Cultural Routes based on Intangible Heritage: Mythology, Poetry and Visual Arts

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Greece
Cultural Routes of Council of Europe

- One of the pioneers in initiatives concerning European cultural integrations and European identity
- Culture as a strong link of European nations
- Linking culture with tourism
- 33 Certified Routes in 2016
Key Objectives of Cultural Routes

• to raise awareness of a European cultural identity and European citizenship;
• to promote intercultural and interreligious dialogue through a better understanding of European history;
• to safeguard and enhance the cultural and natural heritage as a means of improving the quality of life and as a source of social, economic and cultural development;
• to give pride of place to cultural tourism, with a view to sustainable development.
Definition Of A Cultural Route

• A route which includes two or more countries or regions and is organized on a theme whose historical, artistic or social interest is European, either according to the geographical route’s features it follows or according to its nature and/or significance. The route is based on multitude of features which present European culture as a whole, and it includes destinations rich in historic associations.
Benefits of Cultural Routes

• To advance solidarity and tolerance,
• To advance exchange of partners from different countries,
• To advance cooperation at the institutional level,
• To advance development of tourism as to contribute to economic development of the countries
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROGRAM

- Identified across Europe,
- Labeled by common labels,
- Have common promotional activities,
- Have common promotional materials and maps.
COOPERATION

- With other bodies of the Council of Europe
- With the international organizations (UNESCO, EU)
- With national governments (countries signatories of the Cultural Convention which participated in the creation of routes), regional and local governments, NGOs and universities
Criteria I

• Presentation of European values common to several European countries;
• Themes developed by a multidisciplinary team of experts from different European regions;
• Illustration of European history and heritage and contribution to diversity of today’s Europe;
Criteria II

- Stimulation of cultural and educational youth exchange;
- Initiatives and innovation within the area of cultural tourism and cultural development;
- Implementation of long-term multilateral cooperation projects through multidisciplinary networks located in Council of Europe members states.
Themes of Cultural Routes

- Council of Europe Cultural Routes combine tangible and intangible heritage.
- Most existing Cultural Routes are mainly based on tangible heritage, such as castles, monuments, products, places of worship, archeological sites, spas, cemeteries, etc.
- Cultural Routes based almost exclusively on intangible heritage is an innovation, particularly based on:
  - Mythology
  - Poetry
  - Visual arts
Argonautic expedition
Argonautic expedition

- Estimated dating back to 1200 BC
- Oldest legendary long-distance maritime journey in the world ever
- Covering several countries, seas, rivers, cities, places
- Referred to in tragedy ancient Greek theatre MEDIA by Euripidis, 4th century BC
- Documented in poem work by Apollonius Rhodius ‘Arginautica’ 250 BC
- Depicted at paintings and frescos of the Rainessance, also in modern art
Savior of the Argonauts  As an Argonaut, Orpheus was often called upon to play and sing—sometimes to inspire the rowers with fresh energy, sometimes to stop the fights that arose among the crew. One day, the Argonauts’ boat encountered the Sirens, creatures whose song made sailors stop at their island and never want to go home. Orpheus strummed and sang so loudly that he drowned out the song of the Sirens and ensured the Argonauts could continue safely.
‘Return of the Argonauts’
Candidate Cultural Route

- From ancient Colchis (modern day Georgia) to Iolkos (modern day city of Volos, Greece)
- Through the Black Sea and the Danube River to the Adriatic Sea and then
- Through Italy to France and to Mediterranean Sea, via North Africa
- To Crete, Anafi, Santorini, Aigina and Evia islands and
- Ending in Volos and Corinth
- Return to Iolkos but also ‘return’ to present day and in the future
Thank you

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