



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



IN SKOPJE, THE CYRIL AND METHODIUS ROUTE INTRODUCED A NEW MAGAZINE AND ADMITTED NEW MEMBERS

Press release of the European Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius

ZLÍN – SKOPJE, 26 May 2024

Having been invited by the Institute of Macedonian Literature at Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje, the Cyril and Methodius Route – a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe took part in the Cyril and Methodius national celebrations in North Macedonia. The new magazine *Europe – Along the Cyril and Methodius Route*, which is currently being released, was inaugurated at the Europe House on 20 May.

‘The 90-page magazine, on which we and our members have worked intensively for more than six months, is our invitation to the Cyril and Methodius Route in all the participating countries. We appreciate the personal presence of Ms Marija S. Gjorgova, State Secretary at the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of North Macedonia, Ms. Jovanka K. Gjorgjeska, Councillor for cultural policies and cultural development, H. E. Jaroslav Ludva, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to North Macedonia, H. E. Henrik Markuš, Ambassador of Slovakia to North Macedonia, and other eminent guests at this festive event,’ Ms Zuzana Vojtová, Director of the ‘European Cultural Route of Sts. Cyril and Methodius’ Association said.

The event was followed by the launch of the Macedonian translation of the novel ‘Blue Dřevnice Waltz’ by Antonín Bajaja. The book was translated by Ms Sonja Stojmenska-Elzeser. Both publications were presented on the occasion of the Cyril and Methodius national celebrations and of the regular meeting of the members of the European Cultural Route of Saints Cyril and Methodius held for the first time in North Macedonia. The members from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Greece attended the meeting in Skopje personally, while others joined online. Inaugurated by Mr Zoran Ljutkov, Minister of Culture and Tourism of North Macedonia, and Prof. Natasha Avramovska, director of the organizer – the Institute of Macedonian Literature, it took place at the Porta Macedonia, a structure reminiscent of the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, on 21 May.

Minister Zoran Ljutkov said, *‘This route reminds us that culture is our strongest tool for peace, for respect, for togetherness. At a time when the world is still facing division and uncertainty, we are here building strong bridges — with words, with values, with spirit. As the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, we will continue to support this route with great respect and enthusiasm — to strengthen it, to expand it, and above all, to make it visible and alive for the youth, for those who come after us, who will carry forward the torch of Cyril and Methodius.’*

The General Assembly also facilitated a meeting of Prof. Valentina Gechevska, Vice-Rector for Science at Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, and Prof. Reneta Bozhankova, Vice-Rector of the Sofia University, Faculty of Slavic Studies.

As Mr Ivan Láska, a Councillor of the Zlín Region and the newly elected Chairperson of the European Cultural Route of Sts. Cyril and Methodius said, *‘We deeply appreciated the invitation from our colleagues from the University of Skopje to hold a regular meeting of the members at this time of the year, when we commemorate the importance of the Apostles of the Slavs for the development of the culture of the Slavic nations and also the 1140th anniversary of the demise of St. Methodius. We discussed the possibilities of promoting the Cyril and Methodius Route and our joint activities planned for the future. Another important point of the meeting was the admission of new members from Bulgaria and Slovakia.’*

The membership network has grown to include 6 new members: the Sofia University ‘Saint Kliment Ohridski’; the National High School for Ancient Languages and Cultures ‘St. Constantine-Cyril the Philosopher’, Sofia; the ‘Glagolitica Foundation’, Sofia; the Bulgarian Cultural Institute in Bratislava; the ‘Bratislava Tourism’ Regional Tourism Organization; and the Municipality of Selce (Slovakia).

After the meetings in Skopje, the representatives of the association moved to Ohrid where they met with the Mayor, Mr Kiril Pecakov, representatives of the Ohrid-based Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality of St. Clement of Ohrid University of Bitola and of the Museum of Ohrid. The programme of the journey also included sightseeing of Ohrid’s churches and monasteries and experiencing the living legacy of the followers of the saint brothers – St. Naum and St. Clement of Ohrid.

Bringing together sites, monuments, cultural institutions, and tourist attractions from countries of Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe, the Cyril and Methodius Route is one of 48 cultural routes certified by the Council of Europe. Currently, the association developing the Route has

43 members from 10 countries – the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Greece, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, and Italy. Its activities promote the living Cyril and Methodius heritage and values based on respect and dialogue between people of different cultures and faiths.

Photos by Martin Peterka.

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