Recommendations

Forum "European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018: International Perspectives"
Brussels, 23 April 2018

Executive Summary

The Cultural Diplomacy Platform organised a Forum on 23 April 2018 to discuss international perspectives of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018. The aim of the Forum was to develop its recommendations in two directions: 1) how the EU could enhance its external cultural relations regarding cultural heritage and also 2) how the EU could respond to global issues that involve cultural heritage and position itself in the global international (non-EU) context in a more defined way.

The Forum has been developed in the context that the reinforcing cooperation on cultural heritage is identified as the third strand under the second pillar (which has the main aim to provide a focus for advancing cultural cooperation with partner countries) of the *EC-EEAS Joint Communication*[1] through: *Research on cultural heritage; Combat trafficking of heritage and Protect heritage.*

Background

Several key developments and documents in the EU and globally have put cultural heritage under the spotlight during the last decade before in May 2017, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the Decision on a European Year of Cultural Heritage (EYCH) 2018. The European Commission recognises cultural and creative industries (CCIs), including cultural heritage, as an important resource for creativity and innovation to flourish in a new entrepreneurial culture in global competition and hereby to create growth and jobs. Promoting culture as a vital element in EU international relations has been one of the three main objectives of the *European Agenda for Culture* since 2007. Here the culture sector is regarded as an increasing source of job creation, contributing to growth in Europe. The culture sector is also an excellent conduit for promoting social inclusion and supporting cultural diversity. The European Commission's 2016 Communication *Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe* underlined the importance of maximising the intrinsic, economic, and societal value of cultural heritage, in order to promote cultural

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[1] http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7935-2017-INIT/en/pdf

diversity and inter-cultural dialogue. Combatting illicit trade of cultural goods has been supported by several regulations and in 2017 the European Commission proposed new rules to stop imports to the Union of cultural goods illicitly exported from their country of origin. In 2015, the United Nations adopted a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. Cultural heritage has positive contributions to each of the three pillars of sustainable development: environment, social and economic. Target 11.4, which aims to '*strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage*', is of particular importance for cultural heritage.

The Forum

Based on the ten initiatives, categorised within four objectives that the European Commission is running through the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 and beyond three panels have been developed for the Forum.

Panel 1 – Cultural Heritage at Risk – Reconstruction, Recovery and Regulations. Next steps?

The panel looked at the cases of intentional destruction of sites (Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, *etc.*) and took into account the devastating impact on local communities and their identities and the implications of different approaches to reconstruction, recovery and regulations. The panel considered cases of Mali, Bosnia and Herzegovina and others, where the extensive reconstruction process has become a symbol of perseverance and unity, facilitating recovery. The formulation of sound directions is needed on issues related to recovery, taking into account the need to support the affected communities, but from a broader perspective – following a complex ripple effect – the formulation and implementation of regulations on illicit trafficking in cultural goods is also needed. Clearly, it is a battlefield on several fronts, facing multifaceted challenges and involving different international stakeholders.

Recommendations of the Panel 1

Panel 1 particularly underlined a need for increasing knowledge transfer (through a platform/database of previous case studies), documentation and resources in preparatory work (regarding cultural heritage at risk) and lessons learned from different cases for knowledge transfer and learning as well as a necessity for equal access to data, resources and capacity-building. Strengthening the multilateralism system with more civil society organisations and more public-private partnerships in the field of cultural heritage at risk has been identified as one of the key needs in order to offer strong partners to UNESCO and the EU to implement projects on the ground in affected countries.

Furthermore, improvement of data on illicit trafficking shall be done through investigating methods and instruments that could be used to obtain solid data; developing new analytical instruments and research approaches to better identify trafficking networks and processes and to better understand financial flows in the field of organised crime and terrorism; developing a digital object depository to be used by law enforcement and customs authorities.

It was clearly highlighted that is essential to create a consistent monitoring of European markets for artefacts and build capacities in the countries of origin of artefacts to monitor the markets and strengthen collaboration with customs and law enforcement

Nevertheless, increasing capacities – though developing more university programmes in Europe regarding cultural heritage at risk, is considered as a key to create a knowledge base for a new emerging field.

Panel 2 – Engagement and Participatory Governance of Cultural Heritage in a Globalised World

The term "participatory governance" of cultural heritage can be understood either as a process by which authority is released and empowerment ensured, or as a process which allows for the adoption of management models whereby responsibility is shared and decisions are taken by communities rather than by individuals. An analysis at European level shows that there are a variety of participatory practices in cultural heritage, many of which, however, cannot be labelled as practices of "participatory governance". In fact, although there might be a high level of involvement of citizens or communities, such practices do not necessarily foresee a system of "shared decision-making and responsibility" for the cultural heritage resources at stake. Nevertheless, they sometimes pave the way for future true participatory governance practices. Furthermore, participatory governance of cultural heritage might be one concrete way to localise the SDGs.

Recommendations of the Panel 2

> *Panel 2* identified needs for promotion of cultural heritage policies based on democracy, gender equality, freedom of speech and human rights and integration of cultural heritage with sustainable urban development and the New Urban Agenda, by engaging diverse communities for heritage management and for adopting a mission-oriented, impact-focused approach to address the role of cultural heritage for sustainable development.

> All present speakers and participants agreed that is essential to organise participatory planning and stakeholder consultations on what values to protect for transmission to future generations and to determine the attributes that these values carry.

> The World Bank has been recognised as a potential key partner for creating joint forces and actions regarding participatory approach and it has been emphasized that in order to develop participatory processes it is necessary to build trust, respect, patience, openness, flexibility and take action and dialogue at all levels with an idea that the participatory governance is a range of activities applied dynamically under the requirements of a specific site and the ability to build a trust among different stakeholders – building trust is an end goal.

Panel 3- Innovation in Cultural Heritage – Diverse Outlooks

Sustainability has been a key lens through which development has been viewed. What is now changing is that communities are increasingly emphasising the social dimensions of sustainability, while innovation is fast becoming a central pillar of development strategy, and there is a need to clarify – and perhaps simplify – our understanding of the approaches being taken, and to identify where some of the key constraints are for designing better approaches, policies and delivering enhanced outcomes. Cultural resources will play a key role in this shifting paradigm, so we shall expect to see historic conservation-based community revitalisation and social entrepreneurship strategies grow in importance. In light of shifting priorities, much of this action shall be led by the private and non-governmental sectors with support from state and local government levels—at least, for the foreseeable future. Achieving community revitalisation at scale also means mainstreaming sustainable development practices into existing tax, land use and financing systems. Furthermore, the role of cultural heritage in the sustainable development goals was discussed.

Panel 3 developed recommendations in several directions.

Regarding Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe it is stressed a demand to open Horizon 2020 programme and Horizon Europe more to international (non-EU) collaborations and engage cultural heritage more as part of science diplomacy towards the world, in order to find solutions to common problems looking at cultural heritage as an asset for social, economic and environmental development as well as to promote research and education in the innovative use of tangible, intangible, natural as well as digital cultural heritage for economic growth and jobs, social cohesion and environmental sustainability. Furthermore, to promote research on cultural heritage as an enabler of social cohesion and inclusion (*e.g.* shared identity; pride in and attachment to place; integration of migrants, new residents and existing ones; historic public spaces; mixed uses).

It is necessary to encourage the establishment of private-public-people partnerships and multidisciplinary processes – bringing different agencies together and develop more efficient and user-friendly tools that will help to demonstrate that cultural heritage conservation is not a burden, but an investment and an opportunity to create jobs.

Related to fiscal policies and cultural heritage, learning from non-EU experiences, it was clearly emphasized that is necessary to work more closely with EU Member States in order to: develop mechanisms that will create tax and fiscal policy models that support conservation efforts; develop mechanisms for their governments to focus on creating the conditions to encourage the private sector to valorise the use and reuse of historical built environment by using consumer preference; develop mechanisms in order to pursue fiscal policy for conservation through the taxation code; develop mechanisms to engage banks, private and international capital funds, *etc*. to encourage real estate developers, seeking for debt or equity, to rather consider historic projects and to encourage adaptive re-use of historical buildings even if there is no continuity of use- buildings should be adaptively reused for contemporary purposes.

It has been argued that cultural participation also improves health and well-being and that is essential to work with the ageing population, developing a social dimension by linking culture with health and well-being of people as well as to use and mainstream social innovation to fight against poverty which became a global issue. Moreover, working further on social inclusion is necessary – the role of cultural heritage in inclusive and resilient cities: art and cultural heritage as a tool to empower and include migrants and local communities and neighbourhoods more inclusively.

Panel 3 also highlighted urgent need to for the recognition, mainstreaming and effective contribution of cultural heritage as a driver and enabler of sustainable development in the process of implementing the United Nations Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals. The innovative context in which the EYCH 2018 exists and the adoption of the UN Agenda 2030 can be considered itself as innovation, and mainstreaming cultural heritage in the Agenda 2030 – especially target 11.4 where all countries in the world, have agreed that cultural heritage is an indispensable feature of sustainable and resilient cities, therefore it is immediately needed to identify the (EU) State Party Focal Point for the SDGs and strengthen links with Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Ministries of International Development, which are writing VNRs (Voluntary National Reviews), in order to follow and enhance that process. As the EYCH 2018 is also the year of first triennial review by the UN high-level political Forum on the status of the global implementation of the SD goal 11 and VNRs reporting on the status of implementing SD goal 11, the EU should encourage and create

mechanisms with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs to report on 11.4 and the role of cultural heritage safeguarding in the Member States' national sustainability strategies.

Related to other global issues it is also necessary to raise awareness that cultural heritage has a lot to contribute to climate changes and cohesion as a resource, as an asset for community resilience – the Paris agreement covers the major areas of action – mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage and knowledge and communication. Mobilise the competences and assets of the cultural heritage community as a part of the solution to climate change.

Under the spotlight of innovation it is emphasized a need to create international hubs of innovation, cultural and social integration and develop a KIC (Knowledge and Innovation Community) of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology on cultural heritage and creative industries, especially because the EIT and existing KICs have already established many international (non-EU) collaborations and partnerships as well as to engage and link the Community of innovators with the international community/hub of innovators.

General recommendations are to use the EYCH 2018 to work more and better at the global level, at least reporting at the global level what the EU and its Member States are doing and work on the international dimension of other objectives.