

rurAllure

*Promotion of rural museums and heritage sites in the
vicinity of European pilgrimage routes*

Press Kit



rurAllure
reach out!



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zurAllure background information

RurAllure is a Horizon 2020 project that runs from **1 January 2021 to 31 December 2023**. The project fosters cultural cooperation and sustainable tourism in the proximity of European historic pilgrimage routes - the Saint James' Ways, pilgrimage routes to Rome, the route of Saint Olav in Scandinavia and the Ways of Mary to Csíksomlyó/Şumuleu Ciuc. **RurAllure leverages the state-of-the-art in information technologies to promote rural museums and heritage sites.** It enhances symbiosis between rural environment and routes to enrich tourists' experience by the vast cultural heritage that most often goes unnoticed.

In Europe, hundreds of thousands of people set out each year from their homes – or from popular starting points – to make their way to major worship places and lesser-known ones. The pilgrimage routes have undoubtedly become a **significant economic and political asset** for Europe.

The rurAllure project addresses **one weak point** hidden behind this depiction of success: the pilgrimage routes may be traversed by thousands, but their impact is almost exclusively perceived in the places located directly on the paths, **rarely permeating into the surrounding rural areas**. Thus, entire provinces and regions of a predominantly rural nature, which are facing significant economic and demographic challenges all over Europe become passive witnesses of the flows of pilgrims, whereas they could actually add much of content and value to the experiences.

The goal of rurAllure is to **overcome this situation** through the allure of the cultural heritage found in the rural environment. The opportunity arises from the fact that pilgrimage is usually planned with some flexibility regarding dates, distances travelled in successive journeys, places to rest, etc. Many pilgrims are amenable to serendipitous findings, too. This makes pilgrimage largely different from other types of cultural and touristic experiences, thus opening possibilities of increasing the numbers of visitors to the least-known heritage sites.

In a post-pandemic world, **rurAllure answers to travellers' needs** to visit destinations that allow to maintain social distancing practices. The project's technological platform offers digital resources for sustainable exploration of walking routes and cultural discoveries off the beaten track far from crowded tourist areas.

By designing, implementing and testing **technological tools and promotional strategies**, the project will seek to generalise this effect and, thereby, contribute to **generate economic activity** and also reinforcing a more diversified employment, to help **preserve cultural heritage at risk** (professions, customs, rural architecture, art and music, etc.) and to fight the rural exodus that is leading to a worrying spiral of loss of population and services.

Key Contacts



Dr. Martín López Nores

Martín López Nores is Associate Professor at the Department of Telematics Engineering at the University of Vigo. He is specialized in interactive information services, semantic reasoning, Digital Humanities, Cultural Heritage, interactive storytelling, and augmented reality. He is currently Deputy Director of the atlantTic Research Center for Telecommunication Technologies at the University of Vigo, and project coordinator of the rurAllure H2020 project.

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Dr. Susana Reboreda Morillo

Susana Reboreda Morillo has a PhD in Ancient History from the University of Santiago de Compostela. Since 1997 she has been a Professor of Ancient History at the Faculty of History at the Ourense campus of the University of Vigo of which she is currently the dean. She has previously held various management positions at the same Faculty, such as director of the Student Area and vice-dean. Over the past ten years she has participated in competitive research projects focused on women in Greek Antiquities.

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Consortium

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| 1) Universidade de Vigo (ES) | 9) Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (SK) |
| 2) GVAM Guías Interactivas S.L. (ES) | 10) Comenius University in Bratislava (SK) |
| 3) Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (ES) | 11) Università degli Studi di Padova (IT) |
| 4) Fundación Uxío Novoneyra (ES) | 12) Fondazione Homo Viator San Teobaldo (IT) |
| 5) Universidade da Coruña (ES) | 13) Associazione Europea Vie Francigene (IT) |
| 6) Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde (PT) | 14) Università degli Studi di Bologna (IT) |
| 7) Kormányzati Informatikai Fejlesztési
Ügynökség (HU) | 15) Norwegian University of Science and
Technology (NO) |
| 8) Mária Út Közhasznú Egyesület (HU) | 16) Università IUAV di Venezia (IT) |



Press Release

Launch of rurAllure: New Horizon2020 cultural heritage project officially kicks off

The European project “rurAllure: Promotion of rural museums and heritage sites in the vicinity of European pilgrimage routes” has been officially launched on 11-13 January 2021 during the kick-off meeting.

This innovative Horizon2020 project fosters cultural cooperation and sustainable tourism in the proximity of the European historic pilgrimage routes - the Saint James' Ways, pilgrimage routes to Rome, the route of Saint Olav in Scandinavia and the Way of Mary. RurAllure leverages the state-of-the-art in information technologies to promote rural museums and heritage sites. It enhances symbiosis between rural environment and routes to enrich tourists' experience by the vast cultural heritage that most often goes unnoticed.

The 3-day meeting, which was conducted digitally, brought together project partners and associates under the leadership of the University of Vigo. Ms. Hinano Spreafico, a representative of the Research Executive Agency of the European Commission, welcomed all the participants and stressed the importance of cooperation and innovation in the sector of heritage and tourism.

15 cutting-edge European organisations and research institutions will work on common strategies and develop the project's pilots, each of them focusing on a particular type of heritage along a pilgrimage route. The research on the Saint James' Ways will be focussed on literary heritage and will be managed by the Uxío Novoneyra Foundation, Municipality of Vila do Conde, Autonomous University of Madrid (ES), and University of A Coruña.

The pilot lead by the University of Bologna will research thermal heritage along the pilgrimage routes to Rome – the Via Francigena, the Via Romea Strata and the Via Romea Germanica together with the Autonomous University of Madrid, University of Padova and Venice, European Association of the Via Francigena ways and the Foundation Homo Viator - San Teobaldo.

The Saint Olav route in Norway will be researched from an ethnographic perspective by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

The natural heritage of the Way of Mary, a route running through Hungary, Slovakia, and Romania, will be studied by the Government Informatics Development Agency, Mary Road Public Benefit Association, Slovak Technical University, and Comenius University in Bratislava.

During the 3-day meeting the overview of the project was presented, as well as the pilots' descriptions and partners' contributions. The participants also had a chance to get to know each other and present the activities of their organisations.

Along with the University of Vigo, the other rurAllure partners are: GVAM Guías Interactivas S.L. (ES), Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (ES), Fundación Uxío Novoneyra (ES), Universidade da Coruña (ES), Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde (PT), Kormányzati Informatikai Fejlesztési Ügynökség (HU), Mária Út Közhasznú Egyesület (HU), Comenius University in Bratislava (SK), Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (SK), Università degli Studi di Padova (IT), Fondazione Homo Viator San Teobaldo (IT), Associazione Europea Vie Francigene (IT), Università degli Studi di Bologna (IT), Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NO).

More information about the project can be found at www.rurallure.eu, which is also where future project outcomes and findings will be published. For further inquiries: contact@rurallure.eu

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rurAllure Fact Sheet



RurAllure is funded through the **Horizon 2020** programme. Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU **research and innovation** programme ever, and helps to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive economic growth. The goal is to ensure Europe produces **world-class science and technology**, removes barriers to innovation and makes it easier for the public and private sectors to **work together** in delivering solutions to big challenges facing our society.



16 Consortium members from 6 different European countries



4 pilot projects

Literary heritage on the ways to Santiago de Compostela

Legendary pilgrimage route crossing Europe towards the tomb of the Apostle James the Greater in Santiago de Compostela. The pilot will focus on stretches of the route along the Primitive, French and Coastal Portuguese ways in Spanish Galicia and Northern Portugal.

Thermal heritage and others on the ways to Rome

Three major medieval itineraries that lead to Rome: Via Francigena, Via Romea Strata and Via Romea Germanica. The research of thermal heritage will be focused on Franco-Swiss and Italian stretches of the routes.

Ethnographic heritage on the ways to Trondheim

Scandinavian network of Saint Olav's pilgrimage paths leading to his tomb in Norwegian Trondheim. The pilot focuses on the routes along the lake Mjøsa in Norway, studying their rich ethnographic heritage.

Natural heritage on the ways to Csíksomlyó

The Ways of Mary or Mária Út is a spiritual route crossing countries of Eastern Europe and the Balkans. The pilot will focus on stretches in Hungary, Slovakia and Romanian Transylvania and will study their natural beauty.



zurAllure project goals

-  Establish a **network of institutions** to work on the promotion of cultural venues and heritage sites from the rural environments of Europe, in the vicinity of pilgrimage routes.
-  **Develop studies** from historical, cultural, sociological, and economic perspectives.
-  Analyse the role that **urban cultural and touristic institutions** can play in the network.
-  **Assess the strategies and recommendations** derived from the aforementioned studies in four pilots.
-  Create a **comprehensive geolocative open database** and an **interactive map** of European rural venues and heritage sites, and a **directory of relevant stakeholders** active in the promotion of culture and tourism.
-  Exchange **best practices and lessons learnt** in the pilots all over Europe.
-  Define an **agenda with key research and innovation challenges** for the decade.
-  Develop **mobile apps** to offer the following functionalities to the pilgrims:
 - Discovery of cultural venues and heritage sites.
 - **Pilgrim guides** exploiting the opportunity (neglected thus far) to cohesively present the heritage of the regions traversed over several days or weeks (rather than hours as it happens in classical museum visits).
 - Recommendation and quick reservation of **transport** from/to selected rural locations and suitable **accommodation and dining** offers.
 - Social network spaces to **keep contact with new friends** and acquaintances made during the pilgrimage.
 - A multi-route pilgrim's **digital passport** to certify the trips.
-  Assemble and deploy a **content management system** as a backend for the mobile apps, offering features to innovate around the new possibilities created by digital media:
 - Collaboration among institutions to create, manage and curate a Cultural Heritage knowledge base.
 - Co-creation and curation of contents and narratives for the pilgrim guides.
 - Specific **web positioning** strategies and strong online presence.
 - Benchmarking and analysis of aggregated data.



rurAllure artwork - logo, media assets

For the use of the rurAllure logo, please write us at **contact@rurallure.eu**

For accompanying images: **[click here](#)**

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