COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

STEERING COMMITTEE FOR CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE (CDCPP)

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8th meeting of the Bureau

7 October 2015: 9h30 – 17h30

Council of Europe, Strasbourg
Palais de l'Europe, Room 17

2nd Council of Europe Platform Exchange on Culture and Digitisation (Linz, 4-5 September 2015)

2nd Council of Europe Platform Exchange on Culture and Digitisation

"Smart Creativity, Smart Democracy"

Linz, 4-5 September 2015

Draft Summary Report

Objectives

Following a first Platform Exchange held in summer 2014 in Baku, Azerbaijan, this years' event in Linz set out to explore latest developments and innovations relating to digital cultural creativity and its link to participation in democracy and gather suggestions towards building an "Internet of Citizens". Three background papers fed into this multi-stakeholder process that was held on 4-5 September in the framework of the 2015 Ars Electronica Festival (http://www.aec.at/postcity/en/):

- *Why Democracy Needs the Art and Culture, by Jaroslav Andel*
- *Overcoming Barriers to Creativity through Digitisation, by Divina Frau-Meigs*
- *Digital Culture, a Challenge and an Opportunity for Art Museums, by Pierre-Yves Desaive*

Results

70 participants from the world of arts/ culture/ science/ technology, cultural policy making, cultural research and academia attended the morning session at the Ars Electronica Centre (http://www.aec.at/center/) and some 45 participants took part in the afternoon session at the Post City Building (http://www.aec.at/postcity/en/).

Main insights and theses derived from eleven widely diverse project presentations on creative innovations and subsequent debates include:

- Digital arts and culture strongly empower citizens to create, innovate, participate, engage with society, critically point at concerns and raise awareness, generate income, integrate socially and contribute to cohesion.
- The potential for co-operation through the digital is almost infinite: everybody now is in "networking state of life".
- The power of digitisation for equal access, societal inclusion, promoting multiple cultural affiliations and multi-perspectivity could be used more actively (example of online games that can enhance positive learning, e.g. empathy).
- Most cultural institutions are not yet ready to face a newly emerging, uncontrolled "digital living culture".
- Digitisation has *not* necessarily increased the take-up of the offer of arts and culture by traditional cultural institutions - capacity needs to be built.
- However, the combination of analogue and digital culture is very promising: libraries acting as fab labs; museums embracing digital art sections...
- Digital means allow more direct communication between public authorities and people, which will eventually enhance a digital citizenship.

Linking ideas about democracy - i.e. human, social and political development - to digitisation and technology is a complex and rewarding undertaking at the same time. **The main challenges identified and suggestions made to enhance an "Internet of Citizens"** and a Democratic Internet, concern the following areas:

Infrastructure and net neutrality:

Open and unlimited access is key to developing creativity in society and empowering citizens. Free WIFI all over Europe as well as non-commercially driven search machines would be desirable. Public/civic and private interests seem to be in competition.

Copyright:

Ownership as a key principle does not fit today's networking, mixing, mashing, co-creating/ co-designing/co-producing culture. New solutions are required that combine the respect of IP and the new cultural production realities.

Funding:

Crowd funding and crowd sourcing must not replace public spending on the arts and culture.

Inclusiveness:

A multi-stakeholder and multidimensional approach is key to understanding and supporting digital culture and an assurance to "bring in all". Inclusiveness is also crucial for combining "old" and "new" cultural formats and for addressing the challenges of migration and mobility.

Connectivity:

The digital potential should be fully used. Existing professional networks are important as multipliers to enhance the impact of cultural action, including action supplied by relevant international bodies. It would be desirable that a European Cultural Digital Network acts as a link for the existing cultural portals.

Knowledge-base:

Overall, more research (incl. qualitative research) and associated indicators are required to understand the complexity of the Internet, audiences and their varying engagement.

Ethics & Education:

The discourse on and education for the digital world must entail training on civil and social conduct on the media. Additionally, media and information literacy is key for competent citizenry in the 21st century.

<u>Public Policy-making:</u>

The concept of the feed-back loop has been introduced during the meeting to explain the current gap between civic participation and the follow up action taken by the responsible stakeholders. It was emphasized that public authorities should close this feed-back loop and engage in more direct and personalized communication with citizens with the use of the digital tools. Simultaneously, the Internet is a public sphere and as such should be guided by internet ethics. Furthermore, policies tend to lack implementation and focus on the overly emphasized competitiveness. In this sense, cultural policy has limited regulative power regarding digitisation, but the power of culture (image, video, artefacts) is uncontested. Short and longer term visions and strategies are required to address the challenges of digitisation in a rapidly changing world.

Documentation on the Linz Platform Exchange

The event attracted strong social media coverage during the short timeframe of the campaign (227 posts; 110 users; reach 46, 698; impressions 165,536).

A film is available on the event:
https://cloudlogin.world4you.com/index.php/s/ET0pFlXdvFtoZXX

Input documents are available on the conference website and all presentations will be shortly added: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/digitisation/linz_en.asp

Follow-up

The conference film and a comprehensive report will be widely disseminated as well as the Recommendation on "The Internet of Citizens" once it is adopted by the Committee of Minsters of the Council of Europe.

In order to start the discussion and provide an initial platform for exchange of knowledge and proposals from the field, a Facebook group is being set-up for Platform Exchange participants
(https://www.facebook.com/login.php?next=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fgroups%2F16267363042751155%2F). In the medium term, a wider CoE Platform might be developed to accommodate the needs of the Internet of Citizens. A collection of good practices/online publication on culture and digitisation is in preparation.

The Platform Exchange 2016 will follow-up the Council of Europe's work on the "digital frontiers of democracy", in co-operation with all interested stakeholders.