



PRODUCING AND SHARING HERITAGE-RELATED KNOWLEDGE

Access keys for Strategy 21

Council of Europe – Strategy 21

WORKSHOP summary



Knowledge as a tool for integrated management

Changes across the European continent are creating a context in which there is an urgent need to make cultural heritage policies central to integrated management. This challenge can be addressed through Strategy 21, which was the subject of a Committee of Ministers Recommendation adopted on 22 February 2017 which provides an understanding of the issues at stake. The primary objective of this strategy is to implement integrated management of heritage, which automatically includes the associated evaluation framework. To do this, it is necessary to reconsider the role of knowledge and of the processes that can help to implement it in practice and ensure that it is widely shared.

The issue of knowledge is central to Strategy 21

The production, sharing and use of heritage knowledge are one of the keys for access to S21 and its effectiveness; this strategy is based on the fundamental values of the Council of Europe. This key is also one of the very reasons for this strategy, which derives from an intellectual and reflective corpus which includes the European Landscape Convention (2000) and the Faro Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (2005). These



instruments, which make an irreplaceable contribution, deserve to be more widely known and used.

Heritage, in its various expressions, arouses emotions and passions. It gives rise to experimentation and also raises many questions. It constantly requires new data and new skills to develop its knowledge, its transmission to the largest possible number of people and its shared management.

Knowledge, coupled with education, is one of its three components. It is central to the whole of S21, including the areas of convergence. From a wider perspective, it forms part of the “knowledge society”, which is an agreed priority at European level. This knowledge groups together learning and know-how. It relates to objects which are, or are in the process of being, recognised as heritage. It takes both their context and their environment into account. It dictates the management of this heritage without overlooking its various impacts and linkage with other sectors.

The 11 recommendations in relation to the third component address eight challenges. They underlie priorities which are organised according to heritage objects, stakeholders and the various problems that exist on various scales. The persons concerned are divided into three groups: residents or tourists and young people, professional or non-professional operators, and experienced specialists in the most advanced sciences or techniques.

Taken together, these recommendations, which concern all forms of heritage expression, cover a wide spectrum (raising awareness, educating, informing, training, studying, sharing, passing on, linking, co-operating) and are linked with requirements relating to meaning, competence, quality, and creativity.

Promoting integrated heritage management including the evaluation of actions

As many stakeholders as possible need to be encouraged to engage in the task of implementing S21 in practice by firstly making users understand the aim of integrated heritage management, which is inseparably linked to its assessment tool, the evaluation framework.

All heritage is defined by its conservation and transmission. This entails political and financial

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commitment, which is subject to choices being made; it requires input from experts and managers and the informed consent of citizens. To give cultural heritage – which is recognised as a precious asset and a resource of irreplaceable value – its rightful place within society, we urgently need to create better links between heritage policies and policies in other sectors (culture, environment, economy, education, social cohesion, etc.).

S21 supports an integrated heritage management process which combines the traditional vertical approach based on a silo mentality with the cross-sectoral horizontal approach. It promotes a holistic approach to cultural heritage and its impacts in different fields, including the social, cultural, economic and environmental domains. The evaluation system that is incorporated into S21 serves as a useful means of achieving and reporting on this integration by objectivising the relevance of the actions, while respecting the diversity of forms of management practised in Europe.



Developing and sharing knowledge: a virtuous circle

On the basis of these foundations, some supplementary points of analysis relating to the production and sharing of knowledge will now be set out.

Stimulating and strengthening heritage awareness

Based on the Faro Convention, S21 highlights the value of cultural heritage for society and its contribution to a peaceful, diverse and democratic society and the process of sustainable development. It recognises the right of every person, taken individually or together, to involve himself or herself with the cultural heritage of his/her choice, while respecting the rights and freedoms of others, and to contribute to its enrichment.

It advocates "heritage awareness" which entails a relationship that is sensitive, intelligible and political – in the sense of the collective mind of the community – with objects, landscapes and intangible forms of culture. This broadened awareness must nonetheless satisfy certain



requirements in terms of knowledge and ethics which the community recognises as its own. It must also incorporate changes that affect heritage and its management.

Heritage, democratic values and citizenship

Heritage projects must illustrate and express the things that unite citizens of democratic societies in their various forms of diversity, and this enables them to coexist in mutual respect and even derive benefit from these forms of kinship.

Heritage creates special places for enjoyment and citizenship which can contribute to “living together well” and the development of community empowerment provided that this societal and inclusive goal is put at the heart of the organisation’s plan with the appropriate forms of support.¹

Exclusion-inclusion: building bridges

In the new European context which is being destabilised by migration, the risks associated with heritage knowledge appear to be those of

1 Example 1: Discussions with the public help to gain a better understanding of society, to link the past, the present and the future together, to encourage newcomers to become rooted in a community, region, etc. Example 2: A travelling exhibition combined with periods of time set aside for discussions becomes a medium for reflection and discussion across the whole of a reference territory and can inspire new subjects of study driven by other partner entities (associations, municipalities, universities, etc.).

exclusion and also conflicts, in addition to more intellectual risks such as essentialism or forms of fetishism.

It is important to work on the study of heritage and its interpretation to the public while taking specific local, regional or national factors into account in order to create a more inclusive, interconnected understanding of heritage, on the basis of shared values. This includes examining the customs and history of an object or site and identifying points of correspondence or resonance with other sites, at regional, national or global level. Revealing the complexity of what a site signifies and incorporating the creativity of the various combinations and adaptations into different contexts can give rise to collaboration with groups “from elsewhere”.

This approach can foster a sense of shared pride, encourage the inclusion of new inhabitants and satisfaction of tourists, and promote crafts and skills, forms of production and ways of life which are current in one place but may have disappeared elsewhere. It acts as a powerful catalyst that can have a real impact on the three components of S21.

Opening up to multiple voices

Every building, site, landscape or town has a diverse range of meanings and stories which are complementary, diverging and sometimes even contradictory depending on the period considered, the narrators and the issues of the moment. To be able to share his or her ideas with other users, an individual must first be accepted and recognised by them. As a single individual has multiple affiliations, a new affiliation produces a new overall way of looking at things.



This is an especially important and sensitive issue in territories affected by population changes, and those whose heritage has changed hands over the course of history. To prepare for a return to peaceful coexistence or indeed reconciliation, we need to focus on the things that we have in common and listen to each other. Exemplary experiments are being conducted in places where a traumatic history makes dialogue difficult.²

Working towards joint creation of knowledge

A huge and ongoing task

The field of knowledge of heritage and heritage action is constantly changing. Subjects of study are very numerous, especially since knowledge needs to be updated constantly. They concern all of the things that make up the heritage management corpus: values, contexts and associated representations, the process of designating heritage, stakeholders, systems and practices, frameworks of reference (institutional, political, regional, socio-economic, etc.) at several levels and the dynamics at work.

All disciplines, sciences and techniques – whether traditional or cutting-edge – are mobilised in order to serve heritage, just as the issues raised by heritage help to advance the fields concerned. Prior diagnoses, impact studies and evaluations are especially useful in this iterative process.

The need to preserve and the fearful spectre of loss, which govern heritage, result in the production of knowledge. Any place or artefact that can be recognised as heritage must first undergo a process of identification and selection work which can result simply in a file of

2 Examples: an exhibition prepared jointly by experts from both sides in relation to the preservation of medieval Armenian heritage (Turkey, Armenia), or local residents or tourists interested in the history and present-day lives of descendants of Germans living in Silesia (Poland). Other examples in Cyprus, Bosnia, etc. provide encouragement to share similar histories in Europe in a context of mutual respect.

documents or, by stages, structured or indeed legal protection.

Heritage provides an essential and available archive for a whole range of knowledge and values conveyed by witnesses of the past. It serves to educate and teach, and hence pass on, not only to citizens at local or regional level, but also to tourists from neighbouring regions or faraway countries, or new inhabitants.

Heritage knowledge also serves to create discourse of which everyone can take ownership and which all can understand. It often precedes enhancement of heritage, which sometimes gives rise to a need for knowledge.³

Academic research, citizen research

Some types of research and interventions require highly specialised professionals, whereas other forms of study can be carried out by citizens on a voluntary basis. Between these two ends of the spectrum, there is broad scope for joint creation of knowledge by both amateurs and professionals. Citizen research,⁴ which is based on a participatory and collaborative approach that is promoted in the Faro Convention, offers many advantages for both the various stakeholders involved and also for heritage.

It entails:

- supporting the persons involved, introducing them to methodological and ethical requirements, and taking feedback into account⁵
- defining and respecting the role of each stakeholder
- providing useful material and facilitating its rational use

3 The coastal landscape and its heritage which is enhanced by the *Territoires imaginaires* association has given rise to an inventory-based approach across the area concerned in France and has awakened interest in similar heritage in other European countries (Italy, Croatia).

4 Examples: methods and co-operation with cultural heritage institutions, universities and regions (Scandinavian countries)

5 Recommendations S7, S8, S9, D7, K1 and K4

- fostering a culture of sharing and co-operation with universities and specialised services, etc.

Research work, a tool to aid decision-making

Heritage sciences lie at the crossroads of professional and scientific issues. Scientific research needs to be maximised at all levels of management when heritage policies are devised, implemented and monitored.⁶

This involves:

- developing research programmes (regional, national, European) which are in line with the needs of the sector and political agendas, while ensuring continuity
- encouraging dialogue and co-ordination between politicians, heritage professionals and the academic sector, which must retain its independence
- promoting multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary and systemic approaches,⁷ which are necessary for integrated and sustainable heritage management
- requiring scientific validation of heritage activities which are suspected of manipulating knowledge, especially where public or community investments are concerned

- widely disseminating, sharing and discussing methods and results of scientific research in order to inspire, develop and apply suitable policies

In order to contribute to the development of integrative cultural heritage policies, it would be worthwhile conducting or expanding scientific research on the following themes:

- Cultural heritage as a factor in quality of life⁸
- Cultural heritage and climate change
- New technologies and the passing-on of cultural heritage: broader participation by the public; access to and secure use of heritage documentation
- The potential of heritage: qualifications and jobs. Current situation and future directions
- European action and international co-operation in relation to cultural heritage

Skills: lifelong learning for all heritage stakeholders

Used here in its broadest sense, “lifelong” learning, education or training refers to a continuum of learning activities intended to develop the skills of each heritage stakeholder at any age.

Since education is a responsibility of the member states, systems vary from country to country. However, “lifelong” learning is regarded here as a right of each stakeholder to participate freely in cultural life. Furthermore, heritage management is viewed in S21 as a shared responsibility which is based on dialogue between the State, the population and professionals, and requires



⁶ Recommendations K9 and K10

⁷ “Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe”, 2015. Translated into 9 languages. <http://blogs.encatc.org/culturalheritagecountsforeurope/outcomes/>

⁸ “Paysage, source de bien-être. Étude sur la valeur socio-économique des paysages et les facteurs du bien-être”, Mission Val de Loire patrimoine mondial, 2018. <https://www.valdeloire.org/Actualites/Articles/Tous/Les-paysages-producteurs-de-bien-etre>

more inclusive, participatory and collaborative methods of treatment.

“Lifelong” learning is relevant to all of the S21 recommendations as it cuts across all the concerns related to heritage in its various expressions and the function of heritage itself. It covers a broad spectrum, from raising the awareness of the largest possible number of stakeholders to the confirmation of specialists in the most advanced sciences or techniques.

Assessing the current situation and identifying needs

A qualitative process should be incorporated into any event project or implemented over the long term. It can create a virtuous circle by broadening the focus and “heritage awareness” of the stakeholders and citizens involved. It also involves experimenting with and adjusting participatory and collaborative methods.

Before a project is implemented, the following should be carried out:

- identifying the skills (knowledge, abilities, attitudes) to be acquired, strengthened or updated
- listing the resources to be mobilised or shared and the forms of co-operation to be initiated or developed
- establishing the evaluation framework in accordance with the recommendation

Fostering a culture of evaluation

The implementation of S21 is based on a pre-structured evaluation framework. It must be viewed firstly as a kind of platform for dialogue between stakeholders. It is a tool to facil-

itate the development of any heritage project which encourages integrated heritage management. This evaluation involves setting realistic goals in advance, jointly creating appropriate indicators for each project together with all stakeholders, and taking an objectivised look at projects which have been implemented or are currently in progress.

Applying this evaluation system, beginning with specific and uncomplicated projects, is essential if heritage as a whole is to be made credible in the eyes of other sectors and, in particular, if the issues of knowledge and the passing-on of knowledge are to be taken into account.

- introducing stakeholders to the culture of evaluation
- organising practical sessions on project evaluation in accordance with S21

Reconfiguring the relationship between heritage and the public through science and technology

As a result of recent research (anthropology, cognitive sciences, information and communications technologies, etc.), greater consideration is being given to the various channels through which information is received (the senses, perceptions, emotions, memory, etc.) and a greater emphasis is being placed on experiencing heritage as opposed to passive reception.

- updating the knowledge of teachers, interpretation professionals and the resources of heritage institutions which are offered to the public both within and outside a school setting

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Strategy 21 redefines the place and role of cultural heritage in Europe providing guidelines to promote good governance and participation in heritage identification and management. It encourages innovative approaches to improving the environment and quality of life of European citizens.



*** This Strategy 21 Workshop summary has been prepared and collected by group lead expert, **Ms Claire Giraud-Labelte** for the Council of Europe. The views expressed in this document are those of its author and not necessarily those of the Council of Europe.



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