

## Introduction

# The Faro Convention: a flexible tool for a changing society

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The year 2021 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of the Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, also known as the Faro Convention. A unique convention that emphasises the value and potential of heritage as a resource for sustainable development and quality of life in a constantly evolving society, the Faro Convention (now ratified or signed by 28 countries) highlights important aspects of heritage related to human rights and democracy. By promoting a wider understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society, it encourages citizens to recognise the importance of cultural heritage objects and sites through the meanings and values that these elements represent to them.

To celebrate this important anniversary, one option could have been to simply take stock of the work carried over the past decade. However, in these uncertain times brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic, it seemed more appropriate to adopt a more forward-looking approach in order to encourage discussions around the Faro Convention's future usage in various related domains. The following pages show that what emerged back in 2005 as a truly innovative approach is still relevant today and can also have an impact on issues beyond its traditional realm. This is illustrated through a set of articles that demonstrate the pertinence of cultural heritage in addressing different issues, ranging from democratic participation to tourism rethinking.

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One of the main aspects of the Faro Convention is the need to involve all citizens in the definition and management of cultural heritage. Prosper Wanner explores the full extent of the concept of participation in cultural heritage and points out the necessity of going beyond passive participation by trying to identify more active ways that allow civil society to fully express not only its rights, but also its responsibilities vis-à-vis cultural heritage. His analysis emphasizes the need to move towards true cooperation among stakeholders and this is illustrated through various cases developed throughout Europe. He points out that new participatory processes imply *de facto* a change in the interaction between authorities and citizens that can be of interest in domains other than cultural heritage.

The long-term participation of citizens also requires the involvement of the younger generation to ensure that today's efforts by heritage communities are not

subsequently thwarted by the indifference of young people. Angel Portolés emphasizes the need to use heritage education to keep such processes alive and shows how this approach is in line with the Youth Sector Strategy 2030 of the Council of Europe's main priorities. Moving away from any kind of nostalgia about the old good days, existing cultural heritage can be used as a basis for the future development of new generations. The knowledge and significance of the past is thus crucial and an attractive approach to heritage education must therefore be found that embraces new technologies and retains young people's interest.

Another major message of the Faro Convention is that cultural heritage can play an important role in responding to one of the major challenges facing our contemporary societies, namely the need to ensure the sustainability of future development. If cultural heritage is often the victim of unrestricted development, it can also contribute actively to economic, social, environmental and cultural sustainability. Having recalled the challenges of the current approach, Blanca Miedes explores the potential of the Faro Convention principles in fostering sustainable development in accordance with the 2030 Agenda and how this potential can be translated into a contribution to the achievement of the associated goals.

Another major aspect that constitutes both a threat and a potential opportunity for cultural heritage preservation and enhancement is tourism development. Ivana Volić takes a fresh look at the impact of tourism on cultural heritage by departing from the dominant paradigm of business-oriented tourism development and considering a more humanistic tourism that favours social transformation. To illustrate this alternative approach, she presents relevant experiences within Faro-inspired initiatives in various European countries and emphasizes that the Covid-19 pandemic which has strongly impacted the touristic sector can be a unique opportunity to rethink how tourism should evolve in the future, in greater accordance with the Faro Convention approach.

The Faro Convention is all about communities, but in our ever-globalised world with increased international mobility, population movements both internally and across the borders of nation-states, the question of the integration of newcomers and the associated evolution of existing communities is frequently raised. Hakan Demir Shearer addresses the challenges that

migration trends pose and presents ways in which the Faro Convention principles can contribute to regenerating communities, also by engaging such displaced people in genuine dialogue about cultural heritage, contributing ultimately to more sustained community life and people's well-being.

Finally, cultural heritage is a component of the larger concept of culture which also encompasses the arts. Through a practical initiative to disseminate the various materials illustrating its goals and achievements, Ed Carroll presents how a community-based artistic action can contribute to cultural heritage assessment and management and, by replicating the experience throughout Europe, how it can serve as inspiration for similar artistic actions and subsequent collaboration between different cultural heritage communities.

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In conclusion, the various topics addressed in these articles should provide valuable insights into the present and future use of the principles embedded

in the Faro Convention when dealing with issues that go beyond the mere conservation of cultural heritage. If there is one domain that can illustrate how the past can shape the future, cultural heritage is surely the best example, as preserving it illustrates the necessary recognition of previous generations' action while valuing it reflects the need to give greater meaning for present and future generations.

This brief introduction cannot be concluded without warmly thanking all the authors for sharing their extended knowledge and wisdom in their respective domains, thus contributing to shaping the future of the Faro Convention by inspiring Council of Europe action, authorities' policies and programmes, as well as heritage communities' activities in accordance with the convention's principles. The wide range of topics to be addressed and the numerous possibilities described by the various contributors suggest that the next ten years of the Faro Convention will be as challenging and rewarding as the decade that has elapsed since its entry into force.

# Faro Convention and Participation

## Shared responsibility for cultural heritage

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Prosper Wanner  
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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, known as the Faro Convention, is a convention on the *shared responsibility* for cultural heritage on the part of civil society, elected representatives and public institutions.<sup>1</sup> According to the secretary of the committee that drafted the Council of Europe convention, Daniel Thérond, this is one of its strong points, which implies new states of balance between the respective functions of institutional experts and of emerging heritage communities.<sup>2</sup>

After reference in the preamble to the need to involve everyone in society in the ongoing process of defining and managing cultural heritage, Article 1 of the convention calls on the parties to take the necessary steps to ensure greater synergy of competencies among all the public, institutional and private stakeholders concerned. To quote Daniel Thérond, the Faro Convention is the first international instrument to describe the vital *interplay* between a range of stakeholders: public authorities, experts, owners, investors, businesses, non-governmental organisations and civil society. The convention promotes a broader approach to heritage and its relationship with human communities, societies and nations,<sup>3</sup> to which the convention adds Europe as a common heritage.

### Rights and responsibilities

The Faro Convention establishes the rule of law, democracy and human rights as the framework for this sharing of responsibilities. It recognises the *right to cultural heritage* as a component of the cultural rights of individuals enshrined in the Universal Declaration

of Human Rights (1948, Article 27) and the other subsequent texts on fundamental human rights such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966). Accordingly, together with all fundamental rights, cultural rights and, hence, the right to cultural heritage form an indivisible, interdependent, closely interrelated and inalienable whole for guaranteeing individual dignity and freedom.

This common framework enables people to be involved in the ongoing process of defining and managing cultural heritage, while respecting individual dignity. All individuals contribute with their cultures to the richness of human culture while respecting humankind's universal values of freedom, equal dignity, reason and conscience and the spirit of brotherhood (Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights). These various instruments stress that "*cultural diversity is the common heritage of humanity*", as stated in the 2001 Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity.<sup>4</sup>

Once this framework has been established, Patrice Meyer-Bisch, who holds the UNESCO Chair for human rights and democracy at the University of Lausanne, believes that, as a human right, cultural rights cannot be invoked either politically or legally to restrict the application of individuals' other fundamental rights. Rather, they ensure that cultural diversity cannot be used to call universality into question and that, conversely, universality does not serve as a pretext for stifling diversity. Cultural rights and hence also the right to cultural heritage are based on respect both for cultural diversity and for universal values.<sup>5</sup> Given its role in upholding the rule of law, human rights and democracy, the Council of Europe is right in establishing this framework which alone can enable responsibilities to be shared between heritage communities, public institutions and elected representatives.

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1. Section 3 of the Convention: Shared responsibility for cultural heritage and public participation.

2. Daniel Thérond, "Benefits and innovations of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society", in "Heritage and Beyond", Council of Europe Publishing, 2008.

3. Idem.

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4. UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2 November 2001.

5. Patrick Meyer-Bisch, "Les droits culturels: une responsabilité transversale", February 2015.

## A Framework Convention

The convention lays down the *framework* for each of the parties. Public institutions are responsible for leading the partnership process. Articles 11 to 14<sup>6</sup> set out the necessity of involving all members of society in a rationale of democratic governance in all matters connected with the cultural heritage.<sup>7</sup> This involves individuals or groups of individuals and heritage communities, or groups of people who value specific aspects of a given cultural heritage and seek to work *within the framework of public action*.<sup>8</sup> Heritage awareness should stem not only from professional expertise but also from the aspirations of population groups which may not be linked by language, an ethnic tie or even a shared past, but are linked by a purposive commitment to specific heritages.<sup>9</sup>

At the same time, whether or not a state adopts the Faro Convention does not guarantee the emergence of a Faro process. Although, once ratified, international treaties like the Faro Convention prevail over domestic legislation,<sup>10</sup> no provision in the framework convention creates rights for individuals merely by virtue of ratification. While, upon ratification, states do undertake to take steps to adapt their domestic legislation, the Faro Convention makes no provision as to the timetable or the expected level of detail. Application of the convention is in itself a responsibility shared by all the parties. Although important, ratification by states is not enough: the involvement of citizens, elected representatives and civil society is vital for this right to cultural heritage to be exercised before or after ratification by states.

The Faro Framework Convention defines the issues at stake, general objectives and possible fields of action for member States to move forward with. Each

State Party can decide on the most convenient means to implement the convention according to its legal or institutional frameworks, practices and specific experience. In addition to its legal dimension, the Faro Convention is therefore a reference framework that is more a matter of a form of *public ethics*<sup>11</sup> that enables this sharing of responsibilities between public institutions, citizens, elected representatives and the private sector.<sup>12</sup>

## Stakeholders

Moreover, in practice, the initiative of applying the Faro Convention may be taken by a wide range of stakeholders:

- ▶ heritage curators as in Marseille (France),
- ▶ mayors as in Fontecchio (Italy),
- ▶ NGOs as in Viscri (Romania), Cordoba (Spain) and Machkhaani (Georgia),
- ▶ universities as in Huelva, Castellon (Spain) and Rome (Italy),
- ▶ artists as in Kaunas (Lithuania),
- ▶ residents as in Lisbon (Portugal), Venice (Italy) and Novi-Sad (Serbia),
- ▶ local authorities as in Cervia and Forlì (Italy),
- ▶ central government as in the Netherlands, Switzerland and Norway.

Against a background of mistrust between civil society, elected representatives and public institutions, the parties that sign up to the Faro Convention thereby affirm their *commitment and their desire for democracy*.<sup>13</sup> This is also illustrated by the fact that, at the Council of Europe, the Faro Convention is driven by the Directorate of Democracy.

6. Text of the Faro Convention. Section 3: Shared responsibility for cultural heritage and public participation.

7. Explanatory report to the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society. Council of Europe Treaty Series, No. 199.

8. Article 2, b: a heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations.

9. Daniel Thérond, "Benefits and innovations of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society", in "Heritage and Beyond", Council of Europe Publishing, 2008.

10. Article 55 of the French Constitution of 1958.

11. According to Yves Boisvert, public ethics involves two separate but interrelated spaces: one for deliberation and assistance with decision-making (public ethics) and one for decision-making (politics).

12. It lays down the boundaries for trying out new heritage practices. It sets out objectives, definitions and shared principles (Section 1), describes the cultural heritage's contribution to society and human development (Section 2) and assigns shared responsibilities for cultural heritage and public participation (Section 3).

13. Marc Crépon, "De la démocratie participative. Fondements et limites", Editions Mille et une nuits, 2007.



*Protest against a new road project, Kaunas, Lithuania. Photo: Darius Petruolis*

## **A working premise put into practice**

“Heritage participation” was one of the working premises put into practice by the Council of Europe at its first *Faro Walk* held in Marseille on 12 and 13 September 2013. That forum made it one of the three priority strands of the Faro Action Plans, which seek to put the principles of the Faro Convention into practice. Participation was set out in working premises and assessment criteria for the purpose of comparison with the initiatives to implement the Faro Convention and with the priorities of the Council of Europe. It has remained one of the focuses of research under the four successive Faro Action Plans, which have given rise to the publication of terms of reference, assessment

criteria and ratings, and concept papers, as well as the holding of a “Faro Research Action” seminar in Huelva in Spain on 3 and 4 December 2018.

As the work moved forward, the term “co-operation” gradually came to be preferred over “participation”. This choice was confirmed for good in 2018 when the Faro working premises, principles and criteria were updated in the third Faro Action Plan. On that basis, the purpose of this article is to give an account of this process so as to explain as far as possible this choice and the benefit of favouring a co-operative approach in promoting and implementing the Faro Convention, whether alongside a participatory approach or not.



*Faro Research in Huelva, Spain. December 2018. Photo: Distrito V*

## 2. CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATING IN BUILDING CITIZENSHIP

### The social value of heritage for society

The Marseille Forum on the social value of heritage and the value of heritage for society held on 12 and 13 September 2013 submitted three working hypotheses or premises to an international panel, including one on participation: *Participatory civil society building citizenship*. This international forum was held jointly by the Council of Europe and the European Union as part of a joint programme to promote the Faro Convention among member states. At the close of the forum, “*the development of democratic participation*” was approved as one of the three main thrusts of the Council of Europe’s action in promoting and implementing the Faro Convention.

The working premise of the forum was based on the fact that the heritage activities conducted in Marseille in connection with the Faro Convention involved experimentation with *forums for participatory democracy encouraged within the framework of public action, but carried out by residents, which were that many responses to the constant difficulties experienced locally*. The Faro process conducted in the city’s northern neighbourhoods in 2013 was chosen on account of its exemplary nature in terms of sharing heritage responsibilities. The European integrated heritage task force established in the northern neighbourhoods of Marseille<sup>14</sup> and headed by the heritage curator, Christine Breton, from 1994 brought together district mayors that had committed themselves to the principles of the Faro Convention, self-declared heritage communities and public heritage institutions.

14. Michel Jolé, Hôtel du Nord. La construction d’un patrimoine commun dans les quartiers nord de Marseille, in *Metropolitique*, January 2012.

### The Marseille experience

The first district town hall to sign up symbolically to the Faro Convention in Marseille in 2009 began by setting up a *heritage committee* as a forum for dialogue on heritage policies. It met half a dozen times a year to discuss issues such as the preparation of the European Heritage Days, choices in terms of economic optimisation or use of heritage, the impact of urban development projects on heritage and follow-up to applications to list properties. Associations defending local living conditions, tenants’ associations, artists, businesses and ordinary citizens came together at the invitation of the councillor for culture to address these heritage issues affecting their neighbourhoods. In the case of the economic optimisation of heritage, the committee led to the establishment of the first residents’ co-operative, Hôtel du Nord, comprising several heritage communities.

The heritage committee project in Marseille was an example of operational implementation of the new mechanisms emerging for sharing heritage responsibilities for which the Faro Convention serves as a framework. It acted as a political forum for dialogue, early warnings, proposals, action and exchanges of knowledge between citizens, their elected representatives and public bodies concerning the exercise of the right to cultural heritage.

Three other district mayors in Marseille subsequently signed up to the principles of the Faro Convention and set up similar heritage committees. It was in these four settings and with the four mayors and members of these heritage committees that the *Faro Walk* was organised in 2013. The international panel was invited to validate common references to these initiatives that allowed application of the Faro Convention and their recognition in other European settings.



Community meeting to protect Miramare, Marseille, France, 2021. Photo: Dominique Poulain

## Civil society and heritage issues

The concept paper submitted to the panel pointed out that Europe needed to innovate in order to stimulate society with *more democracy, more direct citizen participation and better governance* based on more effective institutions and on dynamic public-private partnerships. The development of democratic participation is described as one of the Faro Convention's main contributions to the social challenges facing many member states.

Drawing on the work of the American political theorist, Benjamin Barber, one of the three working premises submitted to the panel presented civil society participation as an essential precondition for the existence of democracy and involving the learning of citizenship through experience of participation in local affairs. The application of the Faro Convention to Marseille is considered from the angle of its ability to reposition civil society as a key component of our democracies and, in particular, to strengthen its self-organisation and its role alongside, and sometimes in the face of, central government, the public authorities and the market.

The panel concluded that the Faro Convention emphasised an innovative approach to social, political and economic problems, using cultural and heritage values and practices to reach all stakeholders in society, including the most disadvantaged, in particular through the promotion of democratic participation capable of influencing policy-making and rendering it more legitimate and sustainable. Participation was recognised as one of the three main "notions" forming the common frame of reference for understanding and implementing the Faro Convention.

The summary nevertheless concluded that not all the attempts to develop a genuinely participatory type of local democracy based on a battery of texts had been conclusive to date and that citizen participation could not be imposed but must be built up.<sup>15</sup>

## Acting within the framework of public action

The development of democratic participation has become the third priority of the Faro Action Plans, with the dual objective of implementing "shared responsibility" involving citizens and civil society in mechanisms integrated into public action for the purpose of identifying values, defining priorities and managing heritage projects (Articles 5.c, 5.d, 11.d, 11.e, 12.a and

12.c) and of encouraging all social players' sense of responsibility so that their action is sustained by an awareness of belonging to a community enriched by its elements of diversity (Articles 8.c, 9.b, 9.d).

Three criteria linked to that priority were thus adopted for assessing the local initiatives:

- ▶ **The existence of a group of concerned and supportive political players.** As elected representatives who are facilitators, observers and active participants, they redraw the boundaries between civil society and the political community. They tackle their public service mission more from the co-operation angle and do not make the construction of social cohesion subordinate to party political issues but to the successful development of political links that foster "living together".
- ▶ **The existence of a heritage group.** This means a group from civil society, which identifies as such and is recognised by civil society and wishes to play a more active role in a series of measures that were previously the sole preserve of heritage specialists. The wide range of occupational backgrounds and of interests of its members, the wide range of theoretical, methodological and operational approaches and the wide range of projects undertaken, where nothing is ruled out, are that many assets for ensuring that the various activities are likely to have a major impact.
- ▶ **Contribution to the emergence of a participatory mechanism.** This involves re-establishing a more flexible, fluid and responsive relationship with the public authorities and helping to develop a proactive civic voice as a means of contributing to the public good, in particular through the various projects tried out together that are just waiting to be passed on, backed up and supported by the authorities.

These three criteria (together with six others) have been used to assess initiatives throughout Europe that deliberately set out to apply the Faro Convention or do so unwittingly. The work here has clarified the importance to heritage communities of "acting within the framework of public action" and the relevant methods.

## 3. EXISTING CASES AS INSPIRATION

### Feedback on practical examples

In addition to Marseille, three other initiatives in Venice (Italy), Pilsen (Czech Republic) and Viscri (Romania) were assessed under the second Faro Action Plan. These assessments produced a critical analysis regarding participation as a principle of the Faro Convention.

15. De l'exercice du droit au patrimoine culturel (Exercising the right to cultural heritage), Prosper Wanner, 2017. In Cultural heritage, 2015-2017, Edition Ca' Foscari Digital Publishing, <https://edizionicafoscari.unive.it/it/edizioni4/libri/978-88-6969-225-3/>

In the four cases, the relationships between the residents, their institutions and elected representatives were marked by very low levels of trust or even conflict. There were many different reasons here.

- ▶ a property development promoted by the mayor of Viscri threatened communal meadows;
- ▶ the scandal surrounding the Moses project in Venice led to the arrest of the mayor in 2014;
- ▶ the feeling that the northern neighbourhoods of Marseille had been abandoned by city hall was a key factor in the municipal elections in 2013;
- ▶ in Pilsen there were unusual public protests against a decision by the municipal council allowing a new supermarket to be built on a heritage site.

In all these cases, civil society questioned the ability of public bodies and the elected representatives concerned to defend the public interest and, in particular, the cultural and natural heritage assets to which it was attached.

Nevertheless, in the four cases, participation was established locally through public policies:

- ▶ in Marseille, a participatory process was implemented as part of the urban regeneration programme;
- ▶ in Venice, the new municipal council adopted public regulations on participation and set up an ad hoc office;

- ▶ in Pilsen, the participatory process was one of the requirements for the award of the title of European Capital of Culture;
- ▶ in Viscri, participation was part of the European directives linked to European funding and the presence of the Roma minority.

A common feature of these participatory processes is that they were not explicit choices on the part of elected representatives or local institutions but often were adopted under pressure from local residents or national or European directives.

In practice, public authorities and local elected representatives have little faith in civil society's ability to be a resource in the processes for which they are responsible and the only benefit they see in participatory processes is achieving better understanding and acceptance of decisions already made. For its part, civil society is reluctant to take part in these processes insofar as it no longer regards the authorities and elected representatives as reliable partners. The participatory processes are therefore established unilaterally and, in the contexts discussed, were rejected by residents as in Marseille, not applied by the institutions as in Venice, disregarded as in Pilsen or misunderstood as in Viscri.<sup>16</sup>

16. Pour un patrimoine européen vivant, débattu et en responsabilité partagée. Prosper Wanner, 2017, Cartaditalia – Special edition: 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage. [https://iicbruxelles.esteri.it/iic\\_bruelles/fr/gli\\_eventi/cartaditalia/cartaditalia-edizione-speciale.html](https://iicbruxelles.esteri.it/iic_bruelles/fr/gli_eventi/cartaditalia/cartaditalia-edizione-speciale.html)



*Viscriste informal parliament meeting: representatives from the agricultural association, women's association, craftsmen, guesthouse owners, touristic service providers, fire-fighters, religious representatives and local councillors - picture taken by Ursula Fernolend*



## New forms of interaction

In these contexts, concerted application of the principles of the Faro Convention by the public institutions and civil society established new forms of co-operation by the heritage communities in public affairs, which differ from officially instituted participation.

These new forms tie in with the approach taken in 1966 by the UN defining “the right to take part in cultural life” under Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which served as the foundation for the Faro Convention. The monitoring committee of the international covenant has stated that the right to “take part” in cultural life involves three fundamental aspects: access, participation, and contribution to cultural life.

- ▶ **Access** is the right of everyone as an individual or in a group to “know and understand his or her own culture and that of others through education and information, and to receive quality education and training with due regard for cultural identity”.
- ▶ **Participation** is the right of everyone as an individual or in a group “to act freely, to choose his or her own identity, to identify or not with one or several communities or to change that choice, to take part in the political life of society, to engage in one’s own cultural practices and to express oneself in the language of one’s choice”.

- ▶ **Contribution** to cultural life covers the right of everyone “to be involved in creating the spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional expressions of the community. This is supported by the right to take part in the development of the community to which a person belongs, and in the definition, elaboration and implementation of policies and decisions that have an impact on the exercise of a person’s cultural rights.”

These clarifications concern the interpretation and application of Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in practice the right to cultural heritage as defined in the Faro Convention.

*In the light of the above, how do these Faro processes reshape and renew the nature of relations between the political authorities, public institutions and the heritage communities?*

The decision by elected representatives, institutions and civil society to use the Faro Convention as a framework for action is intended first of all not to set participatory democracy against representative democracy. They are linked when, for example, a change in mayor following elections can significantly slow down a Faro process, as is currently the case in Venice and Forlì in Italy. Conversely, the departure of a facilitator between the relevant institutions and heritage communities can just as easily pose problems, as was the case in Pilsen.



Faro process in the Arsenal of Venice, Italy, 2014. Photo: Faro Venezia

## 4. FROM RESPONSIBILITY TO CO-OPERATION

### A shared responsibility

The desire to share heritage responsibilities commits all the parties. The elected representatives and public institutions recognise heritage communities as stakeholders in public action while, in turn, heritage communities acknowledge their willingness to act “*within the framework of public action*”. The Faro Convention lays down the boundaries within which the sharing of heritage responsibilities can be tried out. It lays down objectives, definitions and shared principles (Section 1), describes cultural heritage’s contribution to society and human development (Section 2) and assigns shared responsibilities for the cultural heritage and public participation (Section 3).

Regarding public responsibilities, General Comment No. 21 on the ICESCR stresses the importance of “*the enactment of appropriate legislation and the establishment of effective mechanisms allowing persons, individually, in association with others, or within a community or group, to participate effectively in decision-making processes, to claim protection of their right to take part in cultural life, and to claim and receive compensation if their rights have been violated.*”

The decision by elected representatives to apply the Faro Convention is a public policy decision and a commitment to a principle of reciprocity in their relations with heritage communities, on the one hand, by agreeing to learn along with the residents and, on the other, by accepting that the heritage process as proposed by Faro means taking an interest in the impact of heritage choices on other areas of public action such as economic affairs and urban development.

The public institutions create the conditions for action by heritage communities within the framework of public action and in compliance with the statutory rules. In accordance with the Faro Convention, within the specific context of each state, public institutions ensure that legislative provisions exist for exercising the right to cultural heritage and foster an economic and social climate which supports participation in cultural heritage activities. More specifically, they undertake to develop legal, financial and professional frameworks to make joint action possible between public authorities, experts, owners, investors, businesses, non-governmental

organisations and civil society (Articles 5 and 11 of the Faro Convention).

In Marseille, as part of an experimental European integrated heritage task force, a post of full-time heritage curator was made available to residents to enable them, as individuals or in groups, *to enhance the value of the cultural heritage through its identification, study, interpretation, protection, conservation and presentation*. The relevant action requires scientific skills and a knowledge of administrative procedures that are mainly possessed by public bodies: research and scientific monitoring in co-operation with heritage professionals; co-ordination with scientific authorities; accompanying of archiving, classification and registration processes, preparation of exhibitions. These skills are those of scientists, historians, curators, archaeologists, geologists and so on within public bodies.

### Enriching representative democracy

Accordingly, rather than opposing representative democracy and public bodies or institutions or positioning themselves as an alternative to them, through their adherence to the Council of Europe convention, the Faro processes confirm their commitment to democracy, which is Europe’s common heritage, and to the principles and institutions that sustain it in the long term. Through their adherence to a framework convention, they affirm their desire for a democracy in which the diversity of heritage values, even if contradictory, can be expressed as a source of dialogue, opinions and shared decision-making and as a resource for sustainable development and quality of life.

*How can participation stemming from social demand rather than top-down instructions be fostered? How can these participatory forums be made sustainable in the long term (changes in elected representatives, ending of particular contexts such as European Capitals of Culture)? What could the Faro Convention provide in terms of renewing relations between residents, their elected representatives and public authorities?*

Although it is perceived as being inherent in Faro, the concept of *participation* is at the same time criticised as being counterproductive when initiated by top-down mechanisms and followed up by little feedback on a practical level. Terms such as co-construction, co-operation, co-deliberation and co-decision are more meaningful for heritage communities than the generic *participation*, which seems to put the issue of rights and responsibilities to one side.



Faro Heritage Community, district of Centocelle, Rome, Italy. Photo: LUISS

With the Faro processes, it is possible to create out-of-the-ordinary dialogue situations in which all participants, whether scientists, elected representatives, residents or officials, are (re)legitimised precisely in relation to a given cultural heritage. The respective responsibilities, functions and knowledge are not the same yet do not conflict with one another (scientific knowledge against popular, amateur, lay or other knowledge) when they are properly designated and recognised: heritage communities belong to a given heritage, curators have a public responsibility and elected representatives have a political mandate. The ICESCR monitoring committee sets out these conditions for *acting within the framework of public action* as regards heritage and cultural resources, namely measures which make them *available* to individuals, *accessible* in practice and do so in an *acceptable, adaptable and appropriate* manner.

The Faro Convention Action Plan Handbook reflects this shift from participation towards co-operation in the definition of priorities, principles and criteria for Faro Action Plans. The following definition of co-operation is given in the glossary: *Co-operation is the action of working together [towards the] same goal, beginning from the first steps and gradually constructing together. A special distinction is made here between participation and co-operation, as participating in something*

*denotes lesser influence in decision-making and may exclude certain groups [from] taking [an] active role in the processes.*

### Co-operative principles

On the civil society side, the initiatives draw on co-operative principles and status in applying the Faro Convention. Under the co-operative approach, the role of individuals is central, as under the Faro Convention. In Faro initiatives, one of the demands of individuals is to be involved in managing heritage policies so as fully to exercise their right to “benefit from the cultural heritage and to contribute towards its enrichment”.

Co-operatives seem to be particularly well suited here, as democratic organisations run by their members, who play an active part in determining policies and making decisions. This economic democracy is embodied especially well in the co-operative principles of “voluntary membership open to all”, known as the “open door”, and the principle of “authority exercised democratically by the members” under the simple rule of “one member, one vote”.

The co-operative principle of “member economic participation” is the basis for solidarity between the members of a co-operative and with future generations.