



12th CULTURAL ROUTES
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE
ANNUAL ADVISORY FORUM

Łódź, Poland, 20th - 22nd September 2023

**CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE
12th ANNUAL ADVISORY FORUM**

***"Cultural Routes – Social and Creative Dimensions of Cultural
Heritage in a Post-Industrial Context"***

**20-22 September 2023
Łódź, Poland**

CONCEPT NOTE 13.09.2023.

Background to the 12th Annual Advisory Forum on the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

The 12th Annual Advisory Forum will be devoted to the theme, "Cultural Routes – Social and Creative Dimensions of Cultural Heritage in a Post-Industrial Context" and will take place at the EC1 Łódź – City of Culture in **Łódź, Poland, on 20-22 September 2023**. Once again, the Forum will explore the *"role of cultural heritage in the construction of a peaceful and democratic society"*, as declared in the Faro Convention, as the 12th Annual Advisory Forum takes place in the wake of the war in Ukraine.

The Russian Federation's military aggression against Ukraine that started on 24 February 2022, has profoundly changed and impacted the face of Europe. Since the very start of Russia's military aggression, the Council of Europe has been mobilising all instruments available to ensure the Russian Federation's full accountability for violations of human rights and for serious violations of international law. The Council of Europe is the first and the only international organisation to date to have excluded Russia from its ranks. The exclusion followed the suspension of Russia's voting rights in the organisation on 25 February 2022, the day after the start of the war. The Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation Against Ukraine, created under the Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe is a first step towards an international compensation mechanism. The Register was created at the Council of Europe Summit in Reykjavik, Iceland, on 16-17 May 2023. Forty-two countries and the European Union have joined the Register as members or associate members, so far.

In the contemporary context of post-industrial societies, the exploration of cultural heritage takes on a new dimension that extends beyond historical preservation. The social and creative aspects of cultural heritage emerge as vital components in shaping identity, fostering community cohesion, and driving economic revitalisation. As once-thriving industrial sites undergo transformation, they become canvases for innovative expressions of art, culture, and heritage. This phenomenon not only honours the industrial legacy of these spaces but also infuses them with new life and meaning. The convergence of social engagement and creative activities within post-industrial cultural heritage sites prompts interesting dialogues on urban regeneration, sustainable development, and the role of cultural memory in contemporary societies. The 12th Annual Advisory Forum on the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe seeks to illuminate the ways in which heritage, far from being static, becomes a dynamic force that intertwines with human experiences, aspirations, and the narratives of progress, and how the certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe are key players in this framework.

The diverse and rich cultural heritage of Europe is not immune to the multifaceted challenges posed by major risks, including wars, pandemics, climate change, and economic crises. These perils can have far-reaching and devastating consequences on historical sites, artifacts, and intangible cultural expressions that have shaped European identity for centuries. Wars and conflicts can lead to intentional destruction, looting, and displacement of communities, causing irreparable damage to heritage sites. Pandemics disrupt tourism and communal gatherings, affecting the sustainability of cultural institutions. Climate change exacerbates erosion, flooding, and decay, endangering physical heritage. Economic crises can result in reduced funding for heritage conservation. To safeguard this heritage, implementing effective mitigating measures is essential. Collaborative international efforts, increased awareness, disaster preparedness plans, and innovative technologies for monitoring and protection can

aid in safeguarding cultural heritage. Integrating heritage protection into urban planning, diversifying funding sources, and fostering community engagement are crucial steps. Embracing adaptive reuse, promoting sustainable tourism, and educating future generations about the value of cultural heritage can contribute to its resilience in the face of major risks, ensuring that the legacy of Europe's past continues to enrich its present and future. Once again, exploring these themes through the prism of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Programme will be the opportunity to share best practices and learn from the actors on the ground battling these issues on a day-to-day basis.

The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme stands as a testament to the dynamic evolution of cultural heritage preservation and promotion in response to the changing landscapes of Europe. Embracing the opportunities presented by new technologies, the Programme, through its 47 certified Cultural Routes has harnessed the power of digital platforms, augmented reality, and interactive experiences to bring heritage to life for a tech-savvy generation. Moreover, by prioritizing greater accessibility for all, the programme has woven inclusivity into its fabric, ensuring that cultural heritage is not only preserved but is also accessible and engaging for diverse audiences, including those with disabilities. As Europe grapples with major risks like pandemics, economic crises, and global warming, the Cultural Routes programme has demonstrated resilience by adapting its offerings. Through virtual exhibitions, online workshops, and innovative storytelling, it has navigated the challenges of restricted physical access and transformed threats into opportunities. By embracing these innovative strategies and fostering adaptability, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme has emerged as a beacon of how cultural heritage can thrive in a rapidly changing world, serving as a bridge between the past, present, and future of Europe.

12TH ANNUAL ADVISORY FORUM OF THE CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE – CONCEPT NOTE

Session per session

Day 1

Forum Keynote Speech : the social dimension of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

At the heart of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe lies a profound social dimension that transcends geographical boundaries and historical eras. These routes not only connect physical sites of cultural significance but also weave intricate threads of interaction and understanding among diverse communities. By traversing the historical paths, traditions, and narratives that define Europe's cultural mosaic, these routes foster meaningful exchanges, encourage cross-cultural dialogue, and cultivate a shared sense of belonging. This social dimension extends beyond cultural enthusiasts to engage local residents, offering them the opportunity to participate actively in heritage preservation and promotion. Through collaborative events, workshops, and immersive experiences, the Cultural Routes programme becomes a catalyst for forging bonds, celebrating differences, and nurturing a collective appreciation for the richness of Europe's heritage. Thus, the social aspect of the Cultural Routes embodies a powerful force that reinforces the values of unity, diversity, and intercultural harmony, underscoring the programme's role as a bridge between cultures and generations.

High level dialogue: Building European Identities Founded on Freedom and Solidarity.

Within the expansive realm of Cultural Routes, a profound narrative of European identity emerges, one rooted in the values of democracy, freedom, and solidarity. The Routes serve as living testimonies to the intricate tapestry of Europe's historical, artistic, and cultural interconnectedness. As travellers embark on these journeys, they traverse landscapes that have witnessed struggles for freedom, the flourishing of diverse artistic expressions, and the forging of resilient bonds among nations. Through that lens, the history of European unity and solidarity is vividly painted, illustrating how shared challenges and achievements have united nations under common aspirations. By exploring the narratives of liberty fighters, artistic pioneers, and the harmonious coexistence of varied cultures, the Cultural Routes foster a collective consciousness that nurtures a sense of belonging and mutual support. The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, founded on the principles of democracy and solidarity, become pathways of understanding that transcend borders and differences, building a cohesive European identity that embraces the strength of diversity and the resilience born of shared struggles. This High-Level Dialogue will be the opportunity to discuss how the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe can play a role in building European Identities founded on freedom and solidarity.

Day 2

Keynote speech: Post-industrial heritage and its role in shaping European cultural identity.

The transformation of post-industrial landscapes holds a profound significance in shaping European cultural identity. As remnants of once-thriving industrial epochs are repurposed and rejuvenated, they evolve into symbolic markers of historical progress and innovation. These sites bear witness to the transitions from labour-intensive factories to knowledge-based economies, reflecting Europe's journey through industrialization, deindustrialization, and reimagined urban landscapes. The preservation and adaptive reuse of post-industrial heritage underscore Europe's commitment to embracing its past while paving the way for a dynamic future. These spaces, often interwoven with narratives of resilience, creativity, and societal evolution, serve as catalysts for collective memory, artistic expression, and community engagement. By fostering dialogues about change, heritage, and progress, post-industrial sites weave threads that connect local stories to broader narratives of shared European identity. As signs of transformation, they invite contemplation on the intricate relationship between industrial heritage and the diverse mosaic of cultures that shape modern Europe."

GENERAL SESSION 1: Preserving and Revitalising Post-Industrial Heritage.

In this first general session, we will see how preserving and revitalizing post-industrial heritage stands as a crucial endeavour that transcends the boundaries of time and memory. As the echoes of bustling factories and industrial landscapes fade, these vestiges of the past hold the potential to become powerful agents of transformation. By carefully conserving these sites, we honour the labour, innovation, and stories that shaped our societies. Yet, preservation alone is not enough; it's in the act of revitalization that we breathe new life into these spaces. Adaptive reuse, innovative design, and collaborative planning convert abandoned factories and warehouses into vibrant cultural hubs, creative incubators, and community spaces. This dual commitment to preservation and revitalization not only safeguards our industrial heritage but also ignites a renaissance of culture, economic growth, and societal cohesion. By intertwining the threads of history with contemporary visions, we bridge the gap between eras, ensuring that post-industrial legacy remains a source of inspiration and progress for generations to come.

THEMATIC SESSION: Recommendations on Post-Conflict and Post-Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction – Conclusions for the Cultural Routes.

In the aftermath of conflicts and disasters, the process of recovery and reconstruction takes on a multifaceted significance, where cultural heritage plays a vital role in healing and rebuilding communities. To effectively integrate Cultural Routes into post-conflict and post-disaster contexts, several key recommendations emerge. Firstly, fostering close collaboration among local communities, government bodies, and international organizations is paramount. This collaboration ensures that Cultural Routes are developed in ways that align with the needs and aspirations of affected populations. Secondly, adopting a holistic approach that goes beyond physical reconstruction and includes intangible heritage revitalization is essential. Cultural Routes offer a platform for restoring identity, resilience, and social cohesion. Thirdly, incorporating sustainable tourism practices, while respecting the natural and cultural environment, can catalyse economic recovery and cultural exchange. Lastly, leveraging digital technologies to create virtual experiences can help maintain connections during periods of physical disruption. By integrating these recommendations into their planning, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe forge pathways towards not only recovering what was lost

but also reimagining a future enriched by the narratives of the past. This thematic session will be the opportunity to have an in-depth discussion on how the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe can play a role in post-conflict and post-disaster recovery and reconstruction.

GENERAL SESSION 2: New approaches for participation in cultural heritage: example of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe stand as a beacon of innovation with regards to developing new approaches for participation in cultural heritage. The Routes offer dynamic platforms for engagement that transcend passive observation, encouraging active participation and co-creation, especially for the younger generations. Through interactive workshops, collaborative events, and digital storytelling, individuals are invited to become integral contributors to the ongoing narrative of cultural heritage. By involving local communities, artists, scholars, and enthusiasts, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe bridge the gap between tradition and modernity, infusing heritage with new perspectives and rejuvenating its relevance. This approach not only empowers individuals to take ownership of their heritage but also transforms Cultural Routes into living expressions of collective identity, fostering a sense of ownership, pride, and responsibility for the preservation and promotion of our shared heritage. This General Session 2 will be the opportunity to discuss these new approaches and the participation they generate.

Day 3

KEYNOTE SPEECH – Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) Report “Cultural Routes: a platform for intercultural dialogue”

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Standing Committee called on member States to join the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes, which allows for the concrete implementation of Council of Europe policies on the value of heritage for promoting cohesive societies, intercultural dialogue and the right to access to culture. This follows a special report by Andries GRYFFROY (Belgium, NR) entitled "The Cultural Routes: a platform for intercultural dialogue". Adopting a resolution based on the report by Andries Gryffroy (Belgium, NR), PACE recommended that national strategies involving all levels of governance be put in place to share the knowledge of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme (created in 1987) and, more specifically, to promote the certified Cultural Routes.

According to the adopted text, States should encourage a diversity of views on history, with a wide range of heritage sites illustrating ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity. PACE also called on local and regional authorities to promote artistic projects as a creative means to address sensitivities associated with dissonant heritage. Mr. Andries GRYFFROY will be presenting the report.

GENERAL SESSION 3: New trends in promoting Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme

With a total of 47 certified Cultural Routes recognised by the Council of Europe and participation from 40 Member States, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme continues to expand in both its scope and dynamism. As a result, exciting new opportunities and emerging trends are reshaping the landscape of its promotion. At the European, national, and regional levels, there is a growing imperative to foster collaboration among public, private, and civil society stakeholders for the enhanced promotion and support of the Cultural Routes.

In this context, the EPA Member States are poised to play a pivotal role, leveraging various mechanisms and approaches to encourage the creation, development, sustainability, and enduring relevance of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme. Furthermore, through engaging in creative dialogues, both among the Routes themselves and with tourism, cultural, and economic partners, we are witnessing the emergence of innovative models for networking, coordinated promotion, targeted support, and institutional advancement.

By identifying specific needs and potential areas for growth, employing effective promotion and support tools, implementing integrated national and international communication strategies, and fostering institutional innovation, concerted efforts are already underway in numerous Member States. This General Session aims to provide a comprehensive overview of these best practices, offering valuable insights into how public authorities can actively engage in supporting, fortifying, and amplifying the promotion of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme.

PANEL DISCUSSION: Creative and Innovative practices of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

At the forefront of cultural heritage preservation and promotion, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe have embraced creative and innovative practices that breathe new life into

historical narratives. The Routes have evolved into dynamic laboratories for experimentation, where traditional heritage meets contemporary creativity. From immersive multimedia installations to interactive workshops, these practices blur the lines between past and present, captivating diverse audiences. Collaborations infuse the Routes with fresh perspectives, leading to the development of new experiences, virtual exhibitions, and interactive mobile apps. Such innovations not only enhance visitor engagement but also spark cross-generational dialogues about cultural change. By embracing these creative practices, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Programme navigates the ever-changing landscape of cultural appreciation, inviting participants to uncover hidden stories, forge connections, and envision heritage in exciting new ways. This panel discussion will be the opportunity to discuss current trends.

THE CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROGRAMME

The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Programme

The [Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Programme](#), launched in 1987, provides a framework for the development of thematic routes that demonstrate how the heritage of the different countries and cultures of Europe can contribute to a shared cultural heritage. The Cultural Routes embody the fundamental values of the Council of Europe: human rights, cultural democracy, cultural diversity and identity, dialogue, mutual exchange and enrichment across boundaries and centuries. Currently, the programme counts [47 certified Cultural Routes](#), bringing together more than 3,000 network members in over 60 countries in Europe and beyond.

The [Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe](#) (EPA), was established in 2010 (Resolution CM/Res(2010)53), to enable closer co-operation between states particularly interested in the development of Cultural Routes. The EPA benefits from the cooperation of the [40 Member States](#) that have joined the initiative to date, as well as regional authorities, local communities, and international organisations such as the European Union, the OECD, UNESCO, and the World Tourism Organisation.

The [European Institute of Cultural Routes](#), based in Luxembourg and created in 1998 under a political agreement between the Council of Europe and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, is the technical agency of the programme.

The Programme in a few points:

The promotion of cultural heritage, sustainable cultural development and intercultural dialogue are priority fields of action for the Cultural Routes. According to the Resolution [CM/Res\(2013\)66](#), confirming the establishment of the EPA, a Cultural Route is "a cultural, educational heritage and tourism co-operation project aiming at the development and promotion of an itinerary or a series of itineraries based on a historic route, a cultural concept, figure or phenomenon with a transnational importance and significance for the understanding and respect of common European values".

Their mission is to:

- raise "awareness of the shared European heritage as a cornerstone of European citizenship, a means of improving the quality of life and a source of social, economic and cultural development".
- be "tangible illustrations, through European trans-border itineraries, of the pluralism and diversity of European culture based on shared values, and as means for intercultural dialogue and understanding".
- promote European "identity and citizenship through knowledge and awareness of Europe's common heritage, and the development of cultural links and dialogue within Europe as well as with other countries and regions".
- contribute to reinforcing "cultural co-operation, sustainable territorial development and social cohesion, with a particular focus on themes of symbolic importance for European unity, history, culture and values and the discovery of less well-known destinations".
- foster "cross-border cultural co-operation and the development of sustainable cultural tourism which builds upon local knowledge, skills and heritage assets, promoting Europe – including lesser-known regions – as a destination offering a unique cultural experience".

The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Annual Advisory Forum :

The Council of Europe Conventions: safeguarding and promoting European cultural heritage

Since its establishment, the Council of Europe recognised the importance of culture in laying the foundations for living together in mutual respect and tolerance. In that regard, the first Council of Europe's treaty following the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) was the ground-breaking [European Cultural Convention](#) of 1954, committing its member States to the safeguard of Europe's common heritage and encouraging the development of European cooperation in the cultural sector and the appreciation of our cultural diversity. Since then, the Council of Europe has provided a wide range of Conventions, guidelines and tools for the preservation and promotion of our shared cultural heritage. It is worth mentioning a few, including:

- The [Convention of the Protection of the Architectural heritage in Europe](#) adopted in 1985 in Granada, strengthens and encourages policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage, while affirming the need for European solidarity with regard to heritage conservation.
- The [European Landscape Convention](#) (Florence, 2000), promoting the protection, management and planning of the landscapes, has been a tool with which Member States have been able to ensure the quality and diversity of their living environment. This ground-breaking treaty recognizes that a landscape, whether urban or rural, natural or human-made, reflects the culture, values and identity of communities, and places them at the heart of the landscape.
- The [Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society](#) (also known as the Faro Convention, 2005) marks the beginning of a new appreciation of cultural heritage. By recognizing the importance and value of heritage for society, its contribution to sustainable development and quality of life, the Faro Convention is based on the idea that knowledge of heritage and participation in cultural life are part of the rights of every citizen.

Furthermore, the Council of Europe has also addressed cultural heritage protection issues. The [Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe](#) (Valletta, 1992), replacing and updating the original London Convention of 1969, takes into account the changes in the nature of threats to the archaeological heritage by making the conservation and enhancement of archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies.

More recently, the [Convention on Offences relating Cultural Property](#) (Nicosia, 2017) marks a new stage in the protection of heritage, providing a concrete criminal law instrument and fostering international cooperation to fight crimes against cultural heritage.

Thus, the Council of Europe understands the preservation of cultural and natural heritage not only as an end in itself, but as a means to promote intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding, and democratic participation.

Contact information

The Secretariat of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA) (culturalroutes@coe.int) remains available for any further information you may require.

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