest to visitors. A variation of this type of tour is the so-called Free Walking Tour, where the tour is completely free without losing quality. The remuneration is left to the tourists, who evaluate and tip the guide according to their level of satisfaction with the tour. There are still few studies on this type of walking tour. The free walking tour began in 2004 and has since spread around the world. This activity can benefit public administration, private initiative and the self-employed tourist guide trade with the presentation of a new route that requires little investment. Presenting a different view of walking tours as a way of preserving a city's history and heritage, the free walking tour is inserted as a tool for motivation, awareness and knowledge in schools, associations and organised groups, and can thus stimulate a new form of tourism competitiveness.

Creation of Walking Tour and Free Walking

Tour itineraries Some concerns need to be addressed to the walking tour product, so that there is a standardisation of creation and execution, and it is strengthened in other locations. It is therefore important to define criteria and steps for carrying out a WT. Below we propose an initial structure for the creation of walking tours based on the premises taken from the Ministry of Tourism's guidebook (2007) and reference authors on the subject (STURTEVANT, 2019; DE STEFANI, 2014; TAVARES; CHIMENTI, 2020): a) It is necessary to plan research, with a survey of the following factors Tourism, Cities, Collecting and Museums;b) Identify the specific segment of demand; c) Identify the target audience; d) Survey the infrastructure of the place where the WT will take place; e) Formulate the itinerary; f) Check logistical viability; g) Create

a network of suppliers; h) Check commercial viability; i) Structure the itinerary; j) Defining the rules of conduct for the group and the actions of the monitor, guide or teacher; l) Rules and behaviour regarding the protection and preservation of the site; m) Identifying problems and shortcomings along the route; n) Guiding the group regarding care and appropriate attire; o) Providing a form of contact with the group afterwards; p) Recording the work through reports and images. Clearly The European Route d'Artagnan pays homage to this historical and literary hero by offering hikers, horseback riders and cyclists the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of d'Artagnan and the Musketeers in 15 regions and 6 European countries, , can make a contribution to other routes that already exist, but which don't yet have the stature to be integrated Cultural route pf the Council of Europe.

- **The cultural mission of universities**

In 2012, the University Network for Cultural Routes Studies was launched with the aim of facilitating exchanges between the Cultural Routes of the Europe programme, universities involved in the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, and certified Cultural heritage, and certified cultural routes The aim of the university network is to promote research on the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes related to issues, encourage students to carry out their academic research on Cultural Routes, jointly apply for European grants with the European Institute of Cultural Routes, participate in the annual programme of activities of the of the Institute's activities and offer scientific advice as needed. The University Network of Cultural Routes Studies has 32 members: University of Luxembourg (Luxembourg); IREST, University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne (France); LABPACT, University of Barcelona (Spain); CAST, University of Bologna (Italy); INTOUR, University of Bedfordshire (UK); IPAC, University of Laval (Canada); University of Haifa (Israel); Compostela Group of Universities; USI, Università della Svizzera Italiana (Switzerland); UniMib, Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca (Italy); Mid Sweden University (Sweden); BSUN, Network of Black Sea Universities; DIST, Politecnico di Torino and University of Torino (Italy); University of Angers (France); Mardin Artuklu University (Turkey); University of Piraeus (Greece); Armenian National Agricultural University (Armenia); University of Maribor (Slovenia); University of Donja Gorica (UDG) (Montenegro); Nottingham Trent University (United Kingdom); Constantine the Philosopher University of Nitra (Slovakia); Lebanese American University - Louis Cardahi Foundation (Lebanon); Università Ca'Foscari Venezia (Italy); Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria (Italy); Ege University (Turkey); Juraj Dobrila University of Pula (Croatia); Antalya Bilim University (Turkey); . Nevsehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University (Turkey); Balıkesir University (Turkey); Budapest Metropolitan University (Hungary); Eötvös Loránd University (Hungary); Universidad de La Laguna (Spain). The members of the network are specialised in a variety of disciplines, such as: cultural heritage, landscape management, interpretation and mediation, urban regeneration, tourism, economics, geography, local development geography, local development, sociology, among others. In addition, cooperation in research and development takes place within each of the certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe as this is one of the five priority areas for action identified in Resolution CM/Res (2023)2 of the Committee of Ministers on the revision of the rules for the award of the "Cultural Council of Europe" certification. To promote research practices within the network, the European Institute of Cultural Routes, previously held Academic Workshops, platforms for regular interaction between scholars from different discussing trends, innovative approaches, challenges and best practices in the field of cultural routes. In 2024, the EICR, in collaboration with the Compostela Group of Universities (member of the University Network for Cultural Routes Studies) organised its 1 International Conference on Universities and Cultural Routes at the University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain). Bringing together leading academics, educators, researchers and students to the results of their research on Cultural Routes and to

reflect on new perspectives for action. The aim of the event is to highlight existing research and academic activity in universities and to lay the foundations for future new actions and collaborations in the field of Cultural Routes.

The conference provided opportunities for intellectual and human exchange across borders, cultures and languages, with the aim of promoting joint reflection on the various themes of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe through a multidisciplinary approach.

Why not take advantage of this network of universities to expand studies on topics related to D'Artagnan (e.g. gastronomy, music, fashion and organise historical reenactment's), since this network of universities already has work developed in this field, and add the excellence of the scientific committee of the d European Route D'Artagnan?

- **Gender Equality Towards a Union of Equality**

The European Union (EU) Strategy for Gender Equality aims to make significant progress towards a gender equal Europe by 2025. The Strategy sets out policy objectives and actions to deliver on the commitment of the von der Leyen Commission to create a Union of Equality. All citizens, regardless of their gender, gender identity and expression, gender characteristics, sexual identity, racial or ethnic origin, age, religion or belief and any disability, must be able to follow their chosen path in life and have equal opportunities to prosper, participate and lead. The Presidency Conclusions on Gender Equality in the Field of Culture, adopted in December 2020, underline the potential of culture to promote gender equality and recognise the persistence of gender inequalities in the sector.

The document refers to obstacles related to

- equal access to the cultural and creative labour market
- equal pay and representation in creative and decision-making positions
- equal appreciation and recognition of their work
- It underlines that gender stereotyping and sexual harassment, and abuse remain major concerns in the cultural and creative sectors.

The Presidency Conclusions inter alia invite EU Member States to

- to ensure equal pay
- promote a better work-life balance
- Ensure gender equality in the sector's institutions and decision-making bodies
- Promote research on gender equality and the collection of gender-disaggregated data in the cultural sector.

The European Commission (EC) is called upon to support transnational initiatives on gender equality in the cultural sector and to promote the collection and dissemination of culture-specific data on gender equality and cultural diversity in Europe.

Gender inequality in the cultural and creative sectors

Intersectional gender gaps persist in almost all cultural and creative sectors, with individuals experiencing discrimination based on their gender and other personal characteristics and identities.

Available data shows that, across the EU, female artists and cultural workers typically have less access to creative and production resources, are paid much less than men, and are under-represented in leadership and other decision-making positions, as well as in the arts market. Women are often victims of sexism, gender stereotyping and sexual harassment.

In France, for example, 52% of all performing arts students are women. However, they represent only 31% of practising artists, 11% of programmed artists and only 18% of management positions in these sectors. Since 1980, only 4-12% of arts awards have gone to women.

In addition, 23% of publicly funded projects in France are led by women. Women with the same skills or the same job earn on average 27% less than male artists (source: "Inégalités entre les femmes et les hommes dans les arts et la culture", Haut Conseil à l'Égalité, 2018).

Music: In Europe, women represent 20% or less of registered composers and songwriters and earn on average 30% less than men working in the sector (source: 'Women in Music', 2019).

Theatre: In Ireland, women are under-represented in all theatre roles surveyed, except for costume designers. Only 28% of script writers, 9% of sound designers and 37% of directors are women (Source: Research commissioned by #WakingtheFeminists, 2017).

Circus: In Spain, women's employment is significantly lower in the economically stronger companies. 80% of performers on stage are men, against 20% women. Show directors are almost all men (source: Research by the Associació de Professionals de Circ de Catalunya (APCC), 2019).

Visual arts: In 2017, works by female artists represented only 3-5 per cent of major permanent collections in Europe and the United States (USA). At the same time, only 13.7% of living artists represented by galleries in Europe and North America are women.

More data is needed on the gender inequalities faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQI) persons across the EU.

Tackling the gender gap

It is important to recognise and address the inequalities caused by a gender gap in the cultural and creative sectors through targeted policies. The previous Council Work Plan for Culture for the period 2019-2022 recognises that gender equality is a pillar of cultural diversity and plays a key role in challenging stereotypes and promoting social change.

The Work Plan recommends two actions to address gender gaps in the EU's cultural and creative sectors

mapping the situation of women artists and cultural workers

Convening the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) expert group to exchange experiences and good practices and formulate recommendations.

The European Commission has funded an EU-wide study on gender gaps in the cultural and creative sectors. The study analyses the specific challenges faced by women and provides recommendations to support policy making to address these issues.

As mentioned in the Council Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026, the development of cultural statistics on vulnerabilities in the cultural and creative sectors in Europe, including gender inequality, is an important measure to build resilience through culture.

Eurostat has published data and articles on different aspects of culture, such as cultural employment, cultural education and cultural participation.

Gender Equality Report

In addition, the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) expert group on gender equality worked between autumn 2019 and spring 2021 to propose a set of policy recommendations and actions in response to these challenges under the new Creative Europe programme.

The result is the OMC report "Towards gender equality in the cultural and creative sectors", which will be published in June 2021.

The report focuses on the following key challenges

- Gender stereotypes
- sexual harassment
- Access to the labour market and the gender pay gap
- Access to resources
- Access to leadership and female entrepreneurship.

In addition to a general overview of the status quo of gender equality in the cultural and creative sectors, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the report provides a comprehensive set of recommendations and good practices on how to implement them.

The report is addressed to all policymakers and decision-makers, as well as to the cultural and creative sectors, the media and the education sector.

The report recommends

Improving the collection of reliable and comparable data on gender gaps across the EU

the importance of using gender neutral language

the implementation of gender equality in the workplace, as well as gender budgeting and gender mainstreaming methodologies.

The EC launched the "Women on the move" day in 2019 to discuss the issue of gender balance in the cultural and creative sectors. As a follow-up, the EC published an overview of good practices from the audiovisual industry to be replicated in all Member States.

The issue of gender balance in the cultural and creative sectors was also discussed in 2019 between the EC and cultural and creative sector stakeholders as part of the 'Voices of Culture' structured dialogue, which brought together 36 sector representatives from across the EU.

- **Culture Routes in the Sustainable Development Goals**

Cultural Routes follow the UN Sustainable Development Goals and thus contribute to improve local economies, provide support to SMEs and promote local identity and shared European values. Ninety percent of the Cultural Routes cross rural areas, which brings additional cultural, social and economic opportunities to less well-known destinations.

Culture is at the heart of Europe's identity. Culture contributes to the prosperity, social cohesion and well-being of Europeans. It also strengthens Europe's image and influence in the world. EU leaders have pledged to increase their support for cultural cooperation.

Agenda 2030 is the most comprehensive and ambitious development agenda the world has ever seen. Culture is part of this agenda. The Sustainable Development Goals provide pathways for culture to thrive, but culture also helps to drive the SDGs.

The European Union and its 27 Member States are committed to delivering on the global agenda. Europe has much to contribute and much to learn.

The EU is well placed to deliver on the cultural goals. Several member states are leading by example, focusing on cultural objectives in their SDG implementation strategies.

The role of the European Union The 2030 Agenda is the most comprehensive and ambitious development agenda the world has ever seen. Culture is part of this agenda. The Sustainable Development Goals provide pathways

for culture to flourish, but culture also helps to drive the SDGs. The European Union and its 27 Member States are committed to delivering on the global agenda. Europe has much to contribute and much to learn.

The purpose of this reflection. With only six years left to achieve the SDGs, where are the Council of Europe's cultural routes heading?

How can the European Rout D'Artagnan and the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe members maximise their impact? Where should the European Rout D'Artagnan focus its efforts?

A few EU policies already contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, but in other areas there is for greater alignment. Coordination and cooperation need to be further improved, including between the EU and national capitals. The current EU budget does not reflect the importance of culture for society or the EU's ambitions.

Europe's contribution to culture as a dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals could be particularly valuable in five areas:

A priority for Europe could be to focus on the role of culture in education, including by promoting global citizenship, arts education and the appreciation of cultural diversity (SDG 4).

Cultural and creative industries are drivers of innovation, accounting for nearly 30 million jobs worldwide; in Europe they employ more young people than any other sector. Tourism, which accounts for 10% of EU GDP, is also a driver of jobs and growth. By supporting creative industries and cultural tourism, the EU could contribute to sustainable economic growth (SDG 8).

Third, the EU could do more to protect and promote the world's cultural and natural heritage in its forthcoming and mainstream heritage in its forthcoming multi-annual budget (SDG 11).

Floods, earthquakes, heatwaves and other manifestations of climate change pose huge challenges to cultural and natural heritage. Disaster risk reduction must be EU priorities in Europe and beyond (SDG 13). Fundamental freedoms are a cornerstone of sustainable development (SDG 16).

However, in many countries, freedom of expression is under sustained attack and artists, academics and journalists are being silenced, academics and journalists are being silenced. The EU should strengthen its support for freedom of expression and the right to culture.

- **The role of tourism in healthy aging**

With the rapid ageing of the population, the well-being of people aged 60 and over has become a focus of private and public policy. Creative and cultural participation plays an important role in promoting social cohesion, inclusion and the accumulation of social capital among older people (Belfiore 2002; Ferraro et al. 2019) and contributes significantly to reducing the risk of depression (Ghenta et al. 2022). Grossi et al. (2011) analysed the social dimension of cultural activities and found that collective participation motivates older people to engage in activities they would not normally do. McLean et al (2011) reviewed 31 studies of people over 60, mostly in the UK and USA, and concluded that participatory arts programmes provide opportunities for social contact, friendship and support within the arts groups themselves. In general, cultural participation improves the well-being of older people and counteracts the negative effects of ageing. Noice et al. (2014) reviewed the benefits and challenges of participatory arts for older people, highlighting the importance of dance, expressive writing, music, theatre arts and visual arts in improving quality of life. Archer et al (2018) examined a spectrum of 40 different factors that could potentially contribute to overall wellbeing. Among these factors, which included elements such as physical activity and belonging to a community group, cultural participation emerged as the most important influencer, according to their findings. Building on this, Fancourt and Steptoe (2019) explored the findings of the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA). This longitudinal study, which involved over 6000 adults aged 50 in England, began in 2004-5 and spanned a remarkable 14 years of follow-up. The results showed that people who engaged in arts activities had a 31 per cent reduced risk of death, which fell to 14 per cent for people who engaged in arts activities infrequently. The link between arts engagement and increased levels of wellbeing was recently explored in a study by Tymoszuk et al (2021). Their research involved 5338 adults in the UK in 2018-2019, encompassing different forms of artistic engagement such as literary, visual, performing, craft and decorative arts, and suggests that different characteristics of engagement may have implications for mental and social well-being. Although access to and participation in culture is vital, a significant proportion of the older population is unable to engage with the arts due to various barriers. Keaney and Oskala (2007) identified poor health, inadequate social networks and limited access to transport as significant

barriers to cultural access for those aged 55 and over. Furthermore, Goulding (2018) noted the importance of the vicious cycle that cultural participation perpetuates by both reflecting and creating inequalities of opportunity in later life. Cultural engagement highlights the impact of class, gender and ethnicity on the context of engagement and subsequent outcomes. The “silver tourism” market is a big opportunity. It can boost the economy and help the growing number of older people have a good life. A recent study from Edith Cowan University (ECU) shows that people are living longer, and there are fewer kids being born. This is making the global population age faster. In 2020, one billion people worldwide were 60 or older, and 727 million were 65 or older. By 2050, these numbers are expected to go up a lot, reaching countries like Japan, South Korea, and Italy are already dealing with this aging trend. Even though people are living longer, they’re not necessarily staying healthier. This is where the idea of “silver tourism” comes in. It’s not just a way to grow the economy but also a chance to improve the quality of life for the increasing number of older folks.” Rapid aging is already one of the most significant trends of the 21st century, and this demographic shift poses enormous challenges for society. There is a community-wide effort to promote healthy aging, but the role of tourism as an important service industry in this process has been underappreciated,” the researchers explain. “Tourism and hospitality, one of the largest industries globally, is duty-bound to participate in initiatives to support healthy aging. Although extant tourism and hospitality research has identified this niche market, attempted to understand its travel behaviours, and proposed senior tourism, silver tourism, and geriatric tourism to accommodate the aging population, the industry is still far from creating age-friendly destinations. “The older generation is a noteworthy tourist group due to their strong buying power, ample free time, and eagerness to travel. However, researchers highlight that discrimination in services and tourism disparities persist against older adults. While the increased leisure time and disposable income of the aging population make them a crucial and rapidly growing tourist segment, their greater vulnerability and diverse needs complicate their travel behaviors. This complexity results in higher demands for products and services tailored to their specific requirements. To ensure that this niche market can fully enjoy tourism, it is essential to conduct more thorough research and put in extra efforts. The researchers emphasize that significant investments in infrastructure and training are necessary for the tourism industry to fully benefit from silver tourism. “The training is especially important for frontline service employees. They currently don’t have the knowledge and experience needed to interact with people living with certain health conditions,” the researchers explain. The researchers point out that society often sees the aging population as needing a lot of support, leading to various challenges like discrimination, elder abuse, violence, stigma, and exclusion in different situations. These issues not only violate their basic human rights but also make it difficult for them to fully become part of society. Even with progress, discrimination in services and tourism disparities against older individuals are still ongoing issues. “While the aging population represents a crucial and rapidly expanding tourist segment, with more leisure time and disposable income, their vulnerability complicates the understanding of their travel behaviors,” they conclude. Rapid aging is already one of the most significant trends of the 21st century, and this demographic shift poses enormous challenges for society. There is a community-wide effort to promote healthy aging, but the role of tourism as an important service industry in this process has been underappreciated. Based on an interdisciplinary literature review, this paper presents a conceptual model suggesting that tourism, as part of a healthy lifestyle, could contribute to healthy aging. Tourism can help older adults to optimize their functional abilities to perform activities of daily living and maintain quality of life through physical, cultural, sporting, and recreational activities, social participation, nutrition, and positive emotions, thereby extending their health span. Critical reflections on future interdisciplinary research and implications for

eight key stakeholders (i.e., The European Route D'Artagnan, academics, aging tourists, destination operators, tourism and hospitality practitioners, healthcare practitioners, host communities, government, society) are outlined to highlight the big impact and potential of this area.

- **Promotion of interfaith dialogue and reconciliation: creating and sustaining spaces of encounter**

From D'Artagnan's birthplace in Lupiac (Gers, France), to his deathplace in Maastricht (Netherlands), the European Route D'Artagnan invites travellers to walk, cycle, ride or even drive along magnificent trails that illustrate the epic story of D'Artagnan and the Musketeers along 6 countries (Belgium, France, Italy, Germany Netherlands, and Spain where exist a pluralistic society, especially in terms of religion, belief and culture, requires a platform in the community. I suggest that European Route D'Artagnan in this sense, interreligious and interfaith dialogue can be seen as an effective platform for building mutual understanding and tolerance in society. This process can be engaged in by anyone, from ordinary people to religious leaders, academics and politicians at international, national and local levels. The term interfaith dialogue refers to cooperative, constructive and positive interaction between people of different religious traditions and/or spiritual or humanistic beliefs, at both individual and institutional levels. It aims to promote mutual understanding and increase acceptance and tolerance. Used as a tool or strategic practice, interfaith dialogue can facilitate discussions to combat intolerance, hate speech and discrimination, and promote peacebuilding.

Conclusions

I recognize that European Route D'Artagnan has a very important the paper of the key role of cultural heritage in promoting peace, democracy and sustainable development and in promoting peace, democracy and sustainable development by fostering tolerance, inter-cultural and inter-faith dialogue and mutual understanding.

CRITERIA		Recommendation s previous evaluation 2020-2021	Has the route addressed the recommendation since the last evaluation?		Recommendation s current evaluation 2024- 2025
			YES	NO	
I. Cultural route theme			x	☐	
			☐	☐	
II. Priorit y fields	Cooperation in research and development	Satisfactory. The inventory of places of remembrance has been completed.	x	☐	Promotion of interfaith dialogue and reconciliation: creating and sustaining spaces of encounter.
			☐	☐	

of action	Enhancement of memory, history and European heritage	The project for a series of lectures on 'D'Artagnan, European hero' has been fine-tuned. All that remains is to get it up and running quickly.	x	☐	The cultural mission of the University Network for Cultural Routes Studies) and disseminating knowledge to other networks;
			☐	☐	
	Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans	The teaching tools have been tested in France. It is important to transfer these tools abroad (translations) and to organise exchanges between young Europeans.	x	☐	Gender Equality Towards a Union of Equality; Culture Routes in the Sustainable Development Goals; Culture Routes in the Sustainable Development
			☐	☐	
	Contemporary cultural and artistic practice	Equine culture, the equestrian arts and fencing provide an original medium. These activities must be shared with foreign partners. They help to develop cross-disciplinary skills such as teamwork, initiative and a sense of responsibility.	x	☐	Historical re-enactments, based on existing scientific research, including demonstrations of historical fencing, historical cavalry, costumes, weapons, gastronomy and other aspects of daily life during the Route's historical period.
			☐	☐	
	Cultural Tourism and Sustainable Cultural development	Horse-riding tours are organised with great respect for nature (environment and animals).	x	☐	Culture Routes in the Sustainable Development Goals
III. Cultural Route Network			x	☐	
		The network covers 5 countries. However, 2 countries on the	x	☐	The role of tourism in healthy aging and

	main route are not yet represented. are not yet represented: Germany and Italy. It is important to convince them quickly			
		X	☐	
Communication Tools	There is 1 website, 1 Facebook, online maps, a logo and a logo and graphic charter. The website does not yet have a foreign language version, given the interest of American riders in European riding. The first topographical guides are not yet available.	X	☐	It's important other foreign languages (Portuguese, Spanish and Japanese)
		☐	☐	

5. List of references

5.1 Dossier de Certification

1. Certification file
2. List of annexes to the certification file

Other Bibliography

3. ARCHER L, Davidson S, Iparraguirre J, Kohler M, Pursc B (2018) Creative and cultural activities and wellbeing in later life, ageUK
4. BELFIORE E (2002) Art as a means of alleviating social exclusion: does it really work? A critique of instrumental cultural policies and social impact studies in the UK. Int J Cult Policy 8(1):91–1
5. DE STEFANI, C. Tourist itinerary design: from planning to pricing should. São Paulo: Intersaberes, 2014.
6. BEAUDET G., 2003, « Les routes touristiques à thème : entre marketing territorial et valorisation identitaire ». Téoros, 22
7. CARLIER, Bruno (2000), «Construire et dynamiser une route touristique», Pratiques économiques : initiatives et activités, Fiches pratiques 12/C www.territorial.fr/home/ouvrages.nsf.
8. FERRARO RA, Pallazola VA, Michos ED (2019) Physical activity CVD, and older adults. Ageing

9. 11(9):2545–2546
10. GHENTA M, Matei A, Mladen-Macovel L, Bobarnat ES (2022) Factors associated with the participation of older adults in cultural and sports activities. *Int J Environ Resour Public Health* 19(10):1–22
11. GENTRY, G. W. Walking with the dead: the place of ghost walk tourism in Savannah, Georgia.
12. <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/policies/selected-themes/gender-equality>
13. GROSSI E, Sacco PL, Tavano Blessi G, Cerutti R (2011) The impact of culture on the individual subjective well-being of the Italian population: an exploratory study. *Appl Res Qual Life* 6:387–410
14. GOULDING A (2018) The role of cultural engagement in older people's lives. *Cult Sociol* 12(4):518–539
15. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
16. KEANEY E, Oskala A (2007) The golden age of the arts? Taking part survey findings on older people and the arts. *Cult Trends* 16(4):323–355
17. MCLEAN J, Woodhouse A, Goldie I, Chylarova E, Williamson T (2011) An evidence review of the impact of participatory arts on older people, mental health foundation. <https://baringfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/EvidenceReview.pdf>. Accessed 14 Dec 2024
18. STURTEVANT, L. Create successful walking tours. London: Independently published, 2019
19. TAVARES, A. M. T; CHIMENTI, S. Roteiro turístico: é assim que se faz. Sao Paulo: Senac, 2020
20. TYMOSZUK U, Spiro N, Perkins R, Mason-Bertrand A, Gee K, Williamon A (2021) Arts engagement trends in the United Kingdom and their mental and social wellbeing implications. *PLoS ONE*. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0246078>

5.2 Network

REA General Présentation

21. Gers loop topoguide project
22. Topoguide Navarre
23. Example Letter from the founding Chairman to the Chairmen of the Departments and Provinces
24. Standard partnership agreement for the tourism and promotion of the REA (a.NL-b.DE)
25. Conventions de partenariat 2021-2024 - Annexe 2.4
26. EJME quadripartite partnership agreements - see in particular Article 2: Description of the action
27. Contact Points Germany
28. Contact Points Belgium
29. Contact Points Spain
30. Contact Points France :
31. Contact Point Italy
32. Contact Point Netherlands
33. Contact Points of others regions
34. List of network members - Appendix 2.3

35. AERA identity card

5.3 Statuts

- Up-to-date legal statutes of the network

5.4 Members

d) Up-to-date list of network members (in Excel format, following the template in section 2.2 'Network governance'); + members of Scientific Committee

5.5 General Meetings

- Reports of the last three years' Ordinary and Extraordinary General Meetings

5.6. Budget information

- Network budget documents
- Operating budget.
- Financial information for the last three years;
- Three-year forward budget plan.
- specific funding for the implementation of specific actions).

5.7 Activities

- 3-year business plan.

5.8 communication tools

- Brochures (FR-EN-IT-DE-ES-NL)
- D'Artagnan Gascon-EN/FR
- Dossier de Presse
- EJME flyer
- European Young Musketeer Diploma
- European Young Musketeers Brochure
- Graphic charter - European Road of D'Artagnan Association (ERAA)
- Info flashes
- Kakemono+oriflamme model
- Model of the Gers departmental sign
- Musketeer booklet
- Photos: scarf, polo shirt, saddle pads Helmet and medals
- Press review - The d'Artagnan European Route - 2021-2024
- REA map
- REA signposting
- Stage-REA logo
- Screenshots of publications on social networks

6. Annex 1: Expert field visit and interviews with the network management and members

I was able to visit Nantes, Charente Maritime, La Rochelle, Brouage and Royan Atlantique which enabled me to meet a few people working in the field and to go to several points along the route to check the state of the signage. I was then able to contact several members in different countries by videoconference and email-

- **26 November - Nantes**

I visited two places associated with D'Artagnan in the city of Nantes because On September 5, 1661, in front of the Cathedral of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, Fouquet was arrested by Captain D'Artagnan after a failed attempt in front of the Château des Ducs de Bretagne, against the king Louis XIV.

- **27 November - Charente Maritime**

This visit gave me the opportunity to meet face to face and online with the AERA Vice-Presidents in charge of the 4 thematic commissions (history, education, tourism and heritage), as well as with colleagues from the Charente Maritime Department and Charente Tourisme, who oversee managing the tourism implementation phase with AERA in collaboration with all the partners involved.

At the end of the first day, the Tourist Office of La Rochelle organized a visit to the siege of the city by Richelieu, whose 400th anniversary will be celebrated in 2027

- **28 November - Brouage**

The second day was devoted to a visit to the citadel of Brouage, a historic fortress on the route, ruled by Richelieu and Mazarin, the place where Marie Mancini, with whom King Louis XIV was madly in love, was sent away, and the birthplace of Champlain, the founder of Quebec, with which strong links still exist and which should enable the REA to be promoted in Canada. In the 17th century, the citadel of Brouage was one of the most important fortresses in western France. It was in the governor's palace that Marie Plancini, Louis XIV's first great love, was sent away with her two younger sisters, Hortense and Marie-Anne, in 1659, when they realised that the reasons of state had finally won out over those of the heart. On 28 June 1660, on his return from Saint-Jean-de-Luz, where he had just married the Infanta of Spain, Marie-Thérèse, Louis XIV, accompanied by Philippe Mancini, Marie's brother and lieutenant of the first company of the King's Mousquetaires, temporarily abandoned his wife, mother and entourage on his way to Brouage, via Etauliers, Brie and Saint Fort. Arriving in Brouage the next day, the King stayed for two nights in the very place where Marie Mancini had spent several months. He wanted to see everything: the palace, the staircase, the ramparts, the bedroom and the bed, all of which reminded him of his beloved's presence. He walked along the sea for a long time and, according to Philippe Mancini's own testimony, cried profusely. On 1 July, around eight in the morning, he left for Saint-Jean-d'Angély, where he joined the queens.

- **28 November - Royan Atlantique**

Finally, I interviewed members of the Communauté d'Agglomération Royan Atlantique, who are very active in developing quality infrastructure in their area and promoting the Route des Cardinaux, by organising the Echappée Nuptiale twice a year.

17.1 list of stakeholders interviewed

DATE	NAME	ROLE
La Rochelle 27 November 2024	Alain LIBEROS	Founder and Chairman: Former official at the European Commission and the Ministry of Industry, Master's degree in law and economics, specialising in European law
	Philippe GERARD -	Vice-Chairman in charge of interdepartmental relations: Former Deputy Director General of the GERS Departmental Council
	Odile BORDAZ	Vice-Chairman of the Historical and Cultural Commission (CHC): Historian, Doctor of Art History, Heritage Curator, biographer of d'Artagnan, scientific adviser for cinema and television
	Julien WILMART	Active advisor on the REA Scientific Committee: Doctor of History (Sorbonne-UCL.) Author of an outstanding thesis and a book on the companies of the Musketeers (1622-1815).
	Corinne BATTISTIG -	In charge of relations with the ICCE: Parliamentary assistant at the Senate, European Master's degree in human rights and democratisation, ERASMUS Master's degree in international and European law.
	Constance LE MOULLEC	Tourism Development Officer : permanent, full-time AERA contract - her role is to monitor the implementation of infrastructure, signposting and the signing of agreements with accommodation providers. Interdepartmental coordination for setting up routes.
	Olivier AMBLARD	Olivier AMBLARD Managing Director of Charente Tourisme : In 2005, he took over as Managing Director of Charente Tourisme, then of Charente Tourisme, the result of the 2017 merger between Charente (16) and Charente-Maritime (17), which he helped to structure.
	Emilie SAVOYE	Head of ecotourism and soft mobility Charente Tourisme: Coordination and steering of the 'Route des Cardinaux Charente-Maritime' itinerary committee.
	Marie LEGER	Head of Ecotourism and Soft Mobility Charente Tourisme: Responsible for qualifying the 'Route des Cardinaux Charente-Maritime' itinerary committee.
	Carine PECON	Territorial Development Officer DEM DIR environment mobility: Coordination, steering and infrastructure of the 'Route des Cardinaux Charente-Maritime' Itinerary Committee
	Laurent SAVIGNAC	Project Manager for soft traffic routes - Tourism Department: represents the Centre-Val de Loire region, a founding member.
	Bruno BATTISTINI	1st Vice-President - Infrastructure and Tourism Commission. In charge of finance: Former General and Financial Director of the Société des chevaux Français, Director of France Galop, Civil servant in the General Directorate of Public Accounting.
	Joëlle CLISSON	Treasurer : Former transport and building materials manager, Deputy Mayor of Montlieu-La-Garde
	VALLAEYS-SPELTENS	Vice-Chair of the Education, Social and Community-Based Tourism Committee: Former manager of the Domaine du Taillan, which specialises in welcoming groups and supervising sporting activities.

	Sandrine POMPÈLE	Administrative assistant and communications officer: part-time fixed-term contract
	Tourist Office of La Rochelle	At the end of the first day, Tourist Office of La Rochelle the organized a visit to the siege of the city by Richelieu, whose 400th anniversary will be celebrated in 2027.
	GERARD (Vanessa)	Director of the 'Chez Madiran' winery, gastronomic partner in the AERA project
	VITSE (Stephane)	Director of the Trenchali farm, hosting partner of the AERA route
	ETIENNE (Stéphane)	Mayor of the town of Artagnan (D'Artagnan family stronghold)
	BERJONVAL (Marie Christine)	President of MJC Vic en Bigorre
	MARCHE (Valery)	Route d'Artagnan stage, live shows (horses and birds of prey)
17/10	Abbaye de Flaran	Museum, stage on the D'Artagnan route
27 November 2024	Brouage	The second day was devoted to a visit to the citadel of Brouage, a historic fortress on the route, ruled by Richelieu and Mazarin, the place where Marie Mancini, with whom King Louis XIV was madly in love, was sent away, and the birthplace of Champlain, the founder of Quebec, with which strong links still exist and which should enable the REA to be promoted in Canada
27 November 2024 Royan Atlantique CARA - Communauté d'Agglomération Royan Atlantique	Anne Guérin-Larribau - Director of outdoor and coastal activities - Communauté d'Agglomération Royan Atlantique ; Emmanuel Hillaireau (SIG), Gilles Parisot (field agent, marking and maintenance) et Sylvain Chabanne (field agent, marking and maintenance),	Finally, I interviewed members of the Communauté d'Agglomération Royan Atlantique who are very active in developing quality infrastructure in their area and promoting the Route des Cardinaux, in particular by organising the Echappée Nuptiale twice a year.

PROGRAMME

(Reviewed by the expert with the following modifications)

Wednesday 27 November 2024

Location Conseil Départemental de la Charente-Maritime 85 boulevard de la République
17000 La Rochelle

Video link (9am-4.30pm) :

Present AERA :

Alain LIBEROS President and Founder

Martine VALLAEYS Vice-Chairwoman in charge of the Social and Supportive Tourism Educational Commission

Joëlle CLISSON Treasurer

By video :

Philippe GERARD Vice-Chairman in charge of interdepartmental relations

Odile BORDAZ Vice-President in charge of the Historical and Cultural Commission

Corinne BATTISTIG in charge of relations with the Institute of European Cultural Routes

Bruno BATTISTINI 1st Vice-Chairman in charge of the budget and the Tourism Commission excused in the morning
 Constance LE MOULLEC Territorial Development Officer
 Sandrine POMPELE Communication and Resources Officer
 Laurent SAVIGNAC Région Centre Val-de-Loire excused in the morning

9.00am - 10.30am: Start of the meeting with AERA at the Charente-Maritime Departmental Council, on the certification renewal dossier.

10.30am - 11.00am: Presentation of La Rochelle as a major historical and literary centre of the REA by Odile BORDAZ, President of the Historical and Cultural Commission (by videoconference).

11.00am - 12.00pm: Continuation of discussions with AERA members on the certification renewal application.

12pm - 1:30pm: Lunch in the CD 17 canteen

13:30 - 15:30: Presentation by Charente Tourisme of all aspects of the Route's tourism development and testimonials. By Emilie SAVOYE, Marie LÉGER and Géraldine POUSSIN.

3.30pm - 4.30pm: Additional discussions in the presence of Laurent SAVIGNAC and Bruno BATTISTINI.

17:00: Tour of La Rochelle (La Rochelle Tourist Office, Town Hall)

7. Annex 2: Expert assessment checklist

EXPERT ASSESSMENT CHECK-LIST					
QUESTIONS			Yes	N o	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		With hauts lieux historiques, littéraires et équestres
	2	Does the theme of the route offer a solid basis for youth cultural and educational exchanges?	1		
	3	Does the theme of the route offer a solid basis for innovative activities?	1		Horse-riding and fencing are innovative projects in the context of the routes. The educational projects developed are also innovative.

3.2 FIELDS OF ACTION		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	Apply for Horizon Europe
	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	Villers-Cotterêts seminary
		7	Does the Route play a unifying role around major European themes, enabling dispersed knowledge to be brought together?	1	IFCE Culture Committee
		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	University of Angers-ESTHUA, Toulouse and Bordeaux
		11	Does the Route have a multidisciplinary Scientific Committee?	1	4 thematic commissions
		12	Does the Scientific Committee work on its theme at the European level?	1	Educational and equestrian
		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 d'Artagnan European Conferences
		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	On the basis of the annual meetings of the Musketeers in the provinces
	3.2.2 Enhancement of	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	

		19	Do the Route activities identify, preserve and develop European heritage sites in rural destinations?	1		Blegny-Mines
		20	Do the Route activities identify, preserve and develop European heritage sites in industrial areas in the process of economic restructuring?	1		
		21	Do the Route activities valorize the heritage of ethnic or social minorities in Europe?		0	
		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		
	3.2.3 Cultural and educational exchanges of young	25	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to develop a better understanding of the concept of European citizenship?	1		
		26	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to emphasize the value of new personal experience through visiting diverse places?	1		
		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		
		28	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to offer collaborative opportunities for educational institutions at various levels?	1		
		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		
		30	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to set up pilot schemes with several participating countries?	1		
		31	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to give rise to co-operation activities which involve educational institutions at various levels?	1		
	3.2.4	32	Do the Route's cultural activities promote intercultural dialogue and multidisciplinary exchange between various artistic expressions in European countries?		0	
		33	Do the Route's cultural activities encourage artistic projects that establish links between cultural heritage and contemporary culture?	1		

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		ERASMUS +
	37	Do the Route's cultural activities encourage activities and artistic projects which explore the links between heritage and contemporary culture?		0	
	38	Do the Route's cultural activities highlight the most innovative and creative practices?		0	
	39	Do the Route's cultural activities link these innovative and creative practices with the history of skills development?***		0	
	40	Do the Route's activities (relevant to sustainable cultural tourism development) assist in local, regional, national and/ or European identity formation?	1		
	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		OITS, AEFE, CILF, Compagnie des Mousquetaires d'Armagnac
	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		
	48	Do the Route's activities aim to diversify cultural product, service and activities offers?	1		
	49	Do the Route's activities develop and offer quality cultural tourism products, services or activities transnationally?	1		INTERREG

		50	Do the Route's activities develop partnerships with public and private organisations active in the field of tourism?	1		
		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		
3.3 NETWORK		52	Does the Route represent a network involving at least three Council of Europe's member states?	1		
		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		
		56	Is the network financially sustainable?	1		
		57	Does the network have a legal status (association, federation of associations, EEIG,...)?	1		
		58	Does the network operate democratically?	1		
		59	Does the network specify its objectives and working methods?	1		
		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		
		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		
		72	Is it the website available in other languages?		0	
		73	Does the network use effectively social networks and web 2.0?	1		
		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 Routes of the Council of Europe	77	Is the title of “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” present on all communication materials (including press releases, webpages, publications, etc.)?	1		
	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		It is included in the graphic charter for members and partners.
	80	Are the logos (Cultural Route + certification logo) provided to all the members of the Route?	1		
	81	Does the Council of Europe certification logo appear on road signs/ boards indicating the cultural route?		0	Yes, on the explanatory panels
SCORE			74	7	

8. Annex 3: List of acronyms, figures and tables

Figure 1 – The D'Artagnan European Route



ROUTE EUROPÉENNE D'ARTAGNAN

The d'Artagnan European Route: REA
Trademark registered with the INPI - certified by the CDE - Rights and obligations

6 countries: France, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Italy

17 regions

60 departments and provinces

50 Pays and Pôles d'Équilibre Territoriaux et Ruraux (PETR) in France

400 communities of communes (EPCI)

172 historical, literary and equestrian landmarks

Zones: metropolises, conurbations, rural town centres





The European Route of Artagnan
La Route Européenne d'Artagnan



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

Figure 2 – Visit Nantes – The Caste of The Castle of dukes of Brittany



Figure 2 Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul of Nantes



- Figure 3 – Field work Charente Maritime



Figure 4 - Présentation - Emilie Savoye - Route des Cardinaux Charente-Maritime

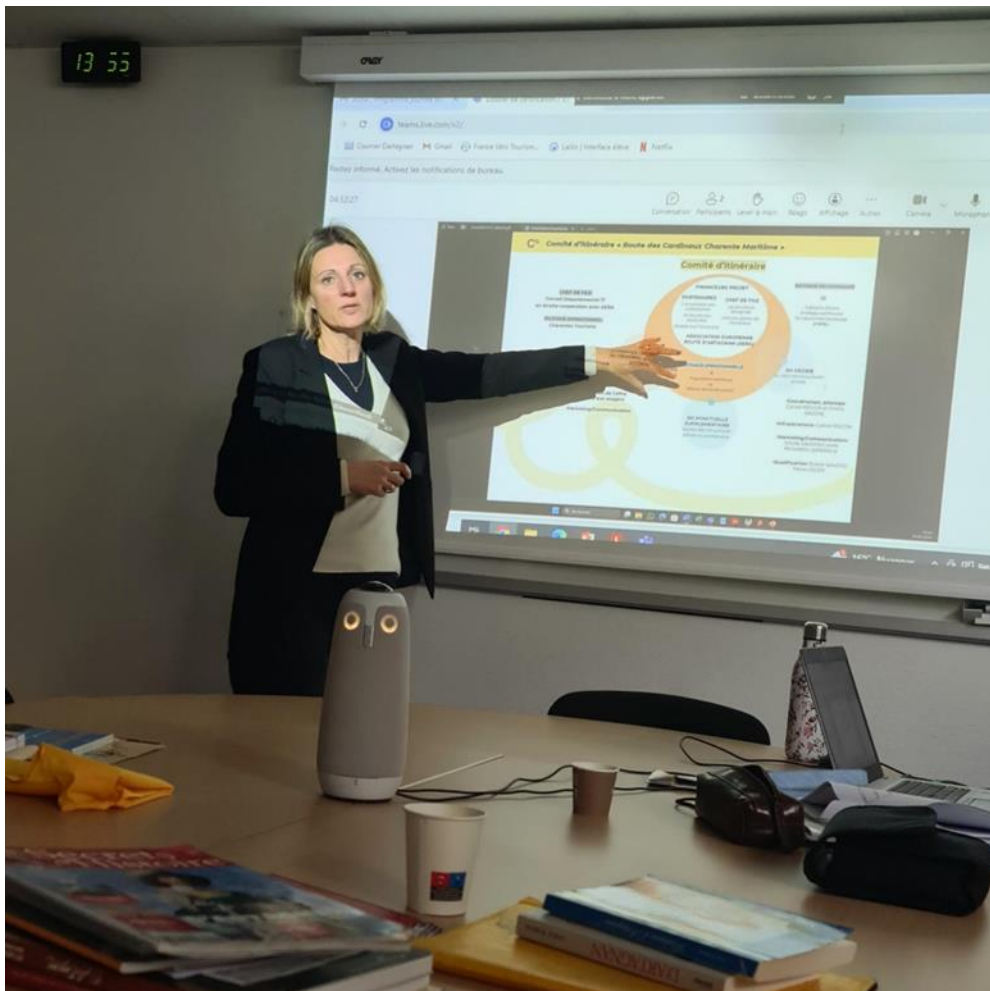


Figure 5 – Visit La Rochelle



Figure 6 – Visit La Rochelle



Figure 7 – Visit Brouage



Figure 8 – Field work - Royan Atlantique

