
ФІЛОСОФІЯ ЕКОНОМІКИ ТА УПРАВЛІННЯ
PHILOSOPHY OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT

UDC 351.853:[005.332.6CE](474.5)

DOI <https://doi.org/10.32782/hst-2024-18-95-14>**PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE BASED ON THE NAPOLEON
CULTURAL ROUTE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE NARRATIVE:
THE CASE OF LITHUANIA****LETA, BALEVICIENE¹**
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Annotation

Cultural tourism is a type of tourism associated with educational, experiential trips of heritage, culture, and personal enrichment. One of the types of cultural tourism – cultural routes is based on significant tangible and intangible cultural heritage, its actualization, cultural phenomena, historical personalities, etc. The article aims to clarify the requirements for a country to join the Council of Europe’s Napoleonic Cultural Route “Destination Napoleon”. The problem of this study – it is not clear whether joining the Council of Europe cultural route “Destination Napoleon” will have a positive impact on the preservation of cultural heritage. The aim: find out the requirements for joining the Council of Europe’s Napoleon Cultural Route (Destination Napoleon) regarding the preservation of cultural heritage. Research tasks: 1) To define the concept of the cultural route of the Council of Europe, emphasizing the Napoleonic cultural route 2) Find out the requirements for joining the Council of Europe’s cultural routes; 3) To find out the opinion of experts on Lithuania’s compliance with the requirements of membership of the Council of Europe “Napoleon’s cultural route” (Destination Napoleon) regarding the preservation of cultural heritage. Research methodology. Analysis of scientific literature sources, current reports in the media, European Council documents and statistical data; A qualitative study was carried out – an expert interview, based on a pre-prepared questionnaire; formulation of conclusions. The research showed that the absence of the necessary association prevents Lithuania from becoming a member of the “Destination Napoleon” project, which prevents the implementation of further requirements, when joining would have a positive impact on the preservation of cultural heritage in Lithuania.

Keywords: cultural route, Napoleon, Council of Europe (COE), requirements, Lithuania.

Introduction**1. Relevance and novelty of the topic**

Cultural tourism is a type of tourism associated with educational, experiential trips of heritage, culture, and personal enrichment. This type also includes cultural routes, the topic of which has been examined by such authors as: Martens, D. (2022); Addoun, M. (2023), Boz, M., (2018), Abramovičienė, A. (2020) and others. Cultural routes can be regional, national, international, thematic, but all must be based on significant tangible and intangible cultural heritage, its actualization, significant cultural phenomena, historical figures, etc. In 2023, there are 47 very different cultural routes of the Council of Europe.

Among them is the cultural route of Napoleon Bonaparte “Destination Napoleon”, to which more and more European cities are joining, Lithuania is also interested. The question is what is needed to join: what do we have and what are we missing? The topic is not characterized by a wide field of research, although it is discussed. The article relies on the latest scientific literature in order to reveal the trends of the considered cultural route both in the context of Europe and Lithuania.

To implement the research objective, a qualitative study was used, applying the semi-structured expert interview method. The expert interview helped to reveal the requirements for joining and Lithuania’s compliance with the membership of the COE Napoleon’s cultural route (Destination Napoleon). The interviews took place remotely, with pre-prepared open-ended questions, and one interview was transcribed. Interview respondents:

A. Representative of the Lithuanian Cultural Heritage Department under the Ministry

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of Culture, supporting the program at the European and national level.

B. Representative of the European Federation of Napoleonic Cities.

The interview with respondent A was conducted on 10/25/2023 on the “Zoom” platform, the conversation lasted 36 minutes. Respondent B was contacted by e-mail, the answer was received on 11/09/2023. The study is based on the European Code of Conduct on Research Ethics. The conducted interviews followed the principles of voluntariness, informed consent, and avoiding harm.

2. Theory analysis

Nowadays, more and more often, tourist routes are given the status of the basis of tourism development, due to their characteristics, which open up opportunities for countries to fully reveal and exploit the potential of tourism (Abdukhamidov, 2022; from Addoun, M. 2023). Cultural routes are also valued for strengthening the identity of local communities and promoting the economic activity of the region (Addoun, 2023). The cultural routes program of the Council of Europe (hereinafter – COE) states that European cultural tourist routes should contribute to the cultural disclosure of the European identity, the cultural cooperation between countries and the strengthening of cultural tourism. In these aspirations formed by the COE reflects the concept of the cultural route confirmed in the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. In the document, the cultural route is described as an educational project of cooperation between culture or cultural heritage and tourism, with the help of which the aim is to create and publicize tourist routes related to a historical route, a cultural concept, an exceptionally important personality or a certain phenomenon. This project makes sense in promoting the understanding of European values and respect for them (Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA), 2013). Abramovičienė identifies such cultural routes as an instrument of cultural policy, as a model that promotes cultural memory and cultural tourism itself (Abramovičienė, 2020). According to Martens, today’s cultural routes are like a tool for heritage conservation, education and tourism promotion, bringing economic, social and cultural benefits (Martens, 2022). In summary, it can be said that the COE cultural route is a project based on education, developing and publicizing tourist routes that are meaningful in promoting understanding and respect for European values and are related to a certain phenomenon, historical

route, cultural concept or exceptionally important personality. The cultural routes program of COE was initiated in 1987, with the aim of implementing the main principles of COE culture: human rights, cultural democracy, cultural diversity and identity, dialogue and exchange between states (Boz, 2018). A cultural route is certified as a cultural route of the COE, only when it is confirmed that it meets the criteria specified in the Resolution of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (2010), such as: a topic that corresponds to European values and is relevant to at least three European countries, that reveals European memory, history, heritage, promoting youth education and cultural exchange, good initiatives and innovative projects, in the development of cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development, as well as the topic that initiates the creation of tourist products, targeting different groups of society (Department of Cultural Heritage, viewed: 2023 10 14). One of the routes that meets these criteria is the Napoleonic cultural route, based on the invasions of Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) from Portugal to Russia, which covered current Europe with a veil of military and historical heritage (Paiva, 2018). The Napoleonic cultural route, (according to the data of the Council of Europe in 2023) unites about 50 European cities and 12 different countries. Daniele Kuss, in expert report on the cultural route of the Council of Europe, states that Napoleon’s legacy in Europe shaped the identity of today’s Europe through law, diplomatic principles, science, culture and, in general, the ideas of the Enlightenment (Kuss, 2018–2019 Council of Europe cultural route evaluation cycle, expert report: Destination Napoleon). Therefore, it is not surprising that the areas, various objects, buildings and monuments, works of art, laws and even furniture and intangible heritage related to the myth of Napoleon reflect the impact of the Napoleonic era on today’s European cultural heritage (Department of Cultural Heritage, viewed: 10/14/2023). After all, it can be said that during the time of Napoleon, a certain idea of Europe was born, which makes the strengthening and dissemination of the Napoleonic heritage a very effective vector of European memory. Of course, the former French emperor is viewed differently in each country, but this only proves that nowadays, in order to create a peaceful future, we must come to terms with our past, whatever it was. It is important to emphasize that the Napoleonic cultural route allows for the development of many different projects, focused not only on European ideas, but

also close to national and local realities (Kuss, 2018–2019 Council of Europe cultural routes evaluation cycle, expert report: Destination Napoleon). In summary, network of cultural routes connecting European countries and consisting of more than 45 cultural routes reflecting European values and heritage is of the highest quality. Among them, the Napoleonic cultural route, which emphasizes Napoleon's influence on European identity, is open to the initiation of various projects and focuses on the preservation of cultural heritage, promoting cooperation and unifying countries, influenced by the activities and legacy of the former French emperor.

According to Abramovičienė, the cultural route is like a network with a specific management structure and legal basis. It is important to understand that the cultural road project is created by many partners connecting to one network, coordinated by the cultural road operator (i.e. an organization or public institution legally registered in one or more member states of the COE, taking legal, financial and moral responsibility for the management, functioning and representation) (Abramovičienė, 2020). In the 2021 order of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania on the approval of the description of the procedure for determining the levels and certification of cultural routes in Lithuania, the criteria for the international cultural route are indicated: cooperation with organizations of neighboring countries, the significance of the topic for the cultural heritage of Lithuania and at least several other countries, a clear concept of the road with cultural resources revealing the topic, identification of the target market and its needs, created cultural road route, infrastructure, activity plan for at least three years ahead, network of partnerships, communication and marketing system of the cultural road, website, inclusion of the cultural road in tourist guides, scientific material supporting the importance of the road, securing funding (Order of the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania on the approval of the description of the procedure for determining the levels and certification of cultural roads in Lithuania, 2021, accessed: 10/15/2023). Although these criteria are not focused on the already certified COE cultural route, after assessing the compliance with these criteria, one can submit a request to consider joining the desired cultural route program and expect an easier process of joining the project. However, joining the "Destination Napoleon" city begins with the signing of the protocol of admission

to the European Federation of Napoleonic Cities (hereinafter – FECN). The protocol notes that the city undertakes to appoint a contact person who will guarantee the relations between the city and the federation, participate in monthly online board conferences, the annual general assembly and other activities of the federation: projects, tourist exhibitions. However, it is important to emphasize the obligation of a city member to pay an annual fee, the size of which is indexed according to the population (Membership Agreement with the European Federation of Napoleonic Cities, protocol of admission to the federation). Thus, the cultural route is like a network with specific management and legal structures, the joining of which is subject to specific criteria, including cooperation with neighboring countries, the possession of cultural resources revealing the topic, developed infrastructure, a person representing the new member in the project.

Results

Joining process. When respondent B was asked to name the main requirements for connecting to the cultural route, the answer was received that either the city or an organization (some structure) connects to the route. Joining is done by filling out the membership form and paying the annual fee. A new member must identify the Napoleonic places of interest in his city, prepare the basis for a pedestrian route in the city created jointly with the federation, appoint a representative of the municipality or association who would actively participate in FECN-Destination Napoleon initiatives, monitor ongoing activities and news, participate in the annual general meeting of members.

Lithuania's preparation for membership.

When asked about Lithuania's suitability to join "Destination Napoleon", respondent A, representing Lithuania, confirmed Lithuania's opportunities to become a member of the Napoleonic cultural route, emphasizing the main deficiency in the context of the requirements for membership, which hinders the implementation of other requirements: *"The possibilities are absolutely complete [...] the problem is to gather a network of local, local people who will make a local cultural route, Napoleonic. The main thing is to gather the association [...] and this is the most difficult and complicated work in Lithuania, which I still don't know how to do."* Meanwhile, the FECN (B) seems to have confirmed and added to the thoughts of respondent A: *"[...] it is necessary for the member municipalities to take*

on a commitment, and each municipality, taking into account its capabilities and strategies, must assess whether it is capable enough for this commitment". These words create the conditions for the formation of the assumption that Lithuania not only lacks the association specified in the requirements, but also that the municipalities that want to join are not necessarily able to commit.

Challenges. The person representing the FECN (B) identified the challenge of the wider context – the understanding that the Napoleonic cultural route is not about Napoleon, but about his legacy, which allows to give meaning, shape and spread the values promoted by the COE: “*Napoleon becomes the key to solving participatory democracy, the rule of law, the importance of intercultural dialogue, the right to heritage and the topics of European citizenship*”. In part, this problem of not delving into the essence of Napoleon’s cultural route could be interpreted as a reason that complicates the processes of creating the necessary association. Thus, Lithuania is prevented from joining the project by the absence of the necessary association, which prevents the implementation of further requirements.

Conclusions

1. The cultural route of COE – project that, through education, tourism and cooperation, develops and publicizes tourist routes that are meaningful in fostering understanding and respect for European values and are related to a certain phenomenon, historical route, cultural concept or an exceptionally important personality. One

such route is the “Destination Napoleon”, which emphasizes the influence of Napoleon Bonaparte on European identity, is open to the initiation of various projects and is focused on the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, uniting countries affected by the activities and legacy of the former French emperor.

2. The main steps for joining the COE’s cultural routes: filling out the member form and paying the annual membership fee, with which the new member undertakes to identify the Napoleonic places of interest in his city, prepare the basis for the pedestrian route to be created in the territory of the committed city or municipality, appoint a representative of the municipality or association who actively would participate in FECN-Destination Napoleon initiatives, monitor ongoing activities and news, participate in the annual general meeting of members.

3. Lithuania is faced with the lack of the primary requirement for joining “Destination Napoleon” – an association that unites all groups interested in membership. The absence of such an association prevents the implementation of other requirements, and the process of creating an association is possibly complicated by a general misunderstanding of the essence of “Destination Napoleon”. As shown by the mission of the Napoleonic Cultural Route and the experience of the member countries, this project is focused on the preservation of cultural heritage, so it is likely that Lithuania joining this COE cultural route would have a positive impact on the preservation of the country’s cultural heritage.

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ЗБЕРЕЖЕННЯ КУЛЬТУРНОЇ СПАДЩИНИ НА ОСНОВІ НАПОЛЕОНІВСЬКОГО КУЛЬТУРНОГО МАРШРУТУ НАРАТИВУ РАДИ ЄВРОПИ: ПРИКЛАД ЛИТВИ

Анотація

Культурний туризм – це вид туризму, пов’язаний з пізнавальними, експериментальними поїздками спадщини, культури та особистого збагачення. Один із видів культурного туризму – культурні маршрути ґрунтуються на значній матеріальній та нематеріальній культурній спадщині, її актуалізації, культурних явищах, історичних особистостях тощо. Метою статті є уточнення вимог до приєднання країни до Наполеонівського культурного маршруту Ради Європи «Пункт призначення Наполеон». Проблема цього студії – незрозуміло, чи матиме приєднання до Ради Європи культурний маршрут «Пункт призначення Наполеона» позитивно вплине на збереження культурної спадщини. Мета: з’ясувати вимоги для приєднання до Наполеонівського культурного маршруту Ради Європи щодо збереження культурної спадщини. Завдання дослідження: 1) визначити поняття культурного шляху Ради Європи, акцентуючи увагу на наполеонівському культурному маршруті; 2) з’ясувати вимоги для вступу до культурних маршрутів Ради Європи; 3) з’ясувати думку експертів щодо дотримання Литвою вимог членства в Раді Європи «Культурний маршрут Наполеона» (Destination Napoleon) щодо збереження культурної спадщини. Методологія дослідження. Аналіз джерел наукової літератури, поточних повідомлень у засобах масової інформації, документів Європейської Ради та статистичних даних; проведено якісне дослідження – експертне інтерв’ю, на основі заздалегідь підготовленої анкети; формулювання висновків. Дослідження показало, що відсутність необхідного об’єднання заважає Литві стати членом проекту “Destination Napoleon”, що перешкоджає реалізації подальших вимог, коли приєднання позитивно вплинуло б на збереження культурної спадщини в Литві.

Ключові слова: культурний шлях, Наполеон, Рада Європи (РЕ), вимоги, Литва.

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Received date 11.01.2024
Accepted date 25.01.2024
Published date 11.02.2024

How to cite: Leta, Baleviciene, Regina, Navickiene. Preservation of cultural heritage based on the napoleon cultural route of the council of europe narrative: the case of Lithuania. Humanities studies : Collection of Scientific Papers / Ed. V. Voronkova. Zaporizhzhia : Publishing house “Helvetica”, 2024. 18 (95). P. 144–149.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.32782/hst-2024-18-95-14>