

11TH EHHF ANNUAL MEETING

- COUNCIL OF EUROPE CULTURAL HERITAGE ACTIVITIES -

EUROPEAN CULTURAL HERITAGE STRATEGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

To recall the background

The European ministers responsible for cultural heritage from the 50 States Parties to the European Cultural Convention met in Namur (Belgium) on 23-24 April for their 6th Conference entitled “*Cultural heritage in the 21st century for living better together. Towards a common strategy for Europe*”. The Conference was held in the framework of the Belgian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. The Ministers adopted the Namur Declaration in support of a **European cultural heritage Strategy for the 21st century** and sending a clear political message about the importance of cultural heritage in addressing new societal challenges.

The Strategy will redefine the place and role of cultural heritage in Europe and provide guidelines to promote good governance and participation in heritage identification and management, and disseminate innovative approaches to improving the environment and quality of life of European citizens. It will address the main challenges facing heritage at the beginning of the 21st century through three main dimensions: a societal and participatory component, an economic and territorial development component, and an education and knowledge sharing component.

The Strategy will set challenges, recommend actions and highlight best practice to be followed by all actors and stakeholders: governments, local authorities, civil society, professionals, etc. It will be based upon and come in support of existing Council of Europe conventions in the field of heritage, especially the [Faro Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society](#).

What has been done so far

Under the supervision of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) a team of heritage experts from member States is drawing up the Strategy. Five meetings have already been held: Paris, 1 December 2015; Paris, 25-26 January 2016 (social component); Strasbourg, 29 February-1 March (territorial development component); Paris, 12-13 April (education component) and in Strasbourg 3-4 May (to review the document as a whole, plus the areas of overlap between the three components and the evaluation).

The drafting process has progressed very well in a very tight schedule and is now in its final stage. The Chair of the CDCPP, Mr Bruno Favel, and Mr Pierre Paquet rapporteur of the heritage experts group, are playing an essential role in the process together with national experts. The CDCPP Bureau examined the draft Strategy on 21-22 April.

The next steps

The Plenary meeting of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape will be held in Strasbourg on 13-15 June and will examine and approve the draft Strategy in the framework of a Committee of Ministers' Recommendation to be adopted in the third quarter of 2016.

A launching event will probably take place in Cyprus in spring 2017 as part of its Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers. Therefore, the Council of Europe will be collaborating with the Cypriot authorities in the organisation of a high-level promotional event. It will then be up to the countries to implement the Strategy on the ground. The Council of Europe is extremely interested and eager to accompany the member States in their tasks, by providing legal and technical assistance if requested, identifying and exchanging good practices, and monitoring the Strategy's implementation.

We will have the opportunity to further discuss the Strategy later at the Working Group dedicated to this matter.

Thank you for your attention.