

Resolution CM/Res(2013)66 confirming the establishment of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA)

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 18 December 2013 at the 1187bis meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

The representatives to the Committee of Ministers of Andorra, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Montenegro, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland,

Having regard to the success of the Council of Europe Cultural Routes Programme, based on Resolutions CM/Res(2010)52 and CM/Res(2010)53 on the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, which have become 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;

Underlining the importance of 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;

Noting with satisfaction that 26 cultural routes are now certified as Council of Europe Cultural Routes and that the activities of the networks which implement these routes are constantly growing, spanning across most of continental Europe and beyond, also noting that cultural routes now carry out hundreds of cultural events, educational exchanges and tours each year, involving hundreds of thousands of people, hundreds of organisations and local communities;

Recognising that in order to achieve maximum outreach and impact, the existing cultural routes, as well as the many others in the making, require increased professional assistance and support;

Underlining the essential contribution of the European Institute of Cultural Routes based in Luxembourg in compiling and diffusing information and dealing with increased demand for technical assistance for the setting up of cultural routes, and thanking the Government of Luxembourg for its continuous and generous support to the Institute over many years;

Taking note of the commitment of the Luxembourg Government to continue to provide an annual voluntary contribution to cover the operational costs of the European Cultural Routes Institute in order to enable it to fulfill the tasks given to it by the EPA and of the Supplementary Agreement to the General Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Council of Europe concluded between the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Council of Europe signed on 28 November 2011 by Council of Europe Secretary General Thorbjorn Jagland and the Deputy Prime Minister of Luxembourg, Minister for Foreign Affairs Jean Asselborn, concerning the EPA;

Noting with satisfaction the solid partnership which has been established between the Council of Europe and the European Union in the field of cultural routes and cultural tourism, and supporting the continuous reinforcement of this partnership in the future, including the accession of the European Union to the EPA as soon as possible;

Acknowledging the decisive political support of the European Parliament in the establishment of the EPA;

Also noting with satisfaction the new activities which have been initiated with other international organisations such as the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (WTO), the OECD and UNESCO in this field, and encouraging the further development of these partnerships;

Acknowledging the importance of cultural routes in relation to cross-border cultural co-operation and the development of sustainable cultural tourism which builds upon local knowledge, skills and heritage assets, promoting Europe – including lesser-known regions – as a destination offering a unique cultural experience;

Considering that the EPA provides an adequate operational tool to support the development and promotion of existing and new cultural routes;

Having regard to Resolution CM/Res(2010)53 establishing an Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes for an initial period of three years;

In the light of Resolution CM/Res(2013)67 revising the rules for the award of the “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” certification;

Considering Statutory Resolution Res(93)28 on partial and enlarged agreements adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 14 May 1993 at its 92nd Session;

Having regard to Resolution Res(96)36 establishing the criteria for Partial and Enlarged Agreements of the Council of Europe, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 October 1996 at the 575th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies, as amended by Resolution CM/Res(2010)2, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 5 May 2010 at the 1084th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies,

Resolve as follows:

1. The Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA) is hereby confirmed, to be managed in accordance with the provisions contained in the statute appended to this resolution.
2. The European Cultural Routes Institute will continue to operate with the financial support of the Luxembourg Government under the auspices of the EPA and help to carry out its programme of activities on the basis of the agreement between the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Luxembourg authorities of 27 November 2011 as well as an operational agreement between the President of the European Cultural Routes Institute and the Executive Secretary of the EPA.
3. Express the wish that all Council of Europe member States and other States Party to the European Cultural Convention will become members of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA) in the near future.

Appendix to Resolution CM/Res(2013)66

Revised Statute of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes

Article 1 – Aims and tasks

1.1 Aims

The Enlarged Partial Agreement (EPA) shall contribute to the promotion of European identity and citizenship through knowledge and awareness of Europe's common heritage, and the development of cultural links and dialogue within Europe as well as with other countries and regions. It shall seek to shape a

shared cultural space through the development of cultural routes aiming to foster awareness-raising about heritage, education, networking, quality and sustainable cross-border tourism and other related activities.

The EPA shall contribute to reinforcing the potential of cultural routes 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. It 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. It shall contribute to the preservation of a diverse heritage through theme-based and alternative tourist itineraries and cultural projects.

The EPA shall contribute to the development and promotion of the cultural routes concept in all its aspects in order to raise awareness globally of Europe as a tourism destination of a unique value and quality.

Definitions

Cultural Route: 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.

Cultural Route operator: an organisation or a grouping of organisations legally registered in one or several of the Council of Europe member States, or a public institution, which carries the legal, financial and moral responsibility for the management and functioning of a cultural route and represents the route vis-à-vis the Council of Europe.

“Council of Europe Cultural Route” certification: certification awarded to cultural routes that satisfy the criteria outlined in CM/Res(2013)67 revising the rules for the award of the “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” certification.

1.2 Tasks

Policy making and standard setting

The EPA, drawing in particular on the expertise of the European Cultural Routes Institute, shall provide advice and expert assistance for the development, implementation, evaluation and promotion of cultural routes. This involves expertise on:

- setting up and functioning of project networks and organisations and the development of co-operation agreements;
- research on the historical background of the routes and the development of the cultural and educational content and activities of the cultural routes;
- development of a sustainable tourist offer based on the cultural routes, thus contributing to the economic well-being of regions;
- preparation and implementation of financing and promotion strategies;
- training and capacity-building for cultural routes operators, in particular in relation to Council of Europe and other international standards in the field of heritage and culture, as well as standards of professional practice in the field of tourism;
- promotion, visibility and all other aspects related to the compliance with the Council of Europe standards.

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.

The EPA shall award the Council of Europe Cultural Route certification in accordance with Resolution CM/Res(2013)67 revising the rules for the award of the “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” certification.

1.3 Programme of activities

EPA shall implement a programme of activities as decided by the Governing Board.

Article 2 – Accession and participation

2.1 Any member State of the Council of Europe or a Contracting Party to the European Cultural Convention, as well as the European Union, may join the EPA by notification addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

2.2 The Committee of Ministers, in its composition restricted to the representatives of the member States of the EPA, may, by the majority stipulated in Article 20.d of the Statute of the Council of Europe, invite any non-member State of the Council of Europe to join the EPA, following consultation of EPA members which are not members of the Council of Europe. A non-member State which receives such an invitation shall notify the Secretary General of its intention to become a member of the EPA.

2.3 Member States of the Council of Europe and other Contracting Parties to the European Cultural Convention not joining the EPA may request the status of observer with EPA for a period of maximum one year, without any financial contribution. Decisions in such matters will be made by the Governing Board of the EPA.

2.4 The European Union is invited to join the EPA with the same rights and obligations as the other members of the EPA. Pending its accession to the EPA, the European Union will continue to participate in the work in accordance with arrangements laid down by each body of the EPA.

2.5 In accordance with Statutory Resolution Res(93)28 on partial and enlarged agreements and at their request, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (OMT), the OECD and UNESCO will be invited to participate in meetings of the EPA as observers without the right to vote.

2.6 The Committee of Ministers, in its composition restricted to the representatives of the States members of the Enlarged Partial Agreement, may, by the majority stipulated in Article 20.d of the Statute of the Council of Europe, following consultation of EPA members which are not members of the Council of Europe, authorise the EPA to invite other international intergovernmental organisations, the representative of the Council of Europe Cultural Routes, NGOs or other bodies who contribute to EPA’s objectives, to participate in its work, without the right to vote.

2.7 The Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the Conference of INGOs, may participate in the work of the EPA in accordance with Article 3.5 below.

Article 3 – Governing Board

3.1 The Governing Board of the EPA shall be composed of one representative appointed by each member of the EPA.

3.2 A member of the relevant intergovernmental committee¹ to which the Governing Board reports on its decisions, shall be invited to participate in its meetings, in order to facilitate this committee's consultative role concerning decisions on certification provided for in Resolution CM/Res(2013)67. The modalities of the consultation are the subject of a provision of the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Board.

3.3 The Governing Board shall elect from among its members a Bureau comprised of a chair, one vice-chair, three other members, for a term of office of two years, renewable only once.

3.4 The Governing Board shall:

- be responsible for the general implementation of the tasks conferred to the EPA;
- award the Council of Europe Cultural Route certification in accordance with Resolution CM/Res(2013)67 revising the rules for the award of the "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe" certification;
- adopt the draft annual programme of activities of the EPA and submit it, in conformity with the Financial Regulations of the Council of Europe, to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe relating to the elaboration of the draft annual budget, prior to its transmission to the Statutory Committee;
- decide on projects consistent with the Council of Europe's political priorities;
- oversee relations with the European Cultural Routes Institute in order to ensure the consistency between its actions and the EPA programme of activities;
- monitor the implementation of the programme of activities;
- adopt and transmit an annual activity report to the Committee of Ministers.

3.5 The Governing Board shall meet once a year. It may invite representatives of the relevant Council of Europe bodies to attend its meetings, without voting rights, according to the items on its agenda.

3.6 The Governing Board may assign operational tasks to its Bureau by a two thirds majority. The Bureau shall be convened by the chair of the Governing Board at least once a year.

3.7 The Governing Board shall adopt its decisions by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, with each member having one vote. Procedural matters shall be settled by a majority of the votes cast. In all other matters, the Governing Board shall adopt its own rules of procedure and any other arrangements for the implementation of its activities.

Article 4 – Statutory Committee

4.1 The Statutory Committee shall be composed of the representatives on the Committee of Ministers of the member States of the Council of Europe which are participating in the EPA and of representatives specifically designated to that effect by the non-member States participating in the EPA. The Statutory Committee shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, the rules of procedure of the Committee of Ministers.

4.2 The Statutory Committee shall determine every year the total of members' compulsory contributions to the EPA and the scale of contributions according to which that total shall be apportioned

¹ At the time of adoption of this resolution, this committee is the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP).

between the participating States; as a general rule, that scale shall conform to the criteria for the determination of the scale of contributions to the General Budget of the Council of Europe.

4.3 The Statutory Committee shall adopt, every year, the budget of the EPA on expenditure relating to the implementation of the programme of activities and common secretariat expenditure.

4.4 The Statutory Committee shall approve, every year, the annual accounts of the EPA, which shall be drawn up by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Council of Europe and submitted to the Statutory Committee accompanied by the report of the External Auditor, as provided for in the Financial Regulations. In order to give discharge to the Secretary General in respect of his or her management for the financial year in question, the Statutory Committee shall transmit to the Committee of Ministers the annual accounts, together with its approval or any comments along with the comments submitted by the Governing Board and the report drawn up by the External Auditor, as provided for in the Financial Regulations.

Article 5 – Cultural Routes Advisory Forum

5.1 A meeting of representatives of cultural routes operators, networks, international heritage and tourism organisations and platforms, local and regional authorities, civil society organisations, Chambers of Commerce, foundations and other donor organisations, professional organisations in the field of tourism, heritage and culture or other relevant bodies will take place annually in the form of a Cultural Routes Advisory Forum.

5.2 Participation in the Forum will take place upon invitation or registration accepted by the Secretariat of the EPA.

5.3 The Forum will discuss trends and challenges in relation to cultural routes and provide a platform for the exchange of experience, review of progress with the implementation of cultural routes, debates on new professional practice, the launch of new initiatives and the development of partnerships.

Article 6 – Budget

6.1 The EPA resources shall comprise:

- annual contributions from each member joining the EPA;
- any other payment, donation or bequest, subject to the provisions of paragraph 6.3 below.

The EPA may receive contributions by the European Union.

6.2 Expenditure related to the implementation of the programme of activities and common secretariat expenditure shall be covered by the partial agreement budget funded by the members of the EPA. The expenditure for the seat of the EPA, as well as that related to the staff and operational costs of the European Cultural Routes Institute, shall appear in the accounts of the EPA as an information item.

6.3 The EPA may also receive voluntary and other contributions connected with the work of the agreement, subject to the authorisation of the Governing Board prior to their acceptance. These contributions shall be paid into a special account, opened under the terms of Article 4.2 of the Financial Regulations of the Council of Europe, monitored by the Governing Board and shall be earmarked for the objectives and tasks specified, provided that they are consistent with the aims of the statute.

6.4 The EPA assets shall be acquired and held on behalf of the Council of Europe and shall benefit as such from the privileges and immunities applicable to the Council's assets under existing agreements.

6.5 Travel and subsistence expenses of persons attending meetings of the Governing Board and its Bureau and, where appropriate, of the Statutory Committee shall be borne by the State or the organisation concerned.

6.6 The travel and subsistence expenses of persons attending the Cultural Routes Advisory Forum shall be paid by the participants, unless otherwise decided by the Governing Board on the basis of special purpose allocations specified in the operational budget of the EPA.

6.7 The Financial Regulations of the Council of Europe shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the adoption and management of the EPA budget.

Article 7 – Secretariat

7.1 The Secretariat of the EPA, headed by an Executive Secretary, shall be provided by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

7.2 The Executive Secretary may call on institutions and independent experts in the areas concerned by the programme.

7.3 The seat of the EPA is located in Luxembourg, in the premises of the European Cultural Routes Institute, by courtesy of the Government of Luxembourg.

Article 8 – Amendments

The Committee of Ministers, in its composition restricted to the representatives of the States members of the EPA and after consultation with EPA members that are not members of the Council of Europe, may adopt amendments to this statute by the majority provided for under Article 20.d of the Statute of the Council of Europe.

Article 9 – Withdrawal

9.1 Any member may withdraw from the EPA by means of a declaration sent to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

9.2 The Secretary General shall acknowledge receipt of the declaration and so inform the members of the EPA.

9.3 By analogy with Article 7 of the Statute of the Council of Europe, withdrawal shall take effect:

- at the end of the financial year in which it is notified, if such notification is given before 1 June of that financial year;
- at the end of the following financial year, if notification of withdrawal is given on or after 1 June of the financial year.

9.4 In accordance with Article 18 of the Council of Europe's Financial Regulations, the Governing Board shall examine the financial consequences of the withdrawal of a member and shall make the appropriate arrangements.

9.5 The Secretary General shall immediately inform the member concerned of the consequences of its withdrawal.