

**COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION**

**CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE  
CONVENTION EUROPEENNE DU PAYSAGE**

***21st MEETING OF THE WORKSHOPS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE EUROPE LANDSCAPE CONVENTION***

***21<sup>e</sup> REUNION DES ATELIERS POUR LA MISE EN ŒUVRE DE  
LA CONVENTION EUROPEENNE DU PAYSAGE***

***“Landscape and education”  
« Paysage et éducation »***

**Tropea, Italy / Italie**

**3-4 October 2018 /3-4 octobre 2018**

***Study visit, 5 October 2018 / Visite d'études, 5 octobre 2018***

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***WORKSHOP 1***

**Landscape and education: Slovenian experiences**

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Dear Colleagues, I hope this conference will have its significant contribution to the essential work done by the European Council in the fields of landscape education.

The successful landscape development system largely depends on social awareness and the knowledge and awareness of the significance of landscape. Trends connected with the modern lifestyle clearly show that it is necessary to look for new ways to educate people about the space they live in. Therefore, education on landscape and its role in everyday life, within general education institutions, in all periods of life, is of major importance. Below are listed some activities carried out on landscape education in Slovenia.

**Landscape Education at University level**

With the aim to assure competences in landscape conservation, management and development, the Landscape Architecture programme of Academic Study in Slovenia began in the 1950s with the Urban Horticulture programme at the Faculty of Biotechnology of the University of Ljubljana. Postgraduate studies in Landscape Architecture began in 1972 and in 1976 a graduate studies programme in Landscape Architecture was launched.

Landscape architecture in Slovenia is the study of landscape design, environmental planning and protection of the environment, nature conservation and spatial planning. The study of landscape architecture provides education that will enable students to define analytically and to creatively solve issues on all the levels of spatial planning and landscape design. The study programme is interdisciplinary, so a student acquires knowledge from numerous fields. A landscape architect is educated in disciplines that provide the knowledge required for spatial management, nature conservation and landscape design; natural-ecological, socio-economic, humanistic and cultural knowledge. Students can also choose courses from other study programmes at the Biotechnical Faculty, other universities in Slovenia and abroad. The study programme lasts for three years and successful students obtain a university academic degree in Landscape Architecture.

Landscape as a topic in higher education is also found in individual aspects part of the studies programme of the Faculty of Arts (Department of Geography, Department of Psychology) and of the Faculty of Architecture.

### **Landscape education at primary and secondary school level**

Education for sustainable development, which includes landscape, is provided in the Slovenian curriculum in both primary and secondary schools within geography, the environment, nature and society. However it was found that pupils were mostly learning about environmental issues such as pollution and its prevention. This is a good starting point for education for sustainable development and landscape conservation, management, and development but it is not enough, because it leads to an incomplete perception of the very complex issues surrounding sustainable development. It is crucial that students learn about this subject comprehensively and include all aspects, which means learning not just about the environment but also about social and economic aspects of our society. From this point of view it is most important that they recognise the meaning of spatial planning, including landscape planning, for assuring sustainable development.

In primary and secondary schools in Slovenia subjects such as environmental pollution, national history and cultural heritage, ecosystems, natural resources and their use are topics which are relatively well presented in the curriculum. Topics that are not well presented in schools are the spatial planning system, spatial and social problems regarding landscape conservation, management and development. Themes connected to the landscape as a foundation for development of activities in a region and its planning can be incorporated into many subjects, such as environmental studies, social studies, geography, history, the arts and biology.

### **Raising awareness about the importance of landscapes through various projects and initiatives**

In Slovenia, the public can participate in the preparation of spatial document procedures and in planning of the management of natural resources through legally prescribed procedures of public exhibition and public hearings and there is increasing participation of non-governmental organisations in raising public awareness. In this area, the Slovenian Association of Landscape Architects is particularly active; it organises and carries out national and international expert conferences and meetings, workshops, exhibitions and projects. The Slovenian Association of Landscape Architects, which was established in 1992, is as an association of experts in the field of landscape architecture and spatial management. Its mission is to promote the landscape architecture profession in Slovenia, to search for spatial solutions in co-operation with various public entities, and to educate on the issues of environmental protection. Besides its publishing activities and successful participation in many

competitions, the association organises lectures, exhibitions of the work of its members, panel discussions and conferences. The annual Month of Landscape Architecture that takes place in April has become an important event offering lectures, guided tours, and children's workshops, thus educating on the environmental, social, and economic factors of spatial planning, landscape planning and landscape design.

In Slovenia, we have a number of other non-governmental organisations in charge of raising awareness in the field of landscape such as:

- Pazi!park (Look Out! Park), an NGO supporting public initiatives and public participation in spatial planning;
- Institute for Spatial Policies, an independent research institute. Its purpose is to achieve synergies across a range of disciplines and practices dealing with space and place.

With the purpose of enhancing the knowledge of Slovenian landscape heritage and raising awareness to the need to preserve landscape values and understand the action of humans on natural surroundings, Slovenia has courses in primary and secondary education, seminars and workshops and several initiatives such as:

*We are Making Landscapes* aimed at disseminating knowledge about landscapes, learning about Slovenian landscapes and motivating children and adults to observe the environment and better perceive qualities in the landscape (2005 – 2005; Slovenian Association of Landscape Architects). This helped the public develop a more informed attitude towards the landscape, space and environment around them. The objective of the project was to educate and raise awareness of the public in general about the landscape. The project focused on education of the pedagogues, mentor teachers, children and their parents, as well as the general public. Activities and events in the framework of the *We are Making our Landscape* project included: publication of five posters *Slovenian Landscapes*, defining five landscape regions in Slovenia; a seminar with a workshop to inform teachers about the project, a competition for art and photographic works and the selection of the best. The competition was attended by pupils from 90 primary schools and 43 kindergartens. 1029 art and photographic works were submitted, including 797 drawings and paintings, 22 models and 210 photographs. The motifs were mainly natural and cultural landscapes, city and urban landscapes, landscape patterns that were presented also in an abstract manner, children and school playgrounds, private gardens, individual landscape elements (trees, flowers, houses, hayracks, mills), and of course, people and animals as landscape components). There was an exhibition of the best works and a ceremony of awards presentation to the best participants.

*Raising awareness of values of space through the process of education (RAVE Space)* dealt with problems of education about spatial planning and sustainable development in primary and secondary schools (2005 – 2007). The main purpose of the project *RAVE Space* was to raise the awareness of primary and secondary school pupils about the values of space and the importance of spatial planning for sustainable development. Under the aegis of the Slovenian Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning and the *RAVE Space* project, three two-day seminars were held for teachers to present certain not-yet-established forms and methods of work and teaching materials that could more effectively orient students to recognise the values of space, engage in proper environmental management, comprehensively understand the causes and effects of human interventions in space, and realise the importance of spatial planning.

*Vital Landscapes* aimed at the area of Ljubljansko Barje (Ljubljana Marsh) focused on exploring the possibilities of marketing and economic development of Ljubljansko Barje area, in close collaboration with the local community as well as potential new stakeholders (2010 – 2013). Ljubljana Marsh is an exceptional landscape, an area of nature conservation, rich cultural heritage and specific aquatic habitats but it does not possess the attributes of an area with classic successful economic development. Slovene project partners organised a number of workshops dedicated to searching for local identity and ways to unify, harmonise and link the existing local products and services. The workshops hosted local stakeholders and students, involving faculties that share interests with the subject in question. Amongst others, a key aim of the project is to form suggestions for a common platform for the tourist, recreational, educational, cultural and other attractions and to offer a selection of farms, arts, crafts and similar local products.

*Landscape variety* (2014 – 2015) aimed to prepare guidelines for landscape features which are important for biodiversity conservation in Slovenia. This list has been completed and consists of 18 vegetation, geomorphologic, built and water features. The general recommendations for conservation and management of landscape variety include protection of identified features and the extensive use of their surroundings especially on the intensively used agricultural land; they can be implemented through nature conservation and agricultural policy. The aim of the project was also to disseminate the knowledge and to familiarise professional services with the system of landscape features.

*Landscape areas* with identifiable features at national level (2017 – 2019) aims to involve both experts and the general public in the design of criteria for determining the landscape features of national identity.

*Landscape Policy* (2018 – 2019) aims to involve both experts and the general public in the shaping of objectives and measures for preparation of the landscape policy.

### **The Way Forward – Key Messages**

The complexity of landscape as the subject area is reflected by the diversity of approaches on the field of landscape education, knowledge and understanding of landscape in time and space. In landscape conservation, management, and development we must not only integrate specialist knowledge from a wide range of disciplines, but also society has a great cancer for quality of life, safety and functionality of rural and urban areas, and biological and landscape diversity. Contents on landscape conservation, management, and development should be including in education system and in sustainable development on every level. Only with systematic promotion, permanently raising awareness in pupils at all stages of the educational process can we achieve a desired quality of life and keep landscape's diversity.

When discussing the role of education and sustainable development, some facts need to be highlighted:

- school is the most important medium that can increase awareness of space-related topics, and therefore they need to be fully incorporated into existing curricula;
- spatial planning is one of the most important activities that influence the quality of life;
- public participation is needed in that process, but people lack the knowledge of how to do it, and thus we must stimulate debate regarding the future evolution of the landscape.

