



STEERING COMMITTEE FOR CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE (CDCPP)

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

ACTION PLAN 2014-2015 FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON THE VALUE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE FOR SOCIETY State of progress

DOCUMENT FOR DECISION

Item 5.2 of the draft Agenda

The Committee is invited to:

- assess the state of progress of the Action Plan;
- validate the results so far (§ 2);
- agree on the issues still to be developed (§ 3).

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

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 entered into force on 1 June 2011. To date, seventeen member States have ratified it and five others have signed it.

During its plenary session of 27-29 May 2013, the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) adopted the "Faro Action Plan 2014-2015", enabling the Secretariat of the Council of Europe to initiate reflection on the value of heritage for society and initiatives to promote the Faro Convention.

1.2 Objectives of the Faro Convention

The Faro Convention completes the other conventions related to cultural heritage adopted by the Council of Europe, from the European Cultural Convention (1954) through to the European Landscape Convention (2000), and including the Convention on the architectural heritage (Granada, 1985), and the Convention on the archaeological heritage (Valletta, 1992).

As a "*framework convention*", the Faro Convention is part of the Council of Europe mechanisms aimed at helping member States to address the societal issues at stake, individually or collectively. Its main originality is that it concerns mainly society, and proposes acting for society. It encourages reflection about the role of citizens in the process of defining, deciding and managing the cultural environment where they live, by asking the following question: *for what and for whom should cultural heritage be enhanced* (the previous conventions replied rather to the question: *how to preserve cultural heritage*).

1.3 The Faro Action Plan 2014-2015

The Faro Action Plan aims to facilitate understanding of the richness and novelty of the Faro convention's principles, to propose interpretation guidelines corresponding to the current societal issues at stake, develop common references and create mechanisms and tools to encourage initiatives relating to the convention's principles.

The process is based on three priority axes and six objectives chosen in order to underline the contribution of this convention to the political objectives of the Council of Europe:

Priority 1: The management of cultural diversity for cohesive societies

Objective 1: To strengthen the public interest in heritage in order to stimulate investments preserving and enhancing the social and economic values of the heritages (Articles 5a, 5b and 10a).

Objective 2: To promote conciliation and reconciliation in order to bring together within a community the divergent interests, and to allow dialogue to become one of the main forces for sustainable development (Articles 5f, 7a, 7b and 7c).

Priority 2: The improvement of the living environment and quality of life

Objective 3: To encourage a high quality architectural and urban design enriched by the cultural diversity of the territories and their traditions (Articles 5e and 8d).

Objective 4: To bring together the objectives related to economic efficiency, social cohesion and ecological balance within heritage-led strategies that allow for the combined action of public authorities, investors and civil society (Articles 5g, 8a, 8b, 9a, 10b, 10c, 11a, 11b, and 11c).

Priority 3: The development of democratic participation

Objective 5: To implement a “shared responsibility” involving citizens and civil society in mechanisms integrated with public action in order to identify values, define priorities and manage heritage-led projects (Articles 5c, 5d, 11d, 11e, 12a and 12c).

Objective 6: To encourage a sense of responsibility in all social stakeholders so that they act on the basis of feeling they belong to a community which is enriched by its diversity (Articles 8c, 9b, 9d).

2.0 The results of the Faro Action Plan

The Steering Committee has already been informed about the acquis in the intermediary reports presented by the Secretariat either at the June 2014 plenary meeting or at the CDCPP Bureau in 2014 and 2015.

2.1 A common reference framework to understand the scope of the Faro Convention

The Marseilles Faro Walk conclusions (12-13 September 2013) have provided the terms of a common reference framework structured around three principles (“Faro Principles”):

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

These principles underline that the “community”, which is founded on shared values and identity, must be considered as a heritage in itself. They also claim that the heritage-led approach is a vector for improving the living environment and quality of life of inhabitants by enabling citizen commitment in support of public action.

In order to consolidate these principles and to test them in different circumstances, nine “criteria” about the social value of heritage were validated. The use of these criteria allows the appreciation of citizen processes and the level of democratic participation at the service of the common interest:

- a. Assertion of a group defined by a specific heritage;
- b. Emergence of a consensus within the community about the concept of “heritagization”;
- c. Existence of a demarcated territory to which a collective imagination is associated;
- d. Capacity, through the group, to produce territorial narratives and stimulate life narratives;
- e. Presence of personalities who can convey the message;
- f. Support of concerned and supportive political players;
- g. Emergence of a new economic model;
- h. Consolidation of a participative pattern backing official public action;
- i. Openness towards empowerment practices.

2.2 A distinctive approach

The reflection initiated by the Council of Europe drew on two main ideas emerging from the Faro Convention spirit, which were incorporated as hallmarks of the working methodology:

- Prioritising residents in their relationship with the cultural heritage;
- Reaching out to heritage communities.

The reflection gave priority to an “*action research*” approach, particularly aimed at four “sites” chosen as case studies: Marseilles (France); Pilsen (Czech Republic); Viscri (Romania); Venice (Italy). It sought to include the various protagonists of civic initiatives carried out at these different sites and to draw on their specific experiences. This approach thus allowed a better consideration of contributions from the field (a “bottom-up” approach) in order to provide input for the development of common references to all member States of the Organisation.

2.3 Actions related to participative democracy

The reference framework initiated enabled the elaboration and testing of actions aimed at promoting the Faro Convention and to encourage its ratification and its implementation by member States. To all intents and purposes, these actions perform a follow-up function with simultaneous bearing on legislation, policies and practices regarding cultural heritage, and in general democracy and diversity management. They are also meant to help facilitate exchange and codify and disseminate best practices:

Faro Workshops: Tool to explain and debate in countries deciding whether or not to ratify the *Faro Convention*;

Faro Appreciations: Tool for gauging the effectiveness of civic initiatives and institutional support for these initiatives in relation to the Faro principles. Four Appreciations were completed in 2014 as pilots:

- Marseilles, France (European Cultural Capital) ;
- Pilsen, Czech Republic (European Cultural Capital) ;
- Viscri, Romania (Rom community integration experience) ;
- Venice, Italy (re-qualification urban process in the Arsenal area).

Faro Applications: Tool proposing free access to initiatives which have been conceptualised and compatible with Faro principles. Five Applications are online so far:

- Heritage Commission
- Heritage Walk
- Resident’s Co-operative
- Urban Revelation Workshop
- Metropolitan Trail

2.4 Results which open up prospects

The Faro Appreciations carried out to date have already demonstrated the validity of the Faro principles and criteria (social value of heritage). These results encourage the pursuit of actions in order to collect greater quantities of practical information and generate more examples of civic initiatives that draw on the Faro principles.

The Council of Europe process has been supported and encouraged by the European Union, which refers to the Faro principles. This process has also been recognised as part of the European Cultural Capitals, especially for its capacity to propose practical solutions regarding citizen participation.

The results so far confirm the validity of the process based primarily on field experience in order to get the European institutions to listen to the communities. They also confirm the development of an innovative approach to heritage which consolidates the Council of Europe’s position regarding human rights, democracy and social cohesion, and proposes new possibilities for defining a “living together”, the improvement of the quality of life and living environment, and better governance. Once again, the Council of Europe is in a position to launch and guide a pan-European debate on fundamental issues for society.

Since the start of the Faro Action Plan, four countries have ratified or signed the Faro Convention (a 20% increase). The Action Plan should allow this movement to be supported and to accelerate.

3.0 Finalisation of the 2014-2015 Action Plan

The Faro Action Plan is ongoing and is due to end in 2015 with the proposal of measures and actions to be implemented as part of the 2016-2017 Council of Europe programme of activities. It will be a question on the one hand of pursuing the development of the reference framework and tools through a reflection on the issues that have been identified and which still need analysing, and on the other hand, establishing mechanisms that provide heritage communities with political or strategic support, or that endorse their action.

3.1 *The issues at stake*

Issues identified which prompt citizen initiatives, spontaneously embarked on for the sake of heritage throughout Europe:

- a. the difficulty of certain communities faced with the challenges of diversity, migrations and various crises in bringing out a collective contemporary "**Narrative**".

There are historical periods when narrative breaks down. The dominant stories which come to hand nearly always pertain to ancient times, often conceived at moments when history has been compellingly made and has given the impression of somehow standing still, as if fossilised in the corporate memory: the glorious era of the Serenissima in Venice; the 2nd World War and the Pilsen memorial complex; the rich colonial period of the port of Marseilles; the long-lasting Saxon presence in Romania.

Tales of life, territorial tales, telling the stories of internal and external migrations, hospitality tales, accounts of unique histories of characters, human groups or emblematic places by heritage communities are all ways to permit revelation, appropriation and dissemination of the extraordinary wealth of our common history in Europe. The Narratives question, challenge, bring to light, and allow the inhabitants themselves to take possession of places and of their history. These narratives connect the recent and more distant past with what constitutes the present. They make sense, that is give direction and allow cohesion of individuals, groups and institutions because they offer representations that can be compared and shared. Thus they afford an opening on a social, collective imaginative realm which connects and bonds.

- b. the resolve to identify and preserve one or more "**common assets**" around which the community can be structured and projected into the future;

What is held in common attaches to human activity. Only a practice of pooling in liaison with the public authority can decide what is "common", set aside certain things for common use, and collectively put forward the rules calculated to ensure its governance.

It is first of all what sustains co-existence between persons. The prime common asset is the surety for everyone to be able to enjoy relational well-being, to lead a peaceable co-existence with the other. This definition of the common asset is fundamental to the commitment of all heritage communities.

Next, it is all kinds of places, unique practices and traditions which the heritage communities rediscover or reveal and turn to account. It may be, in Pilsen, the collective re-appropriation of a garden formerly tended by prisoners and left uncultivated. It may be, in Marseilles, rediscovery of the Aygalades stream piped in the industrial era and restored to the population today. In Venice, it is furtherance of reflection on accessing and using activities related to the lagoon and to water. In Viscri, it is regulation of residents' access to the communal meadows to graze their livestock.

- c. the urge and the wish for **participation** of individuals and collective entities ready to enter into public action for the general well-being.

In the four case studies, participation is instituted locally in the framework of public policy (programme of urban regeneration in Marseilles), of official regulation (participation rules and bureau in Venice), of European incentives (requirement for being European cultural capital in Pilsen) or of European directives (integration of the Roma community in Viscri). In these situations, the participatory process is imposed unilaterally, and either refused (Marseilles), regulated (Venice), disregarded (Pilsen) or not understood (Romania). This situation is still more paradoxical in that its necessity is acknowledged by everyone, civil society and public institution alike.

In these contexts, concerted application of the principles of the Faro Convention by the public institution and civil society presents new forms of participation by the heritage communities in the affairs of a local authority. It reshapes and renews the nature of relations between the political power, the public institution and the heritage communities.

3.2 ***The complementary reflection issues***

Three main orientations will be developed in priority:

- offering a framework for the expression and the identification of civic initiatives (“Faro Initiatives”);
- appreciating and recognising the diversity of the civic initiatives that implement the Faro principles (the “Faro Label”);
- developing a network of acknowledged “sites” within which the reflexion on the values of heritage for society can be continued (the “Faro Community”);

1. The “Faro Initiatives” will be identified thanks to the spontaneous expression by actors of these initiatives. They will be invited to present their actions through a summary harmonised as part of an on-line questionnaire.

All initiatives identified will be followed up by updated information provided by their promoters, as well as by opinions communicated through the Council of Europe Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape.

2. The “Faro Label” will be awarded by the Council of Europe to a general or specific initiative carried out by citizens, associations or institutions in villages, towns or territories where “heritage communities” are established. These initiatives can be identified by the fact that they have expressed interest in the Council of Europe (Faro Initiatives) or have been approached by the Council of Europe through the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape.

The sites in question will automatically be subject to a “Faro Appreciation” to determine how local or civic initiatives are being implemented in relation to the Faro principles. The label is awarded where it possible to argue the value of the initiatives carried out by heritage communities. The references of these projects will be added to the Council of Europe’s database on heritage policies as part of the HEREIN System.

3. The “Faro Community”, to be supported by the Council of Europe, will be made up of resource experts (the creators or users of initiatives awarded the label), representatives of heritage communities or elected representatives of villages, towns and territories recognised for their application of the Faro principles. The community will need to be able to:

- promote the Faro principles and their contributions to society;
- serve as a resource centre and source of experience, and expand on a regional, national and European scale;
- continue and further develop the work of interpreting the Faro Convention using the “action research” approach in the context of “laboratories” or “pilot sites”;
- act as a “panel” to validate the stages in the development of common references.

3.3 *The future role of the Council of Europe*

As from 2016, the role of the Council of Europe vis-à-vis the Faro Convention (as part of a new action plan) could focus primarily on the following objectives, according to modalities to be specified, defined according to the societal issues at stake identified by the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape and the Organisation’s political priorities:

- Promoting the initiatives and sites awarded with the label as European models;
- Facilitating experience and expertise sharing within the Faro Community;
- Involving local experts in initiatives in other towns and regions;
- Encouraging debate on the interpretation of the Faro Convention within the reference framework established, settling differences of interpretation, if necessary, and endorsing conceptual advances and operational innovations via the panel.

Appendix : Implementation scheme of the Faro Principles

