



EUROPA
NOSTRA

CULTURAL HERITAGE COUNTS FOR EUROPE

**“Not everything that counts can be measured,
and not everything that can be measured, counts” (Albert Einstein)**

**Position Paper of Europa Nostra,
the Pan-European Federation for Cultural Heritage**

**Adopted by the Europa Nostra Council
at its meeting on 2 June 2005 in Bergen (Norway)**



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NOSTRA

Europa Nostra, the pan-European Federation for Heritage, is the representative platform of over 200 heritage NGOs active throughout Europe. It is the voice of organised civil society active in the field of heritage towards EU Institutions, the Council of Europe and UNESCO. It is dedicated to putting heritage in the mainstream of public consciousness at European, national, regional and local levels and in making heritage a priority for public policies and action both at European and national levels.

Europa Nostra's objectives are, among others, to promote, at a European level, high standards of quality in the fields of heritage conservation, architecture, urban and rural planning and to advocate a balanced and sustainable development of urban and rural, built and natural environment. Europa Nostra also seeks to highlight the importance of the cultural and educational dimension of the ongoing European integration process. Moreover, it supports national and international campaigns for European heritage at risk. Europa Nostra is responsible for the running of the leading European cultural heritage awards scheme, the EU Prize for Cultural Heritage/Europa Nostra Awards.

Europa Nostra cooperates closely with European heritage networks, such as ICOMOS-Europe, ECOVAST (European Council on Villages and Small Towns), the Union of European Historic Houses Associations, and the European Landowners Organisation. It also cooperates with the European Forum for Arts and Heritage and the European Cultural Foundation on broader issues of advocacy for culture in Europe.



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I. FOREWORD

“Europe isn't just an economic area to be administered. It is first and foremost an original civilisation which has to be reinvigorated by the shock of the Union.”

Hendrik Brugmans, founding rector of the College of Europe in Bruges

As Europe prepares itself for its new role in the 21st century, it has to make full use of all its resources. Renewing its constitutional structure, enlarging the EU, developing an active citizenship, asserting its place in the modern world, building a constructive relationship with other European countries and neighbouring regions, improving the competitiveness of Europe's economy, coping with rapid technological and societal change, promoting sustainable development and ensuring the protection of its environment – these are hard tests for the stability, prosperity and coherence of Europe.

Europe and especially its most dynamic political force, the European Union, will succeed in its mission only if these complex processes are accompanied by a growing conviction of all its citizens of belonging to a common civilisation. Recognising our common cultural heritage - most visible and tangible in historical buildings and cultural landscapes - and preserving it for present and future generations ought to become one of the important political challenges also for the EU.

This paper presents Europa Nostra's latest contribution to the re-emerging debate on a cultural dimension of EU policy. It calls for a comprehensive and coherent EU cultural strategy, especially in the field of cultural heritage, by making full use of the "complementary competences" under the present EU-treaty. It should encompass EU action in its cultural programmes as well as in all other areas having a direct or indirect impact on cultural heritage. We have been encouraged by the clear policy statements of the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, ever since the beginning of his five-year term and by large public debates encouraged by the successive EU Presidencies of The Netherlands and Luxembourg, as well as by German and French governments.

Such an EU heritage strategy needs to be developed in close consultation with the organised civil society committed to the safeguard of our cultural heritage. These local, regional and national organisations represent – on the grass roots level – the mostly voluntary work of millions of Europeans who care for our common cultural heritage. They know that heritage is central to their identity and quality of life, to the economic and social development and regeneration, the cohesion and the liveability of their cities, regions and nations. A credible EU strategy in this field could persuade them that the EU really cares for the daily life of its citizens. It would help them to recognise and enjoy the common cultural area of Europe and develop their sense of civic responsibility as European citizens. An EU heritage strategy will, of course, have to take fully into account the experience of international organisations in this field, such as the Council of Europe and UNESCO.

Europa Nostra stands ready to contribute to such an EU strategy by serving as intermediary organisation and voice of the European civil society in the field of heritage conservation, education and enhancement.

***Otto von der Gablentz, Executive President of Europa Nostra
June 2005***



II. THE CULTURAL DIMENSION OF THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESS NEEDS TO BE FURTHER ENHANCED

“The EU has reached a stage of its history when its cultural dimension can no longer be ignored. (...) If the economy is a necessity for our lives, culture is really what makes life worthwhile.(...)”

José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, Berlin, 26 November 2004¹

European civil society can only **endorse the current political momentum to enhance the cultural dimension of the European integration process** which was started as part of the work of the European Convention and subsequently reflected in the text of **the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe**². This momentum was forcefully confirmed by the committed speeches made by the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, ever since the beginning of the term of the new Commission³. The organised civil society in the field of culture and cultural heritage which played an important part in mobilising political support for “giving more room for culture” in the policies and activities of the European Union will, of course, continue to contribute to the current – equally important – phase of discussions which should result in concrete decisions on EU policy and action.

In this context, the **Constitutional Treaty represents an important milestone and a significant step in the right direction**⁴. Its preamble and its articles I.3.3 (on the Union’s objectives) and III.280 (on Culture) highlight the cultural dimension of the European Union and include the safeguarding and enhancement of cultural heritage among the main objectives of the Union. The introduction of the qualified majority rule for decision-making process in the field of culture also opens the way for a more effective and imaginative implementation of the legal framework for action provided by the Treaty. We are, of course, aware of the uncertain future of this Treaty, following its rejection at the French and the Dutch referenda. However, we will continue to refer to the text and the spirit of the above constitutional provisions throughout the present document, since we think that they will remain a source of inspiration for the future course of EU action and policy.

In the meantime, **Europa Nostra believes that the existing Treaty already provides sufficient legal basis for the Union to develop a comprehensive strategy and action in favour of culture and cultural heritage.**

We strongly believe that the Member States should lend their full support to the proposed strengthening of EU action in the field of culture and cultural heritage, without fears that such a development would be contrary to the proper implementation of the **principle of subsidiarity**. In fact, by reason of its scale and effect, the protection of Europe’s cultural heritage undoubtedly requires the involvement of the Union, in addition to the relevant policy and action of the Member States. This was recognised by the

¹ www.berlinerkonferenz.net

² In the rest of the present document referred as the Constitutional Treaty.

³ Berlin Conference “A Soul for Europe” (November 2004), Rotterdam Conference “Europe: A Beautiful Idea?” (December 2004), Brussels Conference (February 2005)

⁴ EFAH/Europa Nostra joint statement at the Hearing organised by the European Parliament’s Constitutional Affairs Committee on 25/11/2004;

See: http://www.europanostra.org/downloads/documents/afco_hearing_november_%202004.doc



wording of article 151 of the existing Treaty. Since the article has explicitly limited the nature of EU action to “complementary action and measures”, excluding any possibility of harmonisation of national laws, no Member States should be opposed to the full implementation of the “cultural article” on the grounds of the principle of subsidiarity.

We also recognise that the “**European added value**” parameters should guide the Union’s strategy and action related to culture and cultural heritage, along the lines of the Council Resolution on the work plan on European cooperation in the field of culture of 9 December 2002⁵.

As far as the **specific fields of cultural action** are concerned, Article 151 (paragraphs 1 and 2) of the existing Treaty stresses the importance of contemporary artistic and literary creation as well as of the necessary safeguard of Europe’s cultural heritage, both in its tangible and intangible forms. Europa Nostra indeed believes that **artistic creativity and cultural heritage conservation, enhancement and education are two sides of the same coin: a Europe of Culture**. The Union should therefore highlight and **promote a constructive balance** between these two essential elements of culture, each contributing to a sense of pride, a sense of belonging and a sense of citizenship – both national and European.

While fully supporting the broad “advocacy for culture” movement at European level, by means of the present document Europa Nostra wishes to **highlight the specificity of the cultural heritage** and the nature and importance of the multiple benefits which cultural heritage has for Europe’s society, environment and economy as well as for the entire European integration process. It **makes a case for adequate EU strategy and action benefiting Europe’s cultural heritage**.

⁵ See Council Resolution on the work plan on European cooperation in the field of culture: European added value and mobility of persons and circulation of works in the cultural sector, 9/12/2002; 14181/02, CULT 54.



III. CULTURAL HERITAGE HAS MULTIPLE BENEFITS FOR EUROPE TODAY

“The upsurge of interest in buildings, gardens, interiors and design issues helps to show that people value quality of life considerations alongside economic and social well-being.”

Sir Neil Cossons, on behalf of the Historic Environment Review Steering Group⁶

Heritage today can provide more than an argument for beauty and certainly more than an attraction to travellers. It should be realised as a necessary precondition of integration and a vital instrument of societal development.⁷

Our cultural heritage has, first and foremost, an important **political significance** for Europe today. Heritage is a visible expression of our common European culture and history, a tangible testimony of our roots without which our present would be impoverished and our future would become sterile. As such, it is an essential element of our local, regional, national and European identity. The knowledge and the understanding of the “unity in diversity” of Europe’s shared cultural heritage contribute fundamentally to the development of a **sense of European citizenship** and a **sense of belonging**, as indispensable **cohesive factors** in the on-going process of European integration.

Europe’s cultural heritage also provides considerable **benefits for society, the environment and economy**. Activities related to heritage conservation, enhancement and education should indeed be recognised and fully exploited as **a contribution to the achievement of current EU policy priorities**, and in particular the full implementation of the **Lisbon objectives** (knowledge economy and job creation), the **Gothenburg agenda** (sustainable development and environment protection); the promotion of **social cohesion and inclusion**; and development of **active European citizenship** and **participatory democracy**.

Furthermore, cultural heritage – both built and natural – contributes fundamentally to the **quality of life** of Europe’s citizens and to the **character and beauty of our living environment**. This environmental and spatial dimension (both urban and rural) defines the specificity of cultural heritage in comparison to other fields of cultural activity. While advocating the highest possible level of cultural heritage conservation, Europa Nostra fully recognises that cultural heritage “places” (both monuments and sites) remain **dynamic entities**. Indeed, the **continuity between the past, present and future** needs to guide and inspire European, national and regional strategies, policies and action related to cultural heritage thus ensuring its sustainable development but also encouraging the necessary cultural and social evolution of those places. At the same time, strategies of urban and rural development and spatial planning, as well as modern architecture developments should respect and take fully into consideration the requirements of cultural heritage conservation.

⁶ Introduction to the “Heritage Counts 2003” Report on the state of England’s Historic Environment; see also Heritage Counts 2004 Report; www.heritagecounts.org.uk

⁷ “Heritage and the Building of Europe”, Foreword by the Editors, Rupert Graf Strachwitz and Sneska Quaedvlieg-Mihailovic, publication jointly produced by Europa Nostra and *Kulturstiftung Haus Europa*



Europa Nostra recommendations:

- In addition to its intrinsic cultural dimension and objective, the **safeguarding and enhancement of cultural heritage should be fully promoted as part and parcel of the Union's wider objectives**, as defined in Article 2 of the Treaty.
- In compliance with Article 151.4 of the Treaty, the EU and its Member States should also fully exploit the **synergy between EU action directly related to Culture and Cultural Heritage and EU policy and action in other fields**, and in particular the following:
 - Promoting responsible and active European citizenship
 - Education and Training
 - Environment
 - Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion
 - Common Agricultural Policy
 - Tourism
 - Neighbourhood and Mediterranean Policy, and also the overall Foreign and Security Policy



IV. A STRUCTURED DIALOGUE WITH CIVIL SOCIETY AS AN ASSET

“The Institutions shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with representative associations and civil society”

Article I - 47.2 of the Constitutional Treaty

Civil society organisations should be recognised as important partners for the definition and implementation of public strategies and policies, both at national and at European level, which are directly or indirectly related to heritage. They have a special responsibility for raising the awareness of the significance of cultural heritage and for stimulating grass-root initiatives. Civil society organisations also have a task to monitor policy and economic developments and, whenever appropriate, raise their voice against developments detrimental to cultural heritage.

EUROPA NOSTRA recommendations:

* the EU Institutions should set up an appropriate consultative mechanism for a regular dialogue with organised civil society active in the field of cultural heritage. This could take the form of a **“European Heritage Forum”**, similar to other existing fora such as the European Environmental Forum, the European Tourism Forum or the European Forum on Architectural Policy⁸. **Europa Nostra is prepared to be the facilitator for such an institutionalised dialogue** between the EU Institutions and organised civil society active at European, national, regional and local levels.

* the EU Institutions should consider giving the appropriate form of endorsement to the **“Declaration on the role of voluntary organisations in the field of heritage”** which was adopted by the Vth European Conference of Ministers in charge of Cultural Heritage (Portoroz, 2001)⁹ (for example, in the form of a Resolution by the Council of Ministers).

* in the context of the on-going enlargement process, special efforts should be invested in the **capacity building of heritage NGOs in the wider region of Central and Eastern Europe** through dissemination of the “power of example” and best practises, twinning projects, exchanges of ideas and experiences and training on specific issues.

In the broader field of culture, Europa Nostra welcomes the **emerging alliance between the European networks and organisations active in the various fields of culture** and recognises the valuable role played in this context by the **European Forum for the Arts and Heritage and the European Cultural Foundation**. Europa Nostra has, inter alia, taken part – as the representative platform of NGOs active in the field of cultural heritage – in the Stakeholders Forum of the **Laboratory of European Cultural Co-operation (LAB)**.¹⁰ Europa Nostra also welcomes the recent establishment of an **informal EU Civil Society Contact Group** which encourages dialogue between the representatives of European platforms of organised civil society active in various sectors covered by EU policy and action, including culture and environment.

⁸ The next meeting of the bi-annual European Forum on Architectural Policy will be held on 27 and 28 June 2005 during the Luxembourg Presidency of the EU, when a Seminar on architectural quality will be organised in conjunction with the Informal meeting of the Council of Ministers in charge of Culture.

⁹ www.coe.org

¹⁰ www.eurocult.org



V. TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE EU STRATEGY AND ACTION BENEFITTING CULTURAL HERITAGE

“The Community shall take cultural aspects into account in its action under other provisions of this Treaty, in particular in order to respect and to promote the diversity of its cultures.”

Article 151.1 of the Treaty establishing the European Community

A) GENERAL REMARKS

The above-mentioned “horizontal clause” is the key to the effective contribution by the EU Institutions and Member States to the safeguarding and enhancement of cultural heritage (immovable and movable, tangible and intangible including cultural landscapes and traditional crafts and skills). **It is indeed vital that a comprehensive strategy with regard to cultural heritage be adopted by the Union and that action benefiting cultural heritage be mainstreamed into all relevant EU policy/action areas.** EU direct action related to culture and cultural heritage should thus be complemented by other policy/action areas with direct or indirect impact on culture, such as education and training; action towards youth; information and communication; action promoting active (European) citizenship; environment; common agricultural policy and rural development; regulation of the internal market; taxation; trade; energy; research and development; tourism; external relations and last but not least, regional development and social cohesion through structural funds.

The EU Institutions and Member States also need to adopt incentives for private investments in restoring and maintaining heritage since a large majority of Europe’s heritage assets is, and will remain, privately owned. Many of these measures need to be promoted also at European level, including fiscal measures such as a reduced VAT rate on restoration and maintenance works on historic buildings. As historic monuments constitute a common good, legal and fiscal measures to assist private owners of historic buildings and sites should be an integral part of future sustainable EU strategy and action with regard to cultural heritage.

Europa Nostra recommendations:

- The full implementation of this “horizontal clause” requires a **continuous dialogue on shared objectives** among the various DGs of the European Commission (with a special role for the Secretariat General of the Commission); between the various DGs of the European Commission and their counterparts in other EU Institutions; as well as between the EU Institutions and the corresponding NGOs. A horizontal cooperation between various NGO sectoral platforms is also needed.
- An effective implementation of the “horizontal clause” requires a **comprehensive and permanent monitoring system** (including the production of periodic progress reports by the Commission on the implementation of article 151.4), with a particular role for the European Parliament and the civil society concerned.



- Special attention should be given to a careful assessment of the growing number of EU directives or regulations – many of them adopted as part of the regulation of the internal market – which might have an unintended adverse effect on cultural heritage. The Commission might in the future consider accompanying its legislative proposals with an additional “fiche” indicating the **compatibility of a given Commission proposal with the provisions of article 151.4 of the Treaty**.
- The EU Institutions should explore the feasibility of **introducing an appropriate “cultural impact assessment” system** similar to the one which currently exists in the form of an “environment impact assessment”.

B) HERITAGE AS AN ASSET FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: SPECIAL FOCUS ON CULTURAL TOURISM

As many reports and studies show, cultural heritage (both its historic and its natural components) is capable of generating a wide range of positive economic benefits. These include benefits to individuals as a result of new job opportunities or the higher prices commanded by homes with historic features, and benefits to entire communities thanks to the regeneration of run-down historic areas. The economy also benefits directly from a vibrant and expanding tourist industry, much of which depends upon a high quality historic and natural environment to attract new visitors.^{11/12}

Tourism is one of the most important and fast growing sectors of the world economy and of the European Union. In particular, Europe is the world leading tourism destination. It contributes at a rate of at least 4% to the EU GDP, accounts for more than 6 million direct jobs and for more than 2 million businesses, most of them being small and medium-size undertakings. In addition, according to some estimates, more than 50% of tourist activity in Europe is driven by cultural heritage and cultural tourism is expected to grow the most in the tourism sector. Sustainable European tourism requires, inter alia, preservation of cultural heritage resources which are crucial for its development. This is the asset of its competitiveness in the world market. In so doing cultural tourism contributes to the safeguard and enhancement of Europe’s cultural heritage.

Furthermore, the intra–European cultural tourism constitutes an important vehicle for promoting, among the European citizens, the awareness of Europe’s cultural dimension, of its cultural “unity in diversity”, and also for promoting the sense of European identity and sense of belonging. For all these reasons the promotion of cultural tourism is one of the primary objectives and actions for Europa Nostra.

To this aim **Europa Nostra strongly supports the current action on tourism by the EU Institutions**, in particular the European Commission Communication on “Basic Orientations for the sustainability of the European Tourism” (on which it has communicated comments and suggestions), the work of the Tourism Sustainability Group foreseen in that Communication and the draft Report and Motion for an EP Resolution of Mr Luis Queiro’, MEP, on “New prospects and new challenges for sustainable European tourism” presented to the EP Committee on Transport and Tourism on 1.3.2005.

¹¹ See **Heritage Counts 2004 Report**, chapter 5.2. on Economic Benefits, www.heritagecounts.org.uk

¹² For an additional analysis of the economic value of cultural heritage see, among others, the recent study prepared by By Dr. T. Nypan, Directorate for Cultural Heritage, in Norway “Cultural Heritage Monuments and historic buildings as value generators in a post-industrial economy (with emphasis on exploring the role of the sector as economic driver)”



Europa Nostra recommendations:

- To promote and take advantage of the great synergy between cultural heritage and sustainable tourism for the promotion and enhancement of both.
- Given the fact that cultural heritage is an invaluable economic asset having the “power of attraction” for cultural tourism without getting sufficient financial benefit in return from this important economic activity, the EU and national or local public authorities should **explore ways in which those economic imbalances can be smoothed out, in particular through fiscal measures (including a reduced VAT rate) and/or grants.**
- Cultural heritage education is important for the attractiveness of cultural and quality tourism. It should be developed and spread throughout Europe, both intra schools and extra. Guidebooks stressing the European dimension of Europe’s Cultural Tourism destinations should be promoted.
- **Cooperation between all stakeholders** should be pursued, in particular the public and private sectors, between the heritage conservation community and tourism industry to protect cultural heritage as declared in the International Cultural Tourism Charter, adopted by ICOMOS in 1999.
- The European Prize for Cultural Heritage/Europa Nostra Awards constitutes an effective tool for increasing the attractiveness of cultural tourism destinations and itineraries. The competent services of the European Commission for culture and tourism respectively could start a coordinated action in this sense. Europa Nostra is ready to cooperate.
- In the framework of the work for a Label for European Tourism as a global destination, one should think to one particular **Label for Cultural European Tourism.**



C) EU ENLARGEMENT: OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE NEW MEMBER STATES¹³

The continuing enlargement of the EU constitutes a significant enrichment of its cultural heritage and provides a great **opportunity** for cultural heritage conservation and education in the new Member States. The many opportunities will be created by gradual growth of economy and standard of living, increased mobility of people within the EU, gradual development of cultural tourism, improved standards of environmental protection imposed by EU regulations, the use of EU structural funds, the return of historic monuments to former owners or acquisition of historic monuments by new private owners.

The EU and its Member States must however also become aware of the many **threats** to cultural heritage which will arise as a consequence of often uncontrolled urban, industrial and building developments which are currently under way. These should in no way be underestimated.

For example, the Common Agricultural Policy and the industrialisation of agriculture have already had some negative side-effects on the preservation of the countryside in the Union. This is why **Europa Nostra welcomes the latest CAP reforms**, and notably the decoupling of aid from production, with the aim to make agriculture sustainable and to enhance the rural environment and quality of life.

Illicit trafficking of works of art will be further “facilitated” due to the abolition of frontier controls. Stronger police and judicial co-operation between all EU Member States is therefore a must. Finally, reduced state funds for culture will lead also to substantial budget cuts for heritage conservation, or for the management and presentation of museums/sites to the public. Therefore, new sources of funding, mostly private, will need to be encouraged by adequate incentive measures to be adopted by public authorities.

All of the threats mentioned above exist also in “old” Member States. However, the situation is particularly fragile in the “new” countries as they are “countries in transition”. The economic pressure in the new Member States of the Union will indeed be particularly high and requires firm regulations for the protection of non-renewable resources such as built and natural heritage. Central and Eastern Europe should try to learn from the mistakes which Western Europe made in the 50s, 60s and 70s and seek to avoid them, not repeat them.

Europa Nostra Recommendation:

- The EU Institutions and Member States have a particular responsibility to help the “new countries” to fully exploit the above-mentioned opportunities, while at the same time reducing as much as possible the negative effects of the many threats.

¹³ For a more detailed overview of opportunities and threats to the cultural heritage conservation and education linked to the EU Enlargement see the special issue of the European Cultural Heritage Review on “Enlargement = enrichment”, Europa Nostra N.1/2004



VI. EU ACTION DIRECTLY LINKED TO CULTURE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Europa Nostra **supports the overall aim of the proposed Culture 2007 programme**¹⁴ which is “to enhance the European common cultural area through multi-lateral cultural cooperation between creators, cultural players and cultural institutions with a view to encouraging the emergence of European citizenship”. However, if the profile of cultural heritage and of EU action in this field is to be raised, we believe that the above **general objective should be accompanied by references to specific aims to be pursued and achieved in various fields of cultural activity.**

Europa Nostra is also concerned that the general objective of enhancing our common cultural area might fade into oblivion behind the three specific objectives (transnational mobility of people working in the cultural sector, transnational mobility of artistic and cultural works and products, and inter-cultural dialogue) which are too limited. The first two specific objectives should in fact be considered as tools – amongst many others – to achieve the overall objective, but are not goals in themselves. Moreover, inter-cultural dialogue is in fact an “umbrella objective” encompassing also the first two specific objectives; it should therefore be incorporated in the overall aim of the proposed programme.

We are particularly worried about the fact that the activities in the field of immovable cultural heritage might be in practice excluded from the proposed second specific objective of the programme which is “to promote transnational mobility of artistic and cultural works and products”. We therefore propose the inclusion of one additional specific objective, which could be worded as follows: “*to protect Europe’s cultural diversity and to promote the knowledge and awareness of Europe’s cultural heritage*”. This proposal is in line with the wording of article 151 of the Treaty.

While recognising the importance of the mobility objective, we also believe that one the specific objectives of the Union should be to encourage its Member States to adopt the necessary measures aiming to reduce the “mobility” of the stolen works of art.

In addition to this, it appears that the main target group which will benefit from this programme are heritage professionals, much more than interested European citizens, and in particular youth. This, in our opinion, does not provide the optimal means for enhancing our common cultural ground and encouraging the emergence of a European citizenship. Indeed, it is our concern that in the proposed programme, some vital aspects might be neglected in future EU cultural action, namely facilitating access to culture for all, through instruments such as heritage education.

Furthermore, the third strand of the proposed programme will support analysis and the collection and dissemination of information. It is of great importance that this strand of EU action in this area does not duplicate the work of other international organisations, both governmental and non-governmental, and specifically that the *acquis* of the Council of Europe be taken into account in the development of this strand.

In particular, the proposed programme envisages the development of an Internet tool for exchanging information and good practice. The EU should ensure that there is no

¹⁴ COM (2004) 469 final – Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Culture 2007 programme (2007 – 2013)



overlap between this proposed Internet tool and the already existing Internet tools of the Council of Europe, namely COMPENDIUM and HEREIN¹⁵, and wherever possible build on these existing projects and experiences.

We greatly welcome the intention to make Culture 2007 a more “user-friendly” programme through the introduction of simpler methods for beneficiaries, and through rationalised management of the programme.

We welcome the proposed openness of the Culture 2007 Programme also to the countries of the Western Balkans and to the countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy. In this context, it is also desirable to make provisions and invent initiatives – both financially and administratively – to facilitate the actual participation of third countries in the programme.

Finally, if the ambitious aims of Culture 2007 Programme are to be achieved, Europa Nostra stresses the need for a much better resourced programme, and to this end endorses the campaign launched by the European Forum for Arts and Heritage and the European Cultural Foundation for a future EU budget for culture based on the principle of spending 70 Euro-cents per EU capita per year for culture.

Europa Nostra recommendations can be summarized as follows:

- Amend the proposed article 3.2. on the objectives of the “Culture 2007” Programme by adding to the existing three specific objectives one additional one: “d) to protect Europe’s cultural diversity and to promote the knowledge and the awareness of Europe’s cultural heritage”.
- Give due attention to smaller operators and smaller-scale projects
- Facilitate the participation of third European countries who are not (yet) candidates for accession to the Union
- Ensure that the programme is accompanied by an adequate budget

¹⁵ www.european-heritage.net



VII. AN ENHANCED COOPERATION AND COORDINATION OF ACTION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

“The Community and the Member States shall foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the sphere of culture, in particular the Council of Europe.”

Article 151.3 of the Treaty establishing the European Community

Any EU action in favour of culture and cultural heritage must take into account that European culture is not limited to the EU's territory, and that the EU's approach to culture should be inspired by the principle **“Europe without dividing lines”**. In compliance with the existing article 151.3, the EU needs in particular to take full advantage of the extensive “acquis” of the Council of Europe with its wider membership and its long-standing experience and large expertise in the field of European cultural cooperation. The considerable added value of this “acquis” lies, inter alia, in the fact that all new Member States have already been members of the Council of Europe for the past decade during which they have been actively participating in various European projects promoting high quality conservation of cultural heritage and in awareness raising campaigns about the “unity in diversity” of our common heritage. An additional advantage lies in the fact that the Council of Europe's “acquis” applies to the whole of Europe.

EUROPA NOSTRA recommendations:

- the European Commission should explore the political and legal implications of a possible formal endorsement of European Conventions related to cultural heritage which have been adopted in the last two decades under the auspices of the Council of Europe, as well as of the more general European Cultural Convention whose 50th anniversary is currently celebrated¹⁶. The European Commission should also find the appropriate form of involvement in the present process of the elaboration of the new Framework Convention of the Council of Europe on the value of cultural heritage for society¹⁷.
- While welcoming the Decision recently adopted by the Council authorising the European Commission to participate in negotiations within UNESCO on the preliminary draft Convention on the protection of the diversity of cultural contents and artistic expressions (13840/04), Europa Nostra urges the European Commission to take duly into account the cultural heritage dimension as an important component of cultural diversity.¹⁸

¹⁶ European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2000); Convention on the Conservation of Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern, 1980); European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised) (Valetta, 1992); Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Grenada, 1985); European Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property (1985); European Cultural Convention (Paris, 1954).

¹⁷ Draft Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage in Society.

¹⁸ For the text of the preliminary draft of a UNESCO Convention on the protection of the diversity of cultural contents and artistic expressions, see http://portal.unesco.org/culture/admin/file_download.php/Eng-PreliminaryDraftConv-conf201-2.pdf?URL_ID=21972&filename=10902314103Eng-PreliminaryDraftConv-



VIII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

“We feel that, at this crucial stage of European integration, the EU as the most dynamic political force in shaping the Europe of the future, shoulders a special responsibility for ensuring that the common heritage of our continent will be preserved for coming generations.”

Otto von der Gablentz, Executive President, Europa Nostra¹⁹

Heritage conservation, enhancement and heritage education should be fully exploited as a valuable **resource for building a “Europe of the citizens”**. They are an indispensable building block of a sustainable European edifice that citizens can be proud of and in which they feel at home. Only an EU with a strong commitment to preserving Europe's cultural heritage will be able to ensure the cohesion of our continent. Only such an EU will be able to assert its position in the worldwide dialogue of cultures and to mitigate the levelling influences of economic globalisation.

At this historical juncture of its integration process, Europe has a chance to overcome one of its most serious handicaps: the relative lack of committed and loyal citizens. The EU has to make use of the political potential of heritage-related activities. After all, **Europe's historical buildings and cultural landscapes are the visible and tangible witnesses that, together with the intangible forms of heritage, reflect a common civilisation all Europeans share and care.** Unity and diversity have never been contradictions in Europe's cultural evolution. They are the two sides of the same coin, an original European civilisation characterised by its amazing diversity.

What really matters is the awareness of all Europeans, citizens as well as national and European authorities, that **cultural heritage is fundamental to European integration and cooperation. It helps us to realise that our shared historical experience consists of more than the memory of murderous European civil wars.** A generation of Europeans who can "read" and understand the European character of our historic buildings and cultural landscapes will be able to place their own regional and national past, and indeed present, within the context of Europe – an important step towards a development of a sense of European citizenship. Heritage education should therefore be one of the priorities of a wider EU cultural strategy.

In fully implementing its mandate in the field of culture and especially in the field of the safeguarding and enhancing of our common European heritage, the **EU has also got the chance of changing the largely economic and technocratic image**, presented all too often by the media and therefore perceived as such by its citizens. A European Union which is seen as an active promoter of heritage conservation would appeal to millions of citizens. It would develop a more human face, becoming slowly what the founding fathers, more than half a century ago had in mind, the political expression of our common European civilisation.

Europa Nostra stands ready to contribute to a Europe which draws its strength from a renewed awareness of its shared cultural heritage.

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¹⁹ “Heritage and the building of Europe: a special role for Europa Nostra”, concluding article by Otto von der Gablentz (pages 154 – 158) in the book “Heritage and the Building of Europe”, already cited.

