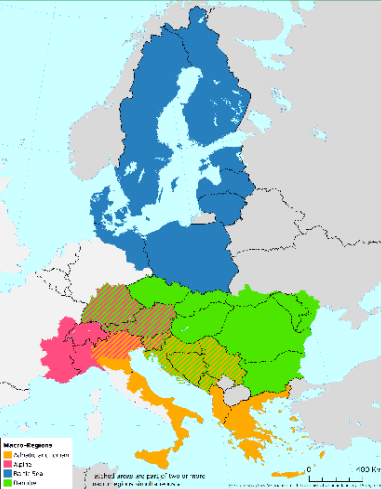


# Social participation and social cohesion in the EU macro-regions:

## Cultural Routes and community engagement

Routes4U | 8

Macro-Regions:  
Adriatic and Ionian, Alpine, Baltic, Danube



### Routes4U Project

Funded  
by the European Union  
and the Council of Europe



EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Implemented  
by the Council of Europe



# **Social participation and social cohesion in the EU macro-regions:**

Cultural Routes  
and community  
engagement

Routes4U | 8

Council of Europe

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# Introduction

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## Routes4U manual series

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**T**he Routes4U manual series is an undertaking by the joint programme Routes4U of the Council of Europe (Directorate General of Democracy, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes) and the European Union (European Commission, Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy). Routes4U aims at strengthening the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in the Adriatic and Ionian Region, the Alpine Region, the Baltic Sea Region and the Danube Region in line with the objectives of the respective macro-regional strategies. To date, four macro-regional strategies have been adopted by the European Union: the EU Strategies for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR, 2009), the Danube Region (EUSDR, 2010), the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR, 2014) and the Alpine Region (EUSALP, 2015). These four EU macro-regions encompass 27 countries with more than 340 million inhabitants. They provide a policy framework to address common challenges facing the countries in a defined geographical area. They also strengthen co-operation and thus contribute to economic, social and territorial cohesion.

In the macro-regional context, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe play a significant role in the promotion and preservation of heritage as well as the implementation of sustainable cultural tourism and strengthening transnational

co-operation. Launched by the Council of Europe in 1987, the Cultural Routes invite travellers to discover Europe's rich and diverse heritage. They promote cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and mutual exchanges across borders. They combine tangible and intangible resources, natural and cultural heritage, the past and the present.

A critical need for guidance for Cultural Routes professionals on the macro-regional strategies – and for the professionals working on the macro-regional strategies on the Cultural Routes – was identified in the framework of Routes4U. Various Routes4U expert meetings have revealed the need for more focused training and capacity development for the implementation and management of Cultural Routes and for the objectives and structures of the macro-regional strategies EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR. The development of an e-learning training and this series of manuals is a response to this need.

The manuals are intended to provide focused guidance to Cultural Routes managers, professionals working on the macro-regional strategies, cultural and tourism

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



professionals and local and regional governments in the macro-regions. They aim to provide knowledge and assistance in effectively managing Cultural Routes that contribute to the objectives of the macro-regional strategies.

The manuals are user-friendly tools for capacity building on themes related to the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe as well as the European Union strategies for the macro-regions. They can be used independently for self-guided learning as well as material at training workshops and should complement the basic provisions for understanding the basics of cultural tourism for regional development.

The manuals are published as online PDF documents which can be freely downloaded. They accompany an [e-learning programme](#) that is freely available. The modules of the training programme are the following:

1. Cultural Routes in the EU macro-regions. Step-by-step guidance on certification and implementation.
2. Cultural tourism in the EU macro-regions. Cultural Routes to increase attractiveness of remote destinations.
3. Social participation and social cohesion in the EU macro-regions. Cultural Routes and community engagement.
4. Local and regional development in the EU macro-regions. Cultural Routes and SMEs.
5. Marketing strategies in the EU macro-regions. Cultural Routes and marketing of the macro-regional strategies.

## Manual 3: Social participation and social cohesion in the EU macro-regions

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This Routes4U manual consists of the following sections:

- ▶ Community engagement, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in the EU macro-regions: concepts and framework
- ▶ The role of community in the development and maintenance of the Cultural Routes
- ▶ The challenges and advantages of community engagement and social participation to promote social cohesion in the context of European Cultural Routes
- ▶ Community engagement in culture, cultural heritage protection and tourism development
- ▶ Community engagement planning and step-by-step implementation
- ▶ Practices for community engagement along the Cultural Routes



# I. Community engagement and Cultural Routes

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We start our learning journey by defining some of the main concepts and terms that will be explored throughout the following sections, including “local community”, “engagement”, “identity”, “cultural heritage” and “EU strategies for the macro-regions”.

Community engagement activities do not take place in a vacuum and the context of the Council of Europe’s Cultural Routes programme plays an important role. The Cultural Routes programme aims to build upon the value of cultural heritage in promoting cohesive societies and intercultural dialogue, and aims at, *inter-alia*, facilitating access to culture. Cultural Routes are powerful channels for intercultural dialogue: for promoting and preserving Europeans’ shared and diverse cultural identities and for providing a better understanding of the history of Europe through cross-border exchanges of people, ideas and cultures. Social participation and community engagement are perceived in the context of the goals set by the Council of Europe Cultural Routes programme and the European Union strategies for the macro-regions.

As explained in the Routes4U first e-learning manual, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe are transnational networks with legal status, in which at entities from at least three European countries participate. The network partners carry out a vast range of activities in the research, educational and artistic fields.

A Cultural Route of the Council of Europe is defined as follows: “A cultural, educational heritage and tourism co-operation project aiming at the development and promotion of an itinerary or a series of itineraries based on a historic route, a cultural concept, figure or phenomenon with a transnational importance and significance for the understanding and respect of common European values” (CM/Res(2013)66). The Cultural Routes stretch over a wide territory and involve many stakeholders.



The Route of Saint Olav Ways © Association for the Route of St. Olav Ways (ACSOW)

Each Cultural Route is based on a European theme bringing together tangible and intangible heritage elements that are common to several countries and represent European values. Heritage elements refer to both human and natural heritage.

More information can be found at:

- ▶ Sani M., Lynch B., Visser J. and Gariboldi A. (2015), Mapping of practices in the EU Member States on Participatory governance of cultural heritage to support the OMC working group under the same name, (Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018). *EENC Short Analytical Report*.  
[www.gordion.nl/sites/gordion.nl/files/mapping\\_of\\_practices\\_in\\_the\\_eu\\_member\\_states\\_on\\_participatory\\_governance\\_of\\_cultural\\_heritage\\_copy1.pdf](http://www.gordion.nl/sites/gordion.nl/files/mapping_of_practices_in_the_eu_member_states_on_participatory_governance_of_cultural_heritage_copy1.pdf)
- ▶ Council of Europe (2013), Resolution CM/Res(2013)66 confirming the establishment of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA), 2013.

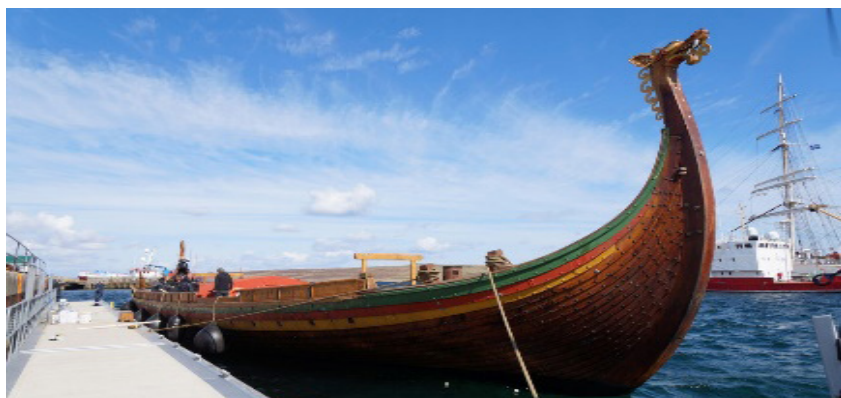
## Concepts and framework

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### Tangible and intangible cultural heritage

According to the Council of Europe, cultural heritage is “a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time” (Council of Europe (2005), [Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society](#)).

According to UNESCO, tangible heritage includes buildings and historic places, monuments, artefacts, etc. which are considered worthy of preservation for the future. These include objects significant to the archaeology, architecture, science or technology of a specific culture.



The Vikings Routes: *Draken Harald Hårfagre, Lerwick, Scotland* © Mike Pennington

UNESCO states that “cultural heritage does not end at monuments and collections of objects. It also includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts” (UNESCO).

According to Elifnaz Durusoy, a route as such necessarily includes a “number of material elements and objects linked to other values of an intangible nature by the connecting thread of a civilizing process of decisive importance at a given time in history for a particular society or group”. Following this, a European heritage-based Cultural Route tells the story of the places on it by focusing on some theme(s), strengthening the identity of the places and positively impacting people’s sense of belonging to those places.

### Further reading

- ▶ Council of Europe (2005), Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society. Faro, 27 October 2005.  
[www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/199](http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/199)
- ▶ Durusoy E. (2014), *From an ancient road to a Cultural Route: conservation and management of the road between Milas and Labraunda*. Istanbul: Institut français d’études anatoliennes.
- ▶ UNESCO (n.d.), What is intangible cultural heritage?  
<http://ich.unesco.org/en/what-is-intangible-heritage-00003>

Many Cultural Routes reflect on less familiar themes and aspects of European history and present less familiar characteristics of European macro-regions. In other words, the Cultural Routes shed light also on hidden, off-the-beaten-track, rural or not-conventionally-touristic heritage.

The recently certified Iron Curtain Trail serves as an example of such heritage. This trail retraces the physical border stretching from the Barents Sea to the Black Sea, which divided eastern and western Europe for almost half a century after the end of the Second World War. Following this cyclable route for more than 10 000 km is a living lesson in 20th-century European history. The route combines cultural and historic sites linked to the political, military and ideological barrier erected during the Cold War and is a reminder of the peace and reconciliation that followed the fall of the Iron Curtain. The route features attractive and varied landscapes and unique habitats that emerged along the former border strip. The Iron Curtain Trail covers 20 European countries connecting many historic buildings, monuments, museums and landmarks which remind us of the history of a divided Europe. This could prove a crucial driver motivating communities to engage and embrace aspects of identity, as well as a sense of belonging to Europe, as we know it today.



According to Heshmat (2014), identity is largely concerned with the questions, “Who are you? What does it mean to be who you are?” Identity relates to our basic values that determine the choices we make. These choices reflect who we are and what we value.

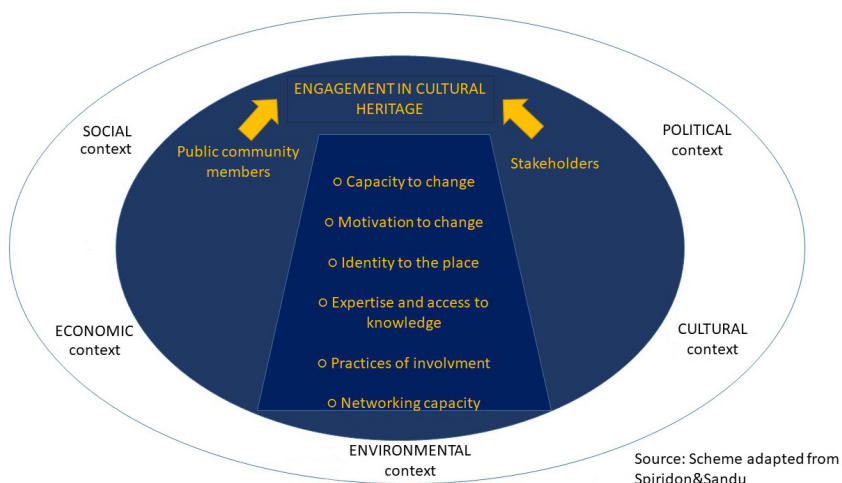
### Further reading

- ▶ Heshmat K. (2014), “Basics of identity: what do we mean by identity and why does identity matter?”, *Psychology Today*, 8 December.
- ▶ [www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/science-choice/201412/basics-identity](http://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/science-choice/201412/basics-identity)

The Cultural Routes are tools for promoting and preserving Europeans’ shared and diverse cultural identities. This is one of the main objectives of the European Cultural Routes programme, to make European citizens aware of a European cultural identity, which entails diversities but also shared heritage. Themed initiatives tell stories about great artistic achievements (for example, the Impressionisms Routes), about persecution and exile, migration and integration (for example, the Huguenot and Waldensian Trail), and about the different aspects and values of European civilisation.

### Community engagement and social participation

Overall, the Cultural Routes are a model for grass-roots cultural co-operation, providing important lessons about identity and citizenship through participatory experiences of culture. Local communities are the key to keeping both intangible and tangible heritage alive and, at the same time, heritage is an expression of community identity.



The main objectives of the Cultural Routes programme are closely related to the needs of local communities and to strengthening European identity:

- ▶ to preserve and enhance European cultural heritage as a means of improving the context in which people live and as a source of social, economic and cultural development;
- ▶ to accord a special place to cultural tourism within European leisure activities;
- ▶ to make European citizens aware of a common European cultural identity, one that is united in diversity.

What should we understand by community in the case of the Cultural Routes? From a social perspective, communities can be defined as “social and political networks that link individuals, community organisations, and leaders” (ATSDR (2015), *Concepts of community*), and understanding these networks is critical to planning efforts in engagement.

The organisation Istituto Superiore sui Sistemi Territoriali per l’Innovazione defines a community as “a group of people with a common identity who may be involved across a range of related livelihoods. Communities often have customary rights related to an area and its natural resources, and a strong relationship with the area from a cultural, social, economic and spiritual perspective”. In this respect, the local community can be considered as a group of people “who can affect or could be affected by the development and implementation of a Cultural Route”. Consequently, “the main stakeholders are the public, the private sector and the residents along the route”.

#### Further information

- ▶ ATSDR (2015), *Concepts of community*.  
[www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communityengagement/pce\\_concepts.html](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communityengagement/pce_concepts.html)
- ▶ Istituto Superiore sui Sistemi Territoriali per l’Innovazione (2016), *Community engagement in Cultural Routes*, 9.  
[www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/http://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/ECRR.html/CE81-ECRR-D.T1.1.1-Work-paper-Promotion-Transnational-Cultur](http://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/http://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/ECRR.html/CE81-ECRR-D.T1.1.1-Work-paper-Promotion-Transnational-Cultur)

A wide spectrum of organisations and individuals are involved in theme-based routes – national and regional authorities, non-governmental organisations private organisations representing varied themes, as well as local communities. Engagement practices have been established in many sectors by different kinds of organisations. However, there is no universal model as to how to engage people; the best possible engagement is defined by the specific conditions.

There are two approaches to community engagement:

- ▶ top-down approach;
- ▶ bottom-up approach.

In the bottom-up approach, community engagement is initiated by the community itself, which usually indicates a rather high level of motivation to participate. Local community representatives or non-governmental organisations may initiate the process

of joining a Cultural Route. For example, the tourist club Oga in Grobiņa, Latvia, in the Baltic Sea Region, decided to join the Viking Route, following their long-term activities in relation to exploring Viking history in the area and teaching wider audiences about it.

Organisations are well aware that the engagement of individuals, customers, local communities and other stakeholders is significant in any field – education, politics, culture, and so on. However, in practice, there are cases where engagement activities are rather formal and meaningless and, as a result, the potential of local communities and other stakeholders cannot be fully utilised. Therefore, engaging people in developing and maintaining the Cultural Routes might be quite a challenging task.

Top-down oriented approaches refer to a situation in which decisions are made by a few people in authority rather than by the people who are affected by the decisions. They are also frequently structured around the use of professional leadership provided by external resources that plan, implement and evaluate the initiative. For instance, the development of a new Cultural Route would be led by state organisations and destination marketing organisations rather than the local community. In comparison to a top-down approach, bottom-up models emphasise engagement of the local community.



Source: Pixabay

So what does the much-debated term “engagement” mean? Different fields offer many definitions of engagement, but none of the definitions prevail. A variety of sources illustrate the range of interpretations of engagement and the dependency of the use of the term on the field and the authors’ individual understanding. In literature, the concept of engagement is manifested as a process, a relationship, a precondition and as a myriad of activities. Sometimes the meanings are even conflicting; however,

there are also shared ideas. The main similarities are that as a result of engagement, new actions are initiated with the aim to improve the situation, to enhance the experience or to make a difference on a larger scale in society. Frequently, citizen engagement is understood as activities focused on benefiting the whole of society and refers to “individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern” (Adler and Goggin (2005), in Lotina L. (2016) and the active role of citizen engagement in the service of the wider community).

### Further reading

- ▶ Lotina L. (2016), “Conceptualizing engagement modes: understanding museum–audience relationships in Latvian museums”. Tartu: Tartu University Press.  
[https://dspace.ut.ee/bitstream/handle/10062/50608/lotina\\_linda.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://dspace.ut.ee/bitstream/handle/10062/50608/lotina_linda.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

- ▶ Warren A. M., Sulaiman A. and Jaafar N. I. (2015), "Understanding civic engagement behaviour on Facebook from a social capital theory perspective", *Behaviour & Information Technology* Vol. 34, No. 2, pp. 163–75.
- ▶ Whitehead A. L. and Stroope S. (2015), "Small groups, contexts, and civic engagement: a multilevel analysis of United States Congregational life survey data", *Social Science Research* Vol. 52, pp. 659–70.

Participation and engagement are occasionally used as synonyms, although theoretically there is a small difference between them. Participation is linked to theories of democracy, where the issues of power distribution among the engaged parties are significant. This is not always the case in engagement. However, in this study course we will use the term "social participation" and "community engagement" interchangeably. More detailed explanations of the concept of engagement, and the relationship between engagement and participation, can be found in the next section.

### Further reading

- ▶ Carpentier N. (2011), *Media and participation: a site of ideological-democratic struggle*. Bristol: Intellect.
- ▶ Carpentier N., Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt P., Nordenstreng K., Hartmann M., Vihalemm P. and Cammaerts B. (eds), *Researching media, democracy and participation. The intellectual work of the 2006 European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School*. Tartu: Tartu University Press.

According to the Directorate General of Social Cohesion of the Council of Europe (2001), social cohesion is defined as "the concept that includes values and principles which aim to ensure that all citizens, without discrimination and on an equal footing, have access to fundamental social and economic rights. Social cohesion is a flagship concept which constantly reminds us of the need to be collectively attentive to, and aware of, any kind of discrimination, inequality, marginality or exclusion". Social cohesion has a close relationship with the concepts of engagement and participation, as all aim to improve the status quo and address issues of public concern.

For more information:

- ▶ Council of Europe (2001), "Promoting the policy debate on social exclusion from a comparative perspective", *Trends in Social Cohesion* No. 1. Germany: Council of Europe. [www.coe.int/t/dg3/socialpolicies/socialcohesiondev/source/Trends/Trends-01\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/socialpolicies/socialcohesiondev/source/Trends/Trends-01_en.pdf)
- ▶ Jenson J. (2010), *Defining and measuring social cohesion*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat and United Nations Research Institute for Social Development. [www.academia.edu/26949161/Defining\\_and\\_Measuring\\_Social\\_Cohesion](http://www.academia.edu/26949161/Defining_and_Measuring_Social_Cohesion)

### The EU strategies for the macro-regions

The European Commission defines a macro-regional strategy as "an integrated framework endorsed by the European Council, which may be supported by the European

Structural and Investment Funds among others, to address common challenges faced by a defined geographical area relating to Member States and third countries located in the same geographical area which thereby benefit from strengthened cooperation contributing to achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion” (European Commission (n.d)).

Four EU strategies for the macro-regions have been adopted so far:

► **EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (2009)**



Baltic Sea Region – Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden

Main objectives: save the sea, connect the region and increase prosperity.

► **EU Strategy for the Danube Region (2010)**



Danube Region – Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Montenegro, Ukraine, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Romania

Main objectives: connecting the region, protecting the environment, building prosperity and strengthening the region.

► **EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (2014)**



Adriatic and Ionian Region – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia

Main objectives: marine and maritime growth/blue growth, connecting the region, environmental quality and sustainable tourism.

► **EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (2015)**



Alpine Region – Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Slovenia and Switzerland

Main objectives: fair access to job opportunities, building on the region's high competitiveness, sustainable internal and external accessibility to all and a more inclusive environmental framework.



More information about the strategies and the macro-regions can be found here:

- ▶ European Commission (n.d.), Macro-regional strategies. [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/policy/cooperation/macro-regional-strategies](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/cooperation/macro-regional-strategies)
- ▶ Routes4U Project (2017-2020), *Fostering regional development through Cultural Routes, Background information*. <https://rm.coe.int/native/16808add7a>

The four EU macro-regional strategies encompass 27 countries with more than 340 million inhabitants.

The macro-regional strategies support the countries' self-identification processes by allowing them to benefit from common resources, using them for development purposes and dealing with common issues. A significant objective of the four macro-regional strategies is to connect people within the regions, which can be achieved by promoting culture and tourism and people-to-people contacts. The macro-regional strategies focus on sustainable and resourceful development. Within the framework of Routes4U, the co-operation with the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe contributes to the further development and promotion of cultural and tourism industries in the regions. A Cultural Route is to be understood not only in the restricted sense of physical pathways.

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region set a clear goal to develop new and support existing Cultural Routes in the region (*About EUSDR*, <https://danube-region.eu/about/>).

### Cultural heritage in the macro-regions



Faro, Portugal © Flickr CC Jocelyn Erskine-Kellie

The Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society ([Faro Convention, 2005](#)) promotes a wider understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society. The document encourages individuals to recognise that objects and places are not, in themselves, what is important about cultural heritage. They are important because of the meanings and uses that people attach to them and the values they represent. It is a framework convention which defines issues at stake, general objectives and possible fields of intervention for member states to progress. Each member state can decide on the most convenient means to implement the Faro Convention according to its legal or institutional frameworks, practices and specific experience.

Like the Faro Convention, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme underscores the importance of local people and their affinity with their region as essential to understanding the cultural identity of the sites.

Cultural route  
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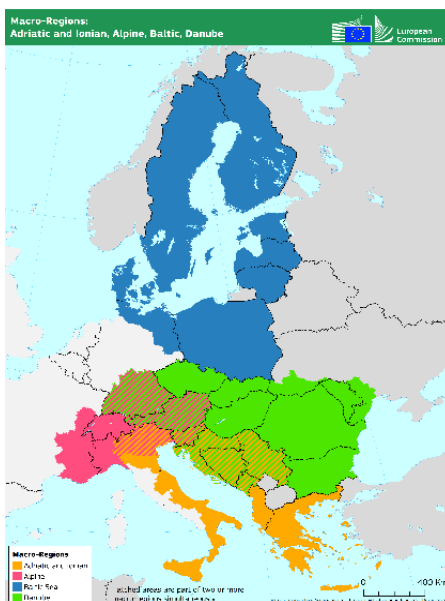
As of June 2019, there are 1 148 members in total in the Cultural Routes macro-regions.

The co-operation enabled by EU macro-regional strategies supports the planning of new Cultural Routes in the macro-regions.

For more information:

The Council of Europe (2005). Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society.

[www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/199](http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/199)



## Added value of Cultural Routes

By inviting citizens and tourists to discover the cultural heritage of the macro-regions, as showcased by the Cultural Routes and by establishing good practices in transnational network management, the Cultural Routes add value and strengthen identities.

The following reflect some of the best practices:

### Intercultural dialogue



**The Routes of Olive Tree.** The olive tree is a universal symbol of peace. This Cultural Route brings together stakeholders from 18 countries that use the ancient tradition of cultivation to process the so-called liquid gold. Intercultural discovery and dialogue through the Cultural Route are a gateway to new co-operation between remote areas.

### Strengthening European values



**European Route of Historic Thermal Towns.** In the 18th century, the thermal town of Spa (in Belgium) became a place not only for leisure but also for cultural and intellectual debates. These debates were often held in several languages and therefore qualified as part of the European café culture (so-called coffee houses). Nowadays, the network advocates and protects the thermal cultural heritage in thousands of historical thermal towns. The activities of the Cultural Route bring together the fields of health, leisure and culture.

### Networking and Political support



**The Hansa.** With 190 Hanseatic members in 16 countries, the Hansa is the world's largest voluntary association of towns and cities. In the past, the Hanseatic Days were the highest decision-making council of the Hanseatic League. Today, an alternating Hanseatic city hosts the annual "Hanseatic Day". The event provides a floor to exchange ideas and experiences and to strengthen the network in a cordial atmosphere.

### Democratic governance and legal structure



**Saint Martin of Tours Route.** A rotating presidency has been established to ensure the democratic governance and representation of the 10 countries covered by the network. This ensures that the different network stakeholders are not only involved in leading the network, but also in identifying the priorities of the activities.

### Multidisciplinary and intersectorality



**European Mozart Ways.** The network proposes tourist itineraries, following Mozart's journeys through Europe in the 18th century. It also organises and supports artistic, cultural and educational activities. For example, children's and youth choirs or orchestras are selected in the framework of the Young Ambassadors of the European Mozart Ways programme to make concert tours of Mozart's repertoire, at home and abroad.

### Civil society and Youth involvement



**European Route of Megalithic Culture.** Every year, the network organises the European Day of Megalithic Culture, when network members explore and celebrate a specific topic. For example, in 2017 under the motto “Moving Stones”, the town of Jeggen (Germany) organised a Stone Age Festival. Besides some hands-on activities for children and families, the participants transported a boulder, using the same technique as people did 5 000 years ago around Europe.

### Lesser-known destinations



**European Route of Cistercian Abbeys.** Over 180 Cistercian abbeys and related sites belong to the network, crossing 11 countries. They are mainly located in lesser-known areas, such as Žďár (Czech Republic), where events like the festival KoresponDance, Museum Nights, Open Doors and all-year activities attract thousands of people to this town of 22 000 inhabitants.

### Scientific-based approach



**Réseau Art Nouveau Network.** Scientific co-operation and knowledge exchange are strong components for association members. Based on their expertise, the network organises various activities for the general public – from exhibitions to colloquiums and publishes several publications. Online resources such as educational material or scientific databases are also available on their website.

### Transnational and transborder co-operation



**Huguenot and Waldensian Trail.** The historical path of the Huguenot and Waldensian refugees started in France and Italy and headed towards Switzerland and Germany. Thanks to the co-operation between the four countries, the 1 600 kilometer-transnational trail offers coherent information through thematic holidays, daily visits and guided tours. Partners include regional districts, wildlife parks, parishes, museums, associations and tour operators.

The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe pass through the four macro-regions. Their themes express the identity of each locality. Despite the fact that the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe are European by nature, some are more focused on a specific EU macro-regional context.

For example:

The Danube Region can be considered a melting pot of diverse cultural influences. The Danube River has been one of the main exchange routes of people and ideas in Europe. The wide diversity of nations, languages, religions and traditions is a statement of these processes. The engagement of civil society and the local community has a vital role in the promotion of a common European heritage and this is equally valid for the Danube Region. Local communities' perception and values accorded to local, national, regional or European cultural heritage may act as either a basis for, or an obstacle to, further regional co-operation, unification and development. Cultural heritage is in need of participative and transnational interpretation and storytelling, as a means of connecting the Danube Region.

Vukanovic M. (2019), "Participative and transnational storytelling: cultural heritage for connecting the Danube Region" in Routes4U Project (2017-2020), *Roadmap for the Danube Region*, pp. 51–56. <https://rm.coe.int/168094b571>



Source : Landel (2006), cited in Council of Europe (2015).

## Tourism and Cultural Routes

The role of tourism, specifically cultural tourism, is significant in many ways in the context of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. Tourism benefits from European cultural heritage and provides possibilities for preserving it, and to improve the surroundings in which people live. It is also a source of social, economic and cultural development. Tourism can be used to support the reinforcement of the destination's identity. Iconic

sites, lifestyle, skills and cultural activities of the local people and communities – these complex elements shape the identity of the destination in the marketplace and in the minds of visitors. From this perspective, the Cultural Routes are considered as a tool for development in EU macro-regions.

The Cultural Routes programme underlines the importance of local people and their affinity with their region as essential to understanding and rediscovering the cultural identity of the sites, to attracting new activities, encouraging the tourism sector in a sustainable way and ensuring that economic use does not threaten cultural heritage itself (European Commission, 2017).

There are plenty of good practices to be found when the Cultural Routes enable sustainable tourism development and engage local communities. For instance, the project H.O.S.T. – The Heritage of Olive Tree for Sustainable Tourism was developed to jointly promote four Mediterranean tourist destinations (three representing the Adriatic and Ionian Region and Malta), focusing on olive tree heritage and open-air activities. One of the main objectives is facilitating the networking among the tourism sector service providers by building SME networks and DMOs (destination management organisations).

However, tourism development along the Cultural Routes may also pose risks. Integration between communities living in and along the Cultural Routes in the process of route planning, route development and route management is a key factor in guaranteeing sustainability and preservation of tangible and intangible heritage. The lack of community involvement in the development process is much more evident when the tourism product is related to cultural tourism. This lack of involvement could lead to a feeling of detachment that the tourist perceives when visiting tourism sites without any contact with the local community. The same feeling can be experienced by local communities, who may see themselves either as the attraction or as totally detached from the cultural identity promoted by that specific tourism product. Cultural Routes may represent an extreme case, as they link several attractions across different countries, touching several communities.

### To find out more

- ▶ European Commission (2017), *What is an EU macro-regional strategy?*  
[https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/cooperate/macro\\_region\\_strategy/pdf/mrs\\_factsheet\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/cooperate/macro_region_strategy/pdf/mrs_factsheet_en.pdf)
- ▶ Istituto Superiore sui Sistemi Territoriali per l’Innovazione (2016), *Community engagement in Cultural Routes*, 10–20.  
[www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/http://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/ECRR.html/CE81-ECRR-D.T1.1.1-Work-paper-Promotion-Transnational-Cultur](http://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/http://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/ECRR.html/CE81-ECRR-D.T1.1.1-Work-paper-Promotion-Transnational-Cultur)
- ▶ Council of Europe (2015), *Cultural Routes management: from theory to practice. Step-by-step guide to the Council of Europe Cultural Routes*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

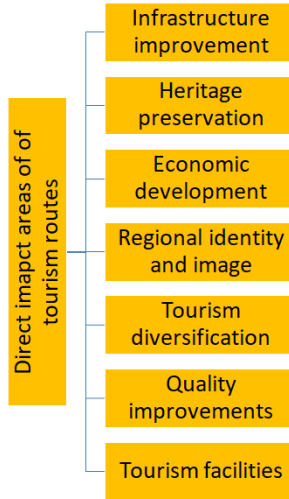


The Impressionisms Routes: Giverny, France. Source: Shutterstock © EricValennegeostory

## First summary

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1. There are four EU macro-regions: the Alpine Region, the Baltic Sea Region, the Adriatic and Ionian Region and the Danube Region. Macro-regional strategies are important because they support the macro-region countries' self-identification process by allowing them to benefit from common resources, using them for development purposes, focusing on sustainable and resourceful development and dealing with common issues. A significant objective of the four macro-regional strategies is to connect people within the regions, which can be achieved by promoting culture and tourism and people-to-people contacts. The macro-regional strategies focus on sustainable and resourceful development.
2. The Saint Martin of Tours Route has established a rotating presidency to ensure the democratic governance and the representation of the then countries that are in the network. This ensures not only the involvement of the different stakeholders of the network by leading it, but also the identification of the prioritised activities.
3. The four macro-regions involve 1 148 members: 395 in the Adriatic and Ionian Region, 288 in the Baltic Sea Region, 274 in the Alpine Region and 191 in the Danube Region.
4. The role of cultural tourism is significant in the context of Cultural Routes. Besides being a source for economic, social and cultural development, it improves the environment surrounding local people and provides possibilities for the preservation of heritage. Tourism also helps to shape the destination's identity and image.



5. However, the development of tourism along the Cultural Routes may also pose risks: lack of involvement on the part of local citizens could lead to a feeling of detachment. This may be perceived by tourists who visit the sites without having any actual contact with the local communities. These local communities may start seeing themselves as “attractions” of a tourist destination, and may find themselves totally detached from the cultural identity promoted by that specific tourism product.



## II. The role of community in the development of Cultural Routes

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In this section, you will get to know more about the concept of the Cultural Routes as grass-roots cultural co-operation networks providing important lessons about identity and citizenship through a participatory experience of culture.

Cultural heritage currently opens up space for multicultural, inclusive co-production, which is a participatory practice extending across national borders. Community engagement with cultural heritage is a powerful tool for empowering local communities, enhancing reconciliation in divided societies, and promoting human rights and social cohesion. For community engagement to take place, it is central to understand cultural heritage as a process of caring for the past.



### Further reading

- ▶ Holtorf C. (2011), "The changing contribution of cultural heritage to society", *Museum International* Vol. 63. No. 1-2, pp. 8-16.

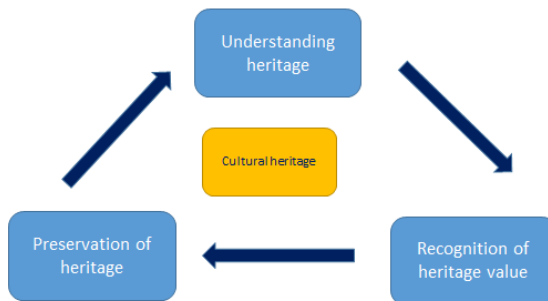
Caring for cultural heritage requires the knowledge of individuals and communities who have lived in the area and had access to the values created there. Such knowledge and values stem from their relationship with nature, work, the rhythm of life, and so on. This relationship has developed over time into a special and unique cultural character

of the community – the local cultural heritage. For example, the European Cemeteries Route launched in 2018 a Local Guide programme “Their Story. Our Story”, to reveal some of the amazing stories from the cemeteries. Engaged communities are also responsible for the preservation of their cultural heritage.

Local heritage sites may, for example, be attractive to many visitors, but destination visitors may be unable to understand the local cultural and community values.

How can this potential problem be minimised while also enhancing community engagement? The precondition for engagement in cultural heritage conservation, and for using heritage for tourism in a sustainable manner, is to understand the importance of heritage and value recognition. To increase the role of communities in Cultural Routes development and maintenance, the first initiatives should be related to explanations of the heritage and values brought together under a themed route.

### The cycle of cultural heritage preservation



When we think about the engagement of the local community in the development and preservation of the Cultural Routes, it is important to understand first that ideas about the objectives of thematic routes may vary at different levels – at EU, national and local level. As previously mentioned, the Cultural Routes is an initiative by the Council of Europe, which promotes values such as cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and mutual exchanges across borders. According to the Council of Europe, the themes of the Cultural Routes must satisfy all of the following criteria:

- ▶ be representative of European values and common to at least three countries of Europe;
- ▶ be researched and developed by groups of multidisciplinary experts from different regions of Europe;
- ▶ be illustrative of European memory, history and heritage and contribute to an interpretation of the diversity of present-day Europe;
- ▶ lend itself to cultural and educational exchanges for young people;
- ▶ permit the development of initiatives and exemplary and innovative projects in the field of cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development;

- ▶ lend itself to the development of tourist products in partnership with tourist agencies and operators aimed at different publics, including school groups (Council of Europe (2018), *Fostering regional development through Cultural Routes – Routes4U Project*, [\).](https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/certification-guidelines#{)

As indicated in the list above, the economic dimension and development of tourism represent just two out of the six criteria; all the other criteria are related to social, educational and cultural exchange, as well as to research and other non-profit developmental activities. How widely are the overall aims of the Cultural Routes programme understood among the network stakeholders of the Cultural Routes at a local level? These stakeholders represent the state or the municipal, private and non-governmental sectors – local municipalities, museums, trusts, societies, tourism enterprises, educational and scientific institutions, which all cover varying themes. Sometimes the performance of the Cultural Routes at national level is identified as weak by the stakeholders. As a result, the success of the Cultural Route depends on the activity of each separate member and the strength of a network. Under these conditions, it is hardly surprising that quite a few Cultural Routes’ stakeholders mostly focus on the tourism perspective and aim to increase the competitiveness of the region as a tourism destination and/or the competitiveness of their own tourism product. Professional tourism literature aims to improve readers’ knowledge about how to use the thematic tourism and themes routes (including Cultural Routes) to increase a destination’s visibility among tourists – to define target groups, to develop new themes related to tourism products, to enhance tourists’ experience, quality of tourism services, and so on.

There is no doubt that the idea of boosting tourism and the economy by using the status of a certified Cultural Route is a positive initiative and this is one of the aims of the Council of Europe programme. However, sometimes the initiative to develop a new Cultural Route is mainly related to boosting economic development and creating new jobs while the other aspects are downplayed. Cultural Routes are proven to be not just a source of innovation, new business activity creation, local employment and income generation, as well as cultural tourism products development, but they also promote social inclusion and identity building (Klaric M., Andrić M., Nevidal R. and Horjan G., 2013).

Some of the Cultural Routes are based on values that local communities are proud of, for example being part of the Hanseatic League and being a resident in a Hansa town. The Cultural Route Association Die Hanse is an active network of towns and cities that historically belonged to, or had active trading exchanges with, the association of merchant towns known as the Hanseatic League.



The Hansa: Lübeck, Germany © The Hansa

Many inhabitants of Hansa towns might wish to identify themselves with a prosperous past, and for this reason, it might be easier to engage communities in Cultural Route activities.

The situation might not be so straightforward if the theme of the Cultural Route represents a so-called uncomfortable heritage of history. The Iron Curtain Trail might serve as a bright example as it represents the history of Europe's division. For almost half a century, Europe was forcibly divided into east and west by the "Iron Curtain". Are local communities equally eager to identify themselves with the Iron Curtain heritage as they are with the Hanseatic tradition? How strongly people identify themselves with the heritage is significant in relation to their motivation to engage in the preservation of that heritage.

It is clear that some of the Cultural Routes have a longer experience of community engagement than others, for example the Via Francigena which has been a certified Cultural Route of the Council of Europe since 1994. Over the years, many activities have been organised in order to involve local stakeholders and promote the route.

Another good example is ATRIUM – Architecture of Totalitarian Regimes of the 20th century in Europe's Urban Memory (certified since 2014) in the Danube macro-region and Alpine macro-region countries. The engagement of local communities is particularly important



Palace of Parliament, Bucharest, Romania. Source: Creative Commons

in this route, as it engages with a very controversial and uncomfortable theme – the totalitarian regimes. For this reason, the Center for Advanced Studies in Tourism (CAST), which has been supporting the project by providing studies and policy suggestions, has developed a methodology for sustainable tourism planning in dissonant heritage sites by encouraging a participatory communication between tourism stakeholders. For example, before investing in the promotion of a controversial cultural tourism product, the research provided the municipality of Forlì with a clear picture of the residents' willingness to perceive this dissonant heritage as a tourist attraction on a transnational Cultural Route. In particular, three different surveys were conducted, having as a unit of reference residents, tourists and potential tourists respectively (*Istituto Superiore sui Sistemi Territoriali per l'Innovazione* (2016).

For more information:

- ▶ *Istituto Superiore sui Sistemi Territoriali per l'Innovazione* (2016), *Community engagement in Cultural Routes*, 25–26. [www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/http://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/ECRR.html/CE81-ECRR-D.T1.1.1-Work-paper-Promotion-Transnational-Cultur](http://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/http://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/ECRR.html/CE81-ECRR-D.T1.1.1-Work-paper-Promotion-Transnational-Cultur)

- ▶ Klaric M., Androić M., Nevidal R. and Horjan G. (2013), *Managing visitors on thematic Cultural Routes handbook. Adapted for the Danube Cultural Routes project: Roman Emperor's Route and the Danube Wine Route*. Zagreb: Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Croatia and Lujzijana Association.

<https://mint.gov.hr/UserDocImages/arhiva/ManagingVisitors-CultRoutes.pdf>

## Actions to be undertaken by the Cultural Routes

The table below presents a spectrum of heritage-related actions in the context of Cultural Routes, where the engagement of the local community is needed.

Heritage/ territorial resource	Territorial marker	Activity creator	Support for stakeholder networks
Invention of heritage	Research, archaeological sites	Identification of stakeholders and projects linked to heritage, promotion	Identification of heritage elements along the Cultural Route in the ter- ritories involved
Identification- certification of the heritage	Heritage inven- tory, classification, denomination	Inscription of the proj- ects in a federative initia- tive linked to a coherent project for territories part of Cultural Routes	Inventories, stud- ies, networking, exchanges
Heritage protection and restoration	Renovation	Conservation charter, capacity building for stakeholders	Exchanges of knowledge, restoration and renovation works
Mediation of heritage, interpretation	Signposting, development of activities for interpreting heri- tage dedicated to inhabitants and students	Exhibitions and development of tourist activities	Creation of local itineraries and routes, exhibitions, etc.
Valorisation of heritage	Development of cultural activities based on heritage	Creation of accessibility infrastructure, creation of cultural and tourist products	Development of cul- tural products in net- work, valorisation of local products in the territories along routes

Source: Landel P.A. (2006) in Council of Europe (2015), *Cultural Routes management: from theory to practice. Step-by-step guide to the Council of Europe Cultural Routes*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

## Second summary

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Cultural Routes represent network structures that can have a great impact on the regions. Cultural Routes are not only tourism products, but structures which affect local communities and are affected by them. According to that belief, the primary reference groups for the functioning of Cultural Routes are those from the immediate environment, namely the members of the local community, and not those who appear in the area only occasionally, sometimes only once, such as tourists. It is believed that a Cultural Route constructed more widely than merely a tourist attraction has to generate a diverse cultural offer. In this way, it can become an important medium for change in the culture; it has an impact on building the cultural competence of local residents, formulating their identity, and meeting their needs and aspirations. An important dimension of Cultural Routes is also their direct impact on the tangible and intangible heritage of the regions. Cultural Routes become significant elements of protection, popularisation and heritage management (Goral A., 2016).

### People move from to



For more information:

Goral A. (2016). "Cultural Routes as a medium for changes in regions". Proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Heritage and Sustainable Development. [www.researchgate.net/publication/305657867\\_Cultural\\_routes\\_as\\_a\\_medium\\_for\\_changes\\_in\\_regions](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/305657867_Cultural_routes_as_a_medium_for_changes_in_regions)

# III. Community engagement for promoting social cohesion

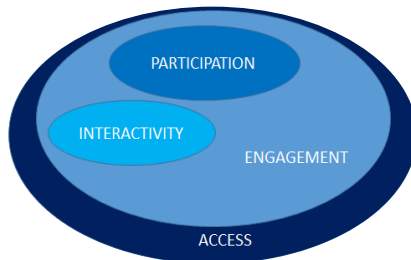
This section explains the significance of participatory and engaging practices in the context of 21st-century society, indicates their advantages, benefits and prerequisites, and addresses the barriers.

The concept of engagement reflects a general cultural shift in the 21st century, which has transformed individuals from cultural consumers to cultural producers, from “users and choosers to makers and shapers”. This transformation is reflected in almost every field of life, including our relationship with heritage and heritage governance.

## Further reading

- ▶ Sani M., Lynch B., Visser J. and Gariboldi A. (2015), Mapping of practices in the EU Member States on Participatory governance of cultural heritage to support the OMC working group under the same name, (Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018). *EENC Short Analytical Report*.  
[www.gordion.nl/sites/gordion.nl/files/mapping\\_of\\_practices\\_in\\_the\\_eu\\_member\\_states\\_on\\_participatory\\_governance\\_of\\_cultural\\_heritage\\_copy1.pdf](http://www.gordion.nl/sites/gordion.nl/files/mapping_of_practices_in_the_eu_member_states_on_participatory_governance_of_cultural_heritage_copy1.pdf)
- ▶ Shirky C. (2008), *Here comes everybody: the power of organizing without organizations*. New York: Penguin.

## The relationship between engagement and participation



Source: Simon N. (2010), The participatory museum. Santa Cruz, CA: Museum 2.0. [www.participatorymuseum.org/read/](http://www.participatorymuseum.org/read/)

The notion of “participation” might be considered a subsection of the concept of engagement, which has been derived from political participation studies and is rooted in theories of democracy (Pateman C., 1970). As previously stated, participation and engagement are occasionally used as synonyms, although theoretically there is a small difference between them (Dahlgren P., 2006 in Carpentier N., Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt P., Nordenstreng K., Hartmann M., Vihalemm P. and Cammaerts B., 2006). Participation is linked with theories of democracy where the issues of power distribution among the engaged parties are significant (Carpentier N., 2011), which is not always the case in engagement. Essentially, engagement might be considered as an umbrella term for different kinds of engaging practices, including participatory ones.

The mandatory precondition for any kind of activity is access, and restricted access can be related to any kind of barrier – physical, psychological, financial, intellectual, social, and so on. Access to engagement means that individuals can make free choices and estimate whether it is beneficial for them to use the engagement opportunities available. There are two types of factors that define people’s will and capability to engage in activities: internal factors (such as physical condition, personality) and external factors (such as environment, resources, relationships with other people).

## Factors



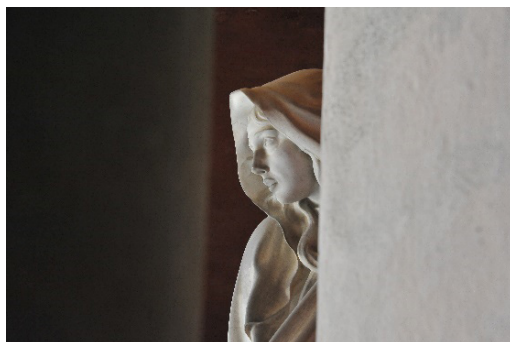
Source: adapted from Lotina L. (2016), “Conceptualizing engagement modes: understanding museum–audience relationships in Latvian museums”.



The Cultural Routes scheme summarises different factors influencing community engagement and presents both organisations' and participants' perspectives on motivation and ability to engage. It highlights the impact of the macro factors at societal level and states some of the complex reasons why it might be harder to engage some communities and why some organisations might be rather closed for engagement. For example, the Alpine macro-region is composed of territories with different demographic, social and economic features and a rich cultural and linguistic diversity. This diversity is combined with a variety of governance systems and traditions ([ESPON and the European Union \(n.d.\)](#)).

Engagement as a phenomenon includes participation and interactivity, which are narrower in definition as they are used for displaying specific features of engagement. For instance, interactivity is frequently restricted to hands-on practices while participation requires a power balance between the parties ([Lotina L., 2016](#)).

As mentioned, the definition of the terms "participation" and "engagement" varies from one author to another and from one field to another, and sometimes understandings are conflicting. In the context of the Cultural Routes, participatory and engagement practices are understood as initiatives aimed at benefiting the whole of society and they refer to individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. The active role of citizen engagement in the service of the wider community is part of that: a two-way process combining the performance of both parties, the engaged part on the one hand and the organiser of the engaging activity on the other.



© European Cemeteries Route

For more information:

- ▶ Carpentier N. (2011), *Media and participation: a site of ideological-democratic struggle*. Bristol: Intellect.
- ▶ Carpentier N., Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt P., Nordenstreng K., Hartmann M., Vihalemm P. and Cammaerts B. (eds), *Researching media, democracy and participation. The intellectual work of the 2006 European Media and Communication Doctoral Summer School*. Tartu: Tartu University Press.
- ▶ Pateman C. (1970), *Participation and democratic theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ▶ ESPON and the European Union (n.d.), *Cross-border functions & macro-regions*. [www.espon.eu/cross-border-macro-regions](http://www.espon.eu/cross-border-macro-regions)

- ▶ Lotina L. (2016), "Conceptualizing engagement modes: understanding museum–audience relationships in Latvian museums". Tartu: Tartu University Press. [https://dspace.ut.ee/bitstream/handle/10062/50608/lotina\\_linda.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://dspace.ut.ee/bitstream/handle/10062/50608/lotina_linda.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

It is not so unusual to find situations where organisations are carried away with the idea of engagement. They sometimes feel the social pressure to adopt engagement practices without a real understanding of what such practices mean. As a result, engagement activities produce no real benefits for any of the engaged parties. In her book, *The participatory museum* (2010), the researcher Nina Simon identifies several types of participation in cultural institutions and highlights the benefits for both parties.

### **Participative cultural institutions**

Participation researcher and museum professional Nina Simon (2010) has defined four broad categories of public participation in cultural organisations and identified participatory projects that could be described as: contribution, collaboration, co-creation and hosting. These categories align roughly with the extent to which the public are involved in different stages of the project. Hosted projects are the most participative ones in which the institution turns over a portion of its facilities and/or resources to present programmes developed and implemented by public groups or casual visitors.

These models are rather normative as Simon claims that many institutions incorporate elements from each of the models. The differences among participatory project types are highly correlated with the amount of ownership, control of process, and creative output given to institutional staff members and visitors. Not every project benefits from the same power structure.

Although the models are designed for the participation in museums, the concept can be adapted for a wider spectrum of culture-related institutions and organisations.

According to Simon, the most common way that visitors participate with museums is through contribution. Visitors contribute by helping the staff to test ideas or develop new projects. They contribute to the wider public by sharing their thoughts and creative work in public forums.

Visitors can provide:

- ▶ feedback in the form of verbal and written comments during visits and in focus groups;
- ▶ personal objects and creative works for crowd-sourced exhibits and collection projects;
- ▶ opinions and stories on comment boards, during tours, and in educational programmes;
- ▶ memories and photographs in reflective spaces on the web.

Main reasons that institutions engage in collaborative projects:

- ▶ to consult with experts or community representatives to ensure the accuracy and authenticity of new exhibitions, programmes or publications;
- ▶ to test and develop new programmes in partnership with intended users to improve the likelihood of their success;
- ▶ to provide educational opportunities for participants to design, create and produce their own content or research;
- ▶ to help visitors feel like partners and co-owners of the content and programmes of the institution.

Main reasons that cultural institutions engage in co-creative projects:

- ▶ to give voice and be responsive to the needs and interests of local community members;
- ▶ to provide a place for community engagement and dialogue;
- ▶ to help participants develop skills that will support their own individual and community goals.

Broad reasons that institutions may choose to pursue hosting models for participation:

- ▶ to encourage the public to be comfortable using the institution for a wide range of reasons;
- ▶ to encourage visitors to creatively adapt and use the institution and its content;
- ▶ to provide a space for diverse perspectives, exhibits and performances that staff members are unable or unwilling to present;
- ▶ to attract new audiences who may not see the institution as a place for their own interests.

Source: Simon N. (2010), The participatory museum. Santa Cruz, CA: Museum 2.0. [www.participatorymuseum.org/read/](http://www.participatorymuseum.org/read/)

Simon's approach to categorising participatory practices and showing their advantages is one of many. For example, the educational institution NCCPE (2014) indicates three types of engagement:

1. Informing: inspiring, informing and educating the public, and making the work of higher education more accessible;
2. Consulting: actively listening to the public's views, concerns and insights;
3. Collaborating: working in partnership with the public to solve problems together, drawing on each other's expertise.

These examples serve to illustrate that there is a wide spectrum of ideas about what is engagement and participation. In the context of tourism, the focus has been on the emotional engagement of a tourist and on enhanced experiences.

Nowadays, people engage and are engaged both on-spot and online. Online engagement has been made possible because of the development of Web 2.0 which supports

the participatory usage of the internet by allowing people to produce user-generated content. It has extended the spectrum of engagement activities and increased the number of potential participants. However, barriers exist that hold back individuals from engaging, whether online or offline.

To decrease the barriers to engagement, organisations can work on developing more engaging environments and meaningful content to increase the motivation of potential participants. The main barriers to engaging in participatory activities are the following:

- ▶ low motivation to engage: people tend to have different priorities over how to spend their time and other resources. A strong sense of belonging to a place can increase motivation to engage in activities that are beneficial for a place;
- ▶ not enough information on engagement opportunities: frequently, organisations that intend to invite participants believe that enough information has been provided, but in fact, the information has not reached the potential participants because they do not use the correct information channel(s). Alternatively, from the potential participants' perspective, the information is available but not sufficient;
- ▶ not enough resources: the aspect of time as a resource is clearly related to the level of motivation;
- ▶ the financial situation of potential participants might be decisive in some cases, for example under scarcity of money, people might feel pressured to get involved only in activities that generate personal income;
- ▶ individuals and/or communities do not have the habit and/or experience of engagement;
- ▶ lack of understanding of the value of engagement: different societies have different engagement practices, and there are societies where the number of people involved in NGO work is much higher than in others. It is one indicator that shows how open a society is towards engagement in non-profit activities aimed for collective benefit. There are also assumptions that post-Soviet societies are less interested in engagement, as they still might have recollections from the Soviet past when pseudo participatory practices were reinforced;
- ▶ in the case of online engagement there are several barriers that hold back individuals from using new technologies for participatory purposes. These constraints are related to a lack of free time, psychological barriers and a lack of information, literacy or education.

The experience of the Via Francigena might be useful to illustrate the effects of a lack of information. Luca Bruschi, the manager of the European Association of Via Francigena, claims there is usually a general scepticism about the advantages that "a Cultural Route can bring to local communities, in terms of socio-cultural and economic benefits" ([Istituto Superiore sui Sistemi Territoriali per l'Innovazione \(2016\)](#)). In the case of the Via Francigena, particularly, tour operators and accommodation providers did not immediately realise the opportunity to increase their income and profits, as they had in mind a stereotype of a low-income wandering pilgrim, which is actually far from the truth. It also takes time before associations and residents get to know the route

and recognise the value of the cultural heritage of their territory. As a consequence, accommodation managers, tour operators, associations and residents criticise local institutions that invest in these kinds of projects. In order to find a balance between different perceptions and interests, a great effort is needed in the participatory process.

More information can be found here:

- ▶ Istituto Superiore sui Sistemi Territoriali per l'Innovazione (2016), Community engagement in Cultural Routes, 25–26.  
[www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/http://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/ECRR.html/CE81-ECRR-D.T1.1.1-Work-paper-Promotion-Transnational-Cultur](http://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/http://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/ECRR.html/CE81-ECRR-D.T1.1.1-Work-paper-Promotion-Transnational-Cultur)
- ▶ Duncan S., Manners P. and Miller K. (2017). Reviewing public engagement in REF 2014: Reflections for shaping the second REF. Bristol: National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE).  
[www.publicengagement.ac.uk/sites/default/files/publication/reviewing\\_pe\\_in\\_ref\\_2014\\_final.pdf](http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/sites/default/files/publication/reviewing_pe_in_ref_2014_final.pdf)

Public organisations are constantly in need of extra human resources. Many municipal, non-governmental organisations in the culture and heritage sector depend on volunteers. Frequently, organisations understand that participants can be beneficial when unskilled help is needed – for instance, extra hands in organising and implementing a large-scale event. However, organisations are less often aware of participants' expertise or trust it.



Ornans, France. Source: Creative Commons

Community engagement can be associated with different opportunities in different spheres where all stakeholders could benefit from the process and the result. Several important aspects determine the potential of society and the range of its competences.

Overall, it is not as challenging to establish participatory practices with formal and informal groups and individuals who have specific expertise and/or resources. For example, in the case of the Viking Routes, participants are historians and archaeologists, some representing local communities and others educational and research institutions. Participants can also be students in the field or colleagues from similar organisations such as museums. Frequently, school teachers are also involved as they can provide access to pupils – a large potential group. Organisations are frequently interested in the expertise of teachers, as they want to enhance schoolchildren's experiences and understand how to reach that group. Yet, the participation process becomes a more complicated issue when engaging wider communities without specific expertise.

## Opportunities

<b>Research</b>	A “bottom-up” tool for acquiring knowledge, conducting analyses and raising awareness of the social and cultural meaning of tangible and intangible cultural heritage
<b>Educational activities</b>	Provides innovative ways of learning and accomplishing dialogue through living heritage
<b>Promotion and dissemination</b>	Strengthens social cohesion, enhances shared values and engages with transnational dimensions of European heritage in a forward-looking way
<b>ICT activities</b>	Increases access to cultural objects, enhances cultural democracy and attracts different groups, especially the younger generations
<b>Sustainable development</b>	Creates a positive impact on local cultural economies and helps in the protection of tangible and cultural assets

Source: Cvijić V. (2017), *European level benchmark study on innovative cultural heritage valorisation and related participatory initiatives (D.T2.1.1)*. Ljubljana: ZRC SAZU.

Most frequently in the process of engagement, participants devote their time, skills, and expertise or collective expertise. Collective expertise is understood as the knowledge of the community, which is greater than individual knowledge. Therefore, groups are great sources of collective expertise (Bishop J. 2007). The concept of collective expertise is especially significant in the context of online engagement, since Web 2.0 has enabled participatory potential online – on social media, on discussion forums, etc.

The organisation itself also might act in a way that diminishes its potential to attract participants. Nina Simon (2010) has defined three core criteria that an organisation should meet when welcoming participants:

1. Desire for the input and involvement of outside participants

The primary motivation should always be to genuinely engage with the community to derive better outcomes from possible activity. It should never be implemented simply to “tick the box” for a funding or planning requirement. Any community engagement should be “purposeful” and meaningful to participants (Adamson D., Bere J., Bevan J., Dakin A., Isherwood N., MacNamara H. and Southall A. (n.d.)).

2. Trust in participants’ abilities

3. Responsiveness to participants’ actions and contributions

Organisations should also be responsive to participants’ needs and contributions. It is likely that participants will be in need of training and support as well as supervision. Training and preparing participants for the work is significant for a participant – he or she can gain new knowledge, or skills that might be considered a positive outcome. Also, organisations undoubtedly gain if the participants are better prepared for achieving

the engagement goals. However, it must be noted that training and being responsive to participants' needs and contributions takes a lot of time and effort. This is the crucial aspect of participation that not all organisations are prepared for.

### Further reading

- ▶ Bishop J. (2007), "Increasing participation in online communities: a framework for human-computer interaction", *Computers in Human Behavior* Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 1881-93.
- ▶ Simon N. (2010), *The participatory museum*. Santa Cruz, CA: Museum 2.0. [www.participatorymuseum.org/read/](http://www.participatorymuseum.org/read/)

## Basic principles

<b>Social justice</b>	Building an equal and fair society where all community and human rights are promoted and oppression in any form is challenged
<b>Self-determination</b>	Individuals and groups identifying shared issues and concerns to enable them to take collective action
<b>Working and learning together</b>	Valuing, sharing and using the skills, knowledge, experience and diversity within communities to collectively bring about desired changes
<b>Sustainable communities</b>	Supporting communities to develop their strengths, resources and independence while making and maintaining links to the wider society
<b>Participation</b>	The right for all to be active participants in the processes that affect their communities and lives
<b>Reflective practice</b>	People learning from their collective and individual experiences to inform their future action

More information can be found here:

Adamson D., Bere J., Bevan J., Dakin A., Isherwood N., MacNamara H. and Southall A. (n.d.), A guide to effective community engagement, Crew Regeneration Wales. <http://regenwales.org/upload/pdf/071415111717A%20Guide%20to%20Effective%20Community%20Engagement.pdf>

Good community engagement practice includes:

- ▶ avoidance of raising expectations;
- ▶ facilitation of process;
- ▶ ensuring the right format of event/programme;
- ▶ avoiding exclusionary practice (Adamson D., Bere J., Bevan J., Dakin A., Isherwood N., MacNamara H. and Southall A. (n.d.).





# IV. Community engagement in cultural heritage protection and tourism development

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This section explores the specifics of engagement in culture and cultural heritage in the EU macro-regions in the context of everyday life.

Participation in culture and cultural heritage should not be approached as an isolated practice. As shown in the previous section, it is influenced by socio-demographic, economic and other macro-level factors. Another indicator showing the potential participation in culture and heritage is the consumption of culture and heritage.

The [Special Eurobarometer 466 report “Cultural Heritage”](#) (2017) assesses the attitudes and opinions of Europeans about cultural heritage. It is one of the rare information sources providing voluminous quantitative data which make it possible to link the consumption and participation habits of EU residents, thus proving how the appreciation of cultural heritage through consumption is one of the preconditions to engage in safeguarding heritage. Attitudes and opinions, as well as consumption of heritage-related experiences, can reflect the interest of local communities in more active engagement activities.



Source: Pixabay

The Eurobarometer survey study explored differences in attitudes towards heritage among people from different countries by covering questions on personal involvement and interest in cultural heritage; barriers to accessing cultural heritage sites and events; the perceived importance of cultural heritage to respondents personally; the perceived importance of cultural heritage to the local community, region, country and the EU as a whole; the values attached to Europe's cultural heritage and perceptions of European culture; the impact of cultural heritage on tourism and jobs, and so on.

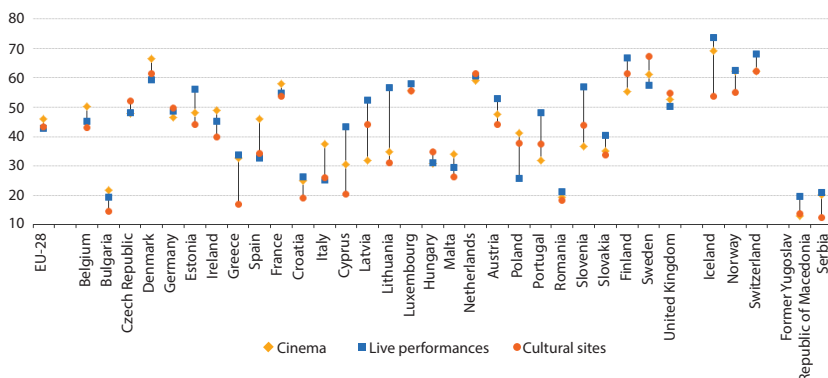
The Eurobarometer reveals that 73% of Europeans live near some form of cultural heritage – close to historical monuments or sites, traditional events or festivals, or works of art, for example in museums or galleries. However, just over half of all respondents (51%) are personally involved in cultural heritage, with the most likely involvement being regular visits to sites or events. Fewer respondents relate the personal involvement of living in a historic environment, area, city or building, which is considered as being of cultural heritage value (European Commission, 2017).

A large majority of respondents think cultural heritage is important to them personally as well as to their community, region, country and the EU as a whole. Europeans also take pride in cultural heritage, and generally agree it can improve their quality of life and a sense of belonging to Europe. The survey indicates that respondents recognise the significance not only of local and regional heritage, but also think from the perspective of Europe. This stresses once again the role of cultural heritage-based themed networks in the context of the EU Strategies for the macro-regions (European Commission, 2017).



Destination Napoleon © Christine Lacaud

Figure 1 – Participation in cultural activities at least once in the previous 12 months, 2015 (% of population aged 16 and over).<sup>1</sup>



Note: Estimated data for EU-28. Data of low reliability for Ireland, Poland and the United Kingdom.

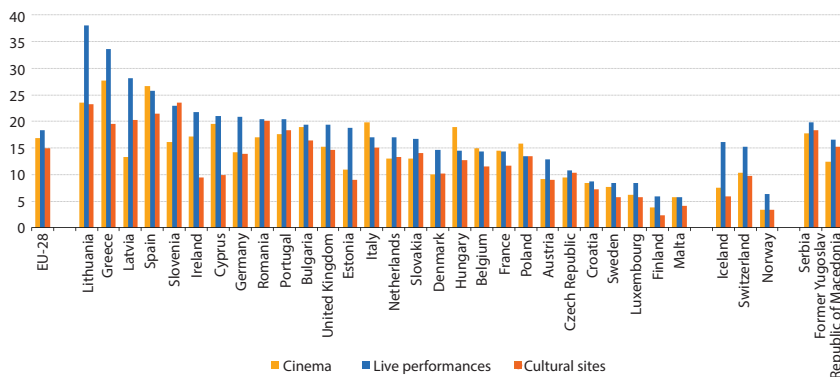
Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Figure\\_1\\_Participation\\_in\\_cultural\\_activities\\_at\\_least\\_once\\_in\\_the\\_previous\\_12\\_months\\_2015\\_\(%25\\_of\\_population\\_aged\\_16\\_and\\_over\).png](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Figure_1_Participation_in_cultural_activities_at_least_once_in_the_previous_12_months_2015_(%25_of_population_aged_16_and_over).png)

1. Please note that this graph was prepared by Eurostat in 2015. In 2019, under the Prespa Agreement, the country formerly known as the Republic of Macedonia officially changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia.

The reasons holding back respondents from visiting heritage sites and heritage-related events are the same as those hindering people to engage in participatory activities. A lack of time is the most common barrier to access cultural heritage sites or activities (37%), followed by cost (34%), a lack of interest (31%) or a lack of information (25%). In the previous 12 months, 61% of respondents have visited a historical monument or site, 52% have attended a traditional event and 50% have visited a museum or gallery (European Commission, 2017).

Just over half of Europeans have some personal involvement in cultural heritage. The most common form of involvement in cultural heritage is regular visits to sites or going to events such as monuments, museums, festivals, concerts and so on (31%). Less than 1 in 10 participate in the other cultural heritage activities – 8% respondents do a traditional activity, such as traditional dancing or singing, playing traditional music, traditional cooking, etc., or master skills or knowledge related to one or several traditional crafts. Almost as many (7%) donate money or other resources to an organisation that is active in the field of cultural heritage, while 5% do voluntary work for an organisation that is active in the field of cultural heritage. Almost 1 in 20 are involved in other ways (4%). Overall, 51% of all respondents are involved in at least one of these ways (European Commission, 2017).

Figure 2 – Not-participating in cultural activities (in the previous 12 months) for financial reasons, by cultural activity, 2015.<sup>2</sup>



Note: ranked on 'Live performances'. Estimated data for EU-28. Data of low reliability for Ireland, Poland and the United Kingdom.

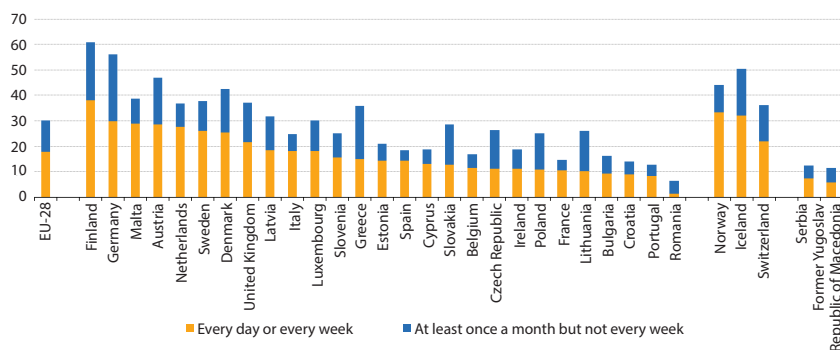
Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Figure\\_4\\_Not-participating\\_in\\_cultural\\_activities\\_\(in\\_the\\_previous\\_12\\_months\)\\_for\\_financial\\_reasons\\_by\\_cultural\\_activity,\\_2015.png](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Figure_4_Not-participating_in_cultural_activities_(in_the_previous_12_months)_for_financial_reasons_by_cultural_activity,_2015.png)

2. Please note that this graph was prepared by Eurostat in 2015. In 2019, under the Prespa Agreement, the country formerly known as the Republic of Macedonia officially changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia.

The Eurobarometer discovers striking differences among respondents from varied countries. In 20 countries, at least half of all respondents are involved in at least one of these above-mentioned cultural heritage activities. People in Sweden (81%), the Netherlands (78%) and Denmark (71%) are the most likely to be involved, compared to 29% in Portugal, 38% in Bulgaria and 44% in both Greece and Italy. Respondents in the Netherlands (59%), Sweden (56%) and Denmark (49%) are the most likely to say they regularly visit sites or go to events, such as monuments, museums, festivals, concerts, and so on, while those in Portugal (17%), Romania (18%) and Italy (19%) are the least likely to say this. The correlation can be seen between a low number of visits to heritage sites and events on one side and lower participation in heritage-related activities (European Commission, 2017).

There are five countries where at least 1 in 10 do voluntary work for an organisation that is active in the field of cultural heritage: Sweden (14%), the Netherlands and Ireland (both 11%), and Denmark and Slovenia (both 10%). In a striking difference, in Portugal, Bulgaria and Lithuania just 2% of respondents say the same. Respondents in the Netherlands and Malta (both 19%) and Sweden (14%) are the most likely to donate money or other resources to an organisation that is active in the field of cultural heritage, compared to 1% of respondents in Greece and 2% in Portugal. Overall, all the numbers show that participation in cultural heritage-related activities is related to the number of visits to heritage sites and events, as they are a sign of understanding and appreciating heritage. Moreover, the results show that in some countries practices of participating in heritage-related activity are better established (European Commission, 2017).

Figure 3 – Frequent practice of artistic activities, 2015 (% of population aged 16 and over).<sup>3</sup>



Note: ranked on 'Every day or every week'. Estimated data for EU-28. Data of low reliability for Ireland, Poland and the United Kingdom.

Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Figure\\_8\\_Frequent\\_practice\\_of\\_artistic\\_activities,\\_2015\\_\(%25\\_of\\_population\\_aged\\_16\\_and\\_over\).png](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Figure_8_Frequent_practice_of_artistic_activities,_2015_(%25_of_population_aged_16_and_over).png)

3. Please note that this graph was prepared by Eurostat in 2015. In 2019, under the Prespa Agreement, the country formerly known as the Republic of Macedonia officially changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia.

The survey relates some socio-demographic factors of respondents to engagement but shows relatively few differences. The results show that the longer a respondent remains in education, the more likely he or she is involved in at least one way: 65% who completed their education aged 20 or after are involved, compared to 33% who completed their education prior to age 16. Younger respondents aged 15-24 are less likely than older age groups to say cultural heritage is important to them personally: 78% do so compared to 86% of 40-54-year-olds. Furthermore, 15-24-year-olds are the least likely to say cultural heritage is important for their region: 84% do so compared to 90% of 40-54-year-olds. Opinions vary more according to personal involvement and interest. Respondents who live close to cultural heritage are more likely to say cultural heritage is important in the area and this shows potential for participation in the heritage-based thematic networks, as the analysis states that people care about heritage in the places where they live (European Commission, 2017).

Answers to the question about the importance of cultural heritage present some differences between countries. Overall, at least three quarters of respondents in each country think cultural heritage is important for their local community. Almost all respondents in Cyprus (95%) think this way, as do 92% in Greece and 91% in Portugal. Three quarters in Lithuania (75%), 77% in the Czech Republic and 78% in both Romania and Slovakia think the same way. At least half of all respondents in Cyprus (68%), Greece (66%), Malta (56%), Ireland (52%), the United Kingdom and Bulgaria (both 50%) say cultural heritage is very important for their local community. At the other end of the scale, 21% in Latvia, 24% in Finland and 26% in the Czech Republic say the same. The low importance of heritage in local communities means that community engagement is restricted (European Commission, 2017).

Previously, the [European Commission Eurobarometer survey on cultural access and participation \(2014\)](#) indicated similar factors that were holding people back from consuming culture. Lack of interest, and lack of time and expense are the main barriers to participation in cultural activities. The data from this report allow us to conclude that since the 2007 survey a small overall decline in participation in cultural activities has occurred. Similar to the report on cultural heritage, considerable national variation exists across the EU in terms of cultural participation and engagement. Generally speaking, higher involvement is observed in northern and



Source: Shutterstock

participation in cultural activities has occurred. Similar to the report on cultural heritage, considerable national variation exists across the EU in terms of cultural participation and engagement. Generally speaking, higher involvement is observed in northern and

western European countries and lower involvement in southern and eastern European countries. Here, the cultural heritage consumption and participation differences among EU macro-regions can be observed.

For more information:

- ▶ European Commission (2017), Special Eurobarometer Report 466: Cultural Heritage.  
<https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en/resource-centre/content/special-eurobarometer-report-466-cultural-heritage>
- ▶ European Union Open Data Portal (2014), Special Eurobarometer 399: Cultural access and participation.  
[https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S1115\\_79\\_2\\_399](https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S1115_79_2_399)

There are some cases, however, where the engagement of communities in the field of culture and heritage is more likely. Van Hek and Kraaykamp (2013) claim that countries with plenty of wealth and cultural funding show more sophisticated consumption, and that such consumption in European countries is also affected by a nation's social mobility level and level of cultural supply. If this is true, wealthier countries would have an advantage in engaging communities.

Taking into account the results of these prominent studies, it can be concluded that engagement practices in culture, cultural heritage and Cultural Routes are – at least to some extent – related to cultural consumption. If the local community can be fostered to consume culture and heritage, and taught about the value it has, the more motivated and prepared the community members might be towards participation projects.



*Budva, Montenegro © 3.0 Petr Kraumann*

European Cultural Routes involve varied members from state, municipal, private and non-governmental sectors and they represent diverse organisations – local municipalities, museums, trusts, societies, tourism enterprises, educational and scientific institutions, which cover varied themes in relation to culture and heritage and tourism.

Partner	What can be expected of them?
Scientific institutions (archives, historic, social, musical institutes, etc.)	Provide high-quality scientific background to the theme. Provide data for evaluation of resources and attractions; interpretation and presentations.
Heritage institutions (museums, galleries, music and concert halls, etc.)	Provide high-quality scientific background to the theme. Provide data for evaluation of resources and attractions; interpretation and presentations.
Medium-sized enterprises: hospitality and restaurants	Contracting. Added value on the route, thematically appropriate for various visitor segments (i.e. Roman Emperors Route – occasional Roman dinners, events, culinary workshops, etc.)
Small and medium-sized businesses: accommodation	Provide an offer on the route, thematically appropriate for various visitor segments (for cyclists – offer Bed and Bike on the Roman route). Contracting.
Destination management companies, travel agents, tour operators	Provide assistance in assessing the route resources for tourism purposes. Offer packages organised for target groups (schoolchildren, students, specific groups: team building, foreign markets, archaeology lovers, artists). Contractual relationship.
Destination management organisations, national tourism organisations	Support the promotional activities, financial support.
Development agencies	Organisational support, project preparation, funding sources.
Local associations (folk, fishermen, women)	Participation in creating activities and events, and the associated structural content.
Artists, prominent scientists, entrepreneurs	Participation in creating activities and events, and the associated structural content.
Educators, teachers, guides and animators	Elaboration of content and interpretation for targeted educational groups, social groups, etc.

Source: Klaric M., Androić M., Nevidal R. and Horjan G. (2013), *Managing visitors on thematic Cultural Routes handbook*. Adapted for the Danube Cultural Routes project: Roman Emperor's Route and the Danube Wine Route. Zagreb: Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Croatia and Lujzijana Association.

Taking into account the diversity of different participants, it is not possible to come up with universal engagement models in culture and heritage. Also, there is no such thing as “the best” type of participation as everything is defined by the context.

When different authors and sources discuss the challenges of community engagement for cultural heritage organisations, the following issues overlap with issues in other fields:

- ▶ learning to work in partnership (capability of involving the public as a critical friend and key change agent) towards people building strong communities;
- ▶ a move from being leaders to becoming facilitators;
- ▶ the need to start considering themselves as resources for communities;
- ▶ the creation of mechanisms which are able to support independent initiatives (appropriate regulatory frameworks);
- ▶ the creation of management models to accommodate participatory processes to start at the grass-roots level;
- ▶ making the collaboration between citizens and institutions a permanent feature of public policies.

#### Further reading

- ▶ Van Hek M. and Kraaykamp G. (2013), “Cultural consumption across countries: a multi-level analysis of social inequality in highbrow culture in Europe”, *Poetics* Vol. 41, No. 4, pp. 323–341.
- ▶ Sani M., Lynch B., Visser J. and Gariboldi A. (2015), Mapping of practices in the EU Member States on Participatory governance of cultural heritage to support the OMC working group under the same name, (Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018). *EENC Short Analytical Report*.  
[www.gordion.nl/sites/gordion.nl/files/mapping\\_of\\_practices\\_in\\_the\\_eu\\_member\\_states\\_on\\_participatory\\_governance\\_of\\_cultural\\_heritage\\_copy1.pdf](http://www.gordion.nl/sites/gordion.nl/files/mapping_of_practices_in_the_eu_member_states_on_participatory_governance_of_cultural_heritage_copy1.pdf)

In the context of cultural heritage and of the Cultural Routes, key interest groups are significant and must be identified to enable successful co-operation. Durusoy (2014) suggests such groups and partners could be people for whom the route has special meanings, or people with social, spiritual and other cultural connections with the region. In addition, successful co-operation requires active participation of the related NGOs together with the residents who live in the local communities within these regions. Durusoy suggests encouraging community groups to take part actively in safeguarding their values, organising events to present different types of traditional arts, publishing these activities to inform about ongoing projects, inviting members of the community to take part in discussions to identify issues and threats concerning traditional arts, and arranging educational programmes to obtain feedback concerning traditional arts. These are some of the main strategies for community involvement, where the use of a systematic approach to communication and engagement is important.



## Third summary

1. The creation and maintenance of a Cultural Route project needs community engagement. There are several participants (individuals and organisations) that are involved in the creation and maintenance of Cultural Routes projects. Participants can have different roles, but different partners can provide similar expertise.

Partner	Area of expertise in Cultural Route
Destination management organisations	Support the promotional activities, financial support
Heritage institutions	Provide high-quality scientific background to the theme
Local associations	Participation in creating activities and events
Educators	Drafting of the content
Artists	Participation in creating activities and events
Restaurants	Added value on the route

2. Organisations frequently struggle to engage local communities. Previous studies and practice confirm that the most common reason holding people back from engaging in participatory activities is a lack of time. There are five countries in the EU where at least one person in 10 does voluntary work for an organisation that is active in the field of cultural heritage. The most active people are in Sweden, then the Netherlands and Ireland, Denmark and Slovenia. But there also are countries, such as Portugal, Bulgaria and Lithuania, where only 2% of citizens do voluntary work in the heritage field. This confirms striking cross-cultural differences in practices of engagement in the heritage field. Generally speaking, a higher level of participation is observed in northern and western European countries, and a lower level of involvement in southern and eastern European countries. Overall, the numbers show that participation in cultural heritage-related activities is related to the number of visits to heritage sites and cultural consumption. This increases a person's understanding of the value of heritage and keeps their interest alive.



*Polish folk dances* © Creative commons

# V. Community engagement and step-by-step project implementation

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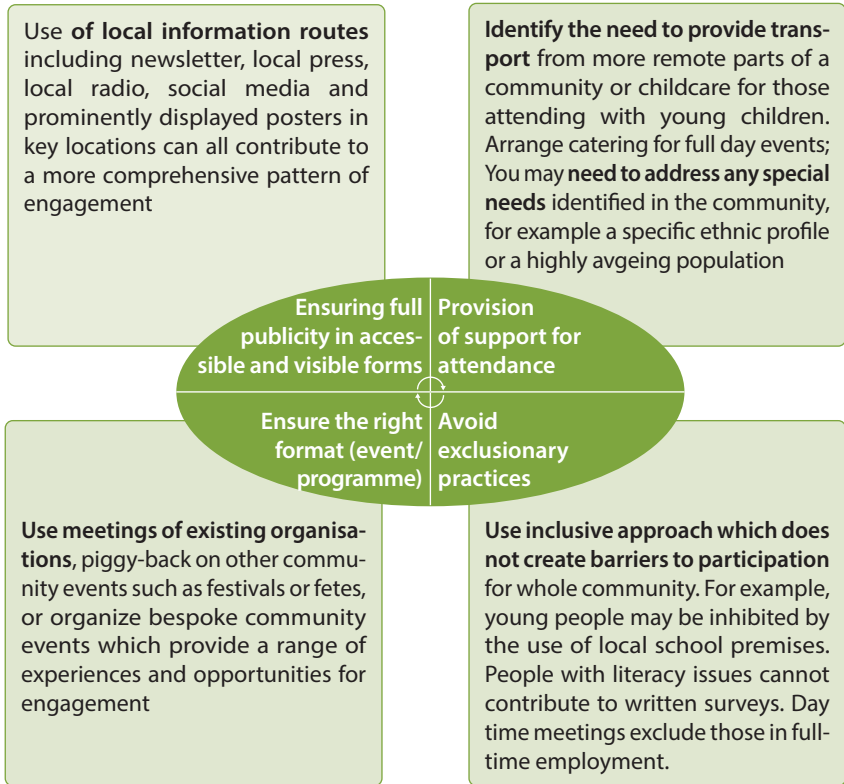
In this section, the process of engagement is discussed in more detail and you will have the opportunity to become more familiar with:

- community engagement planning;
- identification of resources for community engagement;
- identification of stakeholders.

A transnational theme can create a powerful dynamic and engage local communities, tourism businesses, local authorities and the general public. A transnational theme can also bring other associated benefits, such as:

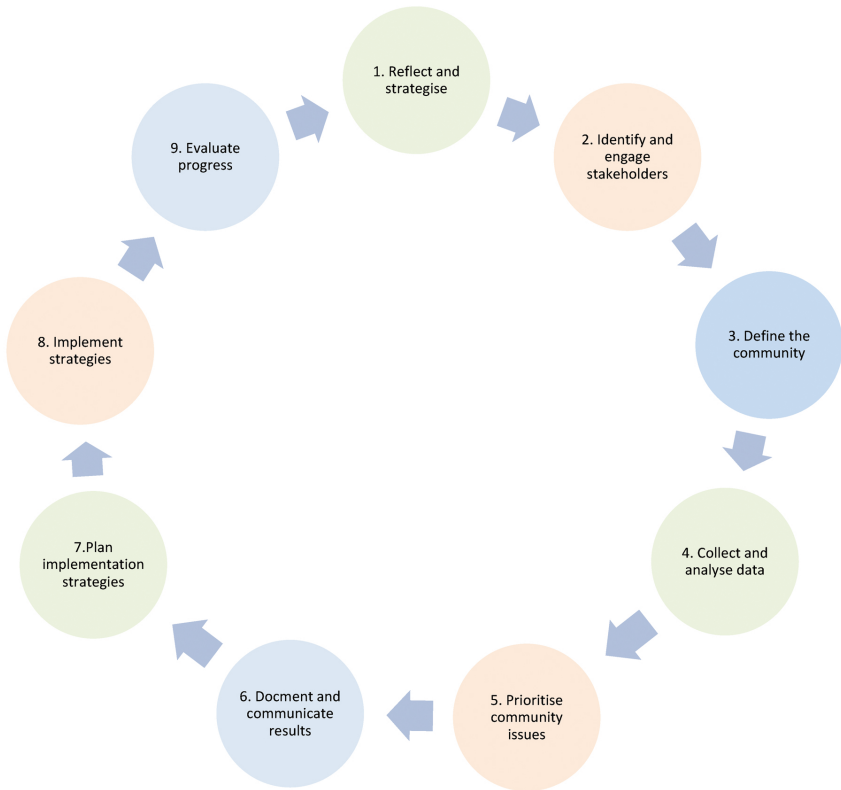
- ▶ giving a voice to local communities;
- ▶ helping to rediscover local traditions and cultural assets;
- ▶ encouraging sustainable recreation (walking, cycling and other forms);  
raising public awareness of the richness and variety of human experience (World Tourism Organization and European Travel Commission 2017).

Reaching these benefits requires plenty of work and lots of planning.



The Council of Europe has defined five similar steps to establishing a Cultural Route, and it claims any of the stages gives a good opportunity and good arguments for community engagement. Other authors have identified seven stages of Cultural Route planning, starting from the definition of the theme and ending with serving consumers.

Referring to the studies analysed above, the first initiatives should be taken to advance the cultural understanding of the local population and visitors through valorising and preserving the uniqueness of local heritage and traditions. Increasing the consumption of heritage and understanding its value requires an increase in funding to raise awareness of a common cultural heritage and traditions through open cultural events and festivals, as well as through social media. Further, to create a suitable climate for the formation of new thematic Cultural Routes, the identification of potential partners, and their needs and roles is crucial. Underdeveloped partnerships are factors which might undermine Cultural Routes projects, along with lack of enthusiasm, and lack of co-operation.



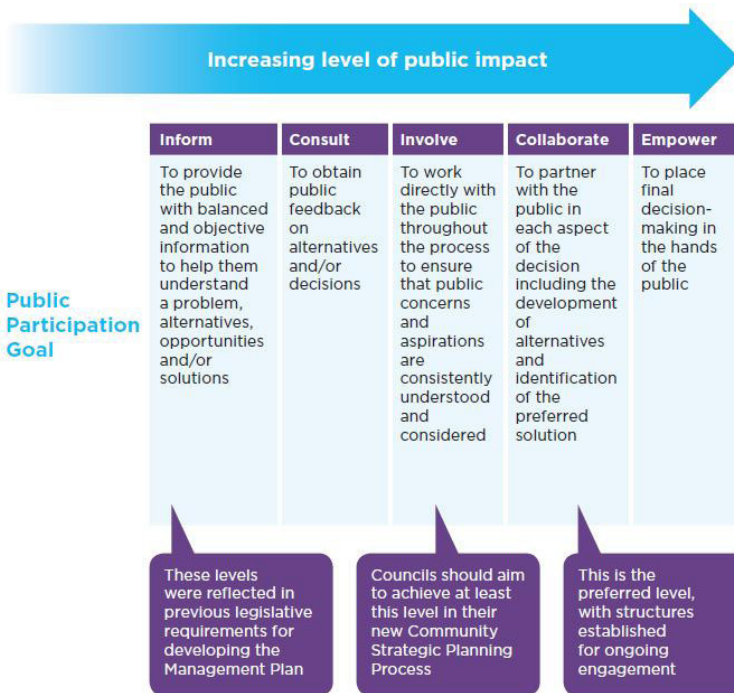
The strong network of stakeholders is a core element in the process of route development – routing, route management, caring about sustainability, ensuring the visibility of the Cultural Route and destination, as well as serving consumers. Each partner must know what is expected of them, but without a central organisation of the Cultural Route managing entity, it can be challenging. Motivation is also mentioned as the key for the formation of partnerships.

More information can be found here:

- ▶ Klaric M., Androić M., Nevidal R. and Horjan G. (2013), *Managing visitors on thematic Cultural Routes handbook. Adapted for the Danube Cultural Routes project: Roman Emperor's Route and the Danube Wine Route*. Zagreb: Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Croatia and Lujzijana Association.

<https://mint.gov.hr/UserDocsmages/arhiva/ManagingVisitors-CultRoutes.pdf>

- ▶ World Tourism Organization and European Travel Commission (2017), *Handbook on marketing transnational tourism themes and routes*. Madrid: UNWTO.



Source: Office of Local Government NSW, Australia, [www.olg.nsw.gov.au/councils/integrated-planning-and-reporting/framework/community-engagement-strategy](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/councils/integrated-planning-and-reporting/framework/community-engagement-strategy).

Good practice in the identification of resources for a Cultural Route is to use bottom-up community engagement.

### Best practices

The tourism club Oga, a local non-governmental organisation established in a small town called Grobiņa in Latvia, in the Baltic Sea macro-region, exemplifies a typical bottom-up engagement case. It presents a list of factors that positively influence the local community's ability to join the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe and highlights the opportunities to benefit from heritage while developing cultural tourism, educating society and increasing its network of co-operation partners. The NGO actively works with the support of Grobiņa Municipality to make the archaeological monuments of the Viking era available to visitors, and to explain the ancient traditions and lifestyle. For some time before joining the Cultural Route, club members organised thematic events, developed and offered tourism products related to the Curonian Vikings, and knew about the history of the Curonian Vikings. The recent formal membership in the Viking Routes was, therefore, no more than a logical outcome of long-term grass-roots activities.

The planning and implementation of a Cultural Route shares some similarities with the cultural revitalisation of rural territories, which is especially significant in the context of the rural depopulation trend. According to sources, around 90% of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe are located in rural territories ([European Union, European Development Fund \(2019\), Policy brief on Cultural Routes in Europe](#)). Cultural revitalisation processes demand effective partnerships and mobilisation of local communities, which strive to create a situation where the infrastructure of heritage and culture offers are made primarily for the local community, not for visitors.

Frequently, when discussing community engagement practices in cultural heritage, sustainable tourism and cultural tourism emerge as ways of incorporating new elements in heritage management that could help local communities to draw more obvious benefits from their cultural legacy while preserving and maintaining its uniqueness. Other relevant issues in the development of the routes are the integration of marketing and promotion and the development of a common and truly “shared brand”, the engagement of local communities in the design, operation and interpretation of routes as well as the fair and equal distribution of tourism benefits at local level. Success will require the engagement of culture and tourism stakeholders at all levels to address cross-cutting responsibilities in areas such as governance, community engagement, innovation and technology, and corporate social responsibility (World Tourism Organization and European Travel Commission (2017).



Stari Most, Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
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## Main challenges

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Cvijić (2017) has summed up the following concerns and challenges expressed by participants based on a real-life case, the Saint Martin of Tours Route:

- ▶ weak communication and collaboration among the main groups of stakeholders, especially among authorities, experts, local residents and business;
- ▶ no clear idea on how to find a common way to connect all actors who work on Saint Martin’s heritage in order to improve co-operation;
- ▶ no co-ordination of the different local visions;
- ▶ no clear vision on how to utilise Saint Martin’s heritage and what heritage (tangible/intangible) to include;
- ▶ no public money and no possibility to build new forms of tourism to improve cultural initiatives and accessibility to historical sites;
- ▶ weak knowledge among residents of Saint Martin’s heritage (some ignore the existing Saint Martin’s heritage);

- ▶ low level of voluntary/cultural/social work in local communities;
- ▶ low capacity to empower local communities and involve them in a common vision to link the past, present and future;
- ▶ low capacity to transmit traditions from past to present;
- ▶ no clear idea on how to define a vision, which will not be too ambitious, but concrete and realisable;
- ▶ the most important challenge that all partners have to work on is how to involve the youngest (15-18 years of age) in heritage practices connected with Saint Martin to become active stakeholders in its presentation, interpretation and utilisation.

More information can be found here:

- ▶ Cvijić, V. (2017), *European level benchmark study on innovative cultural heritage valorisation and related participatory initiatives* (D.T2.1.1). Ljubljana: ZRC SAZU. [www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/WP-T2-D.T2.1.1-European-level-Benchmark-Study-final.pdf](http://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/WP-T2-D.T2.1.1-European-level-Benchmark-Study-final.pdf)
- ▶ European Union, European Development Fund (2019), *Policy brief on Cultural Routes in Europe*. [www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user\\_upload/plp\\_uploads/policy\\_briefs/2019-03-27\\_PB\\_Cultural\\_routes\\_final.pdf](http://www.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/plp_uploads/policy_briefs/2019-03-27_PB_Cultural_routes_final.pdf)

## Methods

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We have contextualised some specific engagement actions implemented by the Cultural Routes, but how do we involve the whole community in the engagement process? We need to know about the different steps!

We start with some rather simple questions:

1. Does our route/project/planned activity have potential environmental, economic, safety and/or health impacts on the community?
2. Have the community members voiced an interest, concerns or opposition to our route/project/planned activity?
3. Would public participation help our project achieve equitable outcomes for our community members?
4. Will we be asking the community to provide additional funding for our project?



Source: Pexels



## 1. Goal setting

Engagement planning includes five primary goals that should be considered: informing, consulting, involving, collaborating and empowering (Bässler C., Förster B., Moning C. and Müller J., 2008).

The planning phase should start with clarifying the background.

Questions to consider:

1. What does our project want to do for the community?
2. What are the impacts (positive and negative) at the neighbourhood level? And at the “outside locality” level?
3. What is the current level of community awareness and knowledge about our project and its impact?
4. What have our community engagement efforts or experiences looked like in the past for this or similar projects? Were they effective or ineffective?
5. What are the possible consequences/outcomes (if any) of not engaging the community?
6. How can our project timeline accommodate a community-engagement process?
7. What are the information gaps? What is still unknown about our project?

## 2. Stakeholders' identification (who will/should engage?)

Depending on the nature of our project, there is a need to develop an understanding of either one or both of the following:

- ▶ relationship between the level of project impact that community stakeholders experience and their current level of engagement (awareness and involvement) with our project or the concept more generally;
- ▶ relationship between the impacted community stakeholders' influence on project outcomes and their current level of engagement with the project.

Questions to consider:

1. Which specific community members/groups will be most affected by our project?
2. Which groups are already engaged? Which are currently disengaged?
3. Which groups have a high influence on project outcomes? Which groups do we need to empower to have greater influence?
4. Which groups are easy for us to reach? Which are difficult for us to reach? With which groups have we already built relationships? With which groups do we need to build connections?
5. What type of information formats or channels for the provision of information and receiving the feedback should be used (printed and electronic information) about our project?
6. Which municipality departments and partner organisations should we collaborate with for our community engagement efforts to be more successful?

### 3. Community engagement strategy planning

Basic principle: strategies should be dynamic, adaptive and responsive to resident needs and circumstances.



Vienna, Austria. Source: Pixabay

There are transportation, language, technological, institutional and physical barriers that limit access to information and active engagement for socio-economically disadvantaged populations, community members with disabilities, youth, the elderly, and black and ethnic minority communities.

Communities can be culturally and racially diverse: this requires various methods of information sharing and engagement opportunities. The same strategy does not work for all!

One of the challenges is to leverage existing relationships with community members/groups to reach out to and build new relationships with disengaged and weakly represented groups.

Questions to consider:

1. Which communication outlets should we use? Will these outlets reach the intended community members/groups?
2. What would be the most convenient/accessible space for public meetings/gatherings, which physical locations/spaces (indoor/outdoor)?
3. What is the best time to reach the intended community groups?
4. How can we limit barriers to public participation?

### 4. Measurement of engagement success

Assessment of our efforts is an integral part of improving our outreach and engagement strategies. It helps to understand “what we are doing well and how we can improve”. It also keeps a higher level of accountability to all the stakeholders.

Questions to consider:

1. What are the goals we set for our outreach efforts at the beginning of this project – which did we meet and which did we not meet?
2. For the goals we met, what helped us to accomplish them?
3. What could we have done better for unaccomplished goals?

More information can be found here:

- ▶ Bässler C., Förster B., Moning C. and Müller J. (2008), “The BIOKLIM Project: biodiversity research between climate change and wilding in a temperate montane forest – the conceptual framework”, *Forest Ecology, Landscape Research and Nature Conservation* Vol. 7, pp. 21-33.

## Fourth summary

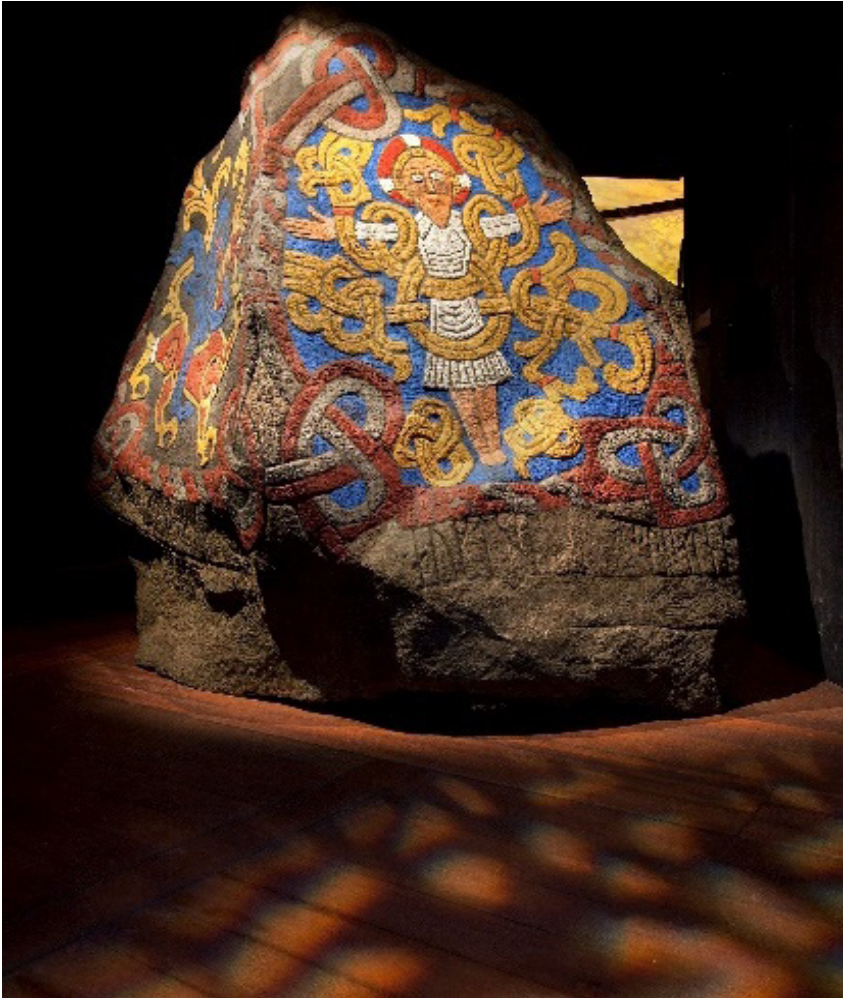
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1. The first initiatives in community engagement implementation should be taken to advance the cultural understanding of the local population and visitors through valorising and preserving the uniqueness of local heritage and traditions. Increasing the consumption of heritage and understanding its value requires an increase in funding to raise awareness of a common cultural heritage and traditions through open cultural events and festivals, as well as through social media. The community's knowledge, which is known as collective expertise, is an important factor in the process of community engagement.
2. Different levels of community participation: information, consultation, involvement, collaboration, empowerment
3. Frequent mistakes in community engagement projects in Cultural Routes.
  - weak communication and collaboration among the main groups of stakeholders;
  - no clear idea on how to find a common way to connect all of the involved actors in order to improve co-operation;
  - no co-ordination of the different local visions;
  - no clear vision on how to utilise the heritage and what heritage (tangible/intangible) to include;
  - no public money and no possibility to build new forms of tourism to improve cultural initiatives and accessibility to historical sites;
  - weak knowledge among residents about heritage;
  - low level of voluntary work in local communities;
  - low capacity to empower local communities and involve them in a common vision to link the past, present and future;
  - low capacity to transmit traditions from past to present;
  - no clear idea on how to define a vision, which will not be too ambitious, but concrete and realisable;
  - a lack of engagement among youngsters (15-18 years of age) in heritage practices.

Themed initiatives help to promote diverse cultural identities by telling stories about great achievements and the values of civilisation.

However, communities can be diverse: this requires various methods of information sharing and engagement opportunities. The same strategy does not work for all!

Community engagement is about individual and collective actions that are designed to identify and address issues of public concern.



The Vikings Route © National Museum of Denmark

# VI. Practices for community engagement along the Cultural Routes

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Community engagement in the projects of the Cultural Routes has been formally defined as a very significant aspect. The Cultural Routes are network-based structures, which have legal status in the form of an association or federation of associations under the same umbrella, with a variety of stakeholders such as local and regional authorities, universities, museums, destinations and sites, and individuals. The network has established widespread co-operation in Europe based on equality, mutual understanding and appreciation between people.

## Learn from good practices

It is important to note that community engagement is a process that has to be managed continuously.

The following activities provide different examples of good practice in terms of engaging a wide range of participants and developing specific aspects.

### Case 1. Project Danube Culture Platform – Creative Spaces of the 21st century – CULTPLATFORM\_21



**Implementation period:** 2017-2019

**Funding:** EU Interreg Danube Transnational Programme ([www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/cultplatform-21](http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/cultplatform-21))

**Description:** The main objective of the project is the development of an innovative multilevel policy framework for cultural routes in the Danube area. The activities are seeking a response to manifold themes: to develop new destinations along the Danube River (tourism) by discovering, resourcing and interpreting hidden heritage by means of contemporary arts and technologies (culture) as well as to experience the culture of expanded cultural routes (international audience/tourists). It aims to be the driving force for strategic development, future activities and co-operation of culture and tourism stakeholders in the Danube Region. Its focus lies on promoting cultural exchange and connecting culture and tourism.

#### Community engagement process

The partners showcased their pilot projects, providing exciting artistic and digital interventions uncovering hidden heritage places, stories and objects along the Danube.

Several of the pilot projects were based on the engagement of the local community, a general audience. The project interprets the hidden heritage as invisible because sites/events are less well known – beyond the scene, situated beneath the ground, destroyed, banned or repressed for political or societal reasons, disappeared or of an immaterial nature (for example, submerged communities/heritage due to the creation of artificial lakes, removed cemeteries, communication structures such as postal systems, neglected buildings and bridges, locations destroyed during the wars). Yet the hidden heritage might also include music, literature, river and lifestyle, and so on.

For example, the pilot project Budapest in 100 Words (HU) Mindspace Budapest – an open story-writing competition for texts with a maximum length of 100 words. The core idea is to connect literature with city life. The story can be about anything from a random thought that hits you on the subway, to a snapped moment on the street, or even a dream. In 2017, the best 12 pieces were illustrated by graphic designers and music compositions. This dynamic project encourages and facilitates people to pay more attention to the urban environment while taking a short cultural break. In five years, more than 5 000 stories have been received – sent via e-mail, by post, some even handwritten pages and words typed on old typewriters (Your city in 100 words. [www.budapest.in100words.eu/en](http://www.budapest.in100words.eu/en)).



Source: Creative Commons

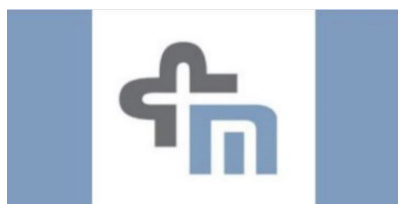
## Results

- ▶ One of the conclusions was that the methodology of developing hidden heritage sites needs to focus on interpretation and storytelling. It is not enough to merely excavate, restore and display heritage. This work is important as ground work, but without providing context and applying storytelling, the artefacts displayed remain just dead objects, whose significance most of the people in the audience cannot understand.
- ▶ The project identified new themes for the extension of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe based on hidden heritage along the Danube and engaged local communities and audience in this process. The support for the theme and understanding of the theme is crucial to establish sustainable Cultural Route.
- ▶ A guidebook on resourcing hidden heritage for tourism is prepared in the project and it educates the reader on the role of local communities in offering heritage to tourists. It stresses that wider communities are an important aspect that enables them to address various aspects of hidden heritage, for example contested and forgotten heritages; new interpretations and ways of representing heritage; changing ownership, rights, roles and responsibilities within and across communities and generations. The context for hidden heritage is constructed and deconstructed, refined and updated through continuing dialogue with the research, heritage and wider interested communities.

## Further reading

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- ▶ CULTPLATFORM\_21 Danube Culture Platform – Creative Spaces of the 21st Century project. [www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/cultplatform-21](http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/cultplatform-21) \*includes documentation
- ▶ Your city in 100 words. [www.budapest.in100words.eu/en](http://www.budapest.in100words.eu/en)

## Case 2. Project SYMBOLS



**Implementation period:** 2014-2016

**Funding:** European Union programme Creative Europe (<https://symbolsproject.eu/about-symbols.aspx>)

<https://cemeteriesroute.eu/projects/symbols-project.aspx>

**Description:** SYMBOLS is a project of the European Cemeteries Route (certified Cultural Route of the Council of Europe, since 2010), with its central value of multicultural diversity. The project promotes European cemeteries as places of life and historical memory and consists of tangible (works, sculptures, engravings) and intangible (culture) heritage.

**Community engagement aspect:** The project started in 2014 due to the need to connect cemetery symbols with culture and history, and to strengthen knowledge and public awareness of cemeteries as cultural heritage. The activities of the project consist of artistic interpretations of symbols (exhibition), creation of a common database of symbols, as well as workshops with different target groups (such as young people and people with disabilities) and the organisation of seminars.

**Community engagement process:** One of the core results is a mobile guiding app that has been developed as a replacement for traditional maps. The app is based on the arTour platform and enables learning by moving (for example the mobile phone vibrates as a person walks) and it explains the things seen or just missed. The user does not have to watch the screen if he or she does not want to miss out on a trip.

Users can create content by adding points on specific route locations. The platform explains sites to users and is able to transform text into audio. Furthermore, the platform can also be accessed offline. In order to achieve these results specific community engagement actions were taken. Distinct approaches are used in order to target specific groups. Activities targeting young people have had highly positive responses. Key competencies were reinforced by working in groups, by developing competencies and digital abilities, researching, learning, through first-hand experiences (for

instance, study visits), searching for new artistic language, in order to express concepts and by improving memorisation through drawings and sketches. Apps and the latest ICT solutions have greatly increased engagement with heritage for visually impaired people. Access and inclusiveness of heritage for people with impaired hearing is made possible by shifting from static displays towards facilitated experiences, customised visual materials and alternative methods of communication. The following forms of access to heritage are especially important:

- ▶ web-based hard-of-hearing projects which tell stories of first-hand experiences;
- ▶ cutting-edge tools, which enable translation of content into sign language;
- ▶ live speech-to-text captioning, which converts the spoken word into visible text;
- ▶ educational involvement of deaf or hard-of-hearing artists.

Digital technologies (augmented reality browsers) have been used to create new routes of “symbols” to discover hidden heritage, as well as to work and test them with new audiences (young people and people with disabilities).

Results in the context of community engagement:

- ▶ participation and test with at least 120 young people from six countries;
- ▶ creation of six “routes of symbols” by the young people on the arTour mobile application;
- ▶ adaptation of arTour to the needs of blind people (three pilot tests in Maribor in Slovenia, Avilés in Spain, Nebbiu in France);
- ▶ joint artistic residences for 15 printmakers (etching, lithography, silkscreen, relief, monoprint, etc.) from seven countries;
- ▶ joint artistic residences for five dancers and 10 musicians from six countries;
- ▶ co-production of one multidisciplinary exhibition in 2016 in seven countries, nine places: objective 27 000 visitors (3000 per place);
- ▶ three good practice manuals distributed to around 1 000 stakeholders through workshops and networking activities;
- ▶ strong ICT and media communication.

**More information on the project:** Symbols – Stories of cultural life. A project by the European Cemeteries Route. <https://symbolsproject.eu/about-symbols.aspx>

### Case 3. Project AGORA



**Implementation period:** 2014-2016

**Description:** AGORA is a project of Routes of the Olive Tree (certified Cultural Route of the Council of Europe, since 2005). AGORA consists of a versatile interdisciplinary and operational team, which co-operates with the local members of the Routes of the Olive Tree network in more than 20 countries, including universities, NGOs, scientists



and civil society representatives. The project is oriented towards the promotion of the Mediterranean culture of the olive tree with its many unknown regions.

**Community engagement aspect:** The project is founded on the principles of cultural diplomacy and volunteer work. An important aspect is the valorisation of labour of different actors – artists, producers, craftsmen – who actively contribute to the preservation of endangered cultural assets of the olive tree civilisation. Furthermore, the project seeks to discover opportunities for promoting Mediterranean craft and diet (which is recognised by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity). This is especially relevant since small producers, jeopardised by the effects of global competition, are being increasingly pushed out of the market, which is a threat to the existence of traditional products and cultural economies.

**Community engagement process:** In 2017, the cultural itinerary of AGORA started from Greece and proceeded towards northern European cities in order to familiarise citizens with olive trees in the Mediterranean as an essential part of the European culture. The itinerary allows for encounters between travellers and merchants, providing a climate of friendship, co-operation and intercultural dialogue.

### **Results in the context of community engagement**

In 2017, a two-day feast was organised in co-operation with local municipal authorities and, among other things, included:

- ▶ cultural activities, such as exhibitions, Mediterranean music, film projections, workshops for children and young people, competitions;
- ▶ gastronomic activities, such as food and wine tastings, demonstrations and cooking courses in Mediterranean cuisine, networking among producers, small distributors, gourmet food stores and restaurants, and sale of selected products by participating producers;
- ▶ info point, where conferences, round tables, actions and initiatives took place.

An International Voluntary Work Program Agreement was signed between the International Association of Students of Economics and Commercial Sciences of the University of Piraeus and the Cultural Foundation “Routes of the Olive Tree”.

The engagement of various cities in the AGORA project has been sealed by a gift – an olive tree – which symbolically incorporates municipalities and actors in the Routes of the Olive Tree. They are given a place in the “Olive grove of solidarity”, which serves as a reference point for reflection and creation of Mediterranean culture, art and tradition. This shows that local governments, civil society actors and citizens can contribute to small-scale sustainable development, which can sustain cultural diversity and offset the negative effects of global competition. This project is a good example of sustainability in context.

**For more information:** Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, The Routes of the Olive Tree. <https://olivetreeroute.gr/en/>



Via Francigena: Monteriggioni, Italy. Source: Shutterstock © RobertaRistori

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# Glossary

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**Bottom-up approach** – is a type of management that implies strong community engagement in the process of agenda elaborating, planning and implementation of plans. A bottom-up approach requires a high level of motivation to participate on the part of the community as well as legal mechanisms and incentives that encourage and facilitate community involvement in the decision-making process. The opposite management strategy is called a top-down approach (*see below*).

**Certification/Decertification** – is a process to check the compliance of a product with the requirements to be met; decertification happens when the requirements are not met and a product cannot be certified.

**Certification process of a Cultural Route** – is a process of evaluation of a possible future Culture Route. Every year, the certification is awarded to legally constituted networks, working on a European theme and implementing activities in at least three Council of Europe member states. The certification “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” is a guarantee of excellence. The certification gives visibility to European initiatives which bring to life the Council of Europe values, such as cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and mutual exchanges across borders.

**Citizen engagement** – refers to individual and collective actions that are designed to identify and address issues of public concern and aimed at making a difference on a larger scale in society.

**Community** – a social and political network that links a group of people with a common identity who may be involved across a range of related livelihoods. Communities often have customary rights related to an area and its natural resources, and a strong relationship with the area from a cultural, social, economic and spiritual perspective.

**Council of Europe** – is an international governmental organisation founded in 1949. It is the oldest European organisation as well as the “most European” one since it includes 47 member states and covers the whole European continent. From its origin, the Council of Europe has had the aim of achieving greater unity between its member states and their citizens. Human rights, democracy and rule of law are the three core values, providing the foundations of the Organisation and orienting its work.

**Culture** – can be defined as the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterise a community, society or social group. It includes not only arts and literature, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs. Culture encompasses the living or contemporary characteristics and values of a community as well as those that have survived from the past.

**Cultural heritage** – is the expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places,

objects, artistic expressions and values. Cultural heritage is often expressed as either intangible or tangible cultural heritage.

**Cultural Routes** – are transnational networks with legal status certified by the Council of Europe in which at least three entities from different European countries participate. The network partners carry out a vast range of activities in the academic, educational and artistic field.

**Cultural tourism** – is essentially a forum of tourism that focuses on the culture and cultural environments, including the landscapes of the destination, and the values and lifestyles, heritage, visual and performing arts, industries, traditions and leisure pursuits of the local population and host community. It can include attendance at culture events, visits to museums and heritage places, and mixing with local people. It should not be regarded as a definable niche within the broad range of tourism activities, but encompasses all experiences absorbed by the visitor to a place that is beyond their own usual environment.

**Creative Europe** – is a programme aimed at helping the European Union countries to develop cultural, creative and audiovisual sectors.

**Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA)** – is an agreement among members and non-members of the Council of Europe. It was established in 2010 and seeks to reinforce the potential of the Organisation for cultural co-operation, sustainable territorial development and social cohesion, with a particular focus on themes of symbolic importance for European unity, history, culture and values and the discovery of less well-known destinations.

**European Commission** – is the European Union's politically independent executive body. It is responsible for drawing up proposals for new European legislation, and it implements the decisions of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU. The EU Strategies for the Macro-regions were adopted by the European Commission and endorsed by the European Council.

**European Institute of Cultural Routes** – is the technical agency of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. The EICR was created in 1998 and is located at Neumünster Abbey, in Luxembourg City.

**Faro Convention** – The Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society emphasises the important aspects of heritage as they relate to human rights and democracy. It promotes a wider understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society. The Convention encourages recognition that objects and places are not, in themselves, what is important about cultural heritage. They are important because of the meanings and uses that people attach to them and the values they represent. The Convention was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 13 October 2005.

**Good practice** – is a method or a technique which was chosen above others because of its superior effect or result.



**Heritage** – a broad concept that encompasses our natural, indigenous and historic or cultural inheritance.

**Identity** – is the result of the self-identification of an individual or a group of individuals with wider communities and related sets of values through self-reflection within the context on the surrounding environment. At the same time, identity is a result of the external to an individual or a group identification process as well, since identity is based not only on self-identification and an answer for a question “Who am I?” but also on the perception of an individual or a group by other individuals and communities.

**Intangible heritage** – refers to traditions and customs, artistic expressions and values.

**Interreg** – is a programme aimed at helping the European Union to implement border cooperation projects through providing parties involved in a project with access to finance, data and learning opportunities. The project assists three types of beneficiaries: public authorities, non-profit agencies and research institutes as well as intermediate bodies (that are in charge of the Investment for Growth and Jobs programmes or European Territorial Cooperation).

**Macro-regional strategy** – is an integrated framework endorsed by the European Council, which may be supported by the European Structural and Investment Funds among others, to address common challenges faced by a defined geographical area relating to Member States and third countries located in the same geographical area which thereby benefit from strengthened cooperation contributing to achievement of economic, social and territorial cohesion.

**Routes4U** – is a 30-month Joint Programme, launched in the framework of the joint programme between the Council of Europe (Directorate General of Democracy) and the European Union (European Commission – DG REGIO). The project aims at very real and specific action to foster regional development through cultural heritage policies.

**Social cohesion** – is the development and formation of connections in a group which ensure the transformation of the given structure from the outside into a psychological community of people, a psychological organism that lives according to its norms and laws based on its goals and values. Social cohesion is a concept which stresses the need to be collectively attentive to, and aware of, any kind of discrimination, inequality, marginality or exclusion.

**Social participation** – refers to forms and degrees of involvement of individuals and groups in the decision-making process. Participation is linked with theories of democracy where the issues of power distribution among the engaged parties are significant and it might be considered a subsection of the concept of engagement.

**Stakeholders** – are parties which are somehow effective in or affected by a company. They can be its investors, employees, customers or suppliers.

**Sustainable regional development** – is a principle aimed at creating the state of society, in which living conditions and the use of resources continue to meet human needs without undermining the integrity and stability of the natural system at the regional level.

**Sustainable tourism** – refers to a level of tourism activity that can be maintained over the long term because it results in a net benefit for the social, economic, natural and cultural environments of the area in which it takes place.

**Tangible heritage** – is heritage which includes sites, buildings or objects.

**Top-down approach** – is a type of planning and management that is characterised by a closed model of decision-making. Top-down approaches refer to a situation in which decisions are made by a few people in authority rather than by the people who are affected by the decisions. They are also frequently structured around the use of professional leadership provided by external resources that plan, implement and evaluate the initiative. The opposite management strategy is called a bottom-up approach (*see above*).

# List of abbreviations

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**ATSDR** – Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

**CAST** – Center for Advanced Studies in Tourism

**DMO** – destination management organisation

**EPA** – Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes

**ESPON** – European Spatial Planning Observation Network (current European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion)

**EU** – European Union

**EUSAIR** – European Union Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region

**EUSALP** – European Union Strategy for the Alpine Region

**EUSBSR** – European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

**EUSDR** – European Union Strategy for the Danube Region

**H.O.S.T.** – Heritage of Olive Tree for Sustainable Tourism

**ICT** – information and communications technologies

**NGO** – non-governmental organisation

**SMEs** – small and medium-sized enterprises

**UNESCO** – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

**UNWTO** – United Nations World Tourism Organization





As of today, more than 30 transnational networks certified “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” cross the four EU macro-regions: the Baltic Sea Region, the Danube Region, the Adriatic and Ionian Region and the Alpine Region, encompassing 27 countries and more than 340 million people.

The European Union developed four macro-regional strategies (EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR) with a view to strengthening transnational co-operation and addressing common challenges and opportunities within these geographical areas. The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe contribute to the objectives of the macro-regional strategies: they strengthen transnational cultural co-operation as well as sustainable cultural tourism in the macro-regions.

This Routes4U manual provides relevant information on community engagement in the EU macro-regions through the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

- What is the role of heritage as identity marker and promoter of intercultural dialogue?
- What is the role of a local community in the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe?
- What does the concept of engagement mean and what are the different types of engagement?
- How do we encourage and improve local communities’ involvement in the Cultural Routes in the macro-regions?

This manual illustrates the wide range of activities of Cultural Routes, compiling best practices of certified Cultural Routes. It puts the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe into the context of the EU macro-regional strategies by explaining their common objectives. Video links, checklists, infographics and various reference materials provide the opportunity for further study.

The Council of Europe is the continent’s leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

The Member States of the European Union have decided to link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

[www.europa.eu](http://www.europa.eu)

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