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**Council of Ministers of Culture in South East Europe  
Third Meeting  
Sofia, 23-24 March 2007**

**Regional Programme for Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe,  
supported by the Council of Europe and the European Commission**

**Cultural Corridors – Analysis to Synthesis  
Pilot Project Detailed Action Plan (2007-2008)**





## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Ministers of Culture of South East Europe met in Varna (Bulgaria) on 22-25 June 2006 at the second meeting of the Council of Ministers of Culture in South East Europe. This meeting was also attended by Greece and Turkey who have shown a great interest in the *Regional Programme* in general and in the Cultural Corridors project in particular.

Considering that cultural diversity is a defining factor for the region and Europe and expressing their commitment to promote intercultural dialogue and mutual knowledge of the cultures and history of the South East European peoples, Ministers acknowledged the "*Regional Programme for Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe*" as one major organisational framework contributing to the intensification of the regional dialogue and to constructive cooperation through partnerships.

Within this framework, the Ministers gave their initial approval for investigating further the feasibility conditions of a project implementing principles based on the concept of Cultural Corridors which have benefited from increased political attention during the Forums of Heads of State and Government of South East Europe organised in Varna (May 2005) by the President of Bulgaria and in Opatija (June 2006) by the President of Croatia, under the patronage of UNESCO and the Council of Europe. The "Varna Declaration" and the "Opatija Strategy" adopted at these occasions proposed concrete guidelines for defining and implementing projects reviving the historic lifelines of South-East Europe constituting the lines of interaction between cultures which have left their mark on territories, landscapes, settlements and traditions, and make them a source of connection between peoples.

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe willingly embraced this idea and together with the European Commission, the Council of Europe proposes the following "Detailed Action Plan".

### 1.2 Rationale

The apparent deterioration of the "cultural environment" is at the origin of the debate on sustainable development. In destroying the singularity of places, in denying their differences and their complexities, development processes have accelerated the deterioration of the social and physical environment, reducing the quality of living and social conditions of a growing number of people. This is provoking not only economic, but also environmental and identity problems, constituting "new poverties" which concern a growing proportion of people in Europe.

A model for sustainable development should propose a strategic response which can help restore and establish the harmonious relationship between inhabitants and the territory, in order to help balance human settlement with the environment and connect past and present local customs and practices. This process is one of renewal through creative contemporary development leading to a "territorial alliance" between inhabitants.

A possible new Council of Europe tool of intervention referring to the "Varna Declaration" and the "Opatija Strategy" is the creation of an integrated project which demonstrates in practical terms how dynamic links between cultural values and ideas and the territories involved can further develop and enhance transnational networks and inter-regional co-operation. This foreseen new integrated project should contribute to local development and sustainable communities and therefore be able to reconcile several requirements for development – economic growth, preservation of the environment, citizenship education, cultural heritage, cultural creation and diversity. This reconciliation should be the result of a democratic debate involving members of the community that can span across different cultural interests and traditions, and lead to a common project combining historical legacy with a community's contemporary objectives of modernisation and development.

### 1.3 Principles

The “integrated project” should be based on the transcontinental and transnational historical axes of age-old cultural and economic relevance which have always carried ideas, innovations and values, and which transcend geographical and political boundaries of the region. The aim is to understand and preserve, in the long-term, the fundamental role of the different elements composing a territory, and at the same time propose a development dynamic based on a recognised identity of the territory which is sustainable over time. It therefore provides opportunities to protect and raise awareness of the cultural heritage of multiple communities, and to promote cultural connections and sustainable growth economic development, which respect to the diversity of cultural values and histories.

The innovative and experimental dimension of this approach combines the existing plurality of social, institutional, economic and cultural positive forces which are constantly contribute to the transformation of the cultural environment. That integrated development strategy should be implemented through a local development process, which implies social and democratic participation, the recognition and strengthening of local identities and offer opportunities to inhabitants to become the main stakeholders of the transformation process.

The “integrated project” is seen as vector of movement and exchange over time, not necessarily linked to a specific area; it is multifunctional and aims to integrate different values, purposes and themes. It concerns multi-stakeholders, implies multi-dialogue which helps to extend exchange, encourages movement between different people and offers incentives for different people to act together.

The new integrated project must define an operational framework with parameters that identify existing nodes of development, projects, initiatives and personalities, or inspire them, together with the means for gathering isolated initiatives, to develop a combined strategy. It constitutes a framework into which a common vision can be elaborated that can mobilise different strengths and stakeholders. The networking of many local communities that are responsible for their own development processes and capable of undertaking sustained efforts will be one outcome of the project.

### 1.4 Institutional and Political Framework

The Pilot Project “Cultural Corridors – Analysis to Synthesis” is implemented as part of the *Regional Programme for Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe 2003-2008*, and more specifically within the administrative framework defined by its Component B: *Integrated Rehabilitation Project Plan / Survey of the Architectural and Archaeological Heritage* supported by the Council of Europe (Directorate of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage, Division of Regional Cooperation, DGIV) and the European Commission (Directorate General Education and Culture).

The activities carried out within the *Regional Programme* are geared to the implementation of the priorities adopted by the Heads of State and Government in Vienna (1993), Strasbourg (1997), and Warsaw (2005) and refer to the following international conventions concerning cultural and natural heritage, the reference instruments on spatial planning and the environment:

- the *European Cultural Convention* (Paris, 1954);
- the *Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats* (Bern, 1979);
- the *European Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property* (Delphi, 1985);
- the *Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe* (Granada, 1985);
- the *European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage* (London, 1969, revised in Malta, 1992).
- the *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (Faro, 2005)
- the *European Landscape Convention* (Florence, 2000);
- the *Guiding Principles for Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent* (Hanover, 2000, adopted by the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning);

- the *Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy* (Sofia, 1995, approved by European Ministers of the Environment in keeping with the United Nations Environment Programme).

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 General Objectives

To develop, within the next eighteen months (April 2007 – October 2008), a pilot project designed to illustrate an exemplary and exploratory approach over several phases from initial conception through the fine-tuning of specific objectives. This pilot project will enable the development of a clearer understanding of the principles behind a strategy for Cultural Corridors, as a potentially new strand of Council of Europe regional co-operation.

### 2.2 Specific Objectives

- to support transnational initiatives that reflect the rich and diverse tangible and intangible cultural and cultural and natural heritage of SEE and its history;
- to preserve and safeguard, as well as continue to develop the living cultural heritage of the region as an integral part of sustainable development;
- to strengthen transnational co-operation;
- to facilitate social and economic interaction, intercultural dialogue and exchanges in order to stimulate economic growth and inflow of investments (including through cultural tourism) which respect cultural and patrimonial values and cultural diversity.
- to broaden dialogue and mutual knowledge between peoples and their cultures, traditions and languages from different communities;
- to develop existing regional networks, consisting of objects, monuments, places of memories, values, professional skills, specialists, personalities, projects, initiatives, traditions, participating in sustainable development of territories;
- to promote a shared vision of the region of SEE as a space of dialogue, exchange and accord, in which culture plays a role of increasing importance.

## 3.0 BENEFICIARIES

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and UNMIK/Kosovo participate in the Regional Programme.

The pilot project proposes to elaborate a tool for intervention and development of territories to be promoted by national, regional and local authorities. It is based on major political topics such as sustainability (which imply the participation of the civil society and social and economic development) and the improvement of the quality of life (development of territories implying people involvement). The final beneficiaries of the “corridors” are therefore the citizens.

## 4.0 MANAGEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Programme Coordinators of the *Regional Programme for Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe 2003-2008* (RPSEE) are the reference persons overseeing the Pilot Project (“Steering Committee”). They are assisted by international experts nominated by the Council of Europe. Working Groups set up in each participating country will be involved in the implementation of activities.

Programme Coordinators should take advantage of the existing professional networks for the implementation of specific action, especially those involved in the different Regional Programme activities.

## 5.0 ACTIVITIES

### 5.1 Working method and expected results

Practical tasks and activities will be implemented through a large consultation process among the participating countries, on the basis of national and international experts of the RPSEE network recommendations. Sustainability of the pilot project is based on the necessary search for consensus between a multiplicity of initiatives and social interests expressed by inhabitants. The expected result is a coherent and reproducible procedure letting “corridors” emerge from what already exists, but connecting clusters of activity towards a singular vision of development of defined territory. The “corridor” should be auto-generated and should emerge as a framework facilitating links between activities, connecting people. The final method proposed at the end of the pilot project should enable relevant authorities to identify and implement:

- spatially delimited areas of multidimensional homogeneity;
- a policy toolkit (suggesting or guiding projects in the use and organisation of territories and defining stakeholders);
- areas of social and economic interaction (legacy of historical dynamics and projects, with new conditions enabling what was not possible before);
- landscapes enabling flows of development;

The Pilot Project approach implies a clear understanding of the multiple identities and regional specificities, which should be acquired through the experience of the main local stakeholders (inhabitants, local, regional and national institutions, NGOs), which are in the best position to identifying those aspects which are permanent and those which arise from an interpretation of newer contemporary changes.

The implementation of the Pilot Project should recognise and use the existing elements produced within the ongoing activities in South East Europe with increased emphasis on transnational perspectives. Some such elements include the 160 monuments and sites listed as priorities (IRPP/SAAH, Regional Programme), the 9 pilot regions identified as part of the Local Development Pilot Projects (LDPP, Regional Programme) and the Cultural Routes (Olive Tree Route, etc.).

Different phases should offer possibilities to define and adapt the working method. At an initial stage, as the Pilot Project must experiment an operational and conceptual umbrella that can help link and enhance existing nodes of development in order to create synergies, initial criteria for identifying them are the following:

1. initiatives that stimulate a processes of reconciliation between people or communities or group of citizens through a democratic debate involving members of the community from different cultural traditions (a focus on culturally diverse or divided communities);
2. initiatives aiming to connect people and promoting ideas through a “common project” reinterpreting the historical legacy in the light of the community’s contemporary objectives ( a focus on linking history with contemporary development);
3. initiatives promoting common and concrete aims, with a vision of what may be expected at the end of the project in terms of improvement of the quality of life and living environment, the enhancement of conditions for the future development of the community and its understanding of a common future, (a focus on common aims and a shared vision);
4. initiatives that demonstrate the capacity of local communities to face their management responsibilities, while maintaining close and inter-dependent relations with regional and national decision-making bodies. The community becomes jointly responsible for a common project (a focus on local ownership linked to regional and national strategies);
5. initiatives than can show how the transformation of a territory can mobilise many different stakeholders and their combined interests. Social sustainability can be measured by the integration of the weakest stakeholders’ interest within the local decision-making process (a focus on multi-stakeholder management);

6. initiatives that combine agricultural, commercial, industrial, service sector or other economic activities with the enhancement of territorial and environmental heritage, and which can facilitate the development of local enterprises that are committed to the enhancement of local resources. The project should extend networks capable of generating local economic growth, while at the same time protecting cultural and social identity by involving and integrating inhabitants (a focus on linking economic, cultural and social development processes);
7. initiatives that propose actions which can contribute to limiting the deterioration of nature and its bio-diversity; ( a focus on the environment and landscape);
8. initiatives that lead to a reorganisation of spatial planning policies in line with decentralisation reforms, that promote a land use policy that leads to the recuperation of wasteland, and that propose territorial cohesion by considering relations between all parts of a territory and not only the main populated centres (a focus on decentralised spatial planning and territorial cohesion.)

## 5.2 Operational phase and timetable

### Phase 1: Concept paper (April-June 2007)

- Draft Concept Paper by Council of Europe experts (30 March 2007);
- Consultation among the participating countries (April-May 2007);
- Adoption of the Concept Paper defining the key elements/categories and defining the criteria as well as structure of implementation (7<sup>th</sup> RPSEE Programme Coordinators plenary meeting, Strasbourg, 16 May 2007);
- Set-up of Working Groups, involving national experts and NGOs on the basis of definite key elements/categories, aimed at carrying out the subsequent phases (1 June 2007);
- Adoption of a draft template (compare available templates: Component B and C).

### Phase 2: Test (June-September 2007)

- Test of the working method in the nine pilot territories identified within the LDPP project.
- Implementation of the template for each of the nine LDPP sites involving local stakeholders, supported by working groups;
- Definition of stakeholders (multi-stakeholders);
- Pilot data base;
- Shared collected information within the Steering Committee in order to fine-tune the working method and to produce a final template.

### Phase 3: Mapping, exchange of information, data base (September-April 2008)

- implementation of the template on a large scale (SEE);
- identification of stakeholders;
- Identification of the cultural, social, environmental and economic resources;
- Review of what already exist (including the gaps) in terms of groups of people acting with a focus compatible with the principles defined for the pilot project, a positive energy and a sense of future. The mapping does not concerns specific "sites", but more intentions, capacities, strengths, people factors, local positive energies and movement of creativities, which allow different levels of specifications;
- Capture the intelligence of places / define human capital;
- Data base: Create and support an integrated information system;

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Phase 4: Networking / connecting (April-July 2008)

- Connecting the resources identified during the mapping;
- Elaboration of “maps” identifying spatially delimited areas of multidimensional homogeneity (“nodes of developments”);
- Elaboration of pilot policy toolkits (projects of use and organisation of territories defining stakeholders which could be the subject of specific investment from relevant authorities / partners / investors).

Phase 5: Conclusion (August-October 2008)

- Elaboration and adoption of the Terms of Reference (integrated project);
- Propose a co-ordinated regional policy for cultural tourism and suggest a strategy to provide development mechanisms (cultural tourism, cultural industries, traditional skills, etc.);
- Sustain the regional expert network for the Integrated project Cultural Corridors within the Regional Programme for Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe;
- Recommendations for harmonisation and reform of laws and policies in the region to facilitate cultural and economic co-operation;
- Submit the methodology elaborated through the Pilot project to the Minister of Culture for the foreseen extension of the process

More detailed action plans will be required for each phase after agreement of the overall concept and approach.

## 6.0 BUDGET ESTIMATE

### “Corridors” Consolidated Budget 2007-2008 (estimate)

Expenses	Unit	# of units	Unit rate (in €)	Costs (in €)
<b>1. Human Resources</b>				
1.1 Administrative / support staff (Strasbourg)	Per month	18	300	5400
1.2 honoraria (gross amounts, int. experts)	Per day	80	400	32000
1.3 honoraria (gross amounts, local experts)	Per day	360	50	18000
1.3 Per diems for missions/travel				
1.3.1 Abroad	Per diem	120	169	20280
1.3.2 Local	Per diem	270	30	8100
<b>Subtotal Human Resources</b>				<b>83780</b>
<b>2. Travel</b>				
2.1. International travel	Per flight	40	800	32000
2.2 Local transportation (over 200 km)	Per trip	45	40	1800
2.3 mission (Secretariat)	Per mission	9	1000	90000
<b>Subtotal Travel</b>				<b>42800</b>
<b>3. Other costs, services</b>				
3.1 Publications	Per unit	2	1500	3000
3.2 Material (equipment, national secretariats)	Per unit	9	3000	27000
3.3 Evaluation costs	Per unit	1	4000	4000
3.4 Interpreters (countries)	Per day	30	200	6000
3.5 Translation				
3.5.1 in SEE	Per page	750	15	11250
3.5.2 in CoE (publications)	Per page	100	60	6000
3.5 Costs of conferences/seminars	Per unit	3	1 000	3000
<b>Subtotal Other costs, services</b>				<b>60250</b>
<b>4. Other</b>				<b>5000</b>
<b>Subtotal Other</b>				<b>5000</b>
<b>5. Subtotal direct project costs (1.-4.)</b>				<b>191830</b>
<b>6. Administrative costs (5%)</b>				<b>9592</b>
<b>7. Total project costs (5.+ 6.)</b>				<b>201422</b>

The Council of Europe contribution ceiling is fixed at 125,000 €. Contributions from participating countries (in kind or in cash) should complete the budget.