

Cult-RInG
Interreg Europe



Chronicle



Issue 1, June 2017

Cultural Routes as Investment for Growth and Jobs, 2017 - 2020



As the Lead Partner, Regional Development Fund of the Region of Central Macedonia on behalf of the Region of Central Macedonia, we welcome you to the 1st edition of the 'Chronicle' Newsletter of our project "Cult-RInG" in the EU Interreg Europe programme.

Cult-RInG is an interregional cooperation project for improving natural and cultural heritage policies through Cultural Routes in the Interreg Europe Programme, which helps regional and local governments across Europe to develop and deliver better policy by integrated and sustainable impact for people and place.

We feel honored to lead such an important project with such a strong partnership scheme, comprising of organisations and experts with great experience in the field of Tourism and Cultural Routes.

We are certain that the exchange of know-how and learning from each other will meet the main objective of our project.

Beyond the obvious cultural value of the project, which has a global scope, our goal is to capitalize on the goodwill created by Cultural Routes in the local economy, through tourism, by promoting the innovation and competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as entrepreneurship through the development of innovative and attractive cultural tourism products and services. Moreover, the Region of Central Macedonia has as its central policy the parallel development of culture and tourism as a single pillar of development policy that can bring income, open up new jobs, highlight the comparative advantages of our country and create the right background for business activity in an extremely difficult time for business in the country.

So, we welcome all the partners and we are looking forward to a constructive and fruitful cooperation.

Apostolos Tzitzikostas
*Governor of the Region of Central Macedonia and
Head of the Regional Development Fund of
Central Macedonia*

Cult-RInG highlights the value of investment in European Cultural Routes in terms of their contribution to growth and jobs and the development of new cultural routes

The Cult-RInG project is co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund and made possible by the Interreg Europe programme

**Cult-RInG budget: 1,35 M EUR
ERDF co-funding: 1,13 M EUR**

3 SPECIFIC THEMES OF THE PROJECT RELATED TO CULTURAL ROUTES:

1. Assessment of six existing Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe (ex-post) in terms of socio-economic development, direct and indirect benefits for Growth & Jobs
2. Capitalization of established best practices from INTERREG IVC completed projects CHARTS and CERTESS
3. Development of new cultural routes, based on the above assessment and capitalization



Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe have been established for the past 30 years, stressing the importance of European identities. The Council of Europe Enlarged Partial Agreement (EPA) on Cultural Routes currently comprises [32 routes contributing to protection and development of natural and cultural heritage](#).

Cultural Routes (CRs) are used as powerful tools to promote and preserve EU's shared and diverse cultural identities. CRs provide a better understanding of the history of Europe through interregional exchanges of people, ideas and cultures. The impacts of CRs on SMEs' innovation and competitiveness have showed that CRs are at the heart of cultural tourism development; they have achieved a noteworthy impact and progress, and shown remarkable potential for SME generation, networking, social cohesion, intercultural dialogue, and for promoting the image of Europe. CRs represent a source of innovation, creativity, small business creation, and cultural tourism products and services development.

There is a common challenge, in terms of assessing and exploiting the benefits of existing CRs and deploy them in the development of new CRs, so that Growth & Jobs targets can be met faster.

Main outputs are Action plans on CR development and upgrading, with implementation and monitoring of improved policy instruments in 6 regions, communication and dissemination tools for policy learning and capacity building, contribution to EU policies and EU2020 targets.

The beneficiaries are regional authorities looking for capturing the benefits of CRs, both existing ones with greater visibility and new ones, NGOs, European Networks, EU institutions, international organizations and stakeholders.

Expected results

The expected results are the inclusion of Cultural Routes impacts and benefits in the partners' action plans and policy instruments.

- Identified thematic topics capitalized with innovative character on Cultural Routes will be integrated in the policies with attention at regional, national and EU levels
- Capacity building of partners' key staff, stakeholders and policy makers on Cultural Routes
- Better cooperation / partnerships between public and private sectors, tourism and cultural sectors
- Improved policy instruments will ensure sustainable regional development and influence policy makers in other regions
- Cult-RInG will contribute to the Policy Learning Platform of the programme which will ensure continuous EU wide policy learning and knowledge management
- Enhanced education and training opportunities on Cultural Routes
- Results will provide added value to the initiatives at EU level and will influence other European Structural and Investment Funds programmes
- The results may be included in the agenda of relevant EU institutions, European and international organisations and other relevant stakeholders by discussions and consultations.



Main activities and outputs

- 3 Interregional Workshops with technical study visits 2017-2018
- 18 Regional Stakeholder Groups meetings
- Policy Learning Guidelines on Cultural Routes in the Growth & Jobs development contexts
- Study Tour in 2018
- Staff Exchange programme
- 6 Action plans on CR development and upgrading, with implementation and monitoring of improved policy instruments in 6 regions
- 12 Regional Dissemination events in 2018
- Cult-RInG event during European Week of Regions and Cities 2018 in Brussels
- Final high-level political event in 2020, Belgium

7 partners in 6 EU destinations



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Cult-RInG Partnership



Lead Partner **Regional Development Fund of Central Macedonia** acts as intermediate Managing Authority of the Regional Operational Programme (ROP), has great experience in generating, development and implementing EU co-financed and strongly stimulates the professional networks of the region. Cultural heritage and activities related to tourism is one of the main responsibilities of the region.



REGIONE LAZIO

Partner **Lazio Region** is a regional managing Authority with the great experience in development and implement EU co-funded projects on creation and promotion of Cultural Routes, including cooperation with other regions; identification & mapping of cultural routes; experiences of tourism promotion; create a system within Governmental Boards and local stakeholders and tourist promotion of the religious paths (San Francesco, San Benedetto, Via Francigena), ancient historical consular roads (Appia, Salaria).



VÄSTRA GÖTALANDSREGIONEN

Partner **Region Västra Götaland** with its department **Västarvet** is the regional administration of nature and cultural heritage in the region, which comprises several museums and the World Heritage site of Tanum. It has a long history of collaborating with authorities and organizations locally, regionally and nationally. Västarvet is one of the agencies reporting to the Committee of Culture and responsible for natural and cultural heritage within the region.



PODKARPACKA

Regionalna Organizacja Turystyczna

Partner **Podkarpackie Regional Tourism Board** is a structured regional tourism body, which gathers more than 100 members from business, tourism, culture and education. It has a great experience on inter-regional cooperation with the neighboring countries for tourism and tourism products development; collection of financial resources for regional development, particularly in tourism creation of cultural routes and the platform for cooperation between tourism organisations & public administration promotion of the of the region in the domestic and foreign markets with various promotion activities.

in 6 EU destinations



cim alto minho
comunidade intermunicipal do minho-lima

Partner **Intermunicipal Community of Alto Minho** (CIM Alto-

Minho) is a governmental organization that administrates the NUT III level region ruled by a council of mayors representing 10 municipalities. Partner developed and organize natural routes, developed and implemented a series of initiatives, inter-character projects in the heritage field and culture in partnership with a range of public institutional actors, private and associative partners. Alto Minho is awarded with the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Area.



Partner **Pafos Regional Board of Tourism** is the official regional body representing all sectors of the tourism industry,

led by Pafos Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Board promotes the region of Pafos as a quality tourist destination, coordinate activities between the private and government sectors related to the tourism industry and act as a coordinator for the implementation of tourism and other projects towards the further development of the industry.



Advisory Partner **European Cultural Tourism Network** (ECTN) is the only pan-European network for sustainable Cultural Tourism Development and Promotion, which brings together the tourism and cultural industry professionals in

European regions to exchange experience and information on best practice, to influence policymaking and to develop new approaches and innovations.

Being a pan-European Network of public authorities based in Brussels and the project creator, the Network will act as a Communication Manager in the project and guarantees durability of the project results and continue the actions beyond the project period by making the policy learning and capacities available to other authorities.

Cult-RInG kick-off meeting in Thessaloniki, Greece

The Cult-RInG kick-off meeting took place in Thessaloniki, Greece, on 20 – 21 June 2017. The two days event was organized by Lead Partner Regional Development Fund of Central Macedonia in Greece with aim to launch the project and start to work on the project implementation.



The first day started with a welcome by the Deputy Governor of the Regional District of Imathia, Mr Constantinos Kalitzidis at St Paul's Cultural Centre in the city of Veria. He wished a pleasant stay to participants and success in the project's implementation with respective benefits for its destinations.

After welcome by representatives of the Lead Partner, the introduction of the project partners followed and continued with a brief introduction by representatives of Advisory partner and the Cult-RInG project creator European Cultural Tourism Network (ECTN) on the project history, common challenges, aims, approach, activities and expected outputs and results together with Work Programme Overview.

ECTN Secretary Manos Vougioukas presented the origins of the Cult-RInG project in the "Thessalia **Charter for Sustainable Cultural Tourism**" (from completed project CHARTS - INTERREG IVC) and subsequent work by ECTN Secretariat on **Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe**, through involvement in the **Cultural Routes Academy** in Strasbourg and the **Cultural Routes Advisory Forum** by the European Institute of Cultural Routes (EICR).

During the day, the project partners presented the great and impressive cultural routes existing in the partners' regions:

- **Region of Central Macedonia** presented the Wine Routes in Northern Greece, which may be linked with the European Cultural Route 'Iter Vitis',

- **Vastra Gotaland Region**, presented 'The Pilgrim Routes of Saint Olav' in Västra Götaland and highlighted, that the project gives to the region the possibility to strengthen the political support in the region and municipalities by informing about the value of investments in the routes and how the routes contributes to Growth & Jobs,

- **CIM Alto-Minho** presented two secular routes that cross Portuguese territory - the European Cultural Route 'Santiago De Compostela and 'Camino de Torres', one of the most original pilgrimage routes in Portugal integrated in the Portuguese World Heritage List,

- **Pafos Regional Board of Tourism** presented wine, cycling, and walking routes and highlighted the certified 'The Phoenicians' route in the region, local route of Aphrodite, as well as the footsteps of St Paul in Pafos, which may be developed as a new cultural route,

- **Vidzeme Tourism Association** from Latvia (potential partner in the future) presented 'Hansa Route' which cross 6 towns in Vidzeme region and stressed a need to evaluate and exploit the benefits of existing CRs in the regions for the growth of local economy. The Partner look forward to develop cycling cultural route by gathering 20 countries, 14 UNESCO sites and 3 European seas.

The second day's meeting took place in Thessaloniki city, at the Mediterranean Palace hotel conference room, where partners discussed in detail about the policy learning and assessment process for existing cultural routes in their territory with stakeholders, the project management, coordination, financial and communication issues.

The meeting was concluded with the scheduled dates and time for the next project meetings and events.

The project partners will contact representatives of the European Cultural Routes in their respective countries and regions; these representatives will be invited to the relevant project events, together with EICR.

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

Next events and meetings

1 st Inter-regional Workshop Assessment of existing Cultural Routes of Council of Europe with technical study visits for the project partners and their stakeholders, experts and representatives of CoE Cultural Routes	October 2017 <i>Place TBC</i>
2 nd Inter-regional Workshop Capitalisation of Good Practices (e.g. INTERREG IVC CERTES;CHARTS, etc.) with technical study visits for the project partners and their stakeholders, experts	18 – 19 April 2018 Vastra Gotaland region, Sweden
Study Tour dedicated to the exchange of experience on all 3 themes of the project for policy makers from partners regions	Mid May/early June 2018 Lazio region Italy
3 rd Inter-regional Workshop Development of new Cultural Routes with technical study visits for the project partners and their stakeholders, experts	16 – 17 October 2018 Pafos region Cyprus
1 st Regional Dissemination event	January – February 2018 Central Macedonia, Greece Lazio region, Italy Vastra Gotaland, Sweden Alto Minho region, Portugal Pafos region, Cyprus
Special event dedicated to cultural routes in the framework European Week of Regions and Cities	October 2018 Brussels
2 nd Regional Dissemination event	November-December 2018 Central Macedonia, Greece Lazio region, Italy Vastra Gotaland, Sweden Alto Minho region, Portugal Pafos region, Cyprus
Final high-level event, conference	March 2020 <i>Place TBC</i>

The Saint Olav's pilgrim route in Västra Götaland is about 1 000 km long, in various condition and not overall coordinated. The route runs through beautiful landscapes scattered with cultural and natural heritage.

The intensions with the Cult-RInG in Västra Götaland is to coordinate and develop the cultural route Saint Olav's pilgrim route in a sustainable way and contributing to growth and jobs along the route.

There are many challenges to create a pilgrim route that is sustainable in the long run. Examples of challenges are lack of touristic infrastructure such as accommodation and a weak political support in the region and municipalities due to lack of knowledge of the pilgrim route's contribution to Growth and Jobs.

The CultRinG project gives us the possibility to strengthen the political support and develop a touristic infrastructure, by informing about the value of investments in the routes and how the routes contribute to Growth & Jobs.'

*Best regards,
Team from Västra Götaland Region, Vastarvet
in Sweden*

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Cult-RInG activities and the
latest developments!**

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cultring@rdcfm.gr
cult-ring@culturaltourism-net.eu