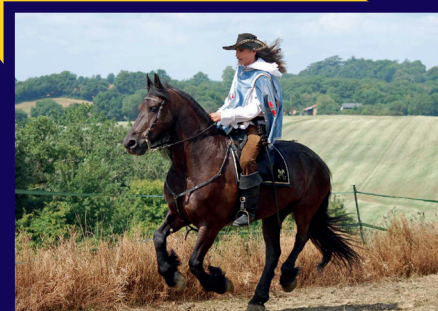


EUROPEAN ROUTE D'ARTAGNAN

Call: COS-TOUR-2015-3-04-1

Title of the project: European Equestrian Route d'Artagnan (EERA), Towards EuroHorse

Acronym: EERA



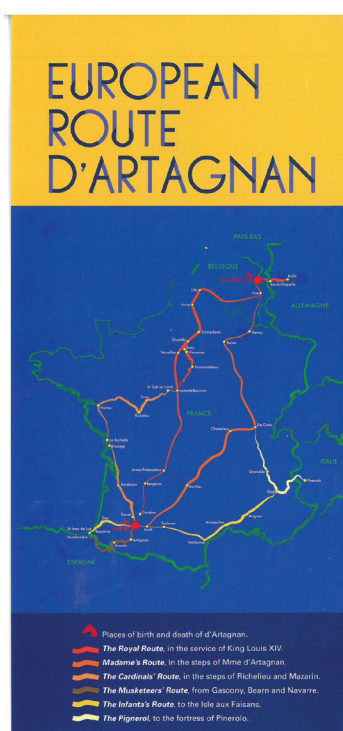
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Project duration and start date: 18 months. From May 1st, 2016 to October 31st, 2017

Short description of project:

Equestrian tourism allies the discovery of the cultural heritage and the conservation of landscapes, and has seduced more than six million riders in Europe.

While the offer for extensive pedestrian and cycling routes meet a great success, there is no large-scale equestrian route. The European Route d'Artagnan was developed out of the wish to offer an equestrian route with a transnational dimension.



The European Route d'Artagnan, first European equestrian route, connects Lupiac in Gascony (France), place of birth of this emblematic character, and Maastricht in Limburg (Netherlands), where he died.

Thus, it is more than 3 000 km of equestrian routes that are proposed to the lovers of horses and nature, in France, Belgium, Netherlands, Spain, Italy and Germany.



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The European Route d'Artagnan thus proposes an original experience, in the footsteps of the famous Musketeer, who traveled Europe on horseback in the service of King Louis XIV.

It is directed as much to the long-distance riders, the riders of equestrian centres, as to the amateur rider, on horseback or for harness riding.

The vocation of the European Route d'Artagnan is to offer an equestrian and cultural quality experience, enabling the discovery of the European cultural heritage, on the tracks of the famous Musketeer and at the horses' pace.

As an innovative tourism project, an application will be submitted in 2017 in order to obtain the label " European Cultural Route " awarded by the Council of Europe.

In order to do so, a scientific, multidisciplinary Committee with a European dimension, is leading research and in-depth work related to the theme, combining historic, economic and educational approaches.

This European recognition represents a fundamental asset for the sustainability of the European Route d'Artagnan and its international notoriety.

The goal is to create, thanks to the extension and the development of new equestrian routes, as well as to the connection with other equestrian routes in other Member-states, a vaster network of equestrian trails in Europe, "EuroCheval", with similar perspectives as "EuroVelo".



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Main objectives:

The specific objectives of the European Route d'Artagnan are to:

- create, manage, develop and promote the first European equestrian route, thanks to the Association European Route d'Artagnan (AERA) that will ensure the governance of the project in a sustainable way,
- federate the regional and local actions allowing the establishment and the use of the European Route d'Artagnan,
- establish solutions to the transnational problems and harmonise the local practices,
- ensure the promotion and the communication of the European Route d'Artagnan in order to strengthen its notoriety, as an equestrian and cultural quality experience, relying on the available tools at every level, local, regional, European and international,
- promote sustainable tourism,
- contribute to the development of the territories along the European Route d'Artagnan,
- value the tools already proposed by Europe (EDEN, Equustur, Prix Charlemagne...),
- pass on the European Route d'Artagnan's model of development and the developed best practice to other stakeholders in the tourism industry.



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The European Route d'Artagnan, as an innovative and sustainable tourism offer, favoring transnational cooperation, improves the **diversification of European tourism offer, its competitiveness and its image of a high quality destination.**

The European Route d'Artagnan, as a quality equestrian trail, mobilising the referents of the countries crossed along the Route, offers an **accessible equestrian experience to all, safe and harmonious throughout the Route.**

The European Route d'Artagnan, as a space to share knowledge, favoring the synergies between stakeholders regarding certifications, contributes to **the competitiveness of the sector and to the expansion of the European identity.**

The European Route d'Artagnan, as an equestrian and cultural quality experience, promoting a sustainable and original tourism product, strengthens **the visibility of Europe as a destination.**

Lead partner/coordinator:



Fédération Française d'Équitation (FFE)

France

The FFE has a public service delegation from the Ministry of Sports for the development of equestrian practices, training and related sports competitions. Thus, it contributes to the promotion and the development of the touristic activities related to horse-riding.

Partners:



Conseil régional Centre-Val-de-Loire

France

The Conseil régional Centre-Val-de-Loire (regional council) conducts a development policy for soft travelling. Thanks to its experience with the cycling programme, « La Loire à vélo », it has acquired an expertise for this type of project.



Conseil départemental du Gers

France

D'Artagnan was native to the Gers department. The Conseil départemental (departmental council) values the natural and cultural heritage of the territory and supports the implication of the local stakeholders.



City of Pinerolo

Italy

Having welcomed d'Artagnan when he once escorted Fouquet up to the fortress of Pinerolo, the city maintains a network of high quality equestrian routes and a prestigious equestrian heritage.



City of Maastricht

Netherlands

It was during the siege of Maastricht that d'Artagnan died. The city invests in this touristic resource and is quite naturally an emblematic place for the European Route d'Artagnan.



Association European Route d'Artagnan (AERA)

Created in November 2014 to ensure the governance on the long term, AERA gathers 7 territorial authorities, 5 national equestrian federations and 6 associations participating in the promotion of d' Artagnan.



Fédération Internationale de Tourisme Equestre (FITE)

Created in 1975, the FITE organises, develops and promotes worldwide equestrian tourism and counts about twenty member countries.



Federazione Italiana Turismo Equestre e TREC ANTE

Italy

The FITETREC ANTE contributes to the development of equestrian tourism in Italy, by paying particular attention to the animal welfare.



Ligue Équestre Wallonie Bruxelles (LEWB)

Belgium

The LEWB is since 2000 the French-speaking wing of the Belgian Royal Federation of the Equestrian Sports. It manages equestrian tourism but also pedagogy and training related to horse-riding.



Federación Navarra de Hípica

Spain

The Federación Navarra de Hípica conducts an innovative policy for the development of equestrian tourism: a label for the equestrian stop-overs, training, and exploitation of the GPS...



KCO Event

France

The KCO Event company specialises in the organisation of sportive and inclusive events. Their approach is resolutely anchored in a sustainable development process.



Ecuries des Acacias

France

The Ecuries des Acacias went on a trial ride in April-May, 2015 along the European Route d'Artagnan, traveling more than 1 200 km in 40 stop-overs.



CONTACT:

FÉDÉRATION FRANÇAISE D'ÉQUITATION (FFE)

Cécilia DO – TEGGOUR

cecilia.doteggour@ffe.com / + 33 (0)2 54 94 46 83

www.route-dartagnan.eu