

Policies for the Danube Region

Transnational cultural policies for the Danube Region (EUSDR)

Routes 4U | 12



Routes4U Project

Funded
by the European Union
and the Council of Europe



EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Implemented
by the Council of Europe

Transnational cultural policies for the Danube Region (EUSDR)

Routes4U | 12

The opinions expressed in this work are the responsibility of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Council of Europe.

All requests concerning the reproduction or translation of all or part of the document should be addressed to the Directorate of Communications (F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex or publishing@coe.int). All other correspondence concerning this publication should be addressed to the Secretariat of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/contact).

Cover photos: Shutterstock and EEAS.
All other photos in this publication belong to the Council of Europe unless otherwise indicated.

Cover design: Documents and Publications Production
Department (SPDP) Council of Europe
Layout: Jouve, Paris

© Council of Europe, April 2020
Printed at the Council of Europe

Contents

FOREWORDS	5
PART I. CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND THE EU STRATEGY FOR THE DANUBE REGION (EUSDR) BY CONSTANZE METZGER	7
CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND THE EU STRATEGY FOR THE DANUBE REGION (EUSDR)	8
Background	8
Council of Europe and Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe	8
European Union and EU Strategy for the Danube Region – EUSDR	15
Routes4U study on national and transnational policies on cultural tourism	17
Global travel trends	18
Monitoring and management of Cultural Routes	19
Overview of national and regional practices	20
Key challenges and identified needs	20
Recommendations	21
Bibliography	23
PART II. TRANSNATIONAL CULTURAL POLICIES FOR THE DANUBE REGION BY CHRISTINA KASPARYAN	25
EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK AND CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE	26
Study methodology	26
“Current state”	26
Monitoring and management tools relevant to Cultural Routes	36
Overview of national and regional practices	38
Austria	39
Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg (Germany)	40
Bosnia and Herzegovina	41
Bulgaria	42
Croatia	43
Czech Republic	44
Hungary	45
Montenegro	45
Romania	46
Serbia	47
Slovenia	47
Capitalising on good practices	51
Keep.eu	51
Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform	52
Interreg Central Europe and Danube Transnational Programme	52
Smart Specialisation Platform	52
European Network for Rural Development (ENRD)	52
Enterprise Europe Network	52
Danube Cultural Cluster	52
Preservation and promotion of cultural and natural heritage through greenways	52
Celebrating Biodiversity Governance	52
Culture and Heritage for Responsible, Innovative and Sustainable Tourism Actions	52
Collaborative digitisation of natural and cultural heritage	53
Sustainable approach to cultural heritage for the urban areas requalification in Europe (SHARE)	53
Thematic Trail Trigger (ThreeT)	53
Effectiveness of Policy Instruments for Cross-Border Advancement in Heritage	53
CultPlatform_21 – Danube Culture Platform – Creative Spaces of the 21st Century	53
Iron-Age-Danube – Monumentalised early Iron Age landscapes in the Danube River basin	54
Transdanube.Pearls – Network for Sustainable Mobility along the Danube	54
ROCK – Regeneration and Optimisation of Cultural heritage in creative and Knowledge cities	55
OpenHeritage Project	55
STORM – Safeguarding Cultural Heritage through Technical and Organisational Resources Management	55
HERACLES Heritage Resilience Against Climate Events on Site	55
Innovators in Cultural Heritage Platform	55
RURITAGE – Heritage for rural regeneration	56

KEY CHALLENGES AND IDENTIFIED NEEDS, SWOT ANALYSIS (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS) 57

Strengths	57
Weaknesses	57
Opportunities	58
Threats	58

PART III. RECOMMENDATIONS 61**RECOMMENDATIONS 62**

Recommendations of the European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century	62
Social component	62
Territorial and economic development	62
Knowledge and education	62
General recommendations	63
Capitalising on the EUSDR macro-regional strategy	63
Evidence-based policy	64
Specific recommendation 1: Agreement and setting up of a joint Danube Cultural Routes Observatory	65
Specific recommendation 2: Enhancing the role of clusters and networks	66
Specific recommendation 3: Use of Community-led Local Development (CLLD) as an instrument to foster better regional planning and support for local projects related to the development of the Cultural Routes	67
Specific recommendation 4: Consolidation of the integrated approach for development of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe	67
Specific recommendation 5: Use of national and regional smart specialisation strategies (S3) and the next generation of innovation strategies	67
Specific recommendation 6: Macro-regional collaboration on finding practical solutions for modern destination management	68
Specific recommendation 7: Joint macro-regional marketing efforts of the Cultural Routes should involve innovation and support of new business models	69
Specific recommendation 8: Skills development and training, and constant capacity building and updating is of utmost significance	69
Specific recommendation 9: Financial assistance, funding mechanisms and fundraising	69
Specific recommendation 10: Update of regional and national cultural heritage inventories, rehabilitation activities and cultural heritage ownership, and development of a macro-regional inventory of cultural heritage as a basis for determining and developing new Cultural Routes	71
Specific recommendation 11: Encouraging further use of disruptive deep tech technologies in the sector and development of a flexible and supportive regulatory framework allowing collaboration and public-private partnerships with the deep tech sector	71
Specific recommendation 12: Further enhancing of specific measures to address the intangible cultural heritage element of the Cultural Routes	72
Specific recommendation 13: Ensuring ownership of implementation and Cultural Routes by stakeholders and local communities	72
Specific recommendation 14: real transfer of knowledge and implementation of tools and practices rather than simply informative	73
Specific recommendation 15: Development of the macro-region as an important regional hub for policy exchange, networking and the transfer of good practices for joint planning of further steps in sustainable management of the Cultural Routes in the macro-region	73
Bibliography	76
List of abbreviations	78

Forewords



Launched in 1987 as a tool for promoting the transnational dimension of European heritage, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe are unique in their commitment to the creation of a common European identity. More relevant than ever in a multicultural Europe

facing many geo-political and diversity challenges, they are in line with the fundamental values of the Council of Europe: human rights, cultural democracy, cultural diversity and mutual exchanges across borders.

I am particularly pleased to present this study as part of our successful co-operation with the European Commission (DG REGIO) through the Joint Programme Routes4U. Addressing transnational heritage and cultural policies in the Danube Region, this publication aims at identifying tools that contribute to the implementation of Cultural Routes at a macro-regional level.

We wish you a fruitful reading and look forward to future co-operation with the Danube Region through the Cultural Routes programme.

Stefano Dominioni

*Executive Secretary, Enlarged Partial Agreement
on Cultural Routes, Council of Europe*

Director, European Institute of Cultural Routes



Europe's rich cultural heritage is an asset for economic and social cohesion. Culture and creative industries are significant sources of growth, accounting for 4.5% of EU GDP, and generating jobs, employing 12 million people (7.5% of total employment). At the same time,

culture has a direct impact on tourism, environmental and territorial policies by promoting travellers' mobility and accessibility to cultural sites.

The Cultural Routes bring an important contribution to the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR). Indeed sustainable tourism and the protection of natural capital are present in the Priority Area of the Strategy "To promote culture and tourism, people to people contacts". EUSDR provides also the right governance to support such an objective: the nine member states, the three accession countries of the Balkan and two neighbouring countries are intervening on equal footing; public and private sectors are also participating. In this way, the European Territorial Cooperation plays a significant role in enhancing synergies among territorial actors in the Danube Region.

I am confident that this study will provide an important insight and contribution to the achievements of the Routes4U project and could be a source of inspiration for numerous stakeholders of the Strategy.

Marc Lemaître

*Director-General for Regional and Urban Policy,
DG REGIO, European Commission*

Part I

Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe and the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)

*by Constanze Metzger
Routes4U, Senior Project Officer
Enlarged Partial Agreement
on Cultural Routes
Council of Europe*

1. Background
2. Council of Europe and Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe
3. European Union and EU Strategy for the Danube Region - EUSDR
4. Routes4U study on national and transnational policies on cultural tourism
5. Bibliography

Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe and the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)

Constanze Metzger

“We stress the importance of Culture and Tourism as a driving force for economic growth, creation of jobs and social cohesion in the Danube region. We call upon all national, regional, local authorities, private sector and non-governmental organizations to continue developing synergies between sustainable tourism strategies and culture and creative sectors including innovative service and business models, in order to foster sustainable equality cultural tourism offers and contribute to the revitalization of urban and rural areas.”¹

Background

This study was launched in the framework of the Joint Programme between the Council of Europe (Directorate General of Democracy – EPA on Cultural Routes) and the European Union (European Commission – DG REGIO) Routes4U. It aims to strengthen regional development in the Adriatic and Ionian, the Alpine, the Baltic Sea and the Danube Region through the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. The four macro-regions involve 27 countries, a population of more than 340 million people and more than 30 Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.



For each macro-region, an EU macro-regional strategy with an accompanying action plan was adopted: the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR in 2009), the Danube Region (EUSDR in 2010), the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR in 2014) and the Alpine Region (EUSALP in 2015). Numerous

For each macro-region, an EU macro-regional strategy with an accompanying action plan was



Cultural Routes cross each macro-region: 28 Cultural Routes in EUSAIR, 28 Cultural Routes in EUSALP, 20 Cultural Routes in EUSBSR and 25 Cultural Routes in EUSDR.² Routes4U com-



bines stakeholders, expertise and resources of the two initiatives: The macro-regional strategies of the European Union on one side and the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe on the other.



Routes4U main fields of action are regional development, cultural co-operation and social cohesion in the Adriatic and Ionian, the Alpine, the Baltic Sea and the Danube Region.

Specifically, Routes4U carries out activities on:

- ▶ development and certification of new Cultural Routes displaying macro-regional heritage;
- ▶ strengthening the network of certified Cultural Routes in the macro-regions;
- ▶ creation of products that add value to tourism (tourism products), such as a Cultural Routes card and a trip planner to plan a trip along the Cultural Routes in the macro-regions;
- ▶ strengthening of skills and competences in the field of Cultural Routes and macro-regional strategies through the development of an e-learning course;

Council of Europe and Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

The Council of Europe was founded in 1949 in a Europe facing destruction and losses of the Second World War. The creation of this first European inter-governmental organisation took place in the context of growing dividing forces of the Cold War. It corresponded to the request of Winston Churchill during his famous address at the University of Zurich on 19 September 1946 in which he called for the creation of a “European family in a regional structure called, it may be, the United States of Europe, and the first practical step will be to form a Council of Europe” to ensure stability and peace in Europe.³

In this context, Article 1 of the Statute of the Council of Europe⁴ emphasises the objectives of the Organisation

1. Statement of Ministers EUSDR, Sofia, 18 October 2018, available at <https://www.mrrb.bg/static/media/ups/articles/attachments/Joint%20statement%20EUSDR%20Ministerial%20meeting%20FINAL5b426541d485e4d322662fbbb55aa5f0.pdf>.
2. For further information on the geographical distribution of Cultural Routes: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/mapping>.

3. Winston Churchill, speech delivered at the University of Zurich, 19 September 1946, available at <https://rm.coe.int/16806981f3>.
4. Statute of the Council of Europe, London, 5.V.1949, European Treaty Series - No. 1.

“to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress [...] this aim shall be pursued through the organs of the Council by discussion of questions of common concern and by agreements and common action in economic, social, cultural, scientific, legal and administrative matters and in the maintenance and further realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms”.



© Pixabay

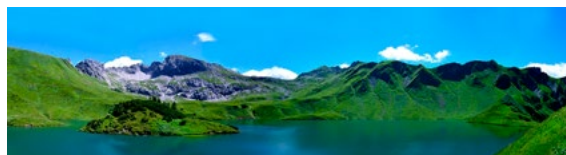
The European Cultural Convention was subsequently opened for signing in Paris on December 19, 1954. The convention promotes cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and the common cultural heritage in Europe. It also seeks the protection of European culture as well as cultural activities of European interest. In a logical extension, the Council of Europe launched the Cultural Routes programme in 1987. The Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Routes was declared as the first Cultural Route of the Council of Europe, with the “Santiago de Compostela – Declaration”.



© Council of Europe

Cultural Routes display both the tangible heritage such as religious places, cultural sites and landscape as well as the intangible heritage in the form of traditions, performing arts and crafts that represent the Santiago Routes. This holistic approach to culture was unique at the time as it opened co-operation on all kind of cultural expressions and forms. According to the definition of the Council of Europe, culture is not limited to the most outstanding masterpieces of

Europe but includes tangible and intangible heritage that is representative of and value for Europe. As such, the Council of Europe promotes a modern definition of culture that encompasses all sorts of expressions and populations.



© Pixabay

Additionally, Cultural Routes are landscapes that link cultural and natural features of the landscape. The definition of landscapes is here in line with the European Landscape Convention, according to which a landscape is “an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”⁵. Landscapes thus are an important component of European heritage and contribute to its identity. The European Landscape Convention clearly describes the landscape as an important public interest role in the cultural, ecological, environmental and social fields.

Cultural Routes as landscapes describe the interaction and interdependence of natural and human factors. Landscapes reflect the way of life of people living in the landscapes. In Europe, a continent that has been cultivated and sharpened by a multitude of populations, landscapes play an especially crucial role in describing human development in Europe. “Landscape is one of the most precious assets contributing to Europe’s cultural identity.”⁶



© PxHere

5. European Landscape Convention, Florence, 20.X.2000, available at <https://rm.coe.int/1680080621>.
6. European Environment Agency (2017): Landscapes in transition. An account of 25 years of land cover change in Europe, available at <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/landscapes-in-transition>.

It is no coincidence that the first Cultural Route was a pilgrimage route. Pilgrimage routes played and still play a historical role in travel. A great number of travellers have been pilgrims going back to ancient times, in fact pilgrimage can be considered travel's earliest and most important form.⁷ Cultural Routes such as Santiago de Compostela combine different aspects such as the promotion of intercultural dialogue, the protection of trans-border common heritage and sustainable travel. Pilgrimage routes represent an excellent opportunity for developing less explored areas with valuable cultural and natural heritage that appeal to external visitors. Currently the percentage of pilgrimage routes is high among the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

Cultural Route of the Council of Europe

"A cultural, educational heritage and tourism co-operation project aiming at the development and promotion of an itinerary or a series of itineraries based on a historic route, a cultural concept, figure or phenomenon with a transnational importance and significance for the understanding and respect of common European values."⁸

In 2010, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme was strengthened through the establishment of the EPA on Cultural Routes. This new governance structure enabled a new facet of the programme, the introduction of certification criteria as well as the establishment of regular evaluation procedures.

Partial Agreements of the Council of Europe

The Partial Agreements of the Council of Europe constitute a special fare not based on an international treaty but constitute a special form of co-operation between some of the member states of the Council of Europe. They are not based on an international treaty, but the signatory states commit themselves to the specific programme.

The Enlarged Partial Agreements of the Council of Europe are not only open for signature to the member states of the Council of Europe. They are also open for signature to other countries, non-member states of the Council of Europe, and intergovernmental organisations that would like

to get committed to the programme in question and comply with the stipulations set out in the agreement.⁹

According to Resolution CM/Res(2013)67, the certified Cultural Routes and candidate networks undergo an evaluation, the latter to be awarded a "Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe" certification. The member states of the Governing Board of the EPA, generally representatives from respective Ministries of Culture, Tourism and Foreign Affairs of the EPA member states, take the final decision on certification, based on an expert evaluation. If a certified Cultural Route does not comply with the criteria outlined in Resolution CM/Res (2013)67, the Governing Board of the EPA on Cultural Routes might decide on an extraordinary evaluation or finally, might decide that the certification is not renewed. This strict evaluation process is not established as a system of sanction but rather as a guarantee that Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe comply with the same criteria.



© Shutterstock

The certification "Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe" is granted to projects that deal with a theme that complies with the eligibility criteria set out in the resolution. The theme is the connecting element of the different components and members of a Cultural Route. It must be pointed out that Cultural Routes do not solely represent linear routes such as Santiago de Compostela.

7. For further information, go to <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/e-learning-module-2>.

8. Council of Europe, Resolution CM/Res(2013)66 confirming the establishment of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA).

9. For further information on Partial Agreements, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/partial-agreements/-/conventions/ap/list>.



© Shutterstock



© Pixabay

Many Cultural Routes can be characterised as territorial Cultural Routes that are linked through the common thematic approach, such as *Iter Vitis*, or they are reticular pattern routes such as the *Hansa* (Berti 2015). The theme of a Cultural Route must be chosen with care, ensuring that it complies with the following criteria.¹⁰

- ▶ Cultural Routes must be representative of European values and common to at least three countries of Europe. It is obligatory for a Cultural Route to be representative, with the trans-nationalism of a project being the unique feature that characterises the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. It is also the comparative advantage vis-à-vis other heritage formats that often focus on a national level. Cultural Routes display the common heritage that constitutes cultural identities in Europe. Through awareness raising on shared heritage across national borders, they contribute to the intercultural dialogue in Europe.
- ▶ The theme of a Cultural Route must be researched and developed by groups of multidisciplinary experts from different regions of Europe. In this regard, a scientific committee needs to be envisaged by a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe. The establishment of a transnational scientific committee is an important source for the further development of a Cultural Route. It can also be regarded as an opportunity to establish a scientific, transnational network.

They must be illustrative of European memory, history and heritage and contribute to an interpretation of the diversity of present-day Europe. Cultural Routes often display a journey through times. They display aspects of history that has influenced the present and should be remembered in the future. As such, Cultural Routes fulfil an important remembrance function, while the heritage includes tangible and intangible elements as well as natural and cultural aspects.

- ▶ They must encourage cultural and educational exchanges for young people. Cultural Routes are grass-root networks. In order to ensure that those networks are relevant and sustainable, they should involve younger generations in their activities. The intangible heritage of Cultural Routes, such as traditions, crafts and legends, are especially at risk of being forgotten by the younger generation. This can be revitalised when tourists show a keen interest in them. As an example, this aspect can be achieved through educational offers and vocational training.
- ▶ They must permit the development of initiatives and exemplary and innovative projects in the field of cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development. *“Culture and tourism have a symbiotic relationship. Arts and crafts, dances, rituals, and legends which are at risk of being forgotten by the younger generation may be revitalized when tourists show a keen interest in them. Monuments and cultural relics may be preserved by using funds generated by tourism. In fact, those monuments and relics which have been abandoned suffer decay from lack of visitation”*.¹¹
- ▶ They must encourage development of tourist products in partnership with tourist agencies and operators. European heritage can become an engine for development even in the most

10. For further information on the certification cycle: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/certification-guidelines>.

11. <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284418978>].

remote destinations of Europe. Cultural Routes cross areas that are characterised by physical isolation from other, and particularly larger, urban centres, a lack of economic diversification, a weak and declining economic base and limited employment opportunities. The development of sustainable tourism is an important tool for socio-economic growth in these areas.

Each project for a Cultural Route is evaluated on the following five priority fields of action.

1. Co-operation in research and development.
2. Enhancement of memory, history and European heritage.
3. Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans.
4. Contemporary cultural and artistic practice.
5. Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development.

Furthermore, the evaluation considers the management structure of the proposed Cultural Routes. Coherent and strong management structures are essential for the good functioning of Cultural Routes,

ensuring the elaboration of a viable programme and budget in co-operation with members and considering sustainability of the Cultural Routes. These management structures request human resources that call for adequate funding to ensure the co-ordination and functioning of the Cultural Route. While the management of the Cultural Route oversees the overall co-ordination, the involvement and participation of members is crucial for the implementation of activities on a transnational level.

The Routes4U-Roadmap for EUSDR provides an analysis of Cultural Routes in the Danube Region according to their thematic, geographical and sectoral coverage.¹² The analysis displays gaps in themes dealing with the fluvial heritage, modern heritage and industrial heritage as well as the heritage of the prehistory and ancient history. It reveals that certain countries such as Ukraine, Montenegro, Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina deserve special attention when creating new routes due to the low presence or non-presence of Cultural Routes in these countries. The Roadmap calls for a heterogeneous composition of their members from the tourism, culture and scientific sector.

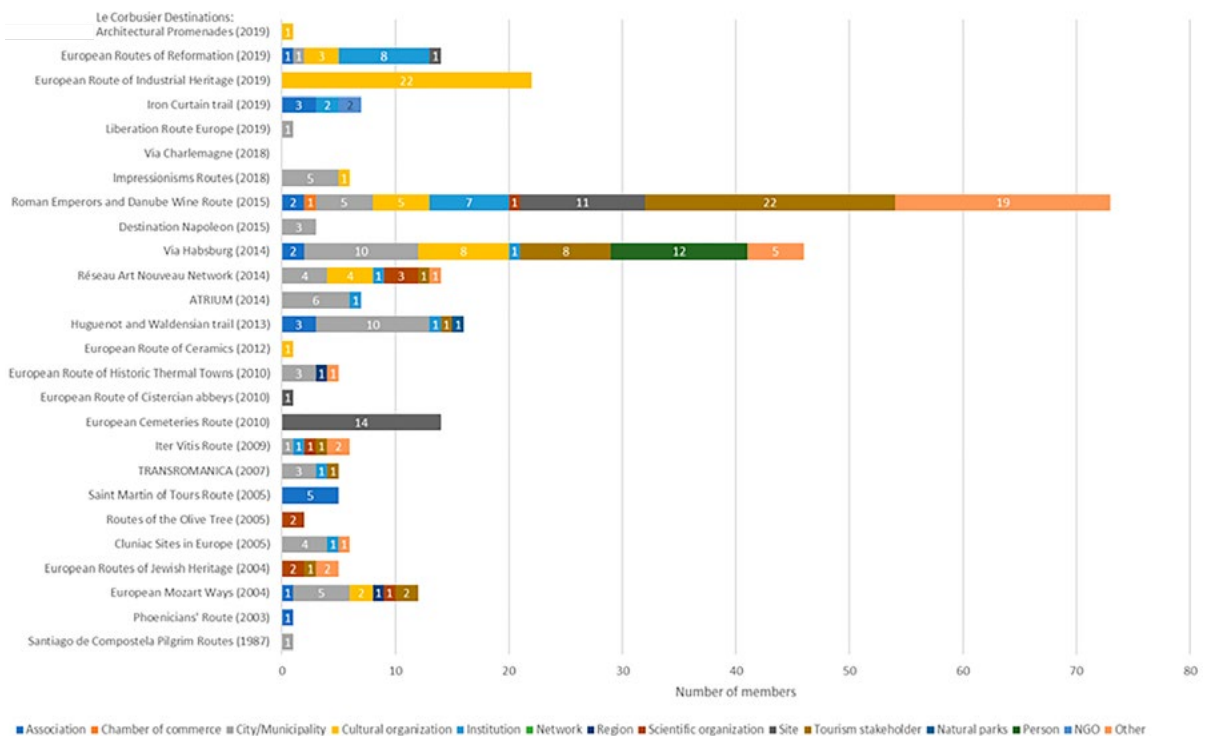


Figure 1 - Cultural Routes networks in the Danube Region as of 2019

The geographical area of the Danube Region demonstrates potential for development of new Cultural Routes based on the common historical and geographical background and on the incredible high cultural diversity of this area. The Danube River has facilitated interaction among the countries over the

centuries and enabled a strong and vivid cultural exchange as well as intercultural dialogue.

12. Roadmap for the Danube Region, available at <https://rm.coe.int/168094b51>.



© Pixabay

Within the framework of Routes4U, a feasibility study on new Cultural Routes was developed that presented nine potential projects.¹³ Representatives of those nine projects were offered the opportunity to present their projects to stakeholders of EUSDR during the Routes4U meeting that took place on 6 November 2018 in Bucharest. Members of the steering group for Priority Area 3 of EUSDR subsequently voted for two priority themes for new Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, the Cyril and Methodius, and the Iron Age themes to be further developed with a view to certification. In the framework of Routes4U, an inventory on heritage aspects and stakeholders to be involved in the Cultural Routes was developed.¹⁴



© Pixabay

Discussions should involve a wide range of stakeholders and include collaboration between scientific researchers across borders around the topics. Where applicable they should also seek out regional authorities, enterprises from a large range of sectors, such as food service industry (Hotel/Restaurant/Café - HoReCa), travel agencies and tour operators, cultural

13. Routes4U feasibility study, available at <https://rm.coe.int/16808ea46f>.

14. Both studies are available at <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/publications>.

NGOs, event-management companies and the ICT sector. This is important so that any potential new Cultural Route not only becomes certified, but also evolves as a memorable experience and an important cultural and social touch-point for both travellers and local communities. A stakeholders meeting took place on 14 to 15 October 2019 in Vienna to agree on concrete steps.



© Vitvit

During this meeting, participants discussed obstacles and challenges in the development of new Cultural Routes:

- ▶ Lack of funds and financial support of the development of the new Cultural Routes posed a challenge. Stakeholders agreed that the development of a new Cultural Route required extensive effort in terms of human resources. At least, one professional would need to coordinate, prepare and manage the network for certification. For the Iron Age and Roman Heritage projects, a co-ordinator was nominated but, in both cases, they underlined the need for additional resources, especially with a view to prepare the legal documentation, the preparation of a budget and programme, the establishment of the legal network, the creation of tourism products and the promotion of a visual identity of the Cultural Route.
- ▶ Especially in the beginning, new Cultural Routes face a challenge in capturing the interest of potential members and visitors. With regards to establishing a strong network of members, stakeholders agreed on national co-ordination of the different destinations of the Cultural Route. These national co-ordination points should be established in order to ensure the participatory approach with all members and to create a multiplying effect in implementation of activities.
- ▶ Cultural Routes should aim for co-operation and collaboration, seeking a win-win among countries rather than competition. In order to raise traveller interest, it was agreed to develop an appropriate tourism plan, thorough research and field tests.

Market research and marketing strategy would enable to measure visitors' attitudes.



- ▶ Creating visibility on a national and transnational level was considered a challenge. Awareness raising campaigns were mentioned as an effective tool for local community and SMEs' engagement and perception. Improved visibility actions are necessary such as the involvement of local businesses, local institutions, and local communities' projects. On the national and macro-regional level, the establishment of a pool of tour operators and travel agencies was listed as a requirement.



© Shutterstock

- ▶ Stakeholders also discussed the need for the creation of innovative cultural tourism product design, stressing participatory and interactive preferences of especially younger audiences.

New creative tourism niche products on the Cultural Route were mentioned, such as photo tourism, literary tourism, culinary tourism, spiritual tourism, educational tourism, cruising and touring, art tourism, crafts tourism, walking and cycling tourism, among others, which could attract interest in the new Cultural Routes.

- ▶ Cultural Routes presents an excellent basis for the development of high value cultural tourism products. In this regards, potential business partners should be identified and invited to co-operate to further raise the business attractiveness of the Cultural Route.
- ▶ The development of a good narrative for the Cultural Routes is a necessity. Quality interpretation is extremely important and highly desirable and needed on different levels for different targeted audiences. Scientific data and research should be translated into a fluent narrative for written, oral, interactive, virtual and other kinds of interpretation. They should always keep in mind the varying perceptions of children, youth, seniors, architects, artists, as well as quality standards, as proposed by the ICOMOS Interpretation Charter. Each route is to use its researched multiple identity levels for building a unique personal story as a foundation for interpretation and presentation.
- ▶ The development of a branding and visibility strategy was also mentioned as a priority for the development of a new Cultural Route. In this regard, awareness raising activities should be regularly performed locally and nationally for new products and destinations. Cultural Routes are a good resource for innovative cultural tourism product development, oriented to less travelled landscapes and responding to the changing lifestyle philosophy of today's travellers. Such new emerging interdisciplinary products need support in the developmental stage, through trainings, awareness raising campaigns, B2B briefings for tourism stakeholders, and educational actions for the local community.



© Shutterstock

- ▶ This corresponds to EU recommendations for visitors' access to sensitive cultural sites. Access should be provided at all levels: a physical level that provides accessibility for all, especially those with special needs; a carrying capacity level that takes into account responsibility towards visitors and the sites alike, not endangering the protected sites by mass tourism; a promotion level that provides quality information both to internal communities and external visitors and partners; an interpretation level that provokes interest, provides understanding, appreciation and respect for the sites and culture.
- ▶ The development of a new Cultural Route requires thorough planning to ensure

sustainability. Cultural and natural resources need to be preserved and protected in order to ensure sustainable heritage use. Commitment to these issues is to be monitored. Environmental issues must be considered when preparing a management plan. The involvement of local communities addresses the need for interpreting tangible and intangible heritage by locals, engaging their communities into creative tourism activities, guiding activities, preserving their traditions, enhancing local hospitality. Heritage-led regeneration that would increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of different historic areas is a cornerstone of regional economic policy and social sustainability.

European Union and EU Strategy for the Danube Region – EUSDR

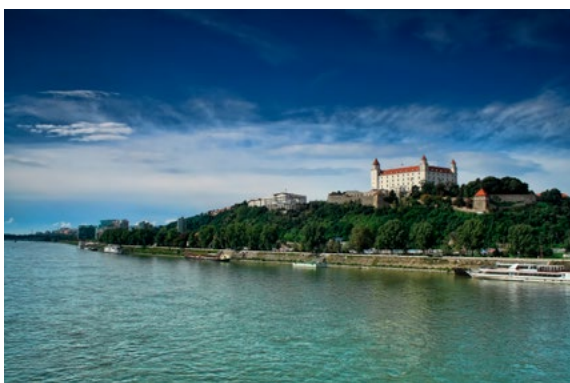


In 2011, the macro-regional strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) was launched. After the successful launch of the macro-regional strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) in 2009, EUSDR was developed as a co-operation framework to address common challenges as well as opportunities faced by a defined geographical area relating to member states and third countries located in the same geographical area of the Danube Region.

The geographical framework of EUSDR is characterised by the involvement of EU countries and non-EU countries. The Region covers an area which is home to 112 million people, or one fifth of the EU's population. EUSDR involves nine EU member states – Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia – three Accession Countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia – and two neighbourhood

countries – Moldova, Ukraine. EUSDR was also designed as a political platform to bring added value to the cohesion policy in the European Union. It provides an opportunity for multi-sector, multinational and multilevel governance.

The European Council¹⁵ and the European Parliament¹⁶ highlight the importance of the macro-regional strategies, offering an innovative way of collaboration as a unique integrated framework to address common challenges and as a relevant instrument for the optimal use of existing financial resources, especially in the globalisation context.



© Shutterstock

For the implementation of EUSDR, an action plan was developed as a rolling document. It is organised into four pillars and 11 priority areas. The four pillars are defined as follows.

1. Connecting the Danube Region
2. Protecting the environment in the Danube Region
3. Building prosperity in the Danube Region
4. Strengthening the Danube Region.

The priority areas of each pillar include the description of specific initiatives and projects to be developed and implemented. This implementation is led by the principle of the “three noes”:

- ▶ no additional funding;
- ▶ no new structures;
- ▶ no new legislation.

In order to respond to the restrictions of the “three no’s”, the EUSDR countries agreed on a more co-ordinated approach to ensure that initiatives and projects were implemented, making use of existing EU funding sources. Funding for EUSDR activities should come from existing financial sources such as national operational programmes planned under

the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and the cross-border co-operation programmes. They should complement the existing EU-institutions and structures instead of creating new structures. No new EU legislation should be created, instead national legislation should be aligned with the objectives of EUSDR where necessary.¹⁷

EUSDR was adopted within the funding period 2007-2013 and ongoing programmes could not be readjusted, as their implementation was already under way. Therefore, some of the already funded projects that strongly contributed to the objectives of EUSDR were labelled by the respective EUSDR priority areas as compliant with EUSDR. Finding funding for new projects, however, remained problematic.

Therefore, with the new seven-year funding period 2014-2020, the ESIF operational programmes planned for better macro-regional collaboration. In addition, in 2014 the Danube Transnational Programme was launched, to cover projects relevant to the EUSDR.

In 2016, the first Report on the Implementation of Macro-regional Strategies listed as one of the main challenges to “ensure sufficient resources for day-to-day work on a long-term basis [...] enhance the potential for aligning the existing funding instruments with the priorities (e.g. Danube financing dialogue, setting-up of an investment platform that would meet the needs of SMEs)”.¹⁸

Each EUSDR priority area has set specific targets to achieve in order to focus on the ongoing and future activities within the region. The topic of culture and tourism is covered by Priority Area 3, to promote culture and tourism and people-to-people contact, co-ordinated by Bulgaria and Romania.

The Priority Area defines the following targets:

- ▶ Target 1. Develop a Danube brand for the entire Danube Region based on already existing work.
- ▶ Target 2. Support the implementation of a harmonised monitoring system, dedicated to tourism, able to provide complete and comparable statistical data in all the 14 countries that are part of the EUSDR.
- ▶ Target 3. Develop new and support existing Cultural Routes relevant to the Danube Region.
- ▶ Target 4. Develop green tourist products in the Danube Region.

17. European Commission (2010), Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. European Union Strategy for Danube Region.

18. https://danube-region.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/EUSDR_Consolidated-Input-Document_AP-Revision_2019_DSP_v1.pdf.

15. 8461/17 Council conclusions of 25 April 2017.

16. European Parliament resolution of 16 January 2018.

- ▶ Target 5. To create a “Blue Book” on Danube cultural identity.
- ▶ Target 6. Ensure the sustainable preservation of cultural heritage and natural values by developing relevant clusters, and networks of museums, interpretative facilities and visitor centres within the Danube Region.
- ▶ Target 7. Promote exchange and networking in the field of contemporary arts in the Danube Region.

In the EUSDR Priority Area 3 implementation reports¹⁹ and the European Commission Report on implementation of EU macro-regional strategies, published at the end of January 2019,²⁰ it was acknowledged that there is much interest in the activities of this priority area, but improved co-ordination of the priority area’s targets and activities is constantly needed.

The reports recognise that while the level of collaboration within Priority Area 3 at ministerial and regional authority level is satisfactory, the involvement of stakeholders from the tourism and culture sectors remains low. Such key stakeholders have not been involved as much as necessary in the implementation of the EUSDR, apart from participation in events and in some EU-funded projects. However, participation in EU-funded projects related to achieving the Priority Area 3 targets is more valid and easier for civil society sector than for the private sector. Reasons for this can be found in the EU’s state-aid rules, especially as far as the tourism sector is concerned. Interventions through direct funding support for private players in this highly competitive sector need to be careful and well thought-out, in order to adhere to the principles of the single market and to avoid market distortion and unfair competition.

In 2017, the Study on Macro Regional Strategies and their Links with Cohesion Policy identified achievements in the implementation of EUSDR, such as:²¹

- ▶ high macro-regional integration on trade, investment and energy ;
- ▶ relevant priority areas set out in the EUSDR’s action plan ;
- ▶ successful creation of a network of different actors (e.g. private and public, across different government levels, from third countries) ;
- ▶ increased dialogue and co-operation on major issues, as well as more co-operation with third countries ;

- ▶ nationally oriented ESIF programmes have been formally aligned, but little transnational financing thus far.

In coherence with the evaluation of the implementation of EUSDR, the current action plan is currently under revision to correspond to changing needs and to allow for readjustment where necessary. Therefore, an EUSDR Evaluation Plan was developed to allow for a thorough evaluation of the results of EUSEDR based on the outcomes for actions and projects.

The consolidated input paper summarizes the discussion on the PA 3 actions in a positive way, claiming that almost all of the PA 3’s actions with a few exceptions have been partially realised. The priority project of Routes4U, Iron Age Danube, was positively mentioned as a project that contributes to the objectives of EUSDR. Furthermore, Routes4U is highlighted: *“The Council of Europe’s Routes4U project started its work to foster regional development through some specific tools. For example, the first Routes4U meeting for the Danube Region took place on 6 November 2018 in Bucharest, Romania and was supported by the PA 3 PAC. The meeting contributed to identifying the regional needs of the Danube Region regarding the Cultural Routes programme and featured three (CultPlatform21, ART NOUVEAU, Iron Age Danube) of the DTP pole 5a projects as contributing to already established cultural routes or with potential of being developed into new ones.”*²²



Routes4U study on national and transnational policies on cultural tourism

The present study falls within the field of action of Routes4U to build up skills and competences in the field of Cultural Routes and macro-regional strategies.

19. www.danube-region.eu/about/progress-reports.

20. https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/cooperate/macro_region_strategy/pdf/2_implementation_en.pdf.

21. https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/studies/2017/macro-regional-strategies-and-their-links-with-cohesion-policy.

22. EU Strategy for the Danube Region (2019), Consolidated Input Document of the Danube Countries for the Revision of the EUSDR Action Plan, available at https://danube-region.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/EUSDR_Consolidated-Input-Document_AP-Revision_2019_DSP_v1.pdf.

The study consists of three main parts:

A) Current state

The “Current state” section is developed through the following.

1) The collection and analysis of available data in the Danube Region to answer the following questions:

a) What is the existing situation in the Danube Region regarding the Cultural Routes?

b) What are the existing policies and strategies relevant to the development of the Cultural Routes in the Danube countries? To what extent does national and EU funding address the development of the Cultural Routes?

c) What are the current global trends regarding the topic? How do they relate to the development of the Danube Cultural Routes?

2) Research through a questionnaire designed to collect information from EUSDR stakeholders about the tools, practices and lessons learned from the implementation of the Cultural Routes in the Danube Region. Research also includes the collection of information about regional and national policies that contribute to the implementation of the Cultural Routes.

B) Needs assessment

The data gathered are used to identify needs of the various stakeholders. SWOT analysis is performed in order to determine the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats regarding the development and management of the Danube Cultural Routes in order to identify missing links, policies or tools for the further enhancement of the Cultural Routes.

C) Recommendations

Recommendations are proposed based on the gathered information from the analytical part, the needs assessment and the SWOT analysis.

Global travel trends

The study provides an analysis of global travel trends that are applicable to Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. It lists recommendations on how to increase attractiveness of remote destinations. In this context, Cultural Routes provide diverse and distinct experiences to travellers. They support the socio-cultural and economic development of local communities. The macro-region of the Danube is very rich on tangible and intangible heritage and thus has a high

potential for the creation of new Culture Routes of the Council of Europe.



© Shutterstock

The study outlines the global megatrend linked to “over-tourism” as this is an increasingly critical issue, particularly for the most popular tourist destinations. Over-tourism can result in pollution, congestion, pressure on infrastructure and resources, a decrease in authenticity of the sites and safety challenges. Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe respond to this challenge as they mainly cross remote areas thereby contributing to the dispersal of visitors and enhance visitor’s segmentation.

Due to the ageing population in Europe there is a strong need to respond to the travel patterns of specific population groups such as senior travellers. This includes questions linked to accessibility and inclusion for consumers of various ages, preferences and cultural backgrounds. Millennials represent an important population group of travellers with a demand for tourism experiences on a budget. An increasing demand for “virtual travel” through virtual and augmented reality technologies can be seen. Overall, travellers’ behaviours shift from the purely material to the empirical which offers individual experiences to travellers and strengthens the personal ties of travellers to the destination.



© Pixabay

Cultural Routes can respond to this need as they contribute to a sense of cultural identity as well as sense of belonging and rediscovery of European roots. The study lists seven identified travel trends: There is a trend for smaller and quieter places of nature. Travellers seek unique experiences or advantages in their travels. Free walking tours are increasingly popular. Travellers request responsible and sustainable travel. They wish to learn about the heritage and history of destinations.

Traveller behaviour changes according to generations. The representatives of Generation Z prefer being independent travellers and use social media in more

various ways and with different goals compared to previous generations. These behaviour patterns must be considered when planning activities of Cultural Routes in the Danube Region, for example through the involvement of influencers on social media.

Monitoring and management of Cultural Routes

Although monitoring tools and methodologies are exhaustive in terms of measuring the cultural heritage impact, the specific impact of the Cultural Routes contribution still cannot be measured and is not targeted.

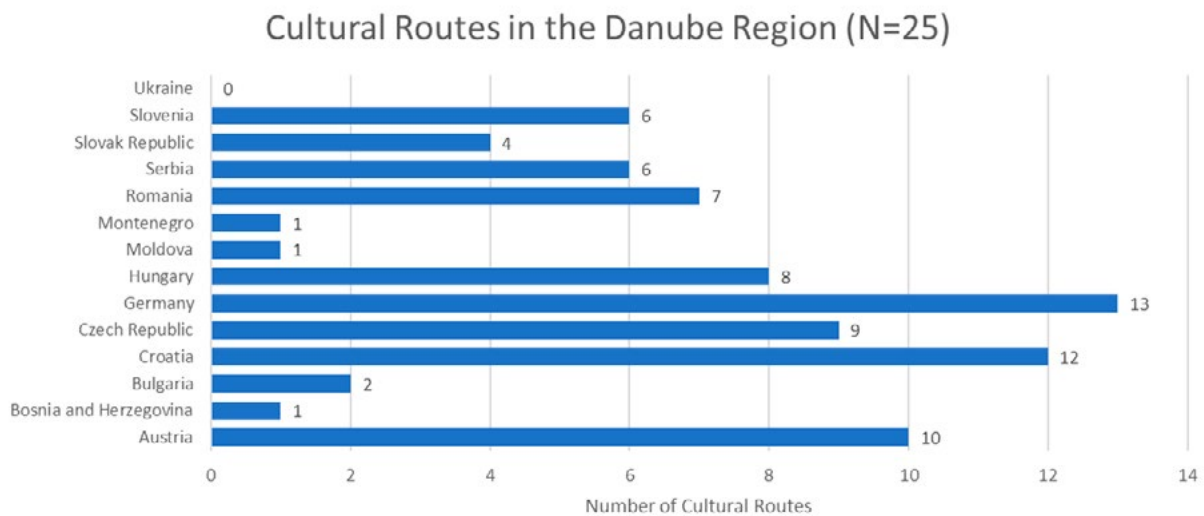


Figure 2 - Number of Cultural Routes in the Danube Region as of 2019

The European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion (ESPON) has developed the "Heritage" project to quantify the impact of material cultural heritage to economic development. It allows the retrieval of data for the measurement of socio-economic impact and the development of a monitoring system at the territorial level.

The European Tourism Indicators System for sustainable destination management (ETIS) covers 43 indicators and is dedicated to measuring the sustainability of tourism destinations. Another monitoring tool is the UNWTO International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO) – a network of tourism observatories monitoring the economic, environmental and social impact of tourism at the destination level. INSTO measures tourism seasonality, employment, destination economic benefits, governance, local satisfaction, energy management, water management, wastewater (sewage) management and solid waste management.

The European Commission's Virtual Tourism Observatory (VTO) aims to support policy makers and businesses to develop better strategies for a

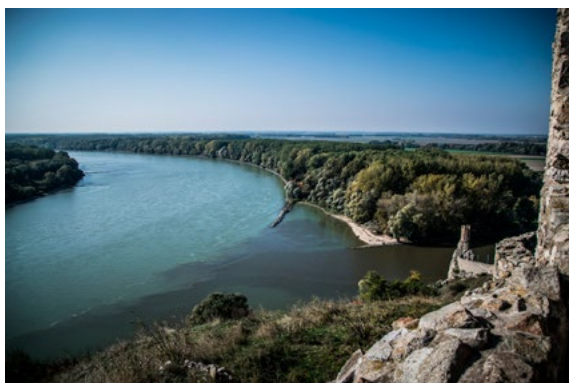
more competitive European tourism sector. The World Travel and Tourism Council Data Gateway (WTTC Data Gateway) provides monitoring of tourism data for most countries in the world. The tools measure business tourism spending, direct contribution to employment, direct contribution to GDP, domestic tourism spending, individual government expenditure, internal travel and tourism consumption, investment (capital investment), leisure tourism spending, outbound travel and tourism expenditure, total contribution to employment, total contribution to GDP and visitor exports (foreign spending). WTTC Data Gateway provides data for the last 20 years and projections until 2028. Although EUSDR is not included as a macro-region, the retrieval of data for all Danube countries allows for additional macro-regional calculations.

The use of big data in policymaking processes allows avoiding over-tourism and overcrowding at cultural heritage sites. Big data are helpful for the better planning of visitors and to capture travellers' trends. It also contributes to better interaction with visitors as well as better identification of strengths and weaknesses of competitive destinations.

Overview of national and regional practices

Many EUSDR countries are included in the EDEN Network - a platform for exchanging good practice in sustainable tourism on a European level and for promoting contact between award-winning destinations. The study provides examples of tourism and cultural policies and strategies of all countries of the Danube Region such as:

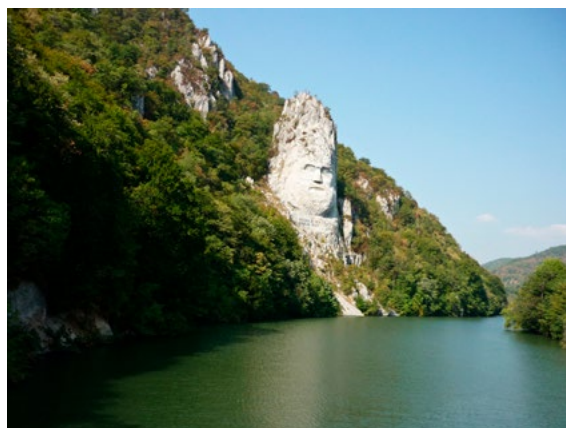
- ▶ Austria's "Plan T Master plan for tourism";
- ▶ Germany's national "Sustainable tourist destinations" competition;
- ▶ Serbia's strategy for tourism development in the Republic of Srpska (2010-2020);
- ▶ Bosnia and Herzegovina's BH Navigator;
- ▶ Bulgaria's The National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism (2014-2030);
- ▶ Croatia's action plan for development of cultural tourism;
- ▶ Czech Republic's State Tourism Policy Concept (2014-2020);
- ▶ Hungary's "Hungarian Tourism Association";
- ▶ Montenegro's Creative Europe Desk;
- ▶ Romania's National Culture and National Heritage Strategy 2016-2020 (SCPN 2016-2020);
- ▶ Slovenia's Operational Marketing Plan for Cultural Tourism in Slovenia (2018-2020).



© Pixabay

In order to consider the further development and especially the socio-economic impact of Cultural Routes, they should be included in the implementation of national and regional smart specialisation strategies. The study (table 8) presents an overview of smart specialisation strategies that have included relevant measures.

The development and promotion of cultural heritage requires funding for the further implementation of plans and projects. Thus, funding for cultural heritage within Europe is available through various EU-funded and bilateral programmes.



© Pixabay

A significant number of projects related to cultural heritage and sustainable use are currently implemented in the Danube Region. Several databases of project outputs and good practices are described in the study. Some ongoing projects are presented with a short summary of each of them, countries involved in projects and programmes responsible for funding.

Key challenges and identified needs

Strengths and weaknesses are listed to show how much work has been done and where it needs to be enhanced, together with the opportunities and threats for the future development of the Culture Routes and the Danube Region in general.

A major strength is the established European strategic framework for the development of Cultural Routes, which established the criteria for the certification of Cultural Routes, which is a prerequisite for ensuring quality and authenticity. The wide participation of EUSDR countries in the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA) and the significant number of Cultural Routes in the Danube Region also provide expertise and a rich heritage for the development of new Cultural Routes based on the common historical and geographical background.

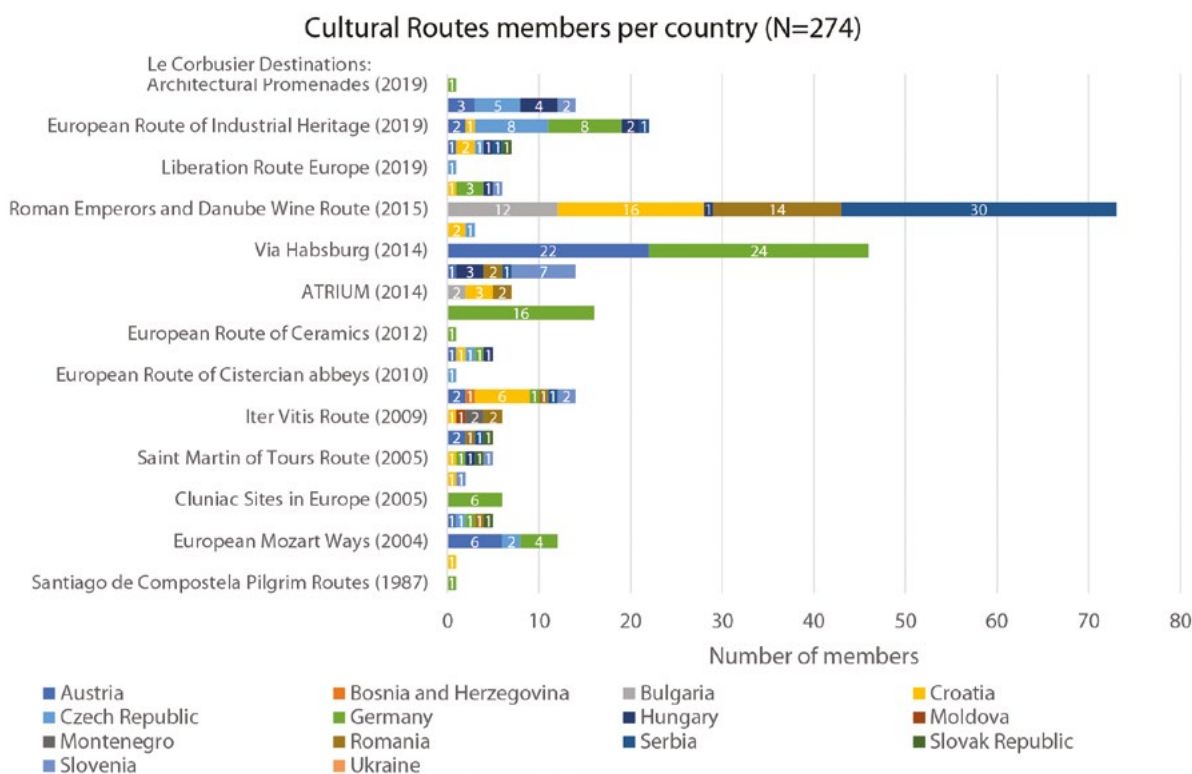


© Planck

The study identifies weaknesses such as the low participation of the private sector in cultural initiatives at a regional level, the gap in development of Cultural Routes that are typical and attributed only to the Danube Region, a missing feeling of ownership to EUSDR as well as missing data on the impact of the Cultural Routes contribution.

Opportunities are the new EUSDR Action Plan that emphasises the importance of Cultural Routes, the branding of the region and its promotion through

Cultural Routes, as well as the collaboration between scientific researchers, the business sector, NGOs and public authorities across borders on the ideas for new Cultural Routes. Additionally, the improvement of skills of personnel in public institutions to become more open to collaborations with researchers and businesses and the use of data to develop tourism promotion and destination management strategies, moving away from more traditional sun, sea and sand, and attraction-based tourism.



Threats are the lack of involvement of partners, the growing international competition of Asia, North America and South America in tourism markets, shortages of personnel leading to compromises in the quality of tourism products and experiences associated with the Cultural Routes, over-tourism and pollution and congestion at cultural heritage sites.

Recommendations

The study contains recommendations which correspond to the long-term objectives for promotion of the Cultural Routes and maximising their socio-economic impact. These recommendations are grouped into three components:

- 1) Social Component;
- 2) Territorial and economic development;
- 3) Knowledge and education.

Specifically, there are 15 recommendations which might be useful for the future development of the Region generally and the Culture Routes particularly:

1. Establishment of a joint Danube Cultural Routes Observatory - a suitable platform to be created for gathering and proper analysis of Cultural Routes data within the Danube Region.
2. Enhancing the role of clusters and networks - to enhance economic development policy in order to encourage clusters of supporting enterprises in locations of heritage interest to strengthen the economic and social situation of these locations. Success depends on strong leadership and a commitment from the diverse partners identified, to work together towards common goals. The plan must be implemented as a complete package. Working only on isolated selected individual parts will not achieve the aim.

3. Use of community-led local development (CLLD) as an instrument to foster better regional planning and support for local projects related to the development of the Cultural Routes.
4. Consolidation of the integrated approach for development of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.
5. Use of national and regional smart specialisation strategies (S3) and the next generation of innovation strategies.
6. Macro-regional collaboration on finding practical solutions for modern destination management in order to avoid tourism overflow and as a result putting more and more pressure on cultural heritage sites.
7. Joint macro-regional marketing efforts of the Cultural Routes should involve innovation and support of new business models.
8. Skills development and training, constant capacity building and update is of utmost significance, including cultural heritage education, continuing professional development and a national policy enhancing a multidisciplinary approach, among others.
9. Financial assistance, funding mechanism and fundraising, such as attracting private investors, patronage and sponsorships, in-kind contributions from the private sector, donations, crowd-funding for specific projects, etc.
10. Update of regional and national cultural heritage inventories, rehabilitation activities and cultural heritage ownership and development of a macro-regional inventory of cultural heritage as a basis to determine and create new Cultural Routes.
11. Encouraging further use of disruptive deep tech technologies in the sector and development of a flexible and supportive regulatory framework allowing collaboration and public-private partnerships with the deep tech sector.
12. Further enhancing of specific measures to address the Intangible Cultural Heritage part of the Cultural Routes.
13. Ensuring ownership of implementation and Cultural Routes by stakeholders and local communities.
14. Transfer of knowledge and implementation of tools and practices, rather than simply informative, to ensure this transfer is continually practised.
15. Development of the macro-region as an important regional hub on policy exchange, networking and transfer of good practices for joint planning for further steps in sustainable management of the Cultural Routes in the macro-region.

The report concludes that there is a lack of data collection and data management of Cultural Routes at various levels. Although various data sets exist providing data on tourism in the Danube area, they are not linked to the development of the Cultural Routes and the regional economic development. Efficient policy making on Cultural Routes would need to be based on data.

Therefore, a common set of indicators for observing and measuring the performance and impact of the Cultural Routes should be developed and agreed at macro-regional level. Better data collection and evidence management related to the Cultural Routes in the Danube Region area is needed to formulate recommendations to maximise impact.

The study illustrates possible indicators that are easy to collect, do not require extensive financial, technological or human resources while at the same time they could prove very useful in terms of establishing the necessary primary evidence and data sets in order to support informed decision making and policy planning.

Bibliography

- ▶ Berti E. and Mariotti A. (2015): "The heritage of Cultural Routes: Between Landscapes, Traditions and Identity". In: Council of Europe (eds.), *Cultural Routes Management: from Theory to Practice*, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, pp.42-55.
- ▶ Churchill Winston, speech delivered at the University of Zurich, 19 September 1946, available at <https://rm.coe.int/16806981f3>, accessed 28 October 2019.
- ▶ Council of Europe (2000), European Landscape Convention, Florence, available at <https://rm.coe.int/1680080621>, accessed 29 October 2019.
- ▶ Council of Europe, European Union Joint Programme: Fostering regional development through Cultural Routes - Routes4U Project, *Cultural Routes mapping*, available at <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/mapping>, accessed 30 October 2019.
- ▶ Council of Europe, European Union Joint Programme: Fostering regional development through Cultural Routes - Routes4U Project, *How to be certified "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe"?*, available at <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/certification-guidelines>, accessed 5 November 2019.
- ▶ Council of Europe, *Partial Agreements*, Council of Europe Treaty Office, available at www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/partial-agreements/-/conventions/ap/list
- ▶ Council of Europe, Resolution CM/Res(2013)66 confirming the establishment of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA).
- ▶ Council of the European Union (2017), 8461/17 Council conclusions on the implementation of EU Macro-Regional Strategies, available at https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/cooperate/macro_region_strategy/pdf/concl_implementation_macro_region_strategy_en.pdf, accessed 5 November 2019.
- ▶ EU Strategy for the Danube Region (2019), Consolidated Input Document of the Danube Countries for the Revision of the EUSDR Action Plan, available at https://danube-region.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/EUSDR_Consolidated-Input-Document_AP-Revision_2019_DSP_v1.pdf, accessed 6 November 2019.
- ▶ European Commission (2010), Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. European Union Strategy for Danube Region, available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0715&from=EN>, accessed 6 November 2019.
- ▶ European Commission (2017), Study on Macro-regional strategies and their links with cohesion policy, available at https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/studies/2017/macro-regional-strategies-and-their-links-with-cohesion-policy, accessed 6 November 2019
- ▶ European Commission (2019), Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies, available at https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/cooperate/macro_region_strategy/pdf/2_implementation_en.pdf, accessed 5 November 2019.
- ▶ European Environment Agency (2017), *Landscapes in transition. An account of 25 years of land cover change in Europe*, available at <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/landscapes-in-transition>, accessed 29 October 2019.
- ▶ European Parliament, resolution of 16 January 2018 on the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies, available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2018-0002_EN.html?redirect, accessed 5 November 2019.
- ▶ Routes4U (2018), Feasibility study: The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe and the Danube Region, available at <https://rm.coe.int/16808ea46f>, accessed 5 November 2019
- ▶ Routes4U (2019), Roadmap for the Danube Region, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, available at <https://rm.coe.int/168094b571>, accessed 30 October 2019.
- ▶ Statement of Ministers EUSDR, Sofia, 18 October 2018, available at www.mrrb.bg/static/media/ups/articles/attachments/Joint%20statement%20EUSDR%20Ministerial%20meeting%20FINAL5b426541d485e4d322662fbbb55aa5f0.pdf, accessed 28 October 2019.
- ▶ Statute of the Council of Europe, London, 5.V.1949, European Treaty Series - No. 1
- ▶ World Tourism Organization (2018), Tourism and Culture Synergies, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284418978>, accessed 5 November 2019.



Part II

Transnational cultural policies for the Danube Region

by Christina Kasparyan

European framework and Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

This section contains details and data on the development of Cultural Routes in the Danube Region, with information on:

- ▶ key applicable trends;
- ▶ monitoring and management tools;
- ▶ an overview of national and regional policies.

European framework and Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

The importance of cultural heritage for Europe has been highlighted by European institutions in numerous documents. Moreover, special funds have been dedicated through all framework programmes and through the European Structural and Investment Funds.

The New European Agenda for Culture explains how the European Commission will support EU member states in tapping into culture's potential to foster innovation, creativity, sustainable growth and jobs. It outlines how to build on the legacy of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 and recommends the boosting of digital, entrepreneurial, traditional and specialist skills and encourages innovation in culture.

The European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage sets a common direction for heritage-related activities at the European level, primarily in EU policies and programmes. Actions that promote the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes are envisaged under the pillar of cultural heritage for a sustainable Europe.

The Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018) highlights the need for synergies with all relevant EU programmes and funds, especially in the fields of culture, education, research, digitisation, and regional and urban development, in order to promote cultural policies in Europe. The new Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022 is already under way, and sets out the following priorities for cultural collaboration and policy making:

- ▶ sustainability in cultural heritage
- ▶ cohesion and well-being
- ▶ an ecosystem supporting artists, cultural and creative professionals and European content
- ▶ gender equality
- ▶ international cultural relations.

The priorities are complemented by 17 actions to be carried out over a period of four years. The work plan is part of the European Agenda for Culture's strategic framework.

Within this briefly presented context, the development of existing and the encouragement of new Cultural Routes fall directly within European priorities.

The Cultural Routes programme was launched by the Council of Europe in 1987 with the Declaration of Santiago de Compostela.

The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe are an invitation to travel and to discover the rich and diverse heritage of Europe by bringing people and places together in networks of shared history and heritage. They put into practice the values of the Council of Europe: human rights, cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and mutual exchanges across borders.

In 2019, there are 38 certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, with very different themes that illustrate European memory, history and heritage and contribute to an interpretation of the diversity of present-day Europe. They cover a range of different themes, from architecture and landscape to religious influences, from gastronomy and intangible heritage to the major figures of European art, music and literature.²³

In 2010, the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA) was established. It reinforces the Cultural Routes as tools for fostering cultural co-operation, sustainable territorial development and social cohesion, with a focus on themes of symbolic importance for European unity, history, culture and values and the discovery of less well-known destinations.

Study methodology

"Current state"

Key data applicable to the development of Cultural Routes

As policy development should be based on data, it is important to underline that the current datasets available to provide information on the tourism sector in EU and Danube Region countries do not capture the specific contribution of cultural heritage. The contribution of existing Cultural Routes is also not represented through official comparable sources of information. However, Eurostat data show that participation in tourism for personal purposes (last data available for 2017) has increased in comparison to 2016, which confirms a trend of steady growth.

Figure 3 makes it clearly visible that the Danube Region stands at the periphery of tourism visits compared to the rest of the EU. Only 10% of Romania's and 26% of

23. www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/by-theme.

Bulgaria's visitors from all over the world have participated in tourism for personal purposes, while the Czech Republic is the best-performing Danube Region country with 63%, followed by Germany (61%) and Austria (60%). Compared to the rest of the EU, Romania and Bulgaria occupy the bottom spots within the EU for this indicator, while the best-performing Danube countries occupy 7th, 8th and 10th places, respectively.

In terms of domestic participation in tourism for personal purposes, the top-performing Danube Region countries are the Czech Republic, occupying sixth spot with 27% of visitors, followed by Croatia and Bulgaria with 21% each (eighth, compared to the rest of the EU). Austria, Romania and Slovenia (respectively 9%, 9% and 7%) are among the countries where domestic tourism for personal purposes does not seem that popular.

Regarding outbound tourism, the discrepancies between the central part of the region and the eastern part of the region are clearly visible in Figure 4.

Slovenia occupies fourth place in the EU for this indicator, while Romania and Bulgaria are at the bottom with only 1% and 3% respectively of their residents involved in outbound tourism activities for personal purposes. Economic reasons for these statistics might be only one side of the story. The proximity of Slovenia to the major travel destinations in Europe lowers the costs and time and allows for frequent weekend tourism visits.

An analysis of the travel and tourism sector's contribution to GDP, employment and individual government expenditure in tourism will be explored next. These indicators are selected to analyse the sector's contribution to growth and the public investment associated with it.

Table 5 demonstrates the total contribution of tourism to GDP in percentage growth and as a percentage of the national GDP for each Danube region country, the average for the EU and the Danube Region average, compiled by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC).²⁵

The value of these data is in the dynamics they represent over time, so that it could be of value for informed assumptions related to policy development and decision making.

The data show that in Croatia and Montenegro tourism contributes to almost one third of their GDP. However, the percentage growth of tourism is decreasing and is not expected to reach the 2017 levels for the next 10 years. Reasons for this trend can be found in the growing insecurity in the world and the slowing down of economic growth within the European Union.

24. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/tourism/statistics-illustrated>.

25. www.wttc.org/datagateway/.

The data for Moldova shows the lowest contribution of tourism to the country GDP. However, the prospects are for steady growth of the tourism sector for the next 10 years with a rate of growth higher than those of the EU and Danube Region averages. This is because Moldova remains widely unknown as a destination, which will gradually change with the opening of the country more and more to the rest of Europe and its inclusion in the Danube Transnational Programme and the use of European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) funds.

Another country that differs from the rest within the analysis of the GDP contribution data is Ukraine. The percentage contribution of tourism to the GDP of Ukraine is stable and is not expected to grow over the next 10 years period while sectoral growth is in significant and steady decline. These data are influenced by the negative media image of the country, associated with conflicts with the Russian Federation, political uncertainty, issues around the safety of tourists in the country and the need to develop and improve the tourism-related infrastructure.

In comparison to the EU, the Danube Region is performing better with a higher percentage of tourism growth and a higher contribution of the sector to the macro-region's GDP. However, the dataset does not allow for a more precise definition of the territory that would consider the fact that Germany and Ukraine do not participate in the EUSDR as full territories. Thus, the data need to be readjusted. An informed assumption can be made that the Danube Region's average would increase, if the dataset included the performance only of the Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg regions. Bavaria is the most visited region in Germany with Munich being the second most visited city after Berlin.²⁶ Baden-Württemberg is the third most visited region in Germany.

The implications for the development of the Cultural Routes are as follows.

- ▶ Use of the data to develop tourism promotion and destination management strategies that include planned measures to boost the economic impact through enhancing the performance of existing and the development of new Cultural Routes on their territories.
- ▶ Comparison of data to find bottlenecks and factors that trigger growth.

Table 6 shows the contribution of tourism to the employment of the EUSDR countries as a dynamic projection, the performance of the Danube Region on average and its position compared to other countries in the EU.²⁷

26. www.germany.travel/media/content/presse/de/2018_pressemitteilungen/DZT_Jahresbericht2017_EN_Web.pdf.

27. <https://tool.wttc.org/>.

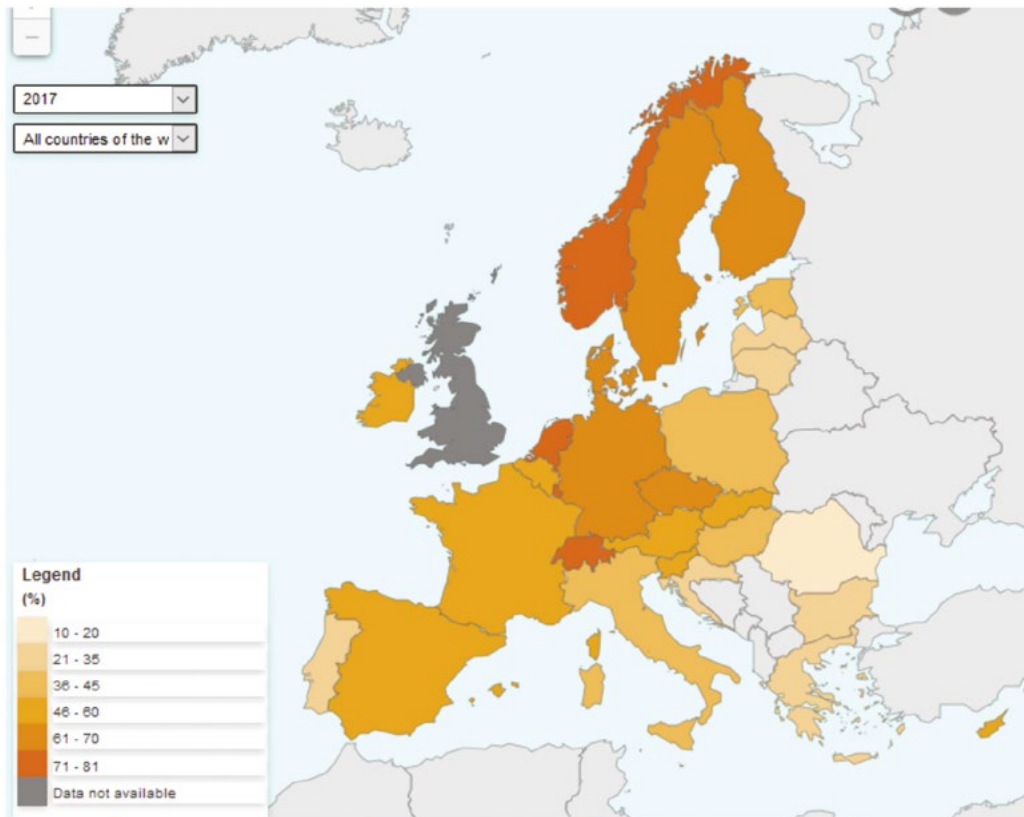


Figure 3 – Participation in tourism for personal purposes. Source: Eurostat.²⁴

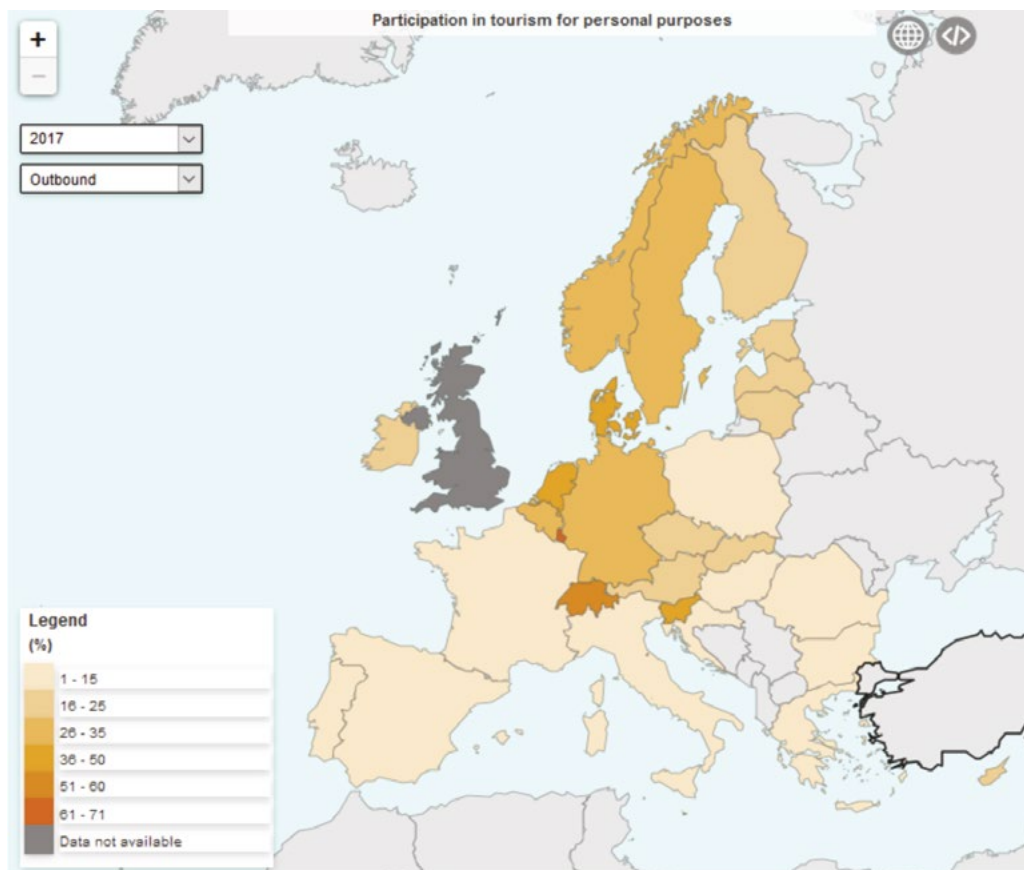


Figure 4 – Outbound participation in tourism for personal purposes, 2017. Source: Eurostat

Table 5: Tourism contribution to GDP by Danube Region country, EU and Danube Region average, projections until 2028. Source: WTTC Data Gateway and own calculations

Total contribution to GDP	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Austria												
Percentage growth	1.3	0.6	2.8	3.2	3.3	2.9	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.2	2.1	2.0
Percentage of GDP	14.8	14.6	14.7	15.0	15.3	15.6	15.8	16.0	16.2	16.4	16.5	16.7
Bosnia-Herzegovina												
Percentage growth	5.2	5.4	5.1	5.4	5.3	5.0	5.3	5.2	4.9	5.5	6.1	5.8
Percentage of GDP	9.6	9.9	10.0	10.3	10.5	10.7	11.0	11.2	11.5	11.8	12.2	12.6
Bulgaria												
Percentage growth	6.7	0.1	1.5	2.7	2.5	4.2	4.5	4.3	4.2	4.0	3.9	3.9
Percentage of GDP	11.5	11.3	11.2	11.3	11.4	11.6	11.9	12.1	12.4	12.7	13.0	13.3
Croatia												
Percentage growth	7.3	3.3	4.4	4.0	3.2	3.6	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.3
Percentage of GDP	25.0	25.1	25.8	26.3	26.7	27.1	27.8	28.5	29.3	30.1	30.9	31.7
Czech Republic												
Percentage growth	3.8	1.8	1.2	2.6	2.1	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.7	1.2	1.6	1.7
Percentage of GDP	7.8	7.6	7.5	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.6
Germany												
Percentage growth	1.7	2.9	2.1	1.9	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.0
Percentage of GDP	10.7	10.7	10.7	10.8	10.8	10.9	10.9	11.0	11.0	11.1	11.1	11.2
Hungary												
Percentage growth	3.2	3.4	2.7	2.4	2.0	1.5	1.0	0.8	0.6	2.3	2.0	1.7
Percentage of GDP	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.0	7.9	7.8	7.9	7.9	7.9
Moldova												
Percentage growth	14.7	4.6	-1.6	3.8	5.9	5.1	5.3	5.6	7.4	6.7	6.1	5.4
Percentage of GDP	3.3	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.7
Montenegro												
Percentage growth	8.3	8.9	3.0	2.0	3.1	4.0	5.1	4.1	4.1	3.8	5.0	5.1
Percentage of GDP	23.7	25.1	25.1	24.9	24.9	25.1	25.6	25.9	26.3	26.6	27.2	27.9
Romania												
Percentage growth	10.2	5.5	2.3	2.0	1.9	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.5	0.9	1.9	1.9
Percentage of GDP	5.3	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.5
Serbia												
Percentage growth	1.7	2.7	4.6	4.2	4.8	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.3	4.2	3.9	3.7
Percentage of GDP	6.7	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.7	7.8	8.0
Slovakia												
Percentage growth	3.3	4.6	3.6	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.4	3.3	4.0	4.1	3.5	3.4
Percentage of GDP	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.5	6.6	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.1	7.2
Slovenia												
Percentage growth	4.1	6.2	2.8	4.2	4.1	3.9	4.2	3.9	4.3	5.3	4.6	4.3
Percentage of GDP	11.9	12.3	12.3	12.4	12.7	12.8	13.0	13.2	13.5	13.9	14.2	14.5
Ukraine												
Percentage growth	7.7	7.2	3.4	4.8	4.1	3.8	3.2	2.7	2.4	2.2	1.4	1.8
Percentage of GDP	5.7	6.0	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.3	6.4	6.4	6.5	6.5	6.6
European Union												
Percentage growth	3.5	2.5	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.9
Percentage of GDP	10.3	10.4	10.4	10.4	10.5	10.6	10.7	10.7	10.8	10.9	11.0	11.1
Danube Region												
Percentage growth	5.6	4.1	2.7	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3
Percentage of GDP	10.7	10.9	10.9	11.0	11.2	11.3	11.5	11.6	11.8	12.0	12.2	12.5

Table 6: Tourism contribution to GDP by Danube region country, EU and Danube region averages as projections until 2028. Source: WTTC Gateway and own calculations

Total contribution to Employment	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Austria												
% share of total employment	16.13	15.95	16.21	16.58	17.01	17.38	17.71	18.05	18.41	18.70	18.96	19.22
% growth	0.6	0.5	2.9	3.0	2.6	2.1	1.8	2.1	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.6
Bosnia-Herzegovina												
% share of total employment	11.15	11.45	11.72	12.03	12.34	12.63	12.95	13.29	13.68	14.12	14.67	15.21
% growth	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.9	2.0	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.7	2.1	2.7	2.5
Bulgaria												
% share of total employment	10.71	10.53	10.51	10.69	10.88	11.20	11.58	11.94	12.32	12.64	13.00	13.38
% growth	6.8	-1.8	-1.5	0.2	0.7	1.9	2.3	2.1	2.1	1.5	1.7	1.8
Croatia												
% share of total employment	23.47	23.41	23.78	24.10	24.22	24.46	24.85	25.27	25.74	26.22	26.72	27.20
% growth	2.3	-0.2	1.8	1.7	0.4	0.7	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.4
Czech Republic												
% share of total employment	9.35	9.22	9.12	9.20	9.24	9.20	9.21	9.25	9.30	9.29	9.31	9.34
% growth	1.5	-0.2	-1.1	0.7	0.1	-0.7	0.2	0.5	0.7	-0.1	0.1	0.1
Germany												
% share of total employment	13.81	13.98	14.09	14.24	14.36	14.40	14.49	14.57	14.58	14.62	14.67	14.78
% growth	0.6	2.3	1.5	1.3	0.9	0.2	0.5	0.3	-0.2	-0.1	-0.2	0.2
Hungary												
% share of total employment	7.32	7.39	7.52	7.64	7.69	7.73	7.74	7.75	7.75	7.85	7.92	7.97
% growth	2.1	2.7	2.3	1.7	0.7	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.0	1.1	0.8	0.6
Moldova												
% share of total employment	2.89	2.93	2.85	2.87	2.92	2.95	3.00	3.06	3.16	3.25	3.33	3.39
% growth	6.5	0.5	-3.8	-0.3	1.8	1.2	1.7	1.9	3.4	2.8	2.5	1.8
Montenegro												
% share of total employment	19.28	20.02	19.74	19.43	19.41	19.58	19.95	20.15	20.39	20.59	21.04	21.50
% growth	7.7	7.7	0.9	-0.1	0.8	1.5	2.3	1.3	1.1	1.0	2.1	2.1
Romania												
% share of total employment	6.34	6.40	6.39	6.40	6.40	6.41	6.43	6.45	6.46	6.45	6.49	6.54
% growth	3.1	0.5	-0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.1	-0.3	0.2	0.3
Serbia												
% share of total employment	4.87	4.74	4.75	4.76	4.80	4.83	4.87	4.92	4.98	5.05	5.12	5.18
% growth	-2.5	-2.2	0.3	0.7	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.1	0.7	0.7	0.4	0.3
Slovakia												
% share of total employment	6.13	6.23	6.30	6.36	6.43	6.52	6.63	6.72	6.84	6.98	7.08	7.17
% growth	1.1	2.6	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.8	1.2	1.0
Slovenia												
% share of total employment	12.31	12.71	12.74	12.99	13.24	13.46	13.71	13.93	14.24	14.69	15.08	15.42
% growth	0.4	3.7	0.7	2.3	2.2	2.0	2.0	1.7	2.1	3.1	2.6	2.2
Ukraine												
% share of total employment	5.14	5.35	5.38	5.52	5.62	5.71	5.77	5.81	5.85	5.92	5.96	6.05
% growth	8.5	6.4	2.5	3.6	2.7	2.0	1.7	1.1	1.0	0.2	-0.1	0.4
European Union												
% share of total employment	11.74	11.84	11.84	11.95	12.07	12.17	12.30	12.43	12.56	12.72	12.88	13.05
% growth	2.8	1.8	0.7	1.3	1.3	1.0	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.1
Danube Region												
% share of total employment	10.64	10.74	10.79	10.91	11.04	11.18	11.35	11.51	11.69	11.88	12.10	12.31
% growth	2.9	1.8	0.7	1.3	1.2	1.0	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2

The data show the number of jobs generated directly in the travel and tourism sector plus the indirect and induced contributions.

It is visible that travel and tourism-generated employment is in decline and is not expected to grow significantly over the next 10 years in the Danube Region countries. The percentage share of employment has remained at the same level over the last two years and is not expected to grow over the next 10 years. The tourism business sector in some countries (for example, Bulgaria) reports significant difficulties in attracting workers and this represents an obstacle to the tourism sector's overall growth.

The Danube Region countries can be divided into three groups:

1. countries with a significant share (higher than the EU average) of total employment in the travel and tourism sector – Croatia and Montenegro, where more than 20% are employed or provide employment in the travel and tourism sector;
2. countries close to the EU average – Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Germany and Slovenia;
3. countries below the EU average – the Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine.

The discrepancies and gaps within the region are clearly visible: in Moldova the share of employment is only around 2% and is twice as low as the rest of the countries in the group below the EU average. Although it is expected to grow, it will not be enough to reach the level in the other Danube countries over the next 10-year period.

The analysis must consider the fact that Germany is represented by its whole territory and, considering the importance of the tourism sector in Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, the average data for the Danube Region could be skewed into attaining the EU average.

In terms of the development of Cultural Routes, the data suggest that decision makers should make following interventions.

- ▶ Examine more the reasons for the low growth of employment in the sector and plan policies to increase employment. This could include increasing wages in the sector.
- ▶ Develop very carefully ways to promote the Cultural Routes. Employment growth must go hand in hand with the promotion of Cultural Routes in order to ensure that there will be no

shortages of personnel leading to compromises in the quality of the tourism experience and that associated with the Cultural Routes.

As for governments' expenditure, Table 7 shows that in 2017 the individual expenditure on tourism of the governments of Romania and Moldova grew significantly, by 12.8% and 14.5% respectively, which is between 5 and 10 times higher than the rest of the region and the EU average. The percentage of government expenditure as a share of the total travel and tourism expenditure, however, remains unchanged and there are no plans to increase this share. The percentage share of government expenditure as a share of total tourism expenditure is higher than the EU and the Danube Region average in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary (the highest), Moldova, Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine.

In general, the percentage growth of individual governments' expenditure on travel and tourism in the EUSDR countries is higher than the EU average. The projection over the next 10-year period is for a minor decrease and at the end of the projection period, this percentage will still be higher than the EU average.

However, government expenditure as a percentage share of total tourism expenditure is expected to increase slightly from 2.4% in 2018 to 2.5% in 2028.

The implications for the development of the Cultural Routes in the Danube Region are as follows.

1. The projection for stable growth of individual government expenditure on travel and tourism that is higher than the EU average creates opportunities to develop and implement policies that stimulate the promotion of Cultural Routes as added value to the public policies in the field.
2. Public authorities should undertake an assessment on the integration of Cultural Routes in their current sectoral policies in order to plan the best use of resources.
3. The continued collaboration within the EUSDR is a chance for intergovernmental exchange on policies and strategies in order to identify what works well.
4. Public authorities and decision makers can harvest the benefits of joint efforts in the promotion of Cultural Routes as a driver for economic development. However, in order to measure this effect, they should work together to establish a commonly recognised set of indicators that go beyond currently available statistics and tools.

Table 7: Individual government expenditures on tourism by Danube Region country, EU and Danube Region average, as projected until 2028. Source: World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) Gateway and own calculations

Government Individual Expenditures	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Austria												
Percentage growth	1.0	1.4	1.3	1.2	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.0
% share of total tourism expenditure	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Bosnia-Herzegovina												
Percentage growth	1.4	2.4	3.4	3.9	4.5	3.9	3.6	3.3	3.3	2.8	3.0	2.9
% share of total tourism expenditure	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Bulgaria												
Percentage growth	3.9	-3.9	3.1	4.5	3.7	3.4	2.9	2.9	2.6	2.2	2.0	1.9
% share of total tourism expenditure	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Croatia												
Percentage growth	3.0	2.5	2.0	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9
% share of total tourism expenditure	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Czech Republic												
Percentage growth	4.1	1.9	2.1	2.0	2.0	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6
% share of total tourism expenditure	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.9
Germany												
Percentage growth	2.2	1.8	1.4	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.5
% share of total tourism expenditure	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Hungary												
Percentage growth	-0.7	2.1	1.8	1.7	1.8	2.2	2.1	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7
% share of total tourism expenditure	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.5	5.5	5.5
Moldova												
Percentage growth	14.5	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
% share of total tourism expenditure	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.4
Montenegro												
Percentage growth	1.1	2.7	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.9
% share of total tourism expenditure	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7
Romania												
Percentage growth	12.8	7.9	3.1	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.1
% share of total tourism expenditure	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Serbia												
Percentage growth	-7.5	3.7	2.9	4.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.0	3.0	2.4	2.3
% share of total tourism expenditure	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Slovakia												
Percentage growth	2.6	3.9	3.2	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.8
% share of total tourism expenditure	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
Slovenia												
Percentage growth	-3.2	3.4	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	3.0	3.0	3.4	3.2	3.0	3.0
% share of total tourism expenditure	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
Ukraine												
Percentage growth	0.8	0.8	1.8	1.8	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.3	1.7	1.3	1.1
% share of total tourism expenditure	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.3
European Union												
Percentage growth	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.2
% share of total tourism expenditure	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Danube Region												
Percentage growth	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.2	2.1
% share of total tourism expenditure	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5

Within the framework of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture of the European Commission commissioned Eurobarometer to assess the attitudes and opinions of Europeans about cultural heritage. The subjects of the questions included:

- ▶ personal involvement in and interest in cultural heritage;
- ▶ barriers to accessing cultural heritage sites and events;
- ▶ perceived importance of cultural heritage to respondents personally;
- ▶ perceived importance of cultural heritage to the local community, region, country and the EU as a whole;
- ▶ the values attached to Europe's cultural heritage and perceptions of European culture;
- ▶ the impact of cultural heritage on tourism and jobs;
- ▶ identifying who should be primarily responsible for protecting Europe's cultural heritage.²⁸



© Pixabay

Within the Danube Region EU member countries, more people in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia live near cultural heritage attractions than elsewhere, while Bulgaria is at the bottom with only 66% of respondents confirming their proximity to cultural heritage sites, cultural events and festivals related to Europe's culture and history. On average, about 30% of citizens of Danube Region EU member countries have confirmed that they are regularly involved in an activity related to cultural heritage, while more than 50% answer that they are involved spontaneously. About 20% have used ICT tools to look up information on cultural heritage, purchase services or view cultural heritage content. People in Bulgaria and Slovenia identified the creation of cultural heritage-related content and sharing it online as their third most frequently mentioned purpose for use of ICT in relation to cultural heritage. Most

citizens in the EU member countries of the Danube Region (from 79% in Hungary to 87% in Bulgaria) consider that cultural heritage is important for them personally and for their local community, region and country. More than two thirds would like to know more about Europe's cultural heritage.

From 57% in Hungary to 80% in Croatia, citizens in the Danube Region EU member countries consider that living close to cultural heritage can improve people's quality of life. More than 70% consider that culture and cultural exchange should have a very important role in the EU as they help people to get to know each other and feel European.

The survey shows the generally positive attitude towards cultural heritage and the role it plays in local communities' development. Unfortunately, the report does not capture the situation in the Danube non-EU countries.

Key trends applicable to the development of Cultural Routes

Global travel trends

In order to enhance existing and develop new Cultural Routes in the Danube Region, policy makers should consider global travel trends and make informed assumptions for the future and decisions based on evidence.

Through its report "Analysing Megatrends to Better Shape the Future of Tourism", OECD²⁹ strategic foresight exercises support tourism policy makers to anticipate alternative futures and inform the development of forward-looking policies. In order to capitalise on these changing trends, policy and decision makers from within the industry will need to consider how to more effectively develop and connect travellers with more remote destinations, where appropriate, to provide diverse and distinct experiences outside of traditional tourism destinations and support the socio-cultural and economic development of local communities.

The report provides the following guiding principles to maximise the value of such exercises.

1. Agility – Utilise existing evidence and projections, while being agile enough to adapt to emerging realities.
2. Multiplicity – Prepare for and consider alternative futures when designing policies and programmes.
3. Proactivity – Take proactive steps to work towards the desired future.

28. Special Eurobarometer 466.

29. OECD (2018), "Analysing Megatrends to Better Shape the Future of Tourism", OECD Tourism Papers.

4. Long-term sustainability – Consider the impact of policies on future generations and take responsible actions now.
5. Engagement and inclusion – Engage with diverse stakeholders that represent a range of perspectives and interests.
6. International collaboration – Collaborate internationally to ensure that policies and decisions are sustainable.

Megatrends capture globally relevant social, economic, political, environmental and technological changes over the long term. While megatrends often unfold slowly and follow relatively stable trajectories, they have potential for high impact and can drive the global economy and society in specific directions. The exact outcomes of these trends are typically uncertain, although it is important that governments are proactive in considering their potential long-term implications and planning through informed predictions.

As a trend, the OECD confirms that “the predominance of emerging generations and their preferences for unique, customised, and sustainable travel experiences could lead to a shift away from more traditional sun, sea and sand, and attraction-based tourism.”³⁰

Another specific global megatrend is associated with “over-tourism”. Over-tourism is becoming an increasingly critical issue, particularly for the most popular tourist destinations. It is an ongoing challenge for the tourism industry and for policy makers to devise solutions to this problem to protect the locals’ quality of life and ensure sustainability. The key issues related to the challenge of over-tourism are pollution, congestion at cultural heritage sites of interest, traffic jams, pressure on infrastructure and resources, the increase in prices for residents, a decrease in authenticity of the sites, safety challenges in the view of terrorist attacks and crime. The UNWTO³¹ has identified 11 strategies for overcoming the effects of over-tourism in big cities and urban areas. They are relevant to the development of the Cultural Routes as important cultural heritage assets are in urban areas.

1. Promote the dispersal of visitors within the city and beyond
2. Promote time-based dispersal of visitors
3. Stimulate new itineraries and attractions
4. Review and adapt regulations
5. Enhance visitors’ segmentation
6. Ensure local communities benefit from tourism

7. Create city experiences for both residents and visitors
8. Improve city infrastructure and facilities
9. Communicate with and engage local stakeholders
10. Communicate with and engage visitors
11. Set monitoring and response measures.

Cultural Routes could be a response to over-tourism, especially in planning and policy decisions concerning strategies 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11.

The ageing population in Europe puts pressure to respond to the travel patterns of this specific population group. An important question to be addressed is how to mandate accessibility and inclusion for consumers of various ages, preferences and cultural backgrounds. It is important to note that ageing travellers in future will represent the biggest travel group in Europe. However, millennials and those from what is termed “Generation Z” are travelling more and more and their demands have led to a drastic change from seeking out tourism products to tourism experiences on a budget. The fears about stagnation and slow economic growth will also change tourists’ preferences. If traditional travel becomes unaffordable for many, it is likely that, in general, people will take fewer long-haul trips and focus instead on domestic or regional experiences that are more affordable. To this end, destinations and locations that are part of the European Cultural Routes will add value to the experience of domestic travellers.

There is also a growing interest in “virtual travel” through virtual and augmented reality technologies. However, it could also be the case that technology enables greater travel, thus virtual reality experiences could be used as a tool to market destinations rather than substituting travel to those destinations, and travellers looking to stretch their resources could rely on platform technologies to obtain real-time information to tailor their experiences and fit within a specific budget.

Reports on travel trends from Trekksoft for 2018 and 2019³² have underlined the shift from material purchases to experiential purchases based on emotional ties. Psychologically, people report being mostly frustrated before the planned purchase of a thing, but mostly happy before they bought an experience – like a trip or an activity. As a result, leading travel brands are putting experiences and their associated promise of joy at the forefront of their marketing. This tendency is extremely important for the development of the Cultural Routes as they can build on

30. Ibid.

31. <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284420629>.

32. Trekksoft, Travel Trends Report 2018 and Travel Trends Report 2019, www.trekksoft.com/eNotapplicable/Notavailableacademy/ebooks/travel-trends-2019.

identity, a sense of belonging and the rediscovery of European roots. The following major trends were identified in 2018.



© Pixabay

1. Recharging deep in nature

The trend to get away from the big city, the noise, traffic and overcrowding is becoming more and more popular. People seem to seek smaller and quieter places that combine the beauty of nature with the discovery of new locations.

The development of Cultural Routes could explore this trend further through clever offers of a mix of nature and culture through the focus of a specific topic relevant to more than one country.

2. The one-off experience you cannot get elsewhere

This trend is more and more evident and has been identified by various sources. The unique experience is what matters, the uniqueness of the travel activities that people talk and dream about.

3. A walking tour in a cultural capital

The free walking tour concept has boomed in recent years. It is one of the best ways to see a city through the eyes of a local, as the leading free walking tour provider. In terms of Cultural Routes, the expansion of the network of volunteers and young people willing to proudly present their locations as part of a European Cultural Route should be encouraged. The best ambassadors for the Cultural Routes are the locals that are involved in welcoming and talking to visitors, not only at hotels and restaurants but also as “diving instructors” for the “cultural ocean” of the route.

4. Sustainable adventure travel

Travellers are increasingly demanding sustainability and the Danube Region cannot lag. Responsible adventure travel is a commitment. The combination of nature and culture along a Cultural Route is an excellent development choice. Developing and offering adventure options will constitute a strong choice. Moreover, adventure usually refers to activities

such as cycling, trekking or climbing but this does not mean that culture can be boring. Thus, going on an adventure through time and space is something destination planners along the Cultural Routes should think about in depth.

5. A story to take home

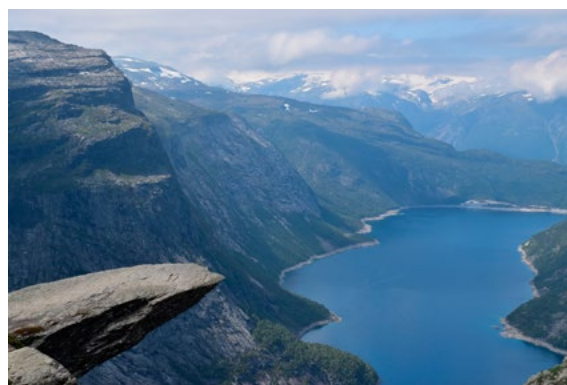
Some travellers cannot resist the allure of three days touring the wilderness. A good example for incorporation of this element is the Pilgrimage Route to Santiago de Compostela. Although not in the Danube area, this route can be studied by public authorities in the Danube countries because:

- ▶ it is the oldest Cultural Route in Europe;
- ▶ it has accumulated a good evidence base of visitor data;
- ▶ many travellers write books and broadcast movies and videos about their stories on the route.

6. Really getting to know a country and its culture

There is much to be said for solo wandering, but it is hard to learn more about a place’s culture and heritage than from a guided tour through the Cultural Route. Policy makers need to work with private-sector organisations and tourism boards to develop tourist attractions that cover the whole path of the Cultural Routes across the Danube Region and show the diverse appeal of tours that share the “best of” a Region.

7. Thrills in a stunning location



© Pixabay

Extreme sports or similar experiences can be combined with the thrills of discovering a Cultural Route. When planning the appeal of the Cultural Route to visitors, combinations of alternative experiences must be considered in order to attract a variety of travellers.

Regardless of political uncertainty, austerity and inflation, people are spending more on activities, choosing instead to cut back on buying products. The Digital Tourism Think Tank confirms that:

Gen Z also approach social media in a different way compared with the previous generation. They give high value to privacy and prefer apps like Snapchat and Whisper. Even more interesting is the fact that 25% of this generation abandoned Facebook in 2014. This is because Gen Z spend most of their time looking for content on social media instead of social networking. In addition, apps like YouTube and Instagram are the most preferred ones. We are in front of a generation that does not only share things but creates things. Gen Z can be defined as “curators”, they want to contribute to the conversation and be part of it.³³

Below are some of the new trends for 2019³⁴ that could be relevant to the development of the Danube Region’s Cultural Routes.

1. The increasing role of influencers – bloggers and social media users with a huge audience can trigger an enormous response. They can persuade people to act. The effectiveness of influencers is still under scrutiny. The involvement of influencers and bloggers in the promotion of the Cultural Routes in the Danube Region could be considered.
2. Modular travel – two types of travellers have been identified: FIT (free independent travellers) that do their own research and make their bookings; and modular travellers that prefer delegation of these tasks to third parties, select from experiences on offer or combine multiple experiences and pre-purchase them. Local and regional authorities can work with tourist agents to develop offers related to the Cultural Routes.

To conclude, global travel trends represent a very good overview of travellers’ preferences and subtle behaviour shifts and their monitoring is indispensable. They provide knowledge upon which to plan further policies and future funding efforts.

Monitoring and management tools relevant to Cultural Routes

European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion (ESPON)

www.espon.eu/tools-maps/espon-data-navigator

Through its project “HERITAGE – The Material Cultural Heritage as a Strategic Territorial Development Resource: Mapping Impacts through a Set of Common European Socio-economic Indicators”, ESPON aims to quantify the contribution (impact) of material cultural heritage to economic development

in the stakeholder countries and regions over the past five years. Building on the work done by the European Heritage Heads Forum’s Economic Task Force and the European Commission, this research activity will define a list of economic sectors on which the material cultural heritage has an impact and perform data collection on the selected impact indicators. The main outcome is a common theoretical framework, defining the most important economic sectors on which the material cultural heritage has an impact and developing the empirical evidence of such impact. This research activity will also develop a blueprint or, in other words, a systematic plan on how to build a monitoring system in the stakeholder countries that includes all actions necessary to obtain and maintain data for the defined impact indicators in the future.³⁵

ESPON envisages a system that will include all necessary data that will assist in monitoring and reporting the impact on Cultural Routes, which will help overall management.

Among the relevant Danube Region stakeholders included in the process are the Romanian Ministry of Culture and National Identity, the Monuments Board of the Slovak Republic, the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia and the Austrian Federal Office for Cultural Heritage.

An additional call was launched in December 2018 by ESPON related to “ESPON Cultural Heritage as a Source of Societal Well-being in European Regions”, with the aim of developing a common methodological framework to determine the societal impact of cultural heritage, collect evidence, define indicators, case studies and recommendations.³⁶

Although the developed tools and methodologies are exhaustive in terms of measuring the cultural heritage impact, the specific impact of the Cultural Routes contribution still cannot be measured and is not targeted.

European Tourism Indicators System for sustainable destination management (ETIS)

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators_en

ETIS is a system of indicators suitable for all tourist destinations, encouraging them to adopt a more intelligent approach to tourism planning. It is:

- ▶ a management tool, supporting destinations that want to take a sustainable approach to destination management;

33. Trekkssoft, Travel Trends Report 2018.

34. Trekkssoft, Travel Trends Report 2019.

35. www.espon.eu/cultural-heritage.

36. www.espon.eu/call-tenders-espon-cultural-heritage-source-societal-well-being-european-regions.

- ▶ a monitoring system, easy to use for collecting data and detailed information and to let destinations monitor their performance from one year to another;
- ▶ an information tool (not a certification scheme), useful for policy makers, tourism enterprises and other stakeholders.

The ETIS destination dataset is dedicated to measuring the sustainability of the tourism destinations. It covers 43 indicators, designed in a way to cover the aspects of sustainability management of the destinations thus creating a more responsible attitude towards tourism destination policies. In addition, the system allows for comparisons between destinations and over time. To that end, ETIS is suitable for comparisons among destinations within the Danube Region providing a benchmarking picture of the performance of the countries and the sector.

While ETIS is primarily focused on the performance of the tourist destinations package, its indicators could be easily adapted and used as an evidence base for the Cultural Routes' economic and social impact on the Region. There was a study in 2010 on the economic impact of Cultural Routes that referred to ETIS.³⁷ This knowledge can be further explored, additionally adapted and readjusted to the purposes and needs for an evidence base for the Cultural Routes.

UNWTO International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO)

<http://insto.unwto.org/>

The UNWTO International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO) is a network of tourism observatories monitoring the economic, environmental and social impact of tourism at the destination level. The initiative is based on UNWTO's long-standing commitment to the sustainable and resilient growth of the sector through measurement and monitoring and supporting the evidence-based management of tourism.³⁸ Of the 25 observatories, one is in the Danube Region, in Croatia.

These observatories measure nine issue areas that are require regular monitoring:

1. Tourism seasonality
2. Employment
3. Destination economic benefits
4. Governance
5. Local satisfaction
6. Energy management

7. Water management
8. Wastewater (sewage) management
9. Solid waste management.

While it is mandatory to measure at least to some extent the nine issue areas, each observatory is different in its structure and focus. INSTO does not require members to specifically monitor predefined indicators, leaving enough flexibility in terms of the content and focusing more on the processes and innovative tools and techniques used by the destinations. This may assist for a more flexible and focused management in the territory. On the other hand it could have the following disadvantages.

1. The observatories measure the performance only of their own countries and due to the flexibility of the approaches allowed, the data might not be comparable across borders, thus benchmarking between destinations cannot be used.
2. The only observatory in Croatia is measuring indicators only for Croatia.

In terms of measuring the impact of Cultural Routes, this monitoring tool seems to have limited scope for use in the way it exists to date. However, some of its indicators could be relevant to monitoring the socio-economic impact of Cultural Routes.

European Commission's Virtual Tourism Observatory (VTO)

<https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/vto/>

VTO aims to support policy makers and businesses to develop better strategies for a more competitive European tourism sector. The observatory is placed under the authority of DG Growth, Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs. VTO provides access to a broad collection of information, data and analysis on current trends in the tourism sector. It includes the latest available figures on the sector's trends and volumes, economic and environmental impact, and the origin and profile of tourists. It is organised in a way to allow comparisons between regions and countries in Europe on various tourism-relevant sets of data. Nevertheless, its role is not to measure the specific performance and impact of European Cultural Routes. Therefore, despite the overall picture it provides, the impact of Cultural Routes on the regional economies and on the Danube Region cannot be judged.

Thus, the Priority Area 3 steering group members have acknowledged the necessity for further steps to be taken by EUSDR countries to develop harmonised monitoring system dedicated to tourism in the Danube Region. It is important to include specific indicators relevant to monitoring the impact of the Cultural Routes in the Danube Region within such a harmonised

37. <https://rm.coe.int/1680706995>.

38. <http://insto.unwto.org/>.

monitoring system. This is of utmost importance, as it will ensure the development and implementation of evidence-based policies and collaboration on common issues identified across borders.

World Travel and Tourism Council Data Gateway (WTTTC Data Gateway)

<https://tool.wtttc.org/>

This tool provides monitoring of tourism data for most countries in the world as well as data for countries by group (for example, those in the OECD, the Commonwealth, Mediterranean, etc.) and regions (Africa, Asia, EU, etc.).

The tool measures a limited set of 12 metrics:

- ▶ Business tourism spending
- ▶ Direct contribution to employment
- ▶ Direct contribution to GDP
- ▶ Domestic tourism spending
- ▶ Individual government expenditure
- ▶ Internal travel and tourism consumption
- ▶ Investment (capital investment)
- ▶ Leisure tourism spending
- ▶ Outbound travel and tourism expenditure
- ▶ Total contribution to employment
- ▶ Total contribution to GDP
- ▶ Visitor exports (foreign spending).

The tool's advantages are:

1. it provides data for the last 20 years and projections until 2028;³⁹ this is useful for viewing the dynamics of data and the evolution of the country indicators;
2. it allows the selection of countries, regions and territorial groups for a specific indicator, which allows for comparison among countries and groups of territories;
3. it allows the selection of a set of indicators for a country to observe its full performance;
4. it allows the selection of both countries and indicators, thus allowing a complex analysis and comparisons;
5. that even if a territory is not directly included (as is the case with Danube Region), the extraction of data is enough to allow one's own calculations to be made.

The tool is useful in terms of determining the impact of tourism on macro-regional economic growth, but it is not enough to make informed conclusions on the contribution of the Cultural Routes to the tourism

performance. Collaboration with the WTTTC could be considered for exchange of experience and transfer of good practices on monitoring.

Use of big data⁴⁰

In the ICT and deep tech era, it is impossible to neglect the advantages big data provide for the proper planning and implementation of development and management strategies. ICT has changed the world of travel and is continuing its march towards the next generation of disruptive solutions. Big data are useful for capturing subtle trends and managing reputations, and can be used in policy-making processes in many ways:

- ▶ Avoiding over-tourism and overcrowding at cultural heritage sites. Big data are helpful for the better planning of entry bookings and visits through analysis of booking times. In peak demand hours, slightly higher prices could be planned so that revenues can be increased together with a better distribution of visits.
- ▶ To capture travellers' trends. Nowadays travellers post pictures, messages, memes, impressions, opinions and comments. The management of big data related to Cultural Routes sites can provide useful insights to improve the visitor experience, define who the influencers are and work to attract them.
- ▶ Interactions with visitors. Big data could help identify which services are used by visitors and which are not used, and to anticipate what they may demand in future.
- ▶ Competitive intelligence. It is useful to identify the strengths and weaknesses of competitive destinations in order to improve strategic planning and the positioning of the Cultural Route.

Overview of national and regional practices

Tourism and cultural policies and strategies



The tourism and cultural policies of the EUSDR countries follow the basic international conventions such as the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (UNESCO, 2005) and the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2003). The focus is on contemporary cultural expressions produced by artists and cultural professionals as well as on intangible heritage that has no tangible,

39. Last visit in March 2019.

40. Huge sets of data captured and processed by ICT systems.

material dimension. Behind the term, “intangible cultural heritage” lies the holistic concept of culture, which is not only high culture but also the culture of ordinary people, the culture of everyday life: rituals, knowledge, practices and traditions that are often deeply rooted in time and to this day still define our collective memory and identity, our individual and collective self-knowledge.

Some of the main objectives of the conventions are to systematically inform the public and to work with the bearers (communities) of elements of cultural expression and intangible cultural heritage with a view to documenting, safeguarding and highlighting the overwhelming wealth of living traditions and cultural goods and services.

Many EUSDR countries are included in the EDEN Network, which constitutes a community of practice and exchange based on national competitions that take place every other year and result in the selection of a tourist “destination of excellence” for each participating country. Through the selection of the destinations, EDEN effectively achieves the objective of drawing attention to the values, diversity and common features of European tourist destinations.⁴¹ Currently the network consists of 72 destinations in 23 countries, out of which eight countries in the EUSDR have member destinations in the network.

Tourism and cultural policies and strategies have been further identified and studied by way of a questionnaire sent to public bodies involved in the planning and implementation of Cultural Routes in the Danube Region. Valid responses have been received from Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia. As each country has numerous initiatives, legislation, projects and actions in the field of culture and tourism, only some highlights are presented here.

Austria



© Shutterstock

“Plan T – Master plan for tourism” in Austria has been published at the end of March 2019 and is based on a six-month consultation and dialogue process. Central issues are sustainability and the sustainable use of resources, including cultural heritage and raising awareness of the local population of these resources. It constitutes the overall strategy to guide Austrian tourism policy. With a 16% share of GDP, more than 90,000 businesses active in the tourism and leisure industries provide employment directly or indirectly to more than 700 000 people. Tourism is a cross-sectional industry with requires a set of competences. Therefore, the comprehensive involvement of all relevant stakeholders –from adjacent economic and social areas as well – is of great importance. For this reason, the development of Plan T is carried out together with the Federal Tourism and Leisure Industries Division of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber as a link to the entrepreneurs. A participatory dialogue process and co-operative interaction with stakeholders not only increases the quality of measures, but also guarantees their implementation on a broad basis. As part of nine dialogue-oriented workshops throughout Austria, solutions and options for challenges in key tourism policy topics such as the networking of agriculture and tourism, marketing, tourism financing, indicators, tourist conditions, the labour market, and education and training are developed jointly. Another important pillar is a high-calibre interdisciplinary expert council, which has strategically accompanied the work on the master plan.

The Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism (BMNT), the Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology (BMVIT), federal states, municipalities and representatives of the transport and tourism industries jointly participate in the “Platform for sustainable mobility in tourism”, which consists of measures to promote eco-friendly ways of transportation in tourism and which organises the annual “Tourism mobility days”.

Moreover, the Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism, in collaboration with the federal states, has every other year since 2012 awarded the “Tourism Innovation Award”. In 2018, the jury focused on innovative tourism products and attractions that included aspects of sustainable mobility.

The country has developed an exemplary umbrella-brand promotional strategy concerning sustainable and cultural tourism under the brand Imperial Heritage.⁴² It features the Habsburg Empire and the vast cultural heritage left by it.

41. <https://youredenexperience.com/>.

42. www.austria.info/us/activities/culture-traditions/imperial-history.

Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg (Germany)

The Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety takes care of tourism in Germany. Germany is the most popular holiday destination for domestic travellers, with approximately one third of the population holidaying in their own country.⁴³ Some 2.9 million people are employed in Germany's tourism sector and they account for almost four per cent of the gross value added in the German economy, which amounts to 105 billion euros. As a result, the tourism sector has grown to a size comparable with the automotive and engineering sectors and is now one of Germany's booming and lucrative economic sectors.

At the initiative of the German Bundestag, the ministry developed the national competition "Sustainable tourist destinations", which was held for the first time in 2012/2013 (the first winner was the Uckermark Region). The aim of this competition is to recognise efforts by regions that are particularly active in the field of sustainable tourism. It also creates an incentive for the further development of domestic tourism. Following a review and update of the indicators for designating sustainable tourist destinations, the Tourism Committee of the German Bundestag held the national competition again for the 2016/17 period. The goal was to further strengthen sustainable tourism in Germany and to increase awareness. The award was presented to the winning destination on 17 June 2017 at the Federal Environment Ministry in Berlin.



© Pixabay

The German Tourism Association e.V. is the only federally structured tourist umbrella organisation of municipal, regional and national tourism organisations and is financed exclusively by membership fees. The association was founded in 1902 as the "Association of German Transport Associations".

As the umbrella organisation of German tourism, the DTV (Deutscher Tourismusverband e.V.) has

around 100 members: these include state and regional tourism organisations and city states. In addition, cities, the three municipal umbrella organisations and supporting members who are involved in German tourism are represented in the DTV. Thus, the German Tourism Association represents almost all those active in the German tourist industry. Deutscher Tourismusverband Service GmbH is a wholly owned subsidiary of the German Tourism Association e.V.

Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg are the only German regions included in the EUSDR, thus some insights into these two regions are necessary.

Maintaining and preserving Bavarian culture is a priority of the Bavarian authorities. The resulting cultural policy has many facets and is as diverse as the art and culture with its different styles, trends, regional characteristics and peculiarities. To pursue sustainable cultural policy means to promote contemporary art while at the same time taking responsibility for traditional cultural heritage. The preservation of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage includes art treasures and architectural monuments as well as Bavarian traditions, customs and festivals. Against the background of global competition and demographic change, it is important to keep Bavaria as an internationally competitive location, to further increase growth momentum and to place the economy at the forefront of the future trends of the 21st century. For sustainable jobs to emerge, sustainable policies relevant to the development of Cultural Routes and the protection of cultural heritage are highly relevant and must curb climate change, the increasing scarcity of raw materials and the digitisation of all sectors of the economy and society, as well as promote sustainable production, products and services. This includes increased economic activity with renewable, bio-based raw materials (the bio economy). It is important to make further progress in sustainable economic activity by mobilising technological innovation potential while ensuring equal living and working conditions in all parts of the country. Demographic change is a challenge, especially in rural areas and the enhancement of Cultural Routes to diversify and enliven the areas could be an asset to explore further, especially within the context of the EUSDR, where common cultural links could enhance the regional branding.⁴⁴

A joint study by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria, the Tourism Upper Bavaria Munich e.V. and the Hotel and Restaurant Association DEHOGA Bavaria e.V. underlines the importance of the economic benefits of

43. www.bmu.de/en/topics/economy-products-resources-tourism/sustainable-tourism/sustainable-tourism/.

44. https://www.nachhaltigkeit.bayern.de/strategie/nachhaltige_wirtschaft_und_konsum/index.htm.

tourism in Upper Bavaria.⁴⁵ In addition, the study provides recommendations for action in the following areas.

- ▶ Commitment of politics to tourism as an economic and location factor.
- ▶ Optimisation of structures as well as strategic offer design, marketing and guest services.
- ▶ Political promotion of the continuous increase in quality and professional marketing of the Upper Bavarian tourism offers.
- ▶ Establishment of excellent lighthouse projects with a signal effect.
- ▶ Systematic data collection for day trips.

Tourismus Marketing GmbH Baden-Württemberg organises and co-ordinates marketing for the region of Baden-Württemberg, while its origins can be traced back to 1906. In 1954, the Association of Tourism Associations in Baden-Württemberg was founded. Its task was to distribute the financial resources of the state and to run national advertising campaigns. At the end of 1969, the founding meeting of the State Tourist Board Baden-Württemberg took place. In 1992 the Tourismus Marketing GmbH Baden-Württemberg (TMBW) was founded. It promotes tourism in Baden-Württemberg through comprehensive thematic marketing or through the processing of cross-cutting topics (barrier-free, service quality, family vacations). It processes the foreign source markets, organises trade fair appearances (CMT Messe Stuttgart, ITB Berlin), carries out market research tasks and develops products. The TMBW sees itself as a service provider to the tourism service providers in the municipalities, districts and regions. It has 17 employees. About two thirds of the budget comes from grants from the state.

The entity is also responsible for the implementation of the regional strategic marketing concept. It was created in close co-operation with the regions and associations, that is, with all those responsible for tourism. Tasks and goals are laid down in this marketing concept as well as brand understanding and action strategies for the next few years.

From January to November 2018, official statistics showed there were almost 21 million guest arrivals and 51.3 million overnight stays in Baden-Württemberg. This corresponds to an increase of 3.9 per cent on arrivals and 3.6 per cent on overnight stays compared to the same period in 2017. An above-average development in arrivals and overnight stays was recorded in the North Baden-Württemberg, the Swabian Alb, the Württemberg Allgäu-Upper Swabia and the Hegau areas. Growth in the foreign source markets has been 4.3% (arrivals) and 4.2% (overnight

stays). Domestic guest numbers were up by 3.7 per cent for arrivals and 3.4 per cent for overnight stays.⁴⁶

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The state is directly involved in sustainable and cultural tourism through participation in workshops to identify tangible cultural heritage, monuments and sites, creation of common cultural and tourism products. It is responsible for co-ordination with cultural institutions, tourism organisations and stakeholders and are engaged in active promotion of cultural and sustainable tourism products and cultural and sustainable tourism routes.



© Shutterstock

Inter-ministry co-operation (Ministry of Trade and Tourism of the Republic of Srpska and Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Srpska) is effectuated through the Republic Institute for the Protection of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage is a republican administrative organisation within the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Srpska. The institute takes care of research, promotion and documentation of cultural and historical heritage.

The strategy for tourism development in the Republic of Srpska (2010-2020) focuses on the development and promotion of sustainable tourism. In 2017, the government adopted the Strategy for Development of Culture of the Republic of Srpska (2017-2022).

In order to promote tourism in the country, a mobile guide has been developed containing maps and guides to locations. It is called BH Navigator and is available for iOS and Android mobile platforms.

Organisations throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina participate in various projects for the development of tourism and cultural heritage in co-operation with international organisations. It is part of Via Dinarica in co-operation with the United Nations Development

45. <https://www.ihk-muenchen.de/de/Wirtschaftsstandort/Branchen/Tourismus/Tourismuspolitik/>.

46. <https://bw.tourismusnetzwerk.info/inhalte/marktforschungstatistik/statistiken/>.

Programme (UNDP) and USAID. The Via Dinarica project began in 2010 and serves as a platform to promote and develop tourism throughout local communities across the Western Balkan peninsula. The trail connects the countries and communities of the Dinaric Alps by spotlighting the region's common thread – its landscape – and its diverse culture.

Via Dinarica aims ultimately to make connections between cities and rural communities in the region, raise awareness about good business practices and environmental protection, and to assist tourism across the peninsula.

Another interesting project is MarketMakers in co-operation with the Swiss Government. The project was designed to provide support for solving the issue of sustainable and functional youth employment in four private-sector industries: IT, agriculture, tourism and export-oriented business services. Activities of the first project phase resulted in the creation of 1 648 new jobs, and the total estimated private-sector investment stimulated by the project activities is over 12 million euros. The project works to support branding of destinations and tourism product innovation.⁴⁷

The **Adrion five senses** project, while funded under the Adrion Adriatic-Ionian programme, involves countries across the Danube Region, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro. The project suggests incorporating sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch to develop effective branding strategies and boost the performance of the destination by creating conditions to enhance tourist experiences. The project could highlight good practice, exchange and synergy outcomes of the two macro-regional strategies: the EUSDR and the Adriatic-Ionian strategy.⁴⁸

The municipality of **Sarajevo** has developed cultural tourism products based on the cultural and historical heritage of the Neolithic, medieval Bosnia-Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, Yugoslav and independent Bosnia periods. It aims to re-brand its tourism to encapsulate the 4 500-years of civilisation presence in Sarajevo's Centar area. Creating and promoting new cultural tourism products requires a consensus in defining long-term goals, involving all actors in the process. Co-ordinating complex activities to protect cultural and historical heritage, developing skills in managing a tourist destination and improving standards are a necessity. Its priority goals are as follows.

Priority objective 1. Creating a positive ambience for the development of a cultural tourism product.

Priority Objective 2. Establishing a system of organisation and mechanisms of cross-sectoral co-operation.

Priority Objective 3. Improving the level of knowledge and skills.

Priority Objective 4. Creating a critical mass of cultural tourism products.

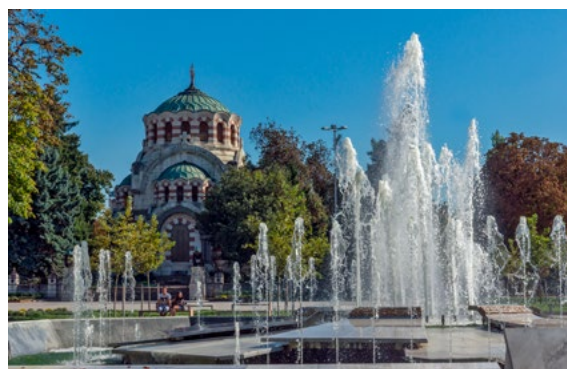
Priority Objective 5. Improving the standard of presentation, equipment and quality cultural tourism products.

Priority Goal 6. Improving the system of information flow, promotion and distribution of cultural tourism products.

Priority Goal 7. Measuring the effects and satisfaction of tourists.

Priority Goal 8. Reduction of omissions and mistakes.

Bulgaria



© Shutterstock

The Updated National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism 2014-2030 stipulates the following strategic objectives.

- ▶ Establishment of a favourable natural and business environment for the development of sustainable tourism.
- ▶ Development of a competitive tourism sector.
- ▶ Successful positioning of the country in the international market.
- ▶ Balanced development of tourist regions.

The Ministry of Tourism has implemented many international relations projects and is active as Priority Area Coordinator for EUSDR Priority Area 3.

Recently, Plovdiv became the first Bulgarian city to be chosen as the European Capital of Culture, for 2019. The purpose of the European Capital of Culture programme of the city is designed to challenge pre-conceived notions about the purpose and character of art, where it appears and the people who create it. The initiative, under the motto "Together3", aims to maximise the authenticity of cultural events within the city, to actively engage the audience.

47. www.marketmakers.ba/stranica/19/pregled.

48. <https://adrion5senses.adrioninterreg.eu/>.

Example no. 1 – Within the ATRIUM Cultural Route, Bulgaria is represented by the Municipality of Dimitrovgrad. In the absence of an established system for gathering evidence on the impact of Cultural Routes, the municipality has established a system to use the number and feedback of museum visitors to measure impact. Using the museum staff as observers and specialists to assess the influence of Cultural Routes in people’s reasoning to visit the town.

Example no. 2 – The regions of Ruse (Bulgaria) and Giurgiu (Romania) are using Interreg Romania-Bulgaria 2014-2020 transnational programme funds to develop a common tourism strategy for development of cultural and sustainable tourism in the rural parts of both regions. The promotion of the places will also include short videos and photo albums, presented together.

Croatia

The Ministry of Tourism oversees policies, strategies and the legal framework of the tourism sector, and the strategy for the development of tourism in the Republic of Croatia by 2020,^{49,50} and the action plan for development of cultural tourism.

The strategy outlines the key directions for Croatian tourism development until 2020, the market opportunities for Croatia and a vision for Croatian tourism until 2020. A key goal is the development of thematic routes.



© Shutterstock

The Action Plan for Cultural Tourism Development stems from the overall strategy for tourism development until 2020 that was adopted in 2013. Cultural tourism has been recognised in the overall strategy

49. https://mint.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/arhiva/Tourism_development_strategy_2020.pdf.

50. <https://mint.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/arhiva/Strategy-tourism.present.pdf>.

as one of 10 key elements of the strategy for tourism development. As such, it should offer a major contribution to the overall development of tourism, which aims to achieve better global recognition for the country, to reposition Croatia as a destination of diverse and authentic content and events, to broaden the geographic and temporal dispersion of tourist attractions and to enrich Croatian tourism to increase the number of tourist visits and tourism consumption.

There are 16 measures for achieving the goals of the action plan, which are distributed throughout five key areas. Those areas deal with the enhancement of the infrastructure for cultural tourism; the development of products for cultural tourism (which includes development of thematic routes); changing (international) marketing of cultural tourism; the creation of a partnership for cultural tourism development; and the improvement of education on cultural tourism.

The action plan follows the main policy outlines of the strategy and defines concrete activities and measures that should be taken for cultural tourism to develop according to the goals set in the national strategic framework.

The country participates in the EDEN Initiative – European Destinations of Excellence. EDEN is an initiative promoting sustainable tourism development models across the EU. The initiative is based on national competitions that take place every other year and result in the selection of a tourist “destination of excellence” for each participating country. Through the selection of destinations, EDEN effectively achieves the objective of drawing attention to the values, diversity and common features of European tourist destinations. In 2017 the theme was “Cultural Tourism” and Vukovar-Vučedol-Ilok was selected as the winning destination in this category.

The Ministry of Culture oversees protection and preservation of cultural heritage based on the Law on the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Goods. It covers establishing the protection of cultural goods, measures for the protection and preservation of cultural goods and protection and preservation of cultural goods.

CROSTO – the Croatian Sustainable Tourism Observatory – assembles a list of sustainability indicators using guidelines provided by three different sources (UNWTO, EUROSTAT and European Union Tourism Sustainability Group). The list consists of 31 indicators grouped into four categories and measures tourism sustainability in seven Croatian coastal counties constituting the Adriatic Croatia Region. The results revealed significant differences concerning both the level of overall tourism sustainability and the aspect of tourism sustainability among Croatian coastal counties.

There are no specific national tools concerning the development of Cultural Routes, which emphasises the need to secure partnerships to raise awareness and capacity building.

The Ministry of Tourism was a partner in the FASTLAIN (EU-funded) project through which a national network for sustainable tourism was established⁵¹ and is connected with the international platform DestiNet.⁵² The EU provides cohesion funding to help increase employment and tourism through the enhancement of cultural heritage within the “Competitiveness and Cohesion” for the financial period 2014-2020” programme. Major tourist cities such as Dubrovnik, Split, Rab, Zagreb and Varaždin offer specific visitors’ cards.

Czech Republic

The Czech Ministry of Regional Development co-ordinates the tourism sector. The State Tourism Policy Concept in the Czech Republic for 2014-2020 is a mid-term strategic document,⁵³ on Czech tourism potential.

Developing laws establishing improved conditions for the development of tourism is a major government goal. Several projects financed from EU structural funds that contribute to the development of tourism in the Czech Republic are also carried out.

The Czech Tourist Authority (CzechTourism) promotes the Czech Republic both abroad and in the domestic market as a tourist destination. CzechTourism’s goal to promote the Czech Republic in markets worldwide, build brand awareness of destinations and boost international visitors.



© Shutterstock

The ministry has been involved in the activities of international organisations in the field of tourism

51. www.odrzivi.turizam.hr.

52. <https://destinet.eu/>.

53. www.npu.cz/portal/npu-a-pamatkova-pece/pamatky-a-pamatkova-pece/pravni-predpisy-a-mezinarodni-dokumenty/zakon%20o%20st%20pamatkove%20peci.pdf.

and the outcomes are presented at international conferences and trade fairs. Through the Czech Tourist Authority – CzechTourism – the ministry presents the Czech Republic both abroad and in the domestic market as an interesting tourist destination. The Czech Tourism Authority – CzechTourism – is an allowance organisation of the Ministry for Regional Development and its goal is the successful presentation of the Czech Republic in the domestic and foreign markets. It uses its central office in the Czech Republic as well as its network of foreign offices in other European countries, including Germany, the UK and Spain, and in non-European countries such as China, Brazil and the United States. The basic objective of the network of foreign CzechTourism representative agencies is to promote the Czech Republic in the respective markets, build brand awareness of destinations and stimulate the volume of arrivals of foreign visitors to the Czech Republic. CzechTourism agency branches offer a wide range of promotional activities. Their basic tools include campaigns (online, print and outdoor), press and excursion tours, road shows, participation in trade fairs, promotional events, organising presentations and workshops, collaboration with foreign and Czech entities and establishing and developing contacts with strategic partners.⁵⁴

The vision of the National Tourism Strategy 2014-2020 is to develop tourism through modern products based on socio-cultural specifications of the regions – their natural richness and historical, cultural and technical heritage – and it contributes to socio-economic development that is environmentally friendly, a subject of interest in the area of tourism. The Czech Republic is promoted as a tourism destination that also applies the principles of sustainable development.

There are four priority areas for more tourism or attraction development for the years 2014 to 2020:

1. the enhancement of tourism supply
2. tourism management
3. destination marketing
4. tourism policy and economic development.

The implementation of the current Marketing Concept for Czech Tourism 2013-2020 identifies several issues and areas for improvement.⁵⁵ Presentation of products is fragmented, so the client must find the necessary information on multiple websites, which are often not linked to each other or the sophisticated portals of destination management by CzechTourism. Mostly they are details about individual attractions, accommodation, catering, information and other services that are not offered as a package and are not linked to the destination. Local products are relatively

54. www.czechtourism.com/about-czt/.

55. www.czechtourism.cz/o-czechtourism/zakladni-informace/strategie-a-koncepcje/.

common without linking to the destination. Access to information through mobile applications is limited.

The official destination management company site for tourist regions provides different quality information, often not complete and up to date. The division into tourist regions and areas is unclear for the client. Information about offers for multiple regions (e.g. Šumava, Krkonoše, Jeseníky) is often presented on a common website. If the linking of web pages is missing (which is quite common), the information for the (potential) visitor is difficult to access and it may discourage them from choosing a place to stay. More focus on the client segment and its requirements and the opportunity to choose other activities and services is needed.

Hungary



© Shutterstock

Hungary is implementing its cultural heritage policies within UNESCO's framework. It has three cultural practices on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and one item on the List of Best Safeguarding Practices.

Cultural heritage protection and management in Hungary deals with the tangible items of heritage. The intangible heritage is part of the cultural policy. In Hungary, the T/10525 Bill on the Protection of Cultural Heritage LXIV of 2001 law and related laws regulate the topic. Act LXIV of 2001 on the Protection of Cultural Heritage is amended in 2016 with amending Act LIII.

Eleven professional organisations working in the field of tourism have created a new platform under the name of the Hungarian Tourism Association to promote the quality development of Hungarian tourism and the creation of modern Hungarian tourism.⁵⁶

The Hungarian Tourism Association is the result of a joint effort of professional associations representing more than a thousand service providers and nearly 200 000 members and employees who share responsibility for the development of tourism. It has

56. <http://magyarturisztikaiszovetseg.hu/szovetsegek-szovetsege/>.

been established in the form of a foundation, that is, it collects resources and supports professional activities promoting the quality renewal and development of Hungarian tourism, especially research, analysis, information and information services, training and further training programmes, expert and professional advisory activities and quality assurance processes.

The most significant problem recognised by the association in the development of Hungarian tourism today is the lack of a skilled workforce, which also hinders competitive and sustainable operations daily and in the long term. The need for human development programmes that respond flexibly to the ever-changing needs of the market is not new, but a comprehensive solution has not yet been developed in the sector. Small businesses alone are not strong enough to professionally manage their human resource development needs, and large organisations have not yet been brought together.

Montenegro



© Shutterstock

Montenegro is represented on the UNESCO World Heritage list by several cultural-historic sites and one national park. The Ministry of Culture oversees management of cultural heritage. The European Commission screening report for the progress of the country stipulates that "the 2017 programme for protection and preservation of cultural assets was adopted in December 2016, while the 2017-2018 action plan to implement the programme for cultural development was adopted in February 2017. Montenegro continues implementation measures on the UNESCO Convention; due attention should be paid to preserving Kotor's UNESCO World Heritage status. Participation in the Creative Europe Programme could be improved, with only four submitted applications in the last four calls without any selected project so far. The Ministry of Culture established a Creative Europe Desk as the implementing body for the Culture and MEDIA sub-programmes".⁵⁷

57. <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20180417-montenegro-report.pdf>.

The country's Regional Co-operation Council is implementing a major project that has the goal of creating joint and internationally competitive cultural and adventure tourism offers in the six Western Balkans (WB6) economies, which will attract more tourists to the region, lengthen their stay, increase revenue and contribute to growth and employment.⁵⁸

The current law on tourism and hospitality entered into force on 18 January 2018. The law aims, among other things, to bring the quality of tourism and hospitality services in line with contemporary trends in order to position Montenegro as an exclusive tourist destination, to implement EU standards and to harmonise national laws with EU law. The law is currently in the process of revision.

Romania



© Shutterstock

Cultural heritage is the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture. The National Culture and National Heritage Strategy 2016-2020 (SCPN 2016-2020) is a mid-term public policy document that defines in principle the policy of the Romanian Government in this field, outlining a horizon of public activity for balanced, sustainable cultural development for the benefit of all those directly involved in cultural activities and of society. By identifying general issues, objectives, directions and measures, SCPN 2016-2020 is the basis for decisions in the field and is a landmark for all those interested in developing the necessary projects and programmes to guide cultural action in a common direction.

SCPN 2016-2020 recognises public authorities' approaches to cultural planning and appreciates as positive the development of local and county strategies that guide and substantiate cultural actions, financing, investments, regulations and other decisions having an impact on the local and regional cultural ecosystem.

58. www.rcc.int/tourism.

SCPN 2016-2020 is characterised by structural features:

- ▶ a correlation with objectives and measures relevant to action in the cultural sector contained in 18 other strategic documents at national level;
- ▶ organising themed action plans, centred around culture, sustainability, development, and creativity;
- ▶ inclusion of a set of cross-section activities to ensure its cultural mission.

The Ministry of Culture has drafted public policy proposals (PPP) to achieve its goals.

- ▶ A PPP on the digitisation of national cultural resources and the creation of the Digital Library of Romania (which was the basis for the initiation of Government Decision no. 1676/2008 on the approval of the National Programme for the digitisation of national cultural resources and the creation of the Digital Library of Romania).
- ▶ A PPP Digitisation Action Plan.
- ▶ A PPP on the improvement of the quality of life in rural and small urban areas from the point of view of cultural services (which led to a series of modifications and completions of GEO 118/2006 on the establishment, organisation and development of the activity of cultural establishments and was the basis for the initiation during 2007 of the National Priority Programme for the construction, rehabilitation, modernisation, endowment and finalisation of the construction works of the public cultural settlements, rural and small urban areas).
- ▶ Agri-tourism.
- ▶ A PPP on redefining the status of performances or concerts and defining the statutes of performers or concerts on the background of clarifying their organisation and functioning, as well as artistic impersonation (PPP provisions were taken over by OG 21/2007 regarding performances institutions and companies or concerts, as well as the performance of the artistic imprint activity).

In 2021, the city of Timisoara will hold the title of European Capital of Culture, following Sibiu in 2007. In Romania, the interest in this initiative was considerable, with 14 cities submitting their applications initially (Alba Iulia, Arad, Bacau, Baia Mare, Braila, Brasov, Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Craiova, Iasi, Sfantu Gheorghe, Suceava, Mures and Timisoara). Of these, four were selected for the final stage in December 2015: Baia Mare, Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca and Timisoara.

There is no specific way to distinguish tourists that are interested in the Cultural Route from other tourists. Thus, the impact of the Cultural Route on the regional development is considered relating to the statistical data.

Serbia

The country's Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunication and the Ministry of Culture and Information oversee the following activities:

- ▶ Participation in workshops in order to identify tangible and intangible cultural heritage, monuments and sites, to create a common cultural tourism identity.
- ▶ Co-ordination with cultural institutions and stakeholders in the country on the process of mapping adequate cultural monuments and sites.
- ▶ Co-ordination with tourism organisations and tour operators in order to promote and commercialise cultural tourism products (cultural tourism routes).



© Shutterstock

The Republic Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Serbia is the authority with responsibility for the condition of the immovable cultural assets, professional assistance and training on cultural heritage protection, the maintenance of central registers of cultural property and the uniform application of criteria for cultural heritage. It conducts research, develops studies and projects related to cultural heritage, and monitors the use of cultural heritage tangible assets as well as the organisation of lectures and other appropriate forms of cultural educational activities.

Serbia is home to the Danube Competence Centre – an association of tourism bodies working together for a sustainable and competitive destination Danube. The association's main task is to build and support networks of tourism stakeholders by enhancing transnational co-operation through various tourism development and promotional activities while implementing and promoting a unique tourism brand for a competitive European Danube Region. It encompasses organisations from 10 Danube countries (Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova and Ukraine).⁵⁹

59. <http://danubecc.org/roman-emperors-and-danube-wine-route-at-cmt-stuttgart/>.

The country is part of the "Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route" and of EDEN, European Destinations of Excellence.

Slovenia

The Public Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia is the main national institution for the protection of cultural heritage. It performs national public service in the field of protecting cultural heritage with the main tasks of identification, documentation, study and interpretation of cultural heritage and its presentation to the public. The institute is a main body for assignments in the field of restoration and preventive archaeology and actively co-operates in several different EU cross-border and transnational projects. Currently the institute leads the cross-border project Claustra+ (CB Slovenija–Croatia 2014–2020). One of the main goals of the project is to develop a new tourist destination in an area featuring a late Roman defence system, Claustra Alpium Iuliarum.



© Shutterstock

ONKULT – the Operational Marketing Plan for Cultural Tourism in Slovenia 2018–2020⁶⁰ – is working on the following objectives:

- ▶ increasing the visibility of Slovenia as a destination for cultural tourism;
- ▶ increasing the number of cultural tourists with effective and innovative marketing and the promotion of Slovenia as a destination for cultural tourism;
- ▶ attracting visitors to existing tourist sites and experiences that include cultural content;
- ▶ establishing and upgrading partnerships and collaboration between the tourism and cultural sectors with the aim of joint marketing of cultural tourism.

60. www.slovenia.info/en/business/slovenian-tourist-board/key-documents.

In Slovenia cultural heritage is excluded from the Operational Programme for the Implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy in the Period 2014-2020: cultural heritage has no access to the finances and is not involved in sustainable tourism programmes.

A good-practice example is the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism, which is a national scheme for green tourism with sustainable indicators. It has developed a certification programme that carries out the following tasks under the Slovenia Green umbrella brand:

- ▶ offering tools to destinations and service providers that enable them to evaluate and improve their sustainability endeavours;
- ▶ promoting these green endeavours through the Slovenia Green brand.⁶¹



© Wikimedia CC

The scheme's key strategic objective is to introduce sustainable models to Slovenian tourism, to both tourism service providers and destinations. All the objectives of the strategic guidelines are in line with sustainable development and demonstrate concern for the economic, social, cultural and natural environment.

The country is working on the Alpe Adria trail through a cross-border network for development of cross-border tourism. The trail provides experience of travel through three countries – Slovenia, Austria and Italy.

Another interesting project is Inducult 2.0 funded through the Interreg Central Europe programme. It is dedicated to the development of cultural tourism in industrial sites. The project establishes the idea of a living industrial culture in Central Europe and reveals, strengthens and utilises the unique cultural spirit of industrial regions. It also includes Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany and Italy.

61. www.slovenia.info/uploads/dokumenti/zelenaschema/2018_gradiva/kratekpregledmaj18eng.pdf.

Smart specialisation strategies' potential for development of Cultural Routes

In order to consider the further development and especially the socio-economic impact of Cultural Routes, the efforts to promote them should not be excluded from the implementation of national and regional smart specialisation strategies. As part of the cohesion policy of the European Commission, smart specialisation is a place-based approach characterised by the identification of strategic areas for intervention based both on the analysis of the strengths and potential of the economy with wide stakeholder involvement.⁶² Although it is primarily viewed as a driver to support innovation, smart specialisation is not focused only on technology-based approaches. Like each regional strategy, smart specialisation strategies must respond to several basic requirements and key principles:

- ▶ **a place-based approach**, meaning that smart specialisation strategies must encompass and use as a starting point the assets and resources available to regions and their specific socio-economic challenges in order to identify unique opportunities for development and growth;
- ▶ **choices for investment** when it comes to selection of priorities for distribution of funding – this means putting the focus on the strengths of the region through a limited number of well-identified priorities for knowledge-based investments;
- ▶ **ensure an inclusive process of stakeholders' involvement centred on "entrepreneurial discovery"**, that is, an interactive process in which market forces and the private sector discover and produce information about new activities, and the government assesses the outcomes and
- ▶ empowers those most capable of realising this potential;
- ▶ **a broad view of innovation**, meaning that technological innovation is not necessarily the top priority, while user-driven and social innovation are also considered as a strong asset;
- ▶ monitoring, evaluation, revision and an update system.

In practical terms, smart specialisation is strongly relevant to the development of Cultural Routes in regions where cultural heritage represents a major asset for its economic growth.

Table 8 presents an overview of smart specialisation strategies that have included measures relevant to the development of Cultural Routes.

62. <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/home>.

Table 8: Relevance of smart specialisation strategies and Cultural Routes

Country/Region	Priorities relevant to economic impact of Cultural Routes
Austria	Priority: intellectual, social and cultural sciences, social innovation. Priority: service innovations and tourism.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not applicable/Not available.
Bulgaria	Priority: Informatics and ICT – new and hybrid applications (including 3D digitisation) for industrial design, assembling, visualisation, prototyping and other areas (cultural heritage); big data, grid and cloud technologies; development of wireless sensors and language technologies. Priority: New technologies in creative and re-creative industries.
Czech Republic	Priority: Creative Czech Republic – Traditional cultural and creative industries: research into materials and technologies, manufacture of glass, ceramics and porcelain, manufacture of textiles, manufacture of wood and manufacture of musical instruments.
Baden-Württemberg	No listed priorities directly linked to the development of Cultural Routes.
Bavaria	Priority: ICT – Cyber-security, big data, cloud computing, industry 4.0, e-commerce, craftsmanship 4.0, robotics for automation (in production, logistics and health care), connected mobility, e-health, digital care, precision medicine and tele-medicine, smart energy, digital media (film and gaming), e-tourism, e-finance, smart construction, digital agriculture for resource efficiency and transparency, e-environment and environmental protection (relevant policy objective: D.33 – New media and easier access to cultural content (e.g. heritage)).
Croatia	No listed priorities directly linked to the development of Cultural Routes.
Hungary	No listed priorities directly linked to the development of Cultural Routes.
Moldova	Not applicable/Not available However, ERAWATCH (the European Commission’s information platform on European national and regional research systems and policies) reports that Moldova has a set priority for cultural heritage and development of society.
Montenegro	No listed priorities directly linked to the development of Cultural Routes.
Romania	Priority: education, cultural and creative industries.
Serbia	Not applicable/Not available.
Slovenia	Priority: sustainable tourism and creative cultural and heritage-based services – Research and innovation activities focusing on social innovation based on a rich cultural heritage and local creativity promoting activities and services centred on the sustainable use of natural resources and innovative well-being programmes.
Slovakia	Priority: Digital Slovakia and creative industries.
Ukraine	Not applicable/Not available.

Although the European Commission acknowledges that cultural heritage and cultural and creative industries represent key elements of promoting socio-economic development, their full potential as engines for innovation and growth remains unreached. The table shows that most Danube Region countries have included cultural heritage as a strategic priority for research and innovation. The opportunities related to the development of Cultural Routes as a trigger for regional innovation include improvement of existing and development of new technologies for

conservation and restoration. Research and innovation can provide significant input in monitoring, risk management, environmental protection, security and safety at Cultural Routes locations. In addition, the table clearly highlights the link some of the countries have found between cultural heritage and digitisation, imaging, visualisation and creation of digital experiences for visitors. At the same time, cultural heritage is viewed as a key element for the development of tourism, requiring the creation and launching of innovative products and services.

Cultural heritage presents specific features and challenges that require targeted support. Innovation-driven investments addressing cultural heritage must be better understood for effective implementation and scale-up. This requires countries and regions implementing smart specialisation to acknowledge, understand, explore, consider and further plan the complex links between traditional cultural assets and policies (cultural heritage, dynamic cultural institutions and services) and the opportunities provided by new demands and societal needs. This inevitably leads to the seeking of collaboration with important players from the cultural heritage field. An obstacle to this process is the fact that stakeholders from the field of culture are not typically engaged in innovation processes and not directly targeted by innovation policy programmes.

Funding sources for tourism and cultural heritage

Funding for cultural heritage within Europe is available through various EU-funded and bilateral programmes. The difficulty of tapping into it is mainly experienced by smaller local communities where limited human and financial resources constitute a major obstacle to their participation in the EU framework funding. Sources of funding for cultural heritage can be organised in the streams related to infrastructure, education, research, business development and community activities.

Infrastructure

The development of infrastructure around cultural heritage is funded mainly through national budgets and the ESIF. The operational programmes for regional development and including initiatives for the improvement of cities, accessibility and environment are linked to the development of the Cultural Routes. However, direct funding targeted specifically to best visitors' experiences, as well as management and development of the Cultural Routes does not seem to exist.

Education

Erasmus+ is the main programme fostering international collaboration in the field of education, skills, competence and youth. The main opportunities of relevance to the cultural heritage sector are found under the strands of Key Action 2 of the Erasmus+ Programme – Co-operation for innovation and the exchange of good practices.

To date the programme funded 1577 projects directly linked to cultural heritage in which EUSDR countries participated in expanded networks across the continent.⁶³

63. <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/#search/keyword=cultural%20heritage&matchAllCountries=false>.

Culture

Funding opportunities encompass the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, the Creative Europe Programme 2014-2020, the European Capital of Culture, European Heritage Days and the European Heritage Label, in addition to the European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage/Europa Nostra Awards celebrating projects in the countries participating in the Creative Europe Programme. The prize celebrates and promotes excellence in cultural heritage work in Europe, raising visibility among professionals, decision makers and the public.

Digital culture

Europeana, Europe's digital platform for cultural heritage, was set up in 2008 and today provides access to over 54 million items (including image, text, sound, video and 3D material) from the collections of over 3 700 libraries, archives, museums, galleries and audio-visual collections from all over Europe. Europeana is funded by the EU under the Connecting Europe Facility, as a digital service infrastructure that makes culture widely accessible and provides data, technology, tools and services to Europe's cultural heritage sector and the creative industries.

Research

Horizon 2020 (H2020) is the most important programme to fund research and innovation within Europe. The work programme for 2018-2020 of H2020,⁶⁴ that includes the section "Europe in a changing world – inclusive, innovative and reflective societies" has highlighted the priority "Cultural and technological transformations for human and social progress: Values, identity and belonging; Human-technology interface" and calls for proposals have been launched. As far as EUSDR countries are concerned, the gaps in success rate for the different countries and the low participation of cultural institutions and authorities in the programme remains an issue. The programme's main purpose is to fund research and cultural institutions do not recognise it as a main source of funding for their initiatives.

Tourism and industry

At EU level, the COSME programme (Competitiveness of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) supports projects promoting sustainable thematic tourism. In addition, the European Commission is also working with UNESCO to develop trans-European Cultural Routes around UNESCO World Heritage sites (i.e. Royal Europe, Romantic Europe, Ancient Europe and

64. https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/sites/horizon2020/files/stratprog_overarching_version_for_publication.pdf.

Underground Europe) and with UNWTO on the development of Western Silk Road tourism.

The EDEN initiative in which EUSDR countries participate draws attention to the values, diversity and common features of European tourist destinations. It is useful in terms of increasing the visibility of emerging European destinations and allows for sharing good practices and networking across Europe.

Rural areas

LEADER (Liaison Entre Actions pour le Développement de l'Economie Rurale, links between the rural economy and development actions) community-led local development (CLLD) funds are available to upgrade rural cultural heritage and improve access to cultural services in rural areas. Under CLLD, local people take the reins and form a local partnership that designs and implements an integrated development strategy. The strategy is designed to build on the community's social, environmental and economic strengths, or "assets", rather than simply compensate for its problems. For this, the partnership receives long-term funding and they decide how it is spent. The CLLD approach is used for local communities that are small, but it also achieves good results in urban environments. Through this approach smaller communities can tap into funding, improve their skills and competences and obtain better opportunities to get involved in transnational collaboration. Although rural development is the primary focus of CLLD, their strategies often include measures to develop their potential for tourism based on specific cultural heritage assets. In addition, the approach can be very useful if applied to the development of a new Cultural Route in the work with local communities and the definition of potential economic and social benefits it provides for them.

Transnational co-operation

Interreg Europe, Interreg Central Europe, Interreg cross-border programmes and the Danube Transnational Programme all provide useful platforms for exchange on the topic of cultural heritage and opportunities to capitalise on existing, and on the development of new, Cultural Routes.

Of course, the list is not exhaustive, but it indicates that the topic is widely covered and incorporated at different levels and under different topics. This provides for a multidisciplinary overview to the funding issues encountered. Nevertheless, respondents to questionnaires still report a lack of funding for their activities. Thus, more efforts are needed to increase awareness about various sources of funding and how they can be used.

Capitalising on good practices

Databases for good practices



© Pixabay

A huge number of projects related to cultural heritage promotion and sustainable use are currently being implemented in the Danube Region. The Danube Transnational Programme (DTP) capitalisation strategy focuses on promotion, further enhancement of knowledge, complementary specialisation, increased visibility and strengthening of thematic networks. It is also aiming at transferability of project outcomes outside of the Danube area and their use as a starting point for future projects.

The DTP capitalisation strategy is implemented through joint communication actions, thematic meetings, studies, policy recommendations, visits between projects and joint dissemination activities. The circulation of experience within thematic poles that are part of the compilation is envisaged through constant communication between projects and the joint secretariat of the programme.

A compilation is also required from all other EU-funded programmes available to provide financing for projects in the region with similar activities.

The following databases of good practices and project outcomes are freely accessible online. They constitute a vast resource of expertise that is still not widely used outside the funding programmes. Additional measures and funding opportunities dedicated specifically to transferability of existing tools should be considered.

Keep.eu

www.keep.eu/

This is a repository of implemented and ongoing projects in all Interreg, Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) and European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) or European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) programmes, with information provided by the programmes themselves.

Thematic searches are useful for finding out about projects related to cultural heritage and tourism and to get learn about what is going on in general. The search by territory “EUSDR” is also a useful function.

Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform

www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/

The platform is dedicated to the promotion of project results and provides opportunities for policy makers and public authorities at all levels across Europe to learn and share. It is a way to strengthen their capacity and build upon practices and experiences that are already in place. The platform provides expert support, a knowledge hub of practices, for example digital solutions in the field of cultural heritage, and good practices across projects funded by the programme.

Interreg Central Europe and Danube Transnational Programme

All funded projects under these programmes are available online with a description, output library and contact details. They constitute a good repository of knowledge and practices, however it is always important to know how effective they are.

Erasmus+

<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/>

The platform allows users to search all projects funded under the programme by topic, representing the success stories and the good-practice examples.

Smart Specialisation Platform

<http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>

The S3 Platform provides advice for the design and implementation of their Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3). It is extremely useful in terms of tapping into guidance material, for providing examples of how other regions are doing things, mutual learning, relevant data and training opportunities for policy makers.

European Network for Rural Development (ENRD)

https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/about_en

This is a hub for the exchange of information on rural development policy, programmes, projects and other initiatives. It is an extremely useful resource for CLLD and provides insights into how the approach can be useful for developing tourism and cultural heritage initiatives in smaller communities. There are currently 63 enlisted practices in the field of tourism and 29 practices in the field of culture in the network.

Enterprise Europe Network

<https://een.ec.europa.eu/>

This is the largest network globally in support of internationalisation and innovation of small and medium enterprises. The network provides opportunities for business, technology transfer and research partnerships across more than 50 countries in the world and is related to the topic through its dedicated sector groups “Tourism and Cultural Heritage” and “Creative Industries”. Their expertise can be used to attract the private sector to the process of the management of Cultural Routes and the international business links that can be associated with the relevant Cultural Route.

Danube Cultural Cluster

www.danubeculturalcluster.eu/

The members of the Danube Cultural Cluster work on ways to promote the arts and culture in their respective countries, regions or communities. They implement various projects and have an observer status in Priority Area 3 of the EUSDR.

Some ongoing projects to follow

Preservation and promotion of cultural and natural heritage through greenways

Funding programme: Interreg Europe, EUSDR countries involved: Bulgaria and Hungary

OURWAY project aims to contribute to conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage in Europe using greenways by means of the improvement of policy instruments related to the cultural and natural quality of the territories involved, including tools for their governance and developing specific measures for their promotion and preservation. The project has recently started and will continue until 2022.

Celebrating Biodiversity Governance

Funding programme: Interreg Europe, EUSDR countries involved: Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia

Celebrating Biodiversity Governance (BioGov) is about the improvement of natural and cultural heritage policies. The project strives to reach its goal through participatory governance, by way of stakeholder cooperation. The project has recently started and will continue until 2022.

Culture and Heritage for Responsible, Innovative and Sustainable Tourism Actions

Funding programme: Interreg Europe, EUSDR countries involved: Bulgaria, Romania

The overall objective is to protect and preserve natural and cultural heritage assets and deploy them for the development and promotion of innovative, sustainable and responsible tourism strategies, including intangible and industrial heritage, through interpretation and digitisation, capitalising on good practices, policy learning, policy implementation and capacity building. Nine action plans have been completed already and the final version of the e-book “Connecting Cultures, Connected Citizens” is published and available for download. Implementation of selected actions during phase two to be scheduled over 24 months (April 2018 to March 2020).

Collaborative digitisation of natural and cultural heritage

Funding programme: Interreg Europe, EUSDR countries involved: Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia

The project aims to improve adoption of the digitisation policy for natural and cultural heritage and to prepare the implementation of best practices in the participating regions, according to their needs. The implementation of this common plan for co-operation work on an interregional level will contribute to establishing uniform standards in the mass digitisation of natural and cultural heritage. Regional strategies and plans for better organisation of the management and exploitation of natural and cultural heritage are explored. It is expected that the project results will inspire the implementation of new initiatives in the participating regions that directly improve eight policy instruments, related to growth and jobs or European Travel Commission (ETC) programmes.

Sustainable approach to cultural heritage for the urban areas equalisation in Europe (SHARE)

Funding programme: Interreg Europe, EUSDR countries involved: Hungary, Romania, Croatia

The SHARE project aims at exchanging experiences in cultural heritage policies in urban settings, in order to identify best practices and innovative methods to develop a sustainable and smart approach to its management and use. The project will target ways in which smart cities projects can be effectively improved by including a smart and sustainable agenda for cultural assets in urban centres. The result of the interregional exchange process, lasting 24 months during phase one of the project, will be conveyed in six action plans that will indicate ways to successfully transfer SHARE’s output into mainstream policies, with reference to five ERDF funds (European Regional Development Fund). Seven thematic routes that define the identity of Iasi city have been developed. Implementing the routes has benefited a range of stakeholders, from the hikers using it to providers of hospitality services, religious

communities, the volunteers and towns involved. Between 2015 and 2017, visitor traffic on the route increased by 35%, leading to Italian national funding. It has also won awards from the Green Road (2015) and the European Cultural Tourism Network for best sustainable cultural heritage destination (2018).

Thematic Trail Trigger (ThreeT)

Funding programme: Interreg Europe, EUSDR countries involved: Hungary, Romania

The ThreeT programme seeks to protect and enhance natural and cultural heritage by setting up thematic trails or improving existing ones, making them accessible to all through green modes of transport and existing information. The aim is to maximise the eco-tourism potential of heritage sites. The project has recently started and will continue until 2022.

Effectiveness of Policy Instruments for Cross-Border Advancement in Heritage

Funding programme: Interreg Europe, EUSDR countries involved: Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania

In each region, the border fragmentises and divides an organically cohesive cultural landscape with varied and symbiotic communities and heritage that have been existing and developing together for centuries. Through the project’s implementation the stakeholders from the two sides of the border rediscover and experience the benefits and catalysation effects of co-operation, practice and knowledge sharing. The project used various tools and the joint report and policy recommendations are already available.

CultPlatForm_21 – Danube Culture Platform – Creative Spaces of the 21st Century

Funding programme: Danube Transnational Programme, EUSDR countries involved: Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Romania, and Serbia

The project involves co-operation between culture and tourism with the aim of developing contemporary aspects of the Cultural Routes. It aims to promote the discovery of places of history and to support existing Cultural Routes in co-operation with the Council of Europe. The project is looking for responses to manifold themes: the development of new destinations along the Danube (tourism), the interpretation of historic places and events in a contemporary way (culture) and the experience of culture (international audience/ tourists). The project is ongoing, but the first results are already available. The process of dialogue, exchange and communicating the lessons learned has already started, a memorandum of understanding has been signed between the ministries

of the participating countries, working group have been created, such as Agreement Danube cultural spaces and an extended list of Hidden Heritage is being developed worked on.

ART NOUVEAU – Sustainable protection and promotion of Art Nouveau heritage in the Danube Region

Funding programme: Danube Transnational Programme, EUSDR countries involved: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia and Serbia

The project is dedicated to boosting the exploration and use of Secession monuments. As Art Nouveau is present in urban settings in many countries, it possesses a cohesive force for connecting them. The partnership of 10 partner organisations from seven countries in the Danube Region recognised this potential. Responding to the needs for sustainable and harmonised protection, revitalisation and promotion of Art Nouveau, this partnership devised a series of interconnected cross-sectoral activities covering the full cycle of its protection and revival.



© Greymouser

Museums and institutes for the protection of monuments undertake scientific research into the roots and forms of expression of Art Nouveau, enhance its physical conservation and ensure its preservation in a digital form. Urban planning institutes and municipalities devise fact-based policy recommendations for the protection and rehabilitation of Art Nouveau as well as for its successful functional and aesthetic integration into urban settings. As a result, values and monuments are revered and cherished by inhabitants, tourists and future generations instead of being lost to them as relics of the past. To date numerous events have been organised as part of the programme.

Iron-Age-Danube – Monumentalised early Iron Age landscapes in the Danube River basin

Funding programme: Danube Transnational Programme, EUSDR countries involved: Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Slovenia



© Pixabay

The Iron-Age-Danube project focuses on monumental archaeological landscapes of the early Iron Age, characterised by fortified hilltop settlements and large tumulus cemeteries, from the era between the 9th and 4th century BC (Hallstatt period). The project partnership builds on joint approaches for researching and managing complex historical landscapes and their integration into sustainable tourism. The project's major innovation is the methodological shift of dealing with complex prehistoric landscapes rather than individual sites, therefore the partnership develops new strategies and methodological tools for their protection, presentation and promotion.

To date the project has organised numerous events and international archaeological camps, closely linking research agendas with public events and new visitor programmes. All gathered knowledge will be published in landscape studies, which are the basis for a new digital application with interactive visualisations and augmented reality features. With this application and small-scale investments, visitors will be able to experience the heritage in a completely different way. The project has been nominated for the RegioStar award.

Transdanube.Pearls – Network for Sustainable Mobility along the Danube

Funding programme: Danube Transnational Programme, EUSDR countries involved: Austria, Germany, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, Serbia

The project Transdanube.Pearls develops socially fair, economically viable, environmentally friendly and health-promoting mobility services for visitors to the Danube Region. The central element of the project is the establishment of a network of destinations (Transdanube.Pearls) committed to sustainable mobility for tourists and inhabitants along the Danube, which will support co-operation between different stakeholders from

the transport and the tourism sectors. The project results include:

- ▶ developing integrated sustainable mobility services and improving the ways in which visitors can travel along the Danube using different means of transportation (train, bus, bike, ship);
- ▶ providing training to local and regional stakeholders and the opportunity to further develop sustainable mobility services;
- ▶ providing user-friendly and easily accessible information on existing travel and sustainable mobility services through the development of transnational web platforms and the establishment of regional mobility centres along the Danube as “one-stop shops”;
- ▶ providing attractive travel packages for visitors travelling along the Danube.

ROCK – Regeneration and Optimisation of Cultural heritage in creative and Knowledge cities

Funding programme: Horizon 2020, EUSDR countries involved: Germany, Romania

<https://rockproject.eu/about>

ROCK focuses on historic city centres as extraordinary laboratories to demonstrate how cultural heritage can be a unique and powerful engine of regeneration, sustainable development and economic growth for an entire city. The project is interesting in terms of the various tools and the approach to the actions, encompassing local actions, transversal actions and pilot actions. The project is extremely interesting in terms of the developed tools, including web platforms, mobile applications, use of augmented reality technology, creative industries green tools, integrated cultural heritage analytics such as opinion analytics, large crowd-monitoring tools, and environment and climate tools. This project provides excellence that goes beyond the simple organisation of events and experience sharing but provides useful practical tools that can be implemented by Cultural Routes. Policy makers should think of ways for broader transferability of the project tools within the EUSDR countries.

OpenHeritage Project

<https://openheritage.eu/practices/>

Funding programme: Horizon 2020, EUSDR countries involved: Hungary, Austria, Germany, Ukraine

OpenHeritage aims at creating sustainable models of heritage asset management. The project focuses on inclusive governance of cultural heritage sites. This means empowering the community in

the processes of adaptive reuse. The project has developed Heritage Labs and in its second phase an online database will be available displaying the results of the overview of the European policies of heritage reuse and analysis of the Observatory Cases. In doing so, the database will allow a comparison of the legal and institutional environments with the actual practice of adaptive reuse. The database will serve as a repository of ideas and will be freely available, with the aim to support knowledge sharing under various circumstances and policy development.

STORM – Safeguarding Cultural Heritage through Technical and Organisational Resources Management

www.storm-project.eu/

Funding programme: Horizon 2020, EUSDR countries involved: Austria, Germany

STORM provides critical decision-making tools to all European Cultural Heritage stakeholders charged with tackling climate change and natural hazards. The project improves existing processes related to identified areas: prevention; intervention and policies; and planning and processes.

The project achievements are divided in four groups: services (data analytics, threat analysis and situation awareness); tools (GIS visualisation tools, risk management); applications (emergency and natural disaster apps, crowdsourcing apps); and policy (mitigation strategy plans).

HERACLES Heritage Resilience Against Climate Events on Site

www.heracles-project.eu/

Funding programme: Horizon 2020, EUSDR countries involved: Austria, Germany

The project aims to develop a scalable and flexible innovative ICT platform able to collect and integrate heterogeneous data for situational awareness and decision support related to the risks to cultural heritage associated with climate change. It sets up specific guidelines for long-term prevention and maintenance actions. The project organises summer and autumn schools and virtual courses, and measurement campaigns.

Innovators in Cultural Heritage Platform

www.innovatorsinculturalheritage.eu/registeredarea/index

Funding programme: Horizon 2020, EUSDR countries involved: all except Slovakia and Moldova

The Community of Innovators in Cultural Heritage is a policy initiative that will help to disseminate research and innovation results, create new synergies among key stakeholders and bridge the gap between research and society. It connects the worlds of innovators and researchers, investors and end users of innovations such as municipalities, public bodies and cultural institutions. The platform is open to all innovators, researchers, practitioners, “change-makers”, entrepreneurs and end users of innovations. They place innovative products and services to visit, register, share, and disseminate updates, news and events.

RURITAGE – Heritage for rural regeneration

www.ruritage.eu

Funding programme: Horizon 2020, EUSDR countries involved: Austria, Slovenia, Romania, Hungary

The main ambition of Ruritage is the creation of an innovative rural regeneration paradigm based on cultural and natural heritage, consolidating the role of culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable

development and contributing to economic growth, social inclusion and environmental sustainability in rural areas. By establishing a new heritage-led rural regeneration approach, Ruritage aims to turn rural areas into sustainable development demonstration laboratories, through the enhancement of their unique heritage potential. Based on past research and experiences, Ruritage has identified six systemic innovation areas – pilgrimage, resilience, sustainable local food production, integrated landscape management, migration, and art and festivals – and 11 cross-cutting themes that represent the ways in which cultural heritage acts as a driver for the regeneration of a rural area and its economic, social and environmental development.

To conclude, vast opportunities for sharing, exchange and transferability exist and these can be used for the further development of the Cultural Routes in the Danube Region. However, these efforts remain outside the scope of public institutions in many cases and collaboration is limited to events and the exchange of experience. Measures and funding directed especially to the implementation of transferable approaches should be further considered and planned.

Key challenges and identified needs, SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)

Strengths

- ▶ Favourable European strategic framework for the development of Cultural Routes.
- ▶ Existing history and practice in management of Cultural Routes across Europe.
- ▶ Established comprehensive rules for certification of Cultural Routes, which is a prerequisite for ensuring quality and authenticity.
- ▶ The majority of EUSDR countries are members of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA).
- ▶ Enhanced collaboration between the Council of Europe, the European Commission and the national authorities through the launch of the Routes4U project.
- ▶ Established collaboration between countries through the macro-regional strategy to address common challenges.
- ▶ Participation of non-EU countries on an equal footing to EU countries.
- ▶ Dedicated priority area within the EUSDR especially targeting development of Cultural Routes.
- ▶ Good level of collaboration at ministerial and regional authority level within Priority Area 3.
- ▶ There are currently 21 certified European Cultural Routes in the Danube Region.
- ▶ The region is rich in cultural and natural heritage, both tangible and intangible.
- ▶ Existing potential for development of new Cultural Routes based on the common historical and geographical background.
- ▶ The percentage growth of individual government expenditure on travel and tourism in the EUSDR countries is higher than the EU average.
- ▶ Planned priorities within smart specialisation strategies relevant to the development of Cultural Routes.
- ▶ Strong base for promotion.

Weaknesses

- ▶ Ownership of the EUSDR among key important stakeholders from tourism and culture in the private sector remains low.

- ▶ Low participation of the private sector in cultural initiatives at regional level.
- ▶ Key stakeholders have not participated as much as necessary in the implementation of the EUSDR Priority Area 3 apart from participation at events and in some EU-funded projects.
- ▶ There is a gap in geographical development of Cultural Routes that are typical and attributed only to the Danube Region.
- ▶ People that are not professionally associated with the macro-regional strategy do not recognise it as their own or feel a part of it.
- ▶ Most people in the Danube area still do not know enough about the Danube region's travel opportunities.
- ▶ Current data sets available to provide information on the tourism sector in the EU, and in the Danube countries in particular, do not capture the specific contribution of cultural heritage.
- ▶ The contribution of existing Cultural Routes is also not represented through official comparable sources of information.
- ▶ The Danube Region stands on the periphery of tourism compared to the rest of the EU.
- ▶ Discrepancies in countries' individual performances in attracting tourists.
- ▶ Travel and tourism-generated employment is in decline.
- ▶ The tourism business sectors in some countries report significant difficulties with attracting a workforce.
- ▶ The specific impact of the Cultural Routes contribution cannot be measured and is not targeted in existing monitoring systems.
- ▶ Eclectic national and regional policy making.
- ▶ Despite planning, smart specialisation is not sufficiently exploited in some of the EUSDR countries as relevant to the development of Cultural Routes.
- ▶ Innovation-driven investments addressing cultural heritage must be better understood for effective implementation and scale-up.
- ▶ Stakeholders from the field of culture are not typically engaged in innovation processes

and not directly targeted by innovation policy programmes.

- ▶ Difficulty of tapping into funding for the smaller players in local communities due to limited human and financial resources.
- ▶ Promotional efforts are limited to events, sharing of experiences and discussions rather than real transferability.

Opportunities

- ▶ The new EUSDR Action Plan may include a redefinition of the priority areas and targets, as well as the priority areas' co-ordination countries, which provides an opportunity for better planning.
- ▶ Development and certification of Cultural Routes in the Danube Region.
- ▶ Branding of the region and its promotion as an integrated itinerary offering various opportunities to travellers with different interests rather than a single-country effort.
- ▶ Discussion of the topics for new Cultural Routes within the regular meetings of the Steering Group of Priority Area 3.
- ▶ Collaboration between scientific researchers, the business sector, NGOs and public authorities across borders on the ideas for new Cultural Routes.
- ▶ Development of destination management by capturing the interest of potential visitors.
- ▶ Collaboration with the IT sector and use of unconventional tools such as crowdfunding campaigns for specific events or causes related to a deeper exploration of the relevant topic.
- ▶ Develop motivation and the continuous improvement of skills of personnel in public institutions to become more open to collaborations with researchers and businesses.
- ▶ Clustering efforts and working with businesses to ensure a feeling of ownership over the Cultural Route.
- ▶ Development of emotional links to both potential visitors and local communities.
- ▶ Explore and target a new type of domestic traveller – that is, domestic not in the sense of a specific country of origin but domestic in terms of living and travelling within the Danube Region.
- ▶ Focus on “co-petition” among countries (collaborative efforts of competitors in certain markets to achieve a win-win situation) rather than competition to develop branding.
- ▶ Better promotion of Cultural Routes at the national and regional levels.

- ▶ Development of training for staff engaged in Cultural Routes' operations.
- ▶ Use of data to develop tourism promotion and destination management strategies.
- ▶ Develop and implement policies that stimulate the promotion of Cultural Routes as added value to the public policies in the field of tourism.
- ▶ Assessment of the integration of Cultural Routes into current sectoral policies in order to plan the best use of resources.
- ▶ Establish a common recognised set of indicators that go beyond available statistics and tools.
- ▶ Provide diverse and distinct experiences outside of traditional tourism destinations.
- ▶ Move away from more traditional sun, sea and sand, and attraction-based tourism.
- ▶ A growing interest in “virtual travel” through virtual and augmented reality technologies.
- ▶ A shift from material purchases to experiential purchases opens the field for the development of Cultural Routes.
- ▶ Offer of a mix of nature and culture.
- ▶ Expansion of the network of volunteers and young people willing to proudly present their locations as part of a European Cultural Route.
- ▶ Offering adventure options within the Cultural Routes experience.
- ▶ Establish a Cultural Routes monitoring system that is easy to implement in the field and is not costly.
- ▶ Use of big data.
- ▶ Develop methods and measures to trigger real transferability and use of existing tools.

Threats

- ▶ Budget cuts for cultural heritage activities at regional level.
- ▶ “Not-in-my-administration, not-within-my-competence” type of attitude that could come from staff within public institutions.
- ▶ Growing insecurity in the world.
- ▶ Slowing down of economic growth within the European Union.
- ▶ Ukraine remaining somewhat isolated due to negative media images of the country, associated with conflicts with the Russian Federation, political uncertainty, issues related to ensuring tourists' safety in the country and the need to develop and improve the tourism-related infrastructure.
- ▶ Growing international competition of Asia, North America and South America in the tourism markets.

- ▶ Deepening difficulties attracting workers to the tourism sector.
- ▶ Shortages of personnel leading to compromises in the quality of tourism products and experiences associated with the Cultural Routes.
- ▶ Shift away from more traditional sun, sea and sand, and attraction-based tourism.
- ▶ Over-tourism is becoming an increasingly critical issue.
- ▶ Pollution and congestion at cultural heritage sites of interest, traffic jams, pressure on infrastructure and resources, increases in prices for residents, a decrease in the authenticity of the sites, safety challenges caused by the threat of terrorist attacks and crime.

According to the study “Impact of European Cultural Routes on SMEs’ innovation and competitiveness”, financed under the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) of the European Commission, the most urgent issues that Cultural Routes need to address include better developing:

- ▶ the transnational connectivity of the Cultural Routes network;
- ▶ co-ordination at European level of the development and promotional strategies of the Cultural Routes;
- ▶ brand image and marketing strategies;
- ▶ quality and sustainable tourism standards development/implementation;
- ▶ human and financial resources of the routes;
- ▶ expertise in the management of the networks;
- ▶ exchange of good practices;
- ▶ network management and performance evaluation tools.

The Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform organised a thematic online discussion on Cultural Routes with a focus on stakeholder involvement. The webinar was held on 7 February 2019 and was designed as an opportunity to exchange ideas on the development

and management of Cultural Routes as sustainable assets for regional development. Over 70 representatives of Interreg Europe project partners and other stakeholders, as well as representatives of Interreg Europe’s Joint Secretariat, contributed to the discussion.⁶⁵ The challenge of a lack of knowledge and a capacity to engage and collaborate with the right stakeholders was highlighted by 74% of the participants in the webinar. As noted by 45% of the participants, insufficient funding is also considered a problem, as well as limited understanding of the potential of cultural tourism (23% of the votes) and lack of digital tools (20% of the votes).⁶⁶ The key messages the stakeholders conveyed in terms of their needs are as follows:

- ▶ improve knowledge and capacity of public authorities about the potential of Cultural Routes;
- ▶ dedicate enough funds for development, maintenance and promotion of Cultural Routes;
- ▶ create a vision and dedicated efforts to build consensus across different stakeholders;
- ▶ improve skills to use creativity and innovative techniques for identifying and engaging a broad range of stakeholders with diverse interests;
- ▶ overcome differences in legal frameworks and competences among all levels of governance in different countries that impact on the territory of the route;
- ▶ exchange, through transnational co-operation, good practices and knowledge on crucial topics regarding the development and management of the routes;
- ▶ take advantage of the opportunities that digital tools provide for better access to heritage assets and engagement of audiences.

In general, stakeholders confirm that cultural heritage should be perceived as having important development potential at regional, national and macro-regional level with appropriate financial resources and engagement in relevant operational programmes.

65. www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/plp_uploads/events/TO6_Thematic_online_discussion_on_Cultural_routes_brief.pdf.

66. Ibid.



Part III

Recommendations

This section includes general and specific recommendations for the development of an integrated approach towards cultural heritage.

Recommendations

Recommendations of the European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century⁶⁷

These recommendations correspond to the long-term objectives for promotion of the Cultural Routes and for maximising their socio-economic impact. They could be considered as a starting point for reflection on what tools and projects within the Danube Region are already available and in use in order to capitalise on them and efficiently use resources. The recommendations are grouped into three components.

Social component

1. Encourage the involvement of citizens and local authorities in capitalising on their everyday heritage.
2. Make heritage more accessible.
3. Promote heritage as a meeting place and vehicle for intercultural dialogue, peace and tolerance.
4. Create a suitable framework to enable local authorities and communities to act to promote and manage their heritage.
5. Encourage heritage rehabilitation initiatives by local communities and authorities.
6. Facilitate and encourage (public and private) partnerships in cultural heritage promotion and conservation projects.
7. Support intergenerational and intercultural projects to promote heritage.
8. Develop and promote participatory heritage identification programmes.
9. Assess citizen participation practices and procedures.
10. Use heritage to assert and transmit the fundamental values of Europe and European society.

Territorial and economic development

1. Promote cultural heritage as a resource and facilitate financial investment.
2. Support and promote the heritage sector as a means of creating jobs and business opportunities.

3. Produce heritage impact studies for rehabilitation, construction, development and infrastructure projects.
4. Ensure that heritage is considered in spatial, environmental and energy development policies.
5. Protect, restore and enhance heritage, making greater use of new technologies.
6. Use cultural heritage as a means of giving the region a distinctive character and making it more attractive and better known.
7. Develop new management models to ensure that heritage benefits from the economic spin-offs that it generates.
8. Use innovative techniques to present cultural heritage to the public, while preserving its integrity.
9. Consider heritage in sustainable tourism development policies.
10. Encourage the reuse of heritage.
11. Promote heritage skills and professionals.

Knowledge and education

1. Incorporate heritage education more effectively into school curricula.
2. Implement measures to encourage young people to experience heritage.
3. Provide optimum training for non-professional players and for professionals from other sectors with a connection to heritage.
4. Develop knowledge banks on local and traditional materials, techniques and know-how.
5. Guarantee the competences of professionals working on listed heritage.
6. Encourage and support the development of networks.
7. Explore heritage as a source of knowledge and inspiration.
8. Develop study and research programmes that reflect the needs of the heritage sector and share the findings.
9. Ensure that the knowledge and skills involved in heritage trades are passed on.
10. Diversify training systems for heritage professionals.
11. Encourage creativity to capture the attention of the heritage audience.

67. <https://rm.coe.int/european-heritage-strategy-for-the-21st-century-strategy-21-full-text/16808ae270>.

General recommendations

The recommendations derive from the points considered in the analytical parts and the SWOT analysis of this report and concentrate on the development of an integrated approach to cultural heritage. The economic and social role of cultural heritage is recognised, including the identified trends and megatrends in the tourism sector, as well as the need to balance the local communities' economic development with over-tourism.

In order to respond to demographic trends, public policies should consider the needs of various groups, such as the ageing population, Generation Z, millennials, etc. From the perspective of government, this preparation should largely focus on strengthening accessibility requirements and investing in infrastructure to support those with mobility challenges and cognitive impairment. Efforts should also be taken to respond to the needs of visitors with different levels of digital fluency in the digital era.

As Cultural Routes could be perceived and promoted as transnational tourism experiences, national and regional policy makers should rethink how travel experiences are framed and marketed, in order to respond to the search for experiences rather than commodities. Innovative digital campaigns and utilising social media platforms to promote the sharing of experiences will become increasingly important components of the Cultural Routes' marketing strategies.

Horizontal and vertical policy co-ordination at transnational level, and closer integration of multiple policies to support a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to sustainable tourism growth must be largely considered. Long-term strategies and policies focused on protection of the Cultural Routes heritage, together with promoting quality employment and job creation, skills development, entrepreneurship, innovation, effective investment, and integrated regional development, are integral to achieving sustainable and inclusive tourism growth while respecting the cultural heritage and avoiding the degradation of cultural heritage sites.

Sustainability must go hand in hand with the regional economic development around Cultural Routes, but this must imply closer work with industry and local communities to better manage tourism flows and encourage tourism development in alternative areas to spread the potential benefits and impacts.

Digitisation of all industries is already a reality. They should adopt policies to support the transformation to a digital economy. The process of digital transformation can provide the stakeholders involved in the management of Cultural Routes with new opportunities to reach international markets easily and directly interact with customers from around the world. An important element of this process will be

facilitating access to technical knowledge and specialist inputs (e.g. links with service and technology providers, including research centres and universities, to increase ICT adoption, learning and innovation).

International co-operation constitutes an integral component of efforts to achieve data management, compilation of data, data security and privacy goals, as well as proper data analysis to support further decision making.

Capitalising on the EUSDR macro-regional strategy

Although the benefit EUSDR can bring to projects and programmes, other than the Danube Transnational Programme, is often rather intangible, some concrete measures can be envisaged to develop this benefit further. The following fields of intervention should be considered more in-depth, especially in relation to further collaboration on enhancing and promotion of the Cultural Routes.

1. Exploit the strategic framework of the EUSDR, especially the activities in Priority Area 3, which is directly responsible for the implementation of collaboration in the field of culture and tourism. However, the EUSDR Pillar 3, encompassing Priority Areas 7, 8 and 9 particularly favours and complements policies and projects relevant to the development of the Cultural Routes. They tackle issues such as support for research and innovation, increasing the competitiveness of SMEs and investing in people and skills. By providing a strategic co-operation framework, EUSDR can support better-defined priorities at programme and project level, but also join forces to address common challenges. This includes using EUSDR as a reference point to develop a thematic focus and align efforts.
2. Better exploit and capitalise on the platform benefits of the EUSDR. This increases visibility and credibility for both projects and programmes. This will increase outreach, critical mass and visibility and can be achieved through the EUSDR annual forum as well as the thematic networks. The increased outreach helps to better disseminate results, widen partnerships, increase networks, etc. At the same time, the implemented projects at different levels and through various funding programmes can benefit from sharing of results beyond project and programme lifetimes. Clear links of Cultural Routes development efforts to the EUSDR and its objectives increase the credibility of a project or programme activity.
3. Capitalise on the "symbolic" importance of the EUSDR and the Cultural Routes. The wider context needs to be considered in order to increase the opportunities to position single programmes and projects in a wider context. Transnational co-operation and other initiatives seeking to achieve structural change can be discouraging, as concrete effects are often

difficult to observe in the short to medium term. The “motivating function” of the macro-regional strategy and its role for development of the European Cultural Routes can be enhanced through awareness-raising actions.

It is important to reiterate that European policy on cultural heritage is to develop an integrated approach to cultural heritage for the benefit of cultural dialogue and mutual understanding, considering cultural, economic, social, historical, educational, environmental and scientific components, with the objective of achieving enhanced social, economic and territorial cohesion. In addition to the more general issues of integration, this requires continuous efforts, the involvement of stakeholders and the update of policy initiatives to tackle issues such as funding, data gathering and assessment, public-private partnerships, incentives (including tax incentives) and sponsorship, digitisation and consideration of megatrends. It further requires consideration of new governance models, consideration of new legal tools, including funding and administrative tools, a better balance between protection of cultural heritage and its sustainable management and use for the benefit of society. To this end, it is vital to consider at macro-regional level the development of a common impact assessment methodology of Cultural Routes, which constitutes a great gap now.

The new travel trends and the macro-regional collaboration make national and regional policy makers face challenges and deal with issues such as the need to make progress in developing new technology and the digitisation of cultural heritage to improve preservation, provide education opportunities, create jobs and improve social inclusion and wider accessibility. In addition, widening of participation and encouraging the use of cultural heritage as an educational tool for societal issues and for greater understanding of the potential of heritage for society also constitutes a greater challenge. Finding the right balance between the need for economic development of local communities in the Cultural Routes areas and the increasing pressure on the sites from the tourism overflow is of utmost importance.

Evidence-based policy

In the process of writing this report, it has become evident that there is a lack of data collection and data management of Cultural Routes at various levels. Efficient policy making should be based on data. Although various data sets exist providing data on tourism flows, structure of tourists, tourist behaviour, the number of cultural heritage sites and their visits, in the Danube area no direct link is found between the development of the Cultural Routes and the regional economic development. The questions asked by decision makers must lead to the indisputable

connection between the proper development and joint transnational management of Cultural Routes and their impact on local communities. A common set of indicators for observing and measuring the performance and impact of the Cultural Routes should be developed and agreed at macro-regional level. These indicators should provide an insight into how the management of cultural heritage places can be documented for improvement of conservation practice and at the same time contribute to the further enhancement of the Cultural Routes. To this end, the following questions should be the basis for further discussion and refinement among the various stakeholders in the macro-region.

- ▶ What indicators are important to improve Cultural Routes management?
- ▶ How is such information collected and measured?
- ▶ When are these data collected over time?
- ▶ What quality of indicator is good enough?
- ▶ Are there good examples of this in practice?
- ▶ What information should be collected? And why?
- ▶ How often should indicators be collected?
- ▶ Are the data comparable among the various Cultural Routes?
- ▶ Is the feedback received actionable?
- ▶ How can success be proven?
- ▶ Do the data align with the goals of the policy makers to further develop and promote the European Cultural Routes?

Strategic recommendations for better data collection and evidence management related to the Cultural Routes in the Danube Region area follow the principle that the impact should be measured, monitored constantly to capture region-specific trends, data sharing and dissemination and use of findings to maximise impact.

Therefore, there is a need to improve methodological frameworks to provide better statistics particularly linked to the Cultural Routes performance, including by the development of sets of indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the Cultural Routes and assessing their actual and potential economic and social value in a more systematic manner.

Table 9 provides an example of possible indicators measuring impact that can be considered together with their source of collection. The proposed indicators are easy to collect, do not require extensive financial, technological or human resources while at the same time they could prove very useful in terms of establishing the necessary primary evidence and data sets in order to support informed decision making and policy planning.

Table 9: Example of indicators to be collected in the field and that do not require extensive monitoring costs

Indicator	Before certification of the Cultural Route	After certification of the Cultural Route	Source of verification
Number of jobs in the tourism and cultural sector in the region	Measuring the impact on employment created by the development of the Cultural Route		Regional statistical data
Number of Cultural Route website visits	Not applicable/ not available	Measuring awareness and interest	Cultural Routes web pages
Number of Cultural Route page clicks per visit	Not applicable/ not available	Measuring awareness and interest	Cultural Routes web pages
Number of SMEs in the tourism, culture and creative industries sectors	Measuring the impact on start-ups and scale-ups related to supporting the development of the Cultural Route		Regional statistical data
Number of visitors to the region	Measuring the interest in the destination and capturing trends		Tourist information centres Regional statistical data
Number of visitors specifically following the Cultural Route (for example looking for specific information related to a Cultural Route)	Measuring the interest in the Cultural Route and capturing trends		Cultural Routes sites and local offices
Number of thematic events (related to the topic of the Cultural Route)	Measuring touchpoints, or ways consumers interact, with stakeholders		Cultural Routes documentation of activities
Number of thematic projects (related to the topic of the Cultural Route)	Measuring the intensity of collaboration on development of new initiatives on the topic of the Cultural Routes		EU programme Interact Managing authorities
Number of new infrastructure facilities developed related to the management of the Cultural Route	Measuring the level of public expenditure and big public-private partnerships		National and regional authorities
Number of policies, strategies, action plans and tools in place to promote regional economic development using cultural heritage	Measuring the level of engagement of decision makers		National and regional authorities
Number of good practices developed and shared in the development and management of Cultural Routes	Measuring what works well Avoiding the duplicating of resources		EU programme Interact Managing authorities National and regional authorities Cultural Routes member organisations

Specific recommendation 1: Agreement and setting up of a joint Danube Cultural Routes Observatory

The lack of data directly attributed to the Cultural Routes and monitoring their development is combined with collecting comparable and consistent data on the impact of Cultural Routes across borders. A suitable platform would have to be created for data

gathering and proper analysis of Cultural Routes data within the Danube Region and may include wide-ranging discussions, promotion of evidence and thinking, and could involve international players delivering and engaging stakeholders from all sectors of society (public, private, third sector and community interests). This observatory could monitor the development of Cultural Routes in order to detect and

identify specific trends useful for formulation of policies and actions at transnational macro-regional level. The observatory could detect dependencies between Cultural Routes and economic activity to understand and estimate the added value of the Cultural Routes, including headline findings on Cultural Routes and tourism expenditure, workforce/jobs and output. Furthermore, the observatory could gather and analyse information about visits, donations, volunteering, tourism overflow and other issues relevant to the operation of the Cultural Routes. The observatory should observe, present, interpret, compare and analyse facts and processes and seek similarities and differences in the EUSDR countries' approaches to policy making concerning Cultural Routes.

The observatory could agree to use the recent UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators (CDIS) tool that assesses the multidimensional role of culture in development processes through facts and figures.

In addition, the Council of Europe's European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century recommendations and indicators should be considered.

Specific recommendation 2: Enhancing the role of clusters and networks

This means enhancing economic development policy in order to encourage clusters of supporting enterprises in locations of heritage interest, in particular Cultural Routes, landscapes and historic towns to strengthen the economic and social situation of these locations.

The following critical success factors for clusters around Cultural Routes should be considered for regional policy.

- ▶ SMEs in the tourism and creative industries sectors but also in services such as transportation and ICT.
- ▶ A positive environment for all players.
- ▶ Co-opetition or win-win attitude: geographic and social proximity facilitates collaboration alongside competition, i.e. a culture of "co-opetition".
- ▶ Innovation.
- ▶ Results and impact and continuous evaluation processes.
- ▶ Added value.
- ▶ Design according to the specific needs of Cultural Routes.
- ▶ The human factor.

Success depends on strong leadership and a commitment from diverse partners to work together towards common goals. If each partner does their part, with

the assistance of strong and focused leaders, the result will be the emergence of a stronger collaboration around the Cultural Routes. This is evident in well-established Cultural Routes such as the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, where cultural institutions, local and regional authorities and SMEs work together to achieve their goals. The cluster will be an engine for economic growth that will sustain the Cultural Routes' economic viability and contribute to preserving cultural heritage for future generations, as local communities' clustering around a Cultural Route will seek to protect and develop it together in order to preserve their source of economic prosperity. One of the fundamental guiding principles must be to avoid duplication of effort and build on existing work that addresses the issues around the Cultural Route. Regional authorities must be authorised to develop a strong action plan built on past results and incorporating ongoing plans. Where one partner is advanced in the management of a particular issue, their lead role should continue, and the positive experiences and lessons learned about the issue should be applied to the entire cluster. The plan must be implemented as a complete package. Working only on isolated selected individual parts will not achieve the goals. The actions and tasks must work together as a co-ordinated plan.

The key opportunities for successful development of clustering around the Cultural Routes include:

- ▶ the opportunities offered by the transnational character of the Cultural Route;
- ▶ travel and tourism megatrends;
- ▶ the emergence and development of market niches related to increased interest in culture and cultural heritage both by domestic and foreign travellers, and sustainable protection;
- ▶ developed service networks;
- ▶ use of European SME support networks for internationalisation and innovation such as the Enterprise Europe Network.

Actions needed to focus on specific goals:

- ▶ increase connections and communication among all key players, gradually creating a culture of sharing, exchange and win-win attitude over one of rivalry;
- ▶ boost the use of innovation and IT solutions for integration of the whole supply and value chains servicing the Cultural Routes;
- ▶ create a positive environment for investors;
- ▶ grow new enterprises through innovation, commercialisation and incubation;
- ▶ maintain the cultural base and create the circumstances that support profitable, sustainable value chains that are sensitive to the maximum protection of cultural heritage;

- ▶ raise public awareness about the contribution of the Cultural Routes to regional economic development;
- ▶ increase access to information on the Cultural Routes in the region, promoting a sense of value both within visitors and local people;
- ▶ use the experience and connections of the clusters' key actors to promote the Cultural Routes in third countries;
- ▶ build a first-class infrastructure to properly manage the destinations linked to the Cultural Routes.

The action plan of clustering around Cultural Routes in the Danube Region should focus specifically on actions that support the protection of the cultural heritage included in the Cultural Route in order to avoid degradation, together with finding the right balance between creating economic benefits and the need to protect. To assess which actions should be included in the plan, the key players should use three fundamental tests:

- ▶ Is the action addressing a specific issue of the region and the Cultural Route?
- ▶ Will the action make a real difference to the future of the Cultural Route and the operations of the local communities around it?
- ▶ Is the action realistic and therefore achievable?

Key bodies in clustering measures must most obviously be public institutions, different types of private businesses, branch associations and existing networks, business support organisations and partnerships, and scientific institutes and universities.

Developing the clustering plans around Cultural Routes should be an interactive process involving representatives from the public, government and all interested business sectors.

Specific recommendation 3: Use of Community-led Local Development (CLLD) as an instrument to foster better regional planning and support for local projects related to the development of the Cultural Routes

This is valid for locations where the Cultural Routes pass through rural and small communities and municipalities. However, the approach is encouraged and proves useful and effective in urban areas as well. In terms of its application to the development of policies relevant to the enhancement of Cultural Routes in the Danube Region, it can demonstrate a real measurable positive impact.

CLLD is a specific tool for use at sub-regional level, which is complementary to other development support at local level. CLLD can mobilise and involve

local communities and organisations to contribute to achieving strategic goals and reaching specific policy objectives.

The CLLD approach is successfully used for the achievement of specific objectives related to fostering cultural activities and initiatives at local level, thus it could turn into a very useful instrument to build upon in the development of the European Cultural Routes. It is useful because it is community-led, by local action groups composed of representatives of local public and private socio-economic interests. It is carried out through integrated and multisectoral area-based local development strategies, designed taking into consideration local needs and potential and takes into consideration local needs and potential, includes innovative features in the local context, networking and co-operation.

The CLLD can provide a solid base for exchange on approaches for triggering the cultural potential of the areas for economic development that is sustainable, inclusive and provides collaboration opportunities across borders for smaller communities with rich cultural heritage.

Specific recommendation 4: Consolidation of the integrated approach for development of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

Protection of cultural heritage and its inclusion in European networks of collaboration needs to be integrated into other policies within the Danube Region and should not be isolated from the overall process of planning and implementation of EUSDR. It is of utmost importance to continue and expand the joint efforts at transnational, national and regional level regarding co-ordination among all administrative bodies involved, such as urban development, construction, land use, rehabilitation of monuments, innovation support, rural development policies, educational and skills development policies and strategies, and security collaboration. Legal and EU funding planning and procedures should consider and incorporate the opportunities provided by fostering the development of the European Cultural Routes within the EUSDR context. This will reinforce the balancing of the needs of economy, society, environment and heritage and will prevent unnecessary damage to non-renewable heritage resources.

Specific recommendation 5: Use of national and regional smart specialisation strategies (S3) and the next generation of innovation strategies

Cultural heritage and the development of Cultural Routes should not be regarded as obstacles to

the economic development of the communities within the Danube Region. On the contrary, it can trigger prosperity. Usually, cultural heritage is associated with reluctance and opposition to managing change and low dynamics in its use. At the same time, economic development at EU and macro-regional level is underpinned by the implementation of national and regional smart specialisation strategies.

Several positive developments and strategies for enhancing the connection between innovation, tourism and cultural heritage – including creating new Cultural Routes, developing new cultural tourism packages, including scientific tourism, infrastructure developments, and educational and cultural events – are all positive developments that can benefit from innovative solutions, societal and economic transformation, scientific research and deep tech development.

Examples of the use of virtual reality in the presentation of cultural heritage and new experience trends in the travel industry are providing an insight into how this huge potential can be further exploited and expanded to promote the Cultural Routes within the Danube Region.

Co-operation in S3 at macro-regional level helps explore whether and how S3 priorities envisaged in national and regional strategies differentiate, or are complementary to, their neighbouring countries/regions. It also leads to the creation of strategic links to tackle common challenges when engaging in joint S3 initiatives. To this end, integration of the Cultural Routes topic within this framework taking into consideration the national and regional context will add value to both the implementation of the S3 and to the development of the Cultural Routes as a way of upscaling economic development.

This process can begin through identification of niche activities able to produce a structural change and assessment of the local development potential. The mapping of the links between cultural activities and the wider economy needs to be part of the entrepreneurial discovery process intrinsic to all smart specialisation strategies. It is vital to identify the benefit of specialisation, who can contribute to it and determine whether to consider cultural heritage as a cross-sectoral activity or a niche activity. At the same time, it is important to detect the specific skills, competences and capabilities and to bring together all stakeholders that can contribute and collaborate. In most cases, especially where the cultural heritage is in smaller communities, it might be possible that external scientific and entrepreneurial knowledge is necessary, thus networking is of utmost significance.

This recommendation is closely linked to recommendation 4, as it can foster good-practice examples in making the integrated approach work in practice.

Specific recommendation 6: Macro-regional collaboration on finding practical solutions for modern destination management

Tourism overflow is a putting more and more pressure on cultural heritage sites and the promotion of Cultural Routes can have negative effects if no proper long-term modern destination management planning is in place. It begins with assessing damage to cultural heritage associated with tourism and ensuring there is sustainable policy to address it, including measures to prevent vandalism, pollution, carbon footprints, degradation of sites and intangible cultural heritage specifics. It is of utmost importance to strengthen the links between neighbouring countries to ensure a more coherent policy for tourism activity associated with common cultural heritage and develop bilateral and multilateral agreements and joint initiatives for Cultural Routes.

Destination management involves thinking ahead, as the marketing and promotion of Cultural Routes and their increased recognition among travellers will inevitably lead to a collision between protection efforts and economic interests. Therefore, a proper destination policy should find the right balance between protection and economic activities and develop a sustainable tourism approach.

The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (www.unwto.org) has defined sustainable tourism as an enterprise that achieves a balance between the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development to guarantee long-term benefits to recipient communities. According to UNWTO, it should:

- ▶ make optimal use of environmental resources, maintaining essential ecosystems and helping conserve biodiversity;
- ▶ respect socio-cultural authenticity, conserve built and living cultural heritage, and contribute to cross-cultural understanding and tolerance;
- ▶ ensure long-term socio-economic benefits, fairly distributed to all community stakeholders, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities, social services, and poverty alleviation.

A lot depends on the situation in which the Cultural Route as a transnational destination is perceived. Policies depend on factors such as the wealth of the respective region or location, understanding and acceptance by the locals of the vision that the Cultural Route attracts tourists, assessment of the

cultural assets' vulnerability, and assessment of the tourism behaviour trends.

Specific recommendation 7: Joint macro-regional marketing efforts of the Cultural Routes should involve innovation and support of new business models

It is important that the Cultural Routes within the Danube area be correctly positioned in order to be distinctive among the rest of the European Cultural Routes. Such distinctive features cannot be worked out at national level and would logically require a transnational collaborative approach to marketing. At the same time, national and regional authorities should consider and constantly evaluate global travel trends to find the right approach to address the right niches in travellers' preferences. The "four Ps" of the marketing mix have already turned into the "four Es".

- ▶ From Product to EXPERIENCE: travellers do not buy tourism products but tourism experiences. This means that instead of hotels, meals, museums and monuments they will seek remarkable memories and "living the Cultural Route". A visitor's unique journey in the Danube Region must be defined and worked on as unique macro-regional branding.
- ▶ From Place to EVERYWHERE: the distribution channels have changed drastically in the digital era. Thus, knowledge of new media and channels are of utmost importance.
- ▶ From Price to EXCHANGE: the sharing economy is already making a significant mark on the way people travel and use products and services. People more and more appreciate the value of things, not just the cost. Thus, relevant interventions should consider the value of the Cultural Routes for visitors and what their attention and engagement are worth.
- ▶ From Promotion to EVANGELISM: travellers get inspired by passion. Thus, in the further development of the Cultural Routes, policy makers should consider the passion of both the local communities and the visitors. The service design methodology can be used to analyse carefully the Cultural Routes users' touchpoints and use interactive tools to attract them. Promotion of innovation and creative labs for trying out, testing, experimenting and implementing ideas and creativity can add value to the Cultural Routes sites. They can provide a multilevel exchange of information, knowledge, ideas for visitors on how to get to know the Cultural Route and can offer the right ingredients to trigger passion, engagement and create unforgettable experiences.

Specific recommendation 8: Skills development and training, and constant capacity building and updating is of utmost significance

There is a broad field of further collaboration within the Danube area in skills development and upgrade. Priority Area 9 of the EUSDR has established important links and many educational projects have been implemented. The EUSDR Youth Platform can be revived and expanded to involve young people in formal and non-formal learning related to the development of Cultural Routes in the Danube Region. Practical skills in destination management, innovative business modelling for the creation of travellers' experiences, service and hospitality should be continuously updated in close collaboration with enterprises. Exchange of policies and the joint development of educational and occupational profiles for specific professions can prove useful to predict future skills demand and the evolution of competences related to better management and benefit from Cultural Routes. Today specialists need to be multi-taskers who can undertake various roles other than simply being specialists in a subject of interest.

Education in heritage needs to start at school level in order to capture the lifelong interest of young people from the perspective of the cultural journey and links between nations across borders. This will assist in safeguarding this resource for the future and at the same time counteract the nationalistic and xenophobic tendencies that have emerged and evolved in Europe and globally in recent years.

Professionals and specialists need to have continual professional development. The digital world is already a daily reality and curators, archaeologists, tourist services providers, cultural sites, etc. must be in line with this reality. Being active than reactive is the best way to achieve the objectives of protecting and benefiting from Cultural Routes. There is a need to develop new types of skills if the heritage resources are to be commercially exploited in a sensitive manner. Understanding heritage and its potential as a catalyst for development should be extended to relevant professions such as spatial and urban planning.

National policies enhancing a multidisciplinary approach to the topic should be supported. Macro-regional collaboration and exchange of practices are highly relevant considering the nature of Cultural Routes.

Specific recommendation 9: Financial assistance, funding mechanisms and fundraising

Reliance on the public sector and public funds cannot meet the demands of the heritage sector. In part, the

issue of funding from state resources can be resolved by providing incentives for the private and third sectors to fund cultural heritage and recognise Cultural Routes as a business opportunity.

However, this requires an understanding and confidence that this is achievable, which can only be established by evidence-based mechanisms.

There is a huge variety of programmes tackling the topic directly or indirectly, such as the Interreg programmes, Creative Europe and some of the streams of Horizon 2020, but other sources of funding should be considered. These sources rely upon the development of new business models and the engagement of people. The following examples should be additionally exploited.

1. Private investments – In principle in most of the EUSDR countries the private interest seems to contradict the necessity to protect and preserve cultural heritage, especially in urban areas where new construction projects put more and more pressure on the local environment. At the same time, the public regard cultural heritage and its protection as part of a national and regional identity. Thus, the ability of public authorities to reconcile the private and the public interests in a way that is beneficial for local development is crucial. This strongly depends on the economic interest of the businesses to preserve and protect cultural heritage and be strategically involved in partnerships with public authorities. Numbers convince private actors, so once again the strong evidence base is of utmost importance to display how protection of cultural heritage and the right balance in exploitation of cultural resources as being part of a Cultural Route could bring huge benefits both to the businesses and to the communities.
2. Patronage and sponsorships – There are established practices in the Danube countries concerning public-private partnerships. The most common way of encouraging this type of private funding is performed and regulated usually through tax reductions offered for patronage and sponsorships of cultural heritage, especially regarding special events. However, more attention should be paid to patronage and sponsorship projects involving cultural heritage conservation.
3. In-kind contributions from the private sector – The business sector is the owner of technologies, expertise, innovations and manpower that can be better channelled and exploited. Thus, public policies and legislative decisions should also be innovative and flexible enough to regulate the matter in a way that is beneficial to both the private sector and the local communities. Involvement of the private sector in

sincere discussions on how to boost this form of public-private partnership is indispensable.

4. Donations – This is a well-known form of fundraising for the cultural sector. The problem is that in many cases there are examples of insufficient control over the spending of the raised funding and feedback on how resources are used. In some of the countries with low trust in public institutions, the management of donation campaigns is considered as corrupt, which leads to a reluctance to donate. In this case the improvement of rules and requirements for the establishment of community councils to oversee the spending of funds, including representatives of businesses and independent public figures, could be a solution.
5. Crowdfunding for specific projects – Crowdfunding has established itself as a very suitable, quick and useful instrument for funding of specific cultural projects, such as events, studies or tools. However, crowdfunding remains out of the scope of national policy making, which has forced the sector to regulate itself in a sufficiently manageable and transparent way, while in some countries running of crowdfunding platforms is completely forbidden. It is indispensable for the public authorities to understand that crowdfunding is a fact and a reality and to embrace it as a highly beneficial source of funding that can be streamlined and encouraged to add value to the implementation of public policies. Collaboration at macro-regional level is valuable for the exchange of good practices and exploring further the opportunities of this form of fundraising through dedicated training and improvement of skills of public servants on the topic.
6. Concessions, transfer of development rights and rehabilitation incentives – Regulations should be strict, especially where natural and cultural heritage is involved. Examples exist in the EUSDR countries in which concession contracts have led to extreme decay of natural and cultural heritage areas, over-construction and pollution. Thus, regulating these activities should be tackled in the primary interest of communities. Private companies should be convinced that proper concession and rehabilitation management will increase their short and long-term profitability much more than if they choose the road to overexploitation. This, once again, is possible only through the establishment of a solid comparable evidence base for the impact of Cultural Routes on economic prosperity.

The multi-funding principle allowing complementarity of funds for large-scale projects should be applied in accordance with EU rules.

Specific recommendation 10: Update of regional and national cultural heritage inventories, rehabilitation activities and cultural heritage ownership, and development of a macro-regional inventory of cultural heritage as a basis for determining and developing new Cultural Routes

Updating inventory records on the condition and ownership of monuments on an annual basis should be used as a source to establish transnational collaborations to identify common cultural heritage and develop new Cultural Routes. Development briefs could be provided to guide potential investors in terms of the level of intervention that could be permitted for rehabilitation and new uses. Another way to be proactive would be to develop an advice service to encourage projects and provide information, not just on permissible works, but also on how to obtain finance.

This activity would allow for a better focus of funds and encourage new projects and activities in the regions. It would prove extremely useful in terms of convincing potential investors to undertake projects and in terms of targeted destination management and marketing efforts. The digital development of the macro-regional inventory and its public availability is also useful in terms of determining heritage at risk and triggering community projects and additional action leading to its protection.

Regional and national inventories are a preliminary step towards combining efforts at macro-regional level for development of a common macro-regional inventory of cultural heritage that can serve as a step forward in the joint development and sustainable exploitation of new European Cultural Routes that represent the Danube Region and its diversity and distinctive features.

Specific recommendation 11: Encouraging further use of disruptive deep tech technologies in the sector and development of a flexible and supportive regulatory framework allowing collaboration and public-private partnerships with the deep tech sector

Information and communications technology (ICT) changes the way cultural digital resources are created, disseminated, preserved and used. It allows different types of users to engage with cultural digital resources. The digital world provides a wealth of opportunities. Thus, regional and national authorities should be particularly open and analyse the travel trends related to booking behaviour, planning of

travel, searches for destinations and decision making on travel, described briefly in this document. The development of Cultural Routes can include the implementation of some of the following examples.

1. Virtual museums.
2. Virtual reconstruction of heritage that is on the verge of being lost.
3. Virtual reality travel experiences in relation to memory, identity and cultural interaction.
4. “Holo gaming” experiences related to the Cultural Routes – the use of gaming experiences attracts a new generation of visitor. Regarding the Cultural Routes, this could involve storytelling and the exploration of the routes through time and space. The Time Travel Museum and especially the House of Music, both located in the city of Vienna, offer good examples for this.
5. New applications – Attracting local ICT experts to take part in the development and management of a Cultural Route could be a game changer. New business models around the travel opportunities, marketing and promoting useful applications allowing for better socialising and better experiences should be encouraged through regional, national and macro-regional funding.
6. Digital marketing – The use of the internet, social media and various digital advertising channels. One of the greatest challenges is the sheer scope and scale of digital marketing. There are so many digital marketing techniques, including search, social and email marketing, for improving the digital experience. Within each digital marketing technique, many detailed tactics are important to success, so they need to be evaluated and prioritised. Thus, development of Cultural Routes digital marketing strategies will add significant value to the creation of the Cultural Route experience.
7. 3D products – Virtual reality postcards, memory tokens or replicas could be part of the Cultural Routes value proposition.

The development of Cultural Routes at the regional level could include plans to offer charging cards, discount cards for multiple visits and virtual applications to interact with on site. At macro-regional level this could be applied to a whole Cultural Route – for example, an opportunity for the visitor to develop an individual personalised digital travel map through the Cultural Route that is built and completed by checking in at the Cultural Routes sites in the different countries. Depending on the specifics of each Cultural Route, this practice can be transformed into a digital experience. Moreover, it allows for a European approach applicable to all Cultural Routes and can take various promotional forms.

1. complete one whole European Cultural Route;
2. complete all European Cultural Routes within a specific country – suitable for domestic tourists or for those enthusiasts for a specific country that visit from abroad;
3. complete all European Cultural Routes.

The use of blockchain, augmented reality and artificial intelligence as destination management tools or for providing services to travellers should be based on a flexible regulatory framework that is not restrictive but supportive and encourages collaborations and public-private partnerships. Legislation and policy frameworks usually follow technology, especially in this extremely dynamic, fast-growing and disruptive field. The macro-regional framework can prove extremely suitable for joint discussions, the exchange of experience and the transfer of knowledge. Moreover, joint policies in the field that link the deep tech sector, tourism and cultural heritage can be enhanced in order to use the newest technological developments, not only in the marketing mix but also in jointly finding ways to protect vulnerable heritage and cultural heritage that is at risk of being lost forever.

Specific recommendation 12: Further enhancing of specific measures to address the intangible cultural heritage element of the Cultural Routes

Communities are often the real guardians of intangible heritage, especially in rural areas, but they may find it difficult to grasp the opportunities cultural heritage provides for them and how it can be used to benefit society, particularly in cases where the local authorities are not obliged to develop specific actions or provide financial assistance for its development. However, local economic development initiatives around intangible heritage, including engaging the private sector and encouraging clusters of activity and developing tourism services, particularly in association with the organisation of events, demonstrates that intangible heritage can be a driver for regional economic development.

More importantly, as far as Cultural Routes are concerned, intangible cultural heritage represents an obligatory element of a route and its actual soul across borders.

Specific measures to address intangible cultural heritage can include the following.

1. Continuation of support for the organisation of special events and initiatives through international collaboration. Co-organisation of art, music, literature and theatre events in places of historical and cultural significance adds value to the destination management of the Cultural Route.

2. Use of the opportunities for EU-funded international research into intangible cultural heritage.
3. Working towards changing mindsets – In many places in the Danube Region, especially in areas marked by severe demographic decline, an ageing population, ethnic structural change and migration, valuable intangible heritage is under threat of being lost forever. At the same time, over-tourism and the competition for travellers' attention jeopardises the authenticity of intangible cultural heritage. Visitors are presented with replicated customs and claims of traditionality, making it difficult for them to identify the genuine traditions. Although UNESCO's intangible heritage list is providing some understanding of recognised intangible heritage, it only represents a non-exhaustive list of globally significant heritage. Public dialogue should become more vivid in two directions:

- a. increasing communities' eagerness to cherish intangible cultural heritage;
- b. finding the right balance between safeguarding and exploitation, i.e. turning intangible cultural heritage into a sustainably used resource.

Specific recommendation 13: Ensuring ownership of implementation and Cultural Routes by stakeholders and local communities

Community involvement is essential for strategies, policies and projects to become successful. If the role of a Cultural Route is not understood, adopted or appreciated by its beneficiaries the sustainability of the planning can be challenged. The worst-case scenario is that a Cultural Route is planned and certified but not recognised and used by the beneficiaries because it is designed in a way that is not feasible, or they do not understand how to use it. Communities need to be committed and the first step is to understand why the commitment is low. Reasons for this may be a lack of technical, financial or human resources capacity or because of negative perceptions of newcomers and travellers as polluters and bringers of problems. Thus, innovative ways to widen participation in the planning of a Cultural Route and in its implementation and promotion over time should be considered.

One way to ensure this is to delegate some responsibilities to local communities in the planning and implementation process of the Cultural Routes. Another way is to encourage them to take part in the monitoring and collection of evidence and to trigger their pride in being part of a European Cultural Route.

Community involvement can have positive consequences as the community will get a degree of control over the process, it might get a financial return or other tangible benefits and, if successful, it will provide a sense of satisfaction.

Moreover, community involvement can handle demand-side issues, for example explaining what features exist that are related to the Cultural Route and how they can be used. Community involvement captures the overall picture and is a tool for overcoming critics and dissatisfaction, and in some cases even for avoiding thefts and vandalism.

This could be implemented through constituting local Cultural Routes boards featuring working groups to concentrate on all aspects involving the development of the Cultural Routes, such as accessibility, promotion, hospitality services and events. This way, local people will have the opportunity not simply to observe but to actively participate and solve problems that emerge over time.

Specific recommendation 14: real transfer of knowledge and implementation of tools and practices rather than simply informative

Knowledge transfer should happen not only during a project's implementation but should be continually practised to ensure the use of a project's results. As has already been documented, there is a huge number of implemented and ongoing projects at European and EUSDR level whose compilation is planned only through platforms, sharing during events, exchange of experiences among the project promoters and through meetings with the stakeholders of the projects.

However, documenting the real transfer of knowledge and tools and their real continuous use outside project partnerships is missing or is rarely employed.

Knowledge transfer can be organised through mentoring programmes for staff, coaching programmes, training, mastery training, on-the-job training and demonstrations.

Funding measures could be planned for future programmes to ensure that projects focus primarily on the transfer of tools, methods and practices to a wide range of stakeholders. This is necessary, as the implementation of some tools may require payments for Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), additional specialist equipment or simply require certain knowledge specifics.

Specific recommendation 15: Development of the macro-region as an important regional hub for policy exchange, networking and the transfer of good practices for joint planning of further steps in sustainable management of the Cultural Routes in the macro-region

The established Danube Strategy Point and the existing structures within the EUSDR can serve as a starting point and a learning curve for development of a regional hub that could strengthen the focus in improving existing legislation and its implementation at local and regional level. The regional hub can support evidence-based policies and the need for an inventory on cultural heritage. It could provide technical feedback on the implementation of policies at local and regional level and ensure a better involvement of local and regional actors in defining, planning, certification and management of Cultural Routes. The regional hub could act as a contact point, which is able to attract and keep stakeholders involved across borders.

Similar to the regional hubs established by the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) and local and regional authorities, the Danube Cultural Routes regional hub can become the operation point for long-term monitoring of and action on the common agenda set by the EUSDR countries for development, management and branding of new Cultural Routes specific to the macro-region. It can act as an intermediary and provide timely feedback on policy efficiency and gaps through managing the joint evidence gathering at macro-regional level. It could gradually develop its function as an information point for all questions on better policy making for the management of Cultural Routes within the Danube Region.

Table 10 illustrates the level of required action for each specific recommendation and is a grid that helps to establish co-ordination and view the whole picture in terms of the implementation of these recommendations. For example, as it is clear that national level is required always in terms of legislation and national policy direction on priorities. In some activities, regional authorities need to provide opinion and data input or be informed but the major activities could be at macro-regional level.

Table 10: Level of required action

Recommendation	Regional	National	Macro-Regional
Specific recommendation 1: Agreement and setting up of a joint Danube Cultural Routes Observatory	Planning and implementation	Planning and implementation	General agreement and working/steering groups
Specific recommendation 2: Enhancing the role of clusters and networks	Planning and implementation	Planning and implementation	Collaboration between clusters and networks
Specific recommendation 3: Use of Community-led Local Development (CLLD) as an instrument to foster better regional planning and support for local projects related to the development of the Cultural Routes	Planning and implementation	Guidance and legal action, where necessary	Collaboration between clusters and networks
Specific recommendation 4: Consolidation of the integrated approach for development of the European Cultural Routes			Ensuring integration of the topic across priority areas
Specific recommendation 5: Use of national and regional smart specialisation strategies (S3) and the next generation of innovation strategies	Planning and implementation	Planning and implementation	
Specific recommendation 6: Macro-regional collaboration on finding practical solutions for modern destination management			Joint planning and implementation
Specific recommendation 7: Joint macro-regional marketing efforts of the Cultural Routes should involve innovation and support of new business models			Joint planning and implementation
Specific recommendation 8: Skills development and training, and constant capacity building and updating is of utmost significance	Capacity building of staff	Capacity building of staff	Knowledge transfer
Specific recommendation 9: Financial assistance, funding mechanisms and fundraising	Planning and implementation	Planning and implementation	Joint fundraising and planning of the next generation of transnational co-operation projects
Specific recommendation 10: Update of regional and national cultural heritage inventories, rehabilitation activities and cultural heritage ownership and development of a macro-regional inventory of cultural heritage as a basis for determining and developing new Cultural Routes	Planning and implementation	Planning and implementation	Agreement on a macro-regional inventory
Specific recommendation 11: Encouraging further use of disruptive deep tech technologies in the sector and development of a flexible and supportive regulatory framework allowing collaboration and public-private partnerships with the deep tech sector	Public-private partnerships	Public-private partnerships	Transfer of knowledge Exchange of experience Discussion on joint development strategies Public-private partnerships

Recommendation	Regional	National	Macro-Regional
Specific recommendation 12: Further enhancing of specific measures to address the intangible cultural heritage element of the Cultural Routes	Inventory planning and implementation of protection measures	Guidance and legislative measures, where applicable	Agreement on common measures, especially in cases where the intangible heritage has common characteristics and features and encompasses several countries
Specific recommendation 13: Ensuring ownership of implementation and Cultural Routes by stakeholders and local communities	Constant communication and co-ordination of the processes		
Specific recommendation 14: Ensure real transfer of knowledge and implementation of tools and practices rather than simply informative			Measures to be planned in next generation programmes
Specific recommendation 15: Development of the macro-region as an important regional hub for policy exchange, networking and the transfer of good practices for joint planning of further steps in sustainable management of the Cultural Routes in the macro-region			Agreement among EUSDR countries Planning of further steps

Bibliography

Celdrán Bernabeu M. A., Mazón J-N., Giner D. and M Vidal J. I., "Big Data and Smart Tourism Destinations: Challenges and opportunities from an industry perspective", *Research Gate*, available at: www.researchgate.net/publication/310793861.

COM(2010) 715, European Union Strategy for the Danube Region Action Plan, Brussels, SEC(2010) 1489, available at https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/communic/danube/action_plan_danube.pdf

COM(2018) 267 final, Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament, The European Council, The Council, The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions, A New European Agenda for Culture, available at https://ec.europa.eu/culture/sites/culture/files/commis-sion_communication_-_a_new_european_agenda_for_culture_2018.pdf

COM(2019) 21 final, Report From The Commission To The European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions on the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies, Brussels, 29 January 2019, available at https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/cooperate/macro_region_strategy/pdf/2_implementation_en.pdf

Council of Europe, Directorate General for Democracy, EPA, "Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe connecting cultural values, heritage sites and citizens: strategies and synergies in a global perspective", 26-28 September 2018, Görlitz (Germany).

Council of Europe, "Impact of European Cultural Routes on SMEs' innovation and competitiveness", CIP, available at <https://rm.coe.int/1680706995>.

Cultural Heritage, Special Eurobarometer 466, December 2017

Danube Transnational programme, DTP Capitalisation Strategy Handbook, February 2018, available at <http://www.interreg-danube.eu/uploads/media/default/0001/13/1f715e7e8225deedf1327892d2393e031b27acf7.pdf>

Dupeyras A. and MacCallum N. (2013), "Indicators for Measuring Competitiveness in Tourism: A Guidance Document", OECD Tourism Papers, No. 2013/02, OECD Publishing, Paris, available at <https://doi.org/10.1787/5k47t9q2t923-en>.

ESPON (2019), Material Cultural Heritage as a Strategic Territorial Development Resource: Mapping Impacts Through a Set of Common European Socio-economic Indicators, available at www.espon.eu/cultural-heritage.

ETIS Destination Dataset, Ref. Ares (2016)1372816.

European Commission, Community-led Local Development Factsheet, March 2014.

European Commission, Mapping of cultural heritage actions in European Union policies, programmes and activities, latest update 2017, available at https://ec.europa.eu/culture/sites/culture/files/2014-heritage-mapping-version-2017_en.pdf

European Commission, Implementing Smart Specialisation Strategies: A Handbook, 2016 / Chapter IV, available at <https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/20182/154972/Implementing+Smart+Specialisation+Strategies+A+Handbook/2a0c4f81-3d67-4ef7-97e1-dcbad00e1cc9>.

European Expert Network on Culture (EENC), New Business Models in the Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCSs), June 2015, available at <http://www.eenca.com/eenca/assets/File/EENC%20publications/interarts2540.pdf>

Interact, Added value of macro-regional strategies – programme and project perspective, February 2017, available at <https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/20182/198909/Added+value+of+the+macro-regiona+l+strategies+for+projects+and+programmes/adeafa20c-8b5d-48c8-8690-1e8fdd2570cc>.

Kutschera S. (2018), 65 Travel Statistics to Know In 2018-2019, Trekksoft. Interlaken.

Mariussen Å, Rakhmatullin R. and Stanionyte L. (2016), *Smart Specialisation: Creating Growth through Transnational cooperation and Value Chains*, JRC Science for Policy Report, available at <https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/20182/154989/Smart+Specialisation+Creating+Growth+through+Trans-national+cooperatio+n+and+Value+Chains/f3587cf2-c511-42a4-b559-a89d511a7e38>.

OECD (2018), "Analysing megatrends to better shape the future of tourism", OECD Tourism Papers, No. 2018/02, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/d465eb68-en>.

OECD (2018), OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2018, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/tour-2018-en>.

Policy Learning Platform on environment and resource efficiency, webinar brief, Cultural Routes, 7 February 2019, 14.00-15.30 CET, Report.

Fuggle L. et al. (2018), Travel Trends Report 2018, Trekksoft, Interlaken.

Mittiga A. et al. (2019), Travel Trends Report 2019, Trekksoft, Interlaken.

UNWTO (2019), '*Overtourism? Understanding and Managing Urban Tourism Growth beyond Perceptions*, Volume 2: Case Studies, published January 2019, available at www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284420070 (eISBN: 978-92-844-2062-9).

USAID, "Tourism Destination Management Achieving Sustainable And Competitive Results", International Institute for Tourism Studies, The George Washington University, Washington DC, available at www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2151/DMOworkbook_130318.pdf.

World Tourism Organization and European Travel Commission (2017), *Handbook on Marketing Transnational Tourism Themes and Routes*, UNWTO, Madrid, available at https://d253pvgap36xx8.cloudfront.net/challenges/resources/67ee32e4538211e8bc1c0242ac110002/Handbook_on_Marketing_...Themes_and_Routes.pdf.

Websites

Danube Strategy Point: www.danube-region.eu/.

Danube Transnational Programme: www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects.

European Network for Rural Development: https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/_en?f%5B0%5D=im_field_enrd_prj_keywords%3A19727.

European Statistics Illustrated: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/tourism/statistics-illustrated>.

Interreg Europe: www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/news/4997/watch-the-webinar-on-cultural-routes/?no_cache=1&chash=ec2a0eaa2add443c9d0aa9a970e868c2.

Priority Area 3 of the EUSDR: www.danubecultureandtourism.eu/priority-area-3-to-promote-culture-tourism-and-people-to-people-contacts-defined-targets.

WTTC Gateway: www.wttc.org/datagateway/.

List of abbreviations

B2B: Business to Business

CLLD: Community-Led Local Development

Cultural Routes: Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

DG REGIO: Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

EDEEN: European Destinations of Excellence

EPA: Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes

ESIF: European Structural and Investment Funds

ESPON: European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion

ETIS: European Tourism Indicators System

EU: European Union

EUSAIR: European Union Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region

EUSALP: European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region

EUSBSR: European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

EUSDR: European Union Strategy for the Danube Region

ICOMOS: International Council of Monuments and Sites

INSTO: International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

SME: Small and medium enterprises

SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

UNWTO: United Nations World Tourism Organization

VTO: European Commission Virtual Tourism Observatory

WTTC: World Travel and Tourism Council



Council of Europe
Directorate General of Democracy
F-67075 Strasbourg
Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural
Routes – Council of Europe
European Institute of Cultural Routes
28 rue Münster
L-2160 Luxembourg
Tel. +352 24 12 50

www.coe.int/routes4u

www.coe.int

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

Routes4U Project

Funded
by the European Union
and the Council of Europe



EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Implemented
by the Council of Europe