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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

STEERING COMMITTEE FOR CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE (CDCPP)

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**4th meeting
Strasbourg, 1-3 June 2015**

STATE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HEREIN ACTION PLAN 2014-2015

DOCUMENT FOR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

Item 5.2 of the draft Agenda

The Committee is invited to:

- review the latest developments and prospects regarding the HEREIN Information System;
- consider the achievements in 2014-15 in view of the 2016-2017 Action Plan.

Introduction

As part of its 2014-2015 Terms of Reference, the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape encouraged member States to increase their efforts and involvement in the HEREIN System, in line with its objective aimed at encouraging *“European platforms and networks - including electronic - to collect best practice of, and exchange experiences on, policies and strategies on culture, heritage and landscape and their value for society, bearing in mind the key role of the intergovernmental dialogue.*

In this context, the CDCPP underlined that *“Member States are assisted in the development of democratic policies in the field..... of heritage ... through ...the HEREIN information system”.*

The 2014-2015 Action Plan adopted at the CDCPP meeting in March 2014 was based on the launch of the improved HEREIN system (<http://www.herein-system.eu/>), and envisaged the gradual expansion of the HEREIN activities, in two main phases:

- a. Ensuring the transfer and updating of the national reports – system operability (2014);
- b. Upgrading the database into a knowledge base (improvement of content, analysis of data, setting up of partnerships – 2015).

The expected results targeted by the end of 2015 should confirm HEREIN’s position at the core of the Council of Europe’s activities in the field of heritage, and achieve the institutional objectives foreseen originally.

This report presents the state of progress of activities.

1.0 Background

HEREIN was set up on the basis of the conclusions of the 4th European Conference of Ministers responsible for Cultural Heritage (Helsinki, 1996) and Resolution No 2 (III.2) of the 5th ministerial Conference (Portorož, 2001). A Charter on the functioning of HEREIN was adopted by the CDCPP in 2012 [document CDPATEP(2011)25, not updated since 2012] which specifies:

- The purpose of HEREIN, is to facilitate co-operation among all European countries to further develop and adapt heritage policies and practices;
- HEREIN is based on an active network of public heritage authorities in 43 States Parties to the European Cultural Convention (CETS No. 018), which appoint national HEREIN co-ordinators, and on communication and interactive work tools.
- It is also an information tool for regional and technical assistance programmes. HEREIN is directly accessible to a broad audience, not only national and local authorities but also conservation and development professionals, researchers and the general public.
- HEREIN is a pan-European database on heritage policies, which covers the architectural and archaeological heritage seen in the light of the Faro Convention principles. It provides an overview of the heritage policies pursued in member States (identification, inventories, protection, conservation, financing, integrated conservation and sustainable development strategies, dissemination and awareness-raising, innovation, etc). The information, accessible by theme or country, is entered and updated directly by the national co-ordinators. The system allows for extraction of data to meet users’ needs.
- Members’ commitments are to:

- maintain an ongoing relationship between their representative on the Steering Committee, their national co-ordinator and the senior cultural heritage officials of their country in order to steer the activities relating to the follow-up of conventions and the development of the HEREIN system;
 - develop and regularly update the national/regional information entered into the database on heritage policies in the specified format and provide the necessary information for the other services offered by HEREIN;
 - co-operate with the Secretariat in the active running of the network;
 - promote the Network and its activities, products and services at national level.
- The Council of Europe's contribution, on the basis of earmarked resources in its budget, and a "special account" budgetary line funded by voluntary contributions from various countries, ensures the hosting of the HEREIN server and a Secretariat. The Secretariat co-ordinates and supervises the HEREIN activities, manages the HEREIN database and website, ensures the implementation of any joint projects with other partners such as the EU, promotes HEREIN and its activities, products and services, and maintains relations with specific external partners.

Moreover, HEREIN has been designed to become a reference point for intergovernmental co-operation and the work of INGOs and NGOs. Over the years, several other heritage data bases have been created (UNESCO, European Network of Cultural Centres, International Art and Heritage Law database, etc.). However these respond to specific purposes and are not based on the same principles and do not suggest the same possibilities in terms of cooperation. Complementarities should be sought and defined with other stakeholders when possible, and proposed for potential partnerships.

Finally, HEREIN has been identified as an existing efficient tool for following up the objectives of the European conventions during the 6th Conference of the Council of Europe of Ministers responsible for Heritage held in Namur (Belgium, 22-24 April 2015).

HEREIN's main added value is that it already exists, and it has the capacity to move rapidly towards a best practices database. It promotes a pragmatic approach and already contributes to designing and implementing cultural heritage strategies, and would easily facilitate the exchange of information and therefore, the comparison of legislation and policies which are essential for assistance and cooperation. Increasingly, HEREIN goes alongside the other permanent Council of Europe major tools in the field of heritage, namely the *Technical Cooperation and Consultancy Programme*.

2.0 Action Plan achievements

At the 13th HEREIN Coordinators' meeting held in Mons (Belgium) in November 2014 as part of the Belgium chairmanship of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, a road map was adopted. It defined new objectives based on the consolidated data base, aimed at progressively developing the System into a "knowledge base", more oriented to exchange and cooperation. Significant complementary efforts had to be made first in order to secure the Network and to consolidate the System. The main progress and achievements are the following:

- a. one Project Officer (temporary position) and one webmaster (expert contract) are strengthening the Secretariat's management capacities. Their involvement has been made possible thanks to the voluntary contributions provided by France and Finland.
- b. A large number of country members have confirmed or nominated new Coordinators (the 43 country members now have a national Coordinator).
- c. Focus has been placed on the publication and update of the national reports (about 30 have been published so far) by using the questionnaire developed in previous phases. The System facilitates the search for information according to specific themes (Organisations, Knowledge and Protection, Conservation and Management, Financial Policy, Access and Interpretation, Digitisation and Heritage Legislation). It includes photos and links to national/regional legislation and information of interest.
- d. Accessibility to the System has been improved thanks to short overviews presented by each country member summarising its policies and strategies linked to national heritage management (specificities, characteristics, facts, challenges, etc.). These texts explain the coordination between the competencies at both national and local levels, and provide an organisational chart on the management structure, as well as a list of main legal reference texts and the ratified Conventions. So far, 5 country profiles have published their profiles, and 14 are underway. 30 are expected to be published before the end of June.
- e. New types of additional information are being integrated into the System. So far, all Council of Europe reference documents relating to cultural heritage are accessible (as listed in "European Cultural Heritage", volumes I (ISBN 92-871-4864-3) and II (ISBN 92-871-4867-8). Reports and material produced as part of the Technical Cooperation and Consultancy Programme related to the Integrated Conservation of the Cultural and Natural Heritage will progressively be published in the System.
- f. The "crowdfinding" tool has been created as a new service placed at the disposal of the country members. It is designed to launch a rapid research and consultation process through the network about specific issues in order to compare existing practices, tools or legal mechanisms throughout Europe. Coordinators are mobilised to provide precise information according to the terms of the procedure defined. The activation of the "crowdfinding" could be at the initiative of the coordinators or their colleagues in specialised services according to their needs, or at the request of the national authorities. The efficiency of the "crowdfinding" needs to be confirmed in order to encourage member States to use it more extensively and also to invite partners to use it for their specific purposes. It is expected that the multiplication of the "crowdfindings" on urgent heritage issues will enrich the data base and develop the capacities of the network. Since it started in December 2014, two "crowdfindings" have been carried out: The first one on investigating European experiences to contribute to a reflection about "A project for a European event about gardens" collected 21 responses/contributions. The second one is underway and is collecting information about a European directive "REACH concerning the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals". Two additional crowdfindings are expected before the end of June.

3.0 Action Plan - remaining objectives / challenges

The results of the HEREIN Action Plan will lead to proposals to be submitted to the CDCPP meeting in 2016 and to be implemented as part of the 2016-2017 Action Plan. The CDCPP might be invited to consider relevant amendments to the 2011 HEREIN Charter, and accordingly, to actively oversee HEREIN, define its policy lines and operational arrangements, decide to adapt or extend the fields covered bearing in mind the focuses of the various conventions and topical events, subject to the availability of the necessary material resources. In the meantime, the final targets of the 2014-2015 Action Plan are:

- i. To ensure that all Coordinators have at their disposal the information and tools for accomplishing their tasks, and to make sure that the 43 country members are allocating relevant resources to their participation in HEREIN.
- ii. To publish and revise all the national reports.
- iii. To develop the quality of information published. This will be through the evolution of the existing questionnaire which was prepared years ago in accordance with different technical specificities. A new logic has to be integrated into the questionnaire, which will facilitate the tasks of the Coordinators. For this purpose, HEREIN workshops will be proposed to countries where Coordinators need support or training, and/or where HEREIN projects still need explaining to national stakeholders. These workshops could acquire a regional dimension where several countries agree to share their questions and experiences. Moreover, the HEREIN Thematic working groups will be set up in order to assess the value and impact of information made available through the system, and to build up a process aimed at providing transversal information directly relevant to the issues at stake in member countries.
- iv. To develop the use of HEREIN as a knowledge base in order to enable the exchange of information, comparison of practices and cooperation and to contribute to consolidate the Council of Europe role as platform of convergence as regards the Namur 6th Conference of the Council of Europe of Ministers responsible for cultural heritage.
- v. To develop the network and include international bodies. Partnerships are necessary in order to capitalise on HEREIN, respond to the needs expressed as part of different European forums, and avoid overlapping and waste of resources or energies. Coordination, cooperation and partnerships will consider various options:
 - Within the Council of Europe, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe or the Parliamentary Assembly might have interests which need to be investigated.
 - The European Union with whom relations and cooperation are constantly improving, is expressing its needs and already taking initiatives, as for example part of the project "Cultural heritage counts for Europe: Towards a European Index for Cultural Heritage" which partly goes in the same direction as HEREIN. Other EU bodies should be taken into consideration, for example the European Parliament Research Service. This does not yet have any specific system on cultural policies and could be interested in having direct and instantaneous access to cultural policy-makers as it responds to requests on cultural heritage.

- Strategic partnerships might also be investigated further, not only to access information, but also to adapt HEREIN services to specific needs and uses, as for example towards the European Heritage Heads Forum, the European Archaeological Consilium, ICOMOS, and in general all NGOs observers in the CDCPP.
 - Connections with existing data bases should be foreseen: NEMO (Network of European Museum Organisations), URBACT (European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development which is a network bringing together 181 cities, 29 countries, and 5,000 active participants), LUDEN (Local urban development European Network which is a network for mutual co-operation focusing on major transitions taking place across the EU and which effect cities, towns and the surrounding countryside (info on local development projects), and so on.
- vi. To ensure that Council of Europe projects will contribute to the data base and will benefit HEREIN which could act as a collaborative platform. Work is already in progress to adapt specific services to the Council of Europe Confidence Building Programme, which has projects related to heritage implemented by the Directorate of Political Affairs. The “Community-Led Urban Strategies in Historic Towns” currently underway in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in cooperation with the European Union will use HEREIN to gather information and results.