



# E.C.C.O. STRATEGIC PLAN 2015

E.C.C.O.  
European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations

# Goals



E.C.C.O. committee meeting, Rome 10/2013

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# Table

## INTRODUCTION

The strategic plan builds on the strength and experience E.C.C.O. has gained over the last twenty years and which helps to point the way forward for the next ten years.

The committee has assessed the aims and objectives of E.C.C.O. based on the working reality of the professional Conservator-Restorer today. Developing the strategic plan has been a long and complex process with open discussions and intensive exchange over the past three years. The different situations experienced by our member organizations have been discussed and are reflected in the goals that are presented. Their selection is based on shared needs, similar situations and on challenges our members face today.

The updated vision and mission statement places greater emphasis on the aim of our profession which is to safeguard cultural heritage for society through a high level of professional practice by the Conservator-Restorer. It highlights the fundamental role of the profession as a facilitator in the engagement of society with its cultural heritage. This change of emphasis has come about as the result of a number of European projects that E.C.C.O. has led or been an active participant (namely APEL (E.C.C.O. 2001) and the formulation of European Recommendations for Conservation-Restoration of Cultural Heritage in conjunction with ICCROM and ENCoRE (E.C.C.O. 2009)) and through active dialogue with its members and other stakeholders in the field.

Comparing the main goals in this document with those of past strategic plans, no previous goals have been dropped. However, they are now expressed in a more concrete way and assembled by themes in accordance with recent policy documents such as the European political directives and those produced by E.C.C.O. during the intervening period.

To develop a strategic plan that is both feasible and realistic while also considering the voluntary basis of the work for E.C.C.O. was a challenge in itself. The strong confirmation of our common vision and mission presented in this document helped

to articulate a meaningful and coherent set of goals for the next ten years. The actions that result from these goals and the deadlines that will be discussed with E.C.C.O.'s member organizations are subject to periodical review. Implementing these actions and ensuring progress will require real commitment and active participation of the member organizations, in terms of mandate, information flow and necessary energy. This is why, more than ever, improved communication has been identified as one of the key issues. All members of E.C.C.O. will have to collaborate and join their efforts to achieve these common goals. E.C.C.O. must continue to develop as a platform for Conservator-Restorers to share their common concerns and as a means through which their voice can be better heard at both international and national level. It will require a concerted effort at national and European level to fulfill E.C.C.O.'s vision to safeguard cultural heritage through high standards in the practice of the Conservator-Restorer.

For clarity this plan is presented in two parts: the first describes the long-term goals that have been set for the next ten years, which is intended to be used by our member organisations to help them to set their own goals.

The second describes the activities that will be carried out in order to make progress towards these goals. These are presented as an interconnected set of projects that will be undertaken in a shorter time frame with the progress reviewed on an annual basis and reported to the General Assembly. Separation of the strategic plan into two parts allows the second part to be regularly revised in the interim period. This enables E.C.C.O. to be flexible and react to the changing professional environment for the Conservator-Restorer within Europe so that work can be best tailored to addressing their needs.

## our vision

Cultural heritage safeguarded for society through high standards in the professional practice of Conservation-Restoration.

## our mission

To organize, develop and promote, on a practical, scientific and cultural level, the profession of the Conservator-Restorer.

To set standards and regulate practice at European level and enhance communication between and mobility of professionals.

To strengthen the role and responsibilities of the Conservator-Restorer in relation to others in safeguarding cultural heritage.

## ABOUT E.C.C.O.

E.C.C.O. was established in 1991 by 14 European Conservator-Restorers' Organisations. Currently representing close to 6.000 professionals within 22 countries and 24 members organisations, plus one international body (IADA), E.C.C.O. embodies the field of preservation of cultural heritage, both movable and immovable. Conservator-Restorers are increasingly becoming involved in administration and management of cultural heritage. During its 24 years of existence (1991-2015), E.C.C.O. has established principles and fought for regulation to control access to the profession of the Conservator-Restorer, by articulating professional standards and publishing guidelines for education and practice.

## STRATEGIC GOALS

The following strategic goals have been formulated in order to achieve our mission. These goals are grouped into six themes:

- Role
- Quality
- Communication
- Mobility
- Legal
- Guidance

# E.C.C.O.'s work focuses on the role of Conservator-Restorers in the safeguarding of cultural heritage and their relationship with other professions in the field.

## How does this relate to E.C.C.O.'s mission?

E.C.C.O. continues to demonstrate the importance of a well-defined role for the Conservator-Restorer. It has published documents such as the Guidelines (E.C.C.O. 2004) and the Professional Competences (E.C.C.O. 2011) which have become widely accepted and used. However, E.C.C.O.'s role is understood as facilitating the engagement of society with its cultural heritage by contributing to the understanding of that heritage and providing professional methodologies for its care. More work needs to be done reflecting a continuously negotiated position in an ever changing professional landscape.

## What are the benefits of these goals?

They will strengthen the Conservator-Restorers' position as a decision-maker on an equal basis with other professions in the field of cultural heritage. Furthermore they help to define the interface between associated professions.

## Goal 1: Support the specificity of the Conservator-Restorer

The detailed mapping of competences for access to the profession of Conservator-Restorer, first published in 2011 (E.C.C.O. 2011) needs to be reviewed in light of comments received.

## Goal 2: Identify shared responsibilities of the Conservator-Restorer and associated professionals within cultural heritage

The Conservator-Restorer is one of a number of professional groups that operate as a resource for sustaining cultural heritage. These relationships need to be clarified together with the responsibilities and contribution of the Conservator-Restorer according to this profession's specific competences. The boundaries between the different professions need to be respected.

## Goal 3: Raise awareness of the need for the Conservator-Restorer in the protection and management of our common heritage

Society has a moral imperative of care for its common heritage – it is the responsibility of the Conservator-Restorer to engage everybody in the care of and access to cultural heritage. This includes promotion of actions that “do no harm” in the broadest sense.

## Goal 4: Enhance the professional status of the Conservator-Restorer through recognition of its role within processes that safeguard cultural heritage

To identify the characteristics of the role of the Conservator-Restorer as decision maker will help to compare and improve the professional status with associated professions involved in cultural heritage.

**Quality derives from an ethical approach that ensures a consistently high standard of work and its results, achieved in an accountable manner.**

#### **How does this relate to E.C.C.O.'s mission?**

The Conservator-Restorer is uniquely placed to influence the physical and intangible nature of our common cultural heritage. It is therefore a critical responsibility of the Conservator-Restorer to ensure that any action is conducted to the best standard possible at that time regardless of any opinion of the market.

#### **What are the benefits of these goals?**

A high quality level of Conservation-Restoration decision-making ensures the authenticity of our common cultural heritage is maintained. By insisting on a high level of quality, E.C.C.O. is increasing the trust in the profession to behave and act in a responsible manner for the benefit of the cultural heritage that is in the public interest. This trust strengthens argumentation for appropriate Conservation-Restoration treatments that do not undermine cultural heritage and legitimises the Conservator-Restorer's role as an expert in the field.

#### **Goal 5: Identify and develop common principles, criteria and values for the profession**

The challenge is to understand the values that contextualize heritage as a social-cultural experience and include this understanding in the practice of Conservation-Restoration. E.C.C.O.'s imperative requires that these values are considered while maintaining the ethical principles on which Conservation-Restoration is based.

#### **Goal 6: Define and promote recognised standards of practice throughout Europe**

Recognised standards support good practice and underline the ethical approach that is central to the profession. They can be used both by the Conservator-Restorer and other stakeholders within society.

#### **Goal 7: Enhance the quality of Conservation-Restoration through education, research and innovation**

Provide support for appropriate levels of education, research and innovation, both technical and conceptual, including the implementation of research results for the sustainable management of cultural heritage.

Every aspect of our work relies on open communication towards our member organisations, affiliated organisations, European governmental bodies and the broader community. Advocacy of our goals can only be effective when we have a high level of visibility.

#### How does this relate to E.C.C.O.'s mission?

As an organisation we cannot serve our members without effective communication and visibility. It is essential to every aspect of what E.C.C.O. does. Greater emphasis has to be placed on dissemination and on participation of our members in our work. Effective communication allows us to transmit and exchange information and ideas that concern the Conservator-Restorer. An important part of this is the improvement of the Conservator-Restorer's visibility within Europe and further afield.

#### What are the benefits of these goals?

Enhanced communication with members results in a clearer sense of ownership of E.C.C.O.'s work, shorter reaction time, greater democratic representation and continuity of purpose. These in turn contribute to an enhanced sense of community and recognition of a shared European inheritance. Through communication it is possible to develop a common language, which in turn leads to greater public awareness of the issues and universal principles of Conservation-Restoration. Enhanced visibility of E.C.C.O. at a European level results in greater influence and negotiating power for the profession.

**Goal 8: Promote communication and collaboration to enhance the flow of information between E.C.C.O. and its member organisations, between the members themselves and others at national, European and international levels**

Good communication is essential for identifying and engaging with common issues and developments in the field, both originating within single countries or across Europe. Co-ordination of communication and actions at international level requires the effective application of modern communication techniques.

**Goal 9: Promote public understanding and interest in Conservation-Restoration via E.C.C.O.'s members through visibility and high quality work**

Cultural heritage is a universal resource. The wider public's understanding of the necessity for and the role of Conservator-Restorers in its management is essential. Without public interest, political support will be more difficult to obtain.

A Conservator-Restorer with recognized competence is entitled to work anywhere throughout Europe. Greater mobility is achieved via the mutual recognition of qualifications.

#### How does this relate to E.C.C.O.'s mission?

The mutual recognition of professional Conservator-Restorers throughout Europe lies at the heart of E.C.C.O.'s mission and has been a central focus throughout its history. Without this recognition the movement of a professional workforce across borders within Europe becomes more difficult. E.C.C.O.'s criteria for recognition of the title of Conservator-Restorer as described in the competence document (E.C.C.O. 2011), are already in use throughout Europe to define professional standards of practice and education. They build on the E.C.C.O. Professional Guidelines, I, II & III, revised and approved in 2004 and create a detailed picture of the knowledge and skills required to practice. These knowledge and skills act as basis for consistent work in the field and a high level of professionalism.

#### What are the benefits of this goal?

Three levels of benefits are derived from this goal: at a European level it ensures greater uniformity of qualifications through a common standard of competence; at an organisational level it provides the tools with which national organisations representing the profession can evaluate individuals from their own and other countries. At an individual level, it assists professionals to move across borders in search of employment.

#### Goal 10: Facilitate mobility of professional Conservator-Restorers within Europe through harmonization and recognition

Internationally and within Europe the mobility of the workforce is an increasing reality. The Conservator-Restorer is faced with having to compete across borders while maintaining a recognised high quality of work. This is important, not only for fair competition when the Conservator-Restorer is operating internationally, but also for sustainability of cultural heritage.

Goals

# The impact of legislation and European directives on the Conservator-Restorers' profession, including the legal obligations, has specific significance for cultural heritage and the practice of Conservation-Restoration.

## How does this relate to E.C.C.O.'s mission?

Access to cultural heritage is a human right towards which the Conservator-Restorer makes a significant contribution (UN 1948; UNESCO 2001); as such our work is of public interest. This is why it is necessary to guarantee that those practicing as Conservator-Restorers do so with the necessary level of qualification and accountability. Therefore a legal framework is required. This has been a central focus of E.C.C.O.'s work and is the origin of projects such as APEL (E.C.C.O. 2001). Every profession has to operate within a legal framework which affects many discrete areas of practice including issues of health and safety, insurance and public liability. Aside from these issues E.C.C.O. works towards legislation that recognises the unique nature of Conservation-Restoration and its central role within the cultural heritage sector. As the laws impacting on Conservation-Restoration are constantly developing this work is on-going.

## What are the benefits of these goals?

E.C.C.O. seeks to influence the legal environment within which the Conservator-Restorer operates. This is done by monitoring developments in this field and communicating them to the members. This enables members to remain informed about legal issues in a complex and rapidly evolving environment. E.C.C.O. is the conduit for the Conservator-Restorer's profession, seeking to represent national Conservation-Restoration bodies and give them influence at a higher political level within Europe.

## Goal 11: Promote legal definition and official recognition of the profession of Conservator-Restorers

It is in the public interest that the profession of the Conservator-Restorer is legally regulated because of the unique character of cultural heritage and its importance for society. E.C.C.O. will promote legal regulation at national and international level, which in turn will lead to greater recognition of the profession.

## Goal 12: Influence legislation affecting the profession of the Conservator-Restorer

In many instances legislation is not drawn up with cultural heritage or the Conservator-Restorer specifically in mind. However, if applied within this sector, it must be fit for purpose. Therefore it is critical that the role of the Conservator-Restorer is considered in law and such legislation evaluated in terms of its impact on the profession.

## Goal 13: Lead in addressing legal developments that impact on Conservation-Restoration in Europe

Europe produces many directives, charters and conventions. These must be evaluated, interpreted and, where appropriate, transposed in a way that is supportive to the work of the Conservator-Restorer. Often the legal impact is not obvious, therefore a proactive approach is needed towards their implementation.

## Guidance means a proactive approach in giving advice and in developing tools and recommendations to the benefit of E.C.C.O.'s member organisations.

### How does this relate to E.C.C.O.'s mission?

E.C.C.O. has a commitment to assist its member organisations in raising the standard of professional practice within their own countries. It has always been a core goal of E.C.C.O. to: seek to keep our member organisations up to date with changes in their field, offer guidance on the level of competence required to practice and how Conservator-Restorers can operate within a wider political sphere. E.C.C.O.'s Professional Guidelines (E.C.C.O. 2004) are an example of this, as such E.C.C.O. sees the production of high quality advice and support to its members as a fundamental role.

### What are the benefits of these goals?

As a European reference body for the Conservator-Restorer, E.C.C.O. is consulted on matters concerning Conservation-Restoration within Europe at a political and legal level. E.C.C.O. provides quality guidance either at a general level or tailored to the situations encountered by individual members.

### Goal 14: Assist our member organisations in actions supporting the profession in their own country

The support from a European body at national level has proven to be effective and is seen as an essential part of E.C.C.O.'s remit. Assistance is also given to our members in interpreting and communicating European developments in our field.

### Goal 15: Leadership through visibility and policy involvement with other key players in cultural heritage

E.C.C.O.'s mandate comes from the democratic representation of its members. Having an informed overview of issues at European level and close contact with other agencies within the cultural heritage sector enables E.C.C.O. to take a leading role in the development of policy that benefits the Conservator-Restorer.

### Goal 16: Offer guidance for a high level of professional practice

E.C.C.O. is one of the producers of norms and guidelines within the field of Conservation-Restoration, many of which are broadly accepted by both the profession and further afield. This is seen as a critical function for maintaining the quality of professionalism.

### Goal 17: Offer guidance for a high level of professional education and continuing professional development (CPD)

E.C.C.O. publications are used to inform and advise. They aid educational delivery and promote continuing professional development.

## QUOTED LITERATURE

**E.C.C.O. (2001):** APEL – Acteurs du Patrimoine Européen et Législation. Survey of the legal and professional responsibilities of the Conservator-Restorer as regards the other parties involved in the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage. Rome: Rocografia

**E.C.C.O. (2004):** Professional Guidelines.  
<http://www.ecco-org/about-e.c.c.o./professional-guidelines.html>

**E.C.C.O. (2009):** European Recommendations for Conservation-Restoration of Cultural Heritage

**E.C.C.O. (2011):** Competences for Access to the Conservation-Restoration Profession. Brussels: European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisation A.I.S.B.L. (E.C.C.O.) [ISBN 978-92-990010-1-1]

**UNESCO (2001):** Declaration on Cultural Diversity, Art 7.  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001246/124687e.pdf#page=67>

**United Nations (1948):** Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art. 27/1

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Recognition

During the preparation of this document a number of other organisations' strategic plans were examined. A particular mention must go to The Discovery Programme (Ireland) Strategic Plan 2014–2017 which inspired the structure and format used by E.C.C.O.

### Key Meetings

The full committee and E.C.C.O.'s membership has been involved throughout the time of developing the strategic plan. The key meetings which resulted in this document were held at:

- Ljubljana in November 2012
- Paris in February 2013
- Dublin in December 2013
- Dublin in July 2014

### Committee members involved in the development of the document

(in alphabetical order).

- Stefan Belishki (ACB, Bulgaria)
- Rui Bordalo (ARP, Portugal)
- Silvia Borghini (ARI, Italy)
- David Aguilera Cueco (FFCR, France)
- Susan Corr (ICRI, Ireland)
- Barbara Davidson (KR; Slovak Republic)
- Peter De Groof (APROA-BRK, Belgium)
- Sebastian Dobruskin (SKR-SCR, Switzerland)
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- Jana Šubic Prislan (DRS, Slovenia)
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.I.S.B.L.	Not for-profit Association	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
ACB	Association of Conservator-Restorers in Bulgaria	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
APEL	Acteurs du Patrimoine Européen et Législation	NKF-N	Nordisk Konservatorforbund, den Norske Seksjonen
APROA-BRK	Association Professionnelle des Conservateurs-Restaurateurs d'Oeuvres d'Art – Beroepsvereniging voor Conservators-Restaurateurs van Kunstvoorwerpen	RN	Restauratoren Nederland
ARI	Associazione Restauratori d'Italia	SKR-SCR	Schweizerischer Verband für Konservierung und Restaurierung – Association Suisse de Conservation et Restauration
ARP	Associação Profissional de Conservadores-Restauradores de Portugal	TCF	Totally chlorine free (paper)
CDCPP	Comite Directeur de la Culture, du Patrimoine et du Paysage – Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape	UN	United Nations
CEPLIS	Conseil Européen des Professions libérales – European Council of the Liberal Professions	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
CoE	Council of Europe	VDR	Verband der Restauratoren e.V.
CPD	Continuing Professional Development	VRKS-ARCA	Verband der Restauratoren-Konservatoren Südtirols – Associazione Restauratori-Conservatori Alto Adige
DRS	Društvo Restavradorjev Slovenije		
E.C.C.O.	European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations		
ECRP	European Conservation-Restoration Portfolio		
ELP	European Language Portfolio		
ENCoRE	European Network for Conservation-Restoration Education		
EU	European Union		
FFCR	Fédération Française des Conservateurs/Restaurateurs		
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council (label for sustainable forestry)		
IADA	Internationale Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Archiv-, Bibliotheks- und Graphikrestauratoren		
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property		
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites		
ICRI	Institute of Conservator-Restorers in Ireland		
ISBN	International Standard Book Number		
ISO	International Standard Organization		
KR	Komora Reštaurátorov		



## E.C.C.O.

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