UNWTO Regional Course in Europe on Cultural Routes Tourism Development Strategy for Cultural Routes and their partners

The World Tourism Organization with the support of its UNWTO.Themis Foundation and the European Institute of Cultural Routes in the framework of the Council of Europe-European Commission Joint Programme 2013-2014 on Cultural Routes has designed and offers the Council of Europe Cultural Routes’ (CoE CR) partners an executive training course on Cultural Routes Tourism Development Strategy in English, from 8th to 12th September, in Gaillac, France.

This course examines key elements of a tourism destination, important concepts in tourism strategy, quality and sustainability, underpinning principles of the Council of Europe Cultural Routes, tourism development methodology, situational analysis, evaluation and monitoring. The aim is to provide the participants with knowledge, skills, tools and a forum for discussion and reflection that will enable them to design a Cultural Route Tourism Development Strategy, with unique emphasis on collaboration with other cultural routes.

1- Introduction to the topic

Cultural tourism is one of the segments that have shown the greatest vitality in Europe in recent years, and as a result it has been the focus of attention and study of a number of international organisations such as the World Tourism Organization’s report (2005) City Tourism and Culture; the European Experience. Similarly, the European Institute of Cultural Routes, during the Council of Europe-European Commission Joint Programme 2011, conducted a study on the Impact of European Cultural Routes on SMEs’ Innovation and Competitiveness.
All the studies carried out agree that Europe’s cultural heritage, and specifically cultural routes, are “one of the oldest and most important generators of tourism” and key elements both in the design of public policies as in the definition of Europe’s competitive strategy.

In this sense, the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth, places the tourism-cultural heritage binomial at the centre of Europe’s agenda.

Tourism represents the third most important socio-economic activity in the EU. It generates more than 5% of the GNP of Europe’s economy and 5.2% of its employment. When taking into account tourism-related sectors, these percentages increase to 10% and 12%, respectively. In 2013 Europe, with 42% of the market share of international tourism, was in fact the world’s top tourism destination, according to ILO.

Likewise, it is a key sector for encouraging territorial cohesion in the EU, particularly for promoting economic and social integration of rural and mountain areas, coastal regions and islands; the most peripheral regions or the least prosperous regions.

Tourism also provides an opportunity for the recovery, maintenance and promotion of Europe’s cultural heritage.

Presently, cultural tourism in Europe is faced with challenges that require specific answers and important adaptation efforts, both by public administrations as well as by the sector’s companies, mostly SMEs.

These challenges include increasing global competition from emerging or developing countries as tourism destinations. To face this competition, Europe must provide a sustainable and quality offer, with vocational experience that enhances its cultural richness and diversity of its landscapes.

On the other hand, Europe’s tourism industry must manage the economic, social and environmental impact generated by tourism on the territory and on its cultural heritage.

Finally, cultural destinations must take into account the growth of information and communication technologies, which have changed the relationship between the tourism industry and its customers, as nowadays visitors are crucial to determining future ‘offers’ and communicating them.

In this context, The Council of Europe Cultural Routes represents an opportunity to rekindle and diversify tourism in Europe. They are an essential element to learn about Europe’s history, culture and way of life, and they respond to traditional values that are associated with new tourism trends: respect for culture and
traditions, heritage, authenticity, sustainability, cooperation… Also, the Council of Europe Cultural Routes boosts local development, cooperation between regions and involve various sectors and professions in the protection of heritage (culture managers, small tourism businesses, gastronomy, etc.).

For these reasons, this course aims to provide the managers of the Council of Europe Cultural Routes with a global vision of the key elements that define a tourism destination in order to identify the tools required for the development of their strategies, taking into account the current trends in the industry, as well as concepts such as competitiveness, cooperation, quality, sustainability, etc. In short, it aims to provide participants with interactive training that will endow them with processes, tools and structures to design their own strategy and find creative solutions that will allow them to take advantage of the opportunities offered by cultural heritage, and specifically by cultural routes, in order to turn European tourism into a competitive, modern, sustainable and responsible industry.

2- Target audience

This course is aimed at 20 selected managers of the Council of Europe Cultural Routes Network and/or their members and partners with responsibilities in the development of tourism for the whole CR network, for a particular node on the CR or for the wider destination in which the CR is located. All these people have a specific interest in designing a Tourism Development Strategy.

3- Objective

The objective of the course is to provide participants with knowledge, skills, tools and a forum for discussion on tourism strategic planning with a unique emphasis on cultural routes.

The course follows the philosophy of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

4- Content

Introduction
I.1 Key elements of a tourism destination
I.2 Key concepts in tourism strategy
I.3 Quality and sustainability in the destination
I.4 Council of Europe Cultural Routes (CoE CR) Programme and its values
Module 1. Situational Analysis
1.1 Supply analysis
1.2 Market analysis
1.3 Impact analysis
1.4 Benchmarking
1.5 Gap analysis

Module 2. Cultural Routes tourism development strategy
2.1 Framework for developing the CoE CR tourism development strategy in relation to core strategies, particularly to tourism development strategy at the
2.2 Tourism product development of the destination reinforced by the CoE CR products and strategy
2.3 Sustainable practices in CoE CR
2.4 Value chain approach for optimising the visitor experience along the CoE CR
2.5 Governance, networking and partnerships

Module 3. Monitoring the Cultural Routes Tourism Strategy
3.1 Framework for monitoring the CoE CR Tourism Strategy
3.2 Performance evaluation using Key Performance Indicators (KPI) integrating the developed CoE CR indicators
3.3 Cultural Routes Tourism development strategy updating
## 5- Provisional Agenda

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<tr>
<th>Monday 8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Tuesday 9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Wednesday 10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Thursday 11&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Friday 12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
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<tr>
<td>08:30-09:00 Inauguration</td>
<td>08:30-10:30 Field work day</td>
<td>09:00-11:00 Module 2</td>
<td>09:00-11:00 Module 3</td>
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<td>09:00-09:20 Official photograph &amp; Press</td>
<td>10:30-11:00 Trip to destination</td>
<td>11:00-11:30 Break</td>
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<td>09:20-10:00 Break</td>
<td>11:00-12:30 Module 1 &amp; Practical activity</td>
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<td>10:00-10:45 The UNWTO Themis Foundation &amp; Course</td>
<td>12:30-14:00 Lunch</td>
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<td>10:45-12:30 Introduction</td>
<td>14:00-16:00 Module 2</td>
<td>14:30-16:30 Participants’ presentation &amp; Questions</td>
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<td>12:30-14:00 Lunch break</td>
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<td>14:00-16:00 Introduction</td>
<td>16:30-17:30 Module 2</td>
<td>17:00-18:00 Final comments</td>
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<td>16:00-16:30 Break</td>
<td>17:30-18:30 Practical activity</td>
<td>18:00-18:30 Closing ceremony with certificates</td>
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<td>16:30-17:00 Regional tourism and cultural policy and strategy (Midi-Pyrenees)</td>
<td>18:30 Trip to Cordes</td>
<td>19:00 Social programme at Chateau Touny les Roses: Fluviat trip &amp; Visit of Albi’s Cathedral (UNESCO)</td>
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<td>17:00-17:30 Local tourism and cultural policy and strategy (Tarn)</td>
<td>19:00 Social programme at Rabastens: Santiago de Compostal and Iter Vitis Routes intersection &amp; Visit of Notre Dame du Bourg (UNESCO) &amp; Reception at Cave cooperative &amp; Inauguration Dinner</td>
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