



STEERING COMMITTEE FOR CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE (CDCPP)

CDCPP(2014)13 rev

Strasbourg, 12 March 2014

**3rd meeting
Strasbourg, 19-21 March 2014**

IDENTIFICATION OF BEST PRACTICES ON IMPROVING LIVING SPACES AND QUALITY OF LIFE, IN LINE WITH THE FARO AND LANDSCAPE CONVENTIONS

DOCUMENT FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

Item 6.6 of the draft Agenda

- the Committee is invited to take note of the best practices on improving living spaces, social inclusion and quality of life in line with the Faro Convention's Action Plan and the European Landscape Convention, with a view to their wide dissemination in member States for their exemplary value and as a source of inspiration.

1. Implementation of the Faro Convention's Action Plan

The *Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (the Faro Convention) was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 13 October 2005, and opened for signature to member States in Faro (Portugal) on 27 October of the same year. The *Faro Convention* entered into force on 1 June 2011.

In 2013, the Secretariat of the Council of Europe launched an "Action Plan for the promotion of the Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society" [document CDCPP(2013)16].

The idea was that the Action Plan should evolve gradually in order to encourage member States to ratify and ensure the implementation of the *Faro Convention*. This document reports on the first results and proposes other complementary actions.

The *Faro Convention* is in fact a "framework convention" which defines issues at stake, general objectives and possible fields of intervention where member States are invited to progress. Each State Party can decide on the most convenient means to implement the convention, according to its legal or institutional frameworks, practices and specific national experience. Compared to other conventions, the "framework convention" does not create specific obligations for action. It suggests rather than imposes. The "framework convention" is also more flexible in terms of following up the implementation. It considers this follow-up as a dynamic and voluntary best-practice sharing and development process.

1. It invites the State Parties to develop cooperation networks for the exchange of experience and launching of new projects. The role of the Secretariat is to increase the visibility and understanding of the *Faro Convention*. Three priority axes structure the current approach in relation to the political objectives of the Council of Europe:

- a. Strengthening social cohesion by managing diversity;
- b. Improving people's living environment and quality of life;
- c. Expanding democratic participation.

The first "**Faro Walk**" took the form of the "Marseilles Forum on the social value of heritage and the value of heritage for society", which was held in Marseilles (France) from 12 to 13 September 2013 (co-organised by the Council of Europe and the European Commission).

The Forum was based on numerous local citizens' experiences which, since 2005, have been developed with reference to the *Faro Convention*. What emerges from the observation of these experiences provides some significant conclusions (see conclusions and summary in Appendix):

- What in fact strikes us about the territories of the four municipalities involved in the "Marseilles Forum" is that ***the inhabitants come together and unite***, not only to defuse conflicts, but also because they have learnt the hard way that urgent day-to-day problems have to be resolved by themselves with the resources available locally.
- ***The geographically and culturally coherent territory becomes the source of a new "rootedness"***. The community becomes the key forum for sharing aspirations, expressing wishes and solidarities, sharing responsibilities, becoming actors and conducting practical action vis-à-vis an environment which has been appropriated and is now shared.
- Multiple stakeholders are involved: tenants' associations, local associations, groups of firms, artists' collectives and ordinary citizens who all work together to defend the quality of life in their neighbourhoods. ***The stakeholders identify with the territory to the extent of seeing themselves as part of their environment which is a heritage to be defended and promoted.***
- ***Constructing citizenship by example.*** An increasing range of interlinked initiatives is being established commanding the respect of local councillors, who have realised the importance of supporting these efforts and have helped prompt a similar realisation in others.

- ***The European reference offered by the Faro Convention facilitates the transition from mobilisation to action, and from action to lasting transformation*** by complementing and enriching the public action without ever challenging, contradicting or hampering it.

In fact, the Marseilles Forum has allowed a deeper interpretation of the most innovative aspects of the *Faro Convention* which ***emphasises an innovative approach to social, political and economic problems, using culture and heritage to reach all stakeholders in society***, including the most disadvantaged.

Broadening the heritage concept in a human rights and democracy perspective helps clarify the definition of the notion of “better living together”, which suggests making the most of cultural diversity in order to generate a local and European citizenship; taking combined action on the living environment and the quality of life in order to try out new economic models; and promoting democratic participation in order to influence policy-making and render it more legitimate and sustainable.

From this angle, the social value of heritage, as considered at the Marseilles Forum, could be defined by means of ***three main “notions”*** which form a common frame of reference for understanding and implementing the *Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*:

- a. Citizenship is based on a community, which is in turn based on a territory
- b. Social cohesion is newly founded on various modes of participation and involvement
- c. Local democracy reinforced by developing civil society’s capacities for action

Perspectives / new proposals

The "Action Plan for the promotion of the Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society" will be pursued in order to deepen the reflection on the social value of heritage, and also to launch reflections on the social and economic values of heritage. The goal is, in addition to promoting the *Faro Convention*, to gather as much information as possible on current experiences and initiatives, or to encourage future initiatives in European countries that are likely to contribute to the implementation of the Faro Convention's principles.

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2. Implementation of the European Landscape Convention’s Working Programme

The European Landscape Convention provides for a ‘Landscape Award of the Council of Europe’, which recognises policy or measures that local or regional authorities or non-governmental organisations have adopted to protect, manage and plan their landscapes, and that have proven to be lastingly effective and can thus serve as an example to other territorial authorities in Europe.

On 20 February 2008, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted Resolution CM/Res(2008)3 on the rules governing the Landscape Award. Every two years the Committee of Ministers makes the award, further to proposals from the committee of experts of the Council of Europe in charge of monitoring the implementation of the Convention.

The significant achievements in the member States on the occasion of the three sessions of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe – 2008-2009, 2010-2011, 2012-2013 –, show that it is possible to promote the territorial dimension of human rights and democracy by improving the features of the landscapes that surround us and thus people’s living conditions. These exemplary experiences selected at national level and presented at international level are important sources of inspiration.

See in particular:

– the ‘Landscape Award of the Council of Europe’ part of the website of the European Landscape Convention

Link to the website:

<http://www.coe.int/europeanlandscapeconvention>

– Publication “*Landscape Award of the Council of Europe*”, Council of Europe’s European Spatial and Landscape series, 2012, N° 96 (presentation of achievements of the Sessions 1 and 2 of the Award)

Link to the publication:

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/Publications/LandscapeAwards_en.pdf

– 11th Council of Europe Meetings of the Workshops for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention “*Council of Europe Landscape Award Forum of National Selections – Sessions 2008-2009 and 2010-2011*”, Carbonia (Italy), 4-5 June 2012

Link to the proceedings:

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/ReunionAteliers/carbonia_en.asp

APPENDIX



The “Faro Walks”: Marseilles Forum on the social value of heritage and the value of heritage for society (12-13 September 2013)

Conclusions and summary

Introduction

The “Marseilles Forum on the social value of heritage and the value of heritage for society” took place from 12 to 13 September 2013. Supported by the Council of Europe and the European Union, it was part of a series of actions to promote and implement the *Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*.

Initiated by four mayors from Marseilles and Vitrolles, co-ordinated by the “*Hôtel du Nord*” co-operative and co-financed by Marseille-Provence 2013 and the Bouches-du-Rhône Department Council, the Marseilles Forum dealt with human rights issues, cultural diversity and cultural identity, the integration of minorities and underprivileged groups, prevention of intolerance and discrimination, inter-faith dialogue and action in deprived urban and peri-urban areas.

The Forum was geared to:

- interpreting the *Framework Convention* on the basis of the Marseilles case study in order to highlight the most innovative aspects of this text, particularly where the “social values of heritage” are concerned;
- implementing appropriate follow-up action to the conclusions of the Forum, notably by identifying guidelines for public policy and lines of reflection for devising indicators with an eye to evaluating the various initiatives;
- providing a common reference framework for the current or future initiatives in the European countries likely to wish to help implement the principles of the *Framework Convention* and promote its ratification by the states.

Background

Marseilles: one million inhabitants; second city of France; its “quartiers Nord” (Northern districts). A zone designated as “*difficult*”. A disparate urban development complex cut off from the city centre, these neighbourhoods have come under a succession of extensive official programmes ever since the 1980s. Yet the problems in these districts do not seem to be in the process of resolution because of the sectorial approach adopted, which is social and urban by turns, but never truly comprehensive or systemic. In the final analysis, they are districts where the residents feel forgotten, isolated, rejected and invisible.



The Northern districts were originally a sprawling harbour zone and a hinterland long dedicated to agriculture. It was a landscape of great beauty which gradually incorporated small industrial units; these contributed to the enrichment of Marseilles in the 19th and early 20th centuries, principally with soap and tile manufacturers. The balances of the city were upset as from the 1950s, at the time of the first immigration waves destined to supply the burgeoning industrial powerhouse with labour, then the immigration linked to the political uncertainties of the Maghreb's phases of decolonisation. In the expansionist enthusiasm of the period, these upheavals were at first seen as opportunities. Architects and social designers envisaged utopias breaking with tradition and promising the new arrivals a role as pioneers of innovative, harmonious, people-friendly lifestyles. The "cités" (suburbs) thrived, each with its own logic and ambition.

The ideals of the architects were very quickly overwhelmed. Social changes linked with economic changes obliterated the initial goals. The humanist aims were subverted by the concepts of return on investment, restriction of public resources and contingency management. Competition between communities took hold, as did segregation, both nurtured by the ceaseless flood of migrations from more and more varied sources. The Northern districts became impoverished, inequalities more pronounced. The centre banished its problems to the outskirts, and they gradually accumulated into an ominous mass looming over the plain of Marseilles. This chaotic complex ringed the heart of the city, penetrated it in places, and over half the city's population ended up somehow or other crammed into it. Although the sea view from the Northern districts remained striking, the poverty belt permanently cut off these uprooted migrant populations from the nice neighbourhoods, jobs, services, culture and education. Poverty of architectural and urban design, social deprivation, economic want and psychological distress were the lot of more and more residents having less and less to do with each other and compelled to share out a straitened, blighted environment.

This summary of the urban history of Marseilles is an extreme revelation of the general post-war European urban development trend. The same phenomena occurred on different scales and in specific contexts, but all resulted, to differing degrees, in loss of bearings, breaking of historical continuity and general deterioration of the human environment both in old city centres and in outlying areas. The town became the setting for every kind of excess and reflected the aberrations of an economic system and economic paradigms at their last gasp.

The acquis of the Marseilles Forum

The approach prioritised by the "Marseilles Forum" was doubly innovative: first of all, the discussions were led by an international panel whose members represented a variety of geographical origins and functions: over thirty countries were represented by ambassadors, parliamentarians, international civil servants, NGOs and ordinary citizens. Secondly, the panel was invited to experience on the ground a series of ongoing civic initiatives, and to imbue themselves with these experiences in order to identify the initiatives which could be transposed Europe-wide. Some tentative conclusions might be worth mentioning:

- ***The striking thing about the territories of the four municipalities covered by the Marseilles Forum is that the populations get together*** in order to defuse latent or open conflicts. But the inhabitants also co-operate because they have learnt the hard way that problems must be tackled head-on, without awaiting any hypothetical solutions from elsewhere; they must resolve urgent day-to-day problems themselves with the resources available locally.
- ***The geographically and culturally coherent territory becomes the source of a new "rootedness"*** making it possible to integrate and to (re)construct one's identity. The build-up of individual worries and needs leads to a type of dialogue which is open to participation by all, and an acute sense of community promoting self-confidence and respect for others. The community becomes the key forum for sharing aspirations, expressing wishes and solidarities, sharing responsibilities, becoming actors and conducting practical action vis-à-vis an environment which has been appropriated and is now shared.

- **Multiple stakeholders are involved:** tenants' associations, local associations, groups of firms, artists' collectives and ordinary citizens who all work together in "*heritage communities*" to defend the quality of life in their neighbourhoods, with which they identify to the extent of seeing themselves as part of their environment which is a heritage to be defended and promoted. To this end, they research their histories, publish works ("*hospitality tales*"), arrange meetings and walks (*heritage walks, sound walks*), produce art work and stage artistic events (*Fenêtre augmentée* exhibition, *le Pont* exhibition, *postcards, sensory walks*), provide tourist accommodation (*Hôtel du Nord* bed and breakfast co-operative), pool their resources and try out forms of participatory democracy (*heritage committee*).
- **Constructing citizenship by example.** These often complex processes are contained, recognised and supported by the *Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*. An increasing range of interlinked initiatives is being established commanding the respect of local councillors, who have realised the importance of supporting these efforts and helped prompt a similar realisation in others. They accepted the principles of the Convention in 2005, approaching local social action from a European angle and legitimating it. Civic action illuminates and vivifies European principles. Europe is constructed bottom up, thanks to the willpower of its citizens.
- **The European reference facilitates the transition from mobilisation to action, and from action to lasting transformation** by facilitating synergies with the tools provided by the public authorities. Clearly, all these initiatives complemented and enriched the public action without ever challenging, contradicting or hampering it. Perceptions changed, attitudes evolved on all sides and facilitated a spirit of enterprise and development of the means of action. It was a case of empowerment through engagement.
- **As a confirmation of the value of these various activities,** the association comprising the towns and partners of the European Capital of Culture year (*Marseille-Provence 2013 Capitale Européenne de la Culture*) has built on the local citizen resources developed here so as to put in place ambitious structural projects designed to last beyond 2013: the first peri-urban long-distance footpath (GR) in France, extending 365 kilometres across 38 municipalities (GR2013); "Culture Pilots", a vocational integration programme for residents as tourist and cultural guides; and "*Hôtel du Nord*", the first residents' co-operative in Europe, which provides community-based tourist accommodation with around 50 qualified bed and breakfast hosts in the working class districts of Marseilles.

The joint EU/Council of Europe initiative in the framework of the Marseilles Forum showed, via the experience of Marseilles, that the *Framework Convention emphasises an innovative approach to social, political and economic problems, using culture and heritage to reach all stakeholders in society*, including the most disadvantaged. Broadening the heritage concept in a human rights and democracy perspective helps clarify the definition of the notion of "better living together", which suggests making the most of cultural diversity in order to generate a local and European citizenship; taking combined action on the living environment and the quality of life in order to try out new economic models; and promoting democratic participation in order to influence policy-making and render it more legitimate and sustainable.

From this angle, the social value of heritage could be defined by means of **three main "notions"** forming a common frame of reference for understanding and implementing the *Framework Convention on the Value of the Cultural Heritage for Society*:

d. Citizenship is based on a community, which is in turn based on a territory

Individuals often identify themselves primarily as members of a group with clear-cut boundaries in which they feel recognised as full actors. It is mainly within this group that they find mutual assistance, direct solidarity and conviviality, i.e. the opportunity to share quality time with people who have shared references and memory. This group, which we might call a "community", is not systematically linked to foreign origins or religious affiliation. It is not the abstract community based on awareness of common interests. Nor is it a community of circumstance, like informal groups of people who have been thrown together in the same places by various marginalisation processes. It is a community which possesses a certain capacity for durable organisation based only on non-institutionalised relations of internal mutual trust¹.

¹ Jacques Barou, "*La Communauté contre le communautarisme?*".

Such a community is rooted in a place, a territory with which it identifies at moments imposed in the imaginative world of all in the course of ancient or recent history. The imagination underpinning the community grows up from individual and collective representations of the territory and from the outside world's perception, appellation and narration of this territory. To requalify a stigmatised or impoverished territory, naming it and discussing it with words which express a strong sense of belonging, which give depth and ultimately a perspective, is also, for individuals who often have a painful past, a means of reconquering their dignity, rights and duties vis-à-vis society, of becoming a citizen.

e. *Social cohesion is newly founded on various modes of participation and involvement*

Social cohesion defines a society's capacity for ensuring the well-being of all its members, by reducing disparities and preventing marginalisation, which involves managing differences and removing divisions. The quest for a more egalitarian mode of "living together" is a dynamic process which must be invented, comprising balance between the state programmes and local action mechanisms. The aim is to identify an original way forward combining several implicit or explicit approaches resolutely geared to seeking convergences and complementarity with the public authorities:

- Developing residents' potential for action to promote individual and collective emancipation;
- A co-operative approach based on mutual trust and the search for collective solutions;
- Efforts to synergise all the stakeholders liable to contribute to the collective dynamics – artists, scholars, social workers, concerned citizens, journalists, academics, etc;
- Ensuring that public action serves the citizens again; a "public service" working with the population to pinpoint solutions;
- A will to unite and combine the treasure troves of knowledge built up in various parts of the territory, embracing town planning, architecture, housing, education, health, culture and immigration.

"Heritage communities"² establish dialogue in the community, which makes them forums for expressing opinions and engagement or commitment to social justice and democratic security. They form a rampart against divided, inegalitarian societies which cannot guarantee social stability in the long term.

f. *Local democracy reinforced by developing civil society's capacities for action*

Rationalisation of administrative structures, particularly through decentralisation, is mainly based on sharing of responsibilities. The emergence of a new generation of neighbourhood elected representatives, who are more present and active in the fields of everyday life and action on the living environment, is effectively redrawing the boundaries between civil society and the political community. These elected representatives tackle their public service mission more from the co-operation angle and do not make the construction of social cohesion subordinate to party political issues. However, not all the attempts hitherto to develop a genuinely participatory type of local democracy based on a battery of texts have been conclusive. Citizen participation cannot be imposed: it must be built up.

In this changing social and political landscape, the heritage communities provide an opportunity for a credible civic voice to be heard, based on the realities of a population awaiting concrete responses and simultaneously capable of formulating proposals itself. Provided that they are recognised as such by the public authorities, heritage communities function as intermediaries between various social and professional entities and a public sphere which is desperately looking for a direct link with the population which provides the legitimacy for its action.

² Article 2.b, Framework Convention on the Value of the Cultural Heritage for Society

Follow-up

The European Union and the Council of Europe will consider the most appropriate means of ensuring follow-up to the conclusions of the Marseilles Forum on the basis of the following activities:

1. Continuing discussions (to be organised in the framework of the “Faro Walks”) geared to both developing the different aspects which define the social value of heritage and analysing other (economic, cultural and political) heritage values using the same innovative approach as in Marseilles;
2. Organising workshops to verify or enrich, in various European towns, the relevance of the concepts set out in the “Marseilles Conclusions”;
3. Establishing a network of all the recognised initiatives relating to the *Framework Convention*;
4. Offering “Faro”-labelled “applications” (of the open-knowledge type) to encourage implementation of initiatives respecting the principles of the *Framework Convention*;
5. Holding promotion seminars to launch national debates on the ratification of the *Framework Convention*;
6. These and other activities could be developed in such a way as to guide public policies in member states having ratified the *Framework Convention*, but might also be replicated throughout Europe, in all the towns and regions, and even beyond our continent, with reference to the common framework as defined in Marseilles.