

KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION COMPONENT

Mariola Andonegui



WHY IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGY 21 KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION COMPONENT?

The concept of cultural heritage has changed in recent decades. Today it is conceived as an inheritance from the past, both in its tangible and intangible dimensions, that people identify as an expression of their way of understanding and being in the world. Something alive, in continuous transformation, created, recreated, interpreted and enjoyed by people and inextricably linked to its context and its natural and cultural environment. Heritage includes both elements identified as such by the local population and local authorities on the one hand, and those recognised by the national authorities on the other. In addition, heritage is a key component of European identity, and a non-renewable common good whose conservation, protection and transmission are the responsibility of society as a whole. (Faro Convention, COE, 2005; Namur Declaration, COE, 2015).

Based on this new vision of cultural heritage, Strategy 21 recognises the extraordinary potential of cultural heritage to educate citizens in values that promote a fairer, more peaceful, and united society. It also highlights the need for greater citizen participation as well as the right and ability of local communities, citizens, and civil society to identify what is meaningful to them as heritage and to respect, preserve, transmit and enrich that heritage. In this context, heritage education has a dual approach. On the one hand, it promotes teaching and training about cultural heritage to raise awareness of its value, to promote citizen participation and to ensure the conservation and transmission of Strategy 21 knowledge. On the other hand, it encourages heritage teaching that transmits the core values of the Council of Europe: democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, openness and dialogue, the equal dignity of all persons, mutual respect, and sensitivity to diversity. (Strategy 21 full text, p.9).

Thus, some of the proposed actions under the “Knowledge and Education” component may also fall under the “Social” and “Territorial and Economic” approaches.

The above vision is reflected in the Strategy 21 Knowledge and Education challenges and recommendations.

Through these, the Council of Europe emphasises the need to:

- > conserve and transmit knowledge
- > insist on the importance of education from childhood
- > go beyond the walls of the school and promote education also in family and social environments
- > highlight the urgency of raising awareness among young people
- > enhance research and knowledge and promote and strengthen lifelong education in the field of cultural heritage.

* all photos are from [Heritage Hubs](#)



HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE 21 STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE KNOWLEDGE EDUCATION COMPONENT?

To make the most of the educational potential of cultural heritage and to preserve and transmit knowledge we should create appropriate teaching, training, and research programmes. These should accompany citizens in the discovery of their values, encourage them to express which cultural heritage they identify with and that they would like to share with others, and to help them to enjoy, preserve and transmit it. It is not a simple task, but Strategy 21 will make it easier for you.

Heritage education and training programmes have to start from a deep study of the environment in which we are working, taking into account the following aspects:

- > Cultural heritage elements, both tangible and intangible, their conservation state, their appreciation by citizens, their educational potential, and their connection with the natural and cultural environment
- > Socio-economic characteristics of the territory
- > Social, educational, and cultural actors involved in the territory who are likely to join the project in order to enhance participatory governance
- > All existing resources to implement the programme (human resources, workspaces, work tools, networks, team members' knowledge, skills, and capacities...), to make effective and sustainable use of them

- > Cultural and heritage policies in line with the legal frameworks at national and international level

From this analysis, we can identify opportunities as well as the needs, deficiencies and conflicts related to cultural heritage in the territory or organisation in which we are working. We can identify the challenges that we will face and the actions that we need to implement in order to take advantage of opportunities and address deficiencies and conflicts.

Strategy 21 provides us with two very useful tools in order to define our challenges and to design actions that allow us to overcome them. On the website, you can consult the [list of the challenges](#) and the [list of recommendations](#) related to the Knowledge and Education component. If we do not have clear views on what actions to take, we will find some concrete proposals in the recommendations accompanied by examples of good practice. Therefore, Strategy 21 recommendations are an excellent guide to developing an education and training plan.



HERITAGE HUBS PROJECT – AN EXAMPLE OF HOW THIS CAN BECOME A REAL HERITAGE ACTIVITY

In the framework of the [2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage](#), the Fundación San Millán de la Cogolla, in Spain, launched the transnational educational project, [Heritage Hubs](#)¹, led by the Association of Cultural Heritage Education in Finland, and in partnership with the Centre for Urban Development, in Serbia as well as Vitteco-E-learning solutions, in Italy, and cofunded by the Creative Europe Programme. Eleven primary and secondary schools from Spain, Serbia and Finland participated in the project.

The project's purpose was to support transnational and cross-cultural learning from and about cultural heritage, and to allow young people to define and voice what *they* regard as important cultural heritage. We focused on young people, aged 13 to 17, because we found that there was a lack of knowledge about cultural heritage in this age group. It didn't seem important to them in their lives, and as a result, they did not get involved in heritage processes. The goal was to change this situation and to give young people the means of participating in the cultural life of their communities.

¹ <https://www.europeanheritageawards.eu/winners/heritage-hubs/>
[Creative Europe Project Results \(europa.eu\)](#)

To reach our goal, we followed the Strategy21 recommendation of *Incorporating heritage education more effectively in school curricula* and initiated a cross-disciplinary school project that included heritage.

The Strategy21 challenges pursued were:

- > Helping to foster a shared knowledge society.
- > Identifying, preserving, transmitting, and sharing heritage knowledge and skills.
- > Raising awareness of the values conveyed by heritage.
- > Enlisting the commitment of young people to heritage.

Two of the participating Spanish schools were located in a rural environment, away from substantial urban centres and with a low cultural offering. Most of the students came from small villages and their families worked in agriculture, livestock, crafts and local industry. We chose to work with pupils who were in their first year of high school because we believed that the project would be an effective tool to foster a stronger relationship between students and teachers and to promote integration into the life of the school. From the first moment we had the support and collaboration of the teachers' team and the families of the students.



As a starting point, we asked students to identify, research and interpret the cultural heritage that was important to them and that they would like to share with their schoolmates and with young people from other countries. Initially, the concept of cultural heritage was very abstract and alien to their lives. They associated it with old buildings, monuments and artworks. However, when we questioned this notion, they were surprised to find out that some elements present in their daily life could also be considered cultural heritage.

This included the agricultural techniques that their parents and grandparents used to care for the land, the farming tools they kept at home, the sayings they heard from the elderly, their favourite dishes, the local festivals, and so on.

Thus, began a process in which young people enthusiastically devoted themselves to identifying, knowing, interpreting and sharing their cultural heritage. Finally, they decided to study and share their villages traditional festivals in which everyone actively participated and, in particular, the dances associated with them. They left the classroom to research and learn on the ground. Families, neighbours, dance group members became their teachers, and suddenly the local community came together and participated in a project they identi-

fied with because it talked about them and their values as a group. In addition, they were supported by teachers from different disciplines: History, Literature, English, Geography, Mathematics, Music, Sports. Everything they learned was shared with their schoolmates and with young people from other countries who, in turn, reinterpreted and endorsed this traditional dance and shared with them their sports, games and traditions. Thus, cultural heritage became part of their daily life.

At the same time, we developed a training programme for teachers and heritage professionals involved in the project. It was structured into several training sessions adapted to the project phases (getting to know, interpreting and sharing heritage). Beyond that, we carried out an evaluation and research work into the learning process and its results. The knowledge generated was included in a Heritage Education Handbook for teachers.

The evaluation results point to an important conclusion: the most valuable learning experiences happen in the context of direct social interactions, in tangible environments and involve physical practice. One of the most remarkable experiences of *Heritage Hubs* participants was the communal and social aspects of cultural heritage.



The participants enjoyed exploring cultural heritage *together*, learning about cultural heritage from each other – whether locally, nationally or internationally – and presenting their own culture to their foreign friends during the school visits and having fun with heritage. A further layer that added more depth to their personal experiences stemmed notably from encounters with older generations (grandparents, community elders etc.) and heritage practitioners, with the chance to “learn their trade”, as well as from the development of the network with other schools. The project allowed cultural heritage to become a new link between individuals, groups and communities locally and beyond.

The teachers reported that the process of getting to know, interpreting and sharing heritage presented a significant learning curve. Through learning about cultural heritage and practices in other countries, the pupils – and teachers – learnt a lot about themselves and their own cultural identities. Both teachers and parents also noted the emotional growth of the young participants during the project. (*Heritage Hubs, towards multicultural and transnational heritage education*. Nurmi, Kati; Nikholic, Aleksandra; Andonegui, Mariola; 2020).

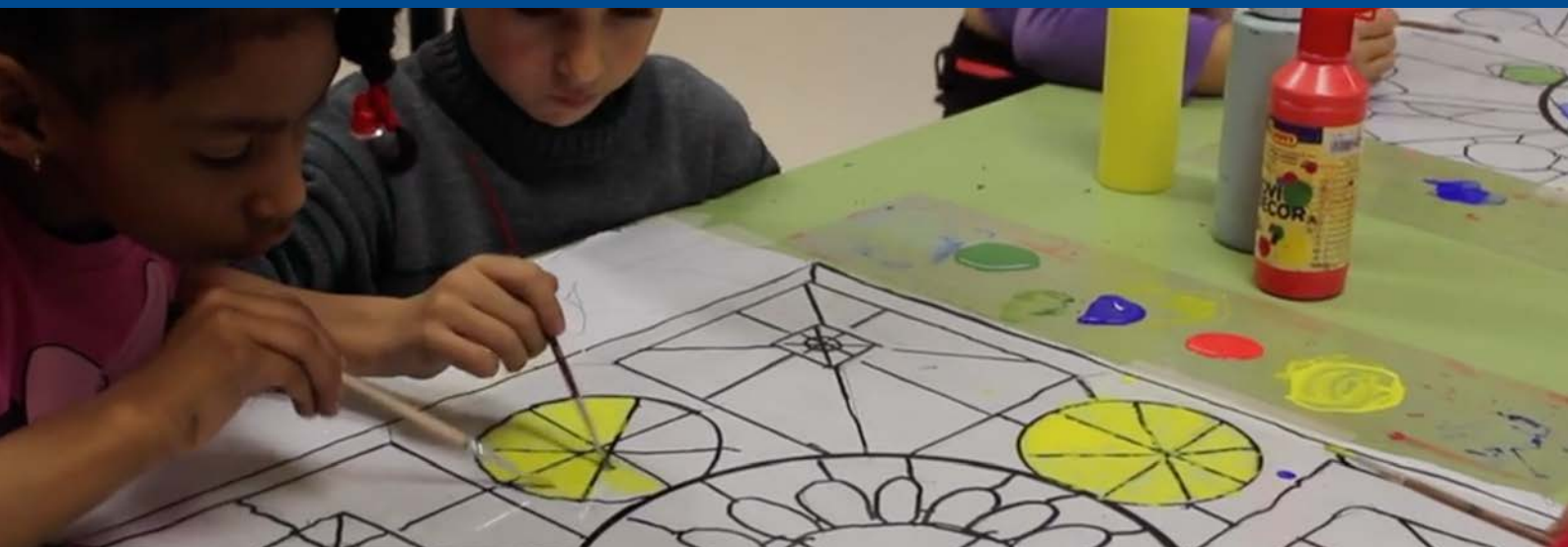
In conclusion, the outputs of the project exceeded our initial expectations. We succeeded not only in achieving a positive outcome in relation to the Strategy 21 education and knowledge challenges that we addressed, but also in relation to social and development challenges (such as preserving the collective memory, promoting an inclusive approach to heritage and building a more inclusive and cohesive society, promote heritage as a meeting place and vehicle for intercultural dialogue, peace and tolerance).

Participating teachers reflected on the outcomes of the project:

“... the pupils noticed how important is to be seen and accepted, how much it means to be involved, and to respect what we and others perceive as an important part of ourselves”

“This project inspired interest in cultural heritage in families, neighbours and the wider community as well as participating pupils and teachers. We built school, family and community”.

LET'S IMPLEMENT STRATEGY 21



With this example we hope to have given you some guidance, inspiration and motivation to encourage you to implement the Knowledge and Education component of Strategy 21 in your own activities. Don't forget that a thorough understanding of the social, economic and cultural environment where you are working, as well as a clear definition of the challenges you intend to address and of the actions that you are implementing will help you to draft and implement your project, evaluate the process and the results ... and to make it an example of good practice of Strategy 21!



EVALUATION QUESTIONS MODULE 4

“KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION COMPONENT”

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	REMARKS
1. Who is the target audience for heritage education and training programs and why?	In accordance with the principles of the Faro and Namur Conventions contained in the Strategy 21 General Framework, the target audience is the whole of society. This is because of the need for greater citizen participation. See more in Strategy 21, Full text p 7-9 .
2. Which tools does Strategy 21 offer for the creation of an education and training programme? Identify the knowledge challenges your organisation should face and select three recommendations to address them.	
3. Who can/should participate in the implementation of education and training programmes?	Think about the answer reading this ST21 factsheet .
4. What benefits do heritage education and training programmes bring to people and to heritage?	You can find benefits of such programmes in the ST21 workshop report Producing and sharing heritage-related knowledge. Access keys for Strategy 21 .
5. Imagine that the stonemason trade is about to disappear in your area because there are only two active stonemasons left – and they will soon retire. How would you implement the Strategy 21 Knowledge and Education component to prevent this from happening?	Select here one of the recommendations you will apply, look up the good practices examples linked to it and define briefly one action you will create to implement the Strategy 21.

