

2021/22 ENG

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes  
of the Council of Europe  
Certification cycle 2021-2022

Candidate route:

# HISTORIC CAFES ROUTE

Independent expert report

Cultural route  
of the Council of Europe  
Itinéraire culturel  
du Conseil de l'Europe





## **Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Certification Cycle 2021-2022**

### **Independent Expert report**

(Historic Cafes Route)

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*\*The opinions expressed in this independent expert report are those of the author, and do not engage the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.*

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. Executive Summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3.3 Main Body Evaluation</b>	
3.1.1 Definition of the theme of the route	7
3.1.2 Historical and cultural context	8
3.1.3 Council of Europe values represented by the theme	8
<b>3.2 Fields of Action</b>	
3.2.1 Co-operation in research and development	9
3.2.2 Enhancement of the memory, history and European heritage	10
3.2.3 Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans	11
3.2.4 Contemporary cultural and artistic practice	12
3.2.5 Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development	12
<b>3.3 Cultural Route Network</b>	
3.3.1 Overview of institutional /legal structure of the network	13
3.3.2 Current composition of the network by country and type of member	17
3.3.3 Strategy for the network extension in the three years to come	18
<b>3.4 Communication tools</b>	
3.4.1 Current state of communication tools developed by the network	18
<b>4. Conclusion</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>5. List of References</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>6. Annex 1: Expert field visit and/or online interviews with network management and network members</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>7. Annex 2: Checklist</b>	<b>32</b>

## Executive Summary

The Historic Cafes Route (HCR) is a thematic route based on the tangible and intangible heritage of historic cafes and wider coffee culture across 15 countries across Europe. Collectively, the present 63 member cafes represent common European values and cultural expressions as well as distinctive local and regional histories and identities. The HCR seeks to preserve the cafes and to make visible their important role in the development of European cultural expressions and as heritage sites that can help tell the stories of social, cultural, economic and political change over the past 200 years. The core membership of the HCR are the small, independent, family-run businesses that continue to provide fascinating and attractive urban spaces for enjoyment, education and inter-cultural dialogue for local communities and tourists. This is an exciting and highly relevant theme for a cultural route with significant potential to engage more members in more countries. The theme has been scientifically justified but further research is required to underpin future developments. The full significance of the themes and its genuine 'Europeanness' needs to be more fully developed and better communicated, particularly via the key tools of the website, social media and publications. A coordinated strategy for communication of the route narrative, its vision and benefits, needs to target both internal and external audiences. Route membership needs to be extended for better geographic representation and diversify, so as to include city and regional authorities, tourism organisations, museums and the like. This will enable greater opportunities to tell the story of European story of coffee culture and the historic cafes and will enhance the financial sustainability for the route. There have been some activities in the required fields of action and considerable further potential exists but it is important that these reflect a coherent, coordinated and fully engaged cultural route rather than via independent member actions. There is a realistic development strategy in place for the next three years underpinned by a dedicated paid management team.

The overall conclusion of this evaluation is that with a focus on the identified shortcomings and recommendations to be addressed within the next three years, the HCR complies with two of the certification criteria. New Statutes for the HCR as a civic non-profit company have been drafted to reflect the new role of the route (as opposed to the former association) and the conditions and responsibilities of paid membership, across different categories. The Statutes reflect transparent and democratic governance. However, at the time of writing and despite efforts of the HCR, the Statutes have not been legally registered by the Greek authorities and consequently a General Assembly of all members based upon the new Statutes has not been able to be held. The process of legal registration must be undertaken by the relevant authorities.

Expert summary conclusions		
	Yes	No
The theme complies with the eligibility criteria for themes listed in Resolution CM/Res(2013)67, <b>I. List of eligibility criteria for themes.</b>	<b>YES</b>	
The Cultural Route complies with the criteria for actions listed in Resolution CM/Res(2013)67, <b>II. List of priority fields of action.</b>	<b>YES</b>	
The Cultural Route complies with the criteria for networks listed in Resolution CM/Res (2013)67, <b>III. List of criteria for networks.</b>		<b>NO</b>

## **2. Introduction**

The application of the Historic Cafes Route (hereafter HCR) emerges from its former incarnation as the European Historic Cafes Association (hereafter EHICA) formed in 2014 to ensure the survival of historic cafes and to communicate their role in the history and heritage of Europe.

The HCR focuses on the many dimensions of the historic cafes of Europe as important heritage sites embedded in numerous cities and towns. This is a thematic cultural route reflecting a longstanding and rich tradition of coffee consumption in Europe reaching back over two hundred years. It recognises common cultural engagement with coffee and associated practices of hospitality and social engagement in purpose built cafes that display many facets of tangible and intangible heritage.

Amongst the aims of the proposed route is to preserve the historic cafes in the face of increasing uniformity of urban centres and large commercial coffee chains. This is a worthy ambition with many of the cafes being long standing family businesses. Further aims are to highlight the distinctive architecture and design of the cafes, their role as meeting places for artists, writers and political debate and their importance in representing local intangible cultural heritage practices relating to hospitality and food and drink preparation and service.

The strengths of the proposed route lie in the importance and multi-dimensionality of its theme and that it is able to draw together sites and members from a large number of countries. At present, the Route crosses 15 countries but there is good potential for more countries to be involved. While the Route has criteria for participation based upon historical value and authenticity it presents as inclusive and with great public appeal amongst local communities and tourists alike.

At present the bulk of members are private sector, small and medium sized enterprises – many family run independent businesses. This is distinctive in terms of the Cultural Routes Programme and a strength in terms of inclusivity, diversity of experience and its tourism potential. However, it does generate potential problems of internal communication, ‘route cohesion’ and the arguably raises issues regarding the delivery of some of the fields of action.

A new organisation has been established to replace the former EHICA and to manage and develop the cultural route; this is the HCA, a civic non-profit company based in the Municipality of Chania, Crete. At the time of writing, the HCA is not registered for trading under Greek law. New Statutes to reflect the function and status of a cultural route as opposed to the former Association have been drawn up and examined but these are not operative yet. There has been no opportunity to hold a General Assembly to bring the members of the Route together under the new terms of reference. Under the newly drafted Statutes, an Executive Committee is established to manage the route including a route manager, an academic manager providing the link between the Scientific Committee and the route management, a manager responsible for finances and human resources and a communications officer. A three-year development strategy has been drawn up to set out the priorities for the development of the cultural route.

### **3. Main Body Evaluation**

#### **3.1.1 Definition of the theme of the route**

The theme of the route is clear and focused upon traditional cafes that have survived in the towns and cities of Europe as well-established, independent, often family businesses. These cafes are heritage buildings reflecting the history of coffee consumption as well as trends in design, architecture and art from the eighteenth century into the twentieth century. They exhibit commonalities in design and function but also reflect national and local styles and interpretation. These tangible heritage sites are de facto accessible to the public and provide a strong thematic network across 15 countries at present.

The Route presently consists of 63 historic cafes with particular concentrations in Austria, Spain, Portugal and Greece but the theme presents considerable potential for expansion of members in the existing countries and in new territories, including countries beyond Europe. There is particular room for taking a city approach to extending Route membership given that historic cafes are located in many urban centres. There are clear criteria in place for the selection of Route members that have been developed by members of the Scientific Committee which, could be reviewed as the route continues to develop.

Given that the Route has a sizeable number of sites and the potential for many more, it is important that it continues to work on narratives that will help develop sub-themes and geographical clusters that can help in interpretation.

Importantly, the theme of the Route is not only about the tangible heritage of the cafes but also about collective memory and intangible heritage. The cafes of Europe were places of important cultural events and many have associations with writers, composers, artists, actors and royalty. They were influential spaces in the development of European culture and tell stories that are relevant at local, national and trans-national level. In addition, intangible heritage is reflected in the practices of local / regional baking and patisserie traditions that frequently accompany the serving of coffee. Café culture is included in intangible cultural heritage lists of Austria and France and is increasingly valued in a number of other countries.

In the context of the Council of Europe's extant Cultural Routes Programme, this theme is highly distinctive for the following reasons:

- It offers the experience of tangible and intangible heritage within each of its sites;
- It is embedded in the daily cultures of a potentially very large number of urban centres across a large number of territories;
- The cafes play a large part in the experience of tourists to European cities;
- The key to the preservation of historic cafes is through regular patronage to support independent family businesses and maintain the diversity of European cities.

There are clear linkages with existing certified cultural routes that can be explored further and that would open new opportunities for developing and enhancing cultural and tourism products. For instance, a significant number of cafes were constructed in the Art Nouveau style and similarly, a number of cafes were co-located in the spa resorts and thermal towns across Europe.

While it is clear that the theme and name of the proposed route uses the term 'historic' cafes and indeed, inherits the name and membership from the European 'Historic' Cafes Association, as outlined above, opening up their multi-dimensionality effectively puts the cafes

into the realm of heritage. While some have 'historic' forms and associations, the term 'heritage' covers them as sites of tangible and intangible heritage and can attract funding.

### **3.1.2 Historical and cultural context**

The historic delineation of the route reflects a golden age of conspicuous coffee consumption across Europe with a large majority of the member cafes dating from the mid nineteenth century into the first decades of the twentieth century. The earliest member café dates back to 1763 with five others having being established in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, 33 established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and 24 established mainly in the first half of the twentieth century. The route thus cuts across a critical historical period in the making of modern Europe reflecting the rise and fall of great empires, extended periods of war and conflict, the expansion of industrialism and urbanism and the development of modernism. The cafes remain as testimony to these momentous periods of change and each played their own role in shaping this change. It is important to see the constituent cafes of the proposed route as living heritage reflecting continuity as well as change. They are not museums but rather they still function as places of coffee consumption and spaces for socialisation and they remain important as markers of local and regional identities in otherwise increasing globalised urban landscapes across Europe.

This is a thematic route and so its connecting geographies are defined by the open mobilities of both communities and tourists. It is clear that there are concentrations of cafes in the major cities of Europe but it should be continually important to encourage membership in some of the lesser well-known destinations.

The theme of the Route has been developed since the formation of the EHICA in 2014. Specifically for the development of the Cultural Route, the theme has been researched by a range of experts coming from different disciplines. These experts will continue to form the core of the Scientific Committee but will also need to enlarge as the route develops geographically and thematically. Expertise on establishing the theme of route has come from the disciplines of history, art history, anthropology, cultural heritage, education and archival science. However, the experts have also drawn upon a rich scientific background and publications that has grown considerably over the last twenty years and now includes insights from architecture, tourism studies, economic history and political science. There is clear consensus that the route reflects an authentic and pervasive cultural phenomenon that is founded on the history and cultures of coffee consumption across Europe. Going forward it is important that the remit and membership of the Scientific Committee is widened, particularly to address the disciplinary fields of memory studies, urban planning, architectural heritage, intangible cultural heritage and hospitality studies.

The experts behind the development of the route have been working to increase their knowledge of their constituent members. They have developed a questionnaire to collect data from the cafes and this will become part of the formal process for new members seeking to join the route. The data will be used to develop branded products, documentary texts for the Route's website, books and other printed material.

### **3.1.3 Council of Europe values represented by the theme**

The theme of historic cafes is representative of European values and is common to the participating 15 European countries. The introduction of coffee into Europe in the seventeenth century permeated all of Europe over the next centuries and in almost every city, coffee houses / cafes were established. While the numbers of traditional cafes have declined, that many of these cafes have survived war, social, economic and political turmoil is testimony to the



importance of café culture and the resilience of family businesses that have kept this culture alive.

The cafes represent memory on two levels. First, they are part of the collective memory of Europe both in good times when they were sites of liberal artistic creativity and the expression of different cultural forms through the patronage of artists and writers and in bad times when they were frequently spaces of resistance and political activism. Second, they are part of everyday memory amongst families and local communities where they are symbolic of special events, occasions and culinary ‘treats’.

In terms of the rich architectural heritage that they represent, the major styles and trends of European art and culture can be recognised across the cafes. From the sumptuous recreation of the Baroque in the mid nineteenth century, to various forms of Art Nouveau interpreted across Europe - Jugendstil, Modernismo, Secession, Stile Floreale etc. – to the Art Deco period, these preserved cafes are able to communicate almost the whole of European design history.

In line with the Faro Convention the historic cafes as living heritage sites, open to all, are an excellent example of ensuring that heritage contributes to the social, cultural and economic dynamics of communities. They also embody the ‘bottom-up’ approach expressed in the Convention as they are rooted in their localism, their place within town and cities and they give meaning to the communities that regularly use them.

Since their inception, the cafes of Europe have primarily been places for people to meet through the shared consumption of coffee and food. They have long been known as spaces for free expression, radicalism and political dissent and thus over various phases of European history they have been important places for the development of democracy. They remain as spaces for convivial inter-cultural dialogue and since the emergence of modern tourism have become sites to visit, to relax, to absorb local life and share in local traditions and consumable products. As such, they can be said to be the embodiment of a shared sense of European values brought together by the opportunity to enjoy the simplistic experience of drinking coffee and consuming cake.

The Historic Cafes Route is very much aware of its role, not just in the historical representation of the cafes in the field of inter-cultural dialogue, but in the contemporary role the cafes play in this.

## **3.2 Fields of Action**

### **3.2.1 Co-operation in research and development**

In the widest academic circles, there have been cultural histories of coffee, studies into ‘coffee tourism’ and the role of European cafes in the formation of the public sphere, political discourse and as various influences on cultural figures and trends. However, there remain many gaps in public knowledge regarding the role of historic cafes and their multi-dimensional character is worthy of far more research, particularly within the context of the tangible and intangible heritage of Europe that they represent. In the guise of the EHICA, there has been cooperation in research, in terms of establishing the theme and membership of the route and in terms of a wider contribution to the understanding of the historic cafes of Europe.

During the European Year of Cultural Heritage (2018), EHICA was a partner in a major conference, along with the University of Coimbra, and the Association of Historic Cafés in Portugal and the Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee of the Intercultural Euro

Mediterranean Centre for UNESCO. The Programme of the Conference (<https://www.ehica.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/programme-coimbra.pdf>) indicates an interesting range of topics but there does not appear to be a published document as to the outcome of the event. EHICA also collaborated with the Municipality of Santiago and the Torrente Ballester Foundation to hold an international conference on “Historic Cafés: Cultural Heritage throughout time” in 2018. Again, published outputs disseminated from the event are not evident. It is important not only to build knowledge through development events, workshops and conferences but also to disseminate the outcomes. The HCA should be expected to be the chief communicator of events orchestrated through its offices, with partners and on behalf of its members.

A Scientific Committee has been established under EHICA and to date its meetings have been sporadic and more informal, partially as a function of the pandemic. At present, the Scientific Committee is small and represents only three countries (Spain, Greece and Portugal). In addition, the disciplines represented are limited. However, plans are underway to significantly expand the Scientific Committee to be more representative of the countries in the route and to include more diverse and expansive disciplinary expertise. Effort has been made to set out the plans and functions of the Committee and its role in the development of the route. These appear to be robust and realistic though the management of the Scientific Committee will be paramount as by definition the historic cafes offer multiple opportunities for research and development across many disciplines. It will be important to prioritise the work of the Committee but it is suggested that dissemination of research to help build the profile of the cultural route is paramount. The plans of the Committee recognise the gaps of expertise amongst the members, particularly in the areas of cultural heritage, architecture, tourism and intangible cultural heritage. It has also suggested new names for possible Committee membership.

At present, the universities the HCA are working with are also limited and it should be expected that in the future, as the Scientific Committee takes shape, that the network of universities engaged with the route represent a far greater number of countries. It is recommended that the route also work closely with the University Network of the ECRI.

### **3.2.2 Enhancement of the memory, history and European heritage**

Part of the rationale for the route is the protection and preservation of the historic cafes that survive in the towns and cities of Europe. By raising the profile of these places, keeping them in business and accessible to all sectors of society, the route is engaged in the preservation of intangible heritage and the communication of memories relevant to specific locations and to the overall history of Europe and its cultural development.

Historic cafes are microcosms of heritage relating to various meta-level conventions, charters, though their value and the role that they do and can play is vastly under-rated. This is in part related to the cafes not being typical of public monuments, exclusively designated as heritage. Rather they are, in the majority of cases, privately owned buildings but nonetheless a valuable heritage element in urban spaces. The role that the cafes can play in communicating heritage protection, interpretation and sustainability is significant for two main reasons. First, they are readily accessible, located within the everyday spaces and experiences of towns and cities (and some within locations that are more rural) and second, they are widely and popularly patronised by a cross-section of the public.

There are good inter-linkages between the proposed route and existing certified cultural routes based not only on historical links but also on the prospect of mutual business benefits. The EHICA already has cooperation agreements in place with Iter Vitas

(<https://itervitis.eu/cooperation-agreement-between-the-cultural-route-historic-cafes-route-and-the-cultural-route-iter-vitis-with-the-aim-of-defending-and-promoting-the-tangible-and-int/>) and with the Phoenicians' Route.

EHICA has with various member cafes been involved with several events that have sought to raise the profile of the historic cafes in different territories. For instance, in 2018 EHICA was involved with the inauguration of Italy's Lega for the Protection of Historic Literary Cafes, held in Trieste with 14 café members. Such activities assist in generating awareness of the importance of this aspect of European heritage and memory.

### **3.2.3 Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans**

Young Europeans are avid consumers of coffee and a large proportion are likely to frequent trans-national, branded coffee shops unaware of the rich history of coffee consumption and the role of the historic cafes in shaping culture. While there is no robust data available, anecdotal information from some historic cafes indicates that their main markets are the educated audiences of 45 years old plus. There is thus a twin need for cultural and educational exchange focused on young Europeans: to raise awareness of the role of the historic cafes in European history and identity and their role in contemporary society as contributing to the cultural diversity of towns and cities and; to expand the market for the historic cafes amongst younger patrons – the 'Starbucks generation'.

In the guise of the EHICA, there have been initiatives in youth educational exchange (see: <https://historiccafesroute.com/happiness-in-lifelong-learning/>). The Café Kipos in Chania, Crete, along with the Café Santa Cruz in Coimbra, Portugal and the Café Casino in Santiago de Compostela, Spain were the venues of educational exchanges between young Europeans. This action entitled "Promoting the tangible and intangible cultural Heritage of Historic Cafés to Young Europeans" was held between 2016-2019 and concerned educational exchanges through the Erasmus + KA2 programme. In this project, the cafés welcomed the students and the accompanying teachers and hosted some of their activities. The students participated in guided tours of the city and the cafes, the rituals of preparing coffee and tasting of traditional products. The project was interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic, however it is scheduled to be re-established post pandemic. Other member cafes of the Route do advertise youth apprenticeships, but mainly dedicated to employment entry into the specific café.

A stated medium-term goal for the proposed route is to continue to develop educational programmes for both formal and lifelong learning based upon cultural exchange and the organisation of hosting programs for young artists and scientists with the aim of jointly creating artistic projects inspired by the themes of the Route. This ambition is laudable and can take place as an initiative of the route as a whole and also as projects by individual cafes and as city-based initiatives where there are concentrations of members. It would be important for the Route to establish some pilot / demonstration projects that its members could then further implement. The role of the Historic Cafes in transmitting the intangible heritage practices to the younger generations is an important one and can directly feed into the creation of employment opportunities.

This field of action has not been an easy one for the EHICA and its individual members to pursue during Covid restrictions. However, it is recognised by the proposed route as a priority in its future development plans. It can bring about mutual benefits in terms of building interest in the core themes of the route and also building new markets for the cafes. The cafes are potential employers for young people with potential training opportunities that go beyond the serving of coffee reaching into wider catering, baking and hospitality skills as well as those relating to the business of marketing and management.

Coordination by route management will be essential in this field of action but capacity for working across the member countries involved has been demonstrated. Thought should be given to working with the tourism and wider cultural sector to develop educational exchanges perhaps through existing city twinning mechanisms or newly formulated reciprocal exchange between cities across the network so that young people could engage in café-orientated cultural projects, tour guiding and inter-cultural dialogue.

### **3.2.4 Contemporary cultural and artistic practice**

The application form demonstrates little in terms of activity in the fields of contemporary cultural and artistic practice on behalf of the proposed route. However, a great many member cafes are very actively engaged in their own cultural programmes of events. Whether this is Japanese Gastronomy nights at the Café Casino in Santiago de Compostela, the intangible heritage of Fado singing at the Café Guarany in Porto, a poetry competition in the Café Calcinha, Loule, Blues music evenings at the Café Odeon in Zurich or Literary evenings at the Café Louvre in Prague, there is clearly considerable activity in the cultural field. Each café is a very special performance space and collectively this provides the proposed route with extensive opportunities to undertake a vast range of cultural activities.

Members will continue to host their own events with various motivations but consideration needs to be given to events and activities that can be hosted, coordinated and branded by the HCR, working with its members individually or within geographic clusters.

### **3.2.5 Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development**

The theme and the existing network of members represent historic cafes in the North, South, East and West of Europe with considerable potential for expanding further, particularly in the East of Europe. While the cafes reflect a common European history through the unifying consumption of coffee and associated food products, they also each have their own identities reflecting the culture, heritage traditions and gastronomy of their localities and regions. The majority of historic cafes are located in well-visited urban centres. Member cafes such as Les Deux Magots in Paris, Pastéis de Belém in Lisbon or the Diglas café in the Wollzeile, Vienna, are already well-known destinations and established tourist sights noted for their historic connections, their architecture, their produce and ambience. However, some of the route members are much less well known outside of their immediate regions and as the route develops this will assist in raising the profile of some lesser visited towns and cities in the more disadvantaged areas of Europe.

The majority of the historic cafes are located in urban centres rather than rural areas. However, links to rural areas can be made through promoting local supply chains and local produce. This is done by some cafes independently in their promotion of local specialities but it is not, yet, part of the cultural route's strategy. This would be a useful project for the Historic Cafes Route to undertake and could attract LEADER Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) funding.

As mentioned, an important part of the rationale for the Historic Cafes Route, building on the approach taken by the former EHICA, is to preserve and protect the cafes as important tangible and intangible heritage sites across the towns and cities of Europe. Most historic cafes are protected as heritage buildings either individually or as part of an urban district. Protected status is usually because of their architectural value, but the cafes are also working small independent enterprises and so they offer something substantively more than the buildings they are in. Cultural Route status will certainly assist the overall protection of these cafes by raising awareness of them in the overall cultural history of Europe and maintaining their function as independent working businesses.

There has been some engagement between the former EHICA and various tourist bodies, confined mainly to Greece but also through nationally based associations in Portugal and Spain to develop regional tourist itineraries. For instance, the Association of Cafés with History of Portugal and the Asociación Cafés Patrimonio de España, won the “European Cultural Tourism Award” of the European Cultural Tourism Network in 2020 to develop cross-border tourism in the Iberian Peninsula based upon the promotion of historic cafes (<https://presentations.thebestinheritage.com/2021/historic-cafes-in-the-iberian-peninsula>). Numerous other historic cafes across Europe have developed tourism products in partnership with regional and national tourist bodies and several are working with commercial tour operators. The HCR has also joined the European Tourism Manifesto, an alliance of more than 60 European public and private organisations.

A distinction needs to be made between the tourism-oriented activities of the former EHICA and that of its independent members, many of which have well established tourism links. A distinction also needs to be made between partnerships with public and private organisations in the field of tourism and country-based associations that exist independently of the EHICA. There is a great deal of touristic activity at the level of independent members going back many decades. It will be important for the HCR to develop public and private partnerships with the tourism sector at the highest levels and in the most creative ways in order to bring something different and significant to its membership. Particular attention should be given to building relations with European city focused tour operators where cafes can become a theme of touristic itineraries.

One clear area for the future development of the Route is to explore cultural and touristic cooperation between Europe and other continents. Given the introduction of coffee to Europe in the Ottoman period via Turkey, there are strong links to its origins in the Arabic world. The rise of coffee plantations in Central and South America and the Caribbean via the colonialist projects of the various European countries are also worthy of further investigation and development given that these plantations are the dominant producers of coffee today. The ability to take a European-wide approach to instigating projects at the international scale would be something the HCR could undertake for the benefit of its members in the longer term.

### **3.3 Cultural Route Network**

#### **3.3.1 Overview of institutional /legal structure of the network**

The proposed cultural route of historic cafes builds upon work undertaken by the European Historic Cafes Association. At the time of writing the legal structure of the proposed cultural route as set out in its Statutes has not been legally registered in Greece – its intended place of legal recognition for tax and financial auditing purposes as a civic Non-Profit Company. The proponents of the HCR are waiting on the Greek authorities for the legal ratification of the Statutes that have been amended from those previously used for the running of the former European Historic Cafes Association. The new Statutes for the intended route have been drawn up and this evaluation is based upon them, with the caveat that they have not been legally registered at present.

The Network/Association of the HCR as a civic Non-Profit Company involves members from 15 countries. The Statutes clearly articulate the purpose of the Company that is in line with and openly reflects the purpose of the Cultural Routes Programme of the Council of Europe. A statutory three countries are represented on the Board of Directors (Greece, France and Hungary). The existing Board of Directors presently comprise five members but with provision for a total of seven (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and three further

members). The Board is elected by the General Assembly. Since the new Statutes have not been legally registered, a General Assembly of the proposed cultural route has not been held amongst existing members. The Board as constituted is effectively the Board of EHICA and will remain as such, presumably until a General Assembly can be held. Given the balance of members across the 15 member countries and noting how this may develop in the future, it becomes important to have effective geographic representation for three main reasons. First, that it reflects the democratic functioning of the cultural route. Second, that this will provide an effective communication mechanism for the route and facilitate coherence. Third, it will encourage expansion of the route in new directions. It is observed that the proposed route is at present dominated by members from the south of Europe along with the opportunity to develop the route further in the north and east. Accepting that any Board must have limits, one way to ensure representation is to equip some Board members with observer status. Now this is not an issue but it is worth building some flexibility at the outset in line with the ambitions of the route to expand.

Two further observations/questions for consideration regarding the functioning of the Board of Governors under the reviewed Statutes are: i) Is there flexibility to adjust the quorum of four members for meeting given the point of potential growth required in Board representation? In addition: ii) Is a meeting of once a month of the Board of Directors, feasible / necessary?

The Statutes appear to allow for a wholly democratic and transparent process of governance for the proposed route in line with its intended legal recognition within Greek law. It is only that at present there is no verification of legal registration as it has not taken place yet.

The day-to-day management of the Route is carried out by an Executive Committee comprising four functional and salaried roles (plus the Chairman of the Board of Directors) and reporting to the General Assembly. These are: a route manager, largely responsible for the strategic development of the cultural route and its administration; an academic manager providing the link between the route management and the Scientific Committee; a manager responsible for operations, HR, finance and administration and; a communication officer. These roles indicate a willingness to make the cultural route a success and are recognition of what is required to sustainably develop the route network. At present, these roles are not precisely defined and will require some 'trial and error' working to establish lines of demarcation between them. However, these roles as identified, demonstrate the capacity to effectively manage the network/route.

A critical action for the proposed route will be that of internal communication between members and between the members and the route's management. While a General Assembly is the obvious opportunity for all members to come together, this has not happened and under the former framework of EHICA, several communication issues can be identified relating to the geographical extent of the membership and the type of members. The following observations were made during the course of this evaluation:

Some listed members were generally unaware that they were part of EHICA. This was demonstrated via a sample 'cold-calling' of members who recorded that they were, for instance:

"unaware of this Association"

"not sure whether they were members or not" (as they were listed in several organisations)

"confused" at who was running such an Association

"would like to know more."

Selected cafe members in Portugal were aware of the "Portuguese Historical Cafés Association" but not EHICA.

Such responses were partly a function of not being able to contact the 'right' person in the café who may have known more about this and reflected issues of internal communication with the historic cafes. It became clear that some cafes were indeed members of EHICA as there were written agreements in place for a majority. However, the basis of these agreements and what they were supposed to mean on a day-to-day basis for the café manager was unclear.

The basic problem of communicating with some of the historic cafes and the lack of awareness of a wider association points to some challenges that the cultural route will face. The cafes are primarily businesses and while ownership may be relatively stable, management and café employees can change very quickly. The cafes are also busy working places and finding someone who has the time, knowledge and an overview of a wider network is problematic. Members of a cultural route need to know that a) they are members of the route, b) why they are members of the route, c) how being a member benefits their business and d) who is the best person to be the point of contact with the route? These challenges are likely to increase as the network grows and this should be built into the communication strategies of route management and route members.

Cafes are also members of other associations/networks that are sometimes more immediate – based within their own city, region or country for instance. Two cafes were members of the Historic Cafes and Restaurants Society – a London based international non-profit organisation, dedicated to protecting and preserving heritage cafes & restaurants ([https://www.facebook.com/HistoricCafesandRestaurantsSociety/about/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/HistoricCafesandRestaurantsSociety/about/?ref=page_internal)) and café was a member of Établissements Classiques de l'Arc Lémanique (ECAL) that focuses on rating and preserving the Best Historical Cafés (<https://www.cafeecal.com/>).

EHICA has shown that it can work with other umbrella organisations and doing this will assist in communicating across members in many different countries. It is recommended that different models of communicating with the route and its membership be explored. If the route expands, it may be that a federated approach – at least in communication terms – could be adopted.

The budget for 2021 as provided shows extremely limited income reflecting the effects of the pandemic and a very low level of activity. It also reflects the fact that within the existing framework of the EHICA members do not pay membership contributions. Working income shown as being just over 11,000 Euros is accumulated income from several years of EHICA. Expenditure headings show the Association as necessarily keeping its profile going during a difficult and uncertain time through continued visibility. The major shift from the extant Association to a certified cultural route will be highly dependent upon the introduction of income streams that will allow the route to function and develop.

The key to the sustainability of proposed route is to build membership and to increase that membership while always keeping with the theme of the route. At present the membership is exclusively 63 historic cafes across 15 countries but no fees are currently levied. A strength of the proposed route is an inherited membership from EHICA (it remains to be seen the extent to which all members are willing to contribute, though indications are a majority will). A greater strength is that there is a large pool of potential members that would be eligible to join the route. A very quick analysis of those countries not currently involved in the route indicates significant numbers of potential members (with concentrations in, for instance, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Hamburg, Krakow, Wroclaw, Belgrade, Stockholm).

This body of members needs to be the 'backbone' of the route as it is they that should be benefitting the most. However, though a potentially large pool of members they are

predominantly small independent businesses with a relatively low fee threshold and open to the constant fluctuations in the trading environment. The suggested membership fee of 300 Euros is realistic and the budget forecasts maintaining this for the next three years which is sensible. This fee level would also include other small, related businesses and NGOs.

A cultural route whose mass membership comes from the private sector and particularly SMEs is distinctive and welcome but it does present some risk to the financial stability of the route. To offset this for financial and other reasons, it is important that the proposed route diversify its membership to include public sector bodies that are likely to have budgets that are more resilient and stand to gain from the cultural route. This would include, for example, city authorities, municipalities or city tourist boards that have historic cafes in their territories and that would benefit through effective packaging and promotion of the heritage assets and experiences that the cafes offer. Growing this member category is vital over the next three years, as it will help solidify more resilient income streams. The fee set at 1000 Euros may need to be adjusted. For a city such as Vienna with a critical mass of historic cafes, the fee may be low but also not worth paying if the cafes are also paying individual member fees. On the other hand, it may well be that a city authority may cover the fees of the historic cafes in its boundaries.

Targeted projected income from cafes and small businesses assumes an increase in members of around 50% over a three-year period. This may be conservative but realistic. However, there would appear to be greater potential for income to come from a smaller number of city / regional authorities targeted for contributions. At present, the member rate is down at a standard 1,000 Euros but this could be tiered figure to reflect differences in city size / number of historic cafes within a city – clearly a membership fee for somewhere like Barcelona or Vienna would warrant a larger fee for route membership. There is an additional reason why it makes sense to involve city/regional authorities, which impacts upon the financial health of the route. In terms of accessing publicly funded projects, particularly those of the EU, the member historic cafes themselves are not in a position to develop funded projects themselves by virtue of their status and lack of experience and resources. Local authorities or regional organisations are able to respond to funded programmes, create meaningful partnerships for large-scale funding, access structural funds etc., which are then able to benefit the historic cafes and the route as a whole.

Income is coming in through two funded projects. One is secured as a 100% full contribution grant (24,800 Euros) from the Region of Crete and is for the preparation and the improvement of the Network of the Historic Cafes Route. Another is as part of a multi-disciplinary 3-year project with 13 partners across Europe and headed by West Attica University. The work package relating to the route focuses upon famous visitors to European cafes and is worth around 36,000 Euros per year.

The bulk of projected expenditure is allocated to staff costs being the four members of the Executive Management. The cost proportion does reflect the intention to deliver the development of the route and thus the necessary growth in income. As should be the case in the early years of establishing a cultural route, expenditure should be viewed as investment in securing long-term financial sustainability. While a number of routes work with project-derived income, the Historic Cafes Route has the opportunity – clearly linked to the strength of its theme - to develop a very robust membership that can underpin success.

At present, the budget allows for maintenance of the existing website (6000 Euros / year). It is recommended that a substantive sum for a new website is factored in for 2022 (offset by maintenance costs) – see section 3.4.1.



### 3.3.2 Current composition of the network by country and type of member

Overall, the criteria for including historic cafes in the proposed cultural route is in place. There are seven obligatory criteria and a prospective member must meet at least four of these. In addition, there are two further desirable criteria. These qualifiers address most of the common sense elements that the public would consider a 'historic' café to have. Furthermore, there is useful flexibility in the criteria to deal with potential exceptions to the norm in terms of member types. The role of Scientific Committee is important in the decision making process for inducting historic cafes into the cultural route, however it is useful to adopt an inclusive approach where possible and take into consideration strategic concerns – for instance in geographical coverage – as the route develops.

At present within the framework of EHICA, the system of application for cafes becoming members is reactive. The website, as the chief communication tool, invites prospective candidates to 'get in touch' by sending an email. There are several problems with this approach. First, there is no promotional element to suggest why a café (indeed any category of organisation) 'should' join – what is the importance/value/vision of the route? There are other associations at both national and trans-national level which could attract historic cafes to join, so why the HCR? This is the upfront opportunity to cite the value of the Council of Europe's Cultural Route Programme. It would be instructive to look at the ways by which other Café Associations work regarding their membership. At the same time as well as promoting membership benefits there needs to be a clear notification of member responsibilities that should link to issues of providing information and the visibility of the CoE Route Programme.

Second, while there is an application form available on the website it is download only and cannot be completed and submitted online. The application is merely a statement of agreement of accepting the articles of the Association and the terms and conditions of membership. The form collects business data but does not collect data relating to the present five conditions of becoming a member. The articles of the association referred to are not to be found on the website. There is nothing about process on the website. What is the time-line for making decisions regarding membership? While it is appreciated that as it currently stands the application process is more about becoming a member of a business association for moving forward to becoming a cultural route a clear application process needs to be developed with some process-mapping carried out with time-lines, response times, staff responsibility etc. This needs to be factored in to a new website.

Third, the membership benefits of being part of a cultural route need to be further developed and clearly articulated. Under a section on the website – Goals and Benefits – benefits are not mentioned. More work is required to make benefits more visible and applicable to different member categories. At present EHICA members do not pay to be members but the question needs to be addressed as to why they should be paying members. Clarity with regard to member benefits will underpin the fee structure.

Fourth, given that proposed route needs to diversify its membership, new processes need to be developed to allow for members that are not historic cafes and accordingly underpinned by a slightly different process; i.e. the criteria for the historic cafes membership will not apply.

Fifth, while there does need be a response system in place, this cannot be the only driver for increasing the membership. In order for cafes to apply for membership via the website they first need to know there is a website and indeed, that there is an association. A proactive approach to growing the numbers of cafés and diversifying membership is indicated in the submitted development strategy but this will need to be magnified even further in terms of country/city/café typology etc.

During the course of the evaluation, a short 'prompt' email survey was sent out to named individuals where possible, or 'the manager', to 26 of the cafes as listed EHICA members. Prompt surveys are designed to stimulate simple contact and indicate levels of engagement. A short paragraph to explain the purpose of the survey and six basic questions were included to assess engagement with EHICA – What benefits have you experienced as an EHICA member? How often have you had contact with EHICA? Are you aware of plans to develop into a CoE Cultural Route? What issues would like to see addressed by such a Route? Where do you display the EHICA logo? Any further comments? The survey was translated into Spanish, Italian, German as well as English. The survey was emailed 16.10.21 and a follow-up repeated email 9.11.21. In addition, cafes in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary were contacted directly. There were no returns.

The no response points to some wider issues that may require attention. As with any survey, response rates can be very low indeed and a no response from such a small sample is not unusual. Email surveys are becoming increasingly problematic. As noted earlier in this report, it may point to communication issues shaped by a lack of information, frequent changes in managers and staff, or merely very busy businesses that have no time to respond to surveys. In the period of evaluation, EHICA membership agreements with a majority of café members have been witnessed dating back 3 years and more. Without 'down-the-line' communication from café owners to their front of house staff and importantly to their customers, membership may mean very little.

### **3.3.4 Strategy for the network extension in the three years to come**

The proponents of the HCR present a three-year development strategy that acknowledges the current situation of the network and sets out priorities for the route. It recognises the need for both increasing and diversifying the membership in terms of geographic spread and different member categories. It suggests expansion into the Middle East but it is recommended that the route solidify its base in the Council of Europe States first. The strategy needs further refinement based upon some further research to focus on particular countries and cities. It is suggested that there will be considerable interest in the states of Georgia, Ukraine and Turkey. As the Strategy states, it also makes sense to target cafes that have a shaping role in the development of coffee and café culture across Europe in countries such as the UK, the Netherlands, France and Turkey.

The Strategy also acknowledges the need to include municipalities and city authorities into the route for reasons of financial sustainability and political and economic leverage. Further, it points to the inclusion of other institutions that fit the theme such as museums, and other commercial members. The HRC is aware of other national/regional Historic Cafés Associations – such as the Club of the Viennese Café Owners and the Portuguese Historic Cafés Association - and will be looking for their accession to the cultural route.

Overall, the strategy for extension is reasonable and realistic but it is recommended that further detailed work is carried out in order to outline priorities in more detail, how this will influence income and expenditure streams and exactly how the plans for extension and further member inclusion will be realised. As noted earlier, it is important that a proactive plan be implemented.

## **3.4 Communication tools**

### **3.4.1 Current state of communication tools developed by the network (graphic charter, communication materials, logo, communication channels, signposting, maps, etc.)**

As EHICA, a number of communication tools are already in place the main one being the website. There several initiatives underway to enhance communication, but in general the application lacks a strategic approach as to how the route will be communicated in a comprehensive and coherent way.

## **Website**

It should be recognised that assessment is based upon two websites: the present EHICA website which focuses upon an association and not a cultural route and; a newly formed website focusing upon the Historic Cafes Route. Somewhat misleadingly, both websites are active though there is considerable overlap in content. Comments are directed to the key messages of both sites. Both websites are lacking in several respects. The multi-layered nature of the cafes – their role as diverse tangible heritage sites, their function as spaces of intangible cultural heritage, their connectivity between locale and sense of place and the vast canvas of European history – is not well told. The importance and contemporary relevance of the cafes to local communities and (mainly) urban life does not come across through either website.

With regard to all tools of communication, it is necessary to think of and present the proposed European route holistically. It is linked by common themes but is also illustrative of local, regional and national differences. Conveying a cultural route in a comprehensive and coherent manner is particularly important for a thematic route that is not defined by geography or origin and destination. Cohesion and comprehension does not come across through the website(s) at present.

The website is foremost a place to learn about the historic cafes and why they are important in a generic sense. The website has direct links to all of its present 63 members and each member entry features a short summary, a location map and further contact details. A number of the links to the cafes' individual websites are not functioning and this emphasises the challenge of keeping links and content fresh amongst a large and growing number of members. The member links appear to be in no particular order or sequence and as members increase, it will be important to provide some categorisation and perhaps some ways of theming listings.

Under the heading of Route of Historic Cafes, a map is provided showing the participating countries and accompanying text that says little about the rationale for a route and its themes but rather focuses upon meetings of the Association President and some outdated information.

Significant information on the website is out-dated. There is too much attention given to outlining the development of the Association and very little on its rationale. A section of the website called 'History and Travels' would seem to be the place to tell the story of the cafes of Europe and how coffee culture did travel throughout the continent over the past 200 years. Rather, it is mainly an outline of the travel of the President of the Association in setting up the organisation.

The Press section of the HCR website – which one would expect to show press releases or news – is a list of member sites in Greek. The site is in both Greek and English and while this is fine, thought also needs to be given to future needs to translate in other languages relevant to the audiences that the cultural route wishes to attract.

The website reflects that of a centralised business association and is rather inward looking and outward looking for those wishing to learn more of the themes that the route seeks to communicate. Though member sites are listed, the website is not convincing in communicating the multiple themes, histories and connections that it undoubtedly could and the reasons why the route should be considered as a trans-national entity. It is not a user-friendly website for

either network members or the general public. It is not easy to navigate. It contains some interesting information but also information that is not relevant, outdated with some broken links. While it is given that a new website is emerging from the old, it is important to identify the major issues.

The website is critical for every cultural route and all the characteristics that define a route should be present and easily accessible. The criteria for the cultural routes of the Council of Europe provides a simple structure for a website - clearly identified theme, historical content, values, activities relating to each field of action, focus on members etc. etc. It is the strongest possible recommendation that an effective website is developed to become the primary showcase for the proposed cultural route. This will require significant investment but a priori, needs to be firmly based on a very clear vision for the cultural route.

## **Map**

There is a firm plan to create a database for all café members that will result in a GIS based digital, thematic, interactive map. This will be welcome but first priority is an appropriate, well-functioning website.

## **Social Media**

A cultural route of historic cafes extremely suited for communication through social media. The social media profile is under-development. A Facebook page is in its very early stages but it will need to mirror content when it is better developed on the website. Again, the Facebook site is a space to generate public interest in the themes of the route and convey the working of the route as whole rather than simply a notice board for individual members. That said, at present Facebook feeds are mainly self-generated – which is understandable – but it will be necessary to encourage cross posting with the many individual Facebook sites run by the cafes themselves. This is something that needs to be communicated to members.

Similarly, the Instagram account is very early in development and consists of many photographs – many of which are repeated – but there no use of captions or bio-space. The potential for Instagram is huge for this cultural route given the size of the membership – all of which will use tags – and the variety of themes that can be explored.

YouTube is also a valuable space for telling the story of the route and the stories that the routes and its members can share. At present, the videos uploaded do not tell anything about the route or its themes but about the organisation. This carries very little public interest.

Other forms of social media can be developed but really should be part of a strategic vision for the communication of the cultural route and its themes. At present the themes, the values and the stories than can attract, challenge and educate a wider audience, are not being articulated.

## **Published Materials – Brochures, Travel Guides etc.**

In terms of dedicated visibility materials there is nothing published that specifically focuses upon the concept of a cultural route based upon the historic cafes. Nothing that sets out the fascinating history and development of cafes and coffee culture across Europe and that provides a rationale for presenting them as places to preserve, promote and patronise. A simple brochure that demonstrates the extent and rich variety of European café culture and its multiple layers of interest is not available. The proposed route should provide for a wealth of literature directed to community and tourist audiences, full of fascinating facts and anecdotes. Many individual member cafes have such literature, online and hard copy, telling their own

stories, but the route should be telling the bigger story. All that is available at present via the website and in hard copy is a brochure about the cultural routes crossing Greece and pamphlets about EHICA that have limited information and are mainly focused on meetings that have taken place. It should be a priority to develop literature that is relevant and that is directed to the widest possible audience so that it can be used to raise awareness of the route themes.

In terms of a dedicated logo, a new one (left figure 1) has been introduced based to replace the old one used by EHICA (right figure 1).



**Figure 1. New and Old Logos**

Following the guidelines of CoE visibility charter, the logo for the proposed route would look as follows:



**Figure 2. Proposed Logo Showing the CoE Cultural Routes Logo**

That shown in figure 2 would feature in all communication materials produced by the network to distinguish it. What will be difficult to achieve and needs attention is how café members can be encouraged, persuaded to utilise this on their own websites, in their own establishments and as part of their activities and events. Given that it is not possible to use this logo, the visibility of the former EHICA logo was tracked through the 63 member websites provided. Out of the 56 that could be accessed, the EHICA logo was only present on two – Café De L'Opera in Barcelona (with a link to Café Kipos through the logo but not the EHICA website) and Café (restaurant) La Calcina in Venice (with a link to the EHICA website). There is further evidence of the logo being physically displayed in several other cafes, see for instance the display on the door of the Calcinha Café in Loule – figure 3.



**Figure 3. EHICA Logo on Display Cafe Calcinha, Loule, Portugal**

While the review of member websites is not intended to be conclusive in any way, the observation is that despite being members of EHICA, it is may be problematic to encourage and insist that for various reasons the logo of the cultural route becomes part of the communication practices of the café members. It would be hoped that in event of CoE certification, the practice would be taken up by all members and feature on websites and social media.

In terms of signposting, the suggestion that information signs “will be placed at the entry points of countries, regions and cities, on their road network and within the cities where the cafes are located” is neither realistic or a priority. However, as rightly pointed out use of QR codes can bypass the multiple issues surrounding physical signage and is more suited to a thematic route. Many historic cafes already have local signposting and interpretation signs (see figure 4). It will be necessary to consider in some cases how the route interpretation and signage can complement existing provision.



**Figure 4. Interpretation Sign for Café Les Deux Magots as Part of a Wider City Trail of Historic Paris**



#### **4. Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on an examination of the application dossier, appendices, supporting files, further requested information and a structured inspection of member websites and published materials, together with online discussions with the route management and observations with network members, it is concluded that the Historic Cafes Route does comply in significant measure, with the eligibility criteria for designation as a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe. However, some issues require resolution for full compliance. In line with evaluation guidance, recommendations are made that are intended to assist the candidate to fulfil the certification criteria. Indeed, recommendations and suggestions for improvement have been made throughout this report.

It is clear that the continuing pressures imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted upon the application for certification as a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe, as it has upon the evaluation process. However, I am confident that this report is based upon the best evidence available under the circumstances and that analysis and scrutiny has been carried out independently, transparently and with due ethical consideration with the intention to deliver a useful outcome for all parties. My thanks go to the candidate management team, the support of the European Institute for Cultural Routes and all other participants in the evaluation process.

#### **Eligibility Criteria for the Theme**

The Historic Cafes and the coffee culture they represent is a very strong and innovative theme for a cultural route and is clearly representative of European values on a number of levels. The theme is relevant to, and demonstrated by, the extant participation of members across 15 European countries but with clear potential to be shared by many more. Historic cafes and what they represent, are truly a trans-national phenomena and they encapsulate and illustrate European memory, history and heritage as well as the diversity of contemporary Europe. The multi-layered expressions, meanings and values of the theme is not grasped and articulated as fully as it could be by its proponents. While the theme has been researched by experts representing different disciplinary perspectives further analysis of the intangible heritage of the route, its role as urban heritage and its capacity to build cultural tourism would be very valuable.

The theme does lend itself to cultural and educational exchange for young people and has engaged in such initiatives. In a post-pandemic context the mechanisms for cultural and youth exchange should be widely developed across the cultural route and funding programmes explored to support this. In terms of youth training and potential employment in the fields of hospitality and tourism there is significant potential.

The theme also clearly lends itself to the development of innovative projects in cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development, though at present this is not well advanced at the level of a coherent route. Building relationships with tourist agencies and operators at trans-national level, particularly focusing on urban tourism / heritage is something that requires more work.

#### **Priority Fields of Action**



Allowing for the restrictions of the pandemic there has been activity in the fields of action but greater coordination is required into the future. There is cooperation in research in development but it is at an early stage and the Scientific Committee needs to reflect a larger range of disciplines to reflect the multi-layered theme and also needs better representation in terms of member countries. Research should be driving creative sub-themes (for instance, connecting architectural styles, historical events etc.) for practical purposes across the whole of the route and ensuring an inclusive approach. Importantly, research needs to be disseminated through comprehensive publications and the website to various audiences, to raise awareness of the theme and the opportunities it offers. At the very least, the route should be publishing a research informed themed guide to the historic cafes of Europe.

The true significance of the cafes and coffee culture needs greater enhancement addressing the questions such as: Why are the historic cafes of Europe important? Why should they be preserved? What is their contemporary relevance? In this, the role of intangible cultural heritage needs to feature more strongly. Importantly the 'Europeanness' of the theme, its current geographical spread and its potential for including more countries needs to be emphasised.

Cultural and educational exchanges may not be as easy amongst the café members as they primarily function as busy businesses and do face problems because of the pandemic and ongoing competition. The route should be in a position to assist with exchanges and point out the long term business benefits of encouraging interest amongst young people in Europe to develop career opportunities with the cafes. A similar role needs to be undertaken by the route on behalf of all of its members or between geographic groupings of members to encourage creative / artistic projects. Individually, the cafes have well developed artistic programmes so what can be the added value brought to this field by a cultural route?

The historic cafes already benefit from cultural tourism and are themselves heritage attractions. The route needs to be developing cultural tourism itineraries, new themes and partnerships on behalf of all members. It needs to work far more closely, across all of Europe, with appropriate tour operators, regional and national tourist boards and particularly city authorities. The route needs to be viewed as something much greater than an umbrella association of individual members. Its capacity to act at the trans-national level will also be seen as member benefit, offering things that would not be undertaken by sole members.

## **The Network**

The rationale for the route, its vision, its multi-layered theme and its strategy needs to be better communicated – to its members and to wider society. EHICA involved no or little cost to members. The introduction of a fee indicates both member benefits and responsibilities and these should be clearly articulated and effectively communicated. Critically, the diversification of membership to include local authorities, tourist agencies, museums, etc. etc. needs to take place otherwise the route will remain a network solely of businesses. Its future strength will be in bringing the private sector and the public sector together to convey the significance of the historic cafes. This is also important to ensure the financial sustainability of the route.

A strength of the theme is that the majority of countries have historic cafes in their towns and cities and thus there is room for the network to expand geographically and even to make links outside of Europe, reflecting the historical mobilities of coffee culture. The geographical representation of members in 15 countries looks strong but the representation of the network as being European needs more emphasis, particularly on the website where the story it is dominated by work in Greece.

The blend of private businesses and public sector support will ensure financial sustainability for the route. Furthermore, the many different dimensions of the theme coupled with significant potential to expand membership will create tremendous opportunities. This provide the route with a sound basis for development so that it not dependent upon a narrow range of members nor on applying for project monies. A priority needs to be that of building and communicating the multi-layered narrative of the route to various stakeholder groups to drive membership development and thus income. This is factored into the routes 3 year development strategy. Attention needs to be given to better articulation/communication of membership criteria, member benefits and responsibilities and the application process.

The communication of the historic cafes as a cultural route requires further strategic direction, particularly the website as the shop window through which the world should be learning more about the unifying themes. The website and aligned, supporting social media is a defining quality for a thematic cultural route and needs a unifying and appropriate narrative structure.

New Statutes for the HCR have been drawn up as a civic non-profit company and reflect an open and democratic system of governance with provisions for the effective organisation and management of a cultural route. However, as at the time of writing, the Statutes have not been legally registered in Greece and a General Assembly of members based upon the new Statutes, which supersede those relating to the former EHICA, has not been possible.

CRITERIA		Fulfilment of certification criteria by the candidate network
<b>I. Cultural route theme</b>		This criterion is met with a very innovative theme that offers many layers of interpretation and that has the potential to be applicable to the majority of countries
<b>II. Priority fields</b>	<b>Cooperation in research and development</b>	This criterion is met and there is an existing body of experts and others identified. There is a Scientific Committee and engagement with universities through research and events.
	<b>Enhancement of memory, history and European heritage</b>	The theme is important for understanding European history and memory and is directed to protecting, managing, interpreting and valorising the tangible and intangible heritage of the cafes.

<b>of action</b>	<b><i>Cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans</i></b>	Actions have taken place before the Covid pandemic and the route lends itself to further exchange programmes
	<b><i>Contemporary cultural and artistic practice</i></b>	This is carried out regularly by network members, though activities have been considerably lessened because of the pandemic. It is clear that the route lends itself to further actions as a coherent route.
	<b><i>Cultural Tourism and Sustainable Cultural development</i></b>	Actions have been undertaken and the criterion is fulfilled though with far more potential to be developed in a post-covid context.
<b><i>III. Cultural Route Network</i></b>		The Network covers 15 countries and has the potential to cover more. The route is financial viable with excellent potential for sustainable income through its membership. This needs to be diversified for economic and inclusive democratic reasons but there is development plan in place and a reasoned budget. There is capability to manage and develop the route. The route has democratic and appropriate Statutes in place but these have not been processed by the Greek authorities at the time of evaluation. This criterion is only partially met at present.
<b><i>Communication Tools</i></b>		These are in place and thus the criterion is fulfilled but the website in particular needs attention.

## 5. List of references

All documents required for the evaluation were duly supplied by the candidate route, either via the EICR or directly.

Application for Certification – Historic Cafes Route – Cycle 2021/22  
EHICA Statutes  
HRC Statutes (draft)

All available published documents available on the website were accessed.

### Background

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Grafe, C. and Bollerey, F. Eds. (2007) *Cafes and Bars: The Architecture of Public Display*, London: Routledge.

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Rittner, L. and Haine, W.S. (2016) *The Thinking Space: The Café as a Cultural Institution in Paris, Italy and Vienna*, London: Routledge.

### Websites

<https://www.ehica.eu/home-2/>

<https://historiccafesroute.com/home-2/>

56 member café sites of EHICA – seven websites were not accessible

[www.tourismmanifesto.eu/who-we-are/](http://www.tourismmanifesto.eu/who-we-are/) - European Tourism Manifesto

<https://itervitis.eu/cultural-route-of-the-council-of-europe/>

Établissements Classiques de l'Arc Lémanique (ECAL) <https://www.cafeecal.com/>

<https://globalgrasshopper.com/destinations/europe/15-historic-cafes-europe/>

<https://www.wien.gv.at/english/culture-history/viennese-coffee-culture.html>

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<https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/turkish-coffee-culture-and-tradition-00645>

<http://poieinkaiprattein.org/beyond-images/literature/literary-cafes/>

<https://www.audleytravel.com/austria/things-to-do/coffeehouse-tour-of-vienna>

### **Videos**

Portuguese Historic Cafes Association: Historic Cafes in the Iberian Peninsula - Vitor de Sá Marques - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0CJ-CmKmi0>

<https://presentations.thebestinheritage.com/2021/historic-cafes-in-the-iberian-peninsula>

Vienna Coffee Houses - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3YmAqeS2Ei0>

Club of Viennese Coffee House Owners - <https://events.wien.info/en/260/ball-of-the-viennese-coffee-house-owners-2022>

### **Facebook Sites**

<https://www.facebook.com/HistoricCafesRoute/>

<https://www.facebook.com/CulturalRouteofHistoricCafesandRestaurants/>

<https://www.facebook.com/HistoricCafesandRestaurantsSociety/> - Historic Cafes and Restaurants Society

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Literary-Cafe-344265796059465/>

## **6. Annex 1: Expert field visit and/or online interviews with network management and network members**

Due to restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 situation, a field visit was not possible. However, an informal visit to one of the member café was conducted as part of another business visit to Paris – Les Deux Magots. The owner of the café – and also HRC Vice-president – was not able to be contacted and could not be met. This was an observation visit only which consisted of looking at how the café presented itself as a heritage site and how it communicated its history. A brief ‘little’ history is provided of the café in French on the back of each menu. The café tells its (his)story and shares its well-known literary and artistic associations through well-placed photographs on the wall and discrete indications of its famous patrons. No indication of the EHICA membership logo was present. I spoke briefly with a Dutch lady with her French friend. The Dutch lady told me it was her friend’s treat and that she had never been to the café before. The French lady had been several times and told me of that later in the month she was coming to the café for an evening event where a well know French writer of thrillers would be speaking about his latest novel. Apparently, this was part of series of events that take place on Mondays. She told me that when she had friends to stay she would bring them here but because of the pandemic, she had not been for a long time. She told me that I could buy a book about the writers who used to visit the café. I also briefly spoke with a male waiter who brought my coffee. I asked him whether he was aware of a network of European cafes. He said he knew about other cafes associated with famous authors and told me that this café is to become a World Heritage Site (a reference to a campaign to focus on intangible cultural heritage).

A Czech colleague, who lives in Prague, visited Café Louvre for me in early November. She spoke to a waiter who had been a former student. He was not aware of any network of historic cafes and mainly complained about the lack of tourists during the pandemic. He used to be asked by foreign tourists about the history of the café but he would refer them to the website as it has a brief history in English. Informal telephone discussions were also held with the following cafes:

Café New York in Budapest – this has been closed until recently. The spokesperson said that he is aware of the history of the café and that it is known as the ‘most beautiful coffee house in the world’. Its focus is on its gastronomy and in business terms, it has many spaces that it seeks to hire for events.

Café Stefanka, Bratislava – closed until very recently. The spokesperson reported that they did not know much about the history of the café but that a new book has just been published about the history.

There was nothing surprising in these visits and ‘cold calls’. The staff are generally busy and communicating the historic dimension of the cafes is a low priority. My thoughts about these cursory visits are as follows. A cultural route can fulfil a role in communicating and interpreting the heritage of the cafes to generate awareness and raise profile on behalf of the establishments that are naturally focused upon going about their daily work. A cultural route should be able to supply its members with literature and materials that would help situate a café in the wider European context. Moreover, a route could act as an initiator and supporter for events wither created or already programmed and share best practice and ideas from other cafes and function as support network.

Detailed, wide-ranging and regular online discussions and email exchanges have taken place with:

Vasilis Stathakis, President  
Maria Mystakidou, Communication Officer

Yannis Karachristos, Responsible for the Evaluation Dossier and Scientific Committee Representative  
Yiorgos Loverdos, Journalist, Photographer  
Michail Varlas, Finance and Budget Matters

## 7. Annex 2: Expert assessment checklist

*For candidate routes:*

The self-assessment grid contains 76 questions. Each affirmative answer is awarded 1 point and each negative answer scores 0 points.

	<b>COUNCIL OF EUROPE CULTURAL ROUTES CERTIFICATION CHECK-LIST</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments (if any)</b>
<b>THEME</b>	Does the theme of the route:			
	- represent a common value - historical, cultural, or heritage - to several European countries?	1		Significantly so but it requires greater elaboration
	- offer a solid basis for:			
	youth cultural and educational exchanges?	1		
	innovative activities?	1		
	cultural tourism products development?	1		
	Has the theme been researched/developed by academics/experts from different regions of Europe?	1		Needs further development to fully display the elements of the theme
	<b>3.2.1 Co-operation in research and development</b>			
<b>FIELDS OF ACTION</b>	Does the Route:			
	- offer a platform for co-operation in research and development of European cultural themes/values?	1		
	- play a unifying role around major European themes, enabling dispersed knowledge to be brought together?	1		But needs to involve more countries and disciplines in the Scientific Committee
	- show how these themes are representative of European values shared by several European countries?	1		Yes but this could be done far better and more inclusively
	- illustrate the development of these values and the variety of forms they may take in Europe?		0	Not overtly and clearly articulated
	- have a network of universities and research centres working on its theme at the European level?		0	
	- have a multidisciplinary Scientific committee?	1		
	Does the Scientific Committee:			
	work on its theme at the European level?	1		Could be more inclusive in its approach
	carry out research and analysis of the issues relevant to its theme and/or activities on:			



	- theoretical level?	1		more outputs are required
	- practical level?	1		more outputs are required
	<b>3.2.2 Enhancement of the memory, history and European heritage</b>			
	Do the Route activities (in accordance with the theme):			
	- take into account and explain the historical significance of tangible and intangible European heritage?	1		less emphasis has been put on the intangible
	- promote the values of the Council of Europe?	1		
	- promote the "Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe" brand?	1		needs further development
	- work in conformity with international charters and conventions on cultural heritage preservation?	1		
	- identify, preserve, and develop European heritage sites in rural destinations?		0	no evidence
	- identify, preserve, and develop European heritage sites in industrial areas in the process of economic restructuring?		0	not relevant
	- valorize the heritage of ethnic or social minorities in Europe?		0	no evidence but could and should
	- contribute to a better understanding of the concept of cultural heritage, the importance of its preservation and sustainable development?	1		Yes but needs to be done far more coherently
	- enhance physical and intangible heritage, explain its historical significance and highlight its similarities in the different regions of Europe?	1		
	- 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, landscape and spatial planning (European Cultural Convention, Faro convention, European Landscape Convention, World Heritage Convention, ...)?	1		
	<b>3.2.3 Cultural and educational exchanges of young Europeans</b>			
	Are the youth exchanges (cultural and educational) planned to:			
	- develop a better understanding of the concept of European citizenship?	1		
	- emphasize the value of new personal experience through visiting diverse places?	1		

- encourage social integration and exchanges of young people from different social backgrounds and regions of Europe?	1		
- offer collaborative opportunities for educational institutions at various levels?	1		needs more development
- place the emphasis on personal and real experiences through the use of places and contacts?	1		very much so
- set up pilot schemes with several participating countries?	1		underway
- give rise to co-operation activities which involve educational institutions at various levels?	1		underway
<b>3.2.4 Contemporary cultural and artistic practice</b>			
Do the Route's cultural activities (contemporary cultural and artistic practice related):			
- promote intercultural dialogue and multidisciplinary exchange between various artistic expressions in European countries?	1		but mainly by individual members
- encourage artistic projects that establish the links between cultural heritage and contemporary culture?	1		but mainly by individual members
- encourage innovative cultural and contemporary art practices* connecting them with the history of skills development?	1		but mainly by individual members
- encourage collaboration between culture amateurs and professionals via relevant activities and networks creation? **	1		but mainly by individual members
-encourage debate and exchange - in a multidisciplinary and intercultural perspective - between various cultural and artistic expressions in different countries of Europe?	1		but mainly by individual members
- encourage activities and artistic projects which explore the links between heritage and contemporary culture?	1		but mainly by individual members
- highlight the most innovative and creative practices?	1		but mainly by individual members
- link these innovative and creative practices with the history of skills development? ***		0	
<b>3.2.5 Cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development</b>			
Do the Route's activities (relevant to sustainable cultural tourism development):			
- assist in local, regional, national and/or European identity formation?	1		but needs further development

	- actively involve 3 major means to raise awareness of their cultural projects: print, broadcast and social media?	1		needs better articulation
	- promote dialogue between:			
	urban and rural communities and cultures?		0	no evidence
	developed and disadvantaged regions?		0	no evidence
	different parts (south, north, east, west) of Europe?	1		appears so
	majority and minority (or native and immigrant) cultures?		0	no evidence
	- open possibilities for co-operation between Europe and other continents?	1		Significantly
	- draw decision makers' attention to the necessity of protecting heritage as part of sustainable development of the territory?	1		
	- aim to diversify cultural products, services and activities?	1		
	- develop and offer quality cultural tourism products, services or activities transnationally?	1		Through individual members
	- develop partnerships with public and private organisations active in the field of tourism?	1		
	Did the network prepare and use tools all along the route to raise the number of visitors and the economic impacts of the route on the territories crossed?		0	
<b>NETWORK</b>	Does the Route represent a network involving at least three Council of Europe's member states?	1		
	Was the theme of the network chosen and accepted by its members?	1		
	Was the conceptual framework for this network founded on a scientific basis?	1		
	Does the network involve several Council of Europe member states in all or part of its project(s)?	1		
	Is the network financially sustainable?	1		
	Does the network have a legal status (association, federation of associations, EEIG,...)?		0	
	Does the network operate democratically?	1		

	Does the network:			
	- specify:			
	its objectives and methods?	1		needs better visibility
	the regions concerned by the project?	1		
	its partners and participating countries (current and potential)?	1		
	the fields of action involved?	1		
	the overall strategy of the programme in the short- and long term?	1		
	- identify potential participants and partners in Council of Europe member States and/or other world countries?	1		
	- provide details of its financing (financial reports and/or activity budgets)?	1		
	- provide details of its operational plan?	1		needs further attention
	- append the basic text(s) confirming its legal status?	1		the text is available but had not been legally registered
COMMUNICATION TOOLS	Does the Route have its own logo?	1		
	Do all partners of the network use the logo on their communication tools?	1		only a few members use the old logo
	Does the Route have its own dedicated website?	1		this needs to be further developed
	Is it the website translated into English and French?	1		It is going to be translated in French
	Is it the website translated into other languages?	1		Greek
	Does the network use social networks and web 2.0 effectively?	1		partial
	Does the network publish brochures on the Route?		0	
	if yes, are the brochures translated in English?		0	
	if yes, are the brochures translated in French?		0	
	<b>For certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe only:</b>			
	Is the "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe" mentioned on all communication materials (including press releases, webpages, publications, etc.)?			

	Is the logo of the Council of Europe present on all communication materials?			
	Is the Council of Europe logo used in accordance to the guidelines for its use (size and position, ...)?			
	Are the logos (Cultural Route + Council of Europe) provided for all the members of the Route?			
	Does the Council of Europe logo appear on road signs/ boards indicating the cultural route?			
	SCORE	<b>63</b>		

\* E.g. visual arts, the performing arts, creative crafts, architecture, music, literature, poetry or any other form of cultural expression

\*\*Particularly in terms of instruction for young Europeans in the relevant fields

\*\*\*Whether these fields include visual arts, performing arts, creative crafts, architecture, music, literature or any other field