

Committees day – March 10, 2020 / Paris

ICOM CROATIA OBSERVATIONS

1/ Briefly introduce your committee: number of members, variety of members

ICOM CROATIA has been established in 1992, as one of (in total six) successors of ex ICOM-Yugoslavia, the state which falls apart in 1991, as per (within Europe) known reasons. ICOM CROATIA is the strongest and biggest (as far as we know) ICOM National Committee coming out of ex-Yugoslavia concerning the number of members, and activities. More precisely it counts for 123 individuals, and 36 institutional members = the number which might sound low, but due to the size of the country and its population, it is indeed respectable. ICOM Croatia members are covering diverse museums spectrum, from those working in art museums, over natural history or ethnography, galleries or people teaching museology/museum studies. So it represents the nationwide museum sector very well. ICOM CROATIA is by far the strongest, and the most influential museum association in Croatia.

2/ What feedback and what approaches have been sparked by the MDPP vision of museums, namely through this definition? For instance: Spontaneous feedbacks from members / Creation of working groups / Articles written by professionals, and/or press articles. If documents have been edited, can you send them us before this meeting?

ICOM CROATIA readily accepted the MDPP initial initiative of participative approaches toward the new museum definition and stimulated its members to contribute to it. At its two annual general assemblies (2018 & 2019) the initiative has been discussed, the small scale workshop organised in April 2019 and contribution of members delivered to the ICOM SE Europe workshop, where overall comments/inputs have been defined and delivered later on to the MDPP (April 2019). While ICOM CROATIA members still applaud toward the ICOM HQ initiative to re-check existing definition of museum/museum institution existing, declared transparency and participative approach has been significantly jeopardised by no communication from the MDPP (or ICOM HQ) in months before ICOM Kyoto 2019 where, as per Kyoto Agenda a new definition was set/forced to be adapted. What was once declared as transparent, inclusive and participative approach ended, overnight, as one proposal to be voted when there was no time for consultation with members, and in fact not clear communication who, when and why decided on the proposal which ended on the ICOM Kyoto agenda. Instead of transparency we, i.e. our members ended confused and they (members) bombarded us with questions on which we didn't have answers. The same happened with responsible government institution involved in a museum sector, e.g. the Ministry of Culture. This was very bad experience, foremost bad in sense of ICOM influence and its reputation which we, ICOM CROATIA tried to pop up in recent years (e.g. including ICOM's definition of museum in a new Croatian Museum Act, on which we were successful).

3 / Can you identify, in 5 points max., the observations and questions raised by this vision and this proposed definition? Method of elaboration, vision of the museum, terms or concepts

From ICOM CROATIA members' perspective:

- the proposed definition is not a definition, definition distinct something from everything else, thus it makes it unique
- existing one (proposed in Kyoto) more fits to vision, if at all. ICOM CROATIA members are concerned if existing definition will go on/will be pushed thus any initiative touching heritage (even heritage industry, or fake touristic products) could be declared as a museum, and consequently apply for government/owners funds, consequently reducing funds to 'museums' to half, easily

- incorporating Kyoto proposed definition of museum in any legal act (e.g. national Museum Act) ended with, no better phrase exist 'laugh out loud', of designate lawyers commented.

4 / Which message would you like to convey today at this international meeting? Particularly in terms of method, and involvement of national and international committees in the prospective approach of ICOM?

ICOM CROATIA, and its members no matter what and existing challenges applaud toward the ICOM HQ Paris in its attempt to look for a 21st century museum definition. However existing way is far from the best, things it claims initially are significantly missing here. ICOM Croatia members do want to see & contribute to a new museum definition, but as a reflection of what & how ICOM members around the globe see the museum in 21st Century, not as a vision/definition of a 'close circle' and their interests, as proposed for the Kyoto Agenda.