

# EUSAIR STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE 2021

RE-ROUTING TOURISM AIMING AT SUSTAINABLE GREEN MACROREGION  
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**The "Routes of the Olive Tree", cultural route of the Council of Europe,  
in the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-Region: Presence and development prospects of the route**

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## Who we are?

The «Routes of the Olive Tree» are itineraries of intercultural dialogue and sustainable development, framed with cultural events and various activities around the Mediterranean of the olive tree. Our objective is to internationally valorize the regions around the Mediterranean through innovative actions on the olive tree civilization.

The activities framing our itineraries are implemented by the Network and the Cultural Foundation «Routes of the Olive Tree», a civil non-profit society based in Kalamata, Greece, which, since 2003, has been materializing alternative proposals around the theme of culture and sustainable development. In this regard, it brings together, develops and promotes this rich cultural heritage through time and space in an imaginative, respectful and efficient way. These successful itineraries are framed with exhibitions, cultural and business meetings, social activities, conventions, contests, as well as research and publications around the history, symbolism, culture and value of the olive tree.



In the framework of the Routes4U project, several Points of Interest linked to the olive tree were identified all along the Ionian Adriatic coast and a connection between them offers a better tourist visibility.

Thanks to this program, the countries of the area had the opportunity to cooperate on subjects of mutual interest, so as to create synergies and better coordinate their efforts in key sectors such as: sustainable tourism, environmental quality and blue growth. The case of the 'Routes of the Olive' Tree falls within the first of these sectors: sustainable tourism.

## The Routes4U project

**Launched** in the framework of the joint programme between the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

**Implemented by** the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe through the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe networks in coordination with the stakeholders of the EU macro-regional strategies according to the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention, 2005)

### Objectives

- Regional development: Strengthening sustainable social, cultural and economic development in the 4 EU macro-regions through the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.
- Cultural cooperation: Promote the cultural cooperation between (local, national, and international) stakeholders of the 4 EU macro-regions.
- Social cohesion: Contribute to the participation of the civil society, ensuring the potential of cultural heritage as a resource for sustainable development.

## THE ‘ROUTES OF THE OLIVE TREE’, CULTURAL ROUTE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE IN THE ADRIATIC-IONIAN MACRO-REGION

The “Routes of the Olive Tree” covers all the Mediterranean countries. More specifically, we focused our efforts on the following 3 objectives:

1. expand the Routes of the Olive Tree in the macro region starting with 3 countries, Croatia, Greece and Slovenia
2. Develop a strategy to identify the main tourism stakeholders and strengthen the sense of belonging to our network
3. Create a specific tourism offer linked to olive tree heritage.

To do this, we proceeded as follows:

- ▶ identification of points of interest
- ▶ mapping of points of interest
- ▶ cooperation with local tourist offices

## THE 'ROUTES OF THE OLIVE TREE', CULTURAL ROUTE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE IN THE ADRIATIC-IONIAN MACRO-REGION

The main objective, based on which criteria were determined, is to offer a complete and authentic tourist experience allowing visitors to dive in the olive culture. These Points of Interest should therefore be tourist and / or cultural structures open to visits, offering visitors the opportunity to acquire knowledge about the olive tree cultivation and Mediterranean heritage and traditions, but also to experience the local way of life, through tastings, workshops (ex: cooking), agricultural practices (ex: olive picking) etc.

The types of structures that have been selected as points of interest are museums, tourist farms and olive producers who offer visits to their olive groves or their mill, allowing visitors to discover the process of making olive oil, tasting the olive oil and other local dishes and offering the possibility to buy these products.

The following have been integrated to the 'Olive Tree Route' of the Council of Europe, thus far:

## THE ROUTES OF THE OLIVE TREE IN CROATIA

**A total of 31 (thirty-one) points of interest have been surveyed and documented to date, focusing in the following areas of the country:**

Island Lastovo

Island Korčula: Municipality of Vela Luka, Municipality of Blato, Municipality of Korčula

Peninsula Pelješac: Municipality of Ston, Municipality of Orebić

Neretva Valley, Municipality of Dubrovnik

Municipality of Trpanj

Island of Pag, Brijuni Islands

Zadar Region

Histria Region

## THE ROUTES OF THE OLIVE TREE IN SLOVENIA

**24 (twenty-four) points of interest have been identified and documented to date, the majority of which are in the following regions of the country:**

Portoroz - Municipality of Piran area (South-western Slovenia)

Municipality of Nova Gorizia area (Western Slovenia)

Municipality of Koper and Municipality of Izola (coast of the Istrian Peninsula)

## THE ROUTES OF THE OLIVE TREE IN GREECE

**26 (twenty-six) points of interest have been recorded and documented to date in 2 selected regions:**

South-western Peloponnese (Dpt. of Messenia, Dpt. of Laconia, Dpt. of Ilia)

Corfu Island (Ionian Island)

All these Points of Interest with their full description are already mapped on our website, on the map of the subsection entitled 'Points of Interest'. Strongly wishing for the development of friendly for the environment routes, we are carrying out a search of possible hiking routes and based on the selected areas and points of interest, we have started in all 3 countries the creation of proposals for local hiking and cycling routes which are available in electronic form. More specifically,

- In Croatia, Dubrovnik-Neretva area, we suggest a trip to Trapanj with departure point Vrilo.
- In Slovenia, in the Portoroz-Piran region, we suggest a beautiful route through olive groves with a departure point Portoroz and destination Strunjan Valey.
- In Greece, in Messinia, (southern Peloponnese), we suggest a route from Kalamata to Kardamyli that combines car and hiking. We also designed a new path in and around the city of Kardamyli that allows to get to know another side of the olivetree landscape unknown to the public.

## Croatia

Dubrovnik-Neretva

# THE OLIVE TREES OF TRPANJ

Walk between stone walls, olive groves and panoramic views of the Adriatic Sea

**Characteristics**  
 Distance: 6 km  
 Difficulty: Easy  
 Return to starting point: No  
 Departure: Vrlo



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## Greece

West Mani

# KARDAMYLI - PETROVOUNI - EXOHORI - AGIA SOFIA - KARDAMYLI

The proposed route connects important monuments of local history and olive culture and also passes through the olive groves of Kardamyli and Exochori. It gives the hiker the opportunity to get to know in depth the Messinia of the olive tree, the settlements and the nature of Messinian Mani, in a much more complete way than that of the average visitor.

**PRACTICAL INFORMATION**  
 Level of difficulty: easy  
 Length of the route: 10,270 m  
 Hiking duration: 4 hours (without stops)  
 Maximum altitude: 400 m  
 Ground: Kaldemni, path with sections of dirt road and asphalt.  
 "The kaldemni path is considered one of the most well-preserved in the whole area"



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## Slovenia

PORTOROZ-PIRAN

# BETWEEN THE OLIVE TREES

A hike between town planning and particular landscapes thanks to the use of specific paths.

**Characteristics**  
 Average duration: 1h30  
 Distance: 4 km  
 Difficulty: Easy (some difficulties)  
 Back to starting point: No  
 Departure: PORTOROZ  
 Arrival: STRUNJIAN VALLEY



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## THE 'ROUTES OF THE OLIVE TREE' IN THE ADRIATIC-IONIAN MACRO-REGION : **Benefits and impact**



- **Contributes to the development of local market economy**
- **Diversification of tourism products in the area by counterbalancing seasonal and coastal tourism**
- **Improving tourism offer quality**
- **Innovation and developing the capacities of stakeholders in sustainable and responsible tourism**
- **SMEs touristic sector development**
- **Creation of network of thematic tourism**
- **Networking and Expansion to trans-border communities**

## NEXT STEPS



Further strengthening relations and cooperation within the EUSAIR framework



Development of activities, new cultural tourism proposals, new destinations and points of interest along the route



Funding, a prerequisite for the continuation of the project:

- Inclusion in current or future EUSAIR flagship projects ?
- Inclusion in European Union - Council of Europe projects ?
- Possible continuation of the Routes4U project or other projects with a relevant scope ?



Strengthening links and cooperation with relevant state, regional and local bodies for the development of Cultural Routes



Development of 'areas of interest' through the creation of a 'value chain' around the points of interest of the route

In this effort, the cooperation of possible actors that know the “terrain” would be invaluable for the establishment of a “Route of the Olive tree” across the Ionian Adriatic coast.

THANK YOU

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