

PROGRESSION ANALYTICS AND ESTABLISHING CONTINUUM OF PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE IN CULTURAL HERITAGE

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Abstract

A participatory approach was at the heart of understanding the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 and consequently after the end of 2018, the cultural heritage sector is putting efforts to understand if the approach was a contemporary trend, a methodology for the Year itself, a topic that was widely discussed, an outlook that is becoming more and more embedded in cultural heritage practices or a synthesis of all aspects. The paper explores if and how the European Year has contributed to advance and progress the understanding of the approach and enhance practices of the participatory governance of cultural heritage.

Keywords

Cultural heritage, participatory governance, European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018

1. Introduction

The year 2015, being the last year for accomplishing the millennium development goals, was perceived as an opportunity to make an overall assessment of international commitments, together with the main results of EU development policy, therefore European Year of Development 2015 had a fundamental role to raise awareness about EU development cooperation and develop a sense of joint responsibility and solidarity with non-EU countries.

Three years later, with no European Years in 2016 and 2017, cultural heritage was aligned with development, but also citizens, volunteering, education, languages, local and regional democracy and many other fundamental topics for which, during previous European Years, has been sent a political signal and set a commitment from the EU institutions and EU member governments that the subject of the Year will be taken into consideration in future policy-making.

When the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 was declared, one year before, its general objective was “to encourage and support the efforts of the Union, the Member States and regional and local authorities, in cooperation with the cultural heritage sector and broader civil society, to protect, safeguard, reuse, enhance,

valorise and promote Europe's cultural heritage” (Decision (EU) 2017/864).

After one year of various implemented cultural heritage related activities and initiated actions, many questions appeared from cultural heritage communities – academics, policy makers, different groups of professionals, all together, trying to perceive if the Year created room for ground-breaking initiatives, if the Year reinforced cooperation among different cultural heritage stakeholders, but also among different sectors working toward that main objective of the Year.

The general objective was built up on many single and specific objectives. The first two specific objectives of the Year focused very much on people-centred and participatory approaches, specifically, “to encourage approaches to cultural heritage that are people-centred, inclusive, forward-looking, more integrated, sustainable and cross-sectoral” and “to promote innovative models of participatory governance and management of cultural heritage, involving all stakeholders, including public authorities, the cultural heritage sector, private actors and civil society organisations” (Decision (EU) 2017/864).

A participatory approach was at the heart of understanding the Year and consequently after the end of 2018, the cultural heritage sector is putting efforts to understand if the approach was a contemporary trend, a methodology for the Year

itself, a topic that was widely discussed, an outlook that is becoming more and more embedded in cultural heritage practices or a synthesis of all these.

1.1 Context of participatory governance of cultural heritage

In recent years, participatory models and community engagement were progressively recognised as important components of culture and cultural heritage policies. Primarily, a considerable amount of literature has been published on the topic of participatory governance in general (Ostrom 1990; Fung 2006; Fisher 2012).

Factors found to be influencing later understanding of participatory approaches related to cultural heritage have been explored in studies conducted in the fields of democracy, citizenship, poverty reduction, conflict mediation, environment governance etc (Fung & Wright, 2003; Schneider 1999; Lovan, Murray & Shaffer, 2017) while different international organisations have incorporated these principles in culture and cultural heritage related standards and documents (UNESCO 2017, section II. F Protection and Management; UNESCO 2003, art.15; UNESCO 2005, art.11; CoE 2005, art.1, 4, 11, 12).

Together, the participatory governance and participatory governance of culture, and more specifically, cultural heritage, concepts are trending both among scholars and practitioners. This is indicated by the rapid growth of articles on that topic: more than 67 articles were published related to that topic in the period 2016-2019, compared to only about 22 articles in the period 2011-2015¹. This does not necessarily include exclusively the term “participatory governance of cultural heritage”, but also “participatory management”, “collaborative planning” as well as “participation in decision making”, “formal community involvement”, “participation” etc.

The topic started becoming more associated with cultural heritage and a number of longitudinal studies research projects, policy frameworks, academic terminology started

discussing concepts, principles, case studies and lessons learnt also since the Communication from the European Commission and Council conclusions on participatory governance of cultural heritage has been published (European Commission 2014).

When the Year started, different authors (Andrian, 2018; Girao, 2018; Portolés, 2018) have pointed out that “there is an urgent need to build new models & tools of (cultural) communication based on collaboration and participation” (Girao, 2018)

1.2 Strategic framework for the participatory governance of cultural heritage

The OMC (Open Method of Coordination) working group’s mandate on participatory governance of cultural heritage came about as a result of the adoption of the Work plan for Culture 2015-2018² in 2014. Same applies for the “Voices of Culture” group (framework for exchanges between European civil society stakeholders and the European Commission with regard to culture) renewed structured dialogue on participatory governance of cultural heritage.

This work plan identified key challenges that affect cultural institutions and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the creative sector at national and European level and participatory governance was one of them. The “Participatory governance of cultural heritage” working group was established under priority b) of the work plan.

The working group was provided with a clear mandate under this EU work plan as following:

- 1) Identification of innovative approaches to the multilevel governance of tangible, intangible and digital heritage which involve the public sector, private stakeholders and the civil society and
- 2) Cooperation between different levels of governance and the addressing of policy areas.

The reports from both groups have developed key messages that should underpin any work on participatory governance and the OMC report also focuses providing step-by-step advice on how to create the necessary preconditions for the participatory governance of cultural heritage,

¹ Based on research of Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development, Google Scholar, The Journal of Cultural Heritage, International Journal of Heritage Studies.

² 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).

support the process and ensure its sustainability (Voices of Culture Group, 2015).

2. Objectives of the paper

A period prior the Year has set a solid background for further investigating avenues of the participatory governance of cultural heritage during the Year. Analyses of different models and approaches to the topic of participatory governance are not the subject of the paper. Literature review and background research have been done in previous studies and reports (Voices of Culture Group, 2015; Sani et al. 2015; Stanojev 2015).

Consequently, the paper analytically explores if and how the Year has contributed to the progress and advancing the understanding of the approach. Furthermore, it investigates if enhancement and establishing continuum of participatory governance in cultural heritage has been achieved.

The paper will analyse progress of the recommendations regarding participatory governance actions implemented before and during the Year and examine if there is a correlation in their evolution in the relation to the timeline of the Year.

The aim of the paper is also to understand if similarities and a common sense between views regarding the participatory approach expressed in various actions of the Year have emerged, which perspectives have been more implemented and which ones are missing or were not enough developed.

3. Methodology

There are at least several methods, quantitative and qualitative, to investigate the advancement of the concept and enhancement of practices of the participatory governance of cultural heritage during the Year.

3.1 Methodology of the paper

Around 11700 events were held contributing to the Year. Due to organisational complexity of the Year and participatory approach with bottom-up perspective, it was not possible to identify the exact number of events that contributed to the topic of participatory governance of cultural heritage, therefore a quantitative approach could have not been employed. The paper uses

qualitative analysis in order to gain insights into topics of participatory governance of cultural heritage not explored so far.

The method involves analysis of previous progress and progress during the Year, as well as further development, implementation and possible application of elements related to the topic of participatory governance of cultural heritage. The analytical framework is built on comparative analysis based on qualitative data as well as application of qualitative analyses of the case studies methodology. A case study approach was used to allow to understand main advantages rising from single initiatives.

Methodology is used as a way of collecting and analysing empirical evidence, with its own logic and criteria related to the topic, in those cases when boundaries between researched phenomena and content are not clearly evident.

3.2 Methodology of the European Year of Cultural Heritage

When discussing the methodology of the paper, it is also necessary to reflect on the methodology of the Year itself.

The Year had the participatory approach itself and that is one more reason giving credibility to discuss the topic itself. "The European Year is more than just a year-long celebration of the past: its aim is to be a laboratory "for heritage-based innovation", a wide ranging, shared reflection at policy level on how to implement the new integrated, holistic and participatory approaches that have been highlighted in the latest policy documents at EU level. The European Commission is opening the way, engaging national authorities, representatives of civil society and international organisations, and all the European institutions in the governance of the Year." (Sciacchitano, 2018).

4. Case studies

The paper explores case studies of reports and conferences during the year on the topic of the participatory governance of cultural heritage as well as projects that started their implementation or were under implementation during the Year.

4.1 Conferences

The Year has brought diverse aspects of a discussion regarding participatory governance

and approach, questioning old ones, deepening existing ones or developing new ones through conferences and events.

4.1.1 *Heritage is Ours - Citizens Participating in Decision Making*

The Year in Finland had a special focus on citizen participation. The book³ “Heritage is Ours - Citizens Participating in Decision Making” published in 2018, presents cases where citizens have managed to influence the decision-making process. The group of authors has claimed that heritage administrators and citizens should join forces to support heritage, pooling their often scarce resources. Both should be more proactive than reactive, in order to avoid a negative label. An organisation that constantly refuse development projects will inevitably appear highly negative in the long run according to them. The best way of preserving heritage is not to react only when disaster is imminent, but to show people the treasures they possess beforehand. In this respect, the administration can form a winning alliance with citizens (Halme et al., 2018). The book conclusion refers that truly participatory heritage governance should be flexible, allowing for different context-sensitive framings. Assessment of the participation processes is a necessary condition for this, both *ex ante* and *ex post*. Before embarking on a process, the situation should be mapped out, acknowledging all stakeholders, their claims to shared cultural resources, and their needs and expectations. Afterwards, it would be vital to find out how the stakeholders have experienced the process and, last but not least, whether it has brought about positive results for them – in terms of heritage or otherwise. (Halme et al., 2018)

4.1.2 *Citizens Involved: Participatory Governance of Built Heritage*

The conference “Citizens Involved: Participatory Governance of Built Heritage”⁴

³ The Forum *Sharing Heritage – Citizens Participating in Decision Making*, organised as part of the European Heritage Congress, was held in Turku in May 2017. The book is based on the presentations given at that Forum, in that every speaker was asked to write an article on the theme. The book is, however, independent and its structure differs from that of the Forum.

⁴ The conference was organised by the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands in the context of JHEP2, a project for the Joint Programming Initiative on Cultural Heritage and

offered a European exchange of practices of participatory governance of cultural heritage. It presented real-life projects by speakers with diverse experiences and with different backgrounds. The focus was mainly on built heritage, taking into account examples of participation in archaeology and the larger areas of historic built environment and cultural landscapes.

Based on insights from the OMC work and others, the conference dealt with several questions: What are the real advantages of participatory governance?; Are bottom-up initiatives more effective than top-down processes, and under which conditions? Or should they be complementary?; Does participatory governance increase the accountability, transparency and impact of public resource investments?; What are valuable working methods with sustainable results? What are the benefits, and what are the challenges?

Group of experts who participated in the conference agreed on a set of recommendations underlining that is needed to find new ways of engagement with cultural heritage and to invest largely and carefully in the relationship with the citizens involved: make the aims clear for all participants, keep it simple and stay connected with the volunteers which was complemented with the idea that is also necessary to provide staff and infrastructure from the start (Heeren, 2018); to think large when it comes to ambition and budget- the relation between top-down and bottom-up is important and changes in the course of a project, therefore that is important to provide training in order to let the network of volunteers do the work themselves.

Furthermore, it has been recommended that is necessary to take time to connect with people who should be engaged with and give something back by arranging an audience for them (Malherbe, 2018) and concluded that participation takes time, because if listening carefully, the whole city has ideas and by using these ideas it is not possible only to create a “place to be”, but also creates a catalyst for development (Poolen, 2018).

Largely, recommendations proposed to listen audience and evolve methods accordingly, do research thoroughly, avoid top-down methods,

Global Change (JPICH) Partnership within the Horizon 2020 – Societal Challenges 5 framework. All citations are from the Report of the conference.

facilitate and support volunteers (Hinnerichsen, 2018). Some other experts suggested also that is not needed to be focused at the economic side of the investment since the social, cultural, ecological etc. return on investment is immense (Buijs, 2018).

It has been argued that is always necessary to look for collaboration with stakeholders (municipality, developers, locals/citizens), since stakeholders need each other, if it is necessary to create a collective vision for the future about the cultural heritage of the neighbourhood, tools that make it possible for the community to come up with ideas and solutions themselves should be created (Lindemann, 2018).

A presentation that was based on the findings from two JPICH projects⁵, argued that neo-liberal reform is diminishing the role of local government in urban governance, leading to a redistribution of responsibilities and that cases from across Europe show that other-than-public actors are taking larger responsibilities in heritage governance projects, while (local) government's role is being reduced (Veldpaus, 2018).

Furthermore, a call for working across sectoral divisions to re-establish a civil society based on Plato's definition of virtue (Bell, 2018) has been made as well as an invitation to work towards a more sustainable society and not to confine participatory governance to perceptions of well-intentioned volunteers.

4.1.3 Forum- European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018: International Perspectives

In the spirit of the Joint Communication- "Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations" and complementary to the conferences held at European level, the Cultural Diplomacy Platform⁶ organised a Forum to discuss international (beyond European borders) perspectives of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018. The aim of the Forum was to develop its recommendations in two directions: how the EU could enhance its external cultural relations regarding cultural heritage under existing initiatives and using existing frameworks,

and also how the EU could respond to global issues that involve cultural heritage and position itself in the global international (non-EU) context in a more defined way.

"Engagement and Participatory Governance of Cultural Heritage in a Globalised World" was one of the topics. The recommendation paper (Gustafsson & Stanojev, 2018) of the Forum stated that the term "participatory governance" of cultural heritage can be understood either as a process by which authority is released and empowerment ensured, or as a process which allows for the adoption of management models whereby responsibility is shared and decisions are taken by communities rather than by individuals. The concept has been developed based on analysis at European level showing that there is a variety of participatory practices in cultural heritage, many of which, however, cannot be labelled as practices of "participatory governance". In fact, although there might be a high level of involvement of citizens or communities, such practices do not necessarily foresee a system of "shared decision-making and responsibility" for the cultural heritage resources at stake. Nevertheless, they sometimes pave the way for future true participatory governance practices. Furthermore, the Forum considered that the participatory governance of cultural heritage might be one concrete way to localise the SDGs.

Through a panel with speakers coming from non-EU countries and different international organisations, discussion led to similar conclusions as discussion at the European level - participatory governance is a range of activities applied dynamically under the requirements of a specific site and the ability to build a trust among different stakeholders - building trust is an end goal (Gustafsson & Stanojev, 2018).

Conclusions suggested that cultural heritage policies should be promoted based on democracy, gender equality, freedom of speech and human rights, that cultural heritage shall be integrated with sustainable urban development and the New Urban Agenda, by engaging diverse communities for heritage management. Furthermore, it has been concluded that participatory planning and stakeholders consultations shall be organised on the question what values to protect for transmission to future generations and to determine the attributes that these values carry, that is necessary to build trust, respect, patience,

⁵ SHUC (2013-2015) and PICH (2015-2018).

⁶ Early March 2016, the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments of the European Commission launched the Cultural Diplomacy Platform to support the EU institutions in the implementation of a new "EU Strategy for international cultural relations".

openness, flexibility and take action and dialogue at all levels – including creating joint forces and actions with the World Bank.

Speakers also pointed out that it necessary to develop more projects and activities engaging communities, while achieving a balance with expert-communities' knowledge, but also identify experts within the community and mediate all these realities in order to achieve the end goal. It raised importance of the mediation among different components of society – governance, gender equality, community, experts, *etc.* – which is what cultural heritage governance is about “as participatory governance in cultural heritage projects can only succeed if it is initiated, led and defined by the community it is ultimately supposed to serve” (Gustafsson & Stanojev, 2018).

4.2 Projects

On the other hand, beside different conferences and events, several projects that rooted participatory approach, started being implemented. The approach was not necessarily caused by the Year, but rather the idea has imposed itself.

4.2.1 REACH

The project REACH has been mapping, analysing and reporting on participatory research and approach. In doing so, it opens up a space in which new research questions and methodologies may be revealed. Sharing the common goal of engagement and participation, and complementary to the mapping and modelling activity, REACH consists of three practical areas of work: 1) Development of a sustainable REACH network aggregating the widest range of stakeholders and audiences, and offering concrete participatory experiences through the pilots; 2) Implementation of a programme of public encounters (workshops, conferences and meeting with local stakeholders) focusing on participatory approaches to preservation, use/re-use, and management of cultural heritage; 3) Publication of Open-heritage.eu, the online portal to give access to open spaces for debate, dialogue, interaction and experimentation, and to a repository of resources and data to be exploited in future research activities.

Three components of the work performed by the REACH project are most relevant in this

context: 1) the REACH repository of good practices in social participation; 2) the REACH Participatory Framework; 3) the Symposium “Horizons for Heritage Research” (March 2019), which initiated the process of setting up a new coordination structure, permanent and sustainable, comprising researchers, civil society, and practitioners in the cultural heritage field, and promoting a synergistic approach to heritage research (Forbes & Colella, 2019).

4.2.2 CultureLabs

One of the aims of the CultureLabs is to identify and analyse the needs of cultural institutions and other stakeholders and perform a comprehensive comparative review of ongoing participatory and collaborative approaches to involve community members, and especially those most disconnected from dominant cultural heritage.

Furthermore the project aims to collect and make available through an open digital platform and searchable infrastructure a set of resources that can prove useful for the development and adoption of participatory approaches in the field of cultural heritage: such as methodologies, best practices, studies, digital and analogical tools, physical facilities, cultural heritage content, possible collaborators, and other helpful information. The infrastructure is addressed to both institutional stakeholders and community members to make use of existing shared, and in many cases commonly created, resources, according to their missions and needs.

4.2.3 The Faro Way: enhanced participation in cultural heritage

The European Commission and the Council of Europe have launched a joint project “The Faro Way” (Faro Way 2018). The project aims to promote the adoption of the Faro Convention among national authorities⁷ and to encourage the increased role of civil society and communities in heritage governance and consequently through meetings discuss the adjustment of the role of national authorities in a process of increasing civil society participation in cultural heritage governance.

⁷ The first seminar took place in Madrid, Spain, organised in co-operation with the Spanish Ministry of Culture in December 2018, the second seminar was organised in Maastricht and Heerlen in May 2019.

The events organised under the project are aiming to promote a wider understanding of heritage as a common good by placing people and communities at the centre and involving them in decision-making. Through presentations and discussions on specific topics, seminar participants have an opportunity to exchange on the concerns that authorities may have in supporting the Faro Convention approach to cultural heritage and visiting local initiatives that are already applying some of the Faro Convention principles shall serve to illustrate how authorities can be involved in the implementation phase.

4.2.4 STEPS

STEPS⁸ is one more EU-CoE Joint pilot project which aims at building and strengthening community cohesion, promoting trust, dialogue and mutual understanding across diverse societies, through the participatory heritage-based action plans.

The project shall focus on providing expertise and guidance for the participatory process to mobilise diverse heritage as a resource for community cohesion in a specific area of the city where an action – either related to urban regeneration or to community development, is already planned. It will develop and test a methodological framework for the use of heritage at the local level. This methodological framework shall be validated through an evidence-based research process which will propose indicators to measure impact of participatory approaches to cultural heritage as a resource for community development and cohesion.

4.2.5 PERICLES

PERICLES⁹ promotes sustainable, participatory governance of cultural heritage in European coastal and maritime regions through an interdisciplinary and geographically wide-ranging approach. The overall aim of the project is to develop and demonstrate a comprehensive framework to understand, preserve and utilize maritime cultural heritage for societal good.

In order to meet challenges to sustainably govern cultural heritage in European coastal and maritime regions, the projects will, among other

goals, develop practical tools, based on stakeholder involvement and participatory governance, for mapping, assessing and mitigating risks to cultural heritage and to enhance sustainable growth and increase employment by harnessing cultural heritage assets and provide policy advice to improve integration of cultural heritage in key marine and environmental policies and the implementation of associated EU directives.

The project shall provide a comprehensive, empowered participatory governance framework for sustainable management and conservation of European coastal and maritime cultural landscapes, to assess and mitigate risks and integrate knowledge across local, spatial, environmental, social and economic aspects of cultural heritage.

4.2.6 CLIC project and HIP process

The CLIC project applies the circular economy principles to cultural heritage adaptive reuse for achieving environmentally, socially, culturally and economically sustainable urban/territorial development. Within the project, the HIP¹⁰ (Heritage Innovation Partnership) process has been implemented. HIP process functions as a platform in which stakeholders, together with representatives from academia and local or regional governments, meet and cooperate in order to build an action plan for adaptive reuse of cultural heritage. Stakeholders and citizens are directly consulted and involved into development of their Local Action Plans.

Each HIP is steered by two local leaders: city-region leader (a representative from a municipal/regional or non-governmental organization) and an academic leader (representative from a local research institution). Both are in charge of gathering a group of stakeholders, with diverse expertise fields and interests, who will work together in the definition of a Local Action Plan for the adaptive reuse of cultural heritage in their territory.

To do so, six HIP Dialogues on diverse topics (e.g. cultural resources mapping, governance models or financing, business models etc.) will be held in each location during the first two years of the project. Moreover, the leaders of the HIP process will meet up one time in each of the city-regions with the occasion of the Peer Review

⁸ [https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/cultural-heritage-and-diversity#{"21406803":10}](https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/cultural-heritage-and-diversity#{)

⁹ <https://www.pericles-heritage.eu/>

¹⁰ <https://www.clicproject.eu/hips-in-clic-cities-and-regions/>

Meetings, to discuss the implementation progress and exchange their learning experiences. One final HIP Open Day in each pilot city/region is foreseen in September 2020 to share the process.

5. Discussion and results

Among participatory governance actions implemented before and during the Year, several different strengths have been recognised: 1) Actions that have contributed to the topic understanding and the notion of participatory governance of cultural heritage; 2) Actions that expanded knowledge and awareness about existing, implemented participatory cases and 3) Actions that directly put into practice principles of participatory governance without having participatory governance as their main focus.

Another important finding was that a timeline with a chronological transition among these categories exists.

The topic and the notion of participatory governance of cultural heritage have been mainly discussed during the period around the Communication from the European Commission and Council conclusions on participatory governance of cultural heritage (European Commission 2014; Decision (EU) 2017/864).

Comparing different definitions and understandings that emerged during this phase showed that there are similarities and a common sense between outlooks regarding the participatory approach expressed in various studies, reports and projects, mainly stating that the participatory governance of cultural heritage is a complex process that involves many stakeholders at different levels, they all also underline that participatory mechanisms must be included in all the management cycle phases and each and every process related to decision-making regarding cultural heritage and that participatory governance is about shared governance and shared responsibility. Many of the reports argue that “one size does not fit all situations” and that participatory governance is rather the process that only a one-time action (Voices of Culture report). Thus, inflowing into the phase of exploring case studies of participatory governance was a logical step forward.

A progress from discussions on the notion of the participatory governance of cultural heritage to actions that expanded knowledge and awareness about existing, implemented

participatory cases happened already prior the Year, has been growing during the Year and will, most likely, continue to expand as a confirmation that the principles of participatory governance of cultural heritage have reached its continuum. The OMC report, although published in 2018 was developed before and decided to elaborate on the idea of analysing best practice examples and exploring how are the best practices transferable. At that stage and during the Year different cultural heritage stakeholders have already embraced the concept, but they have been trying to elaborate on necessary components, steps and factors to ensure it.

The observed correlation applies to other reports and conferences like “Citizens Involved: Participatory Governance of Built Heritage” and “Heritage is Ours - Citizens Participating in Decision Making” as well to the Forum on international perspectives that embraced the topic beyond European borders. Also projects REACH and CultureLabs have been expanding and deepening knowledge on existing cases of participatory approaches.

This finding corroborates the ideas that the most of recommendations regarding the participatory governance of cultural heritage have been articulated in that period and that the concept progressed in its evolution as well as ensured smooth continuity during and after the Year.

Projects STEPS and The Faro Way: enhanced participation in cultural heritage, could be considered as a special line of this strength as they also learn from cases, but working directly with EU Member States and cities while the collaboration is established among some of the main policy stakeholders – the European Commission and the Council of Europe. These two projects are considerably rare, having an opportunity to directly work with EU Member States.

It is interesting to note that actions that directly put into practice principles of participatory governance mainly started being implemented during the period of Year and after (2017-2019), like the CLIC and PERICLES projects. They do not focus on the terminology or definitions of participatory governance, neither on only examining successful cases, but rather creating their own, embedding participatory principles directly into its application and processes, which is demonstrating that the Year

improved the understanding of the approach and reinforced its implementation.

Progress analytics shows that the Year proved that the concept of participatory governance has been progressively recognised and put into actions. As mentioned in the literature review, the concept attracted more interest in the last few years, both, among scholars and practitioners.

However, with a small sample size, caution must be applied, as the findings might not be transferable to all actions related to the activities of the Year.

6. Conclusion and future works

The current paper was not specifically designed to evaluate participatory practices that emerged from the Year and that were implemented as a learning after-effect. That would require a research more in depth with different stakeholders, also the ones who were not directly involved in the Year.

Whilst this paper could not confirm if participatory approaches were completely embedded in all new initiatives developed during the Year, it did partially substantiate that numerous activities contributed to improve, progress and develop new forms of implementing participatory approach. Although the paper is based on a small sample of actions comparing to the total number of actions during the Year, the findings suggest that the topic of participation was highly appreciated. Notwithstanding these limitations, the paper suggests that stakeholders, both academic and practitioners, are engaged in improving this complex concept – through examining the concept itself or implementing it.

Although the Year exposed new dimensions and potential aspects how participatory governance and approach could progress and what they should include, an innovative solution how to ensure it at governmental level (EU Member States), has not been fully achieved. Therefore, this aspect of participation will have potential to be more explored. It is recommended that further research be undertaken in the area of legal framework actions ensuring continuum of participatory governance.

With a view to maintain the spirit of cooperation and policy dialogue achieved during the European Year, the European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage has been launched by the European Commission's Directorate-General

for Education and Culture (European Framework for Action on CH 2018).

The European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage, in line with the new European Agenda for Culture, responds to the invitation of European Leaders and cultural stakeholders¹¹. It builds on the results of the European Year of Cultural Heritage and ensures its legacy by developing further concrete actions.

As objectives of the Year focused very much on people-centred and participatory approaches, consequently the European Framework for Action aims at promoting and putting into practice an integrated and participatory approach to cultural heritage, and contributing to the mainstreaming of cultural heritage across EU policies (European Framework for Action on CH 2018).

Participatory approach is embedded in all five pillars of the European Framework, but mainstreamed in several specific pillars.

In order to stimulate participation in cultural heritage activities, as laid down in the first pillar "Cultural heritage for an inclusive Europe: participation and access for all", three clusters of actions will have a focus on

1) engaging the wider public, including via digital means;

2) engaging school children and empowering young people; and

3) breaking barriers to access. Furthermore, the fourth pillar "Cultural Heritage for an Innovative Europe" underlines that "there is a need for new models that engage local communities, as for example in the social economy, and a wide range of stakeholders through open, participatory and inclusive processes" (European Framework for Action on CH 2018, 24).

To address that challenges above, three clusters of actions will be developed under the fourth pillar aiming at

1) capitalising on technological tools for innovation on cultural heritage;

2) fostering social innovation; and

3) strengthening skills in the field of cultural heritage.

¹¹ At the Gothenburg Leaders' Summit in November 2017, Heads of States and Government confirmed their commitment to a Union which preserves its cultural heritage and promotes cultural diversity. The European Council in December 2017 highlighted the European Year of Cultural Heritage as a pivotal opportunity to increase awareness of the social and economic importance of culture and heritage.

An implication of this is the prospect that the strategic framework is committed to continue developing and engaging capacities in analysing progress and continuum of participatory governance, but mainly regarding stimulation of participation in cultural heritage activities and engaging local communities.

However, as developing the participatory governance of cultural heritage requires also the drafting of legislation and the preparation of organisational measures (OMC report), therefore links of the European Framework and these actions could have been more deeply explored in the future.

After the end of the Year, different stakeholders have continued working with the interest in the same topic and building up the knowledge developed during the Year¹².

An implication to emerge from this is the reliable prediction that the topic of participatory governance of cultural heritage will continue to grow, develop further and evolve in practices. Returning to the hypothesis at the beginning of the paper, that European Years shall send a political signal and set a commitment from the EU institutions and EU member governments that the focus of the Year should be taken into consideration in future policy-making, it is possible to state that the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 has managed to accomplish that. Cultural heritage has been mainstreamed in different agendas. Participatory governance of cultural heritage has been an important part of that journey. However, it still shall put efforts to reach a commitment and fully-fledged implementation from EU member governments.

¹² As follow up of the 2018 and in co-operation with the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, a second seminar of the joint project “The Faro Way: enhanced participation in cultural heritage” was organised and many others. Through presentations, discussions on selected topics and field visits to heritage-driven initiatives, the seminar provided an opportunity to explain in detail the Faro Convention approach to cultural heritage and to exchange on the actions that stakeholders, and particularly authorities, may have in supporting the Convention signature, ratification and implementation.

The Symposium “Horizons for Heritage Research” under REACH (March 2019), which initiated the process of setting up a new coordination structure, permanent and sustainable, comprising researchers, civil society, and practitioners in the cultural heritage field, and promoting a synergistic approach to heritage research (Forbes & Colella, 2019).

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