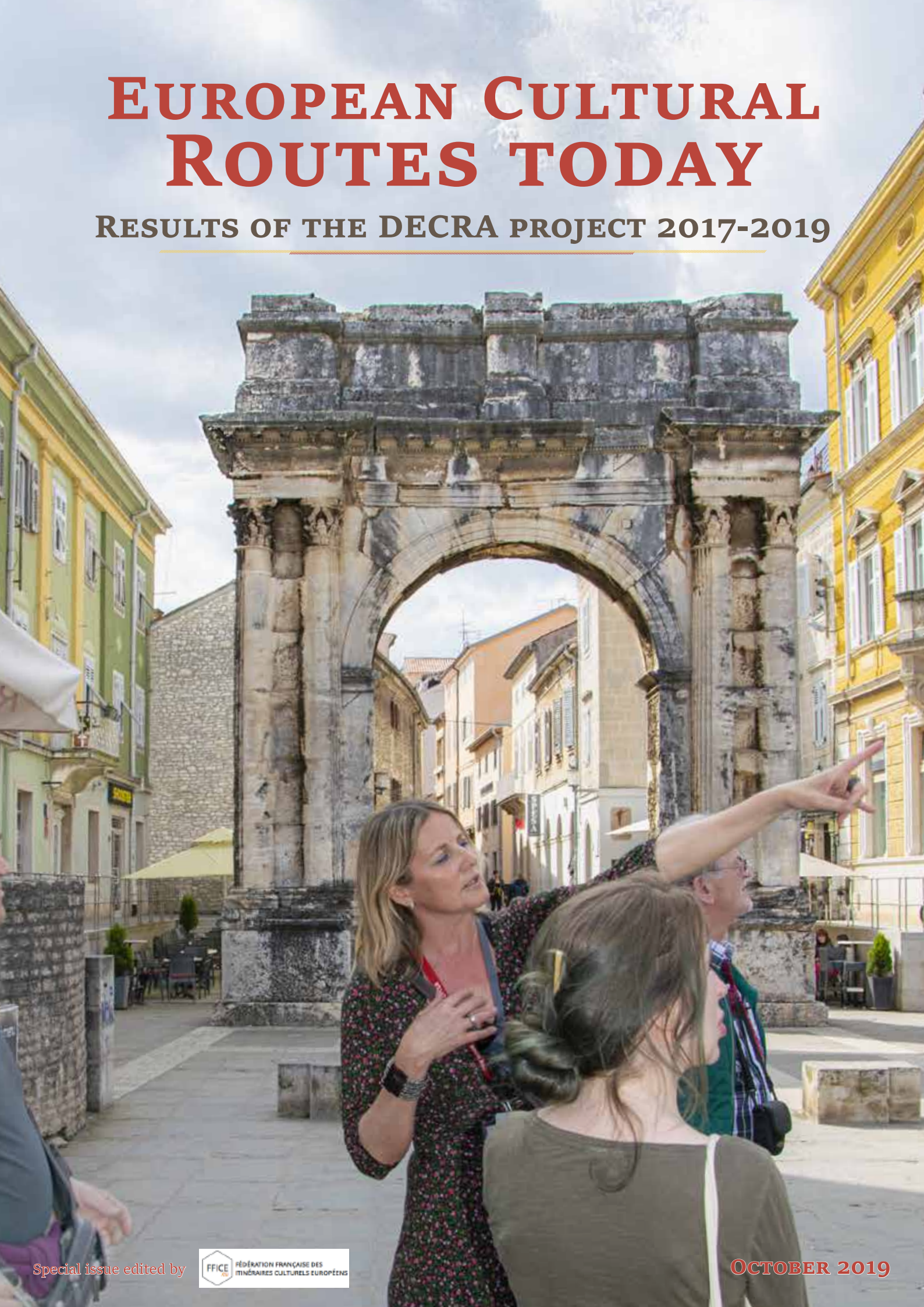


EUROPEAN CULTURAL ROUTES TODAY

RESULTS OF THE DECRA PROJECT 2017-2019





Mont-Saint-Michel, France, Major site of the Ways to the Mont-Saint-Michel
Cover : Golden Gate, Pula, Croatia, Transnational meeting #3, April 2018

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EDITORIAL

European Cultural Routes : Little invisible threads

« Once upon a time, on a faraway continent made of different countries, there were men and women with a long, complex and rich history. They did not know each other, they did not talk the same language, they did not go to visit each other, they just lived quietly in their village. One day, some of them got curious about the history of the next village. What a surprise for them to discover that they had so much in common with their neighbours! How was this even possible?

They tried to know more and their quest led them to the far end of their country where they actually had to acknowledge the same thing: invisible threads were linking the one to the other! Thrilled by such a discovery, driven by a curiosity they had never experienced before, they dared to cross the border to go and see the next villages in the neighbouring country. Would you believe me?! The long invisible threads went on there as well! So far away from home, they could still feel them, so fragile, taking them in directions they had never been taking before. Once in a while, during their journey, they would meet other people coming from unknown and faraway places. They were also carefully following a little thread since they left their home!...

You know how people are when they follow little invisible threads and when they meet each other! In a while, they exchange. Because all of this is so intriguing... Everyone tries to understand how it is possible that the other has also got a thread to follow. Everyone looks for the reason why some of these threads do cross each other in some places. And to which places the thread of the others leads... Through it all, many of them became aware that these fragile threads could be weaved together. Therefore they are more visible and more strong. They can then be followed and be useful to more people for them to go from one village to the other, from one country to the other. The fact is that this continent is not that big, but it is made out of so many of these threads!...

This special edition introduces you to some of these threads, to their weavers, to some villages, as well as to thoughts on the patterns of the tapestry. The continent, you might have recognised it: it's Europe. »

Christophe VOROS

*President of the French Federation
of European Cultural Routes*



Representatives of the Cultural Routes in front of the Cluny Abbey, France, Final transnational meeting, June 2019

THE CULTURAL ROUTES: A EUROPEAN INVENTION OF HERITAGE

The Council of Europe took up a daring challenge: What if we could look at our continent – the old Europe – through its history? More precisely: considering that Europe has been culturally formed on the basis of a rich alluvium deposited by the ebb and flow of great historical movements, why wouldn't we ride their waves? Why wouldn't we consider that each one of them left traces responding to each other all over the continent? Why wouldn't we connect these cultural testimonies beyond the borders in order for them to be the steps of a path leading to a journey? A journey through space and time during which we, Europeans, would become aware of the common cultural heritage we are sharing?



The Cultural Routes are an answer to these questions. The first one appeared in 1987. It is still the most well-known today: the routes to Santiago de Compostela. In 1977, Spain joined the Council of Europe who wished the country to be strongly linked to the rest of the continent as it is coming out of Franco's regime. In this context, it identified paths with different topics allowing historical and cultural connections to be shown between the Iberian Peninsula and its European neighbours. So were chosen the old routes to Santiago de Compostela. History, heritage, culture could thus be efficient binding agents for peace, prosperity and harmony. The Council of Europe chose to systematize its approach and founded a true cultural programme based on this interesting example. The programme is surely unique and its budget might be modest, but it is standing the test of time as it is still progressively developing 30 years after its creation.

Signposting along the Ways to Santiago de Compostela, France



Representatives of the Cultural Routes discovering the Palace of Europe, Strasbourg, France, Transnational meeting #7, January 2019

THE CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE ARE...

- 38 Routes are officially certified and acknowledged in the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe.
- The governance of the programme is coordinated in the framework of an Enlarged Partial Agreement (EPA) signed by 32 member States and 2 observers who wish to follow closely this cultural topic.
- Since 1998, the European Institute of Cultural Routes (EICR) has been managing the administration of the programme in the framework of an agreement between the Council of Europe and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg – that is why the office of the EICR is located there.
- Every 3 years, the certified Cultural Routes undergo a regular evaluation based on a series of criteria promoting European values and enhancing European memory, history and heritage. If they don't succeed in applying the criteria, the Routes can actually lose their certification.
- Every year, an Annual Consultative Forum is organised in a different member State of the EPA. This event is the most important one for the programme of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. Moreover, a Training Academy is proposed every year to the managers of the Routes.

DID YOU KNOW?

This official logo identifies the Cultural Routes certified by the Council of Europe:



This logo stands for the organisation managing and promoting the Programme of European Cultural Routes:



WHAT IS THE FRENCH FEDER CULTURAL ROUTES?

France is often being described as a geographical crossroad in Europe, a pivot between North and South. It is thus crossed by 2/3rd of the Cultural Routes certified by the Council of Europe. To them, one should also add the Routes that are being born and developed on the French territory without benefiting from this acknowledgement of European institutions.

Until 2010, the actors of these Routes did not have any relationship with each other and did not know each other really well. When the French ministries of Culture and Tourism signed a framework-convention where Cultural Routes were mentioned as a tool for territorial development, some of the Routes saw there an opportunity to start working together on a national scale on both short and long term. So was born the French Union of Cultural Routes.

Three years later, with an active support of the French Ministry of Culture, it became the French Federation of European Cultural Routes (FFICE).

What are its specifics?

To gather Cultural Routes both certified or not by the Council of Europe

To work with the Ministry of Culture

To implement outstanding projects

To be a place to exchange good practices

To be unique in Europe



National meeting of the Cultural Routes organised by the FFICE in the French Ministry for Culture, Paris, France, 2017

ATION OF EUROPEAN



FÉDÉRATION FRANÇAISE DES
ITINÉRAIRES CULTURELS EUROPÉENS

The unique digital map of the FFICE

13 Cultural Routes with hundreds of sites... What a challenge to have them all on the same map! And the FFICE succeeded in doing it.

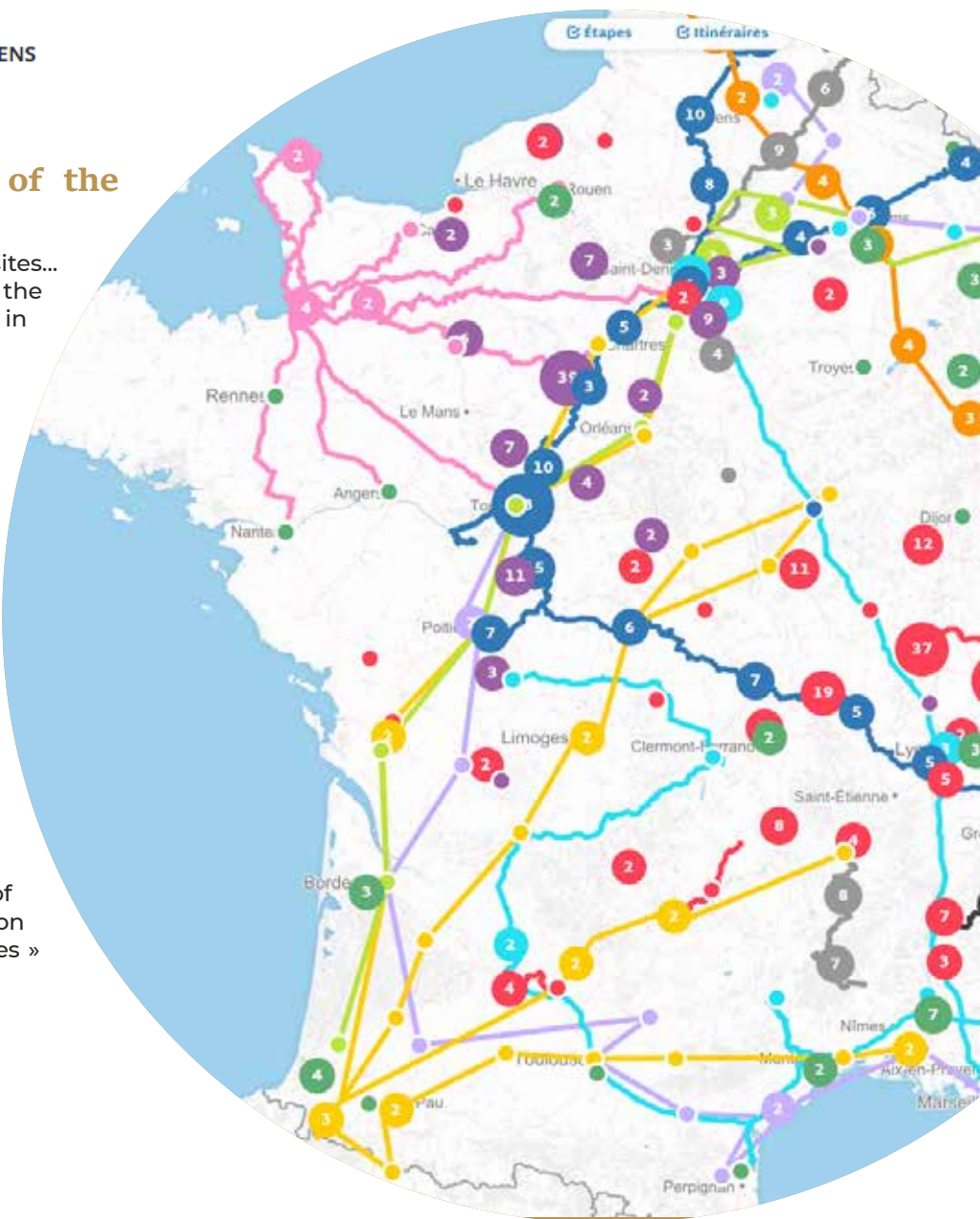
To do so, it developed a unique digital map allowing the user to show all routes and sites on different scales, but also to zoom in to discover each one of them : a church, a museum, a city, a castle, a vineyard, etc. with short illustrated texts.

map.ffice.eu

What in the field?

The FFICE is a privileged contact point for public authorities. It is leading projects in the fields of digital devices – such as cartography and a showcase site for the Routes – and of sustainable tourism – with a common signposting « European Cultural Routes » and the Golden Triangle app.

ffice.eu



Discover the members of the FFICE

The European Federation of Cluniac Sites
 sitesclunisiens.org

VIA REGIA - Europe, Cultures and Heritage
 via-regia.org

European Cultural Center Saint Martin of Tours
 saintmartindetours.eu

Les Chemins du Mont-Saint-Michel
lescheminsdumontsaintmichel.com

Tironensian Order
ordre-tiron.com

French Federation of Association of the Ways to Santiago de Compostela (FFACC)
 compostelle-france.fr

Via Charlemagne (Charles the Great)
 routecharlemagne.wordpress.com

Héloïse - Route of European Pedagogues
 pedagogues-heloises.eu

JEPCJ-France
 jecpj-france.com

Route of Franks and Visigoths
itineraireculturelfrancsetvisigoths.eu

French association of the Huguenots and Valdensians trail
surlespasdeshuguenots.eu

European network In the footsteps of R.L. Stevenson
rlstevenson-europe.org

DECRA, THE EUROPEAN CULTURAL ROUTES IN THE FIELD

FOLDER

« Developing European Cultural Routes for All » to get to know them better

A European Cultural Route, what is it exactly?!

When asked by the representatives themselves, the question may sound rather odd. In fact, they know their own network. But, at the same time, they do not know the other networks really well. And, more generally, the people don't have an overview of these Routes, even if they are primarily targeted as an audience. The diversity of topics, of paths, of organisations, of issues of each Route is so wide that it could seem almost impossible to get a image of a standard Route.

Thus, we confronted ourselves with one key question: if we go beyond the institutional texts of the Council of Europe or of the European Institute of Cultural Routes, *What is the reality of the Routes in the field?*

Who are the people enabling them to even exist?

What do the networks support?

What do they bring to the public?

In order to answer these elementary but essential questions the FFICE has been facing many times over the years, it launched a European project in 2017 called DECRA, standing for « Developing European Cultural Routes for All ».

It was possible to think of such a project thanks to the availability of EU-Erasmus+ funds (*).

The project is unique, coordinated by the FFICE and, during 24 months, it aimed at:

Gathering a set of information among 16 European Cultural Routes to have them analysed and to get an image of each one of them

Allowing the Routes to exchange and transmit information regarding the good practices developed in their networks and making available examples of good practices developed by their colleagues in other Routes in order to imagine adapted solutions for the networks and their members

Developing a unique Web platform allowing the Routes to go on exchanging and cooperating on a long-term period

To do so, it was necessary to have the people of these Routes meeting and working together. With that in mind, the FFICE got together with some of them (called « the partners » here) in different European countries to organise and host transnational meetings. Each one of these meetings gathered representatives of the partners and of the members of the FFICE in order to introduce and discuss the functioning of the hosting network, its heritage, its topics and its characteristics.

The following folder introduces you to the FFICE and its 6 associated partners in this ambitious project (pp. 10-21). It also presents 6 of the 8 transnational meetings (pp. 22-45) - 2 of them were only about administration and finances, nothing exciting about that! Finally, the last section gives the first answers to our key concern : What are the Cultural Routes? Who are they?

Decra in a few figures

24 number of months during which the project has been implemented – and we do not count the **6** months of preparation beforehand

7 partners, forming a European consortium

4 hosting countries for **4** topics

8 transnational meetings

20 regional partners, local authorities and associations in **4** countries

200 participants, from **17** European Cultural Routes

More than a **100** projects presented on **1** open-access common Web platform



Representatives of the Cultural Routes in the Pula Arena, Croatia, Transnational meeting #3, April 2018

Erasmus+ is not only for young people!

When one thinks of Erasmus+, one might think of mobility grants for students. However, over the years, the programme developed its field of action. Nowadays, it supports mobility for training and learning for people of all ages as well as the development of tools and strategies necessary to further enhance learning and mobility in Europe, also fostering cooperation for the exchange of good practices in the field of life-long learning. The DECRA project was developed particularly in this field.



 ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus

THE EUROPEAN ROUTES OF



JEWISH HERITAGE

To propose a renewed vision of the meaning of Jewish heritage nowadays.

The European Routes of Jewish Heritage have been certified by the Council of Europe in 2004. They connect 17 European countries, from Portugal to Azerbaijan, and witness the essential role played by Jews in European history.

The Routes are a window to the history and the Jewish presence in Europe. They are stories of migrations, persecutions and precariousness; but also of exchanges, humanity and an abundance of mutual enrichment and co-creation. It is an extraordinary story!

Every Route - national, regional or thematic - proposes to discover places of high heritage significance, such as archaeological sites, historic synagogues and cemeteries, ritual baths, Jewish quarters, monuments and memorials, archives, libraries and museums.

The key goals of the European Routes of Jewish Heritage are to preserve, promote and keep alive Jewish heritage, through the development of projects in the fields of research, heritage, contemporary culture and art, and cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development.

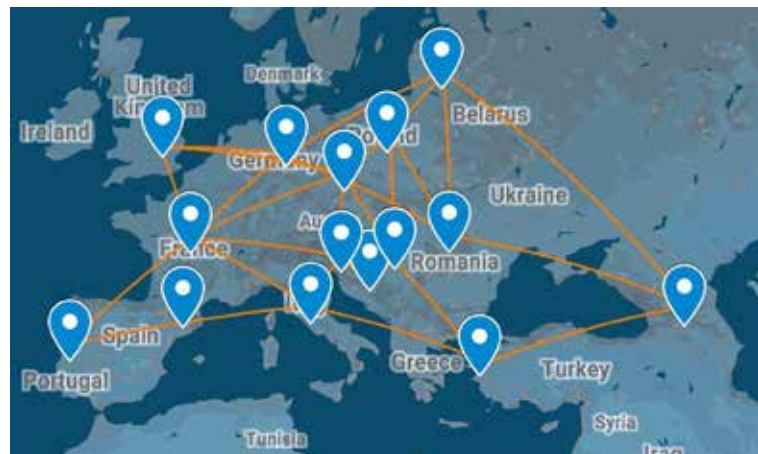
 jewishheritage.org

The European Routes of Jewish Heritage is one of the leading projects of the European Association for the preservation and promotion of Jewish culture and heritage (AEPJ).

The organisation is composed of 22 public and private institutions working on a local to national scale. They all aim at supporting the preservation and promotion of Jewish culture and heritage. Beside the development of the European Route, it also coordinates the European Days of Jewish Culture, consisting of more than 900 events happening every year in 30 countries simultaneously!

The staff of the AEPJ is composed of 4 persons working in close cooperation with their European Governing Board. Its office is located in Barcelona, in Spain.

 jewishheritage.org



- Actions in 17 european countries -



Victor SORENSSEN
Director of the AEPJ

« The AEPJ - the European Association for the Promotion of Jewish heritage and Culture - is a consortium, a network formed by 14 institutions that are working in the field of Jewish heritage. And we found institutions of very different nature : local, regional, national, but also public and private and even federations of Jewish communities. [...] Working as a network, it means to face many challenges. Maybe the most important one is to create an effective coordination in terms of communication and decision-making processes. In order to face this challenge, what we are trying to do is to create a work plan that can define in a very clear way our goals, how to achieve those goals, and also to set a clear and transparent set of rules for everyone.

We understand that working as a network, it's more than different institutions working together. We understand a network as a community of ideas. A network can be a place for reflection, a space of discussion and debates, and an opportunity to build mutual trust between those institutions. And we believe that, if we achieve to create this kind of network, the impact of our actions will be bigger. »

ARCHITECTURE OF TOTALITARIAN IN EUROPE'S URBAN MEMORY



REGIMES OF THE 20TH CENTURY

To promote values of democracy and cooperation between people

The European Cultural Route ATRIUM was certified by the Council of Europe in 2014. It develops its actions in 20 cities in 5 countries : Italy, Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania. The Route is working on the specific architectural heritage left by totalitarian regimes during the central decades of the 20th century.

Totalitarian regimes, such as Staline's USSR and Mussolini's Italy, built new cities, districts and buildings, and rebuilt others, using the most advanced concepts of architectural and urban design of their times. Today, these places are becoming open-air museums.

This heritage calls on a rather recent cultural memory connected to totalitarian regimes and to traumatic events and could be qualified as "dissonant", "disturbing". While firmly rejecting totalitarianisms, the Route is also leading to an exploration of the sociological, ideological and geographical complexities of the history of these regimes, as viewed through the prism of urban landscapes in different cities, in order to support values of freedom and democracy in Europe.

In order to reach such a goal, great actions are implemented in the fields of culture and tourism, based on a European, ethical and participative approach to heritage.

 atriumroute.eu

The European Cultural Route ATRIUM is the core activity of the association ATRIUM, created in 2013 by the partners of the ATRIUM project (2011-2013) implemented in the framework of a EU-funded programme.

The association is taking care of the management of the Route, but it also aims at coordinating local paths included in the international Route, at extending the global knowledge related to the architecture of totalitarian regimes of the 20th century, and at promoting a sustainable cultural tourism and questioning dissonant heritage.

The seat of the association is located in Forlì, in Italy. It is led by a Governing Board composed of 8 persons from 5 different countries and a president. A staff of 4 persons is currently working for the Route, as well as many partners and consultants.

 atriumroute.eu



- Actions in 5 european countries -



Elisa GIOVANNETTI
Member of the Governing Board – Former President

« Our topic is the architectures of the past totalitarian regimes and our most important challenge is to make people aware about this important and dissonant heritage in order to make them understand what is the value of democracy, what is the story of these architectures and what happened in Europe in the 20th century. This challenge involves in particular young people because we consider young people as the most important target of our Route, in particular because they are students and they are involved in knowing the story of Europe, but also because they are young and they are the future of this continent. Right now, we are involved in a lot of European projects [...]. But the most important activity we do to improve our Route and to make it more rich and more powerful, is involving citizens, associations, municipalities and all the people that are living in the cities involved in our Route to better understand the story of the 20th century that involved their cities and make them aware of the importance of democracy in the continent. »

THE ROMAN EMPERORS AND



DANUBE WINE ROUTE

Make out of a border that separates people a way to bring them closer.

The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route was certified by the Council of Europe in 2015. It extends through nine European countries along the Danube and further: Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and Northern Macedonia.

It is a network of sub-destinations, created around individual archaeological sites, locations, places and buildings, which are monuments to the leadership of the Roman emperors in Late Antiquity. Wine, as the key sub-theme, blends in conceptually with the introduction of Roman culture and social mores into the Danube region.

Whether you are hiking, cycling, driving, travelling by boat or train, or combining the lot, the cross-border journey along the Roman Danube Frontier will reveal the outstanding natural beauty of the river and its hidden historic and archaeological treasures, many of which are off the beaten track.

Lovers of the Antiquity will be amazed by the abundance of architectural and artistic treasures on display, which document the presence of ancient Rome and its emperors in this part of Europe.

 romanemperorsroute.org

The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route is one of the leading projects of the Danube Competence Center (DCC), an association of tourism groups centered around the Danube.

The focus of their action? To build and support networks of tourism stakeholders by enhancing transnational cooperation through various tourism development and promotional activities while implementing various projects and promoting a unique tourism brand for a competitive European Danube region.

The DCC gathers members from the public, private and non-governmental sectors of 10 Danube countries: Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova and Ukraine.

In order to achieve these objectives, the DCC works within three core functions:

- advocacy for the Danube destination ;
- marketing and promotion ;
- tourism product development.

The DCC is composed of a Governing Board of 5 persons and a staff of 6 persons. Their office is located in Belgrade, in Serbia.

 danubecc.org



- Actions in 5 european countries -



Danko COSIC
Director of programmes

« We were trying to create an itinerary that would be interesting for our travellers and guests where the Roman heritage serves as an inspiration for travelling, but we're also inviting our guests to learn and know more about local cultures and local traditions along the Danube. The main challenge we are facing so far is building internal coherence because in most of the countries, the Danube is a border, so people see the Danube not as a way to travel further but mainly as a way to stop their travelling. Therefore, we are trying to present the Danube as a Route for itself and building internal cohesion ; we're trying to introduce the idea of the Route's sub-destinations. The sub-destinations are geographical areas around archeological localities which create a unique travelling story and experience [...] where the local service providers, local craftsmen and local producers are actually gathering together to improve the local capacity of the Route and, therefore, the overall competitiveness of the Route»

VIA REGIA - CULTURAL ROUTE OF



THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Thanks to its long history, VIA REGIA is a unique symbol of the common European cultural space.

The European Route VIA REGIA was certified by the Council of Europe in 2005. It gathers public and private bodies, as well as citizens, from 6 countries: France, Germany, Poland, Belarus, Lithuania and Ukraine, along the longest and the oldest road link between Eastern and Western Europe.

From the Stone Age on, this corridor situated south of the ice cap and north of the middle mountainous zone, was the favorite region of passage of migrating tribes. Then, during Antiquity and the Middle Ages, it was progressively formed and known as the « Via Regia » - the « King's Road » - expending from Kiev to Santiago de Compostela along 4.500 km through 10 European countries.

Over the last 2000 years, merchants, soldiers, kings, pilgrims, migrants, and different kinds of travellers, have left their marks on the VIA REGIA. This long historical background is reflected by a rich heritage, ranging from architectural heritage to intangible traditions that have shaped the European continent.

Today, the traveller can experience the principle of «deceleration» as a basis for slowly enjoying this Route across Europe's cultural space, from East to West or vice versa, going for a long ride or short loops around the road. He/she can also discover the many projects implemented along this major European axis, going from fine arts to historical research, from cultural tourism to exchange between citizens and awareness-raising actions for the younger generations to better know their cultural and artistic heritage.

 via-regia.org

The European Route VIA REGIA is the core project of the association NETZ - Medien und Gesellschaft e.V., which is promoting cooperation in Europe and raising awareness for European citizens of their common cultural identity.

The Route VIA REGIA covers a large European space and gathers a range of stakeholders. It works democratically and values field initiatives. Nowadays, NETZ is leading the European Center for Culture and Information in Thuringia, which has existed since 1991 and which is the international point of contact for the Route, also coordinating its transnational projects.

A staff of 8 persons led by their director are currently working on the development of the VIA REGIA. Their office is located in Erfurt, in Germany.

 via-regia.org



- Actions in 5 european countries -



Caroline FISCHER
Director

« We have one common project all the members are working on: it's our common service platform on the Internet. But then, every member can realize their own projects at their location or they can group together to realize transnational, bilateral projects as they prefer and as appropriate in their portfolio. There are regional structures, where the members can group together to organise themselves in regional areas.

Our main challenge is information, language and communication. When you have 5 different languages, and the people are sometimes in smaller institutions, sometimes in bigger institutions it's not easy to transfer all the information on what's going on, which activities are developed, to every single member. [...] And, on the other hand, it's pretty hard for us to know what's going on: the members are realizing many, many projects, many, many events, activities, and sometimes they just forget to inform us [...]. So we just try, as a point of contact, to travel a lot to cope with that, to really meet the people regularly to get the information at source. And this is maybe the best way for us to deal with this problem. »

THE ROMANESQUE ROUTES OF



EUROPEAN HERITAGE

Romanesque art is unity in diversity.

TRANSROMANICA stands for the Romanesque Routes of European Heritage and connects regions across 9 countries stretching from Portugal to Romania and from Italy to Germany. In recognition of the work carried out in order to promote European values on the basis of Romanesque heritage interpretation and management, TRANSROMANICA was certified as a « Cultural Route of the Council of Europe » in 2007.

TRANSROMANICA promotes magnificent cathedrals, peaceful monasteries, beautiful churches, well-fortified castles and connecting bridges telling the stories of life in the Middle Ages. In these exciting and dangerous times, religion was in the centre of urban life and travelling was essential to the spread of knowledge and ideas.

Around the year 1000, this was the precondition for the development of a new kind of art and architecture in Europe: the Romanesque style. A unique association of regional characteristics allows visitors to experience a great variety of shades, cultures and influences witnessed and represented by the heritage sites.

The Romanesque Routes of European Heritage aim at making the different sites accessible to an enlarged and diverse audience. Travellers are also invited to discover the regions, landscapes and specialities around the places through unique cultural attractions and tourism events.

 transromanica.com

The Romanesque Routes of European Heritage is the core project of the association TRANSROMANICA e.V., an organisation promoting Romanesque art and architecture in Europe with an approach of sustainable tourism, economical development of the involved regions and citizen co-operation.

The association was founded in 2007 following a three-year INTERREG project (EU-programme). The network has grown and developed constantly over the years.

Under the leadership of an Executive Board composed of 4 persons, a staff of 1 to 2 persons is coordinating actions in the fields of tourism, culture, sciences and education. The head office is located in Magdeburg, in Germany.

 transromanica.com



- Actions in 5 european countries -



Christin LESER
Managing Director

« The members have the goal to valorize, maintain, present and preserve the outstanding heritage dating back to the 10th to 12th century. The cooperation of the network is characterized by long-term activities such as the presentation and the visibility of the whole network to the outside as well as short- and medium-term projects which all contribute to the fulfillment of our objectives as a European network and Cultural Route of the Council of Europe. This work, of course, comes along with challenges. One of them would be, for example, the involvement of and constant cooperation with all network partners while dealing with different working cultures and very big geographical distances between them accross Europe as well as different needs and aims. One of the opportunities, on the other hand, are the growing possibilities that modern technologies are offering us to facilitate our work as a network. However, we should never forget the personal aspect, the person-to-person communication and interaction that is very important for this kind of project. »

AVIGNON UNIVERSITY AND THE



EUROPEAN CULTURAL ROUTES

Stand out, innovate, act, excel, go beyond the possible

In the Avignon University, the « Culture and Communication » team is orienting its research towards culture, heritage and museology in order to better understand their interactions.

Its work is also highly pedagogical as it is coordinating a Master's Degree « Mediations, Museums, Heritage » (MMP) in the department of Communication Studies. This degree aims at training students for future jobs in communication and mediation in the fields of culture, museums and heritage.

 univ-avignon.fr

For the lecturers and their students, the DECRA project has been an outstanding field of research to question an European approach of heritage through the Cultural Routes.

Is there actually a European approach to heritage? What do the Cultural Routes represent for the people involved in them? How do these people build up a picture of their own network? Is it possible to develop a typology of the managers of the Routes? What interactions do they have with each other?

If the answers to these questions might be interesting, so is also the way a scientific methodology is being developed. After two years, a first scientific « picture » of the Routes can be drawn. It is available at the end of this edition (pp. 46-47).

Avignon University (Université d'Avignon et des Pays de Vaucluse until 2018) is located in the region Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur, in southern France. It is one of the oldest French universities and is quite an exception as it is located in a city with fewer than 100,000.

The university has around 7.000 students divided on two campuses and is developing around two axes. One of them is « Culture, Heritage and Digital Societies » (Campus Hannah Arendt).

 univ-avignon.fr

The team involved in the DECRA project – partly attached to the research center Norbert Elias (UMR 8562) – is composed of senior lecturers, assistant professors, PhD and Master students. Isabelle Brianso, senior lecturer and researcher, has been coordinating the project.



Avignon University, Hannah Arendt Campus, France



Isabelle Brianso
Senior lecturer and researcher

« The DECRA project is a fascinating case study. It opened many opportunities for our research team and for our students in order to broaden our pedagogical approach. For example, the Master's Degree « Mediations, Museums, Heritage » (MMP) has an innovative facility called Museocom which is a young agency specialising in communication and mediation of culture, museums and heritage. It allows students to have a first professional experience during their university studies. For two years, the European Cultural Routes have been at the center of their works, sometimes also the subject of their internships. Furthermore, the research team is involved in the internationally renowned scientific review called Culture & Musées in which academic publications present original research works on culture's audiences, institutions and mediations. The works done in the framework of the DECRA project will be published soon. To this, we also have to add the partnerships developed with the Routes and the long-term studies that will come along with them.





When?

From March 20th to 22nd 2018



Where?

Forli, in Emilia-Romagna, Italie



Host?

ATRIUM – Architecture of Totalitarian Regimes of the 20th century In Urban Memory



Partners?

Municipality of Forli, Graduate school for Translation of Bologna University, association Regnoli41, association Spazi Indecisi, association Deina



Topics?

Social inclusion and citizen participation



Technical Institute Guglielmo Marconi, Forlì, Italy

AT FORLÌ, ABOUT SOCIAL INCLUSION AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

ATRIUM and the Municipality of Forlì hosted the very first gathering of the series of thematic meetings in the framework of the DECRA project. How to approach heritage left by totalitarian regimes? What kind of relationships do inhabitants have with such an heritage? How to present this heritage to tourists? The topics of social inclusion and citizen participation could not have happened in a better place. Forlì challenges, questioned and fostered a great deal of thinking for the participants of 12 Cultural Routes and of the Avignon University.

Forli: an experience of heritage enhancement with and for the inhabitants

Forli is the city where, in the 1920s and the 1930s, Benito Mussolini developed a model of fascist architecture applied to a city centre. This legacy is monumental and dramatic. Nowadays it is a witness of the past but also a daily place to live for its inhabitants, a heritage that should be maintained, restored and explained. Claudia Castellucci, director of ATRIUM, led the participants through the city with surprising stops where architecture was serving a totalitarian ideology that can be difficult to talk about. Its insertion in today's urban landscape, its rehabilitation and its interpretation can bring very different reactions and answers.

In Forli, the experience of « immersive » translation has been validated!

For DECRA's transnational meetings, the choice has been done from the beginning to have everybody understanding the content but also to avoid creating barriers between participants. In terms of translation, this implied that all meetings were proposed both in French and English, but avoiding the use of headphones and booths.

Different set ups were tested, but the one in Forli remains the most interesting: 6 students from the graduate school of translation of the Bologna University took place among the participants and thus translated in small groups, also taking an important part in elucidating the content. A highly positive experience that should be renewed!

Inhabitants regaining their territory: ATRIUM's specific know-how

The ATRIUM Cultural Route has a significant experience in the fields of social inclusion and citizen participation. Its leaders wanted to share it with the participants during a workshop where discussions allowed exchanging views. Elisa Giovannetti moderated for the English-speaking group while Claudia Castellucci took care of the French-speaking one.

Three key entries were used: access, mirroring and co-construction. Taking as an example the projects presented in Forli, the participants then shared their opinion on present and future opportunities for such actions while also questioning the validity of such concepts in other contexts or on other scales.

Accessibility: « Regnoli 41 »

Regnoli is a street in Forli's city center, which was almost considered a ghetto, a degraded place due to the arrival of new immigrants. The shops closed, the people who lived there were more and more isolated... A group of residents starts a path of inversion using art and creativity, mixed with actions of social animation, for the rebirth of the place both in terms of business and relations.

 @Regnoli41

« Totally Lost » – Actions of reappropriation of the territory

In Forli as well as in other cities in Europe, the setting up of the « Totally Lost » exhibitions has become an opportunity to involve many local associations interested in bringing back to life those spaces once lost. Everyone participates with activities of their own interest, inventing together a new life for a forgotten building.

 totallylost.eu

« Luoghi del cuore » (Heart's places)

This participative experience is led by the members of the Foro Boario neighbourhood committee. It is a project about re-creating relationships and participation beginning with the neighbourhood Foro Boario which has changed its appearance over the decades, losing social relations. The project started from the local citizens' wish to refurbish the building, the former Foro Boario built in the 1920s, from its present state of degradation. It gives the name to the district itself. The participatory process, which has developed substantially through word of mouth, involves the collection of interviews, vintage photos and stories of the Foro Boario.

 spaziindecisi.it/space/foro-boario

A large, white marble statue of a young man, Icarus, stands on a stone pedestal. He is depicted from the waist up, looking upwards and to the left, with his right arm raised and holding a piece of stone. The statue is set against a background of a light-colored, textured wall. The statue's musculature is highly detailed, and it has a small, curly lock of hair on its chest.

« FARO HERITAGE WALK »

The experience of the DEINA association began with the work done with high school students of Forlì and neighbouring schools, as part of the project « Auschwitz Reminder », preparation for the visit to the Nazi concentration camps. Later, the project was developed locally through specific workshops with these students dedicated to discussion and reflection on their city. Therefore the work done at a European level was performed locally trying to deduce reflections on the Forlì of the fascist period and on the buildings and places that best represent it.

Forlì's "guided" visit allowed the participants to question heritage through the topic of "Propaganda, consensus and repression of dissent".

 deina.it

Statue of Icarus, Forlì, Italy



When?

From April 17th to 19th 2018



Where?

Pula, in Istria, Croatia



Host?

Danube Competence Center



Partners?

Municipality of Pula, Tourism Office
Pula, Croatian Chamber of Economy,
Archeological Museum of Istria



Topic?

Enhancement of local heritage and
connections with tourism, Faro
Convention



Roman Arena in Pula, Croatia

IN PULA, LOCAL HERITAGE AS A BASIS FOR SHARED EMOTIONS AND DIFFERENTIATED VIEWS

The work session in Pula has been characterized by a great diversity of meetings and topics all leading to a key question: how to enhance and promote local heritage with an European view, also involving both inhabitants and tourists?

Can the Faro Convention be a framework for reflection and action for the Cultural Routes?

Isabelle BRIANSO, senior lecturer in the Avignon University, introduced the Faro Convention of the Council of Europe, also called « Framework convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society ». Opened for signature to member States since 2005, this innovative text is developing to specific definition of cultural heritage.

On the one hand, cultural heritage is defined as « a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time ».

On the other hand, a heritage community is said to consist of « people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations ».

In that way, the Faro convention proposes an approach in which the concept of cultural heritage is always thought in connection with « the people » and always serves as a matter of discussion and of building a citizen « living together » based on new models of development.

Heritage as it is described in the convention is the one identified by the locals who should decide collectively what it is, how it should be preserved and managed in the areas where it is located. The approach is participative in the way that heritage communities are the ones responsible for their heritage which they choose as relevant for themselves.

 coe.int/fr/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/0900001680083748

Gladiators in Pula's Roman arena: Staging heritage?

Sanja Cinkopan Korotaj, director of the Tourism Office of Pula, introduced the show "Spectacula Antika", created thanks to the cooperation between the Tourism Office, the Archeological Museum of Istria and the Collective of Sports Organizations of Pula. After 10 years, the show is now self-sustaining. It happens every week-end during the summer season and gathers 75 performers – and, among them, the gladiators of the Gladiators' School of Pula. Around 25.000 spectators participate in the show every year.

The participants attended a performance of a group of 4 gladiators and 3 Roman legionnaires in the basement of the arena. Then, they had the opportunity to exchange with them to better understand their involvement: year-long training, work with archeologists and historians to know the status of the gladiators, learning and transmitting both fighting skills and technics to make their equipments (iron, wood, paint, etc.).

 spectaculaantiqua.com

With the representatives of local tourism agencies: the exchange of views between touristic and cultural stakeholders

Co-organised with the Croatian Chamber of Economy, the meeting allowed to exchange views between the participants, that is representatives of Cultural Routes and representatives of local mostly family-run tourism agencies. Approaches have sometimes been really different about the way to develop tourism in the Cultural Routes and fostered a discussion on key issues.

For example, it was proposed that the Cultural Routes could be a platform to sell other products with authenticity as an added value. But Cultural Routes do not have a positive image of tourism agencies and their vision of « authenticity » might be slightly different. When organising trips, the managers of the Routes rely on local stakeholders that are not from the tourism sector. It could thus be important to better organise the partnership of a specific destination between tourism stakeholders and the ones of the Cultural Routes.

However, a preliminary stage could be to identify the audiences of the Cultural Routes and the way they could cross the ones of the Destination Management Companies (DMC). All of that without forgetting to reconcile tourists and inhabitants on a local level!

 hgk.hr

BRIJUNI ISLAND : EXPERIENCING « HERITAGE PATCHWORK »

Off Pula, Brijuni Islands consists of cultural and natural heritage assets from different times of the region's history: Roman ruins, a church of the 16th century, villas built and used by Tito, a so-called « safari » where animals from all over the world are preserved after being offered to Tito by different heads of state, etc. There is also a museum holding photos of Tito and a museum with stuffed animals which were once part of the zoological parc of the island.

The visit of the island fascinated the participants and raised many questions regarding the so-called « heritage patchwork »: What perception do the visitors have of such a place consisting of a very heterogeneous heritage? What stories and what history do they recall of it? Do the museographical choices – dating back to some decades – foster an appreciation of the history by visitors?

 np-brijuni.hr/fr/



Roman ruins, Brijuni Island, Croatia



When?

From May 17th to 20th 2018



Where?

Thiron-Gardais, in the Centre-Val-de-Loire region, France



Hosts?

The French Federation of European Cultural Routes with the association of the Tironensian Order



Partners?

Municipality of Thiron-Gardais, Regional authority Centre-Val-de-Loire, French Ministry of Culture



Topic?

Capitalisation and transferability of experiences



Buildings of the abbey of the Holy Trinity of Tiron, Thiron-Gardais, France

IN THIRON-GARDAIS, WITNESSING THE BIRTH OF AN EUROPEAN CULTURAL ROUTE

During the first months, the DECRA project has been implemented at a rapid pace with meetings and the beginning of the survey on practices. In Thiron-Gardais, the partners met for a mid-term discussion on the complex question of transferability of experiences – how to learn from each other.

The great DECRA survey

A unique survey has been launched during the first months of the project. Coordinated by Marie Gaillard, project manager, and Isabelle Brianso, senior lecturer and researcher in Communication Sciences, it is about understanding the practices of people involved in the networks of the European Cultural Routes: actions, projects implemented alone or with other people, in associations, museums, tourist offices, historical monuments, etc. Three topics were especially investigated: social inclusion and citizen participation, physical and digital accessibility, and the promotion of local heritage.

Nathan Martin, a student studying for a Master's degree at Avignon University (Museums, Mediations, Heritage), analysed and treated the surveys in both French and English, that is the transcription of answers into useable data. His work then served as a basis for the development of the DECRA Web platform where all described projects can be found as a source of learning and inspiration.

Did you say projects?! A quick and non exhaustive glimpse...

- The footstep of Saint Martin (France)
- Contemporary milestones along the VIA REGIA (Germany)
- The restoration of Vouillé's windmill (France)
- The Roman market in Sexaginta Prista (Bulgaria)
- Compostela 2000 – Social rehabilitation of juvenile offenders (France)
- The rehabilitation of heritage and social housing on the Island of Lastovo (Croatia)
- The medieval house called « of the dragons » in Cluny (France)
- The restoration of a galleon in Bristol (England)
- The cultural and touristic valorisation of the Sambre canal (France)
- « Memory of the salon » – Collecting and sharing memories (Spain)
- « Specially Unknown » – Collecting stories of refugees (France)
- The creation of a rest house in Sarceaux on the Way to Mont-Saint-Michel (France)
- A mobile app for the interpretation of the heritage of Roman emperors (Serbia)

How to deal with the question of « transferability »?

Transferability is one of the main issue the DECRA project dealt with: how to make out of a personal or association experience an inspiration for somebody else? How to organise a transmission allowing the understanding of the contents of the projects, but also its means, difficulties and the solutions the managers had to face, tackle and adapt? Additionally, what kind of capacities does this transmission require of those who wish to organise it?

All of these questions were discussed during a workshop where the participants had to present two experiences of their Cultural Route and other had to transcript them with their own words. A fascinating exchange allowed to apprehend the wide range of projects implemented in the Cultural Routes, both in their form and substance.

Thiron-Gardais, an architectural heritage in a rural area

Thiron-Gardais is a village with 1.000 inhabitants, but it is also the mother house of a monastic order that does not exist anymore: the Tironensian Order. During its period of widest expansion towards northern Europe in the Middle Ages, it reached Scotland. The abbey of the Holy Trinity of Tiron was founded in 1114 by Bernard of Ponthieu, also called Bernard of Thiron, and contributed to the development of the surrounding city. Nowadays, among others, the huge abbey church remains and questions the preservation and restoration of heritage in rural areas. Victor Provôt, Thiron's city mayor, discussed this issue with the participants.

At the foot of the abbey church, a royal military college was built in the 16th century. Today, it is partly the private residence of Stephane Bern, a famous French broadcaster, and partly a museum. Set up in the former classrooms of the college which have been completely restored, the museum is dedicated to the history of the college, but also of all royal military colleges founded in France. Another part introduces the history of the neighbouring abbey. Once again, the visit allowed the participants to put into perspective the enhancement of historical monuments, being here a private property, with strong local roots and national outreach.

 collegeroyal-thirongardais.com



CEL'TIRON FESTIVAL: PROMOTING HERITAGE THROUGH CULTURAL AND SPORTS EVENTS

Organised every two years in Thiron-Gardais, the Cel'Tiron Festival gives prominence to both local and European heritage connected to the history of the Tironensian Order. If you have never seen somebody throwing a tree trunk, this is the place to be! Settled in the park of the abbey church, between gardens and historical buildings, the festival allows the visitor to discover Scottish traditions – Highland games, dances and music – as well as local and European gastronomy. The friendly atmosphere invites everybody, young and old, to enjoy the diversity of the Tironensian Order throughout Europe.

Did you know? The abbey of Thiron is mentioned in some chapters of the famous « Roman de Renart », a part of the medieval writings about Reynard the Fox. It is said that, in order to escape his enemies, Reynard the Fox turned Isengrim the Wolf into a monk of Thiron! A story told by the children of the village during a show they offered to the visitors of the festival.

 ordre-tiron.com

Bell tower of the church of the Holy Trinity and Royal college, Thiron-Gardais, France



When?

From October 16th to 18th 2018



Where?

Weissenfels, in Saxony-Anhalt, Allemagne



Hosts?

Association NETZ e.V., responsible of the VIA REGIA Cultural Route and association TRANSROMANICA e.V., responsible of the TRANSROMANICA Cultural Route



Partners?

Municipality of Weissenfels, Tourist Office of Weissenfels, museum Schloss Lützen, association Schloss Goseck e.V., European Center for Culture and Information in Thuringia



Topic?

Physical and digital accessibility



Statues of musicians, Weissenfels, Germany

IN WEISSENFELS, HERITAGE FOR ALL!

« **D**eveloping European Cultural Routes for All »: in Weissenfels, projects and visits showcased the accessibility of places for everyone in order to foster a better participation and a better knowledge about these places. Such a requirement leads to complex questions and innovative – and sometimes also surprising – solutions are implemented.

The hard question of physical and digital accessibility

What a complex issue! Because today the word « accessibility » has a wide diversity of meanings and purposes, of actions and projects trying to improve it.

In the framework of the DECRA project, the approach has been specific in two ways. Firstly, it is about dealing with European and international contexts of policy formulation and of standardization of the access « for all ». Secondly, accessibility was not only approached in terms of accessibility to sites and monuments, but also in the spirit of the « for all » reflection: culture is thus targeted as a whole – heritage, knowledge, nature, fine arts, etc. - and it is not only about finding solutions for people « with special needs ».

During the different presentations, everyone could see the diversity and the ingenuity of the projects implemented in and by the Cultural Routes on different scales: local, regional, national and European.

The « escorting house »: experiencing a surprising place with multiple functions

The « escorting house » (« Geleitshaus » in German) is a building of the 16th century named after its function : here, the soldiers could rent escorting and defense services for their journeys to their next quarters. The historic building is particularly famous because, after dying on the battlefield during the Thirty Years' War, the Swedish king Gustavus Adolphus was embalmed here and then his body was sent back to Sweden.

Today, the building hosts many activities. On the first floor, a museum tells local history linked to the Thirty Years' War. On the ground floor, an Irish pub welcomes the visitors and offers them Irish drinks and local gastronomy; in the inner courtyard, they can also enjoy concerts and other cultural events.

 geleitshaus.com

Speed-dating of the Cultural Routes !

Do you know what a speed-dating is? It is a social event during which a single person has got 7 minutes to introduce him/herself to another single person.

A speed dating for the Cultural Routes, what a strange idea, you could think! Actually, not that much.

In pairs, the representatives of the Routes have got a few minutes to introduce each one to a project. Then, the pairs change and the same thing happens with different projects. In the end, each participant must summarize the projects he/she has heard of.

This exercise was both fun and surprising but allowed the participants to discover quickly many projects implemented by their colleagues, but also to enhance their capacities to listen, synthetise and transmit.

LÜTZEN, ITS CASTLE-MUSEUM AND ITS BATTLEFIELD

Lützen is about 20 km away, north-east from Weissenfels, on an historic path of the VIA REGIA. It is a major place of the Thirty Years' War, a series of conflicts to which all European countries took part from 1618 to 1648 when the Peace of Westphalia was signed.

In Lützen, the castle hosts a museum telling the story of the war, especially the battle of Lützen in 1632 between the army of Swedish king Gustavus Adolphus and the one of the Catholic League lead by Albrecht von Wallenstein. More than 30.000 men fought there. The visit also includes a presentation of the archeological excavations made on the battlefield.

The visit questioned two aspects of accessibility. The difficulty to access the castle was discussed – the first step for a building to become accessible being the accuracy of the information given to those willing to visit the place! Furthermore, if the Thirty Years' War is actually a well-known historical event for German-speaking areas, it has also been noticed that a more detailed explanation would be needed for other visitors lacking the cultural and historical background to discover the place.

 museumluetzen.de



THE CASTLE OF GOSECK

About 20 km west from Weissenfels, on a hill upon the Saale river, stands the castle of Goseck. « Castle » might be a little bit simplistic for this monument which, over time, has been a castle, a Benedictine monastery, a private manor, a youth hostel, a school and nowadays a European center for culture and music. The place is a member of the “Strasse der Romanik” (Route of the Romanesque art), a regional loop being part of the TRANSROMANICA Cultural Route.

Robert Weinkauff, vice-president of the association Schloss Goseck e.V., is taking charge of the management and of the animation of the site. He welcomed the participants and took them on a tour, explaining its different functions – heritage site, artist residency, restaurant – and introducing the use of digital devices. Christin Leser also presented the mobile application ‘Strasse der Romanik’ helping travellers to visit many Romanesque sites in Saxony-Anhalt.

 schlossgoseck.de/

Goseck Castle, Germany, Transnational meeting #6, October 2018



When?

From January 29th to 31st 2019



Where?

Strasbourg, in the Grand-Est region, France



Host?

AEPJ – European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish culture and heritage



Partners?

Council of Europe, association JEPCJ-France



Topic?

Networks development and sustainability



Balcony of the Alsacian Museum, Strasbourg, France

AT STRASBOURG, ALL ROADS LEAD TO EUROPE

For three intense days, in the European Youth Center in Strasbourg (EYCS), more than 50 representatives of Cultural Routes, of the Avignon University and of the FFICE met and dealt with the difficult question of European networks through their own different practices and through the multiple interactions connecting them all – even if we don't always see it at first.

Did you say: network? Three case studies

Working as a network is one of the most complex form of organisation. It is possible to approach them through two concepts: their means and their contents. The means are the implemented channels of transmission whereas the contents are at the same time the information that circulates, the relationships that are built among stakeholders and users and the resources that are interchanged.

To make this rather complex description a reality, three young speakers were invited to share their experience on different networks. Eloi Flesch, a PhD student in Communication Sciences, introduced his work, especially the development of a system of pooling cultural information applied to a network of heterogeneous stakeholders. Federica Pastoret, a student of the Master's Degree « Mediations, Museums, Heritage », illustrated networking with the example of the organisation of a sports event, the « Tor des Geants », in the Valley of Aosta. Clément Aubey, independent music producer, having a strong experience in the Animafac network and in the MILA association (Paris), proposed a reflection on the links between network development and social economy.

Cultural Routes' Pictionary: How to draw a network ?

Have you already been asking yourself what could be the different ways to draw a network ? A network is a complex living object and the perceptions of its representatives can be different.

Through an adapted version of the famous game « Pictionary », each participant had the opportunity to propose a graphic version of his/her Route. More or less artistic, more or less conceptual, more or less technical, but always through symbols and ideas that are specific to each person.

Traditions, music and gastronomy: a different way to handle intangible heritage

The Strasbourg meeting allowed the participants to discover Jewish heritage in a different way: Jewish tradition in Alsace, old and modern music, kosher gastronomy... Many more or less known aspects of a multi-faceted heritage!

« What is known as 'Jewish music' today is thus the result of complex historical processes », wrote musicologist Edwin Seroussi. It is therefore very hard to understand it in a few words, or with a few music tracks. However, in order to share the diversity of this rich heritage, Victor Sorensen organised a musical quiz. Richard Tucker, Zohar Argov, Idan Raichel, Avishai Cohen, but also klezmer music or « Morenica », such old and modern names inviting us onto a unique musical journey!

Guided by Thierry Koch and Jean-Pierre Lambert, respectively president and member of the French association for the European Days of Jewish Heritage and Culture (JEPCJ), everyone discovered old traditions and everyday life of Jewish communities in Alsace through a visit of the 'Musée Alsacien' and of the 'Petite France' quarter in Strasbourg.

 musees.strasbourg.eu/musee-alsacien

Cultural Routes' managers on video!

In order to give a face and a voice to the European Cultural Routes, the DECRA consortium chose to shoot videos of the people who are dealing day after day with the challenges and opportunities of European cultural networks. A short interview during which each one of them could explain his/her organisation, objectives and practices... in order to inspire many other European developments !

Go and have a look at the videos on the DECRA Web platform :

 decraproject.eu



COUNCIL OF EUROPE OR EUROPEAN UNION?

Presentations, discussions and exchanges showed that the representatives of the Cultural Routes – just like media and social media also do – often mix the Council of Europe and the European Union. But they are two different entities!


If you go for a tour in Strasbourg and you hear from the « Palace of Europe », it refers to the Council of Europe. But « European Parliament » refers to the European Union.

Of course, there are many other differences.


Through a guided tour of the Palace of Europe, the participants could better apprehend the functioning and challenges of the Council of Europe.

More about this topic:

Council of Europe :

 [coe.int](https://www.coe.int)

European Union :

 europa.eu/european-union/index_fr

European Parliament, Strasbourg, France, Transnational meeting #6, January 2019



When?

From June 11th to 13th 2019



Where?

Cluny, in Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, France



Host?

The FFICE co-organised the event with the European Federation of Cluniac Sites



Partners?

Municipality of Cluny, Cluny Abbey-Centre des Monuments Nationaux, Tourist Office of Cluny, Equivalence-Haras Nationaux, agency Visit'Cluny, association of the Climats of Burgundy, the wine estate Rossignol-Trappet in Gevrey-Chambertin, the castle of Monthelie.



Topic?

Results of the DECRA project



City and abbey of Cluny viewed from the Gates of Honour, Cluny, France

AT CLUNY, THE FIRST CONCLUSIONS OF THE DECRA PROJECT

After 18 months of work and meetings, the participants gathered together for a common feedback on the form and substance, and for a first ‘photography’ of the European Cultural Routes. Cluny was chosen for this important meeting as its abbey crystallised a unique social organisation in the 11th and 12th centuries. Today’s network of the European Federation of Cluniac Sites, certified by the Council of Europe in 2005, is the active witness of this organisation. The occasion was thus given to the participants to discover a famous heritage of which many aspects might sometimes be unknown.

Thinking of the 'after DECRA'

The representatives of the Cultural Routes involved in the DECRA project shared their feedback. All of them showed that this approach was actually matching a need to deeply understand the diversity of the other Cultural Routes, to have time to build relationships with their colleagues, to exchange with them and also get inspired by them, and, last but not least, to step back and look at their own projects.

Christophe Voros, president of the FFICE, and Marie Gaillard, coordinator of the DECRA project, pointed out the many perspectives that this first ambitious approach has allowed. These future developments are thus possible because the Routes are facilitated by people giving time, know-how, good will and energy with determination. Besides, the challenges the project has shown could be overcome by the solidarity of the participants.

Finally, Isabelle Brianço, senior lecturer and researcher at the Avignon University, drew a first scientific photograph of the Cultural Routes, which you can read at the end of this edition.

Cluny, enhancing heritage through a digital approach

Cluny is a monastic capital city, the heart of a network composed of more than 2.000 sites – abbeys, churches, villages, deaneries, castles, farms, etc. This large heritage is disseminated all over Europe and now takes full advantage of an unique digital treatment enabling it to be geolocalised and presented on an online map : Clunypedia.com. Out of this digital platform, digital applications for touristic visits are developed. One of them allows the visitor to visit the city and abbey of Cluny and is called « Clunetour ». Claire Matrat, director of the partner agency 'Visit'Cluny', used it while guiding DECRA participants who could thus enhance their visit with images, maps and 3D components. An example of enhancement of heritage where the local level combines with the European one.

 clunypedia.com

The DECRA digital platform was presented to the participants. It lists initiatives from all over Europe and introduces their managers and stakeholders in order to develop synergies and to foster the sustainability of the DECRA project.

 decraproject.eu

The wine of Cluniac monks, a real but intangible heritage!

An original gateway allowed the European representatives to discover a world famous tradition : the vineyards of Burgundy – called « Climats » and accepted onto the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2015 – and their great wines. The monks of Cluny largely contributed to the know-how of these wines.

In Meursault and Monthelie, the presentation of the centuries-old wine-growing culture confirmed the diversity of the Cluniac heritage and the plurality of actions aiming at promoting it. After seeing and hearing, tasting : the participants could share a « mûchon », a typical friendly meal in Burgundy and a tasting of great wines.




Christophe VOROS

Director of the European Federation of Cluniac Sites

« The abbey of Cluny was founded in 910 in South Burgundy, located in today's Saône-et-Loire département in France. It then expanded during three centuries all over Western Europe and contributed to form what we call feudal Europe which left an important religious, urban but also agricultural and rural heritage. Since 1994, the European Federation of Cluniac Sites gathers local authorities managing this heritage as well as associations bringing life in it, and other authorities which have touristic and cultural policies around this heritage. We also have the specificity to gather together people who are using these buildings, these sites and who are visiting them. So, the Federation is a great network implemented in seven countries today and gathering 200 out of the around 1.800 historical sites in order to foster the awareness-raising of a shared heritage from the East to the West, from the North to the South of Europe.

Today's challenges for our network are the same as all over Europe: a sustainable structure, governance and decision-making processes which allow us to imagine projects that make sense for everyone equally in England, in Spain, in Italy or in Germany. The challenges are also the ones of communication. The capacity to understand each other beyond different languages, but also finding new means which allow us to implement our projects, i.e. financial means. Today, we are in a political and social environment that might be more fragile than twenty years ago and we have to build the basis for tomorrow's Europe, so that our heritage can be an asset for the future. »



THE CULTURAL ROUTES ON STAGE

In the theatre of Cluny, the Cultural Routes have been presented by their representatives in an unusual manner: through fine arts. Music, singing, costumes, theatre, mime, dance, poetry, all artistic means were all effective in telling the stories of its cultural network to a thrilled audience. The different performances definitely allows us to strengthen the cohesion between the participants, but above all to go « behind the scenes » of each Route.

CULTURAL ROUTES : NEW RE

Even if they have existed since 1987, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe have entered the research field only recently. As any other new research object, they are trying to find their path. Isabelle Brianso, senior lecturer and researcher in Avignon University in Communication Sciences, gives here her feedback from an academic point of view.



Palais des Papes, Avignon, France

SEARCH PERSPECTIVES

CULTURAL ROUTES: « MULTI-FACETED OBJECTS »

In Communication Sciences in France, Jean Davallon¹ studied and theorised the way objects become heritage. This process, called « heritagization » or heritage-making process, is a theory that could actually be applied to European Cultural Routes by studying the dynamics and movements of this contemporary idea in the European space.

From this point of view, Cultural Routes can be said to be multi-faceted, that is they have got many forms of tangible, intangible and natural landscapes. In other words, they can be pilgrimage routes, natural trails, groups of monuments, commercial roads or paths following major political figures or groups of people. They all have a common characteristic: they witness the ebb and flow of our European history. Putting it this way, one might get the impression that we are stating the obvious. However, in terms of research, this leads to a theoretical potential that has barely been touched upon.

ACTORS AND NETWORKS

Similarly, if we take a look at the way Cultural Routes are organised and working, we might make statements which have already been done for other objects or in other fields. In fact, they are characterized by a movement of actors beyond national borders and by shared values linked to heritage. However, if we take a closer look at the « ordinary regulars » hikers, inhabitants, pilgrims, volunteers, bikers, etc. - this leads us to question the definition of such a physical and symbolical heritage which should make sense for everyone.

They share another common characteristic: they are organised in networks – supporting networks, networks of members, networks of European stakeholders, etc. From a research point of view, apprehending the Cultural Routes through their networks also includes many different aspects forming another axis for reflection for this research field.

However, investigating the networks should not hide other processes, such as the renewal of forms of cultural expressions by the actors when communicating on their Routes. Classical data collections through surveys thus show a « creative » dimension of these forms of expression. In this way, the « participative » or « inclusive » approach – that we can also find in the Faro Convention² - is meaningful even if it is only at the beginning.

QUESTIONING THE EUROPEAN VALUE OF HERITAGE

Even if the Cultural Routes are a recent research topic in humanities and social sciences, they should remain as interdisciplinary as possible. In fact, this contemporary idea is questioning many academic disciplines (history, geography, communication sciences, information sciences, etc.) within an European context.

The question of European value cannot thus be approached in a superficial or simplistic manner. Is the European value demonstrated when a route is certified by the Council of Europe? What happens if a Route loses the certification, does it also lose its European value? What happens if a route doesn't succeed in being certified?

Such questions, as many other ones, require to give the floor to the actors through field studies in order for the Cultural Routes to be actually studied empirically.

¹ Jean Davallon is Professor Emeritus in Avignon University. His book *Le don du patrimoine* (2006) is a reference for every student and young researcher in Heritage Studies, and any person who as a passion for heritage.

² The Framework convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (2005) of the Council of Europe, also called Faro Convention, is an innovative text introducing the idea of heritage communities and of heritage including « all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time ».

WILL CULTURAL ROUTES BUILD

One of the cultural programmes of the Council of Europe – which acknowledges nowadays 38 themes representing the history of our continent and considered as constituent parts of our common cultural identity – is almost unknown. Unknown by the public at large and by elected representatives, nationally and regionally. One could surely argue that the Ways to Santiago de Compostela are famous worldwide... But more as « UNESCO World Heritage » - which is not completely accurate - than as a « Cultural Route of the Council of Europe ».

Actually, it seems that Cultural Routes are involving only insiders : the people managing the programme on a European scale, the people making these Routes a reality « in the field » and some supporters... 32 years after the launch of the programme, the challenge it wanted to deal with has not yet been taken up. What challenge? The one of making it possible for European people, by travelling through space and time, to become aware of their shared common heritage. Why does such an ambitious idea not work? Why don't politics and people seize them? The idea is captivating, the history fascinating, and our heritage made of an inspiring diversity!... What does not work?

This reality has prompted some Cultural Routes certified by the Council of Europe and crossing France to create the French Federation of European Cultural Routes (FFICE) in 2009. With the support of the French ministry for Culture, the goal was to organise common actions in a more efficient and visible way in order to raise awareness about the Cultural Routes. After many years of projects being implemented on the French territory, the FFICE started in 2017 a more ambitious programme called « DECRA – Developing European Cultural Routes for All » and funded by EU-Erasmus+.

Thus, the Routes and partners presented in this special edition joined forces in a brand-new partnership, initiated and coordinated by the FFICE. Their common objective was to help the cause of the European Cultural Routes – not all of them being certified by the Council of Europe – in their own way. The Avignon University also joined the group, bringing its expertise and so all together, for 24 months, we have been working... on ourselves.

We are asking ourselves what makes the Cultural Routes so special. What is the connection to heritage? What we have in common, what we can exchange, what can make us stronger.

Although the work is not completely done – the final report is due at the end of 2019 – we can already identify overwhelming trends from our project:

1 *Even if we are all associated with to the same programme, we are representing very different networks, from international professional organisations to associations for local development carrying out the idea of an European Route. We share the same view, but we do organise ourselves so differently that a unique model of development cannot be drawn.*

2 *The European Cultural Routes are fragile. They are fragile because most of them are not supported by public authorities, even if they are certified by the Council of Europe. It is the paradox of their situation. Their budgets are often small, uncertain over time, and thus fragile. Because, in the end, their work is based on the reliability of people who, employed or volunteers, deal with their work in a highly professional manner.*

3 *The Cultural Routes are facilitated by the engagement of people and local stakeholders who are keeping them strong and specific.*

EUROPE?



During the last two years of international cooperation, everybody became aware of the fact that the Cultural Routes are doing more than promoting and highlighting heritage. They are in fact making connections. Their members are the makers of links between hundreds of places in Europe who are responding each other. The Cultural Routes do make heritage, a very specific heritage. They are giving to heritage an intangible but palpable dimension which we call « European ».

In this way, they do take part to the building of the idea of Europe, of a way of being Europe. But coming directly from the Europeans themselves.

Christophe Voros

President of the French Federation of European Cultural Routes

« THANKS TO THE DECRA PROJECT... » THEY WROTE IT ON A POST-IT!

Bring new perspectives

We increased our knowledge on the topic of Faro Convention and how to apply and manage culture in a way that the local population has most benefit of it. Also, very important lessons for us were the ones from Forlì and Pula, where it became obvious that the former traditions with negative connotations can be transformed and bring new perspectives and opportunities for local communities in which they are located.

Vladan Kreckovic
Roman Emperors and
Danube Wine Route

A cooperation accelerator

Without DECRA, we might not have wanted to participate in the International Tourism Fair in Berlin and to create a common brochure with the Via Regia and other Routes. For our Route, the project worked as a cooperation accelerator.

Christian Brochier et Michel Legros
In the footsteps of R.L. Stevenson

The way I look at the Routes won't be the same anymore

I will go back home with the hope to see everybody I met again. I am pleased to see the progress accomplished and the ones to come. I think that the way I look at the Routes won't be the same anymore and, because of that, I am sure that I will do my best to promote this work.

Federica Pastoret
Student in Master's Degree « Mediations, Museums, Heritage », Avignon University

An opportunity to find an internship

I bonded with the Via Regia team during the meeting in Strasbourg and then I got an internship in Erfurt [seat of the Via Regia]. I would love to have known the DECRA project before but I am really happy to be a part of it now. I hope that I will continue down this path for a long time."

Caroline Pergeaux
Student in Master's Degree « Mediations, Museums, Heritage », Avignon University

Take away ideas and implement them

Many ideas regarding visitor reception, physical and digital accessibility, the involvement of social stakeholders when organising an event, the way to present culture for the eyes, the ears and the touching of the public have been taken away and are about to be implemented in the Bois-Aubry abbey.

Marc-Olivier Gribomont
Tironensian Order

It is important to have an European experience of working together

I think that, working in an European network, it is very important to give an opportunity for the members to have this European experience of working together. Many times, the financial limitations of the networks do not allow organizing such activities, and through DECRA not only the AEPJ, but members from all over Europe have been able to participate, reflect and share ways of working and best practices in their work.

Victor Sorensen
AEPJ

A constructive connection-building

The connection with networks we are not used to work with and with whom we do not share a priori the same topics is very positive and interesting because some solutions and good practices can be applied and transferred regardless of the language or of the topic concerned.

Magdalena Jamka
European Federation of Cluniac Sites



www.decraproject.eu

FOR THE 1ST TIME THE PLATFORM OF EUROPEAN CULTURAL ROUTES

Concretely, what are the European Cultural Routes doing in the field? The platform developed in the framework of the DECRA project – thus named « decraproject » - identifies hundreds of projects all over Europe – either cultural, touristic, pedagogical or scientific. Their themes, stakeholders, languages show the great diversity of European cultural movements and their complementarity.

Each user can get to know the geolocalised projects and get in touch with their managers to get inspired or even to meet them!

4 thematic
entries have
been created :

*Physical and digital
accessibility*

*Social inclusion and
citizen participation*

*Local heritage,
its promotion and
the Faro Convention*

*Networks development,
with videos of managers
of the European projects*



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