



TEDEN SREDOZEMSKO OBALE IN MAKROREGIONALNIH STRATEGIJ

Izola, Slovenija
15. – 17. september 2026

MEDITERRANEAN COAST AND MACRO-REGIONAL STRATEGIES WEEK

Izola, Slovenia
15 – 17 September 2026



Interreg  Co-funded by
the European Union
IPA ADRION

FACILITYPOINT

Strategic project EUSAIR FACILITY POINT is co-funded by the European Union through the Interreg IPA ADRION Programme 2021-2027.

“Cultural Routes in Action: Unlocking Opportunities towards 2034”

Strengthening links between the Council of Europe Cultural Routes programme and the macro-regional cooperation framework

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in cooperation with Mr. Dimitris Bloukos, Greek coordinator in EUSAIR Pillar IV, Hellenic Ministry of Tourism**

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Context

1. Background: EUSAIR and Cultural Tourism

1.1 Strengthening Cultural Routes: EUSAIR priority, TSG-4 members and Cultural Routes

1.2 Routes4U project: EC and Council of Europe joint Initiative

1.3 Cultural Routes of the CoE in EUSAIR Initiatives: Thematic Sessions and Flagship projects in Cultural Tourism

2. Embedding and implementing EUSAIR: Revised Action Plan and Cultural Tourism

2.1 Revised Action Plan and priorities in Pillar IV: Sustainable Tourism

2.3 Flagships and Funding opportunities

3. Challenges: MedDiet and new Initiatives



Background: EUSAIR and Cultural Tourism

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Strengthening Cultural Routes:

EUSAIR Pillar IV priorities (EUSAIR, EC Action Plan ...- 2025), TSG-4 members and Cultural Routes

- Priority in EUSAIR PILLAR 4: SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The **specific objectives** for this pillar are:

- Diversification of the macro-region's tourism products and services
- Improving the quality and innovation of tourism offer and enhancing the sustainable and responsible tourism capacities of the tourism actors across the macro-region.

To **achieve the abovementioned objectives**, Pillar 4 focused on two topics:

Topic 1 – Diversified tourism offer (products and services)

Topic 2 – Sustainable and responsible tourism management (innovation and quality)



EUSAIR, EC Action Plan (..... – 2025)

Priorities – Cultural Tourism

Priority 5. Cultural tourism and local identity

- i) a series of thematic routes for sustainable tourism development across Europe.;
- ii) The mapping of the existing routes certified by the Council of Europe, as well as the exploration of new thematic cultural routes relevant for EUSAIR.
- iii) Establishment of networks based on thematic tourism already existing in the countries.

TSG-4 members:

- Ministries of Culture, Focal Points for Cultural Routes program in their countries, members of EPA Governing Board,
- Participation of CRs Secretariat in TSG-4 coordination meetings



Background: EUSAIR and Cultural Tourism

Routes4U project: EC and Council of Europe joint Initiative

Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe program: www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes

Routes4U joint programme between the Council of Europe and the European Union - 30-months project (2017-2020)

Fostering regional development through transnational cultural routes, heritage policies and practices in the four EU macro-regions

Cultural Routes Beneficiaries (indicative):

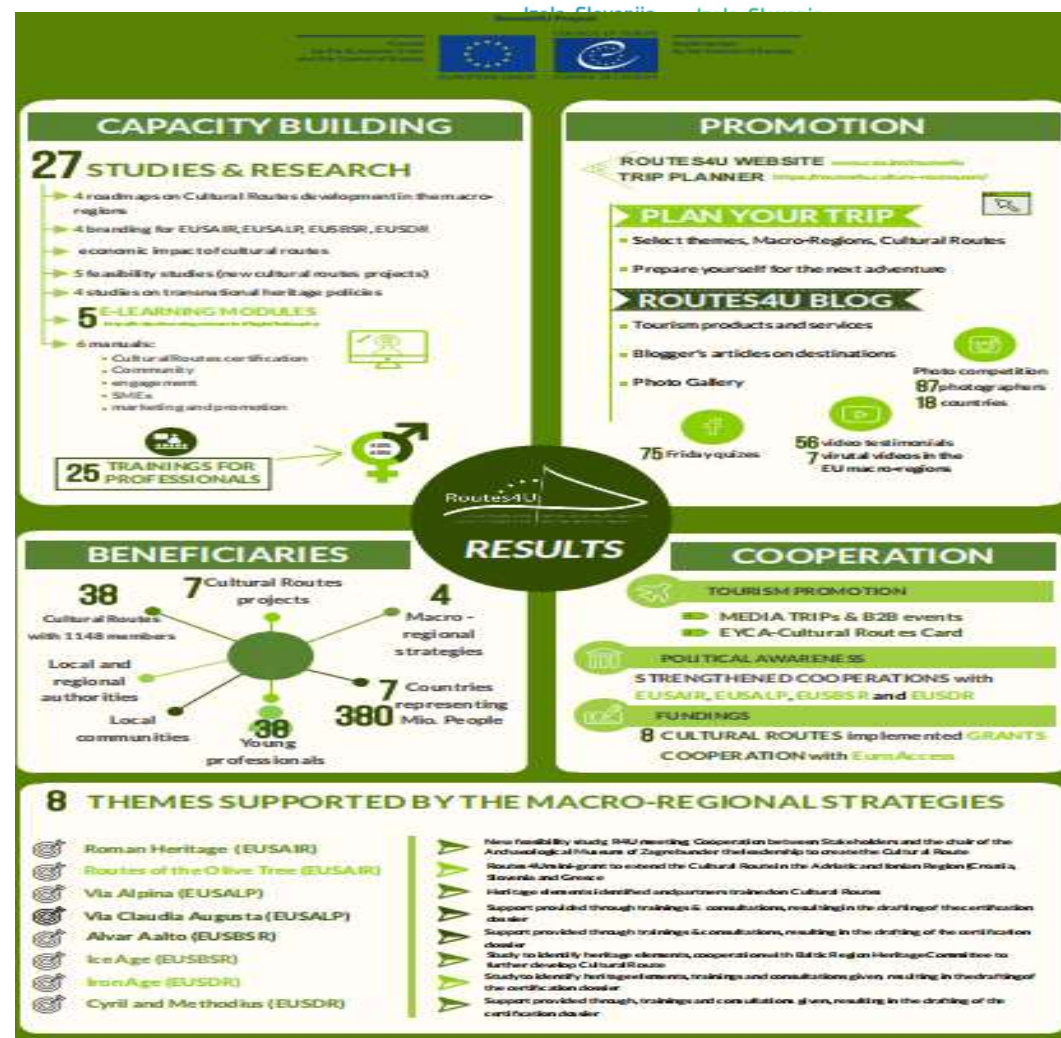
Destination Napoleon | European Route of Historic Thermal Towns | European Route of Megalithic Culture | The Hansa | Iter Vitis | Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route | Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Routes | Via Francigena | Vikings Route

Routes4U Project link CoE:

<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/implementation>

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Cultural Routes of the CoE in EUSAIR Initiatives: Thematic Sessions and Flagship projects in Cultural Tourism

Embedding / flagship projects – EUSAIR Pillar IV

AIR CULTURAL ROUTES: Development of Sustainable and Thematic Cultural routes / Connecting Cultural Routes in EUSAIR -

harmonized data on cultural tourism and methodological framework to monitor cultural tourism

CULTOURAIR: Research and Development for improvement of SMEs performance and Growth Diversification

distribution of tourism flows through macro-regional territories using Cultural Routes

Thematic Sessions:

- 11th [Advisory Forum](#) of the Cultural Routes of the Council in Europe, Chania, Crete, 7th October 2022 – Session on EUSAIR
- 10th [EUSAIR Forum](#), Crete, May 2025, Session on Cultural Tourism, MedDiet Initiative
- [Med Diet Working Group and 2 days Workshop in Bari](#), Italy (September - October 2025)



Embedding and implementing EUSAIR: Revised Action Plan and Cultural Tourism (2025 -)



Revised Action Plan and priorities in Pillar IV: Sustainable Tourism

Revised Action Plan in Pillar 4: Sustainable Tourism

1.1 Topic – Facilitating the digital and green transition of the tourism and Cultural heritage offer

1.2 Topic – Preparing for the future: knowledge, skills and management

1.3 Topic - Greening of Tourism products and services (new topic)

New Actions:

Action 1: Promoting Agritourism, Ecotourism and fishing tourism;

Action 2: Promoting Rural Tourism,

Action 3: Promoting the Mediterranean Diet and Local, organic and origin production, • By setting an cross-pillar Working Group of interested stakeholders on TSGs: 4, 1 and 5.

Topic 3 - Action 3: Promoting the Mediterranean Diet - Consensus on TSG4 member for the importance of Mediterranean Diet in EUSAIR.

EUSAIR New Action Plan for Pillar IV (link: https://www.adriatic-ionian.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/EUSAIR-Action-Plan_SW2025-114-final.pdf)



Embedding and implementing EUSAIR: Revised Action Plan and Cultural Tourism

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Flagships and Funding opportunities

Implementation of Action 3:

- *MedDiet: New Inter Pillars (Pillars I, IV and V) flagship project as a model for future initiatives*

-Working Group on Inter pillar flagship Mediterranean Diet and Sustainable Tourism (3 coordination meetings, expecting the 4th meeting in Angona, 15th October 2026, to be organised by Forum AIC.

-Publication (MD Study)

- CoE Certified Cultural Routes as potential members of MedDiet Network (ex. Iter Vitis, Historic Café Route, Elaia-Culture of Olive Oil etc.),

-Funding:

Interreg IPA ADRION Programme / European Territorial Cooperation Programme - Interreg Euro-MED programme / Euro-MED Heritage Program / Creative Europe Programme (AgoraEU) / Digital Europe Programme / European Heritage Label / NextGenerationEU

- **CoE Cultural Routes Program contribution:** Country Mapping Documents, four of the eight documents produced so far concern EUSAIR participating countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece and Montenegro.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/country-mapping-documents>



Challenges: Common ground approaches

MedDiet and new Initiatives

- Inter-Pillar MedDiet Working Group
- New Flagships based on revised priorities (initial “The cross-pillar ***Skills for Sustainable and Inclusive Tourism in the Adriatic and Ionian Region***”)
- Active participation of Experts and Stakeholders: TSG-4 as a good practice (including Experts on Cultural Tourism and Cultural Routes program)
- EU Macro-regions linkages: EUSAIR and EUSDR joint initiatives in Cultural Routes
Croatian Presidency of the EUSDR next year, EUSDR specific Pillar on Culture: Organizing a thematic event on culture and tourism, taking into account the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Programme
- Joint EC and CoE Initiatives in Cultural Tourism (Routes4U, what is next?)
- Strengthening Cultural Routes and Cultural Tourism through EUSAIR Governing Structure and Tools
(ex. Active participation of CoE EPA Secretariat in TSG-4 initiatives, Development of concept documents by the ESG project 3, SP4EUSAIR).



Useful Links and info:

-Country Mapping Document for Croatia: Highlighting the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) and the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) as important frameworks for cooperation, as well as opportunities for strengthening existing Cultural Routes and developing new ones. The document was presented in Zagreb in June and received considerable interest. A short summary is available here: <https://hr.ironagedanuberoute.com/events/national-mapping-document-for-council-of-europe-cultural-routes-presented-in-zagreb>

-Country Mapping Documents: EUSAIR participating countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece and Montenegro. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/country-mapping-documents>

Routes4U pages: - EC https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/cooperation/macro-regional-strategies/routes4u_en
- CoE <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/implementation>

35 Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe currently cross the 4 EU macro-regions*: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/coe-cultural-routes>





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