

ROUTES THROUGH TIME AND CULTURES EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE HERITAGE

The 15th Advisory Forum on Cultural Routes of the
Council of Europe

Yerevan, Armenia

23-25 September 2026

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Education for sustainable heritage in practice

Thursday 24 September 2026, 14:30* -> 18:00

* The exact start time of the breakout session may be subject to change

**Aims, thematic focus and
methodology of the sessions**

Purpose and function of the sessions

The 15th Forum aims to generate forward-looking and strategic insights into the role and potential of education and culture as essential public goods. It is set to explore their multidimensional contribution to societal development and emphasise their importance for sustainable development and shared values. The participants, policymakers, practitioners, and experts, will explore and outline concrete policy- and *practice-oriented approaches* and identify innovative pathways to strengthen the integration of education and cultural heritage across communities and institutions within the broader landscape of the Cultural Routes programme.

The nature of the event lends the programme to be conceived as a structured framework within which informal meetings, discussions and presentations enable the active participation and engagement of all participants and inputs.

The focus on political and analytical approaches brought in plenary thematic sessions needs to be accompanied by the discussion of the practical experiences based on programmes, projects and activities of the actors in the Cultural Routes programme. This is also what has emerged from the evaluations of previous fora: better opportunities for direct exchanges and contributions to the programme.

Cultural routes and member states were invited to indicate their experiences and projects of relevance to the programme. They have been organised in five thematic clusters which, hopefully, leave room for both thematic specificity and diversity of experiences, approaches and perspectives:

1. EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES
2. CLASSROOM/FORMAL EDUCATION
3. NON-FORMAL EDUCATION ("Hands-on" educational practices)
4. CULTURE, ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION
5. TOURISM AND EXCHANGES/LEARNING THROUGH TRAVEL

In addition to the sharing of experiences, each session should also contribute to a better understanding of the contexts and challenges related to education for sustainable heritage through the programme of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. They should thus propose conclusions, recommendations and guidelines that will form part of the final document of the forum. The objectives of the session can thus be summarised as follows:

- To allow participants to share experiences, projects and issues related to the theme of the session and deepen their understanding of it, especially in relation to education for sustainable heritage; the participants should walk away inspired, and motivated to further educational activities within their own networks;
- To propose conclusions, guidelines or recommendation to deepen/improve/develop the issue under discussion in the Cultural Routes programme over the next few years (applicable to the routes themselves, to member states or to other stakeholders); hence contributing to a better programme through education for sustainable heritage;

- To enhance the participatory dimension and methodology of the forum.

The conclusions of each session will be briefly presented on Friday morning and, especially, they should nourish the conclusions of the forum – to be presented on Friday evening and finalised after the forum.

Methodology

Each session will have people in four main roles:

- The *facilitator*, organises and leads the programme and working methods of the session
- The *opening speakers*, present their experiences or projects within the theme of the session and act as starters for the work of the group (setting the scope, variety of issues, etc.)
- The *resource person*, an expert on the topic who may/should intervene with some input or question to help frame the discussions, bring some analytical approaches and help connect the themes under discussion with the programme's overall priorities and challenges (related to cultural heritage, sustainable tourism, cultural democracy, education, Council of Europe values, etc.). The resource persons may also help to draw/propose conclusions in coordination with the facilitator, de facto acting also like a rapporteur.
- The *participants*, representing cultural routes or other stakeholders of the programme, are meant to bring substance with their experiences, realities, questions and proposals.

A member of the *secretariat* will assist each of the sessions.

The breakout sessions will last for about 180 minutes from approximately 14:45 to 17:45 – with a 30-minute break. It is expected that they can be very different in size, anywhere between 20 to 80 people (this is also conditioned by availability and size of the working rooms). The final composition will be known about one week before the forum.

Specifications for each session

1. EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

Facilitator: Karen AYVAZYAN

Resource person: Professor Maria GRAVARI BARBAS, Université de Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

Opening speakers:

- Déborah JIMÉNEZ PEREDA, Ministry of Culture, Spain – “The National Heritage Education Plan: Programme for research and innovation in heritage education”
- Maija TREILE, National Library of Latvia – “The Latvian Cultural Canon: A National Framework for Cultural Literacy and Heritage Education”
- Eleonora BERTI, La Fédération française des Itinéraires culturels européens, France – “Youth activities repository along the Cultural Routes in France”

This session will focus on designing and implementing cultural education policy and programmes of education FOR SUSTAINABLE HERITAGE at the national level, as well as adopting principles and guidelines and international organisations such as the EU and UNESCO. Representatives of member

states will share their experiences and practices as well as share what types of initiatives are best suited for the national level. Other important themes to be addressed include stakeholder management, setting priorities and performance indicators, and management plans.

The group should also identify challenges and opportunities for future development on the role of education in cultural heritage policy and programming, including cross-sectoral partnerships.

2. CLASSROOM/FORMAL EDUCATION

Facilitator: Zara LAVCHYAN

Resource person: Professor Silvia DE ASCANIIS, Università della Svizzera italiana

Opening speakers:

- Michel LEGROS, In the Footsteps of Robert Louis Stevenson – “The Tremplin Project”
- Sergio FERRARO, Aeneas Route - “Through the Eyes of Young People”
- Erika GIULIANI, Réseau Art Nouveau Network – “Bringing Art Nouveau Heritage back to life – Summer School”
- Francisco SINGUL, St James Way – “Vexo Veo Xacobeo”
- Elka ZLATEVA, Cyril and Methodius Route – “The Cyrillic alphabet as a living bridge between cultural heritage, education, and the digital future”

This session will discuss experiences and challenges about addressing education for (sustainable) heritage in formal education settings, directly or indirectly in formal curricula, including out of school activities.

Route representatives should present their best practices, what worked and didn't work in their lessons/curriculum, how they decided what to teach and how to present it, results, how they measured success, scaling from one classroom to multiple schools or regions, and how to form relationships with schools and universities. The group should identify challenges and opportunities for future development in cultural heritage classroom education.

Of particular importance are the articulation between education and culture/heritage authorities, the preparedness of education staff and the receptivity to interventions from out of school professionals in school activities.

3. NON-FORMAL EDUCATION (“Hands-on” educational activities)

Facilitator: Nina GOGOLADZE

Resource person: Professor Jordi TRESSERRAS, Universitat de Barcelona

Opening speakers:

- Iryna STRASHNENKO, Ministry of Culture, Ukraine – “Cultural Heritage Education and Community Resilience in Ukraine”
- Marisa VÁZQUEZ DE ÁGREDOS PASCUAL, European Route of Historic Pharmacies and Medicinal Gardens – “POMPEII: INTERDISCIPLINARY PROSPECTING IN HISTORY, ARCHAEOLOGY AND HERITAGE”
- Marta RAKVIN, Iron Age Danube Route – “Situlae Festival - School Day at Marof”
- Quintin CORREAS, European Routes of Emperor Charles V – “Collaboration with the Jaradilla de la Vera Secondary School - historical reenactment”

Non-formal education can be defined as any planned educational activity that is held outside the formal education system or curriculum. Many of the experiences of cultural routes interpretative activities are based on non-formal education approaches, where there is an explicit educational content proposed but there is no control (formal evaluation) of the learning process such as in open-ended, learner-centred educational activities.

As planned educational activities, these experiences rely on motivated learners and facilitators of knowledge and experience; when competently implemented it is argued that non-formal education activities are more impactful on the learners, in addition to being suitable to any age group.

The session will explore various types of non-formal and "hands-on" educational activities, mostly by cultural routes, explore the factors and conditions of success and the needs for development. Of particular relevance to discuss is the support for occasional facilitators of non-formal learning activities, the recognition of the value of these educational experiences and their integration/complementarity with formal education actors. Another dimension to factor is the sustainability of non-formal education practices because many seem project-based and thus bound in time as well as geographical scope and resources.

4. CULTURE, ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

Facilitator: Anna YEGHOYAN

Resource person: Professor Leonardo PORCELLONI, University of Genova

Opening speakers:

- Martina JANOCHOVÁ, Cyril and Methodius Route – "Weekend on the Cyril and Methodius Route"
- Aleksandra GRBIĆ, Romea Strata - "Heritage and accessible hiking in Lithuania"
- Marina HAKOBYAN, National Gallery of Armenia - "DasArvest"

While everyone has the human right to cultural participation and culture altogether, the conditions to exercise and access that right vary enormously due to social, geographical, economic and... cultural situations and status. The sustainability of heritage education depends largely on its universalisation because de facto both provision and access are very disparate and potentially unequal.

In addition to the matters of provision and access, the session will analyse examples of intentional projects and activities to address forms of structured discrimination in access to heritage education activities, including physical barriers due to disabilities but also indirect or unintended forms of discrimination based on social, ethnic or linguistic background of people.

The session should conclude on guidelines or suggestion how to make programmes, initiatives, and Routes more accessible and inclusive – including the responsibility and role of public sector stakeholders, such as education and cultural authorities. The group should identify challenges and opportunities for future development in accessibility and inclusion in the culture and cultural education sectors.

Participants should come away with new knowledge and ideas about accessibility and accessible programmes, and the ways their Routes/programmes could improve inclusion of different groups.

5. TOURISM AND EXCHANGES/LEARNING THROUGH TRAVEL

Facilitator: Mariana ȚURCAN

Resource person: Professor Mike ROBINSON, Nottingham Trent University

Opening speakers:

- Antonio BARONE, Phoenicians' Route - "Intercultural Travel Project for Schools"
- Mateja JANČAR, Women Writers Route - "Ljubka's Trail - A Cross-Border Literary Route of Poetry and Equality"
- Łucja ZAWADZKA, European Route of Industrial Heritage - "From the Miner's Profession to Professional and Mining-related Sustainable Cultural Tourism – ERIH ON TOUR"
- Germinal PEIRO, Prehistoric Rock Art Trails - "European youth mobility programmes"

This session will focus on education through exchanges and tourism. While cultural exchanges, notably involving young people, can often be classified as intercultural learning experiences (a form of non-formal education), tourism as such often falls in the category of informal learning and education (learning is not planned and, therefore, not secured either). Yet, these are the most common and immediate forms of learning and education that visitors experience through cultural routes. The availability and abundance of online information makes today's individual experiences and learning potentially very accessible and credible. This is, however, no assurance or guarantee that the experience can effectively contribute to intercultural understanding, multiperspectivity of interpretation of historic events or scientific correctness. An important responsibility lies therefore on the learners/visitors and on the providers of information, such as routes and tourism operators. In the specific case of tourism, the sustainability factor concerns both tourism and heritage: the experience provided in exchanges and tourism programmes should promote sustainable tourism and sustainable heritage.

In the session's programme, the participants will share experiences and projects promoting heritage education through exchanges and tourism, discuss needs and challenges of promoters and organisers and identify priorities and guidelines for effectively furthering heritage education through travel, exchanges and tourism.