

**Meeting of the EP Intergroup on European tourism development,
cultural heritage, Ways of St. James and other European cultural routes**
on
‘Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe’

16 September 2015, European Parliament, Brussels

Co-organised by **Europa Nostra** and the Co-Chair of the Intergroup, **Ana-Claudia Tapardel**,
with the support of the other Co-Chair, **Francisco Millan Mon**

*Presentation of the results of the ‘Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe’ Report by
Kate Pugh, Chief Executive, The Heritage Alliance*

1. Aims

This project aimed to collect and analyse the existing research to provide a robust evidence base to support the various high level statements from European institutions on the value of cultural heritage.

We may believe this is so but in an era of evidence-based policymaking, it is all the more important to demonstrate the case at local, regional, national and international levels. Often the costs of are more obvious while the benefits can be difficult to capture in conventional terms. Rebalancing that equation was one of the key objectives of this project.

The project was created and supported by the EU Culture Programme at a time when there was a noticeable acceleration in the series of policy documents adopted by the European institutions

- Conclusions on Cultural Heritage as a **Strategic Resource** of a Sustainable Europe
- Conclusions on **Participatory Governance** of Cultural Heritage
- Communication towards an **integrated approach to Cultural Heritage** for Europe adopted by the **European Commission**
- **The Namur declaration under the Council of Europe** calls for a common European strategy for cultural heritage

So there was an urgent need to collect and collate the evidence to support these documents.

And the project was also timely,

- To show how Cultural heritage makes a key contribution to Europe 2020 at the time of its mid-term review.
- And to complement the report by the Horizon 2020 Expert Group *Getting Cultural Heritage to Work for Europe*.

It is indeed the first of its kind to look at this on a European scale. Others may have listed various impact studies but this one analysed their content and development to produce recommendations.

So the report addresses an urgent need for evidence and makes a well-timed contribution to the development of future policy in this area.

2. Findings

And it does make fascinating reading. The detail is superb and the argument convincing. It's difficult to show the detail, so I'm going to show just **4 slides** which I hope will illustrate the scale and strength of the report.

1. The report sets out to demonstrate how and to what extent heritage related activities impact on the economy, society, our culture and the environment.

The two research teams

- The Raymond Lemaire International Centre for Conservation in Belgium
- The International Cultural Centre in Poland

Looked at the existing evidence.

1. They reviewed the theoretical literature to put the European thinking into a global perspective
2. They looked in detail at some 220 studies that had been carried out, demonstrating the wide ranging impacts of cultural heritage at local, regional, national and international level.
3. They added in depth studies to show how a range of impacts can be delivered in practice.

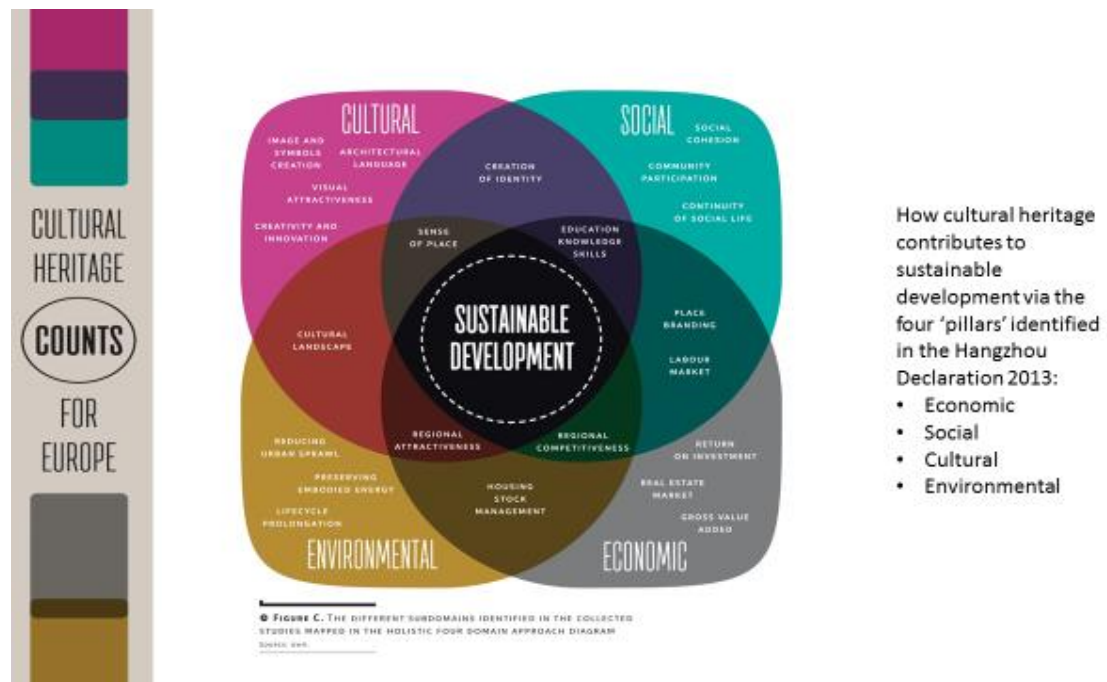
Inevitably, it is not comprehensive and the researchers had to contend with different definitions and different methodologies and many overlaps and crossovers but they did achieve a matrix that allows them to map the impacts across economic, social, cultural and environmental domains.

It came up with 25 areas where cultural heritage activities have an impact.

These range from improving visual attractiveness to reducing urban sprawl, to community participation and to generating tax revenue. And each has plenty of illustrated case studies.

The significant advance is that they then classified these impacts according to the four 'pillars' of sustainable development as presented in the Hangzhou Declaration of 2013: economic, social, cultural and environmental.

And so we can come up with this graphic.



Here we have all the various areas where heritage can make a difference, grouped under those four domains and ingeniously they come together to show how cultural heritage contributes to sustainable development.

This is a really important development in the study of impact assessment.



Here are four examples

1. Here is the Pont du Gard, a World Heritage site which needs €7m euros of public subsidy to maintain it every year but yields a phenomenal €21m a year in taxes and has an indirect impact of €135m.
2. Here is Mechelen a historic Belgian city where 84% of the respondents agreed the city's image had been transformed over the past 10 years and 88% thought this was due to heritage-led regeneration programme.
3. Here is Temple Bar in Dublin which demonstrates the findings that older areas with character attract the creative industries.
4. And here is the Jamtli museum in Sweden, a centre for life-long learning which targets people who have left school early and which has managed through using its resources encouraged participants to re-engage in education. Truly life-changing for some.

So there we have four examples, showing how our cultural heritage impacts on governments, businesses, communities and individuals.

4. Lessons

The research behind this, is of course fascinating, and I recommend the full report because it is full of real-life case studies, well-illustrated, and not least a bibliography which is an international resource in itself.

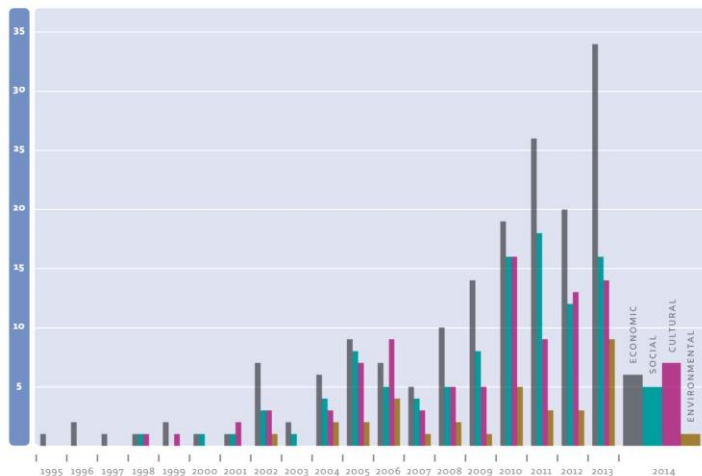
But research is not an end in itself, the research has to travel to the place where it will make a real difference. So there are lessons to be learnt and changes to be achieved.

Lessons

1. The theoretical discourse may have moved from the preservation to regeneration, from single sites to the more general concept of place-making, from the more authoritarian somewhat academic decisions on what is of culturally significant to a more modest everyday heritage.

In effect toward a more holistic approach to our cultural heritage.

But in practice the focus of impact studies are still very narrow and lags far behind the more inclusive thinking.



● **FIGURE A.** CHRONOLOGICAL EVOLUTION OF THE IMPACT DOMAINS AS REPRESENTED BY THE SUBMITTED STUDIES
 Source: own, based on the survey results.

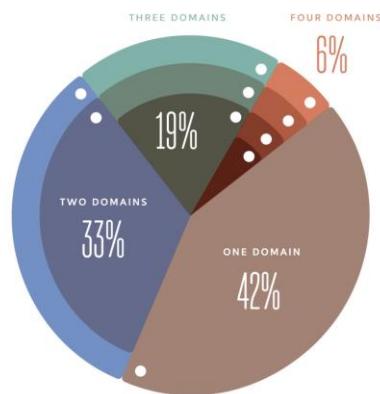
Here we can see the chronological development and interest in cultural heritage impact studies throughout the European Union. The rate of growth is notable and particularly significant in the case of economic-led studies.

While economic studies still predominate, those devoted to social and cultural impacts increased from the 1990s onwards. Environmental impact studies, being a new field of interest, are still relatively under-represented.

What this shows, that the impact of heritage projects is being assessed according to the desired outcomes rather than their total impact.

By specialising, we are not doing ourselves justice – we are selling ourselves short.

This tunnel vision is explained in the next slide.



● **FIGURE B.** THE INTERRELATION OF ALL FOUR IMPACT DOMAINS AS IDENTIFIED IN THE COLLECTED STUDIES
 Source: own, based on the survey results.

This shows how the majority of impact studies look at only one domain, usually economic, , about a third look at two domains , usually cultural and economic, and very few – only 6% look across the totality of impact areas, examining the economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts.

There is a clear connection between a holistic approach to impact assessment and a more integrated approach to policy making.

In effect, heritage initiatives often have spill-over effects, often unexpected, beyond the original objectives.

Similarly job creation programmes, social enterprise investment, environmental services may deliver significant benefit if channelled through the medium of cultural heritage.

At the moment, we just aren't capturing the full benefits of cultural heritage initiatives.

Change - application of the research

Of course the research is interesting but it's not an end in itself. Research is only successful when it achieves change in attitude or a change in policy.

The findings of this report underpin the policy direction the EU has begun, demonstrating the potential of cultural heritage as a strategic resource for creating a more sustainable and prosperous Europe.

But there are no ground for complacency. The research base is still incomplete and in need of further investment if we are to achieve a more integrated policy approach to cultural heritage.

Strategic recommendations

The Report makes a series of 5 strategic recommendations around this main principle.

applying a more holistic approach to impact assessment is essential to developing a more integrated approach to policy making in the field of cultural heritage.

So for example it calls on EU institutions to support the development and refinement of cultural statistics including training of practitioners.

It suggests that all EU funded Cultural heritage projects should require impact assessments using this framework.

Secondly it calls on all EU institutions and member states at all levels of governance to adopt an integrated approach to heritage, by mainstreaming heritage into other policies:

- by integrating the care of heritage assets into related policies and programmes
 - raising awareness in non-heritage fields of the benefits that cultural heritage can bring
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Conclusion

All this sounds quite institutional and distant so why am I here and why are you here? What can we do to advance the role of cultural heritage in the European project?

Perhaps I can make 3 points here

1. Last week was an important day for cultural heritage in Europe as the Members of the European Parliament by **adopting**

A Resolution calling for the implementation of an integrated approach towards cultural heritage for Europe

Over 80%¹ of the total number of MEPs voted in favour.

This Resolution calls for

- all aspects of our cultural heritage to be taken into account;
- for the introduction of a heritage impact assessment to legislative proposals
- and to position cultural heritage a place in the Commission's Investment Plan for Europe

So Parliamentary voting is an example where individuals are making their voice heard.

But in addition, many of you sit on a range of European groupings, committee and Forums where your advice can make a difference, where you can influence the thinking of colleagues across a vast range of disciplines.

The number of MEPs voting for that resolution is far greater than the number of MEPs in this room. So we need to leverage their voting commitment into political influence as well as your own.

What we ask you to do is to take the findings of this report and apply them in all the circles of influence that you have.

2. **Second** the recent move for a European Cultural Heritage Year offers us an opportunity to put this research to work, not only to celebrate our magnificent cultural heritage but an opportunity to demonstrate how central it is to our happiness and wellbeing.

We would hope that all who voted for that Resolution would promote the proposal for ECHY.

3. **And lastly** all the things we've talked about here are European but we shouldn't forget the importance of our cultural heritage in terms of 'soft power'.

Soft power resources, determining international reputations, always include culture alongside

Government, Education, Global Engagement, Enterprise and Digital.

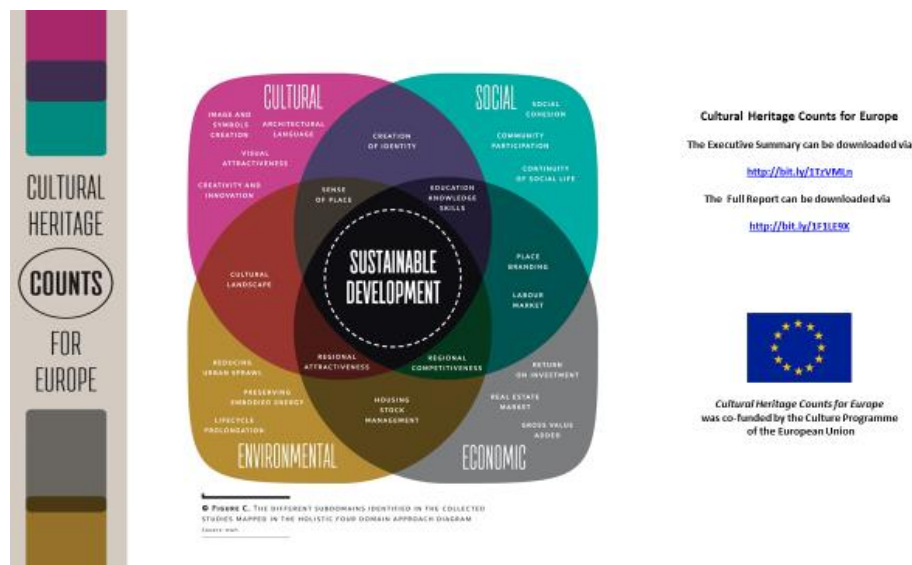
¹ (613 MEPs votes in favour and 70 against, 16 abstained)

In terms of reputation and consequently in global competitiveness, Europe is a cultural bloc with huge resources.

A recent UK study on soft power notes that economic power is moving from west to east and from governments to non-state actors. Geo-politics is in the middle of a fundamental transformation. Countries have to become better at hearing what other global audiences, are saying about them, their culture, their actions and their politics.

All the more important to have unifying cultural strategy to project to an internal as well as an **external audience**. In short not only what our culture contributes to Europe but what Europe through its culture contributes to the world.

Let me leave you with that thought.



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