

*Cultural
Routes as
Investments
for Growth
and Jobs*

Cult-RinG
Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

Action Plan *for Region of Central Macedonia*

2018 
EUROPEAN YEAR
OF CULTURAL
HERITAGE
#EuropeForCulture



REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
OF CENTRAL MACEDONIA
ON BEHALF OF
THE REGION OF CENTRAL MACEDONIA



**VERY
MACEDONIA**
REGION OF CENTRAL MACEDONIA
GREECE



December 2018



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December 2018

Interreg Europe Programme

Interreg Europe Programme of interregional cooperation helps regional and local governments across Europe to develop and deliver better policy. By creating an environment and opportunities for sharing solutions, the aim is to ensure that government investment, innovation and implementation efforts all lead to integrated and sustainable impact for people and place.

By building on its forerunner, INTERREG IVC (2007-2013), Interreg Europe aims to get maximum return from the EUR 359 million financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for 2014-2020.

Solutions exist that can help European regions become the best that they can be. Today, the EU's emphasis is very much on paving the way for regions to realise their full potential – by helping them to capitalise on their innate strengths while tapping into opportunities that offer possibilities for economic, social and environmental progress. To achieve this goal, Interreg Europe offers opportunities for regional and local public authorities across Europe to share ideas and experience on public policy in practice, therefore improving strategies for their citizens and communities.

Cult-RInG Project

Cultural Routes (CRs) of the Council of Europe (CoE) have been established since 1987, stressing the importance of European identities. The CoE's Enlarged Partial Agreement (EPA) on CRs currently comprises 33 routes contributing to protection and development of natural and cultural heritage. CRs are used as powerful tools to promote and preserve EU's shared and diverse cultural identities. CRs provide a better understanding of the history of Europe through interregional exchanges of people, ideas and cultures.

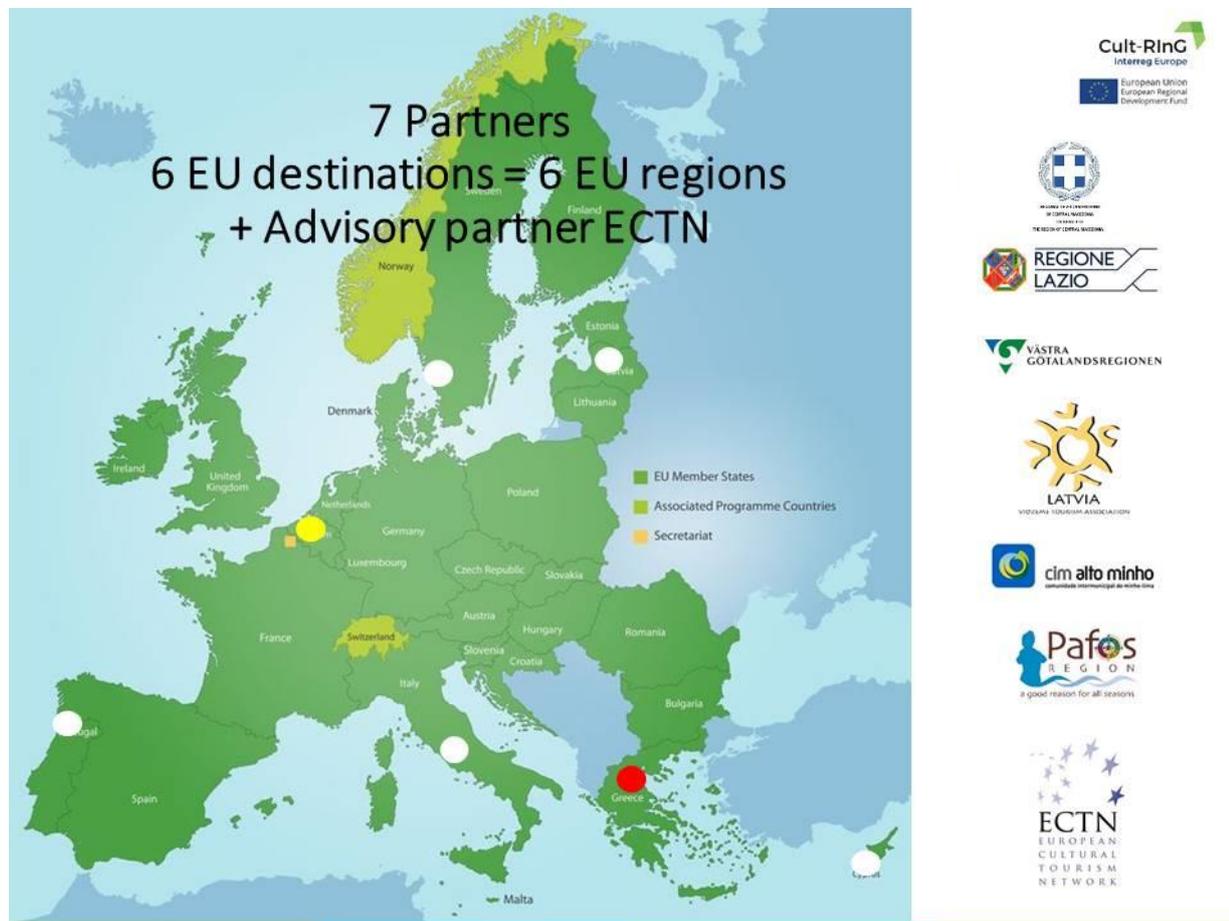
The impacts of CRs on SMEs' innovation and competitiveness have showed that CRs are at the heart of cultural tourism development; they have achieved a noteworthy impact and progress, and shown remarkable potential for SME generation, networking, social cohesion, intercultural dialogue, and for promoting the image of Europe. CRs represent a source of innovation, creativity, small-business creation, and cultural tourism products and services development. There is a common challenge, in terms of evaluating and exploiting the benefits of existing CRs and deploy them in the development of new CRs, so that Growth & Jobs targets can be met faster.

The overall objective of the Cult-RInG project is to highlight the value of investments in European Cultural Routes, in terms of their contribution to Growth & Jobs, with capitalization of good practices, policy learning, policy implementation, development of new Cultural Routes, monitoring and capacity building.

Main outputs are action plans on CR development and upgrading, with implementation and monitoring of improved policy instruments in 6 regions, communication and dissemination tools for policy learning and capacity building, contribution to EU policies and EU2020 targets. The beneficiaries are regional authorities looking for capturing the benefits of CRs, both existing ones with greater visibility and

new ones, NGOs, European Networks, EU institutions, international organisations and stakeholders.

Cult-RinG Project Partnership



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

www.interregeurope.eu/cult-ring

FOREWORD



"The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe are powerful tools for promoting and maintaining the diverse European cultural identities. They provide a better understanding of Europe's history through interregional exchange of people, ideas and cultural assets. It is a model of cultural cooperation among European countries, promoting common understanding of the European identity and citizenship. Cultural Routes combine elements of tangible and intangible heritage encourage people exchanges, and promote cultures and traditions that have shaped Europe over millennia.

Cult-RinG is an interregional cooperation project, highlighting the value of investing in European cultural routes and contributing to the development of new cultural routes as investments for growth and jobs. The Region of Central Macedonia through the Regional Development Fund of Central Macedonia, participates in the Cult-RinG project as Lead Partner, along with six European Regions and the European Cultural Tourism Network as advisory partner. Having established strong collaborations with the partners' scheme, as well as with local stakeholders, the Region of Central Macedonia aims to promote Cultural Routes through its Action Plan with main Action the development and certification by the Council of Europe of the "In the Footsteps of St. Paul, the Apostle of the Nations" cultural route.

Culture can benefit and enforce European society and especially young people and contribute to the development of the European economy through cooperation, establishment of synergies among different kind of stakeholders, like policy and decision makers, educational and cultural institutes, local businesses and actors as well as the society itself. Culture strengthens the European cultural identity as well as the ties among nations and countries of the EU and at the same time it can bring Europe closer to the rest of the world".

Apostolos Tzitzikostas

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

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Executive Summary

Cult-RInG's overall goal, is to highlight the value of investing in European Cultural Routes in order policy and decision makers to achieve growth and increase employment by capitalizing on best practices, developing new cultural routes and enhancing the capacity of local actors and stakeholders engaged in the field of Culture, Tourism and Governance. The Cult-RInG project promotes the interregional cooperation regarding the management and valorisation of Cultural Routes (CRs).

CRs have been proved powerful tools for promoting and preserving the common and diverse cultural identities of the European Union. The involvement of local stakeholders and the interaction among the project partners, brought forward issues and topics of cultural tourism, cultural identity and heritage, common challenges and opportunities regarding the promotion of culture through the development of new and promotion of existing cultural routes, enabling knowledge exchange and capacity building of the policy makers involved. Exchange of experience activities, such as workshops, study tours, events and meetings contributed to the development of synergies among the Cult-RInG partners and other European Cultural Tourism and Cultural Routes Networks.

The Operational Program ‘Central Macedonia 2014-2020’ is one of the most important financial instrument of the Region. Through the Operational Program the Region supports interventions which contribute to smart, sustainable, without exclusions development.

The Program supports the overall goals of Regional Development Strategy such as:

- transition of the regional economy to a new, sustainable productive model
- Protection and sustainable management of natural and man-made environment and natural resources,
- integration of transport infrastructures and networks,
- Support of mobility and upgrading of human resources, tackling unemployment, and ensuring social cohesion.

There is a significant progress regarding the financial and implementation indexes

More specific the approved funding budget of the Operational Program actions (specialization / activation) amounted to 89% of the public expenditure of the Program.

The contracting of the integrated projects goes smoothly at the given moment and amounts to 38% of the public expenditure of the Region of Central Macedonia Region Program, while the absorption (expenditure) is of the order of 20.5%, at the end of the year 2017.

The Region of Central Macedonia through its Action Plan aims to change the focus of its policy instrument, the Regional Operational Programme of the Region of Central Macedonia, by promoting cultural tourism and cultural routes and supporting local entrepreneurship, with main purpose to contribute to the Region’s vision to *“become a dynamic developing region of international scope with distinct identity, competitive and innovative production base, quality environment, strong social and territorial cohesion”*. Call of proposals for SME investments related to tourism sector is expected to be launched soon.

The Action Plan describes and put into implementation the following four actions:

- **Action 1: DEVELOPMENT AND SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF THE “IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE OF THE NATIONS” AS A CULTURAL ROUTE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE. COMMON ACTION WITH LAZIO REGION, TOURISM BOARD OF PAFOS AND ECT.** – an action that focus on establishing an network along with the Paphos Regional Tourism Board (Cyprus), Lazio Region (Italy) and the European Cultural Tourism Network (ECTN-Belgium),

which as a legal entity will apply to the Institute of Cultural Routes for the certification of the “In the Footsteps of St. Paul, the Apostle of the Nations” Cultural Route.

- **Action 2: PARTICIPATION OF THE REGION OF CENTRAL MACEDONIA IN THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S CULTURAL ROUTE NETWORK "THE ITER VITIS ROUTE"**- The Action concerns the participation of the Region of Central Macedonia as member in the European Network of the “Iter Vitis” Cultural Route of the Council of Europe. The Action includes communication with the official body of the Network, based in Sambuca di Sicilia in Sicily, for the registration of the Region.
- **Action 3: FACILITATION OF THE PROCEDURE FOR THE SHAPING OF THE GREEK SECTION OF THE IRON CURTAIN TRAIL IN THE REGIONAL UNIT OF SERRES**- The Action concerns the development of a plan for the definition and formation of the Greek part of the cycling-cultural route "Iron Curtain Trail", also known as “EuroVelo 13” within the Regional Unit of Serres. This route will be linked to the route at the Bulgarian territory.

The Region of Central Macedonia, in order to implement its Action Plan has to work closely with all the stakeholders involved in the Local Stakeholder Group (LSG) that established throughout the implementation of the Cult-RInG project. Their contribution involves scientific support, consultations and advisory sessions, actual implementation of actions, participation in Networks.

The main challenge of this Action Plan is the submission of application in the Council of Europe for the certification of the “In the Footsteps of St. Paul, the Apostle of the Nations” Cultural Route. This will constitute the greatest achievement resulted from the Cult-RInG project, not only for the Region of Central Macedonia and the Regional Development Fund of Central Macedonia as partner of the Cult-RInG, but also for all the stakeholders that were active members of the LSG and will have contributed with their knowledge and experience to this initiative.

This Action also constitutes a result of the interregional cooperation among the four (4) Cult-RInG partners: Regional Development Fund of Central Macedonia on behalf of the Region of Central Macedonia (Greece), Paphos Regional Tourism Board (Cyprus), Lazio Region (Italy) and the European Cultural Tourism Network (ECTN-Belgium). At the same time, cooperation with other Cultural Routes’ Networks, such as the Iron Curtain Trail and the Iter Vitis also contribute to the promotion of cultural tourism in the Region of Central Macedonia and the development of interregional synergies with other countries.

The purpose of this action plan is to create the conditions through the exploitation and development of Certified by Council of Europe Cultural Routes, to ensure coherent and compatible development of the territory and its distinctive and peculiar elements; to realize and to promote local business networks, through public-private agreements and collaborations, for the feasible and compatible relaunch of the individual territorial realities at the regional level and for the reduction of the inequalities and socio-economic hardship.

The certification of new CR “In the footsteps of St. Paul, The Apostle of the Nations” as a Cultural Route of the council of Europe” or the participation in networks of already certified by Council of Europe CRs as “The Iter Vitis Route” and “Iron Curtain Trail”, will create the appropriate conditions for the development of a network of sustainable local tourism system that enhances and promotes the cultures and the excellences of the territory, crossed by the routes. The Regional Operational Program of Central Macedonia will be the financial instrument for the local businesses that will decide to invest to the routes area and benefit from the asset of the specific cultural routes. The development of new business or the financial enhancement of existing ones will represent an opportunity for socio-economic development for the entire community, with benefits to local stakeholders, local communities, local action groups and associations, whose have as a common purpose to define and share strategies and

guidelines for the planning and management of the territory, through the organization of training, dissemination, sensitization and monitoring activities of the CRs.

Moreover the Tourism Promotion Plan of Region of Central Macedonia which is directly depended by Regional Operational Program of Region of Central Macedonia (Thematic Objective 6, Investment Priority 6c), will be revised. The European Interregional Cultural Routes as touristic product will be included in the improved Tourism Promotion Plan, which hitherto lacked this important aspect of sustainable cultural tourism products and services related to ECRs and smart ways. This improvement of the policy instrument contributes towards a positive structural change in incorporating ECRs as a new means of sustainable development of tourism, towards smart tourism, for growth and jobs.

The strategic purpose of the Action Plan is the enhancement of the areas crossed by the respective Cultural Routes, to create a solid connective tissue and to activate development processes and working repercussions in the reference territories, linking to the local productive sectors and / or stimulating a potential.

The Managing Authority of Regional Operational Programm of the Region of Central Macedonia is expected to launch a call in the first semester of 2019 for the establishment of new businesses or the enhancement of existing businesses related to tourism in the Region of Central Macedonia. Proposals from business that will be related with cultural tourism or cultural routes as part of an alternative and sustainable tourism model will be eligible among others. The eligible area of the call of proposals will include the areas of the three Cultural Routes that described in the actions of this document.

During phase II of Cult-RinG project, the Regional Development Fund Region of Central Macedonia on behalf of Region of Central Macedonia will monitor and controlling procedures throughout the project lifespan and measuring specific indexes accordingly the specific actions and the approved application form of the project. One the indexes will be the number of the businesses that will be benefit from the expected call for proposals funded by ROP and related to cultural tourism in the respective CRs area.

The Tourism Promotion Plan (TPP) of Region Central Macedonia is directly depended by ROP. The adoption of the institution of Council of Europe Cultural Routes to the TPP as action for the development of new touristic product ensures the influence of the directly linked ROP

Action Plan (main part)

Part I – General information

Project: **Cult-RinG Index Number: PGI02116**

Partner organisation: Regional Development Fund on behalf of the Region of Central Macedonia

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant): N/A

Country: GREECE

NUTS2 region: EL52

Contact person: Lambrini Tsoli, Regional Development Fund

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Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact: Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
 European Territorial Cooperation

Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed: **Regional Operational Programme of Central Macedonia**

Name of other regional development policy instrument: **Smart Specialisation Strategy RIS 3 of Central Macedonia**

Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

ACTION 1.

DEVELOPMENT AND SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF THE “IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ST. PAUL, THE APOSTLE OF THE NATIONS” AS A CULTURAL ROUTE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE. COMMON ACTION WITH LAZIO REIGION, TOURISM BOARD OF PAFOS AND ECT

1. The background

The policy instrument Regional Operational Programme of Region of Central Macedonia and Tourism Promotion Plan RCM which directly depended by ROP does not currently address the topic of European Cultural Routes hence needs to be improved accordingly, based on the experience exchange with other partner regions, namely in project partner Lazio Region IT (PP2) where Via Francigena cultural route of the Council of Europe is active with established good practices and partner CIM Alto Minho here Santiago De Compostela cultural route of the Council of Europe is active as well.

The initial idea existed before the realization of the project, thus the action was described in the Cult-RinG AF during the submission of the proposal. Additionally the Action/Idea was enriched during the implementation of phase I of the project and constitutes a result of the good practices presented in the 1st and 2nd thematic workshop of the Cult-RInG project that took place in Latvia and Sweden respectively, as well as in the study visit in the Lazio Region, Italy. More specifically the two thematic workshops gave input regarding the methodologies and tools that produced from previous Interreg projects (CERTESS & CHARTS) for the development and management of Cultural Routes as well as the steps of development and management of cultural routes certified by Council of Europe.

Additionally the study visit at the certified by the Council of Europe Cultural Route “Via Fransigena” that was hosted by the Tourism Department of the Lazio Region also inspired the specific action. The Italian part of the “Via Fransigena” is found at the northern part of the region and passes through important archeological sites, monuments and towns such as the those of Viterbo, Itris and Formelo and ends in the city of Rome .

In the Region of Lazio, there is a network of routes (Routes of Lazio System) that includes four different cultural routes, with “Via Francigena” the most popular among them. Both in the presentation and the study visit, the organisation and management of the Route were presented, as well as the synergies developed with the local government for the network’s maintenance and improvement. Synergies have also been developed with local stakeholders and community aiming at the Routes’ preservation as both cultural/tourism product and business tool.

The direct & indirect benefits of existing “Via Francigena” cultural routes of Council of Europe have been highlighted during the tudy visti to Lazio Region. The assessment of the benefits in terms of socio-economic development has been presented on site by local government representatives.

The findings of this Study were as follows:

- Cultural Routes have achieved a noteworthy impact and progress: they encourage widespread community participation in cultural activities raising awareness of a common cultural heritage
- Established on the cultural and social principles, the CoE Cultural Routes represent a source for innovation, creativity, small business generation (tourism SMEs), and cultural tourism products and services development
- They represent a great potential for networking, intercultural dialogue, and promoting the image Europe and its values
- Cultural Routes vary by themes, target groups, time of existence, progress made, network &

management structures, & capacities

The Action is an initiative of the Region of Central Macedonia to establish a network along with the Paphos Regional Tourism Board (Cyprus), Lazio Region (Italy) and the European Cultural Tourism Network (ECTN-Belgium), which as a legal entity will apply to the Institute of Cultural Routes for the certification of the “In the Footsteps of St. Paul, the Apostle of the Nations” Cultural Route. The 4 project partners will be founding members of the network. Member of this network can be Regions, Local Government Bodies, Metropolises, Universities and other relevant organizations.

The Action has been discussed also at a special meeting with the European Institute of Cultural Routes (EICR) of the Council of Europe (CoE) and the managers of six selected certified cultural routes, held in Brussels in June 2018), at the request of CoE.

The steps for the certification of the cultural route are the following:

- Definition of subject that promotes common European values
- Determination of geographical, cultural, historical and natural heritage features in the countries / regions participating in the network.
- Establishment of a European network with legal status
- Coordination of joint actions to encourage cultural cooperation
- Creation a common Viewing Identity for the Route

An important step towards the certification of the route was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding among the Region of Central Macedonia - Greece, Lazio Region - Italy, Paphos Regional Tourism Board - Cyprus and the European Cultural Tourism Network (ECTN - Belgium) in September 2018 , in which the members agree that they will work together to promote the cultural route of the "In the Footsteps of St. Paul, the Apostle of the Nations" and to submit application for the route’s certification by the Council of Europe.

The purpose of this action is to create the conditions to ensure coherent and compatible development of the territory and its distinctive and peculiar elements; to realize and to promote local business networks, through public-private agreements and collaborations, for the feasible and compatible relaunch of the individual territorial realities at the regional level and for the reduction of the inequalities and socio-economic hardship.

The aim is to achieve the sustainability and the competitiveness of cultural tourism with extension of the tourism period 365 days through year in the territories crossed by the cultural itinerary and their territorial cohesion, by providing integrated instruments of action; to guarantee the economic and environmental sustainability of the cultural activities related to the itineraries themselves.

Specifically, the methodologies implemented in the various meetings of the Cult -RInG Project, in particular Portugal, Italy and Cyprus, oriented towards the exchange of experiences and best practices, have allowed us to consolidate a common approach at creating favorable conditions for capitalizing the best practices, present in different itineraries, and start shared governance processes.

The Cultural Route “In the Footsteps of ST. Paul, The Apostole of the Nations” will run across all the

Regional Units of the Region of Central Macedonia including the Metropolitan area of the city of Thessaloniki.

Players involved

During the implementation of the Cult-RInG project, many stakeholders were invited and participated in the Local Stakeholder Meetings of the project, providing information through questionnaires for the development of this Action Plan. All these stakeholders will also provide information on the development of the Cultural Route and will also be invited to participate as members to the Route's cultural network.

Regional Unit of Serres
 Metropolitan Unit of Thessaloniki
 Regional Unit of Hmathia
 Municipality of Amfipolis
 Municipality of Volvi
 Municipality of Thessaloniki
 Municipality of Veroia
 Municipality of Neapoli Sykeon
 Regional Union of Municipalities of Central Macedonia
 Aristotelion University of Thessaloniki
 Tourism Association of Central Macedonia

Timeframe

The Action will be completed within 14 months with the submission of the application in September 2019.

Costs

The cost of the Action includes:

- a) Establishment of the legal person (lawyers' fees, meetings): € 10,000.00
- b) Mapping the cultural route in digital media: € 20,000.00
- c) Collection and processing of all the necessary documentation material and consultation with the local community (costs of experts, organization of consultations): € 20.000,00
- d) the feasibility study and the development of a management plan for the sustainable operation of the cultural route: € 10,000.00
- e) development of route's identity, promotional material (posters, banners, logo, promotional brochures, etc.) 10.000,00 €
- f) the development of tourist packages (cooperation with tourism service providers): € 15,000.00
- (g) Pilot implementation in part of the route (marking, distribution of promotional material to local operators and businesses): € 5.000,00

The total cost of the Action is estimated at € 90,000.00 including VAT.

5. Funding sources:

Co financed by Tourism Promotion Plan of Region of Central Macedonia and Own funds of the Region of Central Macedonia.

ACTION 2.**ACTION 2: PARTICIPATION OF THE REGION OF CENTRAL MACEDONIA IN THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S CULTURAL ROUTE NETWORK "THE ITER VITIS ROUTE"**

(Source: Wine Roads of Northern Greece, www.wineroads.gr)

1. The background

The policy instrument Regional Operational Programme of Region of Central Macedonia and Tourism Promotion Plan RCM which directly depended by ROP does not currently address the topic of Wine Tourism which is facilitated by the 'Iter Vitis' (the journey of the vine) Cultural Route of the Council of Europe certified in 2009. The policy instrument needs to be improved accordingly, based on the experience exchange with other partner regions, namely in project partner CIM Alto Minho (PP5) where Iter Vitis has established an excellent wine interpretation centre. A replication of this successful practice is targeted in CM region, by RCM joining the Iter Vitis CR association as a new member from Greece.

The Iter Vitis Route was certified as a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe in 2009, based on the need to recognize, at European level, the vineyard and wine making culture and activities in general, as important part of the European and Mediterranean culture. The European rural landscape is considered an important heritage asset with high added value. Wineries, people working in the viticulture and wine sector, as well as the technology associated with this tradition are significant elements of the Greek and European cultural heritage.

Already since the submission of the Cult-Ring project proposal and as reflected in the Project Application Form, the importance of the Central Macedonia Region's participation in the Iter Vitis Network was recognized and the Region's main objective was to become a member of the Network.

During the implementation of the Cult—RinG project ("Joint meeting for Action Plans", Portugal, September 2019) the partners had the chance to visit and identify as a good practice the Portuguese headquarters of the Iter Vitis Network which is located in the Vinho Verde Centre for Interpretation and Promotion (CIPVV) in Ponte de Lima, a place that was established in partnership with the Municipality of Ponte de Lima. This comprehensive structure incorporates elements alluding to the diversity and identity of the nine Sub regions in which the Demarcated Region of the Vinho Verde is currently subdivided into, with view to the promotion of wine and the dissemination of the wine heritage. In

Ponte de Lima, the Route of Santiago serves the route of the Iter Vitis, as well as the Pilgrims' Hostel serves as "Domus of the Iter Vitis Network - The Roads of the Vineyard." The objective is to develop wine tourism through the valorization of the cultural, material and immaterial heritage, of the gastronomy and of the territory associated to the wine and vine. In Ponte de Lima, the Cultural Route of Santiago serves the route of the Iter Vitis, as well as the Pilgrims' Hostel serves as "Domus of the Iter Vitis Network - The Roads of the Vineyard." The objective is to develop wine tourism through the valorization of the cultural, material and immaterial heritage, of the gastronomy and of the territory associated to the wine and vine.

The Region of Central Macedonia as well is associated both with wine production and wine tourism. In this direction, the "Wine Routes of Northern Greece", a wine tourism network, was founded in Central Macedonia, offering full package tours to wine lovers, including beside visits to wineries, accommodation, meals, activities, acquaintance with local products and producers etc. aiming to promote and improve wine tourism in Northern Greece.

The Regional Units of Chalkidiki and Thessaloniki, as well as the plains of mountain Paiko are historically associated with viticulture and wineries. In Chalkidiki, in its central part, Sithonia and Mount Athos, large vineyards are located. The dry climate and the humidity of the Aegean Sea favor the production of fine wines. This encourages the production of well-known wine varieties such as "Limnio", an old Greek variety, the French varieties "Cabernet Sauvignon" and "Cabernet Franc" and the "PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) Plagias of Meliton" in Sithonia.

With the same Designation of Origin a white wine is produced from the varieties of white grapes "Asyrtiko", "Rhoditis" and "Athiri". Additionally, in almost all Mount Athos monasteries there is a long tradition in the art of viticulture and wine production. A wide range of grapes grow in their vineyards: the white "Roditis", "Athiri", "Asyrtiko", "Sauvignon Blanc" and "Red Limnio", "Xinomavro", "Cabernet Sauvignon" and "Grenache Rouge". In Central Chalkidiki the vineyards stretch in low hills which are adjacent to the sea. There are many varieties of grapes, white and red. A mixture of "Roditis" and "Sauvignon Blanc" grapes produces the "Local White Wine of Chalkidiki" and, respectively, a mixture of "Xinomavro", "Grenache Rouge" and "Cabernet Sauvignon" produces the "Local Red Wine of Chalkidiki".

Moreover, from the Thermaikos coastlines up to the mountains of the Regional Unit of Thessaloniki, there is great wine making tradition and famous wines are produced. The white varieties "Asyrtiko", "Malagousia", "Sauvignon Blanc", "Chardonnay", "Viognier" as well as the red varieties "Syrah", "Merlot", "Grenache Rouge", "Limnio", "Mavroudi", "Mavrotragano" are cultivated on the coast of Thermaikos, in the vineyard of Epanomi. The wines produced are known as "Local Wines of Epanomi". In the mountainous areas of the Prefecture, the vineyards that grown on the slopes of Vertiskos mountain produce the "Local Wines of Vertiskos Slopes".

In the Nea Mesimvria area, the "Roditis" variety is cultivated. It is also blended with the white variety of "Zoumiatiko" for the production of the white "Local Wine of Mesimvria". Moreover, from the varieties cultivated throughout the Prefecture of Thessaloniki, the "Local Wines of Thessaloniki" are produced.

Finally, in the plains of mountain Paiko, the vineyards of Goumenissa are located on its eastern slopes. In the area "Xinomavro" along with "Negoska", a local red grape, are cultivated. From their blending, a red wine is produced under the name "High Quality PDO Goumenissa". In the hills of Giannitsa, the native varieties "Rhoditis", "Xinomavro" as well as the international ones "Chardonnay", "Sauvignon Blanc", "Ugni Blanc", "Merlot", "Cinsault" are cultivated for the production of the "Local Wines of Pella". From all the above mentioned, the importance and contribution of Central Macedonia in the Greek and European viticulture and wine making is quite obvious. Participation of the Region into the official European Wine Route Network (The Iter Vitis Route) will increase the Region's recognition and its wine-making activity and will also make it an important wine-tourism destination.

2. Action

The Action concerns the participation of the Region of Central Macedonia as member in the European Network of the "Iter Vitis" Cultural Route of the Council of Europe. The Action includes communication

with the official body of the Network, based in Sambuca di Sicilia in Sicily, for the registration of the Region.

The Action includes the filling of the network's application form and the payment of the corresponding fee. Following the approval of the membership request by the Network and the registration of the Region in the Network, the Region will be able to participate in the Network's actions for the promotion of its wine-growing and wine-making heritage and other activities such as: exchange of good practices and know-how, development of educational and cultural exchanges, raising common issues to preserve biodiversity of wine, quality of life in rural areas, improving the operational coordination of Network members, etc.



(Πηγή: Iter Vitis, <http://itervitis.eu/>)

3. Players involved

The stakeholders involved in the Action concern mainly those active in the viticulture and wine sector as well as wine tourism and cultural tourism.

4. Timeframe

The Action will be completed within 6 months.

5. Costs

The cost of the Action includes the annual subscription of the Region of Central Macedonia to the Network, as well as possible costs of organizing actions related to the promotion of the Network's activities.

The cost is estimated at 5,000.00 €.

Own resources of the Region of Central Macedonia.

6. Funding sources:

Tourism Promotion Plan of Region of Central Macedonia

ACTION 3.**ACTION 3: FACILITATION OF THE PROCEDURE FOR THE SHAPING OF THE GREEK SECTION OF THE IRON CURTAIN TRAIL IN THE REGIONAL UNIT OF SERRES**

(Source: www.dikaiologitika.gr)

1. The background

The Region of Central Macedonia through the Cult-RInG project will contribute to the initiative of the Latvian partner of the project, Vidzeme Tourism Association but also to the vision for the completion of the whole route. Through the Action, the Region will also contribute to the development and shaping of the Greek section of the route that is located in the Regional Unit of Serres. This effort of the Region is also supported by the MEP Michael Cramer, who has already visited the area.

The Iron Curtain Trail or EuroVelo 13 is a cycling-cultural route along the former Iron Curtain that from the end of the Second World War until the end of the Cold War in 1992 was the border of the Eastern (Soviet Union) - Western Europe. This route is a long-distance cycle route of 7,650 km, crossing 20 countries, 14 of which in the European Union. The initiative to develop and highlight this route is due to Mr. Michael Cramer of the German Green Party, and also Member of the European Parliament.

Since 2013, separate parts of the route have been completed, especially in the central section and along the German and Czech border. In September 2018, as part of the Cult-Ring project of Interreg Europe, the Vidzeme Tourism Association, Latvia applied at the Council of Europe to certify this route as a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe.

When the route is completed, it will run 7,641 km from the Barents Sea to the Black Sea and will consist of three (3) sections:

A) North Section: 4,127 km from the Barents Sea, along the Finnish-Russian border and the Baltic coast to the German-Polish border

B) Central Section: 2,179 km crossing Germany, following the old border of East-West Germany, continues on the Czech-Austrian borders, Austrian-Slovakian, Austrian-Hungarian and Slovenian ones

C) Southern Section: 1,335 km along the borders of Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, FYROM, Greece and Turkey, to the Black Sea

In Greece, part of the "Iron Curtain Trail" route passes through the Regional Units of Serres and Evros.

2. Action

The Action concerns the development of a plan for the definition and formation of the Greek part of the cycling-cultural route "Iron Curtain Trail", also known as "EuroVelo 13" within the Regional Unit of Serres. This route will be linked to the route at the Bulgarian territory.

The plan focuses on the shaping of a 3 km cycling route, including appropriate signing along the route, identification of accommodation and catering facilities in the wider area, safety measures and standards for visitors and cyclists, identification and highlighting of the historical and cultural assets of the area (fortresses, antiquities, etc.).

The aim of the Action is to promote alternative forms of tourism within the region of Central Macedonia, such cycling and cultural tourism and to strengthen through them the local economy.

3. Players involved

The stakeholders involved in the Action are: a) local government bodies and in particular the Regional Unit of Serres and its municipalities through which the route is running, b) the Forest Service, c) cycling and sports clubs.

4. Timeframe

The Action will be completed within 6 months.

5. Costs

The cost of the Action includes the external expert support of the Region of Central Macedonia for the development of the Cycle-Cultural Route plan.

The cost is estimated at 20,000.00 €, including a preliminary route plan, collecting relevant data on the cultural assets of the route, consultations and a description of the necessary promotional activities.

6. Funding sources

Co financed by Tourism Promotion Plan of Region of Central Macedonia and Own funds of the Region of Central Macedonia.

31.12.2018

Date:

Signature:

Stamp of the organisation (if available):





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



PHOTOS

1. Saint Paul's Routes
2. Iter Vitis Network
3. Iron Curtain Trail



BACK COVER

1. <https://inthe footsteps of st paul mcp.weebly.com/map.html>
2. <http://itervitis.eu/iter-vitis-awards-2018/>
3. <http://eurovelogreece.blogspot.com/2014/02/blog-post.html>