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STEERING COMMITTEE FOR CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE
(CDCPP)

INDICATOR FRAMEWORK ON CULTURE AND DEMOCRACY (IFCD)
PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS AND NEXT STEPS¹

For action

Secretariat Memorandum
prepared by the
Directorate of Democratic Governance
Democratic Institutions and Governance Department

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¹ See also documents CDCPP(2016)6 Addendum 1, CDCPP(2016)6 Addendum 2

Introduction

In 2013 the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture requested the development of an indicator framework on culture's contribution to democracy and the economic efficiency of financing culture.

Work carried out in 2014/15 on the indicator framework by the consultant chosen, Hertie School of Governance, in co-operation with a research consortium led to an innovative analytical concept with the parallel construction of the culture-and-democracy dimension and a framework of 40 indicators grouping 177 variables for a variety of policy fields (e.g. cultural finance, production, consumption, participation, education, heritage) and dimensions (political, legal, economic, civic aspects). A process perspective - distinguishing inputs, throughputs and outputs - was also built into the concept. First tests were carried out on possible culture-democracy correlations. In 2015 the tests were widened and the initial concept refined. Strong relationships were identified between a number of culture and democracy dimensions such as active cultural engagement and democratic openness; political engagement, trust in society and well-being.

At the end of 2015, the Hertie School of Governance delivered:

- the complete IFCD including a final list of indicators with full operationalisation and complete data sources and a methodological/ statistical background paper;
- results of correlations run and of eight specific hypotheses tested regarding culture's contribution towards democracy
- the framework populated with data of 37 countries and resulting in a database of indicators for download (e.g. in CSV, Excel, STATA);
- 37 country summaries providing a brief description of country-specific results;
- a proposal for an online tool for users to explore and analyse IFCD data.

Progress

Following the decision by the CDCPP's Bureau in November 2015 on running an IFCD "testing round", a preparatory meeting was held on 20 January 2016 at the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin. Participants from five member states and one observer as well as representatives of the European Union and the European Cultural Foundation examined the IFCD and particularly appreciated the analytical and policy-orienting potential of the project and the plans for a related online tool. The tool will offer country-specific and thematic findings and indicate areas where policy investment may be most beneficial.

The IFCD "testing round" started in March. Experts from the Hertie School visited the Ministries of Culture in Croatia, Finland, France, Poland, Belgium and Switzerland and discussed use interests of the IFCD in the respective national context. Concrete suggestions were gathered towards the improvement and fine-tuning of the IFCD, i.e.:

- the addition of a number of indicators on access and participation and a focus on these issues as well as
- the future use and update of the framework, in co-operation with relevant statistical initiatives of other international bodies.

A second “testing round” with additional member states will start in May and possibly include Germany, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Spain and Sweden (countries subject to final confirmation).

A meeting with the European Cultural Foundation was held in March to agree on the 2016 support to the IFCD project and its use towards the online tool.

A contract has been drawn-up with the Hertie School of Governance to:

- finalise the IFCD and a guidebook on its use for policy makers,
- elaborate the proposal for the online tool - reflecting the insights gained during the testing with member states and
- draw up a first thematic report on culture and democracy with special reference to the findings on participation in culture and trusting society².

IFCD based findings on the vibrancy of cultural participation in member states have been quoted in the 3rd Report of the Secretary General on the State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law in Europe issued in May.³ Also, a forthcoming report by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on Culture and Democracy⁴ cites some of the IFCD’s insights and highlights its importance as a tool to measure cultural vitality and promote political commitment and investments in the cultural sphere.

The Bureau of the CDCPP in April noted the overall progress made on the IFCD and expressed its full support to the project.

Next steps

A call for tender and contract will be prepared for the final modeling of the online tool once funds from the ECF and further voluntary contributions from member States have become available. The tool would be implemented from 2017 with support by the EU and in close exchange with relevant statistical bodies such as EUROSTAT.

² These show that countries with high cultural participation rates also show high levels of interpersonal trust among their people. The report will become available in September 2016.

³ See chapter V on Inclusive Societies and Democratic Citizenship.

⁴ Rapporteur: Vesna Marjanovic, MP, Serbia.

A work session will take place in early June to plan the IFCD launch conference in Brussels in October, generously hosted by the EU. At this event, the complete IFCD, the guidebook for policy makers and prototype of the online tool will be presented. In addition, the first thematic report on culture and democracy will be launched highlighting the use that can be made of the IFCD beyond national applications. The launch event aims at attracting a high number of senior cultural policy makers from member states, Parliamentarians, leading European cultural policy researchers as well as representatives from interested international bodies so as to prepare for possible synergies.

The conference is expected to agree the roll-out of the IFCD works and put them into practice according to member States' and partner institutions' interests and in line with the Council of Europe's priorities on democratic participation and building inclusive societies.

Three main applications of the IFCD appear evident at this stage:

- Country-specific use by member states for policy optimisation and self-assessment
- Annual thematic reports on Culture and Democracy in line with Council of Europe priorities
- Contributions to the annual Report by the Secretary General on the State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law in Europe.

However, other applications may be developed according to individual stakeholders' interests.

The launch of the IFCD on 12 or 14 October will give visibility to the CDCPP's innovative work and delegates are most welcome to attend. An invitation with detailed information will be communicated shortly.

Action required

The CDCPP is invited to:

- note the accomplishment of the first Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy in follow-up to the decisions by the 2013 Ministerial Conference on Culture and endorse the work;
- thank the European Union, the European Cultural Foundation and the ERSTE Foundation for their support and co-operation on the IFCD;
- call on member states to make available voluntary contributions towards the next steps including the IFCD online tool and annual reports on a culture and democracy theme;
- appoint up to three advisors to engage with the Secretariat in the preparation of the IFCD launch event in October 2016 in Brussels and guide the further development of the project, so as to fully use its potential.