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Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Certification Cycle 2021-2022

Regular evaluation: PHOENICIANS' ROUTE

Independent expert report

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



**Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe
Evaluation Cycle 2021-2022**

Independent expert report

Phoenicians' Route

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**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	6
3	Main Body Evaluation	7
	3.1 Cultural Route Theme.....	7
	3.1.1 Definition of the theme of the route	7
	3.1.2 Historical and cultural context.....	7
	3.1.3 Council of Europe values represented by the theme	8
	3.2 Fields of Action	9
	3.2.1 Co-operation in research and development	9
	3.2.2 Enhancement of memory, history and European heritage	11
	3.2.3 Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans	12
	3.2.4 Contemporary cultural and artistic practice.....	13
	3.2.5 Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development	13
	3.3 Cultural Route Network.....	14
	3.3.1 Overview of the institutional/legal structure of the network.....	14
	3.3.2 Current composition of the network by country and type of member	17
	3.3.3 Network extension since the last evaluation	18
	3.3.4 Strategy for network expansion in the next three years.....	20
	3.4 Communication tools	21
	3.4.1 Current state of the communication tools developed by the network (graphic charter, communication materials, logo, communication channels, signposting, maps, etc.).....	21
	3.4.2 Compliance with the Guidelines for the use of the logo "Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe"	22
4	Conclusions and recommendations.....	24
5	List of References	28
6	Annex 1: Expert field visit and/or online interviews with network management and network members	29
7	Annex 2: Expert Assessment Checklist	31
8	Annex 3: List of acronyms, list of figures, tables and additional documents.....	36

1 Executive Summary

Following a negative evaluation that called into question the awarding of the “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” certification, the Phoenicians' Route undertook a series of rectifications that resulted in the network's return to meeting the criteria determined by the Council of Europe. The report of the current evaluation cycle shows a considerable intensification of the network's activity. Far from being a hindrance, the pandemic has led to an increase in online activities. While school-based initiatives, such as exchanges, have had to be postponed, the network has been extremely proactive, with nearly 80 actions undertaken during the period. In addition, a ten-year Action Plan has been drawn up for the upcoming years. Several factors have contributed to these reversals.

Firstly, obtaining European funding has allowed the network to implement a whole series of flagship projects in a stable, continuous and sustainable manner, without incurring additional costs for members and without depending on the payment of contributions. The European origin of the funds has also guaranteed a complete adhesion of the developed activities to the values promoted by the EU, which are also those of the Council of Europe.

Secondly, the network has offered membership to local and especially regional governments, so that the membership that stood at 54 members in 8 countries in 2017 will increase to 163 members in 14 countries following the final admission of current applicants. However, efforts should be redoubled to obtain the participation of Algeria and Morocco.

Thirdly, the growth of the number of members and therefore of the number of subscriptions, in addition to the received European funding, has led to an increase in income and has allowed for the establishment of a stable management team, notably for the administration of the website, the publication of the newsletter and the upkeep of the Facebook and Instagram accounts. The Phoenicians' Route website (<http://fenici.net>) is fully deployed in four languages, which is remarkable, and is the main communication tool for members.

Thus, the management of the network has initiated reforms that have reoriented it in a good direction. As a result, all the criteria contained in the resolution CM/Res(2013)67 are met, which allows us to look forward to the future of the Phoenicians' Route with optimism.

Expert summary conclusions	Yes	No
The theme complies with the criteria listed in Resolution CM/Res(2013)67, I. List of eligibility criteria for themes.	X	
The Cultural Route complies with the criteria for actions listed in Resolution CM/Res(2013)67, II. List of priority fields of action.	X	
The Cultural Route complies with the criteria for networks listed in Resolution CM/Res(2013)67, III. List of criteria for networks.	X	
The Cultural Route implements the guidelines for the use of the logo " Cultural Route of the Council of Europe "	X	

2 Introduction

The Phoenicians' Route brings together organizations interested in the enhancement of the cultural heritage of the Phoenicians in the Mediterranean Basin and in the study of the relationships they established with the indigenous populations of the bordering regions. Beyond the exchange of raw materials and manufactured products, these peaceful commercial relations conveyed an intercultural dialogue and have led to the ideological, technological, social and political mutation of Mediterranean communities. Today, the study, development and exploration of this heritage via interdisciplinary partnership is a new opportunity to renew dialogue between the different countries participating in the network.

With a dozen members until 2010, the Phoenicians' Route has subsequently opened up to a large number of new members and will reach 156 members from 12 countries by the end of 2021. The number of possible members being unlimited, the growth rate of the network has become exponential, with new participants increasing from 10 per year until 2017 to 24 per year since 2018, with a record of 32 new members per year expected by 2021.

The organization's bylaws in effect since 2018 exempt associations and nonprofits from paying fees, which seems to have resulted in the high public standing of more than 80% of new members. Far from damaging the treasury, as the author of the previous evaluation report feared, the exemption of associations has been largely offset by the massive targeting of public bodies, many of which are certainly seduced by the possibility of displaying the Council of Europe logo on their communication materials, so that the budget item for membership fees has doubled from 2018 to 2021.

Located on the southern borders of the continent, the network seems to have difficulty in obtaining memberships on the southern shore of the Mediterranean that would reinforce its main stated objective of intercultural dialogue. Invitations to participate, which have so far gone unanswered, should be reformulated to encourage the participation of organizations representing Morocco, Algeria and even Egypt.

Concerning transnational collaborations, the Phoenicians' Route has had difficulty in mobilizing more than two partners at a time for participation in its proposed activities. As observed during the 2015 and 2018 evaluations, it is most often Italy or Spain that propose activities, either in isolation or on a bilateral basis.

However, the network is addressing some of the weaknesses identified in previous evaluations. The website is online in four languages at <https://fenici.net>, which is a good effort. Sub-networks, especially the university one, have been set up within the association and give the scientific collaboration the impetus it was lacking. The Phoenicians' Route has also adhered to several European projects that have provided it with new financing, reinforcing its sustainability, of which some of the results are visible on the site.

After a period of difficulties marked by the lack of research activities and the lack of clearly defined objectives, the Phoenicians' Route has found a relevant course and rectified the deficiencies that were reproached during the previous evaluations with, in particular, the assumption of responsibility for the research component through the organization of a network of universities, with the financing obtained thanks to the participation in the calls for projects of the European Union and, finally, with the drafting of a ten-year Activity Plan.

3 Main Body Evaluation

3.1 Cultural Route Theme

3.1.1 Definition of the theme of the route

A remarkably early Cultural Route, the Phoenicians' Route was certified by the Council of Europe in 2003. The International Confederation "The Phoenicians' Route" currently ensures the organization as well as the administrative and financial management of the network.

Originally, the Phoenicians' Route was conceived as the bundle of multiple linear itineraries, most often maritime, taken since the end of the second millennium B.C. by the Phoenicians in the Mediterranean, marking out its shores with ephemeral or permanent stopovers, in contact with the different native populations with whom peaceful and profitable commercial transactions were established. Thus, the circulation of foodstuffs and prestigious objects quickly led to the circulation of knowledge, ideologies and beliefs, accelerating the technological and cultural evolution of the indigenous populations in the Central Mediterranean, the Maghreb, Italy and Spain.

The Phoenician adventure would thus represent a symbol of intercultural dialogue, an example of successful cohabitation, even symbiosis between different cultures, based on common interests. This collective heritage of the Mediterranean countries - and this is the objective of the network - must bring them closer together, encourage collaborative initiatives, academic, tourist, educational and commercial partnerships. This is the discourse defended by the authors of the three-year report.

3.1.2 Historical and cultural context

The Phoenicians' Route recalls the colonial adventure of the Phoenician city-states, established on the coasts of the Levant and their expansion in the Mediterranean. Tyre, in particular, founded Carthage, then Gadir (Cadiz) and set up a myriad of trading posts and ladders from Sicily to Andalusia with the aim of sealing exchange agreements with the native populations. The Phoenicians were in search of metals - gold, silver, but also iron - which they obtained in exchange for not only manufactured goods, but above all prestige goods of which the indigenous elites were fond: goldsmith's trade, ceremonial objects, Greek vases, Egyptian alabasters, and above all... wine! It is in a way by "bribing" the native elites, by covering them with sumptuous gifts, that the Phoenicians obtained from them the extra work necessary for the extraction of the sought-after minerals. Following the Phoenician colonization, the indigenous societies of the West discovered the alphabet, navigation, viticulture, new cults, in general new ways of cultural expression that contributed to the transformation their way of life until the Romanization.

On the other hand, literary sources report testimonies of maritime explorations in the Atlantic Ocean to which researchers agree to give credit: various authors confirm that the Phoenicians of Cadiz brought back tin from the Cassiterides, a stanniferous territory in the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula. On the other hand, on Hannon's journey to the mouth of the Senegal, opinions are less unanimous. Off Essaouira, the Phoenician colony on the island of Mogador, 650 km from the Strait of Gibraltar, there is however a solid indication of these explorations.

This first peaceful stage took place from the end of the second millennium until the middle of the sixth century BC. The Phoenician colonization in the West came to a halt from 575 BC, the date at which the time of peaceful trading came to an end. Taking advantage of the difficulties of the Tyrians, now tributaries of Babylon, Carthage emancipated itself to reign as absolute mistress over the central and western Mediterranean. While in the Levant the military collaboration with the Persian Empire promised the Phoenician cities newfound prosperity and

even territorial expansion, in the West numerous confrontations attest to the heavy competition for maritime supremacy between the Punic people and the Greeks, and later the Romans.

The Phoenicians' Route thus represents a set of different chronological and historical realities, the oldest of which convey the ideological and human values defended by the network's initiators. Then, the intercultural dialogue and peaceful contacts of the early days were swept away by the hegemonic impulses of some and the imperialism of others. Although they hardly represent examples to follow for today's societies, these convulsive periods are nevertheless sources of fascinating stories.

These different scenarios make it possible to group the organizations adhering to the Route according to their geographical location and according to the stages in the history of the Phoenicians that mobilize their research teams.

The early Phoenician colonization is of interest to the entire Mediterranean partnership, from the Levant to the Atlantic. Lebanese archaeologists can find in Andalusian museums the same red varnished vases, the same sarcophagi kept in Beirut. There is a series of common research themes that promise fertile collaboration. The American University of Beirut and various Spanish and Italian research centers are involved.

The conflicts between Carthage, Syracuse and Magna Graecia are of particular interest to the Italian partners and would require the accession of a Tunisian research institute.

Tunisia, Spain, France and Italy, theaters of the Second Punic War and the Barcid epic, constitute a community of scientific interests from which a whole series of synergies can emerge. At present this field of research, invested in by several Italian and Spanish universities and by a French association, is the most fertile of the network.

Finally, the journeys reported by the literary sources are also explored by the members. The connection between the remains of Punic furniture collected in the archaeological excavations of the northwest of Spain, and the trade of tin of the Cassiterides Islands mentioned by Pliny the Elder in his Natural History, justifies the adherence to the Route of the City council of Pontevedra in Galicia (ES). We would expect the same rigor from the city council of Funchal (Azores), which is about to join the network.

3.1.3 Council of Europe values represented by the theme

During the present evaluation cycle, the multiple participations of the Phoenicians' Route in European programs guarantee the respect of the values of the Council of Europe represented by the theme, insofar as the respect of these values is an unavoidable condition of the financing delivered by the European Union.

Furthermore, the certification dossier correctly defends the relevance of the developed theme for European history, memory and heritage, enumerating the different technological or ideological advantages that the Phoenician legacy bequeathed to certain European regions, allowing for their evolution and access to more advanced ways of life, including the adoption of alphabets and navigation. By encouraging research on the local populations that encountered the Phoenicians, the network contributes to the interpretation of common values but also to the understanding of the diversity of today's Europe. Regarding the European values represented by the route, the network emphasizes the search for intercultural dialogue, peaceful coexistence, and the cohabitation of different cultures, religions, and ideologies.

The report deals exhaustively with the contribution of the Route to the values defended by the different European and world conventions to which the Council of Europe adheres. The

Phoenicians' Route pays particular attention to the promotion of intercultural dialogue and the culture of peace.

It should be noted, however, that the challenge of the Phoenicians' Route, which stretches from Lebanon to Galicia and from the Balkans to the Sahara, is to represent the cultural crossroads of three continents. The participation of the countries of the southern shore of the Mediterranean should be seen as a condition for the network to be able to label some of its activities as part of an intercultural dialogue, which is one of its declared objectives.

3.2 Fields of Action

The present evaluation cycle shows a considerable increase in the activities carried out by the Phoenicians' Route, to which different factors have contributed: the enlargement of the network on the one hand, whose membership has rapidly increased, and the obtaining of European funding on the other hand, which has provided means that did not exist before. Far from slowing down the network's activity, the pandemic has led to an increase in online activities. Compared to the previous evaluation cycle, the agenda of the Phoenicians' Route activities has practically doubled. The effort made in the field of Contemporary cultural and artistic practice which was the weakest field of activity in the previous evaluation cycle, is particularly commendable.

It is true that Spanish and Italian projects are still the most numerous, especially in Italy where the individual initiatives of the associates represent 2/3 of the country's contribution. However, the multiple memberships in European projects have led to a more diversified participation.

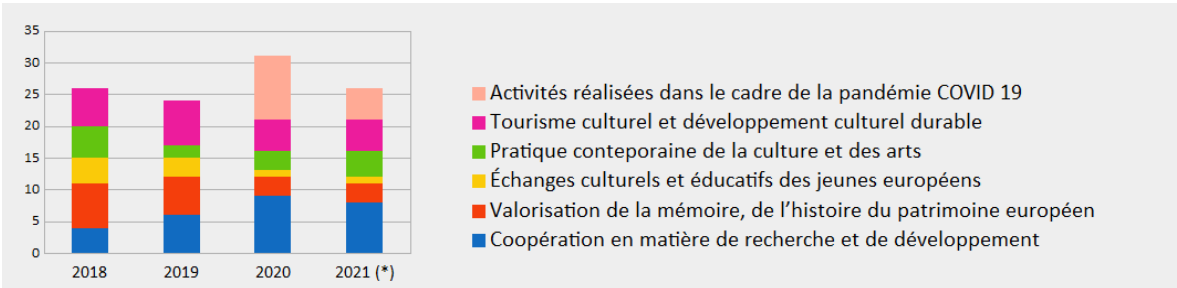


Figure 1: Distribution of network activities by area of interest during the evaluation cycle

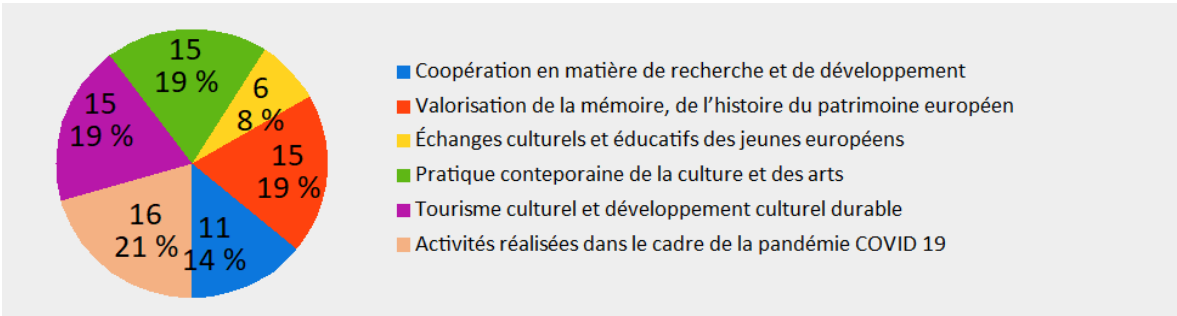


Figure 2: Network Activities by Field of Interest

In this case, the Smart Ways project mobilizes the largest part of the network on each occasion.

3.2.1 Co-operation in research and development

The research activities carried out by the members of the Phoenicians' Route concern mainly two fields: Cultural Heritage and territorial marketing, including tourist exploration.

In the first case, that of archaeological and historical research, transnational cooperation constitutes the systematic principle of the methodological approach of the different projects. Before becoming personally involved in the Phoenicians' Route, the participating researchers knew each other mostly through publications, congresses, symposia, and scientific meetings, and therefore have a natural tendency to seek out opportunities for collaboration.

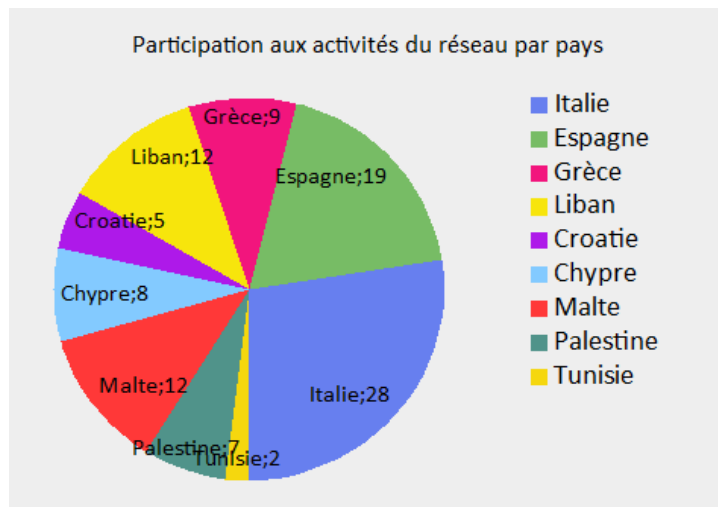


Figure 3: Participation in activities by country

Thus, for example, research on Hannibal's itinerary has long mobilized Spanish, French and Italian teams, who interpret the results of archaeological work in relation to the classical texts of the Barcid epic. The adhesions to the Phoenicians' Route have only consolidated and formalized pre-existing relations. Meetings entitled "Euro-Mediterranean Dialogues" have been organized in Spain and Italy where those responsible for the research development of the battle of *Baecula* (Spain) have met those who study the battle of Metaurus (IT); exhibitions on the Hannibal expedition have been presented in Capua, Crotone, (2018).

Research activities on tourism development, attractiveness and the development of local economies are, on the other hand, more interdisciplinary and transversal than those concerning archaeological research, insofar as they mobilize both tourism operators and stakeholders in the local economy, notably professionals in the reception and marketing of local products. These initiatives have a greater tendency to develop in a vacuum within a framework of micro-regional economic interests. It is in this area that the greatest efforts still need to be made.

European projects such as CROSS DEV, of the ENI-CBC-MED cooperation program, of which the Phoenicians' Route is a beneficiary, offer a solution to this geographical withdrawal, insofar as the exchange of good practices and transnational cooperation are the main conditions for funding. As an example, CROSS DEV has obtained funding for the development of sustainable tourism initiatives, staging a Euro-Mediterranean partnership in which members of the Route are in dialogue with public bodies in Jordan, Palestine¹ and Lebanon.

Following the general assembly of 2017 and at the instance of its Scientific Committee, the Phoenicians' Route has created an International University Network intended to fulfill the "Research and Development" component of its program. Four years after its constitution and after various postponements due to the constraints inflicted by the COVID 19 pandemic, the programming of the first meeting of this network was finally held on October 15 and 16, 2021 in Mazarrón, Spain. This meeting allowed for the appreciation of a clear qualitative

¹ "This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of Council of Europe member States on this issue."

improvement with respect to the scientific initiatives that the Phoenicians' Route had reported until then and that had negatively affected the previous evaluations. Researchers from 12 universities representing 5 of the countries met. The Spanish and Italian presence still forms the majority, which is natural, given the number of universities existing in both countries, however, we welcome the representation of three other members of the network, namely Malta, Croatia and Lebanon. It should be noted that despite the dominant dynamism of the two countries that provide the largest number of participants, the university network constitutes, through its capacity of mobilization, an effective means of overcoming the bilateral tendency that has marked the activities of the Phoenicians' Route until now.

The different round tables and conferences held in Mazarrón are, of course, about cooperation in archaeological research, starting with the colonization and Hannibal's itinerary. A space has been reserved for the theme of the Phoenician wrecks sunk in the Bay of Mazarrón. Concerning the "Tourism" part of the Route, the meeting allowed for the gathering of university researchers from 3 countries of the network (Spain, Italy, Croatia), participating in the definition of innovative tourism. In the same way, the field of intangible heritage was approached within the framework of a round table which gathered specialists from Spain, Lebanon and Italy. The Route also participates in the seminars organized since 2021 by the University of Valencia, on the role of intangible heritage in human development in April and "Drugs & Colors" in October.

This university network, which will meet annually, is planning to adopt statutes in order to specify the terms of participation and the activities of the members. Many new memberships are expected in the near future, and it would be desirable that the Scientific Council quickly oversee a specific action plan to channel all efforts towards collaborations and concrete results. After Mazarrón, the researchers will meet again in 2022 in Urbino (IT).

Membership in European projects has opened the network up to a number of scientific collaborations while consolidating cooperation as a means of financing its partnership activities. The European subsidies now represent more than 40% of the income accounted for in the annual budget, which can be welcomed as a good management practice and, above all, as a guarantee of the sustainability of activities. The Phoenicians' Route obtains funding for four different projects whose choices have proven to be relevant to the objectives and certification criteria of the Council of Europe.

The agenda of the university network is ambitious. There are no less than 12 initiatives taking place in transnational cooperation, such as the TRAMES project, or individually. Due to the regulations of the European programs, the itinerary has been forced to overcome the bilateral tendency of the transnational meetings organized in its name until now, whose promoters were mostly either Spanish or Italian. The meetings dominated by participants from both countries continue, although the partnerships of the European projects show more cosmopolitan participation.

It is therefore possible to state that the deficit in scientific research noted in the evaluation reports since 2015 has been made up for. The Scientific Committee of the Route and the International University Network created in 2018 are now the main driving force and the multiplication of projects financed by the European Union is a guarantee of the relevance of research activities in relation to the principles of the Council of Europe.

3.2.2 Enhancement of memory, history and European heritage

The development of the physical and intangible heritage of the route and its exploration from an educational and responsible tourism perspective, is the main objective of the members. As an example, the archaeologists team up with the local authorities so that the enhancement of the battlefields of the Second Punic War (*Baecula*) is integrated into the Development Plans

of the Region. Projects of this order are innovative in that they establish a dialogue between Cultural Heritage, History, Landscape and Local Administrations.

The surveys that led to the discovery of the site of the battle of Metaurus (IT) are recent, but *Baecula* has an interpretation center of the site of the battle. The story and the dramatic scenes of the expulsion of the defeated fleeing with women and children, told and illustrated with watercolors and digital media, are reminiscent of the more recent events in the Mediterranean today. By adopting the point of view of the refugees and their families, these stories allow us to identify a good communication practice that consists of inciting the spectator to look at the consequences of war in a different way and to recognize on the museum's screens familiar scenes from television news.

Tyre, Byblos, Baalbek in Lebanon, Ibiza in Spain, Agrigento, Syracuse in Sicily, in addition to Motyé and Lilybée on the indicative list..., these organizations that adhere to the Phoenicians' Route manage a good number of World Heritage sites. The respect of the UNESCO Convention and all the elements that derive from it are therefore an integral part of the network's challenges.

3.2.3 Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans

The theme of the Phoenicians' Route lends itself particularly well to cultural and educational exchange initiatives between young people, especially between students. Since 2014, the Phoenicians' Route includes its network of Mediterranean Schools, which organizes educational, linguistic and cultural exchanges for classes of students accompanied by their teachers. The work that is carried out in this framework is related to the educational exploration of the enhancement of heritage and the promotion of the values defended by the Council of Europe. A series of programs are proposed according to the age of the different school audiences: trips to discover the Mediterranean cultural heritage, the Phoenicians and the route of Hannibal, school twinning, educational workshops at the museum.

The COVID 19 pandemic has seriously hampered the travel programs of this school-based subnetwork, which has nevertheless managed to carry out some of its activities. To some extent the reduction in exchanges was compensated for by online activities such as webinars. Exhibits in the activity report show school trips between Italy and Sicily, France and Malta from 2018 to 2020 and online meetings between Spain and Italy in 2021. As the activities involving travel had to be interrupted in 2020, their resumption is conditional on the normalization of educational activities in the post-pandemic period.

Actions have been undertaken to obtain financing from European Union programs such as Erasmus+ where the priority is to promote educational exchanges between European countries. The Phoenicians' Route participates in the Erasmus+ FAB ROUTES project on the conception and implementation of a training program for young cultural route leaders. With the dynamics of tourism, the expectations of the public and the resources of the hospitality professionals having evolved in the last years, it was necessary to train young tour guide professionals in order to adapt the professional profiles to the new expectations.

Other actions are in preparation: The international network of universities has produced an agreement allowing Erasmus+ exchanges of students and professors between universities of the Phoenicians' route. This is an indispensable preliminary step before the initiation of regulated exchanges recognized by the pedagogical authorities of the different countries.

It is therefore to be hoped that the post-COVID period will see a resumption of exchange activities and that the conventions between the universities of the network will favor a transnational mobility of young Europeans; this would represent a considerable qualitative

progress of the pedagogical activities of the Phoenicians' Route, which have had difficulty in starting up outside Italy.

3.2.4 Contemporary cultural and artistic practice

Efforts have been made to support the contemporary practices of culture and the arts, the lack of which had led to remarks in the previous evaluation. The present certification report shows activities that attest to a serious grasp of this area.

The activities listed include exhibitions staged off the beaten track thanks to the contribution of new technologies. For example, the epic of Hannibal is recounted using a combination of moving images, videos and installations combining entertainment and real objects from museums. In the Balearic Islands, sailing enthusiasts have traced the route taken by the Phoenicians on a stretch of coastline on the island of Ibiza, more than 2000 years later, in a regatta. The initiative was also an opportunity to recall the Phoenician role in the dissemination of the intangible heritage that is the knowledge related to navigation. Finally, the stage has become an essential resource for presenting characters from the past in their historical context, here a champion of the Olympic Games, there a recreation of daily life.

At the initiative of the director of the Route, the trip to Sicily for this evaluation included a visit to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Gibellina, which has just reopened in July 2021 after years of neglect. Among the works is an installation inspired by the Phoenicians' Route, depicting a map of the Mediterranean as a backdrop for an installation of ceramic vases marked with the names of the riparian countries. Other works feature objects from archaeological digs such as ancient amphorae in a context of contemporary utensils and formal wear, representing from an atemporal perspective, the journey, the crossroads of civilizations ...

The artistic proposals of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Gibellina could be disseminated among the members of the Route and, who knows, inspire new initiatives in other regions, giving rise to a dialogue and a crossing of views not only across borders and languages but also in the interdisciplinary and artistic dimension.

3.2.5 Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development

During the present evaluation cycle the Phoenicians' Route has dedicated itself to the defining of a common position of its members regarding the model of tourist exploration of Cultural Heritage, which constitute the basis of the specific methodology recommended to the adherent organizations. Thus, since 2019, the TRAMES project, subsidized by the COSME program of the European Union, of which the Phoenicians' Route is a partner, aims at the revitalization of leisure experiences as well as the extension of tourist seasons, focusing on the diversification of the offer.

Part of the objectives of the Phoenicians' Route in the field of tourism are developed within this project, including eight *Smart Ways* and their interpretation centers, which place the local community, its hospitality and traditions at the center of the tourist offer as well as the promotion of cultural and natural heritage. The aim is to tighten the integration between the territory and its attractions, including the value of its landscape, local community, crafts, local products and even its atmosphere. The replication of the Smart Way operating model is carried out in collaboration with the members of the 7 countries of the Route: Italy, Spain, Lebanon, Greece, the Governorate of Jericho, Cyprus and Malta.

The teams begin by conducting state of the art tourism and asset assessments in their respective territories. This includes analyses of the strengths and weaknesses of the current

operating model, as well as the identification of the most strategic stakeholders. Pooling is organized with the aim of fostering a spirit of cooperation among the stakeholders in the region.

The Spanish and especially the Italian members of the Phoenicians' Route have known these dynamics and procedures for a long time. The interest of the European project, which constitutes the normative framework for this action, is that it forces the transmission of these good practices to countries less developed from the touristic point of view, where the symbiosis between the historical heritage, the value of the landscape and the economic resources of the land has not yet been consolidated.

The year 2019 has definitely been a pivotal year for tourism development initiatives, especially with the creation of the "Alliance of Tour Operators of the Phoenicians' Route", intended to accompany members of the tourism sector in adopting the operating model defended by the Smart Ways methodology. This initiative has succeeded in mobilizing a number of major networks in the world tourism business (UNWTO) and in the training of tourism operators (Travel Expert Academy). Finally, the operating model created by the Phoenicians' Route has been highlighted among the initiatives defended within the EUSAIR strategy (Pillar IV of the European Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region). In 2019 the Spanish members of the Galicia region (ES) designed in partnership with the regional government the first maritime Smart Way of the Phoenicians' Route, which is operated by several tour operators with promising results (50000 customers in 2019). The Route launched in 2020 its Underwater Archaeology Network in collaboration with the Superintendence of the Sea in Sicily, in order to satisfy the demand of the important segment of scuba diving tourism. The pilot experience born in Sicily, where about fifteen underwater destinations are proposed, should be extended to the other shores of the Route.

In summary, the EU-funded Smart Ways initiative has developed a model of tourism operation based on experience (or even experimentation) rather than destination. The network activity has allowed for this model to be shared and marketed with some success, it seems, in two different countries.

In light of this information, it appears that the Tourism and Sustainable Cultural Development component of the Phoenicians' Route is fully deployed. The model created within this framework is beginning to prove itself in the market and is asserting itself as an example of strategic tourism development before the European authorities.

3.3 Cultural Route Network

3.3.1 Overview of the institutional/legal structure of the network

The Phoenicians' Route is registered in Italy and has the legal status of an International Confederation, which the management and the secretariat of the network consider to be a particularly favorable framework for the activities of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. Its main bodies are described on the website of the network at <https://fenici.net/en/about-us-2/governance/> :

The Assembly, which meets twice a year (launch meeting and international general assembly), is the main body of the Route, responsible for democratic decision-making on activities, objectives and actions. The network now has an operational tool, its 2020-2030 Action Plan, which outlines the future objectives of the Route. This Plan is updated every year during the International Autumn Assembly, based on proposals from the other organs of the network (the management, the scientific committee, the presidency office and the steering committee).

The Presidency, whose mission is to represent the Route, remains in office for a period of 2 years. The term of office should be extended to three years from 2022 and the position should be rotated between the different countries. This position is described on the website at <https://fenici.net/fr/équipe/>.

The Board, comprising institutional members from 7 countries in the network, is generally made up of people with a public institutional role (region, province, chamber of commerce). This function is described on the website <https://fenici.net/en/presidency-bureau/>. The mission of the Bureau is to assist the President in his institutional duties, supporting the route in the public domain by representing him at the national and regional level.

The International Scientific Committee, includes members from 7 different countries, who are specialists of different scientific disciplines (archaeology, architecture, tourism sciences, humanities, etc.). It is described at <https://fenici.net/fr/comité-scientifique/>. The scientific committee has supervised the drafting of the part of the Action Plan 2020-2030 devoted to the activities of the network. It also plays a role in the regular evaluation of the activities and verifies their relevance to the five fields of action outlined by the Council of Europe and gives its opinion on each new application. Scientific research and training projects are the responsibility of the International University Network of the Phoenicians' Route (IUN), which has just held its first meeting in Mazarrón (ES). The university network constitutes a pole of scientific cooperation and training for the specialists of the Phoenicians' Route. Its activities for the 2022 agenda include land and sea archaeological excavations, applied research, international scientific events on different themes of the Cultural Route.

The Steering Committee, the Secretariat and the Director of the Route constitute the core of the coordination team and the follow-up of the network's agenda. The Steering Committee, composed of 10 members from different countries, ensures the coordination and follow-up of the activities with the Secretariat and the Director. The Director executes the decisions of the Assembly and represents the Route in international projects. He maintains relations with the National and Transversal Networks and with national and international institutions. Finally, the Secretariat is responsible for the administrative management at the service of the associates and the operational networks of the Museums, Schools, Tour Operators and Universities of the Route.

In addition to these bodies, the Phoenicians' Route has opened sub-networks that play a role in each of the five fields of action of the Council of Europe Regulations:

The Network of Museums - MeMuNet includes about twenty museums or networks of museums from different countries, coordinated by the National Archaeological Museum of Naples (Italy)

The University Network - IUN - International University Network of the Phoenicians' Route includes more than 20 universities from different countries whose members are active in research, training and youth exchanges, presenting projects to the European program Erasmus+.

The Network of Schools - EDU.NET- It is a network of more than 30 schools of different levels and countries aiming at promoting dialogue between young people, heritage education, intercultural trips, twinning between schools, shared educational projects (also through Erasmus projects).

The Tour Operators Network, Phoenicians' Route Tour Operators Alliance, launched in collaboration with the World Tourism Organization and the Core Working Group promoted by the EICR of the Council of Europe. The Phoenicians' Route collaborates with different training

and presentation portals for tour operators that promote its models, such as the Travel Expert Academy, which is followed by 65,000 tour operators worldwide. The network leads another sectoral initiative through the collaboration and agreement signed with the partner ISTO - International Social Tourism Organization, section Americas, for cultural exchanges (presentation of museums and places of culture of the Phoenician's Route), academic development (university exchanges and research collaboration) and also tourism (with the participation of tour operators) between Mediterranean-Europe and the Americas through the Phoenicians' Route and the Mediterranean communities of origin in all the countries of the American continent (Lebanese, Italian, French, Greek, Spanish, Cypriot, Maltese, Croatian, Portuguese, etc. diaspora) in America.

The Phoenicians' Route has also undertaken twinning with other routes in the world, especially in America (Grand Sentier in Canada, Route 66 in the United States, Ruta Maya in Mexico and Guatemala, Ruta Moche in Peru, Ruta Chapa nan in the Andean countries).

The growth of the network, the multiplication of its members and, consequently, of its activities, the scheduling of meeting initiatives or the accompaniment of events organized by the members, have generated the need to have staff available throughout the year

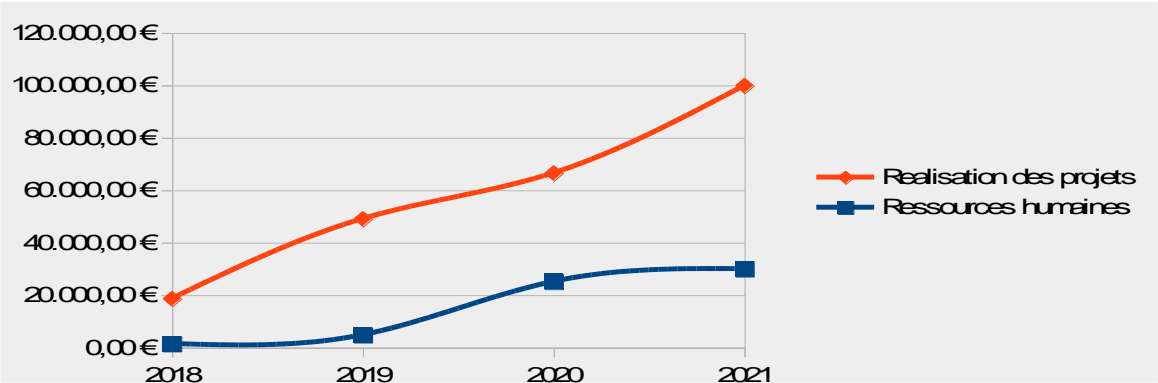


Figure 4: Evolution of Human Resources Expenditures in Relation to Project Budget Execution

Collaborators have been recruited and volunteers mobilized to assist the management team and to animate the various communication resources of the Route, such as the newsletter, the website, whose texts are available in four languages, and the social media platforms. The director is engaged in promotion and representation missions more than 200 days per year. The analysis of the budget shows an increase in the human resources expenditure item 2020. The diagram shows a parallel evolution of this item to that of the project implementations, until 2020 when the curve of the former levels off showing that the resources have become sufficient for all the activities of the network.

European funding is now the other major source of income for the network. Some of it facilitates short, isolated actions, but the most important ones extend over several years and constitute stable and important means of income. Concerning the European projects, the management team mentions first of all the TRAMES project of the European Cosme program, entirely based on the Phoenicians' Route, which has allowed for the development of the Smart Ways model in 5 of its countries. But also, the Crossdev project - of the ENICBCMED program - for which the network is a service provider.

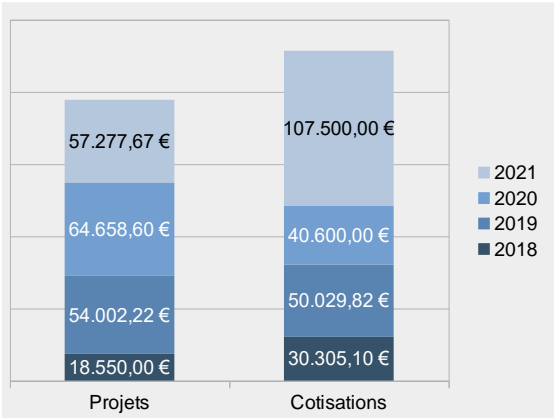


Figure 5: Detail of revenues / year.

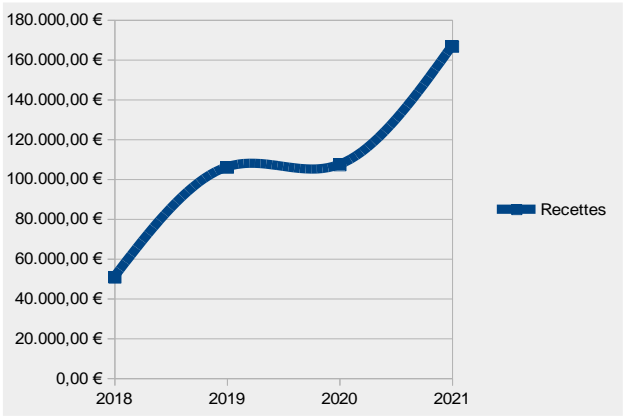


Figure 6: Evolution of revenues over the period

Finally, with the Erasmus+ project FabRoute, whose partners are 5 other Cultural Routes certified by the CoE, the network develops the themes of Governance of the routes. Other Erasmus+ projects have obtained funding during the writing of this report, through which the Route proposes activities of underwater archaeology (U-Mar project) as well as on post-covid tourism (QUEST project). Other results are expected from the Europe Creative program on Heritage Festivals and from the Horizon program on usage models of the destinations of the Route.

The current statutes of the association were the subject of a detailed analysis in 2017 as part of the previous evaluation, with a modification of an article of the statutes having just been proposed at that time. Indeed, this article 7 allows for the ratification of new members on the basis of a proposal from the steering committee after a favorable opinion from the scientific committee, and exempts associations, foundations and other non-profit organizations from paying a membership fee. The evaluator foresaw financial difficulties due to the exemption from paying membership fees for the organizations mentioned, which could have affected the economic viability of the Route. This did not happen. Four years later, the partnership and cash flow situation confirm the validity of the reform. The massive admission of members with public status has relieved by their contributions the private partners who had difficulty in keeping up with their contributions. The exemption of non-profit associations and other private members has therefore not created any cash flow difficulties.

The analysis of the budgets for the current evaluation cycle confirms the financial sustainability of the network. The structure of the members' contributions guarantees the stability of the revenues that have increased considerably. By obtaining funding from the European Union, the Phoenicians' Route confirms its capacity to generate sufficient income for its operation and sustainability.

3.3.2 Current composition of the network by country and type of member

During the last evaluation, the members of the Phoenicians' Route belonged to 9 countries: Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Palestine², Spain and Tunisia. Since 2018 members from three new countries have joined: Albania, Croatia and Cyprus, while two others are candidates: Portugal and Slovenia. The Phoenicians' route will therefore soon have members of 14 different nationalities stretching from the Levantine coast to the Atlantic.

While the distribution of the members of the road is relevant to its theme, it does show the notable absence of North Africa and a marked imbalance between participants from different countries. Efforts should be made to encourage the participation, alongside Tunisia, of organizations representing Morocco and Algeria, and even Egypt, which are still not present.

Until 2009, it was possible to observe a correspondence between the eminently coastal geographical distribution of Phoenician remains in the Mediterranean and that of the members of the route. However, the new partnership requests have led to the adhesion of regions sometimes far from the sea where Phoenician influence has left a lasting mark on the local population, as is the case for the Iberian Culture, the Etruscans and other indigenous populations of Sicily and the Italian peninsula. The geographical and chronological frameworks that were too restrictive in the early days have therefore been extended.

The enlargement of the geographical area of the Phoenicians' Route to the Mediterranean Basin in a broad sense and to the Punic chronology was therefore proposed and the statutes of the association, modified in 2018, now refer to the Phoenician and Punic cultural heritage, with membership open under Article 8 to "*any organization involved in the enhancement of cultural and natural heritage referring to the Mediterranean, to Intercultural Dialogue, to the Phoenician-Punic civilization and to other ancient civilizations of the Mediterranean*".

The membership procedure is very simple; an application form is available on the organization's website; candidates must submit it to the Steering Committee, which considers it relevant after advice from the Scientific Committee. New memberships are ratified at the next annual general assembly. With the number of members being unlimited, the network currently includes more than 130 organizations.

The possibility of extending the network beyond the Mediterranean coasts is particularly suitable for the association of universities for which a limitation of membership to a strict geographical framework would represent a constraint without justification. As an example, the journal *Studia Phoenicia* of the University of Leuven has long been a reference of great prestige in Phoenician research, while the University of Oxford has mobilized in 2019 the greatest names in Phoenician and Punic research in the framework of a manual, which is now an essential bibliographic reference.

3.3.3 Network extension since last evaluation

Since the last evaluation, the membership of the Phoenicians' Route has grown exponentially. The list of members that included 54 registers in 2017 now counts 78 more, a total of 132 members that, considering the list of applications for membership currently under review, will amount to 162 members at the next general assembly.

The association has opened its doors to three new countries of the Mediterranean Basin, namely, Cyprus, Croatia and Albania. The list of applications under consideration also includes a Portuguese regional authority that represents the participation of a 4th new country. France and Greece, which were represented by only one member, now have 3 and 4 more,

² "*This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of Council of Europe member States on this issue.*"

respectively, while Lebanon doubles its membership with a total of 8 registers; the Levant region asserts its presence with the new partnerships of small municipalities belonging to the governorates of Jericho and Jerusalem. The majority of the new members belong to the two most dynamic countries in the network, Italy (43 new members) and Spain (15 new members). The Italian members now represent 47% of the association and the Spanish almost 30%; this shows how welcome the participation of other countries is!

From a qualitative point of view, a change is taking place in the composition of the partnership, in which the importance of the public sector has increased considerably. For example, two thirds of the new Spanish members are local or regional authorities with a direct official role in the management and development of the Phoenician or Punic heritage discovered on their territories.

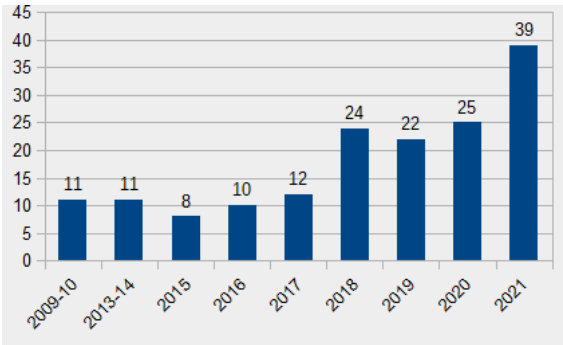


Figure 7: Membership by Year (including applicants)

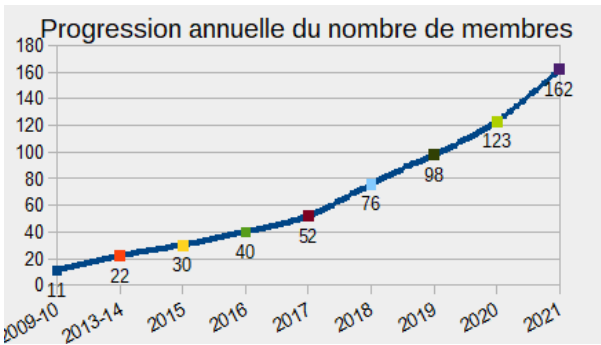


Figure 8: Annual progression (including candidates)

The meeting of the University Network in October 2021 has allowed for the understanding of the current trend of adhesions to the Route, among which local governments represent a growing majority. The choice of Mazarrón (ES) to host the meeting of universities was particularly instructive in this regard. A small coastal town of just over 30,000 inhabitants, Mazarrón is a reference point for the Route due to the discovery of two sunken Phoenician wrecks in its bay, one of which yielded a load of silver lead. The municipality, which hosted and financed the meeting of the university network in October 2021, hopes in return to receive the support of the organization (and by extension of the Council of Europe, whose visual identity it bears) in its efforts with the State, to preserve and exhibit on site one of the wrecks, which the government is preparing to undertake the recovery of.

The trend towards public membership is also important in Italy, although associations and companies still account for 45% of the membership, the rest being made up of regional authorities, municipalities and other public institutions (universities or museums). The triennial report does not indicate any disengagement during the present period.

This wide opening up of the network to local and regional authorities offers several important advantages, in particular the development of a more direct access to those responsible for cultural and tourist policies, at the local or regional level, to whom the Phoenicians' Route can now transmit the strategies and plans conceived by its specialists.

Moreover, the local and regional authorities, who often participate enthusiastically in the network's activities, have no difficulty in mobilizing the media, which allows for a rapid and effective dissemination of the principles to which the Route adheres and which it defends, together with the Council of Europe, such as intercultural dialogue.

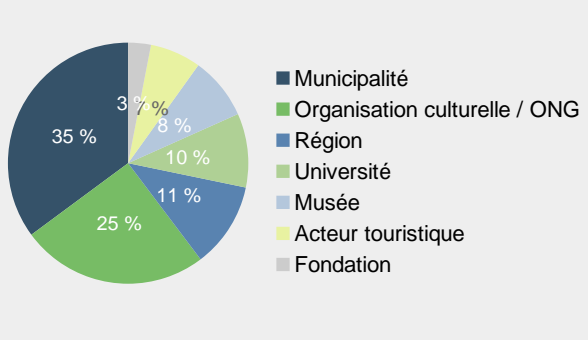


Figure 9: Members by area of activity.

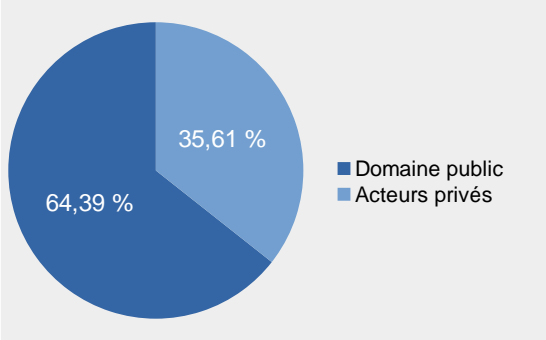


Figure 10 : Membership by Sector (Public/Private)

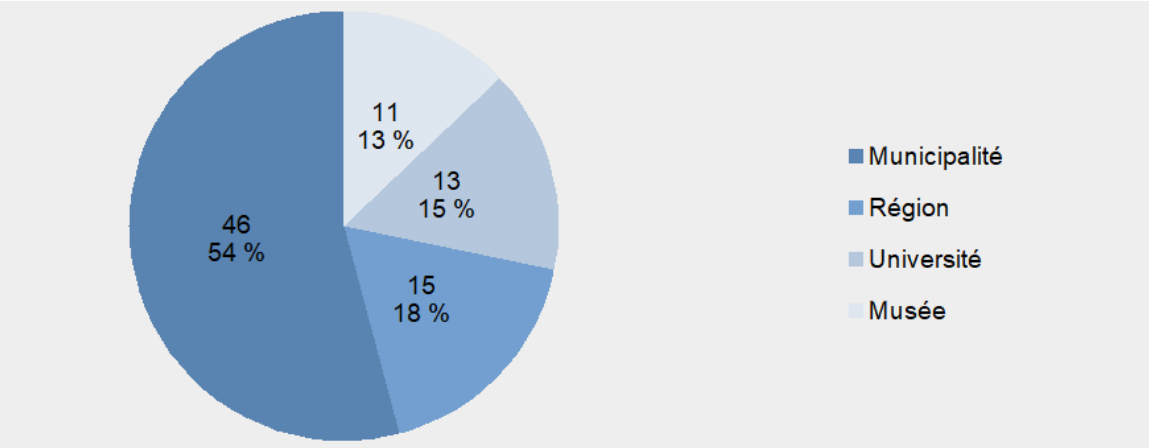


Figure 11: Public Sector Network by Agency Type

Finally, from a financial perspective, the public partners have increased the network's revenues, promising a budgetary stability that it had been struggling to achieve, with its private members often having difficulty paying their dues. It was thus accorded in the new statutes of 2018 to free nonprofit associations and NGOs from the obligation to contribute financially to the budget, which is now based on contributions from public bodies and on the financing by European projects.

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

The adhesion to the network of the local and regional public organizations initiated in 2019 indicates the trend of the next years. Indeed, the administrations have the responsibility and the means to ensure the coordination of the different actors of the territories hosting the Phoenician and Punic remains. The effort of the Phoenicians' Route is therefore primarily aimed at the Regions, which tend to more readily accept the implementation of network methodologies (such as *Smart Ways*) and which have more means than the municipalities.

The Phoenicians' Route has also welcomed local development agencies (GALs for rural areas, FLAGS for coastal areas), which have at their disposal both the financing of the European structural funds and qualified personnel to implement the development of the territory, in partnership with small and medium-sized enterprises of the service chains that support the exploration of the Cultural Routes.

Having the means at their disposal, the Regions also have the capacity to promote meetings between operators, to order training courses aiming at the reinforcement of professional capacities, to recruit professionals of the socio-cultural animation, in other words, they are the essential actors of the integration of the Phoenicians' Route with the policies of development of the territory

Country	Members	%
Italy	67	41,10%
Spain	41	25,15%
Croatia	15	9,20%
Greece	12	7,36%
Lebanon	8	4,91%
Cyprus	5	3,07%
France	4	2,45%
Palestine	3	1,84%
Malta	2	1,23%
Portugal	2	1,23%
Belgium	1	0,61%
Albania	1	0,61%
Tunisia	1	0,61%
Slovenia	1	0,61%

Figure 12: Network Expansion Including

The Route is able to provide the expertise that is often lacking at the local level, its objective being to stimulate the development of local administrations and public bodies, facilitating their participation in the activities of the Route. In exchange, public bodies can contribute to the effective communication of the values of the Council of Europe and the Route and to the development of valid territorial strategies on the themes of cultural heritage promotion. This is the strategy that inspires the extension of the network for the upcoming years.

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.)

The network uses a logo whose conditions of use are the object of a regulation published on its website, in the section "how to join". The members are obliged to use the logo on all the communication support related to the activities they carry out in the name of the Phoenicians' Route, such as scientific publications, exhibition catalogs, brochures, posters, and advertising kakemonos. However, the members have the possibility to use the formula "Phoenicians' Route" in their own language, no other variation being authorized. The review of the communication support produced during the present evaluation cycle shows a correct application of this policy.

A website has been put developed at <https://fenici.net/fr/>, translated into 4 languages (English, Spanish, French and Italian), which is quite remarkable. The different sections proposed include information about the activities and projects in which the members of the network participate, as well as the organic structure and the different committees of which it is composed, the administrative documents including the list of members, as well as the different agreements made with other organizations. The updating of information occurs with a frequency that is linked to the rhythm of the events organized by the network, for which the website is the main communication tool. The meetings intended to mobilize the whole partnership are announced sufficiently in advance, then they are quickly provided with a summary. Thus, in October and November 2021, the General Assembly of the Phoenicians' Route, the meeting of the Universities of the Phoenicians' Route and the General Assembly of the Spanish network of the Phoenicians' Route, which is also an association, will take place.

The Route publishes a newsletter that disseminates the main news of events derived from the activities. However, the publication of several issues a year is irregular and in the absence of feature articles, social networks are still the best sources of information. The network hosts Instagram and Facebook sites that post information on a daily basis. Since the declaration of the health emergency, management has made arrangements to facilitate participation in meetings and events held via video conferencing. Social networks are used for this purpose at each of the events such as statutory assemblies or scientific meetings, so that despite the confinements the network activities could continue without interruption.

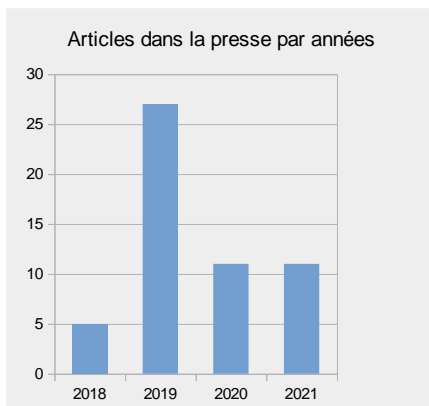


Figure 13: Articles in the press/year

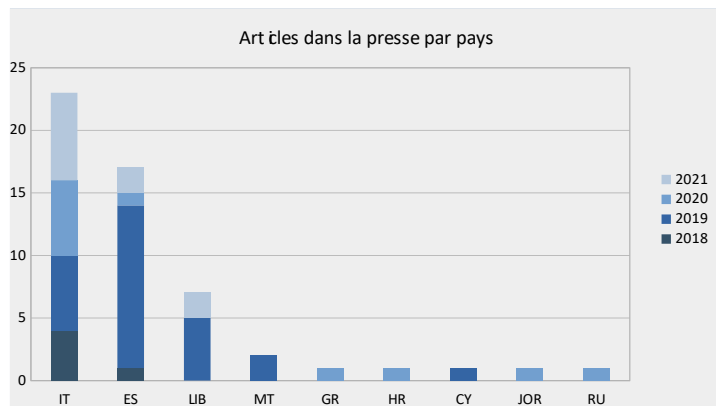


Figure 14: Articles in the press/country

The statistics on the diffusion of information about the activities in the press attest to the same situation observed in the analysis of the fields of activities, where Italy and Spain, followed by Lebanon, appear once again as the countries with the most information to communicate. The diffusion in the media of countries that do not belong to the network is explained by the communication activities carried out by partners of European projects to which the Phoenicians' Route has adhered. The same is true for the publications whose authors are members of the network since the same frequencies and trends are observed. The statistics of the communication therefore constitute a reliable indicator of the activity of the Route.

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

The guidelines for the use of the "Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe" logo are published in the form of regulations on the page of the website that explains the procedure for joining the network. The logo is available in two versions, in color and in black and white. The acceptance and the respect of the guidelines are presented as strict and unavoidable conditions for the membership of the Phoenicians' Route.

The analysis of the communication materials produced by the members of the Route during the present evaluation cycle attests to a scrupulous application of the guidelines and consequently a relevant use of the logo. It is therefore possible to affirm that the Cultural Route implements the guidelines for the use of the logo "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe".

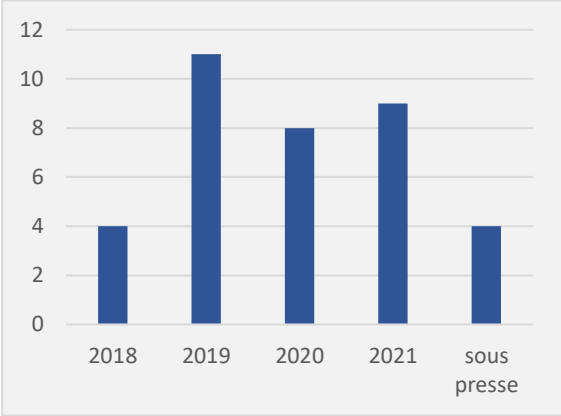


Figure 15: Network publications/year

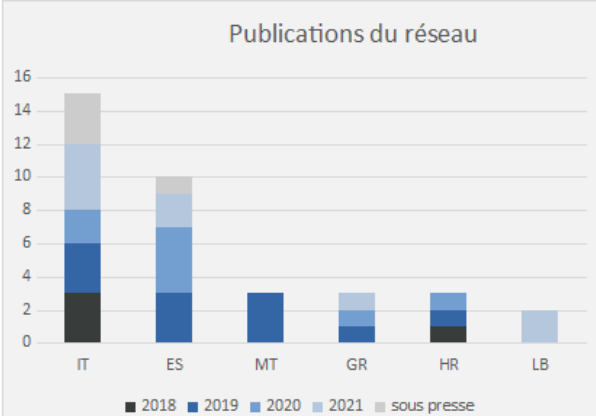


Figure 16: Network Publications / Country

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

Due to varying deficiencies found in the regular evaluation undergone in 2015, the Phoenicians' Route was subjected to an exceptional evaluation in 2017, as a result of which it was able to maintain its status as a Certified Cultural Route of the Council of Europe. However, the 2017 report noted the need to address a series of improvements in different areas, namely, the participation in the activities of a larger part of the partnership, the risks of bankruptcy due to the exemption of the fee for non-profit entities, the failure of attempts to raise European funds.

This report can conclude that these improvements have all been implemented. The predicted budgetary shortfalls have not occurred, on the contrary, the requests for European funding have been successful and the participation in the network activities is mobilizing an increasing number of countries.

The evaluation criteria of the checklist give the Phoenicians' Route a score of 74 out of 81 points. Only 7 questions on the list did not receive a positive response. The results can be summarized as follows:

The theme of the route

The theme that mobilizes the members of the network, the Phoenicians' Route, represents a set of common historical values for the countries bordering the Mediterranean Basin, not only the European countries but also those of the coasts of the Levant and North Africa. The Phoenicians' Route represents the set of values related to peaceful coexistence, exchange of knowledge and ideas that are the basis of intercultural dialogue.

As such it should be recommended to the management of the Route to redouble efforts and renew the first attempts already made in order to obtain the participation of the Maghreb countries.

Priority fields of action

The Phoenicians' Route has provided concrete evidence of the work of its members in the five priority fields of action defined by the Council of Europe. The Phoenicians' Route has obtained funding from the European Union that allows it to carry out projects in each of these fields without depending on the association's treasury. Since the beginning of the present evaluation cycle, the management of the network, assisted by the Scientific Committee, has been working on the creation of specific structures for the channeling of work on the priority fields of action outlined by the Council of Europe; these are the network of universities, schools, museums and tour operators. Likewise, a ten-year Action Plan has been drawn up.

In this regard, it is recommended that the Scientific Committee of the Route develop the 2020 - 2030 Action Plan for each of the priority fields of action and establish specific annual agendas for each of them.

Similarly, it is recommended that the Steering Committee and the Management create an internal quality assessment committee, define the criteria based on the priorities set by the Council of Europe, keep an updated Quality Plan for the Phoenicians' Route and have it certified by an internationally recognized agency.

The network

The functioning of the network is satisfactory. The progression of the number of members is spectacular, the public status of most of the newcomers has consolidated the budgetary stability and has brought the Direction and the different committees of the Route closer to the public authorities that make the decisions concerning the development of the regions that shelter the Phoenician-Punic remains. The sustainability of the network is ensured by the recruitment of a team of collaborators sufficient to face the exponential growth of the activities. Different teams assume the technical, administrative, scientific and representation roles, which constitutes an intelligent and efficient sharing of responsibilities. The network owes much to the dedication of its director, who devotes a great deal of time and energy to it. The many questions posed in this evaluation were answered with great diligence and precision.

Communication tools

The Phoenicians' Route has deployed different communication support, the central element being the website <http://fenici.net/>, the main resource for members, in four languages, updated with remarkable frequency. Facebook and Instagram accounts complete the network's presence in the media. The Route's communication policy is particularly strict with regard to the Council of Europe directive on the use of the logo.

The operation of the network and its communication policy are satisfactory and are not subject to any recommendations.

CRITERIA	Recommendations Previous Evaluation 2017-2018	Has the route addressed the recommendation since the last evaluation?		Recommendations current evaluation 2021-2022
		YES	NO	
Cultural Route Theme	The evaluation found little evidence of real commitment of the Scientific Committee and its members, most of it attributable to its Coordinator.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Cooperation in research and development</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	It is recommended that the Steering Committee and Management
<i>Enhancement of memory,</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

II. Priority fields of action	history and European heritage		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	develop a 2020 - 2030 Action Plan for each of the Priority Fields of Action. Specific annual agendas should be established for each field.
	Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Contemporary cultural and artistic practice	There is a lack of activities in the field of "Contemporary Cultural and Artistic Practice".	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
III. Cultural Route Network			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	It is recommended that the Management redouble its efforts to obtain memberships of the Phoenicians' Route in North Africa
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	It is recommended that the Steering Committee and the Management create an internal quality assessment committee, define the parameters of this assessment based on the priorities outlined by the Council of Europe, and keep an updated Quality Plan for the Phoenicians' Route.
		A significant concentration of initiatives in a limited number of member countries (78% in Italy and 8% in Spain).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Lack of detail on operational and funding plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Establishment of indicators to measure the impact of the cultural routes' activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	The general management of the Route is mainly focused on the role and personal commitment of its director	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	The Route's 2017 decision to waive annual dues for nonprofit entities (which make up more than 60% of the Route's membership) exposes the Confederation to potential risks in terms of financial sustainability.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Communication tools		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

5 List of References

List of documents provided by the network:

- The 2021-2022 certification form
- The previous evaluation report.
- Financial information, statements of account for the years 2018-June 2021 and projected budget for 2021
- Statutes of the Association
- List of members and candidates (Excel)
- Annex of communication materials for European projects
- Annex on the visibility of the central offices of the Route
- Annex on Cooperation in research and development Activities
- Annexes on the activities of Enhancement of memory, history and European heritage.
- Annexes on Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development activities
- Annex of the network's communication materials.
- Agendas and Reports of the General Meetings (bi-annual) 2018-2021
- Newsletters 2018 to 2021
- Promotional materials 2018-2021 including Conferences, Exhibitions, Fairs, Festivals, Historical Re-enactments.

6 Annex 1: Expert field visit and/or online interviews with network management and members

Field trip to Sicily: October 22 to 26, 2021

The field visit program took place from October 22 to 26. The secretariat of the Route, contacted at the end of September, proposed a visit to Sicily, due to the importance of the Phoenician remains that were highlighted there and also because of the agenda of activities for the month of October 2021, which included a number of important appointments for the network. The visit started with the point of arrival the B&B Tempio di Hera in Selinunte, not far from the central office of the confederation. The agenda of the visit proposed by the Secretariat was followed, so that the places visited were the following:

Friday (October 22)

- Arrival in Castelvetro and participation in a meeting of the European project CROSSDEV of the call ENI CBCMED, of which the Phoenicians' Route is a service provider in the facilities of the Vigneto Resort (Comune di Menfi).
- 1st Meeting at the Phoenicians' Route headquarters about the evaluation report, with the director of the Route.

Saturday (October 23rd)

- Visit to the Saracen district and the Interpretation Center of the Phoenicians' Route / Archaeological Museum of Sambuca di Sicilia (Palazzo Panitteri).
- Meeting with the management of the Iter Vitis route.
- Award ceremony - Iter Vitis & Phoenicians' Route Award

Sunday, October 24th

- 9:00 am Visit to the archaeological park of Selinunte, visit to the museum of Selinunte and meeting with the tour operators visiting the Phoenician route in Sicily.
- Visit of a rural farm, partner of the Smart Way of the Phoenicians' Route.
- Lunch at Momentum Resort - Phoenicians' Route Farm

Monday, October 25th

- 9:00 am Departure for the island of Motyé (Marsala), 10:00 am arrival on the island - visit of the archaeological site, visit of the museum and meeting with the director Mrs. Pamela Toti. Return to Selinunte.
- 2nd Meeting at the Phoenicians' Route Headquarters and working session on the Evaluation Report

Tuesday, October 26th

- Visit to the Museum of the Mediterranean Fabrics - Orestidi Foundation in Gibellina, Interpretation Center of the Phoenicians' Route on the Euro-Mediterranean Dialogue and return to the airport.

People from the Phoenicians' Route met and interviewed directly:

Before the trip to Sicily the opportunity arose to participate in the first meeting of the network of universities of the Phoenicians' Route in Mazarrón, Spain. The list below includes specialists and officials met at both events. In all cases, these are direct and oral interviews.

Members of the Board of Directors of the Phoenicians' Route

- Mrs. Elena Tanou, President of the Phoenicians' Route (Nicosia Tourism Board. Cyprus) (23/10/2021 in Menfi IT)

Staff of the Phoenicians' Route

- Antonjo Barone, Director (Italy) (22/10/2021 and 25/10/2021 in Selinunte IT)
- Sara Ferrari, Secretary (Italy) (various dates during November 2021)

Members of the Phoenicians' Route Management Committee

- Manuel Peregrina, National Coordinator for Spain (15/10/2021 and 16/10/2021)
- Antoine Lahoud (Lebanon) (15/10/2021 and 16/10/2021)

Members of the Secretariat

- Sandrine Modolo (France)

Members of the Scientific Committee

- Paolo Ponzio (Italy) (15/10/2021 and 16/10/2021)
- Arturo Ruiz Rodríguez (Spain) (15/10/2021 and 16/10/2021)
- Karsten Xuereb (Malta) (15/10/2021, 16/10/2021 and 24/10/2021)

Members of the University Network

- Ana Maria Niveau de Villedary y Mariñas, University of Cadiz (Spain) (15/10/2021 and 16/10/2021)
- María Luisa Vázquez de Ágredos, University of Valencia (Spain) (15/10/2021 and 16/10/2021)
- Juan Pedro Bellón, University of Jaen (Spain) (15/10/2021 and 16/10/2021)
- Elio Stifanic, Municipality of the city of Poreč (Croatia) (23/10/2021 in Menfi IT)
- Ksenija Keca, Libertas International University - National Coordinator for Croatia (15/10/2021 and 16/10/2021)

Other

- Pamela Toti, Director of the Archaeological site of Motyé and its museum (October 25, 2021).

7 Annex 2: Checklist (Excel file)

EXPERT ASSESSMENT CHECK-LIST								
QUESTIONS				Ye s	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	0				
	2	Does the theme of the Route offer a solid basis for youth cultural and educational exchanges?	1	0				
	3	Does the theme of the route provide a solid basis for innovative activities?	1	0				
	4	Does the theme of the route offer a solid basis for the development of cultural tourism products?	1	0				
	5	Has the theme been researched/developed by academics/experts from different regions of Europe?	1	0				
3.1 PRIORITY FIELDS OF ACTION	3.2.1 Cooperation in research and development	6	Does the Route offer a platform for co-operation in research and development of European cultural themes/values?	1	0			
		7	Does the Route play a unifying role around major European themes, enabling dispersed knowledge to be brought together?	1	0			
		8	Does the Route show how these themes are representative of European values shared by several European countries?	1	0			
		9	Does the Route illustrate the development of these values and the variety of forms they may take in Europe?	1	0			
		10	Does the Route have a network of universities and a research center working on its theme at the European level?	1	0			
	3.2.2 Enhancement of the memory, history and	3.2.1 Cooperation in research and development	11	Does the Route have a multidisciplinary Scientific Committee?	1	0		
			12	Does the Scientific Committee work on its theme at the European level?	1	0		
			13	Does the Scientific Committee carry out research and analysis on the issues relevant to its theme and/or activities on the theoretical level?	1	0		
			14	Does the Scientific Committee carry out research and analysis on the issues relevant to its theme and/or activities on the practical level?	1	0		
		3.2.2 Enhancement of the memory, history and	3.2.2 Enhancement of the memory, history and	15	Do the Route activities take into account and explain the historical significance of tangible and intangible European heritage?	1	0	
				16	Do the Route activities promote the values of the Council of Europe?	1	0	

		17	Do the Route activities promote the brand of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe?	1	0	
		18	Does the Route work in conformity with international charters and conventions on cultural heritage preservation?	1	0	
		19	Do the Route activities identify, preserve and develop European heritage sites in rural destinations?	1	0	
		20	Do the Route activities identify, preserve and develop European heritage sites in industrial areas in the process of economic restructuring?	0	1	
		21	Do the Route activities valorize the heritage of ethnic or social minorities in Europe?	0	1	
		22	Do the Route activities contribute to a better understanding of the concept of cultural heritage, the importance of its preservation and sustainable development?	1	0	
		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	0	
		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	0	
	3.2.3 Cultural and educational exchanges of young Europeans	25	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to develop a better understanding of the concept of European citizenship?	1	0	
		26	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to emphasize the value of new personal experience through visiting diverse places?	1	0	
		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?	0	1	
		28	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to offer collaborative opportunities for educational institutions at various levels?	1	0	
		29	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to place and emphasis on personal and real experiences through the use of places and contacts?	1	0	

		30	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to set up pilot schemes with several participating countries?	1	0	
		31	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to give rise to co-operation activities which involve educational institutions at various levels?	1	0	
	3.2.4 Contemporary cultural and artistic practice	32	Do the Route's cultural activities promote intercultural dialogue and multidisciplinary exchange between various artistic expressions in European countries?	1	0	
		33	Do the Route's cultural activities encourage artistic projects that establish links between cultural heritage and contemporary culture?	1	0	
		34	Do the Route's cultural activities encourage innovative cultural and contemporary art practices* connecting them with the history of skills development?	1	0	
		35	Do the Route's cultural activities encourage collaboration between cultural amateurs and professionals via relevant activities and network creation?	1	0	
		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	0	
		37	Do the Route's cultural activities encourage activities and artistic projects which explore the links between heritage and contemporary culture?	1	0	
		38	Do the Route's cultural activities highlight the most innovative and creative practices?	1	0	
		39	Do the Route's cultural activities link these innovative and creative practices with the history of skills development?***	1	0	
	3.2.5 Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development	40	Do the Route's activities (relevant to sustainable cultural tourism development) assist in local, regional, national and/or European identity formation?	1	0	
		41	Do the Route's activities (relevant to sustainable cultural tourism development) actively involve 3 major means of raising awareness of their cultural projects: print, broadcast, and social media?	1	0	
		42	Do the Route's activities promote dialogue between urban and rural communities and cultures?	1	0	
		43	Do the Route's activities promote dialogue between developed and disadvantaged regions?	1	0	

		4 4	Do the Route's activities promote dialogue between different regions (south, north, east, west) of Europe?	1	0	
		4 5	Do the Route's activities promote dialogue between majority and minority (or native and immigrant) cultures?	0	1	
		4 6	Do the Route's activities open up possibilities for co-operation between Europe and other continents?	1	0	
		4 7	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	0	
		4 8	Do the Route's activities aim to diversify cultural product, service and activities offers?	1	0	
		4 9	Do the Route's activities develop and offer quality cultural tourism products, services or activities transnationally?	1	0	
		5 0	Do the Route's activities develop partnerships with public and private organizations active in the field of tourism?	1	0	
		5 1	Did the network prepare and use tools along the route to raise the number of visitors and the economic impact of the route on the territories crossed?	1	0	
3.3 NETWORK		5 2	Does the route represent a network involving at least three Council of Europe member states?	1	0	
		5 3	Was the theme of the route chosen and accepted by the network members?	1	0	
		5 4	Was the conceptual framework of the route founded on a scientific basis?	1	0	
		5 5	Does the network involve several Council of Europe member states in all or part of its project(s)?	1	0	
		5 6	Is the network financially sustainable?	0	1	
		5 7	Does the network have a legal status (association, federation of associations, EEIG, etc.)?	1	0	
		5 8	Does the network operate democratically?	1	0	
		5 9	Does the network specify its objectives and working methods?	1	0	
		6 0	Does the network specify the regions affected by the project?	1	0	
		6 1	Does the network specify its partners and participating countries?	1	0	
		6 2	Does the network specify the fields of action involved?	1	0	
		6 3	Does the network specify the overall strategy in the short and long term?	1	0	
		6 4	Does the network identify potential participants and partners in Council of Europe member states and/or other countries of the world?	1	0	

		6 5	Does the network provide details of its financing (financial reports and/or activity budget)?	1	0		
		6 6	Does the network provide details of its operational plan?	0	1		
		6 7	Does the network attach the basic text(s) confirming its legal status?	1	0		
3.4 COMMUNICATION TOOLS	For certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe only:	6 8	Does the route have its own logo?	1	0		
		6 9	Do all partners of the network use the logo on their communication tools?	1	0		
		7 0	Does the route have its own dedicated website?	1	0		
		7 1	Is the website available in English and French?	1	0		
		7 2	Is the website available in other languages?	0	1		
		7 3	Does the network effectively use social networks and Web 2.0?	0	1		
		7 4	Does the network publish brochures on the Route?	1	0		
		7 5	If yes, are the brochures available in English?	1	0		
		7 6	If yes, are the brochures available in French?	1	0		
		7 7	Is the title of "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe" present on all communication materials (including press releases, websites, publications, etc.)?	1	0		
	7 8	Is the certification logo present on all communication materials?	1	0			
	7 9	Is the certification logo used in accordance to the guidelines for its use (size and position, ...)?	1	0			
	8 0	Are the logos (Cultural Route + certification logo) provided to all the members of the route?	1	0			
	8 1	Does the Council of Europe certification logo appear on the road signs/boards indicating the cultural route?	1	0			
	SCORE				73	8	

8 Annex 3: List of acronyms, list of figures, tables and additional documents

Figure 1: Distribution of Network Activities by Field of Interest during the Certification Period

Figure 2: Network Activities by Field of Interest

Figure 3: Participation in activities by country

Figure 4: Evolution of human resources expenditures in relation to project budget execution

Figure 5: Detail of revenues / year.

Figure 6: Changes in revenue over the period

Figure 7: Membership by Year (including applicants)

Figure 8: Annual progression (including candidates)

Figure 9: Members by activity area.

Figure 10: Members by Sector (Public/Private)

Figure 11: The public sector of the network by type of organization

Figure 12: Network Expansion Including Candidates (Sept. 2021)

Figure 13: Articles in the press/year

Figure 14: Articles in the press/country

Figure 15: Network publications/year

Figure 16: Network publications/country