



## **The Study on European Cultural Routes impact on SMEs innovation and competitiveness**

### **Methodology**

The Study managing team (CoE) set up an advisory group with key partners – including representatives from the EC (DG Enterprise and Industry, DG Education and Culture), the European Travel Commission, and the European Institute of Cultural Routes (EICR). Considering the complexity and novelty of the field, a consultative group of experts from academia and practice ensures the input of a range of disciplines, professional backgrounds and partner organisations and guarantee a sound methodology.

The methodology is based on a set of case studies, which will cover the following routes: the Hansa, the Legacy of Al-Andalus, the Via Francigena, the Olive Tree, and the Transromanica. Five experts will work on these case studies from January 20, 2011 till March 21, 2011.

In addition, work will be carried out on transversal themes to more precisely identify the factors that may explain the variety of the results of 5 Cultural Routes case studies and to place the Study findings in the broader European context. This task is planned to be accomplished by the end of April 2011. The transversal themes will include: current tourism trends in Europe, Cultural Routes managing structures (organisations), role of new technologies (primarily ICT) in shaping CRs tourism potential, network and cluster analyses, and SMEs innovation and competitiveness.

The study will also raise awareness about Cultural Routes and facilitate knowledge exchange with different European networks, institutions, and organisations, particularly those active in the field of tourism (NEXTOUR), culture (DG Education and Culture at the EC), SMEs development and innovation (European Business Network), as well as with Cultural Routes coordinators via a series of meetings, documents exchange, and conference participation. Two large-scale visibility events are planned at the EICR, Luxembourg, at the end of March 2011, and in Brussels (European Parliament) in June 2011.