

Protocol signed; Francigena proposed as UNESCO heritage site

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“Today is a truly important day for culture, because the process of making Via Francigena a UNESCO heritage site has officially begun; this way has Christian roots, and also goes through Lombardy, the territories of Lodi and Pavia, to be precise.”

This is what the Councillor for Culture, Identity and Autonomy in Lombardy Region, **Cristina Cappellini**, said today, 4 March, in San Miniato, near Pisa, during the ceremony for **the signing of the agreement protocol for including the Italian section of Via Francigena in the list of UNESCO heritage sites**, on the request of the President of Lombardy Region, **Roberto Maroni**.

The signing of the document took place at the end of work on the second day of the conference “La Francigena e i cammini” (“Via Francigena and its routes”). The protocol was also signed by the regions of Tuscany, Liguria, Piedmont, Val d’Aosta, Emilia Romagna and Lazio, as well as by Councillor Cappellini.

The aim of the agreement protocol is to coordinate preparation of the nomination dossier and the site’s draft business plan, in agreement with the councils. In this initial phase, the proposal will only be made for the Italian section, considering the inclusion in the tentative list of MiBACT; later, it will be extended to the other countries involved (the United Kingdom, France, Switzerland).

“FRANCIGENA, AN EXHILARATING JOURNEY BEGINS”

“Today sees the beginning of a tough and exhilarating procedure that Lombardy Region had hoped for, for some time, after they had undertaken a series of initiatives, in the last few years, intended to make the most of the Lombard section of the route, which goes through the territories of Pavia and Lodi,” said Councillor Cappellini. “Today’s important event must be the driving force for the intense promotion that we want to do. Again, I’m going to involve the mayors of the territories, to develop a whole series of initiatives with them.”

The councillor also made a promise. “I’ve said that I intend shortly to travel along part of the Lombard section of Via Francigena. It would be nice if the local and national media also took part (*which is what happened with the President of Lombardy Region and our editor, Giovannelli, on VareseNews, ed.*); we are the region with the greatest number of UNESCO sites, and Via Francigena could be another, extraordinary acknowledgement. We need all of these beautiful sites to become known as much as possible.”

IN LOMBARDY, IN THE LAW FOR THE REORGANISATION OF CULTURE, A SPECIFIC REGULATION FOR SPIRITUAL ROUTES.

“As testimony to our wish to make the most of places and ways inspired by our Christian roots, such as Via Francigena, we wanted to include in the new law for reorganising culture in Lombardy, regulations relating to spiritual routes, in perfect tune with the start of the procedure for nominating Via Francigena as a UNESCO heritage site,” Councillor Cappellini concluded.

di Translated by Prof. Rolf Cook