

**REGIONE PUGLIA***Dipartimento Turismo, Economia della Cultura  
e Valorizzazione del Territorio*  
**Green  
Pilgrimage**  
Interreg Europe European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund

# Green Pilgrimage – Action plan of Puglia Region (PP4)

## Background

Produced by each region, the action plan is a document providing details on how the lessons learnt from the cooperation will be exploited in order to improve the policy instrument tackled within that region. It specifies the nature of the actions to be implemented, their timeframe, the players involved, the costs (if any) and funding sources (if any). If the same policy instrument is addressed by several partners, only one action plan is required.

Should include who the document is for, what it is for, project information, partner organisation, Country, Contact Person, and Date

## Policy context (PUGLIA REGION)

*Name of the policy instrument addressed, how it has been involved and how it will be impacted by the Action Plan*

POR Puglia 2014/2020: Objective 6.6 improves the conditions and bidding standards for the use of natural heritage, according to the Landscape Regional Plan to preserve the most important natural landscape of inland areas; Objective 6.7 integrates the use of historical and cultural heritage, landscape, traditions, arts, food and wine through the consolidation and development of networks; Objective 6.8 fosters competitive positioning of tourist destinations through valorization, focusing on improving the capacity to adapt to demand changes for different forms of tourism experiences.

National Strategy on Inland Areas and the model “Cultural and natural system” achieved during the previous implementation, are policy instruments that will be integrated to promote the development of inland and rural areas concerned by pilgrimage route Via Francigena. Currently the Region does not have adequate protection of natural and cultural heritage along the European route.

Puglia Region- Tourism and Culture Department is directly responsible for the implementation of the aforementioned objectives of POR Puglia. The regional strategy, through the preparation of two long-time strategic Plans for the Tourism (Puglia365) and the Culture (PIIIL Cultura), is focused on actions linked to the cultural and sustainable tourism for the valorisation of Apulian Routes. The institution of the Regional Committee of Cultural Routes and Itineraries represents the political instrument used to carry out this strategy. Furthermore, the Technical Responsible for the Cultural Routes in Southern Italy was involved in a Staff exchange to the National Pilgrim Centres in Norway, which contributed to strengthen the internal expertise of Puglia Region. In the frame of the National Strategy on Inland Areas, the project allowed Puglia Region- Tourism and Culture Department to promote the dialogue with several municipalities and GAL Monti Dauni (Local Action Group of Daunian Mountains), responsible for the implementation of the national strategy thanks also to the realization of a project Study Visit in the area and the following identification of

links connecting Daunian Mountains' routes (Cammino Dauno of the Cammino Materano) and Via Francigena. All this know-how together guarantees a real impact on both on-going policies and planning of future Community funds related to tourism and culture.

## Partner Details

Puglia Region – Department of Tourism, Economy of Culture and Valorisation of Territory - managing the Green Pilgrimage Project as Project Partner

Green Pilgrimage Project

Puglia Region - Department of Tourism, Economy of Culture and Valorisation of Territory

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## Policy Instrument

This Action Plan aims to impact:

- Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
- European Territorial Cooperation programme
- Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed:

POR PUGLIA 2014/2020

PIIIL PUGLIA 2017-2025

PUGLIA 365 2016-2025

FESR-FSE 2014/2020, Axis VI

INTERREG V-A GREECE-ITALY 2014/2020

## Details on Policy Instrument – Puglia Operational Program

**POR PUGLIA 2014/2020, PIIIL PUGLIA 2017-2025, PUGLIA 365 2016-2025, FESR-FSE 2014/2020, Axis VI**

The Operational Program is co-funded by the ERDF for less developed regions and thus aims to contribute to the EU2020 Strategy, for a smart, competitive and inclusive growth and to achieving social, territorial and economic cohesion. Moreover, being the territory included in the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion, Puglia Region OP 2014-2020 also contributes to implement the European Union Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR), in compliance with EU2020 disposals. In particular Puglia Region coordinates in Italy pillar 4, related to sustainable tourism. The cultural and natural heritage of the Region is addressed by Axis IV of the OP.

## **ANALYSIS OF THE POLICY OBJECTIVES RELATED TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM, PILGRIMAGE OR LONG DISTANCE WALKING**

The Puglia Region OP 2014-2020 has so far supported the definition of the Regional Plan for Culture (called “PIIIL Cultura”) and the Regional Strategy for Tourism (called “Puglia365”). Both Strategies have introduced a new method based on participatory planning and monitoring of the Strategies in close cooperation with all main regional stakeholders of Culture and Tourism sectors.

“PIIIL Cultura” intends to encourage cultural contents development in cultural containers to avoid simple restoration of buildings without a real strategy of development and with direct involvement of local communities and public-private partnerships.

Conversely, “Puglia 365” has involved all actors of the tourism sectors, local authorities, trade unions, stakeholders, citizens, universities, Minister of Culture and Tourism to outline a new vision of tourism in the Region. The Strategy has identified six main themes: hospitality, education and training, infrastructure, innovation, promotion and product.

The Axis VI of the Puglia Region OP 2014-2020 is specifically devoted to the protection of natural and cultural resources and environment. More particularly specific objectives 6.6, 6.7 and 6.8 seem to be coherent with the development of pilgrimage routes and cultural routes in rural areas. The policy acknowledges that despite the highly valuable, diversified and diffused historical cultural heritage in Puglia, cultural tourist demand is still low and there is a great potential to be further developed.

**Specific objective 6.6 “Improving conditions and standards to enjoy natural heritage in areas of interest”** Through this objective the OP intends to improve quality conditions of natural areas of particular interest which are located mainland and along the coast. This objective should be addressed in coherence with Regional Landscape Plan in order to preserve natural areas while enhancing their use through innovative tourism services and systems. In particular, green travel (non-motorized travel experience) through regional landscapes and connectivity of rural areas with urban centers are among the activities to be supported in order to improve knowledge and sustainable tourism through the whole territory.

**Specific objective 6.7 “Improving conditions and standards to enjoy cultural heritage in areas of attraction”**

Despite regional historical and cultural heritage is of high value and well diffused throughout the territory, the demand of this kind of tourism has still not achieved the expected level. This objective intends to support regional cultural heritage encouraging the development of integrated tourism offer with landscape heritage, food and wine traditions, theatre and music traditions and contemporary arts and live performance. In view of cultural routes and historical pilgrimage development in Puglia region, it seems useful underlining that Puglia OP intends to carry out an integrated strategy with Regional Landscape Plan for the enhancement of cultural heritage and local landscape. This objective clearly intends to facilitate economic regeneration and employment. Infrastructure works and development of quality services and systems will be funded within the framework of this objective to allow new modes of travel through knowledge of territorial cultural identity.

**Specific Objective 6.8 “Boosting tourist destinations competitive positioning through integrated enhancement of territorial assets and skills”**

This objective intends to answer to new tourism demands. It acknowledges that tourism attractions are not anymore sufficient if tourism supply is not integrated and does not allow travel experience which fulfil new specialized demands. This objective aims at increasing tourist destinations competitiveness in the international market by supporting actions aiming at :

- raising Puglia tourist brand reputation and awareness,
- adapting the offer to new forms of experiential tourism,
- developing tourism operators skills toward visitor economy,
- differentiating tourism products within a destination in order to meet relevant new demands in low season,
- boosting a smart, effective and dynamic coordination of public and private actors involved in the management of relevant tourist attractors

- improving quality standards of public services related to tourism experiences
- improving cooperation among public administrations on common tourist services to increase efficiency and economies of scale

This specific objective is coherent with EUSAIR PILLAR 4, in particular with Topic 1 *Developing new sustainable thematic tourist routes*

A transversal approach of the Puglia Region OP 2014-2020 will consolidate and develop networks supporting the regional cultural and natural heritage, sustainable management of the heritage and promotion of tourism supply chain linked to this activity.

## **INTERREG V-A GREECE-ITALY 2014/2020**

Interreg V-A Greece-Italy Programme is a European Territorial Cooperation Programme that aims to help public institutions and local stakeholders to develop cross-border projects and pilot actions and to create new policy, products and services, with the final goal to improve the citizens' quality of life. Particularly, the Cross-Border Co-operation (CBC) Programme Greece-Italy (GR-IT) links eleven (11) NUTS III level prefectures and six (6) provinces from two different EU Member States, Greece and Italy. The overall objective is to support strategic cross-border co-operation for a more prosperous and sustainable region across the Ionian Sea. Emphasis will be placed upon developing the foundations for a dynamic economy which fosters smart, sustainable and inclusive growth with the goal to improve the quality of life for those living in the region. Strategically, the programme will enhance innovation in a number of fields such as blue growth, tourism and culture, agro food and cultural and creative industries. Interreg V-A Greece-Italy Programme has a total budget of 123,176,896 € financed per 85% by European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and per 15% by the 2 member states Greece and Italy through a national co-financing. Puglia Region intends to consider this ETC Programme as additional policy instrument connected to Green Pilgrimage Project, particularly through the creation of a network of public hostels for pilgrims and tourists.

Thanks to GP, there was the decision to devote a strategic Interreg Greece-Italy 214/2020 Project to the creation of the first network of public hostels along via Francigena in Puglia. Particularly, after lessons learned during Project Study visits and Staff Exchange Activities, Puglia Region decided to create a network of public hostels for pilgrims and tourists along via Francigena in Puglia Region. This represent of the most important action in terms of Cultural Routes in Puglia due to the lack of a common policy on management of hospitality and welcome matters. The project name is "TheRoute\_net - Thematic Routes and Networks" with a total budget for Puglia Region of about 11.000.000,00 Euros. The project results currently approved and funded and activities will start in the next months. This project aims to achieve a structured regional strategy to strengthen slow tourism and cultural and historical paths, of which Puglia has a rich heritage, through a structured plan of material and immaterial interventions aimed at favoring the seasonal adjustment of tourism, especially in terms of cultural routes, in close collaboration with municipal administrations, territorial institutions and private organizations.

After lessons learned during GP study visits and Staff Exchange Activities realised by experts of PP4, Puglia Region decided to create the first network of public hostels along via Francigena in Puglia. For this reason, during the preparation of Strategic Project under INTERREG Greece-Italy Programme, Puglia Region chose to dedicate one proposal connected with welcome policy of tourists in Puglia, with particular regards of pilgrims and more in general to "slow tourists". Project was approved an this represent just the first change in the Policy realised by Green Pilgrimage Project. In fact, Puglia Region learned the fact that Pilgrims and pilgrimage tourism represent of the most potential and sustainable typology of tourism for its territory and a means to ensure a deseasonalisation along all the year.

Particularly, lessons learned during study visit and staff exchange activities on hospitality policies and management of hostels and Pilgrims center provided the decision to invest in this aspect through the Greece-Italy Programme. Without the awareness on hospitality policies learned thanks to Green Pilgrimage project, it would have been very difficult to dedicate a large amount such as 11.000.000,00 to the matter of Cultural Routes.

The potential Territorial impact of this first change of policy is impressive for Puglia Region because, after years and years of inactivity on the matter of hostels, there will be the possibility to realise 7 hostels for pilgrims and tourists, with particular regards to pilgrims. Certain will be also the indirect effect in terms of local economy that the presence of this hostels and the change of the Regional law on hostels will produce (the regional law on hostels will be updated thanks to lessons learned during GP study visits). Moreover, there will be an increase of occupational level thanks to the new job placements of hostels and new job

resource activated by the induced economy by the strengthening of accommodation facilities and the change in policies on the reception of tourists and pilgrims.

## Introduction

*This will explain what the Action Plan is for, a bit about the project, the main focus of the project and the policy influence envisaged.*

The structure chosen of the Action Plan was the one decided and finalized by the partners during the project meeting in Norway. Internal staff of Puglia Region also participated in the webinar on Action Plan of the Programme before to start the preparation of the first draft.

First of all the Action Plan analyzed the Policy Context of Puglia Region and the related links with the policy instrument addressed (how it has been involved and how it will be impacted by the Action Plan). Particularly, for this aspect Puglia Region highlighted the strict connection between goals of Action Plan of Green Pilgrimage and POR Puglia 2014/2020, mainly with the following POR PUGLIA Objectives: 6.6 improves the conditions and bidding standards for the use of natural heritage, according to the Landscape Regional Plan to preserve the most important natural landscape of inland areas; Objective 6.7 integrates the use of historical and cultural heritage, landscape, traditions, arts, food and wine through the consolidation and development of networks; Objective 6.8 fosters competitive positioning of tourist destinations through valorization, focusing on improving the capacity to adapt to demand changes for different forms of tourism experiences. In addition to the above mentioned policy instrument, the Action Plan of Puglia Region is also linked with the INTERREG V/A GREECE-ITALY 2014/2020 ETC Programme, as detail in the previous section.

A connection was also individuated with the National Strategy on Inland Areas and the model "Cultural and natural system" achieved during the previous implementation, are policy instruments that will be integrated to promote the development of inland and rural areas concerned by pilgrimage route Via Francigena

In general, the strategy behind this Action Plan is related to an analyses of gap and needs on cultural routes in the Region in order to be filled and satisfied. For this purpose, the Action Plan of Puglia Region contains actions referred to the improvement of impact of cultural routes policy on Puglia Region Territory.

For each actions, was specified the Link with policy, the Impact on policy, timeframe, budget and source of funding and sustainability.

This action plan was positively approved by the Department of Tourism of Puglia Region, principal policy maker at Regional Level in terms of cultural routes policies. Contents of this action plan will be an integral part of the Regional Master Plan of Puglia Region in Cultural Routes that will be approved at political level by Puglia Region.

## Partners

Kent County Council, UK

Region Ostergotland, Sweden

National Pilgrim Centre, Norway

Institute for Tourism Research and Development, Romania

Norfolk County Council, UK

Diocese of Canterbury, UK

Puglia Region, Italy

## Project Background

The Green Pilgrimage (GP) project is funded by the European Union Regional Development Fund in the framework of the Interreg Europe Programme. It involves six partners and one advisory partner from five EU countries and aims at exploring how the increasing trend of pilgrimage and active tourism can support policies of protection of natural and cultural heritage. GP project is expected to show policy makers how to protect natural and cultural heritage whilst developing jobs and growth along pilgrim routes through developing low impact tourism, digitalization, pilgrim accommodation and strengthening local traditions. This reconnects pilgrims with their environment, landscape and culture.

## Project Aims and Outcomes

The overall objective of Green Pilgrimage is to provide an evidence base to regional policy makers showing green pilgrimage as a social and economically valuable cultural heritage tradition that enhances and develops Europe's natural landscape and cultural assets. The simple protection of nature and heritage is not enough as this approach isolates assets from today's economic realities. The best way to protect nature and heritage is to give it economic value in a way that enhances the very heritage that we seek to protect. This requires addressing the different types of policies that IMPACT on natural and cultural heritage.

This broad policy integration is the overarching aim of GP. Sub-objectives are to:

- Integrate pilgrimage objectives into a range of policy types affecting natural and cultural heritage and to evaluate their impact on asset enhancement and protection.
- Integrate sustainability indicators into policies impacting on natural and cultural heritage
- Sustainably develop the economic potential of pilgrimage as seen in the rapid growth of pilgrimage in places like Santiago de Compostela or Walsingham in Norfolk.
- Develop a broader interpretation of pilgrimage as a journey with meaning; walking for health, for remembrance, for leisure, etc. Wider pilgrimage accessibility increases its potential for heritage development
- Promote green pilgrimage ethos as a low carbon socially responsible outdoor activity
- Share best practice on pilgrimage route management, promotion and business engagement.
- Enable stakeholders to benefit from regional expertise
- Inform regional policy of project results and outputs.
- Support a network of pilgrimage places and routes in Europe
- Develop GP action plans that enable the development of natural and cultural assets through sustainable economic growth

The Action Plan will inspire an invigorated interest and development of Pilgrimage from the local level through to regional level policy makers.

## Project Progress to End of Phase 1

### *Summary of achievements to date*

According to the AF, Puglia Region ensured the realisation of the Action Plan according to the format approved by consortium, participated in 6 Study Visits organised by PPs, organised 1 Study Visit in Italy, organised 1 international conference on Cultural Routes Policies, organised 6 stakeholders meeting, involved several stakeholders in both Study Visits and stakeholders meetings as well as in Regional Activities such as the "Regional Committee of Routes and Cultural Routes", had several policy changes according to the Policy Instruments and the Action Plan as well detailed in its Progress Reports.

# The IT Context

Puglia region is located in Southeastern Italy. The region covers an area of 19,540,9 [km<sup>2</sup>](#), its capital is Bari (324,198 inhabitants). Its location in Mediterranean sea (800 km of coastlines in Puglia), between the southern European continent, the Balkans and the East has always influenced its history and marked its varied and valuable cultural heritage and landscape. Being at the crossroad of Euro-Mediterranean routes the territory has been crisscrossed over the centuries by pilgrims, emperors, traders, soldiers, monks, etc. en route to Rome, Jerusalem and the East, for religious, trade or political reasons.

Tourism in the Region has dramatically increased in these years recording +5% of arrivals and +3% overnight stays in 2016, with tourists arriving mainly from Italy, Germany, France, UK, Switzerland and United States. Tourism represents a key sector of regional economy and has affected positively the socio-economic growth, jobs and new businesses generation, infrastructure development. Sea and beaches, rituals and traditions, spirituality, nature, art and culture, gastronomy, are among the thematic products offered. Current regional administration efforts are now addressing the need to integrate tourism services, to diversify and de-seasonalize tourism demand. A recent regional initiative called "inPuglia365" was launched in the framework of the regional tourism strategy yearly operational plan and is supporting alternative tourism initiatives other than the "sea, sun and beach" tourism product, to be implemented all over the year and proposed by local administrations, associations, and private enterprises. In the Summer several initiatives are supported by the regional administration included guided walks and bike tours along local itineraries through nature, mountains and villages.

Hiking, biking and pilgrimage routes are not presented in the Region promotional website, except "Borboni cycle way" and "Adriatic bike route" ([www.viaggiareinpuglia.it](http://www.viaggiareinpuglia.it)). The non-motorized tourism offer throughout the territory does not seem to be developed and organized. In recent years Puglia Region has started developing European cultural routes, in particular it has worked in cooperation with the European Association of the Via Francigena and the other concerned Regions in Italy and submitted the Council of Europe the dossier to apply for the extension of the "cultural route of the Council of Europe" certification to the **Via Francigena** south of Rome, until Puglia. Cultural activities were also supported to raise awareness among local population and visitors about the Via Francigena in the Region. Puglia Region is currently working to implement the route on the ground, financing so far the tracking and signage of the 400 km-route in the Region.

The Roman **Appian Way** running from Rome to Brindisi has also recently been re-discovered. It is the subject of Italian national policies and development project which include Puglia and other southern Italian Regions, with the objective to restore and revitalize the ancient historical route and create opportunities of tourism development in line with new trends.

Religious traditions and heritage are widespread and deeply rooted in the regional history and among communities. Major religious sites are known worldwide as Monte Sant'Angelo (the church incorporating the Saint Michael's Cave) which is a UNESCO site alongside Castel del Monte, or the town of S.Giovanni Rotondo which hosts the shrine of San Pio, or still the Saint Nicholas Cathedral in Bari which draws many Christian pilgrims from orthodox and catholic churches in the world. Many diffused local religious feasts, celebrating local patron saints with processions by sea and on land, are often enriched with popular traditions which attract a greater range of tourists (e.g. procession in honor of the Virgin Mary by boat in Santa Maria di Leuca on 15<sup>th</sup> August, Saint Anthony Abbot -Sant'Antonio Abate-bonfire in Novoli, the holy week celebrations carried out by religious brotherhoods, etc.).

## *Summary of the project in the IT*

Thanks to GP Project, Puglia Region empowered its approach on cultural routes and seasonal adjustment of tourism and will change its policy approach about cultural routes.

# Conclusions

*Summary of all of above and purpose of Phase 2*

Following lessons learned during GP Study Visit Experiences, Puglia Region intends to adapt its policy change process and structure about cultural routes in order to be more suitable to the current needs of pilgrimage, and more in general of tourists that choose cultural routes as a different touristic product compared with the traditional “sun and beach” touristic offer of Puglia territory. Action Plan and the implementation of the action detailed in this document represent the concrete actions that Puglia Region intends to realise thanks to the input had through GP project. The phase 2 will be dedicated to the monitoring of the implementation of actions foreseen in the Action Plan.

# Action Plan Summary

The action plan is a document providing details on how the lessons learnt from the cooperation will be exploited in order to improve the policy instrument tackled within that region. It specifies the nature of the actions to be implemented, their timeframe, the players involved, the costs (if any) and funding sources (if any). If the same policy instrument is addressed by several partners, only one action plan is required. Particularly this action plan contains 10 actions that Puglia Region intends to realise in the near future thanks to policy changes that GP project produced in the Policy maker structure of Puglia Region.

# Actions

## Action 1 - Horizontal and Vertical signposting on Via Francigena

### Description

Via Francigena in Puglia is not properly signposted yet. The segments from Faeto to Canosa, from Manfredonia to Bari and from Bari to Brindisi do not have any road signs for pilgrims. To solve this problem, it is necessary to fix horizontal and vertical signposting with paint, stickers, and necessary boundary stones according to the *vademecum* of the European Association of Vie Francigene. In order to implement this Action, Puglia Region is waiting for the Ministry of Cultural Heritage to release the necessary amounts, which will be disbursed after the completion of a tender procedure common to the three southern regions affected by the Via Francigena route. Puglia Region will have the task of coordinating the work on its territory.

### Organisations Involved

Puglia Region, municipalities, parks, European Association of Vie Francigene and local associations.

### Implementation plan

To be developed.

### Link with policy

Piil Cultura Puglia, Puglia 365.

### Impact on policy

This action is in line with the strategic plans of Culture and Tourism of Puglia Region as well as satisfies the action lines foreseen in these documents.

### Indirect economic impact

The realization of signposting will allow to walk effectively Vie Francigene and will stimulate micro-economy processes linked to this model of slow tourism (reception, restaurants, services, etc.).

### Timeframe

2020 + 2021

### Costs

€ 800.000,00

### Sustainability

Horizontal signposting has a very low impact on the environment. The planning of vertical signposting was thought in order to be completely environmental-friendly. In the coastal areas and in the natural parks wood supports will be used while, in the countryside, boundary stones will be preferred over classic street signs.

### Durability

The durability of the operation will be guaranteed by the agreements between Puglia Region, Municipalities, Parks and private subjects who will carry out the maintenance of the signposting and their substitution in case of deterioration.

### Suggested Funding Sources

Italian Ministerial Funds (CIPE).

## **Link to learned lessons**

During the study visit held in Galicia, Norway and Sweden, Puglia Region learned how much is important to have a clear and visible signage for pilgrims and, more in general, for people moving along paths. Taking into account examples seen in the above mentioned countries, PP4 decided to use the same concept in terms of signage: painted arrows, horizontal wood sign, stickers, vertical sign and necessary boundary stones on the section of Via Francigena from Faeto to Canosa, from Manfredonia to Bari and from Bari to Brindisi. Needless say that this signage will be implemented according to the *vademecum* of the European Association of Vie Francigene.

This action does not rely on Pilot Funding requested by Puglia Region.

## **Action 2 - Realization of information panels in the stopover points of Via Francigena**

### **Description**

The historical centres along the Via Francigena need information billboards with the double aim to inform pilgrims about the history of places and to make citizens aware of the presence of the European itinerary within their territory. In order to implement this Action, Puglia Region is waiting for the Ministry of Cultural Heritage to release the necessary amounts, which will be disbursed after the completion of a tender procedure common to the three southern regions affected by the Via Francigena route. Puglia Region will have the task of coordinating the work on its territory.

### **Organisations Involved**

Puglia Region, municipalities, parks, European Association of Vie Francigene and local associations.

### **Implementation plan**

To be developed.

### **Link with policy**

Piil Cultura Puglia, Puglia 365.

### **Impact on policy**

This action is in line with the strategic plans of Culture and Tourism of Puglia Region as well as satisfies the action lines foreseen in these documents.

### **Indirect economic impact**

The realization of signposting will allow to walk effectively Vie Francigene and will stimulate micro-economy processes linked to this model of slow tourism (reception, restaurants, services, etc.).

### **Timeframe**

2020 + 2021

### **Costs**

€ 600.000,00

### **Sustainability**

The choice of the signals' collocation will take into account the restrictions imposed by the Superintendence.

### **Durability**

The durability of the operation will be guaranteed by the agreements between Puglia Region, Municipalities, Parks and private subjects who will carry out the maintenance of the signposting and their substitution in case of deterioration.

### **Suggested Funding Sources**

Italian Ministerial Funds.

### **Link to learned lessons**

During the study visit held in Romania and Kent, Puglia Region learned how much is important to connect main point of interest (in term of cultural and natural heritage) of the area along Puglia Region paths with the policies of development of cultural routes in Puglia (a cultural site becomes a further attractor point), also through information billboards with the double aim to inform pilgrims about the history of places and to make citizens aware of the presence of the European itinerary within their territory. In this way, tourism development policy of Puglia Region will consider also the possible connections among paths and cultural and natural heritage along cultural routes informing tourists moving along paths. This action can also participate in the connection of main point of interest (in term of cultural and natural heritage) of the area along Puglia Region paths with the policies of development of cultural routes in Puglia (a cultural site becomes a further attractor point)

This action does not rely on Pilot Funding requested by Puglia Region.

## **Action 3 - Institution of citizens' committees on the Via Francigena**

### **Description**

Every stopover point of the Via Francigena needs a citizens' committee able to valorize it and carry out minimum maintenance works. The objective of citizens' committees should be to welcome pilgrims properly, signal eventual accommodation and refreshment facilities and report eventual criticality of the route to the regional and local administration. The creation of these committees will be stimulated with a series of territorial meetings, 2 for each area of Puglia (north, central and south), aimed at associations and local operators. These will be real training moments, with qualified teachers, which will aim to provide the various components of the territory with the notions and practices essential for managing this new tourist model.

### **Organisations Involved**

Puglia Region, municipalities, parks, European Association of Vie Francigene and local associations.

### **Implementation plan**

To be developed.

### **Link with policy**

Piiil Cultura Puglia, Puglia 365, Regional Law on Participation.

### **Impact on policy**

This action is in line with the strategic plans of Culture and Tourism of Puglia Region as well as satisfies the action lines foreseen in these documents. Furthermore, the institution of Committees makes citizens aware of the rules and the regional strategies existing in the cultural and touristic sectors.

### **Indirect economic impact**

The creation of citizens' committees will improve the routes of Vie Francigene and will stimulate micro-economy processes linked to this model of slow tourism (reception, restaurants, services, etc.)

#### **Timeframe**

2020 + 2021

#### **Costs**

€ 50.000,00

#### **Sustainability**

This action has no impact on the environment; instead, it supports the control of the rural territory from citizens, who often signal eventual illegal waste spills.

#### **Durability**

The durability of the operation will be guaranteed by the agreements between Puglia Region, Municipalities, Parks and private subjects who will allow citizens to work on their territories.

#### **Suggested Funding Sources**

Interreg V-A Greece-Italy Programme 2014-2020 (Call for Strategic Projects).

Regional Funds

#### **Link to learned lessons**

For this action, a strong contribution came from what was learned in Galicia where measures environmental impact & mitigation and approach on welcome of pilgrims were studied. Particularly, thanks to this Action 4 it is possible to increase the awareness of local communities living along cultural routes in Puglia. In this way, Puglia policy could absorb modalities to how the local economic tissue could be influenced by an increase of pilgrims.

This action does not rely on Pilot Funding requested by Puglia Region.

## **Action 4 - Modification of the Regional Law regulating Hostels**

#### **Description**

In Puglia there is a law in force, which sets age restrictions (under-26) to access hostels. This law, together with out-dated technical standards, has effectively prevented this form of accommodation from growing. Puglia region will therefore proceed to write a new law that will not only abolish the limit of 26 years, but will update the technical characteristics of the hostels according to the new European standards, which foresee not only the presence of spaces for accommodation, but also of community areas for the promotion of the territory. The study of this law will be entrusted to professionals who will compare the existing regulatory material at national and community level.

## **Organisations Involved**

Puglia Region, professional associations.

## **Implementation plan**

To be developed.

## **Link with policy**

Piil Cultura Puglia, Puglia 365, Law regulating hostels.

## **Impact on policy**

This action aims to delete any age restrictions, adapt technical standards to the European ones and simplify the administrative procedures for people who want to invest in the hostel sector. A special category linked to the routes, "hostels for pilgrims", will be introduced with several advantages for those who want to invest in this market segment.

## **Indirect economic impact**

The modification of the law regulating hostels will open onto a new market in terms of reception of outdoor target and will contribute to the development of the linked micro-economy.

## **Timeframe**

2020 + 2021

## **Costs**

€ 30.000,00

## **Sustainability**

There is no negative impact on the territory. The opening of this market segment will allow recovering several empty buildings still present in historical centres.

## **Durability**

The durability of the operation will be guaranteed by the legislative framework of Puglia Region.

## **Suggested Funding Sources**

Interreg V-A Greece-Italy Programme 2014-2020 (Call for Strategic Projects).

Regional funds

## **Link to learned lessons**

For this action, a strong contribution came from what was learned in Norway, thanks to the study visit and the staff Exchange in Norway. Particularly, an expert of Puglia Region visited the *Pilgrimcenter* of Ringebu and learned a lot of lessons on hospitality rules and management aspects of hostels and pilgrims centres. In view of the learning experience had in Norway, many emerged elements can be decisive for the intention of Puglia of modifying the current regional law on Hostels and hospitalities in these structures.

This action does not rely on Pilot Funding requested by Puglia Region.

## Action 5 - Construction of 5 regional hostels

### Description

Nowadays, the Apulian routes cannot count on a proper hostel network. In order to support this new market segment, Puglia Region intends to finance the recovering of abandoned public buildings within the five Apulian provinces to realize 5 regional hostels linked to the main routes. Within the hostels, in addition to beds, there will be also the executive offices managing the routes. The technical study of this new hostel model will be contracted to professional architects who will compare existing models at national and international level.

### Organisations Involved

Puglia Region, municipalities.

### Implementation plan

To be developed.

### Link with policy

Piil Cultura Puglia, Puglia 365, Interreg V-A Greece-Italy Programme 2014-2020 (Call for Strategic Projects), Regional Law regulating hostels.

### Indirect economic impact

The realization of model regional hostel will stimulate private initiatives and will open a new market segment related to the reception of outdoor target and will contribute to develop the linked micro-economy.

### Impact on policy

This action is in line with the strategic plans of Culture and Tourism of Puglia Region as well as satisfies the action lines foreseen in these documents. Furthermore, the realization of these facilities will introduce a substantial change to the regional legislation regulating hostels.

### Timeframe

2020 + 2021

### Costs

€ 11.163.250

### Sustainability

The action is sustainable because does not foresee land consumption but the recover of already existing buildings.

### Durability

The durability of the operation will be guaranteed by the agreements between Puglia Region, Municipalities and private operators who will guarantee through contracts the opening of the receptive structure.

### Suggested Funding Sources

Interreg V-A Greece-Italy Programme 2014-2020 (Call for Strategic Projects).

### Link to learned lessons

Another important goal achieved by Puglia Region was the great lesson learned during the staff exchange had in Norway in May 2019. In view of the learning experience had in Norway, many emerged elements can be decisive for the intention of Puglia Region of modifying its policy and the planning of funding: in addition to the necessary regulatory updates to the hostels, a system of regional Pilgrimcenters is required, equipped with offices able to provide the maintenance and the project management of the routes: to achieve this objective, it will be necessary not only to intervene with structural measures by recovering public buildings (as it is already happening with the Greece-Italy Strategic project) but also to guarantee to these structures a

financial framework as well as full participation in the programming and design processes of the Committee of Cultural Routes and Itineraries, the regional governance body devoted to this tourist segment. It would be very interesting to test a relationship between these new structures and the regional info points, in order to allow not only a more efficient data collection, but also an osmosis between the outdoor sector and the cultural tourism of the cities of art, often crossed by the routes in Puglia. In the final version of Regional Action Plan on cultural routes, these lessons will be taken into account.

Particularly, during last few months there was a first change in policy in terms of Cultural Routes. Particularly, thanks to GP, there was the decision to devote a strategic Interreg Greece-Italy 214/2020 Project to the creation of the first network of public hostels along via Francigena in Puglia. Particularly, after lessons learned during Project Study visits and Staff Exchange Activities, Puglia Region decided to create a network of public hostels for pilgrims and tourists along via Francigena in Puglia Region. This represents one of the most important action in terms of Cultural Routes in Puglia due to the lack of a common policy on management of hospitality and welcome matters. The project name is "TheRoute\_net - Thematic Routes and Networks" with a total budget for Puglia Region of about 11.000.000,00 of euro. The project results currently approved and funded and activities will start in the next months. This project aims to achieve a structured regional strategy to strengthen slow tourism and cultural and historical paths, of which Puglia has a rich heritage, through a structured plan of material and immaterial interventions aimed at favoring the seasonal adjustment of tourism, especially in terms of cultural routes, in close collaboration with municipal administrations, territorial institutions and private organizations.

This action does not rely on Pilot Funding requested by Puglia Region.

## Action 6 - Masterplan and Atlas of Apulian Cultural Routes and Itineraries

### Description

In November 2018, Puglia Region established a governance body called "Committee of Cultural Routes and Itineraries" with the aim to develop a strategy for the valorization of Apulian cultural routes and itineraries and, through the related Forum, analyze eventual requests of the involved territories. Within this body, it is necessary to draw up both a masterplan with all the necessary actions to achieve this objective and a real atlas, in GIS format, with the purpose to resume the several ongoing projects on a digital map base. To carry out the MasterPlan, an office has been activated at the Tourism and Culture Directorate of the Puglia Region which works not only on the realization of the same, but also on the ordinary management of all the Cultural Routes.

### Organisations Involved

Puglia Region, municipalities, parks, local associations, Ministry of Tourism.

### Implementation plan

To be developed.

### Link with policy

Piil Cultura Puglia, Puglia 365.

## **Impact on policy**

This action is in line with the strategic plans of Culture and Tourism of Puglia Region as well as satisfies the action lines foreseen in these documents.

## **Indirect economic impact**

The realization of a Master Plan of Cultural Itineraries will allow calculating the economic need for its management and for a stimulus of all the activities sustaining the economy of the outdoor sector.

## **Timeframe**

2020 + 2021

## **Costs**

€ 30.000,00

## **Sustainability**

This action is completely sustainable and has no impact on the territory.

## **Durability**

The durability of the operation is guaranteed by the establishment from Puglia Region of the Committee of Cultural Routes and Itineraries, whose task is to update the Master Plan every year before drawing up the regional budget.

## **Suggested Funding Sources**

Regional funds.

## **Link to learned lessons**

This action is strictly linked with lessons learned in UK, particularly about the use of Information Technology in order to provide a "more digitalised" cultural routes offer in Puglia. Particularly Puglia Region focused on aspects such as the Digitalisation as a focal point to encourage pilgrimages and tourists to move along paths and Digitalisation as facilitates instrument for finding, booking, planning and execution of a trip in Puglia along Cultural Routes. Digitalisation will be an important part of the Regional Master Plan on Cultural Routes of Puglia Region and its Atlas.

This action does not rely on Pilot Funding requested by Puglia Region.

## **Action 7 - Translation into foreign languages of printed guides and websites devoted to cultural routes**

### **Description**

To attract foreigners, information channels should be translated into at least other two languages. In order to do that, it is necessary to support the translation of printed guides and websites devoted to cultural routes already existing in Puglia. The creation of these guides will be assigned to the Puglia Region Special Agency for Tourism which will, in collaboration with the Department of the Tourism and Culture, create the editorial and IT products, which will then be distributed in national and international fairs, as well as in regional info points.

## **Organisations Involved**

Puglia Region, PugliaPromozione, local operators.

## **Implementation plan**

To be developed.

## **Link with policy**

Piil Cultura Puglia, Puglia 365.

## **Impact on policy**

This action is in line with the strategic plans of Culture and Tourism of Puglia Region as well as satisfies the action lines foreseen in these documents, in particular the internationalization of users.

## **Indirect Economic Impact**

The presence of guides in foreign languages will allow opening the Apulia outdoor sector to foreign markets, with the consequent major fruition of cultural itineraries and the linked services.

## **Timeframe**

2020 + 2021

## **Costs**

€ 20.000,00

## **Sustainability**

This action is completely sustainable and has no impact on the territory.

## **Durability**

The durability of the operation is guaranteed by the annual plan of the touristic promotion of the regional agency "Puglia Promozione", which every year prints guides related to this sector.

## **Suggested Funding Sources**

Fesr-Fse 2014/2020

Regional funds, Cooperation funds.

## **Link to learned lessons**

This specific action is linked with lessons learned during the study visit in Canterbury where Puglia Region focused on the importance of the use of English language for the production of guides, maps and website. In this way it is possible to increase the quality of services related to Puglia Cultural Routes in order to attract and satisfy needs of foreign market of tourists and pilgrims.

This action does not rely on Pilot Funding requested by Puglia Region.

## **Action 8 - Realization of at least one accessible stopover point on the Cammino Materano**

### **Description**

In the last years, the touristic targets have significantly enlarged and started to focus the attention on the accessibility, intended like capability of creating the necessary conditions to let particular types of users to access specific touristic products. Among these, the most important are those linked to the disability and family world. This action aims to delete (or reduce as much as possible) structural and organization obstacles, in order to make at least one stopover point of the Cammino Materano in Puglia accessible to this particular target of tourists. To achieve this goal, some training meetings were held in the area with local stakeholders to try to organize the tourist offer in a structural way.

### **Organisations Involved**

Puglia Region, PugliaPromozione, local operators.

### **Implementation plan**

To be developed.

### **Link with policy**

Piiil Cultura Puglia, Puglia 365.

### **Impact on policy**

This action is in line with the strategic plans of Culture and Tourism of Puglia Region as well as satisfies the action lines foreseen in these documents.

### **Indirect Economic Impact**

The opening of accessible stops will allow reaching the market of the accessible tourism, with the consequent major fruition of cultural itineraries and the linked services.

### **Timeframe**

2020 + 2021

### **Costs**

€ 6.000,00

### **Sustainability**

This action is completely sustainable and has no impact on the territory.

### **Durability**

The durability of the operation will be guaranteed by the agreements between Puglia Region, Municipalities, Parks and private subjects who will contribute to the development of other stops devoted to the accessible tourism.

### **Suggested Funding Sources**

Other ETC Programmes

Regional funds

## **Link to learned lessons**

This action is particularly linked with lessons learned during study visits in Sweden and Norway. Particularly, during these experiences it was possible to understand the importance of the concept of the “inclusion” in the frame of pilgrimage and more in general of slow tourists in Puglia. This also will be a part of the General Master Plan of Puglia Region on Cultural Routes. In this aspect, Puglia policies will be influenced by inclusion matter starting from a first example of a stopover of the Cammino Materano in Puglia, accessible to this particular target of tourists (people with reduced mobility, families).

This action does not rely on Pilot Funding requested by Puglia Region.

## **Action 9 - Support to the program of routes' cultural animation (Festival)**

### **Description**

Apulian cultural routes can count on an articulated program of cultural animation composed of three festivals devoted the audiovisual, narrative and music. In order to make Puglia region a first-level destination in this touristic sector, it necessary to carry out coordinating actions, aimed at jointly promoting these festivals, especially in the other European countries. To achieve this, the three Apulian festivals will not only try to host international artists and personalities, but will be promoted in the various sector fairs present in the various European countries

### **Organisations Involved**

Puglia Region, PugliaPromozione, local operators.

### **Implementation plan**

To be developed.

### **Link with policy**

Piiil Cultura Puglia, Puglia 365.

### **Impact on policy**

This action is in line with the strategic plans of Culture and Tourism of Puglia Region as well as satisfies the action lines foreseen in these documents, in particular the internationalization of users.

### **Indirect Economic Impact**

The realization of Festivals will create micro-economies on the territory, linked to essential services of reception and restaurants. The overexposure of Festivals in terms of media, in addition, becomes an important instrument of promotion of the territory.

### **Timeframe**

2020 + 2021

### **Costs**

€ 50.000,00

### **Sustainability**

This action is completely sustainable and has no impact on the territory.

## **Durability**

The circuit of regional Festivals linked to cultural routes has its own funding in the budget of Puglia Region and the agencies linked to the Region.

## **Suggested Funding Sources**

Regional funds, Cooperation funds.

## **Link to learned lessons**

Pilgrimage festivals, pilgrim walks, pilgrim poems, films, businesses and even political campaigns could be considered to increase the awareness about pilgrimage. This was one the main lesson that Puglia Region learned during the Study Visit in Kent. With this regards, it is important to create a policy (inserted in the Regional Master Plan on Cultural routes) with the aim to coordinate festivals devoted to Pilgrims in terms of audiovisual, narrative and music. Puglia Region already had a first experience contributing to finance the first film festival on cultural routes held in Monte Sant'Angelo in October 2018. Due to the great success, Puglia Region intends to stabilise such kind of activities in order to promote and increase the matter of pilgrimage in Puglia and to create indirect economy effect especially on rural area of Puglia.

This action does not rely on Pilot Funding requested by Puglia Region.

## **Conclusions and Monitoring**

Details of how the above Actions will be monitored during phase 2 including engagement with stakeholders.