



Education and Culture DG

Culture Programme



European Heritage Days
Journées européennes
du patrimoine



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

DGIV/PAT/JEP(2012)5
03 February 2012

EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS
A joint action of the Council of Europe and the European Union

"The European Dimension"
Key Characteristics

Strasbourg (France), 10 February 2012

Venue: Council of Europe
Palais, Room 17
Allée de l'Europe, 67000 Strasbourg

“THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION”: DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS

At a meeting on the subject of the “European Dimension”, Strasbourg 11-12 December 2011, experts and National Coordinators agreed that the concept “European Dimension” could be defined in relation to the following characteristics.

Events being promoted as having a “European Dimension” should include:

- A) **Collaboration on multiple levels** (local, regional, national and international, cross frontier, transnational initiatives). The difficulty of engaging local populations needs to be addressed. The solution might lie in the focus on the new geography of cultural exchange, which we are experiencing today; empowering local aspects of international activities to operate as a centre of the event, and to engage all participants as equal partners in an international network.
- B) **Networking and use of technology** in order to enable a broader reach for the smaller communities and provide access for all. Electronic networks enable European communities to collaborate with each other and to have a voice in event development.
- C) **A stress on cultural diversity**, according to the texts adopted by the Council of Europe, the European Commission, UNESCO. There should be a focus on accessibility in its widest sense. The terms intercultural dialogue or intercultural exchange may be used as a substitute for cultural diversity where this latter has become too politicized.
- D) Promotion of **cultural exchange of ideas, information, goods and services and the sharing of resources** between different partners in European countries.
- E) **Active participation / engagement /cooperation between visitors to the ED event and the local community.**
- F) Focus on a **people centered activity**, rather than a place or object oriented activities; it should stress the human dimension of the projects and the heritage.
- G) Focus on links **between heritage, history and culture.**
- H) Vision of **cultural heritage as a resource**, rather than an end or goal itself.
- I) **Principle of sustainable development** – not only external funding. The “European dimension” event should always assume it must anticipate developing resources from within.
- J) Attention to **inclusion of youth** in the project.
- K) **Links between the event and cross frontier cooperation between cultural and/ or educational structures.**
- L) **Cultural Cooperation** as a value.

All of the participants decided that the “European dimension” events should focus on the common European heritage. They should embrace the principles of cooperation and diversity and the vision of building a better society based on peace, cooperation and mutual respect.