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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

NINETEENTH COUNCIL OF EUROPE MEETING
OF THE WORKSHOPS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION

*Organised under the auspices of the Czech Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers
of the Council of Europe*

“The implementation of the European Landscape Convention at local level: local democracy”

Brno, Czech Republic,
5-6 September 2017
Study visit, 7 September 2017

WORKSHOP 2

Portugal – The landscape in the revision of municipal master plans: guidelines for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention at municipal level

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This presentation focuses on an approach to the landscape in the elaboration process of municipal master plans, highlighting the aspects particularly relating to public participation, since one of the main subjects of the workshop is local democracy. It collects some of the concepts, ideas and principles which are foreseen in the Portuguese guide, *The Landscape in the revision of the municipal master plans: guidelines for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention*.

The European Landscape Convention was ratified to Portuguese Legislation in 2005. In 2006 we identified, in the Portuguese National Programme of Spatial Planning Policy (now under review), aimed at developing a National Policy on Architecture and Landscape: this was approved in 2015.

To improve the role of Landscape in spatial planning at a municipal level, it is important at the outset to consider three questions: what principles should we follow (taking into account European Landscape Convention principles)? What questions should be the object of our reflection? Which are the main steps?

Following these principles, and in line with the subject of this workshop, it is important to promote reflection, leading people to think about the proposals that are being considered. In this process the main stakeholders can be not only the mayors and local authorities, technicians and experts, but also the inhabitants; researchers; farmers; hunters; experts; ecologists and visitors. The participatory process can range from a simple consultation procedure (in order to obtain information) to an active set of workshops with the aim of involving different stakeholders during the various spatial planning process stages.

Looking to the current procedures of the elaboration of a municipal master plan, a possible approach to tackling landscape issues is to consider three main steps: (1) analysis and diagnosis; (2) proposal and (3) management. Landscape must be present in all the different planning phases, and not just at the beginning or the end.

In the first phase it should be understood in what type of landscape we are doing our local spatial plan. The dimensions that should be considered during the first phase are: spatial dimension (physical components, biodiversity and land use); temporal dimension (landscape change and multifunctionality) and the social dimension (landscape perception). The diagnosis focuses on strengths, values, opportunities and threats, weaknesses and constraints.

The proposal phase is also fundamental. In this phase several actions should be carried out, namely: identification and characterisation of the landscape and its main functions; definition of guideline measures for its management; promotion of public participation; definition of landscape quality objectives to the identified landscapes, using public consultation and defining measures to protect the character, values and qualities of the landscapes; planning the landscape looking forward to its valorisation, recovery and the building of new landscapes, and integrating the landscape with other dimensions of local planning.

A possible approach to identifying landscape quality objectives (LQO) involves following the identification of landscape units and the definition of legal regulations or mapping, with direct guidelines for the landscape, for instance with emphasis on public spaces; rural space; edification, etc. That process should amass the input from local community and scientific and technical insights. After the identification of LQOs it is necessary to define an Action Plan to perform the necessary actions to achieve those objectives, grouped in protection, management and spatial planning actions. It is also fundamental to define an engagement model in order to support the decision taken, allowing consensus-building and the sharing of responsibilities. This model should involve local authorities, NGOs; property developers and entrepreneurs of different activities settled in the area. All the stakeholders should accept a commitment in order to identify and manage human and financial resources to facilitate the Action Plan.

The management step is related to the implementation of municipal master plan proposals, including landscape management, discussion, negotiation and a share of responsibilities. It is recommended to create a municipal committee to the landscape with representatives from social, economic and cultural municipal stakeholders, and also institutions that are sensitive to landscape issues. The aim of the committee should be linked with the promotion of partnerships; carrying out training and awareness-

raising sessions; promoting pilot projects and developing and implementing applications relating to landscape projects.