

ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

For the attention of:
the European Parliament
the European Council
the European Commission

Paris, 17 April 2012

Subject: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing Horizon 2020 - The Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) /* COM/2011/0809 final - 2011/0401 (COD) */

Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites) strongly pleads for the inclusion of cultural heritage in the 8th EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, HORIZON 2020.

In the proposal of the European Commission for HORIZON 2020 cultural heritage has been omitted completely, thus taking away all the funds previously available for research in this field. This decision would have serious consequences, since the whole basis and science of the documentation and conservation of cultural heritage in Europe would be eliminated, probably for many years to come.

Due to continuous EU funding of cultural heritage research since 1986 almost 200 projects have been successfully implemented internationally, making Europe the world leader in this sector. As an example of one of the outstanding projects within the current Framework Programme we mention "Climate for Culture" (Project No. 226973, period: 2009-2014), which assesses the damage potential of climate change on our cultural heritage, its socio-economic impact as well as the possibilities of mitigation. For the first time ever, high resolution climate evolution scenarios will be coupled with whole building simulation models in order to identify the most urgent risks for specific regions and to develop mitigation strategies. Other projects include important work on communication and networking, like the "Coordination action in support of the implementation of a Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) on Cultural Heritage and Global Change: a new challenge for Europe" and many others.

The research programmes funded in the last decades have built up a unique European network for interlinking professional know-how in urgent matters of common interest and scientific cross-discipline. Only through research and innovation it is possible to meet the complex challenges involved in protecting our cultural heritage in Europe and world-wide.

Funding provided within the EU Framework Programmes is essential for Europe, as it guarantees the development and implementation of state-of-the-art methods that are urgently required all over Europe not only for the conservation of irreplaceable cultural assets but also for their nurturing. Without research, such assets cannot be cared for in the most sustainable manner, leading to the loss of a significant part of our cultural identity and an important economic factor that amounts to 3.3% GDP in Europe and a turnover of 338 billion EUR p.a. from tourism.

Thus, the exclusion of cultural heritage from the Programme for Research and Innovation would be a disastrous step backwards for Europe as a cultural entity as well an extremely negative signal to the rest of the world.

ICOMOS as a global NGO of experts, which is dedicated to promoting the application of theory, methodology and scientific techniques to the conservation of the cultural heritage, based on the

1964 International Charter on the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (Venice Charter) and subsequent doctrinal texts, asks the EU to include cultural heritage within the 8th Framework Programme.

ICOMOS has gained international reputation as an advisory body in World Heritage affairs, to the European Union and to the Council of Europe. It is the only global NGO of its kind and represents more than 10,000 cultural heritage professionals present in 120 countries. 8,000 of the professionals are based in Europe. The Europe Group of ICOMOS works today in close cooperation with the ICOMOS Secretariat in Paris in order to give these professionals a voice with two main objectives: Strengthen the cultural heritage exchange within Europe and act as ambassadors for the European cultural heritage and heritage conservation on a global level.

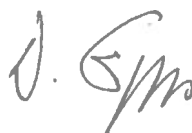
Finally, we would like to make reference to other relevant EU documents which underline the importance of the matter, in particular the Territorial Agenda 2020 (adopted in 2011). Chapter III Territorial Priorities for the Development of the European Union, paragraph 6 Managing and connecting ecological, landscape and **cultural values** of regions, reads:

*"..... (37) We underline that well-functioning ecological systems and the protection and enhancement of **cultural and natural heritage are important conditions for long-term sustainable development. We are all responsible for ensuring they are well functioning, protected and enhanced. Joint risk management is particularly important, taking into consideration different geographical specificities. We support the integration of ecological systems and areas protected for their natural values into green infrastructure networks at all levels."***

ICOMOS through this letter requests the EU to acknowledge fully its responsibilities now and in the future, to put cultural heritage back high on its agenda and to address the topic appropriately in the next Framework Programme.



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