



Culture, Lands and
Local Government

Cultural Routes
of the Council of Europe
Itinéraires culturels
du Conseil de l'Europe



MALTA IN

THE CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

A seminar for partners and stakeholders in Malta involved in or interested
by the programme of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe

Birgu, Malta

29-30 October 2025

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE
DRAFT PROGRAMME



Presidency of Malta
Council of Europe
May - November 2025

Présidence de Malte
Conseil de l'Europe
Mai - Novembre 2025

Organised by the Ministry for Culture, Lands and Local Government - within the programme of the Presidency of
Malta of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

THE CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The [Council of Europe](#) is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member States, including all the members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member States have signed the [European Convention on Human Rights](#), a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The [Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme](#) was launched in 1987 to demonstrate, via journeys through space and time, how the heritage of the different countries in Europe contributes to a shared cultural heritage. The programme acts as a channel for intercultural dialogue and promotes better knowledge and understanding of European cultural identity, while preserving and enhancing natural and cultural heritage as a source of cultural, social and local development.

In 2010, the [Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes \(EPA\) of the Council of Europe](#) was established in order to strengthen the programme politically and financially. The EPA, based on criteria established by the Committee of Ministers Resolution CM/Res (2023)2, awards the "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe" certification during the meetings of its Governing Board.

A Cultural Route is a cultural, educational, heritage and tourism cooperation 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.

Today, there are [49 certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe](#). Five of these Routes have [members or partners in Malta](#).

ABOUT THE SEMINAR: *MALTA IN THE CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE*

Malta joined the Council of Europe in 1965 and the EPA on Cultural Routes in 2023. While relatively young in the programme, Malta's heritage is deeply connected with the cultural values and history of the rest of Europe and as such is connected with many Cultural Routes, even those that are not yet formally represented in the country.

The [Maltese Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe](#) (May-November 2025) is an ideal opportunity give visibility to the programme of Cultural Routes in Malta and to strengthen the activities of the programme of the presidency on culture and heritage.

By bringing together national stakeholders in the name of cooperation and mutual understanding in the field of heritage, the seminar will embody the ambition of the Ministry for Culture, Lands and Local Government to preserve and promote the national cultural heritage for future generations.

The seminar *Malta in the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe* is first and foremost an opportunity for stakeholders in the cultural and heritage fields in Malta to be familiarised with the Cultural Routes programme and to contribute to its development in Malta.

[Similar seminars](#) have been held successfully in the framework of previous Presidencies. The Republic of Moldova will host a similar seminar in March 2026.

Objectives

The seminar aims at strengthening the visibility of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in Malta. Its main objectives are:

- To inform and provide an overview of the main characteristics of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe to various stakeholders and partners concerned by cultural heritage in Malta;
- To strengthen participants' ability to develop and maintain collaborative relationships with national and international stakeholders in order to support the development of transnational cultural routes.
- To identify challenges and opportunities for the development of new Cultural Routes and the extension of certified Routes in the country.
- To facilitate contacts between Cultural Routes and local stakeholders with a view for them to join or develop cooperation with already existing Routes;
- And to link Maltese cultural heritage stakeholders with the Maltese Presidency of the Council of Europe.

Participants

The seminar will bring together:

- Representatives of national and local authorities, non-governmental organisations, cultural institutions, academic institutions, cultural tourism operators and other professionals from Malta concerned with the programme of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe (to be invited by the Ministry);
- Maltese operators or members of existing Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe (to be invited by Ministry);
- Representatives of networks of certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe with presence in Malta or interested in developing it (to be invited by the Council of Europe);
- Officials and representatives of the EPA on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe (to be invited by the Council of Europe).

A total of c. 100 representatives is expected.

Essential information

- The seminar will be hosted in Birgu, Malta.
- The travel and accommodation expenses of foreign participants will be covered by the Council of Europe. Further details regarding travel arrangements and reimbursement procedures will be provided upon confirmation of participation.
- Information on recommended hotels will be made available shortly.
- All meals and visits within the programme will be covered by the Ministry for Culture, Lands and Local Government.

Draft Programme

The seminar will be split into three segments. The first will provide context, including information on the five priority fields of action for Cultural Routes and how to join or create a

Cultural Route. Further discussions will attend to communication strategies, branding, audiences and sustainable tourism.

In the second part we will hear from representatives of certified Cultural Routes (which could be relevant to Malta) on the benefits of joining a Cultural Route.

In the last part of the seminar we will have a workshop as part of a networking facilitation in order to bring together local stakeholders and representatives from different Cultural Routes.

At the end of the seminar there will be a ceremony to celebrate the accession of Heritage Malta to membership of the European Route of Megalithic Culture

Wednesday, 29 October 2025

Morning:

Arrival of foreign participants and guests

14:30 Plenary gathering of participants: introduction to the programme and practical information

15:15 **Cultural tours** (*tbc*), such as:

- Haġar Qim & Mnajdra (European Route of Megalithic Culture)
- The Farson's Brewery experience (European Route of Industrial Heritage)

19:15 **Debrief** and exchange about the visits

20:00 Dinner and informal get together

Thursday, 30 October 2025

08:30 Registration of participants (pre-registration online)

09:00 **Opening** and presentations of participants and organisers

Welcoming remarks, by:

- HE Ambassador Francesca Camilleri Vettiger, *Permanent Representative of Malta to the Council of Europe, President of the Committee of Ministers*
- Sergio Ortega Muñoz, *Chair of the Governing Board of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe (tbc)*
- Hon Dr Owen Bonnici, *Minister for Culture, Lands and Local Government, Malta*

09:30 **Malta and Cultural Routes** – keynote about the visible and invisible connections between the Cultural Routes programme and Malta's Heritage (*speaker tbc*)

10:00 **The Cultural Routes** of the Council of Europe programme: definition, operation, quality criteria, added value and cooperation

- Presentations by the Secretariat and experts
- Testimonies from participants
- Q&A session

11:15 Break

11:40 Presentations by certified Cultural Routes related to Malta (*Routes tbc*)

13:00 Lunch break

14:30 **Cultural routes in practice** – workshops to facilitate networking and sharing experiences between local stakeholders and representatives of Cultural Routes (breakout groups)

16:00 Break

16:30 **Debrief** – questions and themes emerging from the workshops

17:00 **Closing session**

- Conclusions by the rapporteur
- Insight into the programme of the Moldovan Presidency seminar
- Presentation of new Maltese members of the European Route of Megalithic Culture
- Conclusions and closing words by Hon Dr Owen Bonnici, *Minister for Culture, Lands and Local Government*

18:00 End of the seminar

20:00 Dinner

Friday 31 October

Departure of participants (non-resident in Malta)