



Introduction

Welcome to the fifth Newsletter of the Umayyad Project!

The purpose of this Newsletter is to provide information and updates for the Umayyad Project.

Umayyad Project is co-financed by the multilateral cross-border cooperation programme ENPI CBC MED funded by the European Union. It aims to reinforce cooperation between the EU and partner country regions located along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

The 2007-2013 ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme is a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation initiative funded by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). The Programme objective is to promote the sustainable and harmonious cooperation process at the Mediterranean Basin level by dealing with the common challenges and enhancing its endogenous potential. It finances cooperation projects as a contribution to the economic, social, environmental and cultural development of the Mediterranean region. The following 14 countries participate in the Programme: Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Palestine, Portugal, Spain, Syria (participation currently suspended),

Tunisia. The Joint Managing Authority (JMA) is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (Italy). Official Programme languages are Arabic, English and French (www.enpicbcmc.eu).

The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

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Guide on EU funding for the tourism sector (2014-2020)¹

As the third largest EU economic sector, tourism has a wide-ranging impact on economic growth, employment and social development. The European Commission is therefore constantly working on the development of new tools and services contributing to boost the competitiveness of the European tourism sector.

It takes a lot of people and businesses to offer tourist services: advertisers, travel agents, tour operators, transporters, hotels, restaurants and attraction managers, who often have different needs.

There are therefore many EU programmes of potential interest for the sector. The new Multi-Annual Financial Framework for 2014-2020 brings simplification at various levels: merger of EU funding programmes for easier access to information, harmonisation of application procedures, etc. Gathering and digesting information about all these thematic programmes remain however a challenge for hard-pressed private and public entities involved in tourism.



A specific guide was therefore necessary. Building on the Info Day organised earlier in 2014, the “Guide on EU funding for the tourism sector (2014-2020)” focuses on practical questions: type of tourism-related actions eligible for funding; type and level of funding; who can apply and how to apply. It also points at concrete examples of what has been funded under previous programmes, as a possible source of inspiration.

You can download the Guide in the following [LINK](#)

¹ Excerpt from: http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/newsroom/cf/itemdetail.cfm?item_id=7843&lang=es&title=Guide-on-EU-funding-for-the-tourism-sector-%282014-2020%29

The project is promoted in the first Seminar on Halal Tourism targeted towards tourism professionals

This seminar served as an opportunity to further promote the Umayyad Route project.



The Andalusian Public Foundation El Legado Andalusi participated in the First Halal Tourism Conference under the slogan KEYS to understanding Islamic Tourism: Developments and new strategies, launched in Granada on the September 22nd. This meeting aimed to disseminate information about the halal tourism and provide guidelines on this subject to professionals working in hospitality sector. In the near future this niche can be an important part in the sector of tourism both in Granada and Andalusia. This seminar served as an opportunity to further promote the Umayyad Route project.

The Andalusian Public Foundation El Legado Andalusi organized an information stand at this meeting and participated in a workshop titled: "The routes of El Legado Andalusi: a cultural tourism project." The managing director, Marina Martin, stressed the importance of participation in such initiatives, "what it means for the strengthening cultural, social and tourist ties with the countries of the Arab World and because it is a national and international meeting to disseminate the needs of halal tourism and exchange views". In this sense, El Legado Andalusi was reporting on its stand about the Umayyad Route in Andalusia that begins in Algeciras, continues in Sevilla, Córdoba, Jaén and ends in Granada (distance of over 600km) - offering to the travelers landscapes and places of great beauty with a common Umayyad heritage.

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Spain is the top destination for Muslim tourists, especially those who come from Southeast Asia and the Arab World.

According to Turespaña, over 81 000 tourists from Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar and Kuwait travelled to Spain during last year. Moreover, in the European Union there are 14.2 million potential customers in halal tourism. Other potential customers are European Muslims living in countries such as France, Germany and the United Kingdom. Some of these countries are already launching the so-called halal tourism and adjust their offer, in order to attract this type of customer.

Attractions of Andalusia for this tourism

Clearly, Andalusia, due to its past and Arab-Andalusian heritage, is a major attraction for this type of tourism. This motivation is important for travelers as well as the food, the weather or the coast.

El Legado Andalusi has been working together with the countries from the Arab World for over 15 years in the field of recovery of the Hispano-Muslim culture. In this regard, the Foundation is referenced as an example of good practices in the management of cultural Routes in various European projects and it is advising institutions and governments of different Arab and Mediterranean countries through the Umayyad Project (funded by the program ENPI CBC MED). This project has also presented at the conference where attendants could obtain information about it. It aims to create a cross-border itinerary in which locations from different countries will be integrated into a transnational route. The objective is to promote the rich heritage of the countries involved from the point of view of tourism under a common brand in the Mediterranean and make it more accessible to tourists.



Work for the future Umayyad Museum which will be located in the city of Anjar has been launched (Lebanon)

Our partners from Lebanon visited the work for the future Umayyad Museum that will be finally located in Anjar (Lebanon). This town is part of the Lebanese Route within the Umayyad Itinerary. The city of Anjar is 58 kilometers from the capital, Beirut. It was founded in the first half of the eighth century.



The museum will disseminate the contents and objectives of the project, the Umayyad culture and spots in the seven countries that are part of the Umayyad route, the itinerary itself, points of interest, useful travel information, etc. The creation of this museum complex in Anjar has been considered by the Lebanese authorities as a major boost to tourism and economic development of the city and its surroundings.

Accessible tourism - The new frontier of the sector¹

To conquer the “new frontier of the tourism industry”, the European Commission has rewarded excellences in accessible tourism and developed best practices that will let everyone enjoy holidaying in the EU.

Whilst the EU tourism sector loses a staggering €142 billion annually by failing to cater for special needs groups, research points to a growing market with huge economic potential.

More information in the following [LINK](#)



1 Excerpt from: http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databa-ses/newsroom/cf/itemde-tail.cfm?item_id=7920&lang=es&title=Accessible-tourism---The-new-frontier-of-the-sector

The training courses organized in the framework of the Umayyad Project received a great support in Tunis.

In the Tunisian capital, the event took place at the headquarters of the Project partner Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), where many cultural and tourist stakeholders of the country met. The training course has been organized by the Tunisian project partners, Liaisons Méditerranéennes, the Italo-Tunisian Chamber of Commerce and, the international organization, ALECSO.



In Tunisia, the Director of ALECSO's Culture Department, Dr. Hayet Guettat welcomed the attendants on behalf of the General Director of the pan-Arab organization, Mr. Abdallah Hamad Muhareb. Then, the Tunisian partners presented the actions that they undertake for the implementation of the project in the country. Mr. Juan Manuel Cid, as a Tourism expert in the Foundation "The Legacy of al-Andalus", the project leader, explained the Foundation's experience in the management of cultural routes and itineraries. After the presentation the attendees participated in the debate on cultural tourism.

The project has attracted considerable interest in Tunisia since it is a pretty new experience in this country. In this sense, the Umayyad Route is seen as a pilot project for future cultural tourism projects.



The aim of these training sessions is the involvement of different local public stakeholders in the realization, dissemination and promotion of cultural routes. Thus, during the sessions, the Foundation laid emphasis on the transfer of good practices in the materialization of cultural tourism routes in Andalusia that connect a valued legacy with other kind of touristic resources such as gastronomy, nature, adventure tourism, etc.