

FOSTERING INNOVATION IN HERITAGE PROFESSIONS: THE EFFECT OF THE EYCH

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Abstract

The European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018 highlighted and celebrated the values of cultural heritage and its role as a driver of social cohesion and economic development, which requires an integrated approach in policy making. The consultation process to help develop these policies reflected the right of all in society to participate in cultural heritage. This paper describes the work that took place in identifying traditional and emerging professions in the field of cultural heritage and specifically issues around the transfer of skills and knowledge. Dialogues initiated by the European Commission were facilitated by the mechanisms of the Open Method of Coordination and the Voices of Culture under the Work Plan for Culture.

Keywords

Heritage professions; competences; skills; knowledge; education; training; mapping; skills transfer; values; care; conservation-restoration.

1. *Cultural heritage and its values and concepts*

“The price of everything and the value of nothing” is a well-known trope that can sometimes feel wearisomely applicable when arguing for investment in the care and maintenance of cultural heritage.

The intangible nature of the values that confer cultural significance can be very difficult to articulate and defend as essential to our wellbeing. It is particularly so when competing with the social realities of homelessness, unequal access to healthcare and education as they are also pressing outcomes of poor policies and lack of resources.

But if it is crises that bring our priorities into sharper focus, then the recent fire at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris is a case in point. The threatened loss to this iconic piece of heritage was experienced as a cultural trauma. And not just in France. The subdued vigil as the Cathedral burned, the visceral sense of shock and horror as the fire raged, even the tears, found resonance in the formal messages of sympathy and solidarity that poured in from all over the world. All speak

to a universal value that understands the meaning of loss.

The threatened loss in this instance is a building that has borne witness to and come to symbolise 800 years of history, adversity, defiance, reliance, solidarity and hope. While the fire threatened the very fabric of a building which is a testament to past lives, past technologies, skills and materials, it also threatened to take away, in a most brutal fashion, a touchstone of cultural and historical identity. As a building synonymous with Paris, Notre Dame is placemaking; its very presence helps us situate and find ourselves, not merely in the physical world but in the continuum of things. The idea of Paris without Notre Dame is unimaginable.

The significance of culture is how it frames and describes our relationship with a world shaped by complex networks of values, where every interaction is a cultural act. Cultural heritage refers to the customs, things and traditions of the past that we value today because of the contribution they make to the *meaning* of our lives.

Giving expression to the meanings and values that confer significance is the only way to ensure

that 'the heritage' is transmitted to the future safely. Loss or damage to heritage diminishes the possibilities to negotiate with the record of ourselves, our human traces and the truths that heritage documents.

This is why authenticity is such an important attribute of heritage, and has implications for how it is cared and safeguarded. There are paradigmatic principles which inform sustainable access to and use of heritage, axiomatic to them is the practice of conservation-restoration. Often referred to as the 'management of change' conservation-restoration are actions and interventions guided by the need to transmit an authentic material heritage to the future.

The question of authenticity can be troublesome as it is often confused with the desire to reveal what is 'original' at the expense of the patina of historical change, the story that historical events and the passage of time have inscribed into the fabric and character of the thing. Stories thus inscribed are a genre of historical record, every bit as authentic, legible and valuable as an ancient document. Knowing this forces us to think very carefully about how we should use and transmit our heritage into the future, giving rise to principles of best practice that are at the core of conservation-restoration.

To return to Notre Dame, the fire is now a chapter in its history. Although the commitment by the French government to have the 'symbol of France' restored so that it will be even 'more beautiful than before' is clearly well intentioned, it threatens to undermine the principles underpinning the conservation and restoration of heritage, principles that are not so much about *improving* a heritage asset as about preserving its cultural agency *and* its historical authenticity so that the relationship between community and heritage is renewed in a manner that is respectful and beneficial to both.

The urgency the French Government has brought to the timeframe to restore Notre Dame may reflect the need to console and reassure, as happens in times of grief. But addressing the complex issues that will arise, ethically and practically, in the conservation and restoration of this building will require wisdom, expertise, skill, engagement, financial commitment and most of all the patience to do it right.

Financial commitment does not seem to be an issue, as the pledging of money from private sources, philanthropic or otherwise, illustrates. It

certainly speaks to Notre Dame's iconic status, yet the opening of private purse strings in such a manner precipitated a social and cultural backlash of a different kind.

The amount of money donated in the immediate aftermath of the fire provoked a reactionary response by the Gilet Jaunes movement. Demonstrating against a perceived injustice at the sums of money which were pledged to restore bricks and mortar by a wealthy private sector in light of falling standards of living across the public sector, the Gilet Jaunes seemed to be asking, "what price your cathedral now?" An inversion of meaning perhaps of the trope quoted at the start but still pointing to very pertinent questions about value systems, and the biggest question of all: "whose heritage is it anyway?"

A key issue here in fact, is not about the worth of the cathedral to France and the cost of its repair, but the willingness of our democracies to advocate for the interests and rights of all of their citizens, including the right of access to and participation in cultural heritage, the political and symbolic potency of which is demonstrated by the fact that it is so often deliberately targeted in times of conflict.

While heritage has the power to unite, if it is not shared openly it can also divide, exclude and alienate. Willful damage or destruction of material heritage, as has been seen around the world many times over, is the rejection and symbolic execution of values, meaning, cultural identity and historical ancestry and legacy. Thus, heritage assets are the manifestation of cultural diversity whose relevance can only be assured in Europe by sustainable cultural, social, environmental and economic development. This is the view of the Council of Europe.

Since its foundation in 1949, it has been the role of the Council of Europe to explore concepts of social freedoms, culture and human rights as these are key to functioning democracies across Europe. As can be seen, symbols and expressions of heritage can act powerfully on us, having the capacity to unite as well to divide, to include as well as exclude. The Council of Europe's Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention) recognises that the value of cultural heritage lies not in objects and places themselves, but in the meanings and uses we bring or attach to them, and draw from them. However, too much can be

invested in symbols while their meanings stagnate.

Values are both resilient and protean. Cultural norms are contested. Each generation challenges, rejects and questions traditions and ways of doing things, regenerating and reshaping the world around us, how we think about it, including how we think about the symbolic values of heritage. In contrast, the heritage asset is considered to be a non-renewable resource and its transmission to the future enacts conservation-restoration principles which must negotiate the cultural ecosystem surrounding the heritage. This not only helps to secure its viability and protection into the future, but also recognises the dynamism of our relationship with heritage which is the source of its cultural agency, i.e. the power that heritage has to shape us on an emotional, intellectual and even a physiological level.

The Faro Convention advocates for the democratisation of heritage because it recognises that the cultural agency of heritage resides in the quotidian, expressed in the evolution of our relationships with the world around perhaps even more so than in our relationship with the iconic.

Although there is a difference in scale, our engagement with heritage is a condition of being human generating existential, social and economic capital that is of immense benefit to society. The very identification of something as heritage makes its care and safeguarding become cultural imperatives, implicating public and experts alike. It is for these reasons, heritage and heritage protection are symbiotic, needing recognition and support in the policies and choices we make on a political level across all sectors. Political acknowledgement of this finds resonance in the Declaration of Namur signed in April 2015 by Ministers to the States Parties to the European Cultural Convention¹. This Declaration welcomes the the Communication of the European Commission of 22 July 2014 “Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe” and as this converges with the Council of Europe’s work.

A resolution of the European Parliament in 2015 ‘Towards an Integrated approach to Cultural Heritage’ which followed the European

Commission’s communication in July 2014². The designation of 2018 as European Year of Cultural Heritage³ has been part of a suite of major initiatives which both highlight and interrogate the nature and role of cultural heritage as drivers of social and economic growth and well-being. Balancing the risk attached to the commodification of heritage with the need to ensure its viability into the future is critical to policy making. Identifying and matching those skills in the care, valorisation, and utilisation of cultural heritage is axiomatic to the provision of resources so as to harness the potential cultural heritage has to offer. Exploring this potential and the role of cultural heritage has also been the work of the Directorate General for Culture and Education (DG EAC) through the Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018⁴. Embracing the democratic principles of the Faro Convention the EU Commission engaged with civil society through the mechanisms of the Open Method of Coordination⁵ (OMC) and the Voices of Culture (VoC) throughout the course of 2017 and 2018. Parallel discussions or dialogues took place across ten initiatives between experts from the European Ministries for Culture at OMC level and stakeholders working in the Cultural heritage sector at VOC level⁶. The initiatives were structured around four pillars as a framework for

² European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: *Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe* (COM/2014/0477), 22 July 2014. http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/culture/library/publications/2014-heritage-communication_en.pdf, Committee of the Regions, Opinion: *Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe* (2015/C 195/04), 12 June 2015. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=OJ:C:2015:195:TOC>

³ Decision (EU) 2017/864 of the European Parliament and the Council of 17 May 2017 on a European Year of Cultural Heritage (2018). See <https://europa.eu/cultural-heritage/>.

⁴ Council of the European Union, *Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on a Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018)* (2014/C 463/02), 2014. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C.2014.463.01.0004.01.ENG>

⁵ Open Method of Coordination is a framework of cooperation between the European Commission and delegates from state Members whose aim is to produce recommendations or soft laws at European level. https://ec.europa.eu/culture/policy/strategic-framework/european-coop_en

⁶https://ec.europa.eu/culture/content/overview_en; https://europa.eu/cultural-heritage/partners_en

¹ <https://rm.coe.int/16806a89ae>

exploring our relationship with heritage resources; specifically these are: engagement, sustainability, protection and innovation⁷. While different initiatives were allocated to each pillar, it is suggested that these four pillars could be applied as performance and quality indicators in the assessment of the management of our heritage resources. They could frame the interrogation of actions in the development of integrated policies for cultural heritage. This would be the real legacy of the European year of Cultural Heritage.

It is recognised that many experts and specialists already working in the cultural heritage sector both advocate for its potential and understand the problems this presents. This sector is continuing to expand as a result of an enlarged view of cultural heritage. 'Traditional and Emerging professions; Skills and knowledge transfer' was one of the ten initiatives in which the OMC and VoC groups participated. This dialogue explored the types of professions that are emerging in the cultural heritage sector as well as how existing knowledge and skills are transferred, with a view to identifying the resources and the types of education that are requisite to delivering quality outcomes in this sector.

The work of the OMC and VoC groups presented below, suggests that the professional roles these specialists play in relation to cultural heritage need to be mapped so as to resource, strengthen and support their missions and interactions. At the same time transversal skills or emerging vectors in the transversal space between all stakeholders can then be identified.

In turn, these professions represent a discrete field of economic activity and for this reason the case can be made to have cultural heritage accorded its own sectoral status within the NACE Codes (Nomenclature statistique des Activités économiques dans la Communauté Européenne; Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community; the Statistical

Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community)⁸.

The following sections detail the work and findings of the VoC and OMC groups.

2. *The European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 and the Voices of Culture on skills, training and knowledge transfer for traditional and emerging heritage professions*

Although European heritage expertise is a benchmark for quality, the sector faces the challenges of cuts in public budgets, low ratio income, the age pyramid, low levels of interest in heritage professions by the younger generations, loss of traditional skills and a foreseeable lack of specialized professionals in various areas of the cultural heritage. These factors hinder take-up for the necessarily long training cycle of most of these professionals, ultimately leading to the loss of specialized knowledge and its transfer. The VoC, as a framework for exchanges between European civil society stakeholders and the European Commission regarding culture, aims to ensure that the voice of cultural professionals is heard at the European level and ultimately informs the culture policy development work of the European Commission.

2.1 *The Brainstorming Process*

It was the mandate of the VoC on "skills, training and knowledge transfer for traditional and emerging heritage professions" to address these challenges and consider how an integrated approach towards cultural heritage would look like in this European landscape. The European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations E.C.C.O.⁹ as one of 34 stakeholders, participated in this specific Dialogue on skills and knowledge transfer.

The VoC process involves a democratic inquiry by the professional sector as they represent those people who work in direct contact with the reality of the cultural heritage. As a result it is recognized that they are in a position to assess, diagnose and suggest appropriate and practical recommendations. In March 2017 an open call was launched and almost 200 organizations applied. The application process

⁷ 'Engagement' by promoting society's awareness towards heritage; 'Sustainability' in re-imagining new uses for built heritage as well by fostering responsible and committed cultural tourism; 'Protection' by cherishing heritage through quality standards in its care as well acting against illicit trade and managing risks; and lastly 'Innovation' in capacity building for heritage professions and for society in participatory governance, and in benefiting heritage by research and technology.

⁸ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nace-rev2>.

⁹ European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations. <http://www.ecco-eu.org/>

required stakeholders to answer a set of questions concerning their mission and values towards heritage skills, training and knowledge transfer. Stakeholders had to demonstrate their expertise in this area and the good practices they had implemented within this scope. This process allowed stakeholders to plunge into the mindset that would constitute the process of the VoC brainstorming session work and allowed 34 to be chosen which represent a broad and comprehensive landscape of stakeholders involved in the heritage sector.

Two discussion meetings were held in 2017 with the aim of preparing an advisory report. An initial Brainstorming Session was held in June in Brussels, followed by a second meeting in September where the emerging work was presented and discussed with representatives from the European Commission. The final report was published and submitted in October to a group of state member delegates represented in the OMC group and the European Commission in Bucharest.

The Brainstorm session was introduced by DG EAC team who framed the VoC work within the scope of the four pillars of EYCH and the challenges and opportunities faced by heritage related professions. They set out the aim of the session and its desired proposals and recommendations. Through a process moderated by a third party, the group was asked to examine and debate five questions from which the dialogue started:

- What are the boundaries of “traditional” and “emerging” (tangible, intangible and digital) heritage professions?
- What are the current challenges in the transmission of traditional knowledge faced by the heritage sector? Could you provide examples of how these challenges have been addressed and overcome by the cultural sector?
- What are the skills¹⁰ and training needs related to the “emerging” professions, including those concerning the digital shift? Could you provide examples of how these needs have been faced by the cultural sector?

¹⁰ The concepts skills, competences and knowledge are not used strictly as the European Qualifications Framework defines, instead are used freely and almost interchangeable with each other, broadly understood as capacity building desired outcomes either through educational or vocational programmes.

- In what way is the sector professionalized? What structures are currently in place to deliver professional practitioners in the heritage sector?
- What is needed to enhance/develop capacity building for CH and professionals?

The discussion ultimately focused around a key issue, which was to identify the needs, current challenges, and future strategies in the capacity building and knowledge transfer for an integrated approach to cultural heritage.” This led to a deep and comprehensive discussion which considered the skills and knowledge required to achieve an integrated and sustainable approach addressing the value chain of heritage. Recognition of professions in the cultural heritage sector irrespective of whether they are traditional or emergent was also discussed. Some issues arose that were considered ground for further working groups or projects, such as the necessity for a thorough process of evaluation and gathering of heritage terminology and legal frameworks concerning heritage, or mapping existing and emerging heritage professions with the corresponding sets of skills and knowledge. Likewise, the prevalence of shared experiences and professional realities fostered the emergence of basic premises, which were proposed as the foundation for a structured approach that holds cultural heritage at its core and from which policies and strategies emerge.

2.2 VoC report and core concepts for an integrated approach towards cultural heritage (Ateca et al 2017)

The first proposal considered was the organization of the heritage sector into groups of actors from the perspective of society’s relationship towards cultural heritage. Relationships are characterized on their role or their purpose towards heritage. Although all roles are driven by the same aspiration “cultural heritage identified, protected, shared, transmitted and sustainably preserved for the enjoyment and education of the wider and diverse public in a well-functioning democracy” this naturally translates into different methods according to which group is identified. Each group has a different role expressed as their mission: their reason for existing on behalf of and towards cultural heritage. According to these missions, society is grouped into four main stakeholders:

- Public, as society in general from individuals to communities, aware of and engaging with cultural heritage;
- Policy, as those responsible for policy and decision making from European to local level;
- Mediation, those who bring resources together in accessing cultural heritage;
- Expertise, those who directly care or intervene with cultural heritage.

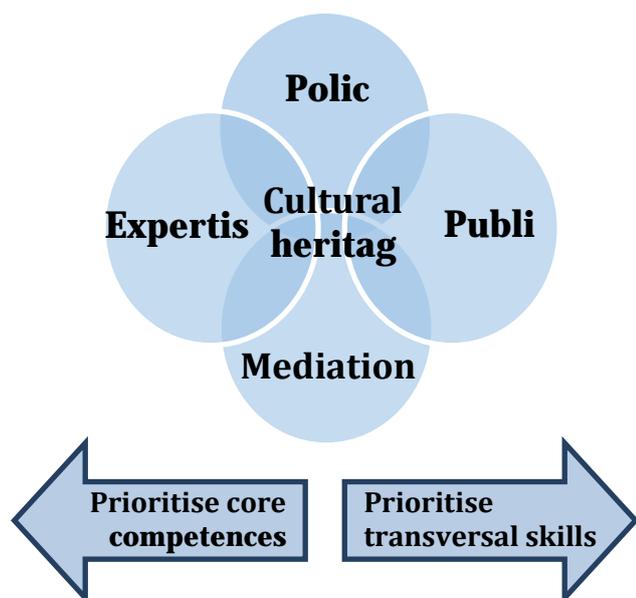


Fig. 1: The principle of the 4 stakeholders and what an integrated approach towards cultural heritage “looks like”

The achievement of an integrated approach relies on guaranteeing that all four stakeholders are capable of carrying out their mission towards heritage in a seamless relationship.

Regardless of the stakeholder’s mission, the fact remains that all groups need the adequate means to perform their roles. Thus, this new shared stewardship requires promotion of appropriate capacity building mechanisms for all. In particular for the professions centered on heritage, it entails providing them with the right set of core and transversal competences and skills according to their mission, by formal educational or vocational training and informal learning (Fig. 1).

This insight inspired another key concept, which was to illustrate the relationship of core and transversal skills and competences to one another, which was represented as the letter “T”. The transversal skills should be as broad as the horizontal bar, while the vertical stem represents the in-depth core competences and knowledge

which supports the cultural heritage sector. The reality that transversal skills are not adequately represented in training programmes was recognized by the participants. It is critical that the professionals as ‘experts’ have a discrete core set of skills, competences and knowledge to engage and perform their mission towards heritage¹¹.

These professionals cannot exist outside the cultural heritage sector; their sole function is to directly act on cultural heritage¹². However, as the boundaries amongst the stakeholder groups overlap and crossover, it is vital for all to have transversal skills to achieve an integrated and participatory approach. The integrated approach also fosters innovation within the sector and extends outwards into other areas of society and can respond to various demands from the EYCH pillars.

The “T” image can be translated for every professional in each stakeholder group, including the public, thus creating a network of interactions that ultimately are the true expression of an integrated approach towards cultural heritage. When applied to non-heritage professions acting within the heritage sector it also informs their capacity by promoting related skills, such as ethical principles, heritage deontology, heritage value awareness, cultural management, cultural heritage awareness and understanding.

These concepts inform a considerable part of the report, which also sets out the definition of the missions of each stakeholder and its connection to the “T” image according to their core competences and transversal skills. The work fosters development of adequate mechanisms for capacity building and knowledge transfer in the sector.

The group dealt with matters far beyond the question of how to guarantee skills and knowledge transfer in heritage professions. It became evident that other underlying issues needed to be examined. The group realized that the heritage workforce is not adequately recognised, nor are the relevant educational and training programmes, and even less is known about the definitions of heritage occupations in this dynamic and evolving sector.

¹¹ Such as E.C.C.O.’s “Competences for access to the Conservation-restoration profession” in 2011. http://www.ecco-eu.org/fileadmin/assets/documents/publications/ECCO_Compentences_EN.pdf

¹² The conservator-restorer is a prime example.

These challenges highlight more compelling issues to address. The final report of the work, however, was mainly concerned with the concept of cultural heritage and its power, the missions of those involved in its shared stewardship, the transversal competences and methods for capacity building for this workforce.

The four EYCH pillars were adopted as goals, and challenges in the proposals for developing a sustainable continuity of knowledge transmission focusing on the 'Mediation' and 'Expertise' groups of professionals, and in particular those professionals "who physically act in and on cultural heritage and those who transmit intangible heritage values". In an outward-looking, cross-sectoral perspective the four stakeholders, Public, Policymakers, Experts and Mediators, are used as an axis for policy proposals according to the four EYCH pillars, which also extend into other policy areas displaying the leverage of heritage values (including economics, research, tourism and international relations)¹³.

2.3 Main recommendations

- Map the sector, identifying the professions and their educational programmes according to the European Qualification Framework;
- Assure that heritage expertise professionals have their profiles defined according to their education, core competences, access, practical application of skills and responsibilities towards cultural heritage, and that these are considered within the scope of recruitment, training and policy making;
- Heritage professionals require broad transversal skillsets necessary to answer the challenges of this new integrated and participatory approach responding the demands of the 4 pillars EYCH, such as communication, management, digital competencies, finances, financial, advocacy. They should be part of lifelong learning and development programmes;
- Foster the way of principle and practice in academia and vocational education with professionals in the field ensuring that traditional knowledge and skills are in the curricula;
- Produce recommendations at EU level.

¹³ VoC report, Figure 04, p.16.

3. *OMC group work and report: Fostering cooperation in the European Union on skills, training and knowledge transfer in cultural heritage professions*¹⁴

3.1 Background

As described above, the European Union and Council of Europe have moved towards a people-centred and holistic view of cultural heritage as a shared resource, in which all stakeholders are responsible for their part in its transmission to future generations. This development has changed the dynamic between heritage authorities, cultural institutions and the public, which in addition to challenges outlined below, influences the knowledge, skills and attributes required by cultural heritage professionals.

The European Commission invited member states to discuss cultural heritage skills, training and knowledge transfer using the Open Method of Coordination initiative under the 'Innovation' pillar of the EYCH¹⁵. The work took place in 2017-2018. The OMC concept proved a useful model for capacity-building in creating an informal network of committed experts, whose varied, combined expertise in cultural heritage education and policymaking enabled constructive discussions and a rewarding depth and breadth of interrogation.

3.2 Work process

The working method of the group was characterised by three elements which provided thorough foundations for the report. First, most meetings were conducted by study visits to five participating countries, engaging with cultural heritage institutions and learning from their representatives, which proved invaluable.

Second, the identification and analytical processes were arranged in two main phases of work. During the identification phase SWOT analyses were carried out, which were jointly analysed by the Belgian and Dutch members to identify themes. The combined SWOT derived from these themes made clear that throughout Europe similar strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats influence the state of

¹⁴ Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2019.

¹⁵ All 28 Member States were invited to nominate two experts, respectively from the heritage and education sectors.

cultural heritage skills, training and knowledge transfer. The analytical phase involved the organisation of the report's structure to reflect the four development phases of potential heritage professionals: raising awareness; education and training; lifelong learning, and knowledge transfer. The participating members divided into four groups to tackle their themes, using the SWOT results and effective brainstorming sessions.

The third critical element throughout process was the ongoing expertise provided by two representatives from the VoC and the European Commission, who attended every meeting¹⁶. Finally, the guiding hand of the chair, Ana Galan-Perez (Spain), kept the process moving in a capable and generous manner and made several presentations to international conferences during the process to illustrate the ongoing work and emerging findings.

3.3 Findings

The Voices of Culture report was very influential on the process. Two concepts were particularly constructive: the description of skills in terms of 'core' and 'transversal', illustrated by the 'T' image and the division of cultural heritage professions into four main types: *expertise*, *mediation*, *policy* and *public*. The mapping of competences against professional category divisions, the four EYCH pillars and the European lifelong learning key competences was also very useful.

Societal developments, such as greater public accessibility and engagement, improved networks and knowledge exchange (traditional and digital), have expanded the understanding of, and value placed on cultural heritage skills. Regulatory and policy contexts also influence the potential for capacity building and inform the ethics and approaches to conduct and practice. Positive developments include the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) which governs formal education; growth in innovative training formats; guidance on the validation of non-formal and informal learning and adoption of the EQF for evaluation of informal competences by some EU states. There is also increasing emphasis in many

professions on accreditation and certification schemes and continuing professional development requirements. The ongoing publication by European Committee of Standardisation Technical Committee CEN/TC 346 of a range of cultural heritage standards provides quality benchmarks for practice.

Demand for cultural heritage expertise drives demand for formal education and training programmes. However, the group found that regulatory and policy approaches have a profound influence on how or if a public good such as cultural heritage can sustain a skilled workforce. Systemic problems include trends towards market-led education and training in both traditional and emerging spheres which prioritise large-scale demand and academised formal education, at the same time as the necessity of 'expertise' is questioned and popularisation is preferred over scientific research. There is also decreasing value placed on handskills and onsite training. Many archaic craft skills and traditions which have an aging demographic are being lost and gaps are emerging between traditional and emerging professions' use of technological innovation. Crucially, most existing and emerging cultural heritage professions are not visible in occupational and culture statistics at European and international levels¹⁷.

The group considered that quality assurance problems arise from absence of state and/or European oversight, proactive policies and/or utilised occupational profiles of both traditional and emerging roles. Within public procurement the group found insufficient linkage in between competence requirements and quality, including awareness and use of the available cultural heritage European Norms, with pressures for immediate commercial returns over long-term sustainability.

Due to the combination of these factors, the group found that undervalued expertise and inadequately remunerated work leads to issues with the recruitment and retention in the workforce of expert professionals, especially in publicly funded cultural institutions, coupled with

¹⁶ Elis Marçal, ECCO; Jermina Stanojev PhD (independent researcher) and Erminia Sciacchitano European Commission). The authors would like to thank Ana Galan-Perez for reading the OMC section of this paper.

¹⁷ The conservator-restorer profession is not included in the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08). ISCO also presumes that built environment occupations have competence to repair as well as construct/develop, which is not the case where the materials and technologies originally used are intrinsically different to modern systems.

ongoing threats from digitisation and replacement by volunteers and interns.

The report seeks ways to overcome these challenges. It highlights 35 good practice case studies from many European countries, which cover skills training and knowledge transfer in both tangible and intangible heritage.

3.4 Recommendations

The report highlights innovative ways for the cultural heritage sector to plan, design and deliver sustainable education, training, lifelong learning and knowledge transfer in a virtuous circle, sharing knowledge not only within the cultural heritage sector amongst experts and mediators to increase capacity but also to generate greater awareness in the wider community of participants, including owners and the public administration at local, national and EU policymaking level. The following points are summaries of the recommendations made in the report under the EYCH pillars.

For engagement, cooperation is necessary between national policymakers, educational institutions and cultural heritage professional associations to stimulate multi-directional communication between cultural heritage, other sectors and new audiences, which will foster the demand for and supply of cultural heritage skills. This can be done by providing transversal cultural heritage skills training to those whose work interacts with the sector; disseminating information about cultural heritage to wider and new audiences using traditional and new technologies; developing closer links between heritage authorities and related sectors to coordinate training solutions; improving cross-sectoral exchange; and learning best practice in volunteer management from other sectors.

For *sustainability*, European and national institutions and policymakers, education and training institutions and sector professional associations should encourage a wider pool of better skilled and qualified cultural heritage professionals with the tools and skills to share their knowledge.

This can be done by supporting professionals in knowledge exchange using traditional and digital means and creating a living human treasures programme; supporting succession planning; promoting greater commonality and clarity around the recognition of knowledge, skills

and competences across Europe; developing a lifelong learning toolkit for individuals to map paths for lifelong learning and for encouraging continuous development of core and transversal competences; and developing and implementing freely available cultural heritage standards at EU level to raise quality in procurement, ensure the recruitment of competent specialists and enable involvement of small companies.

For *protection*, European institutions, European and national policymakers and sector professionals should develop a strong evidence base to identify skills gaps and address shortages, foster professionalism and raise the visibility of cultural heritage professions.

This can be done by developing occupational classifications for all active professions in the standard systems and statistical classifications to improve data collection; encouraging member states to research and map skills at risk and develop plans to safeguard and augment these skills; and generating strategic data for the cultural heritage sector, including traditional crafts and small businesses.

For *innovation*, European institutions, European and national policymakers and sector professional associations should stimulate a more integrated approach to education, training and lifelong learning for cultural heritage professionals, taking into account the digital shift.

This can be done by building closer links between vocational and higher education, cultural heritage institutions and the workplace in the design and delivery of training; promoting EU funding programmes that target cultural heritage with a focus on addressing all forms of skills needs; setting up a European knowledge and innovation community to support research and develop an information exchange portal for sharing material on competences, skills training and communication networks; and encouraging the establishment of European centres of excellence to bridge the gap between research and practice (Fig. 2).

4. Conclusion

To illustrate how cultural heritage is unavoidably interwoven in systems of public and private decision-making across Europe is not just to make a case for improved visibility in social policy.

The EU accepts that, far from being a passive

backdrop to 21st century life ‘... the dual nature of culture [is] on the one hand an economic good that offers important opportunities for the creation of wealth and employment, and, on the other, a vehicle of identities, values and meanings that mirror and shape our societies’.¹⁸ This phrase vividly summarises the necessity of according culture and cultural heritage a higher status in economic, social and environmental decision-making if society is to steer a wise path that prioritises the public good.

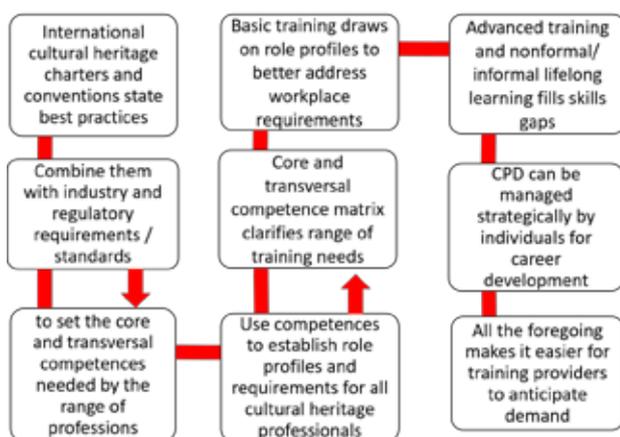


Fig. 2: Lifelong learning flowchart showing suggested ways to a) capture the optimum benefit from participation in lifelong learning in order to design strategic career development; and b) clarify the nature and level of training demand to stimulate training providers to offer relevant formal and non-formal programmes.

The four EYCH concepts of engagement, protection, sustainability and innovation are critical metrics against which to measure the quality of ‘heritage practice’ as they encapsulate the ongoing, active nature of heritage decision-making within public and private domains.

To give life to these concepts (“how well do we engage, protect, sustain, innovate?”), the four VoC categories of public, policymakers, mediators and experts need to be aware of them, consider them to be beneficial and take decisions which are informed by them. In short, it is about agreeing principles to guide the management of change.

A potential way has been proposed in the

OMC report. It recommends that consideration be given to a cultural heritage lifelong learning competence framework that contains principles, tools and guidelines.

The European Commission promotes the concept of competence frameworks as they use a methodological structure in which definitions, descriptions and implementation methods are agreed by, and for, the sector itself, with reference to underpinning sector standards and guidelines.

They use a common language and functional analysis to describe roles and competences, including the skills and knowledge requirements of a sector.

They allow the professions involved to describe the outcomes of activities from organisational to individual level, such as performance standards (descriptive or normative), which helps to translate key competences into learning outcomes and to bridge the gap between education, training and professional practice. They provide a dynamic and flexible representation of evolving responsibilities and can serve to assist functions such as recruitment, appraisals and certification programmes.

The Commission has commenced implementation of the *Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills* (European Commission, 2017) a new process designed specifically to assist the development of skills training on an EU basis. The method requires the main sector stakeholders to describe their training needs coherently and to commit to participating in training programmes, for which Erasmus+ funding is available. The cultural heritage sector should come together at EU level to examine this approach and take advantage of the resources it offers.

¹⁸ Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014, paragraph 72, p.13, known as the General Block Exemption Regulation. The statement includes intangible heritage, as described in Article 53, 2 (c). <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L.2014.187.01.0001.01.ENG>

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