



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



COUNTRY MAPPING DOCUMENT

GUIDELINES FOR MEMBER STATES

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PURPOSE

This document, revised in September 2025, serves as a guideline on the purpose, main elements, procedure for requesting and implementing a Country Mapping Document (Documents de cartographie nationale).

Country Mapping Documents (CMD) are reports which aim to assess the current status and potential for development of the programme of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in the member states of the Enlarged Partial Agreement (EPA). The report is addressed to the EPA member states and to the managers of the «Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe» concerned and includes recommendations for further actions and development.

The objective of the Country Mapping Document is to establish a “state of play” of the Cultural Routes at national level, to identify the potential for the extension and/or enhancement of the «Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe» and highlight emerging heritage themes that could initiate new routes on the territory.

Each CMD is a comprehensive report for one given country. It is prepared according to the guidelines regarding process, structure and content provided by the EPA Secretariat. Each report is prepared by an independent expert with proven expertise in the country concerned by the expertise. The expert works in close consultation with the EPA member states’ representatives, and under the overall coordination of the EPA Secretariat.

MAIN ELEMENTS

The CMD report is prepared by an independent expert contracted by the EPA, following a literature review and a field visit, both carried out in collaboration with the member state's representative.

Each report should address at least the following elements:

1. Current national, regional, and local legislation and policies relating to cultural heritage;
2. History of the programme of Cultural Routes in the country (main moments and major developments);
3. Mapping of data on the "Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe" present in the country at national, regional, and local level (membership structure, typology, member location and contact details);
4. Elements for assessment and analysis of the state of certified Cultural Routes in country (relevance, visibility, sustainability...)
5. Overview of potential expansion of the certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe at national, regional, and local levels;
6. Inventory of actions organised by the certified Cultural Routes in the country over the last 3 years (good practices and micro-case studies);
7. Overview of International and European heritage labels and initiatives and possible synergies with the "Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe";
8. Analysis of non-certified cultural routes active at national level and their potential for future certification as "Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe";
9. Identification of emerging themes, actors, and initiatives with potential for participation in the Cultural Routes programme;
10. Review of potential funding instruments and budgetary provisions for the "Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe" at national, regional, and local levels and overview of fundraising measures;
11. Recommendations and conclusions.





REPORTS REQUESTS BY MEMBER STATES

Procedure for requesting CMDs

At the beginning of each calendar year, member states are invited by the EPA to submit requests for Country Mapping Documents and other thematic reports within the framework of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme.

The EPA Governing Board decides on the requests received; it may invite unsuccessful requests to be sent again the following year.

Following the decision of the Governing Board, the CMD's preparation are also conditioned by the availability of financial resources in the EPA.

STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION

Selection of the expert

Once the request for a Country Mapping Document has been approved:

The EPA Secretariat selects, from its database, experts with relevant experience in the member state concerned and proposes them to the relevant Ministry.

The Ministry is invited to propose the EPA Secretariat other experts to be considered for the selection.

The final selection of the expert will be made by the Executive Secretary of the EPA, in agreement with the Ministry.

Cooperation with the Ministry representative

Once the expert has been selected and contracted, a meeting is organised between all parties (the Ministry, the expert, the EPA Secretariat) to initiate the research with a clear and shared understanding of the expected results

and process. The EPA Secretariat will provide the expert with all relevant information and documents on the programme and will also facilitate contacts with the relevant certified cultural route managers.

The Ministry is invited to appoint a representative to work in close cooperation with the selected expert and to provide the necessary guidance. Continuous cooperation between the Ministry's representative and the expert is expected, with meetings organised as necessary.

Expert's field visit

The expert's field visit usually lasts between two and three days; its expenses will be covered by the EPA.

Drafting and feedback process

During the contractual period, the expert is required to regularly inform the Ministry and the EPA Secretariat about the status of the research. Regular follow-up between the Ministry and the expert will ensure that the report aligns with the country's expectations.

At the end of the process, the expert will submit a complete draft to the EPA Secretariat and the Ministry; both entities will provide feedback and, where relevant, make specific proposals for improvements or additions. The expert will then submit a final draft taking into account the feedback received.

Adoption and publication of the CMD

If the draft is satisfactory to both parties, the report will be presented to the following meeting of the EPA Governing Board for adoption.

The layout and translation of the report will be prepared once the report has been adopted by the EPA Governing Board. The Ministry may also consider translating the report into national languages to facilitate access by national stakeholders.

The report will then be available in hard copy and digital format and will be accessible on the website of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Programme.



Contacts

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More information:

<https://www.coe.int/fr/web/cultural-routes/countrymapping-documents>

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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 Council of Europe, through its Cultural Routes programme, offers a model of transnational cultural and tourism management based on themes of a shared history. This allows synergies between national, regional and local authorities, as well as with a wide range of associations and socio-economic actors on the territory.