



EUROPEAN NETWORK ON RESEARCH PROGRAMME APPLIED TO THE PROTECTION OF TANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

WP 1 SYSTEMATIC EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND BEST PRACTICES CONCERNING THE MANAGEMENT OF RUNNING RTD PROGRAMMES ON THE PROTECTION OF TANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE (INFORMATION EXCHANGE)

Cultural heritage captures the memory of the past. Preserving the past is therefore an important element for governments who develop strategies to ensure priorities and conditions for conservation/preservation of the cultural heritage. This materializes in the form of research programmes (either specific or thematic embedded in larger research programmes) specifically aimed at tangible cultural heritage.



This Work package was dedicated to an overall assessment of the Research Programmes applied to the Protection of Tangible Cultural Heritage (TCH) through information exchange among Partners on capacity, national management, financing mechanisms, procedures, practices and evaluation. The Work package identifies strengths and weakness of the TCH systems currently in place. Recommendations on common approaches were generated in consultation and with the consensus of all the Partners and were provided to the NET-HERITAGE Observatory (WP2) for wider dissemination. Furthermore this first mapping in the field of TCH research will be the base for implementation of future joint actions.



The WP1 constructs an information system that maps strategies, research programmes and research institutions in the field of TCH protection, such as, actors, implementation, funding, duration, evaluation, dissemination.

The information collected through a questionnaire and systematically stored in the information system has enabled to identify best practices (task 1.2.), to benchmark the management of research programmes (task 1.3.), and to map participation in international programmes (task 1.4.).

CONCLUSION

The material in the information system is unique in the sense that it gives the first overview of existing research programmes in this domain. We should however take into consideration that information needs further detail to be reported correctly.



This first mapping shows that on the level of strategy the interaction between the government bodies in charge of cultural heritage and those in charge of research has to be reinforced in order to insure a large and sustainable frame for the TCH research

Some major conclusions are that all participating countries have funding schemes to support TCH research activities. 41 research programmes were identified by the 14 partners of Net Heritage project. This proves the interest given to this domain in Europe. Out of them we identified 13 key research programmes within 10 countries most of which are still running.

These programmes show more similarities than differences in their management. Their scope is broadly overlapping. Most countries commission research projects by organizing open calls on a very regular basis (6 programmes are even organising calls on an annual basis, which demonstrates the room for cooperation between these programmes). Evaluation procedures place scientific excellence at the centre of concern and rely in almost all cases on independent peer review and a steering committee making the final arbitrage.

Unfortunately in not many cases can foreign research centres apply for a call and be funded and we are tempted to conclude that these programmes do not really allow international cooperation between scientists.

Finally, budgets allocated to research in TCH seem rather limited –even though some countries are putting a special emphasis on the topic (e.g. France, UK).



Based on the analyses of the global strategy in terms of political and organisational frame, and of the programmes with a focus on the management, 45 Best Practices were identified and a list of research centres of excellence are also given.

Using the process of benchmarking Recommendations on common approaches were developed with the intention to get an idea how to introduce better processes and standards within the field of TCH research and to develop future cooperation.