

# **The European Institute of Cultural Routes**

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## **1. The Institute's role and functions**

The European Institute of Cultural Routes was formally established as a non-profit association under an agreement between the Council of Europe and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

It is intended as an instrument for continuing the work carried out by the Council of Europe Secretariat over the last ten years. Accordingly, it has been given a number of specific tasks in relation to the eligibility criteria laid down in the new rules for the implementation of the Cultural Routes programme.

In particular, it has the job of processing the many proposals for new themes and activities that arrive almost daily with a view to submitting them to the Advisory Committee. At the same time, being responsible for ensuring the continuity of the Cultural Routes programme, it monitors the programme networks; which involves evaluating their work and co-ordinating and advising the partner organisations with a view to furthering their projects, setting new objectives and establishing inter-network links.

It also has the task of actively exploiting the programme archives for the purposes of an information and communication policy aimed at selecting data about the work of its partners and disseminating it both to professionals and to the general public. It does this by arranging with public and private publishers for the publication of written, audiovisual and multimedia material.

On a wider level, it has begun creating a database concerning the relationship between culture and tourism, with particular reference to regional development, heritage interpretation and the provision of information for those working in the cultural and tourist sectors.

## **2. The Institute's location**

Pending its transfer to a permanent location at the Cultural Centre in the former Neumünster Abbey, the Institute is housed in a historic tower near the abbey, which is one of the stops on the Wenzel Cultural Route. This so-called Tower of Jacob built in the early Middle Ages, was first mentioned in the accounts of the Luxembourg master-builders' guild for the years 1426 and 1427, when a lock and a wooden board had to be replaced.

On the first floor, a room containing one of the audiovisual presentations on the Wenzel Route can also be used for conferences. The public reception area is on the second floor. There, visitors can consult more than 1,000 reference works on the cultural routes and an atlas with information and maps covering all the programme's activities, together with specialist journals, European tourist and cultural brochures, press files about the different routes and all the reports and proceedings of relevant Council of Europe conferences.

On the third floor are the programme advisers' offices and the archives concerning the implementation of the routes scheme since 1987

Finally, the fourth floor houses a meeting and study room where the many people who come to the Institute from European universities can pursue research or prepare dissertations or professional theses.

### **3. The Institute's presence in Europe**

In addition to operating in Luxembourg, the Institute makes frequent on-the-spot visits to its partners as well as fact-finding missions and takes part in numerous European seminars on cultural and heritage tourism. Its study visitors also take part in these outside activities. This form of training and awareness-raising, conducted with the support of experts, is the first phase of a more ambitious policy for training young professionals in the methodology of the cultural routes programme and in the implementation of cultural and tourist development schemes and multilateral co-operation projects in Europe. On the basis of a thorough analysis of documents concerning the themes of the routes as well as the relationship between culture and tourism, the Institute produces studies and publications on specific themes for a European readership. A list of these texts is available from the Institute on request.

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### **4. Background to the project**

#### **4.1 The birth of the project: objectives and challenges**

On 13 and 14 October 1964, a Council of Europe working group entitled "L'Europe continue" wrote in the preamble to its report: "In order to give concrete expression to its work, the Working Group has, in its research, focused on raising public awareness of sites of great cultural importance."

The three objectives stated in this report were:

- to raise awareness of European culture through travel;
- to consider the possibilities of setting up networks for tourism connected with the cultural geography of Europe;
- to promote the major sites and crossroads of European civilisation as places of interest to tourists.

The actual birth of a programme devoted to European Cultural Routes only dates back to the 1980s, when, following a Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation and the discussions held during the 2nd European Conference of Ministers responsible for Architectural Heritage (Grenada, 1985), the Council of Europe proposed that the Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Ways should form the first European Cultural Route: "This route symbolises first and foremost the process of European construction and can serve as a reference and example for future projects". In the same year, another scheme entitled "Architecture without frontiers", which was concerned with rural architecture, was also given Council of Europe recognition.

The Council for Cultural Co-operation established three main objectives for the Cultural Routes programme:

- to make European citizens aware of a real European cultural identity;

- to preserve and enhance the European cultural heritage as a means of improving the surroundings in which people live and as a source of social, economic and cultural development;
- to accord a special place to cultural tourism among European leisure activities.

In order to make the concept of Cultural Routes easier to understand for the public and for those suggesting projects, the CDCC formulated the following definition:

"The term European Cultural Route is taken to mean a route crossing one or two more countries or regions, organised around themes whose historical, artistic or social interest is patently European, either by virtue of the geographical route followed or because of the nature and/or scope of its range and significance." "Application of the term 'European' to a route must imply a significance and cultural dimension which is more than merely local. The route must be based on a number of highlights, with places particularly rich in historical associations, which are also representative of European culture as a whole."

From the outset, then, three challenges were issued:

- a political challenge, to make the programme a catalyst for European social cohesion;
- a challenge of identity, to prevent the search for identity through the routes from leading to an exclusion of those who were different;
- a democratic challenge, to extend cultural tourism to a broader section of society.

## **4.2 Development of the programme**

Over ten years later, the *Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe* project has become an instrument for understanding the European values arising from the complex cultures and societies that have formed Europe.

It is based on themes which are representative of European values: peoples, migrations and major currents of civilisation common to several European countries. These themes are the responsibility of interdisciplinary networks set up in various member states, and are reflected in a series of projects involving multilateral co-operation.

Under this programme, the networks are redrawing the European map, setting up joint university courses, raising schoolchildren's and students' awareness of cultural comparisons and differences, working towards a more open-minded view of the cultural heritage untainted by preconceptions about European history and, reaching beyond different political sensibilities, organising common initiatives in the true spirit of European public service.

As Raymond Weber, Director of Education, Culture and Sport of the Council of Europe, writes, "The itineraries create a cross-cultural, pan-European space in which ordinary people can express themselves across state boundaries and the constraints of all types of systems and beliefs, an open space in which it is possible to seek new solutions, try out new ideas, share experiences, analyse failures, reassess and call into question ... where they can 'push back the horizon'."

## **4.3 Organisation and operation of the programme**

In view of the increasing size of this programme, which involves the co-operation of over 2,000 partners, and in order to establish a formal framework within which its activities might be carried out, the Committee of Ministers adopted a resolution on 17 March 1998 containing a set of rules. Routes should be based on a theme which fulfils certain criteria if they are to

become part of the programme. Each theme is developed through a series of projects involving multilateral co-operation. The rules list the priority fields of action for projects of this kind. Project initiators should form networks to allow for increased co-operation and the pooling of experience. To be approved, these networks must also fulfil certain criteria. Three categories of certification for cultural routes are awarded by the Council of Europe.

In order to improve the running of the programme, the networks are assisted by the European Institute of Cultural Routes, which was set up jointly by the Council of Europe and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. The Institute monitors the projects, co-ordinates the networks and provides them with technical assistance, carries out frequent assessments of the networks, examines new proposals, keeps extensive documentation on the programme, runs a database on all aspects of the routes and cultural tourism, and acts as a source of information.

The acceptance of new themes and initiatives, the approval of networks and the awarding of certification are still the responsibility of the Council of Europe. Links between the Council of Europe and the Institute are provided by an Advisory Committee made up of representatives of various Council of Europe committees. After the Institute has examined a proposal, the Advisory Committee assesses its theme, its suggested initiatives, the progress of the arrangements for its implementation and the work of the networks.

1. Further details are available in a report on the background to the project (1987-96).

2. The word "routes" is to be understood in its broadest sense and not in the narrow sense of actual routes; it is used as a heading summing up the entire programme and its originality. Indeed, it reflects the very concept of the programme.

## **5. Creation of a cultural route**

### **5.1 Procedure to follow**

In order to create a Council of Europe cultural route, you have to follow some formal procedures.

You can find these procedures in the following Rules and their developments.

- I. List of eligibility criteria for themes
- II. List of priority fields of action
- III. List of criteria for the networks
- IV. List of categories of routes and corresponding certification

An explanatory memorandum concerning the rules is appended to the end of the rules (Appendix).

### **5.2 Rules**

Appendix to Resolution (98) 4

These rules should be regarded as a formal framework for the implementation of the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes Programme. The routes are to be centred on a theme, which, in order to qualify for the programme, must fulfil a series of criteria, listed in part I. Each theme is to be dealt with in a series of co-operation projects. Part II of the rules lists the priority fields of action for these projects. Project initiators must form a network so as to improve co-operation and pool their experience. In order to be approved, these networks must in turn satisfy a number of criteria, listed in part III. The three categories of certification awarded by the Council of Europe are set out in part IV.

## **I. List of eligibility criteria for themes**

For a theme to be eligible for the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes Programme, it must satisfy all of the following criteria:

1. Themes must be representative of European values and common to several countries of Europe.
2. Themes must be researched and developed by groups of multidisciplinary experts from different regions of Europe so as to ensure that the activities and projects which illustrate them are based on consensus.
3. Themes must be illustrative of European memory, history and heritage, refer to at least one of the three topics in the general conceptual framework proposed by the programme (peoples, migrations, broad currents of civilisation) and contribute to an interpretation of the diversity of present-day Europe.
4. Themes must lend themselves to cultural and educational exchanges for young people and hence be in line with the Council of Europe's ideas and concerns in these fields.
5. Themes must permit the development of initiatives and exemplary and innovative projects in the field of cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development.
6. Themes must permit the implementation of long-term multilateral co-operation projects in various fields of action (see the priority fields in part II) through the setting up of multidisciplinary networks located in several Council of Europe member states (see eligibility criteria in part III).

## **II. List of priority fields of action**

Each theme must give rise to several long-term multidisciplinary co-operation projects (criterion No. 6 in part I); for optimum achievement of the aims of the programme, priorities have been established by the Council of Europe in five fields of action which lend themselves in particular to such co-operation projects.

### **1. Co-operation in research and development**

In this field of action, projects must:

- play a unifying role around major European themes, enabling dispersed knowledge to be brought together;
- show how these themes are representative of European values shared by several European cultures;
- illustrate the development of these values and the variety of forms they may take in Europe;
- end themselves to research and interdisciplinary analysis on both a theoretical and a practical level;

### **2. Enhancement of the memory, history and European heritage**

In this field of action, projects must:

- enhance physical and intangible heritages, explain their historical significance and highlight their similarities in the different regions of Europe;

- take account of and promote the charters, conventions, recommendations and work of the Council of Europe, UNESCO, and ICOMOS relating to heritage restoration, protection and enhancement;
- identify and enhance European heritage sites and areas other than the monuments and sites exploited by traditional tourism, in particular in rural areas, but also in industrial areas in the process of economic restructuring;
- take account of the physical and intangible heritage of ethnic or social minorities in Europe;
- contribute, in the field of training, to raising awareness among the general public and decision makers of the complex concept of heritage, the necessity to protect it as part of sustainable development, and the challenges and opportunities it represents for the future of Europe.

### 3. Cultural and educational exchanges of young Europeans

In this field of action, projects must:

- organise long-term activities with the same groups of young people in order to promote in-depth exchanges aimed at developing the concept of European citizenship, enriched by its diversity;
- place the emphasis on "real-time" experiences through the use of places and contacts;
- encourage decompartmentalisation by organising exchanges of young people not only from different disciplines, but also from different social backgrounds and regions of Europe;
- constitute pilot actions with a limited number of participating countries and be provided with sufficient resources for meaningful assessment in order to propose prototypes that can serve as reference models.

### 4. Contemporary cultural and artistic practice

In this field of action, projects must:

- give rise to debate and exchange, in a multidisciplinary perspective, between the various cultural and artistic expressions and sensibilities of the different countries of Europe;
- highlight, in contemporary cultural and artistic practice, the most innovative practices in terms of creativity, and link them with the heritage of skills, whether they belong to the field of the visual arts, the performing arts, creative crafts, architecture, music, literature or any other form of cultural expression;
- give rise to activities which break down the barriers between professionals and non-professionals, particularly as regards instruction for young Europeans in the relevant fields;
- lead to the setting up of networks between project initiators and their participants.

### 5. Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development

In this field of action, projects must:

- take account of local, regional, national and European identities;

- promote dialogue between urban and rural cultures, between regions in the south, north, east and west of Europe, and between developed and disadvantaged regions;
- open up possibilities for co-operation between Europe and other continents through the special affinities between certain regions;
- concern themselves in the field of cultural tourism, with raising public awareness, drawing decision makers' attention to the necessity of protecting heritage as part of sustainable development of the territory and seek to diversify both supply and demand, with a view to fostering the development of quality tourism with a European dimension.

### **III. List of criteria for the networks**

Networks located in several member states should form multidisciplinary states. Such networks must be approved by the Council of Europe in accordance with a specific appraisal procedure and undergo periodic evaluation.

#### **1. Approval criteria for networks**

To be approved, networks must:

- choose a theme or an aspect of a theme forming part of the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes Programme;
- present a conceptual framework based on research carried out into the theme chosen and accepted by the different network partners;
- involve several member countries through all or part of their project(s), although this does not exclude activities of a bilateral nature;
- plan to involve, where possible, at least one of the recent signatories of the European Cultural Convention;
- ensure that the projects proposed are financially and organisationally viable;
- have a legal status, either in the form of an association or a federation of associations;
- operate democratically;
- provide all the necessary material for the appraisal of their project(s) and for the evaluation of their activities (see points 2 and 3 below).

#### **2. Appraisal of a proposed network**

In order for a proposed network to be accepted, it must undergo, following a favourable opinion of the competent governmental bodies, an appraisal procedure based on the following criteria:

- the proposed theme must correspond to the eligibility criteria set out in part I or fit into an existing theme of the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes Programme;
- the proposed network must offer a comprehensive programme and specify its objectives, methods, partners, participating countries (actual and envisaged), the fields of action involved and the overall development of the programme in the medium and long term;

- it must identify, in the various member countries, the main initiators, participants and other potential partners likely to form a network; where appropriate, other partner organisations at international level should be specified;
- the regions concerned by the project must be specified;
- details must be provided of the financing plan and operational plan of the proposed network;
- the basic text(s) relating to the legal status of the proposed network must also be submitted.

### 3. Evaluation of the networks

In order to retain their approved status, networks must submit, every two years, a report enabling the Council of Europe:

- to evaluate their activities in order to ascertain whether they satisfy the basic criteria (see point 1 above), and
- to verify whether the implementation of their projects corresponds to the criteria selected for the development of a theme and its fields of action (see parts I and II above).

## **IV. List of categories of routes and corresponding certification**

The certifications awarded by the Council of Europe correspond to three categories of routes:

### 1. First category

Proposals may fall under this category if they:

- are organised around a pan-European theme;
- propose, in connection with this theme, a variety of projects in various European regions and promote long-term co-operation in several fields of action;
- give rise to active networks, establishing communication between regions and countries, and bring together interdisciplinary skills.

The corresponding certification for this category is "Major Cultural Route of the Council of Europe".

It is awarded by the committee responsible for the follow-up to the cultural routes on a proposal from the advisory committee.

### 2. Second category

Proposals may fall under this category if they:

- are organised around a theme having a limited European impact both historically and geographically;
- develop projects which relate to one or more fields of action;
- network the various parties involved.
- The corresponding certification for this category is "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe".



It is awarded by the committee responsible for the follow-up to the cultural routes on a proposal from the advisory committee.

### 3. Third category

Proposals may fall under this category if they:

- refer to one of the themes of the Council of Europe's (pan-)European routes;
- develop an initiative related to one of the fields of action;
- concern an event or an activity of a one-off nature.

The corresponding certification for this category is: "In the framework of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe" these words preceding the title of the operation.

It is awarded by the Directorate of Education, Culture and Sport.

## **Appendix**

### **Explanatory memorandum concerning the rules Appended to Resolution (98) 4 on the cultural Routes of the Council of Europe**

#### **Introduction**

The Cultural Routes Programme of the Council of Europe is an instrument for interpreting European values. It contributes to the building of Europe by drawing on the richness of the European heritage in

The programme accordingly goes beyond the museological signposting of the European area:

- by explaining the influences, exchanges and developments which have forged the European identity in its unity and its diversity, it makes it easier to build awareness of a European identity, especially among the young;
- by placing the emphasis on European values, it seeks to bring out the links between different regions of Europe, between different communities and between different currents of thought in Europe.

The diversity of proposals and actions to which it gives rise reflects the complexity of the cultures and societies which have shaped present-day Europe.

#### **I. Themes**

The themes around which cultural routes are developed may be proposed by member states, local or regional authorities, project initiators (cultural structures, universities, associations or institutions) or by the Secretariat itself in connection with a specific mission of the institution. The eligibility criteria listed in the Rules are used for the selection of such themes; each of the criteria corresponds to an objective of the programme. For a theme to be accepted, it must satisfy all the criteria.

To establish coherence and provide a conceptual framework for the choice of themes, three main areas have been selected in the programme: peoples, migrations and the spread of the major European philosophical, religious, artistic, scientific, technical and commercial movements.

#### ***Peoples***

The themes selected should be developed because of the specific contribution that these peoples have made to the foundations of European civilisation and the significant influences they have had.

Over and above their contribution to archaeological and historical knowledge, these themes should allow for an interpretation of present-day Europe through a better analysis of its current complexity, especially with regard to its cultural diversity.

### ***Migrations***

The themes selected should help explain movements of population, whether voluntary or forced, even those which took place on a small scale; they should also highlight the changes brought about within a region by the settling of communities of a different culture far from their original home.

They should seek to explain how migrations, despite the tensions and upheavals involved, have resulted in a fruitful cultural mixing and how new cultural identities have been, or are being, created.

*The spread of the major European currents of civilisation in the fields of philosophy, religion, the arts, science and technology, and trade*

The themes selected should highlight the developments which shaped European civilisation. They should be based on the spread of these ideas within Europe and on how they have left their mark on specific sites and areas in several European countries. They should also take into account the richness and diversity of popular traditions and cultures.

It should be noted that the term "routes" covers a variety of concepts:

- Historic pathways (up to the present)

These necessarily refer to the idea of an exchange over a historical period along a physical itinerary. They include pilgrim ways, trade routes by sea or land, and migration routes of peoples and communities, and they have not only a historical but also a contemporary dimension.

- Circuits and routes

These give greater insight, locally or interregionally, into a European theme, and link up with one another in various regions of Europe. They are transfrontier in nature and bring out the common human, cultural, social, geographical and economic characteristics predating current national borders.

- Geographical networks

These are networks of towns and cities which in the past shared common interests and objectives (such as the Hanseatic towns) or networks of sites reproducing an initial model (for example fortified towns, monasteries, etc.).

- Cultural networks

These are networks of places of creativity, skills and training focused on contemporary cultural and artistic practices.

## **II. Priority fields of action**

In order to highlight the various components of each theme and achieve the general objectives of the programme, five fields of action have been selected:

- co-operation in research and development;
- enhancement of European memory, history and heritage;
- cultural and educational exchanges of young Europeans;

- contemporary cultural and artistic practices;
- cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development.

These fields of action are derived from the general objectives of the programme and serve as a working framework for co-operation projects on the various European themes.

The programme does not cover all the possibilities of each field of action. The priorities indicate the areas currently emphasised by the programme above-mentioned. Each network will draw up its own programme, taking account of the largest possible number of fields of action.

It is worth restating that, in accordance with the aims of the Cultural Routes Programme, co-operation projects:

- are not limited to encouraging research exchanges, in the usual sense of the term, in the university field;
- do not have as their prime objective regulations or methods for the conservation or protection of the European heritage;
- should not replace existing exchange activities for young Europeans;
- are not aimed solely at accommodating creative artists or cultural events in the broad sense;
- should not be limited to simply fostering the development of new tourism products, even though they may be of a high quality, or merely offering an operational facility for the allocation of funding in the field of regional planning.

### **III. Themes and networks**

Each theme forms the basis for a network consisting of the different individuals, institutions, organisations and structures involved in the development of the theme concerned<sup>1</sup>.

These networks act as relay structures, implementing long-term co-operation projects and creating opportunities for exchange and innovation.

The criteria listed in the Rules make it possible to:

- identify the main requirements which a network must meet in order to be approved;
- examine each network's application not only on the basis of the proposed theme but also on the basis of an overall programme;
- evaluate every two years the relevance of its activities to the objectives of the programme.

In particular, networks must:

- ensure that the discussions on a given theme involve experts from different countries, possibly forming a kind of "international panel" for the particular route;

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<sup>1</sup> Should the network which initiated one of the themes become inactive, the theme could subsequently be taken over by another network.

- be set up on the basis of a hard core of common objectives, not on the basis of an institutional grouping which would operate solely in accordance with positioning strategies or financing possibilities.
- establish a link between two levels:
  - \* theory: deliberation, research and conception;
  - \* practice: project organisation, decision making and action;
- be aimed at different publics:
  - \* local, regional, national and European publics;
  - \* the general public, the young, not-so-young and tourists;
  - \* a specialist public, particularly through awareness raising and training aimed at academics, policy makers, those responsible for regional planning, tourism professionals, cultural operators and local and regional government staff.
- bring together the following in co-operation projects:
  - \* in terms of structures:
    - . institutions, cultural associations;
    - . administrative departments of central, regional and local government;
  - \* in terms of expertise:
    - . scientific expertise;
    - . artistic expertise;
    - . technical expertise;
    - . economic expertise;
- organise interdisciplinary exchanges, pooling skills, experience and know-how.

#### **IV. Categories and certification**

The three categories defined in the Rules and the corresponding certification correspond to different identification requirements.

A distinction is made between:

- proposals relating to a European theme creating a lasting co-operation framework, and covering several of the programme's fields of action. The overall project may comprise one-off actions, medium and long-term actions and pilot actions;
- proposals corresponding to projects which, in one of the programme's fields of action, have shown themselves to be of an experimental nature, which could serve as a reference for other regions of Europe, but whose theme does not fulfil all the conditions for being one of the programme's themes, and which are not organised in a network;
- proposals referring to the programme of one-off actions whose theme is of European importance (for example exhibitions).

The first and the second categories require the signposting of areas (historical pathways, circuits, etc.). As the signposting and use of a logo cannot be placed under the

direct control of the Council of Europe, those in charge of the projects will be responsible for this.

The description "Major Cultural Route of the Council of Europe"<sup>2</sup> is restricted to projects satisfying all the conditions laid down in the Rules relating to theme, priorities, fields of action and networks.

## 6. The different cultural Routes

The Council of Europe chose different Routes. You can find a complete list below, you just have to click on the route which interest you to know more about it.

1. The Pilgrim Pathways  
The Santiago de Compostela pilgrim routes  
The Via Francigena
2. Rural habitat
3. Silk and textile routes
4. The Baroque Routes
5. The Monastic Influence routes
6. The Celts routes
7. Mozart Route
8. Schickhardt Itineraries
9. The Vikings Routes
10. The Hanseatic Cities Routes
11. The Route of Parks and Gardens Writing frontiers, the Pont de l'Europe
12. European Cities of Discoveries Route
13. Living Arts and European Identity
14. The Phoenician routes
15. Gypsy Route
16. The Routes of Humanism
17. Fortified military architectures in Europe  
Wenzel itinerary
18. The "legacy of Al-Andalus" routes
19. The Northern Lights route
20. Popular festivals and rites in Europe

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<sup>2</sup> The word route is to be understood sense not in the restricted sense of physical pathways. It is used as a general term characterising the programme as a whole and defining its originality, and as such correspond to the very concept of the programme.