



STEERING COMMITTEE FOR CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE (CDCPP)

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1st Plenary Session
Strasbourg, 14-16 May 2012

EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE CDCPP'S MEDIUM-TERM MISSION

DOCUMENT POUR DECISION

Item 4 of the draft agenda

Draft decision:

The Committee:

- **is invited** to discuss the document and agree on priorities and a follow-up strategy

**The CDCPP helping to pursue the
Priorities of the Council of Europe:**

**Developing a transversal vision of the culture,
Heritage and Landscape sectors with a view
to democratic involvement of citizens**

The global context and the Council of Europe's priorities

1. In the current context of crisis and budget difficulties in the member states, there is a reason to focus on culture and heritage as factors in economic development, social cohesion and democratic expression.

At the same time we are seeing a strong drive towards participative democracy, as witnessed by widespread protest movements in various parts of the world. The report which the independent "Group of Eminent Persons" submitted to the Council of Europe (CoE), "Living together: combining diversity and freedom in 21st century Europe", also identifies a series of risks facing Europe and provides pointers for a more effective approach to tackling the challenges and identifying possible solutions.

2. As part of the drive to refocus the CoE's programmes, activities relating to culture, heritage and landscape are managed within the Organisation's "Democracy" pillar. These activities, which are being overseen in 2012-2013 by the new Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP), have been included among the priorities for "democratic governance" and "development of sustainable democratic societies" in the Organisation's Programme of Activities 2012-13, with the following aims:

- identifying and formulating appropriate responses to the challenges facing society;
- preserving ethnic, cultural and religious diversity in our societies;
- improving mutual understanding and tolerance;
- reinforcing democratic practices on the ground and ensuring closer involvement by civil society;
- developing partnerships with the European neighbourhood and other international bodies.

3 The former CoE Steering Committees for culture (CDCULT) and cultural heritage and landscape (CDPATEP) already centred their action on "democratic governance" and "management of change" by fostering diversities, promoting dialogue and conflict prevention and reinforcing cohesion and participation. The CoE's various instruments were used to develop this action: formulating and monitoring common standards in line with changing needs and concepts (e.g. the Faro Convention, which adopts a different perception of heritage and its benefits); assisting countries in implementing these standards (e.g. cultural policy reviews, innovative pilot projects through regional co-operation, "intercultural cities" pilot project, etc); developing facilities for data collection and analysis (Compendium, CultureWatchEurope, Herein, European Landscape Convention Information System (ELCIS), etc.); and several high visibility actions (e.g. European Heritage Days and the Cultural Routes). Within this process, the CoE's

specific approach and working methods have also changed, moving on from exclusively intergovernmental co-operation to open engagement with civil society and networking.

Towards a medium-term vision of the CDCPP's work

4. In pursuance of its mandate, the CDCPP will have two major tasks to perform at its two plenary meetings and the meetings of its Bureau in 2012 and 2013:

- monitoring the implementation of the biannual programme adopted by the Committee of Ministers at the end of 2011, examining the items submitted for discussion and decision by the Committee and securing all the necessary information on the overall work;
- holding a creative exchange of views on the significance and scope to be assigned to the Committee's work, pinpointing new issues requiring CoE intervention; this will hopefully lead to proposals for a new programme for 2014 and the subsequent years.

5. In the light of the CoE's current goals, how can we give vital meaning to the sphere covered by the CDCPP and update the corresponding activities? The Committee needs a medium-term vision and a "main thread". This means:

- considering initiatives to **express CoE added value and which have impact**, i.e. investing in fields in which the CoE has played and still plays a pioneering role (or in unprecedented spheres where it might play such a role), disregarding those areas in which other organisations have already taken over and are better placed;
- boosting the **transversal integrated approach** emerging from the combination of the culture, heritage and landscape sectors within one committee, demonstrating that joint action by these sectors promotes the effective attainment of the CoE's goals in a multitude of ways.
- promoting the CoE holistic and integrated approach on culture and cultural and natural heritage as a factor for human, social and economic development. In a global economic crisis, it may be of particular importance to demonstrate how new models based on public/private/civic partnerships in culture and heritage contribute to the economic development at local, national and international levels.
- collecting and coordinating data and good practice exchange on culture and heritage, and make these available to member states and stakeholders through CoE information systems.

6. In addition to its current focus on the democratic management of diversity, the Steering Committee could take a leading role in the analysis and development of new modes of citizen participation and expression and new approaches to making culture and heritage a resource for sustainable development. This involves meeting a series of needs and aspirations which are expressed in practical democracy on the ground, especially **the right of individuals to participate in cultural life** (Art 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Art. 15 (1) (a) International Covenant on Economic, Social

and Cultural Rights, and Article 1 of the Faro Convention) and the right to a healthy environment. In order to promote more stable and cohesive societies, the vision must take account of the quality of relations not only among individuals and population groups, but also between citizens and their built and natural environment as a means of reducing tension and providing collective well-being (in fact this can also attract the support of both established populations and new arrivals).

7. The transversal approach combining the three CDCPP sectors could be linked to the concept of “cultural environment”, in the light of the European Union’s work on territorial cohesion, by bringing in the Council of Europe’s specific “human development” dimension.

The Council of Europe as an innovator in tackling social challenges

8. Defining a medium-term vision for the programme would involve defining main lines for transversal action combining a number of activities with the same rationale and approach. Without trying to anticipate the outcome of discussions. A number of possible lines of action are suggested below.

8.1 One of these lines of action might concern *interculturalism and conflict prevention*, which has been in the spotlight since the 2005 Summit, particularly via the CoE “White Paper” on Intercultural Dialogue. In the 2012-2013 programme, this issue underlies a series of activities on the ground (Intercultural Cities pilot project, technical assistance regarding landscapes in post-conflict areas, and also the interpretation and educational approach relaunched under the joint programmes of European Heritage Days, the European Cultural Routes and other activities).

8.2 Another line of action might concern *the democratic involvement of citizens in the sustainable management of their living environment*. Drawing on the outcome of the monitoring of four cultural heritage and landscape conventions and assistance and co-operation activities, this effort would use the quality of spatial development as a key factor for progress in democratic governance.

8.3 The relations with neighbouring countries and regions could also constitute another issue. The Southern Mediterranean has clearly become a priority for the Committee of Ministers and there is a growing demand from countries in Central Asia to join the European Cultural Convention. The CDCPP should have a discussion in this field and take a position as to whether CoE needs to open current projects and conceive future ones in a global perspective.

8.4 Other transversal lines of action could obviously emerge in a future debate on the renewal of themes such as cultural rights. While the context is unlikely to be conducive to relaunching a legal and political approach to the concept of cultural rights as such, other approaches would be quite topical. Several aspects of the impact of the digital revolution are being addressed by the CoE from the angle of public liberties and cybercrime, but what about its impact on cultural practices which are vital to the very exercise of citizenship? Such a discussion might refer not only to the theme of the protection of the intellectual property rights but to other divides in the digital field.

The Council of Europe as a platform for exchange and convergence

9. During its 2012-2013 mandate, the CDCPP might consider broadening its perspectives, if only because of its wide scope and the broad political framework in which it is working. This raises issues about the potential added value of the CoE's work as a crossroads for international reflection and exchange of experience between the action of the public authorities and other stakeholders.

9.1 The emphasis might shift to the encouragement of platforms and networks involving the public, private and voluntary levels.

- how to link up and ensure complementarity between the CDCPP's plenary meetings and the sectoral conferences which have been going on successfully for several years now (biannual conferences of the European Landscape Convention, annual CultureWatchEurope conferences, European Heritage Forum, and joint EU/CoE meetings). If these conferences continue, how, and how often, should their results be used at plenary meetings?
- how can we use the CDCPP's various information systems and networks to reinforce the CoE's role throughout the year as a centre for exchange and convergence of initiatives in partnership with other bodies (IGOs and NGOs), re-energising the creativity and innovation that can emerge from such intense exchanges? How to better disseminate and share information?

9.2 In addition to preparing the specific programme of the Conference of Ministers of Culture scheduled for April 2013 in the Russian Federation, a discussion is also needed on the future link-up between the work of the CDCPP as a steering committee and the organisation of any future specialised ministerial conferences, such as "European Heritage Ministers" or "Ministers responsible for Landscape and/or Spatial Development".

10. Another matter for debate would be updating the Committee's working methods in a Europe which has considerably changed since the establishment of the instruments mentioned in para. 3 above. Discussions were initiated at the time on the basis of a questionnaire sent to steering committees on the rationalisation of committee work. Clearly, the issue is not confined to the aspects of session preparation, internet communication and availability of electronic versions of working papers within the requisite timescales.

The Council of Europe as a joint-reference institutional framework

11. How might the CDCPP better ensure the effective implementation of conventions within its scope of responsibility? It is certain that CoE conventions may require sectoral Recommendations and additional guidelines.

12. This paper suggests options and possibilities for the Steering Committee to consider. The discussion to follow should encompass the views of member states in relation to future priorities bearing in mind the restrictions of human and financial resources.