

# The Aranjuez Declaration

## Networking for culture and heritage: the Council of Europe's cultural routes - making transnational connections work

### The Participants in the Aranjuez Forum,

Thanking the authorities of Spain for hosting the Council of Europe Cultural Routes Advisory Forum at Aranjuez on 29-30 October 2015,

Recalling the Declaration of Santiago de Compostela of 23 October 1987,

Referring to the Colmar Declaration (2012), the Innsbruck Declaration (2013) and the Baku Declaration (2014), which called upon member states of the Council of Europe and interested non-member states having not yet acceded to the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA) to consider accession as soon as possible, to increase the impact and geographical coverage of the programme,

Congratulating in this context Armenia on having acceded to the EPA since the 2014 Forum and calling on participants at the Forum from countries not yet members of the programme to promote accession with their national authorities,

Thanking Lithuania for its invitation, accepted by the EPA Governing Board, to host the 2016 Advisory Forum and inviting other member states to consider hosting the Forum in 2017 (year of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council of Europe's Cultural routes programme),

Welcoming the continuing support of the European Union for the Council of Europe's cultural routes programme through joint activities with the European Commission and regular dialogue with the European Parliament,

Welcoming also the stepping-up of cooperation with other international organisations, in particular the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO),

Thanking once again the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg for its constant support, in particular through the hosting of the EPA and of the European Institute of Cultural Routes (EICR) in Luxembourg;

Noting the progress with follow-up to the recommendations made in the Baku Declaration, in particular:

- the work during 2015 of the Cultural Routes Taskforce established at the Baku Forum, which has already showed its usefulness as a tool for communication among the routes certified by the Council of Europe and as a platform for joint action;
- the setting up, as a follow-up to Baku, of a joint working group between the EPA Governing Board and the Routes Taskforce to explore principles of methodology for cooperation between the national institutions concerned and the cultural routes present in their territories;
- the continued work of the EICR and the routes with a view to attracting new audiences to the programme, in particular young people, in particular through the development of the EICR's new website, new social networking activities, the organisation of bloggers' trips along the cultural routes and the creation of a blogging platform and a YouTube channel, etc.;

- the implementation since October 2014 of an Erasmus + programme (HECTOR) by members of the Network of Cultural Routes Studies and the organisation of the 2015 Summer Seminar in Osnabruck (2-5 June) in the framework of this programme, with the participation of the professors and students of the universities concerned;
- the launch on 1 September 2015 of a new programme between the Council of Europe and the Tourism Unit of the European Commission's DG-GROWTH, on further capacity-building for routes and new projects;
- the creation of a new Intergroup of the European Parliament on European Tourism Development, Cultural Heritage, Ways of St. James and other European Cultural Routes and the dialogue engaged with this group, in particular in the framework of a presentation of the Council of Europe's cultural routes programme (Brussels, 27 May 2015);
- the plenary session on cultural routes organised in the framework of the first joint UNESCO / UNWTO World Conference of Ministers of Culture and of Tourism (Siem Reap, Cambodia, February 2015) moderated by the Council of Europe;
- the Round Table on Tourism Strategies organised by the EICR in Luxembourg on 16 September 2015 in the framework of the country's chairmanship of the Council of the European Union and as an introduction to the European Commission's European Tourism Forum;

Confirming the importance of Council of Europe cultural routes as “tangible illustrations, through European trans-border itineraries, of the pluralism and diversity of European culture based on shared values, and as means for intercultural dialogue and understanding;” and recalling their vocation as “essential tools for raising awareness of the shared European heritage as a cornerstone of European citizenship, a means of improving the quality of life and a source of social, economic and cultural development;” (Resolution CM/Res(2013)66 confirming the establishment of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes),

Endorse the following recommendations aimed to further these objectives, discussed during the four workshops held during the Aranjuez Forum, and agree to communicate them to the statutory bodies of the cultural routes programme:

***With regard to the role of international organisations in supporting transnational cultural routes initiatives***

The participants in this workshop:

Welcome the continued interest in and support for the Council of Europe's cultural routes programme on the part of the other international organisations working in the area;

Re-affirm the value of the Council of Europe's cultural routes programme as a unique model of transnational cooperation;

Stress the importance of finding synergies and avoiding duplication between actors at the international level by implementing joint activities which allow each organisation to contribute to action according to its specific missions, scope and competencies;

Encourage and promote interaction on the ground where UNESCO world heritage sites coincide with cultural routes;

Request that donor organisations, including governmental organisations, give due consideration to the cultural routes certification in their funding programmes.

***In the context of tourism promotion of cultural routes***

The participants in the workshop on tourism promotion,

Noting that Resolution CM/Res(2013)66 states that:

“the EPA shall support networking and exchange between cultural routes operators and other partners in the field of cultural tourism, in particular for:

- the development of a common vision and strategy for cultural routes as tourism products;
- the development of partnerships to increase the resources available for cultural tourism in Europe;
- the identification and dissemination of good practice.

The EPA shall contribute to developing new orientations and standards in relation to cultural routes and tourism in response to the challenges and concerns of modern societies.

The EPA shall develop further methodologies for the promotion of cross-border cultural tourism”,

Recalling the Baku Declaration, which points to “the signs of a progressive transformation from consumerist tourism towards participative tourism, where the quality and diversity of European landscapes constitute a common resource and a criterion (as stated by the European Landscape Convention in its Preamble) and respect for cultures and destinations makes lesser-known sites more attractive than some of the more visited places”:

Ask the Council of Europe to give due consideration to the communication and promotion of the cultural routes programme as a “brand of quality” for all aspects of tourism-related activity;

Request that the Council of Europe and the European Institute of Cultural Routes consider including a criterion of environmental sustainability as a part of the evaluation of certified routes and candidate projects;

Encourage routes to continue sharing their positive experiences of cooperation with the tourism sector and ask the EICR to seek further potential partnerships in the area of sustainable tourism as a means of giving access to culture and heritage while developing socio-economic value chains.

***Concerning young people’s role and involvement in all aspects of the development and communication of cultural routes, including the preservation and management of cultural heritage***

The participants in this workshop, organised for and with young people,

Recognising once again the need to attract and involve more young people in cultural routes, not only as “consumers” but also as initiators and actors in their development,

Welcoming the work of the Spanish Ministry for Culture focused on youth and heritage and of the European Institute of Cultural Routes on new audiences and youth,

Taking note of the development of the Network of Cultural Routes Studies which is enabling the greater involvement of students in the activities of the programme, in particular through participation in the summer seminars and internships with the EICR and at cultural routes headquarters,

Welcoming the activities organised under the HECTOR project and looking forward to future European programmes for cultural routes studies:

Encourage the Council of Europe’s cultural routes to continue their work to adapt their activities to new publics and new ways of travelling and visiting, in particular through the development and use of new technologies and new media;

Call for the setting-up of a platform for exchange between young people in the context of the cultural routes programme, including an academic database of studies and research, and that the youth dimension be a permanent feature of the annual advisory forums;

Ask the secretariat of the Council of Europe and the European Institute to explore potential cooperation with other Council of Europe youth-related activities, such as the European Youth travel Card and other programmes.

***With respect to democracy and cultural routes – cross-cutting participation at local and international levels***

The participants in this workshop,

Referring to Committee of Ministers Resolution CM/Res(2013)66 which states that the EPA on Cultural Routes “shall strengthen the democratic dimension of cultural exchange and tourism through the involvement of grassroots networks and associations, local and regional authorities, universities and professional organisations”,

Aware that cultural routes are required, on the one hand, to encourage and promote participation in activities and enjoyment of cultural heritage at all levels of society, in rural and urban areas and especially in less accessible regions, and on the other must show that they function democratically in their network structures:

Support and encourage routes’ action to make culture accessible to the broadest possible public and encourage the programme’s stakeholder to seek to define, establish and maintain governance tools and formal or informal structures to ensure democratic participation, shared responsibilities and efficient governance at the different levels of the programme;

Recommend that the programme work towards:

- reinforcing partnership between the EICR, EPA Governing Board, the Cultural Routes Task Force and the Network of Cultural Routes Studies;
- promoting a bottom-up approach, involving communities and other stakeholders in a participative governance models for cultural routes;
- ensuring sustainable models and environment-friendly cultural routes;
- creating networks and synergies between cultural routes scientific committees;
- coordinating synergies with UNESCO and its advisory bodies (ICOMOS, ICOM, ICCROM, IUCN) related to the cultural routes, mainly through common objectives to be included in cultural routes management plans;
- promoting culture as a motor for the promotion of European values through cultural routes;
- encouraging Europe’s regions to promote transnational cooperation through cultural routes.

Finally, the participants resolve to pursue dialogue on the above subjects as a follow-up to the Aranjuez Forum and in preparation of the 2016 Council of Europe Cultural Routes Advisory Forum in Vilnius.

Aranjuez, 30 October 2015