European Heritage Label ***I

P7_TA(2010)0486


(2012/C 169 E/45)

(Ordinary legislative procedure: first reading)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the Commission proposal to the European Parliament and the Council (COM(2010)0076),

— having regard to Article 294(2) and Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, pursuant to which the Commission submitted the proposal to Parliament (C7-0071/2010),

— having regard to Article 294(3) of the Treaty on Functioning of the European Union,

— having regard to the reasoned opinion submitted, within the framework of the protocol (No 2) on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, by the French Senate, asserting that the draft legislative act does not comply with the principle of subsidiarity,

— having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions of 9 June 2010 (1),

— having regard to Rule 55 of its Rules of Procedure,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Culture and Education (A7-0311/2010),

1. Adopts its position at first reading hereinafter set out;

2. Calls on the Commission to refer the matter to Parliament again if it intends to amend the proposal substantially or replace it with another text;

3. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council, the Commission and the national parliaments.

(1) OJ C 267, 1.10.2010, p. 52.

P7_TC1-COD(2010)0044


THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION.

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 167 thereof,
Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions (1),

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure (2),

Whereas:

(1) The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) aims at an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe and Article 167 TFEU in particular gives the European Union the task of contributing to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore. Furthermore, Article 167(2) TFEU specifies that, in accordance with the principle of proportionality, the Union is to contribute to improvement of the knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European peoples.

(2) A better understanding and appreciation, especially among young people, of their shared yet diverse heritage would help to strengthen the sense of belonging to the European Union and reinforce intercultural dialogue. It is therefore important to promote greater access to cultural heritage and to enhance its European dimension.

(3) The TFEU also establishes citizenship of the Union, which complements national citizenship of the respective Member States, and which is an important element in safeguarding and strengthening the process of European integration. For citizens to give their full support to European integration, greater emphasis should be placed on their common values, history and culture as key elements of their membership of a society founded on the principles of freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, cultural and linguistic diversity, tolerance and solidarity.

(4) An intergovernmental European Heritage Label scheme was launched in Granada in April 2006 by several Member States and Switzerland.

(5) The Council of the European Union adopted conclusions on 20 November 2008 (3) aimed at transforming the intergovernmental European Heritage Label into a European Union action by inviting the Commission to submit to it an appropriate proposal for the creation of a European Heritage Label by the European Union and to specify the practical procedures for the implementation of the project.

(6) The public consultation and the impact assessment carried out by the Commission confirmed that the intergovernmental European Heritage Label was a valuable initiative but that the action needed to be further developed to reach its full potential, and confirmed that the involvement of the European Union could provide a clear added value to the European Heritage Label and help the initiative to take a qualitative step forward.

(7) The European Heritage Label should benefit from the experience hitherto gathered from the intergovernmental initiative.

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(1) OJ C 267, 1.10.2010, p. 52.
The European Heritage Label should seek to supplement but not duplicate initiatives such as the UNESCO World Heritage List, the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and the Council of Europe’s ‘European Cultural Routes’. The added value of the new European Heritage Label should be based on the contribution made by the selected sites to European history and culture, including the creation of the Union, on a clear educational dimension reaching out to citizens, especially young people, and on networking between the sites to share experiences and best practices. The main focus of the initiative should be on the promotion of, and access to, the sites, thereby contributing to a shared historical and cultural heritage within the Union, and on the quality of the explanations given and of the activities proposed, rather than on the conservation of the sites, which should be guaranteed by existing protection regimes.

In addition to strengthening EU citizens’ sense of belonging to the Union and stimulating intercultural dialogue, a Union action for the European Heritage Label could also contribute to enhancing the value and profile of cultural heritage, to increasing the role of heritage in the economic and sustainable development of regions, in particular through cultural tourism, to fostering synergies between cultural heritage and contemporary creation and creativity, to facilitating the sharing of experiences and best practices across Europe, and more generally, to promoting the democratic values and human rights that underpin European integration.

Those objectives are fully in line with the objectives of the European agenda for culture, which include fostering cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue and the promotion of culture as a catalyst for creativity (1).

It is crucial that the new European Heritage Label should be awarded on the basis of common, clear and transparent criteria and procedures.

Member States should be able to pre-select sites which have already been awarded the European Heritage Label under the intergovernmental European Heritage Label scheme. Those sites should be assessed on the basis of the new criteria and procedures.

Future evaluations of the European Heritage Label could examine the possibility of extending the initiative to include third countries participating in the Culture Programme.

The administrative arrangements for the European Heritage Label should be light and flexible in compliance with the principle of subsidiarity.

Since the objectives of this Decision cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States and can therefore, by reason of the need, in particular, for new common, clear and transparent criteria and procedures for the European Heritage Label, as well as a stronger coordination between the Member States, be better achieved at Union level, the Union may adopt measures in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as set out in Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union. In accordance with the principle of proportionality as set out in that Article, this Decision does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve those objectives,

HAVE ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Subject-matter

This Decision establishes a European Union action entitled ‘the European Heritage Label’.

Article 2

Definition

For the purposes of this Decision, ‘sites’ shall mean monuments, natural, **underwater, archaeological, industrial** or urban sites, cultural landscapes, places of remembrance, cultural goods and objects, and intangible heritage associated with a place, including contemporary heritage.

Article 3

Objectives

1. The general objectives of the action shall be to contribute to:

   — **strengthening** EU citizens’ sense of belonging to the Union, in particular that of young people, based on shared **values and elements of European** history and cultural heritage;

   — **strengthening** intercultural and inter-territorial dialogue, as well as an appreciation of diversity.

2. *To that end*, the action shall, as its intermediate objectives, seek to:

   — **stress** the symbolic value and **raise the** profile of sites which have played a **significant** role in the history **and culture of Europe and/or** the building of the Union;

   — increase EU citizens' understanding of the **history of Europe and the building of the Union**, and of their common yet diverse **tangible and intangible** cultural heritage, especially in relation to the democratic values and human rights that underpin the process of European integration.

3. The **sites themselves shall, as** specific objectives, **seek to**:

   — develop sites' European significance;

   — **raise the awareness of young people in particular and EU citizens in general** of their common cultural heritage and enhance their sense of European identity;

   — facilitate sharing of experiences and exchanges of best practices across Europe;

   — **increase and/or improve** access to heritage sites for all, especially young people;

   — increase intercultural dialogue, especially among young people, through artistic, cultural, historical **and interactive online** education;

   — foster synergies between cultural heritage and contemporary creation and **support** creativity;

   — **whilst fully respecting the integrity of the cultural heritage, foster interaction between that heritage and the economic activities which are growing up around it and which contribute to its sustainability and that of its surroundings**;

   — contribute to the **promotion, attractiveness, cultural influence, tourist development** and **sustainable development** of the regions;

   — **encourage the creation of European networks to enhance the common European heritage.**
Article 4

Participation in the action

The action shall be open to the participation of the Member States of the Union. This participation shall be on a voluntary basis.

Article 5

Complementarity with other initiatives

The Commission and the Member States shall ensure that the European Heritage Label supplements but does not duplicate other initiatives in the field of cultural heritage, such as the UNESCO World Heritage List, the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and the Council of Europe’s ‘European Cultural Routes’.

Article 6

Access to the action

Sites, as defined in Article 2, shall be eligible for the attribution of the European Heritage Label.

Article 7

Criteria

The attribution of the European Heritage Label shall be based on the following criteria:

(1) Candidates for the European Heritage Label shall have a symbolic European value and shall have played a significant role in the history and culture of Europe and/or the building of the Union. They shall therefore show proof of:

— their cross-border or pan-European nature: the past and present influence and attraction of a candidate site must go beyond the national borders of a Member State; and/or

— the place and role of a site in European history and European integration, and its links with key European events or personalities, as well as with cultural, artistic, religious, political, social, scientific, technological, environmental or industrial movements; and/or

— the place and role of a site in the development and promotion of the common values that underpin European integration, such as freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, cultural diversity, tolerance and solidarity.

(2) Candidates for the European Heritage Label shall submit a project, the implementation of which is to begin by the end of the designation year at the latest, which includes all the following elements:

— raising awareness of the European significance of the site, in particular through appropriate information activities, signage and staff training;

— organising educational activities, especially for young people, which increase the understanding of the common history of Europe and of its shared yet diverse heritage and which strengthen the sense of belonging to a common space;

— promoting multilingualism and regional diversity by using several languages of the Union as a key to intercultural dialogue;

— cooperating with sites already awarded the European Heritage Label.
— raising the profile and attractiveness of the site on a European scale, *inter alia through new information and communication* technology;

— ensuring that the site is made accessible to EU citizens while fully respecting its integrity.

The organisation of artistic and cultural activities (for example events, festivals, residencies, etc.) which foster the mobility of European *cultural agents*, artists and collections, stimulate intercultural dialogue and encourage linkage between heritage and contemporary creation and creativity shall be welcomed whenever the specificity of the site allows it.

(3) Candidates for the label shall submit a management plan which commits them to all the following elements:

— ensuring the sound management of the site;

— ensuring the protection of the site and its transmission to future generations in accordance with the relevant protection regimes;

— ensuring the quality of the reception facilities such as the historical presentation, visitors’ information, signage, etc.;

— ensuring access for the widest possible public, for example through site adaptations or staff training, *and through the use of the internet, including for elderly persons and people with disabilities*;

— according special attention to young people, in particular by allowing them privileged access to the site;

— *promoting* sites as tourist destinations *whilst limiting potential negative impacts affecting the sites or their environment*;

— developing a coherent and comprehensive communication strategy highlighting the European significance of the site;

— ensuring that the management plan is as environmentally friendly as possible.

**Article 8**

European panel of independent experts

1. A European panel of independent experts (hereinafter referred to as the 'European panel') shall be established to carry out the selection and monitoring procedures at the European level. It shall ensure that the criteria are uniformly applied in the participating Member States.

2. The European panel shall consist of **13 members**. Four of the members shall be nominated by the European Parliament, four by the Council, four by the Commission *and one by the Committee of the Regions, in accordance with their respective procedures*. The European panel shall designate its chairperson.

3. The European panel members shall be independent experts. They shall have substantial experience and expertise in the fields relevant to the objectives of the European Heritage Label. *The institutions nominating the experts shall seek to ensure as far as possible the complementarity of their respective fields of expertise and a geographically balanced representation.*
4. The European panel members shall be nominated for three years. By way of derogation, in the first year during which this Decision is in force, four experts shall be nominated by the Commission for one year, four by the European Parliament and one by the Committee of the Regions for two years and four by the Council for three years.

5. **Members of the European panel shall declare any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest in respect of** a specific site. **In the event of such a declaration, or if such a conflict of interest comes to light,** the member shall not participate in the evaluation of the said site or of any other sites from the same Member State.

6. All reports, recommendations and notifications of the European panel shall be made public.

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**Article 9**

**Application form**

A common application form based on the selection criteria **laid down in Article 7** shall be prepared by the Commission and used by all the candidates. Only applications submitted on the official application form will be considered for selection.

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**Article 10**

**Pre-selection at national level**

1. The pre-selection of the sites for the attribution of the European Heritage Label shall be under the responsibility of the Member States, **in close cooperation with local and regional authorities.**

2. Each Member State may pre-select up to two sites **every two years** in accordance with the calendar set out in the Annex.

3. Each Member State shall establish its own procedures and its own calendar for the pre-selection of the sites in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, ensuring that administrative arrangements remain as light and flexible as possible. It shall however notify the Commission of the results of the pre-selection at the latest on **1 March** of the year of the pre-selection procedure.

4. The pre-selection procedure shall be **carried out in accordance with** the criteria laid down in Article 7 and shall use the application form referred to in Article 9.

5. **The Commission shall publish the full list of pre-selected sites and shall inform the European Parliament, the Council and the Committee of the Regions thereof.**

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**Article 11**

**Final selection at Union level**

1. The final selection of the sites for the attribution of the European Heritage Label shall be under the responsibility of the Commission and shall be carried out by the European panel.

2. The European panel shall evaluate the applications in respect of the pre-selected sites and shall select a maximum of one site per Member State. If necessary, further information may be requested and visits to the sites may be organised.

3. The final selection shall be **carried out in accordance with** the criteria laid down in Article 7 and shall use the application form referred to in Article 9.
4. The European panel shall issue a report on the pre-selected sites at the latest on 15 December of the year of the pre-selection procedure. That report shall include a recommendation for the attribution of the European Heritage Label and a statement of reasons for the non-inclusion of any sites in the final list.

5. Candidates not included in the final list may submit a fresh application for pre-selection at national level in the following years.

Article 12
Transnational sites

1. For the purpose of this Decision, the following shall be regarded as ‘transnational sites’:

— several sites located in different Member States which gather around one specific theme to put forward a single application;

— one specific site which is geographically situated on the territory of at least two different Member States.

2. Applications for transnational sites shall follow the same procedure as applications for other sites. They shall be pre-selected by all of the Member States concerned within their limit of a maximum of two sites as laid down in Article 10. Transnational sites shall designate one of the sites involved as their coordinator, which will constitute the single contact point for the Commission. The coordinator shall provide information on the transnational candidacy in due time in all the Member States so as to ensure the participation of relevant sites throughout the Union. All the sites participating in a transnational site shall meet the criteria laid down in Article 7 and shall complete the application form referred to in Article 9.

Particular consideration shall be given to transnational sites which foster the essence of cross-border European heritage, through their representation of tangible and intangible symbolism.

3. If a transnational site meets all the criteria laid down in Article 7, priority shall be given to that site during the final selection.

4. If one of the sites comprised in a transnational site ceases to fulfil the criteria laid down in Article 7 or the commitments made in the application, the procedure laid down in Article 15 shall apply.

Article 13
Designation

1. The Commission shall officially designate the sites to be awarded the European Heritage Label during the year following the selection procedure, having due regard to the recommendation of the European panel. The Commission shall inform the European Parliament, the Council and the Committee of the Regions of the decisions taken.

2. The European Heritage Label shall be awarded to the sites on a permanent basis under the conditions laid down in Articles 14 and 15 and subject to the continuation of the action.

3. The attribution of the European Heritage Label shall not entail any obligation of an urban planning, legal, landscaping, mobility or architectural nature. The sole law applicable shall be the local law.
Article 14

Monitoring

1. Each site awarded the European Heritage Label shall be monitored on a regular basis in order to ensure that it continues to fulfil the criteria laid down in Article 7 and that it respects all the commitments made in the application relating to it.

2. The monitoring of all the sites located on the territory of a Member State shall be the responsibility of the Member State in question. The Member State shall collect all the necessary information and prepare a detailed report every four years, in accordance with the calendar set out in the Annex.

3. The report shall be sent to the Commission and submitted to the European panel for examination at the latest on 1 March of the year of the monitoring procedure.

4. The European panel shall issue a report on the state of the labelled sites in the Member State concerned at the latest on 15 December of the year of the monitoring procedure, including if necessary recommendations to be taken into account for the next monitoring period.

5. The Commission, after consulting the European panel, shall establish common indicators for the Member States to ensure a coherent approach for the monitoring procedure.

Article 15

Withdrawal of the label

1. If the European panel notes that a specific site no longer fulfils the criteria laid down in Article 7 or that it no longer complies with all the commitments made in its application, it shall initiate a dialogue with the Member State concerned via the Commission, with a view to helping to make the necessary adjustments to the site.

2. If after a period of 18 months after the beginning of the dialogue the necessary adjustments have not been made to the site, the European panel shall notify the Commission. The notification must be accompanied by a justification, as well as recommendations on how to improve the situation.

3. If after a new period of 18 months the recommendations have not been implemented, the European panel shall issue a recommendation for withdrawal of the European Heritage Label from the relevant site.

4. The Commission shall take the final decision to withdraw the European Heritage Label having due regard to the recommendation from the European panel. The Commission shall inform the European Parliament, the Council and the Committee of the Regions thereof.

5. The European panel's notifications and recommendations shall be made public.

6. Sites may at any time choose to renounce the European Heritage Label. In that event, they shall notify the Member State concerned, which shall, in turn, inform the Commission. The Commission shall take a decision to withdraw the European Heritage Label and shall inform the European Parliament, the Council and the Committee of the Regions thereof.
Article 16

Practical arrangements

1. The Commission shall implement the Union action for the European Heritage Label. It shall in particular:

— ensure the overall coherence and quality of the action;

— ensure coordination between the Member States and the European panel;

— in the light of the objectives set out in Article 3 and in accordance with the criteria laid down in Article 7, establish guidelines to assist with the selection and monitoring procedures, as well as the application form;

— provide support to the European panel.

2. The Commission shall be responsible for the communication and the visibility of the European Heritage Label at Union level, in particular through the creation and maintenance of a specific website and a new logo, raising the profile and attractiveness of the site on a European scale, for example by using the possibilities offered by new technologies and digital and interactive means and by seeking synergies with other European initiatives. All the notifications and recommendations of the European panel referred to in Article 8(6), Article 10(5) and Article 15(5) shall be published on that website.

3. The Commission shall foster networking activities between labelled sites.

4. The actions under paragraphs 2 and 3, as well as the costs of the European panel, shall be financed through the financial envelope provided for in Article 18.

Article 17

Evaluation

1. The Commission shall ensure the external and independent evaluation of the European Heritage Label action. Such evaluation shall take place every six years in accordance with the calendar set out in the Annex and shall include an examination of all elements, including the efficiency of the processes involved in running the action, the number of sites, the geographical scope and impact of the action, ways in which it could be improved and whether it should be continued.

2. The Commission shall present a report on these evaluations to the European Parliament and the Council within six months of their finalisation accompanied, if appropriate, by relevant proposals.

Article 18

Financial provisions

1. The financial envelope for the implementation of the action during the period from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2013 is set at EUR 1 350 000.
2. The annual appropriations shall be authorised by the budgetary authority within the limits of the multiannual financial framework.

Article 19

Entry into force

This Decision shall enter into force on the day following that of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Done at

For the European Parliament
The President

For the Council
The President

ANNEX

CALENDAR

Calendar for the European Heritage Label

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