

# THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONVENTION OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND THE LANDSCAPE AWARD OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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In tribute to Mihály Mócsényi,  
With all my heart.

Adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg on 19 July 2000, European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe (ETS No. 176) was opened for signature by European States in Florence on 20 October 2000. To date, 39 Council of Europe member States have ratified the Convention: Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. Two States have also signed it: Iceland and Malta.

As the first international treaty devoted exclusively to all dimensions of the landscape, the Convention addresses

the Organisation's major challenges in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law with a view to sustainable development. Its signatory States have declared themselves "concerned to achieve sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the environment", considering the cultural dimension of the landscape. The concept of sustainable development is understood as fully integrating the environmental, cultural, social and economic dimensions, by applying them to the entire territory.

The landscape is the result of many change-producing actions resulting from the activity of various stakeholders in territorial processes in highly varied ways and on differing scales of time and space. Such activities may be the outcome of action by public authorities in establishing a large-scale infrastructure or of individual action in a restricted space. The legal recognition of landscape implies rights and responsibilities on the part of all institutions and cit-

izens towards their living environment. Although each citizen must contribute to preserving the quality of the landscape, it is the authorities that are responsible for establishing the general framework that enables that quality to be assured. The Convention accordingly lays down the general legal principles that must guide the adoption of national landscape policies and the establishment of international co-operation in this area.

The Convention provides that existing competent Committees of Experts of the Council of Europe, set up under its Statute, are designated by the Committee of Ministers of the Organisation, to monitor its implementation. The Work Programme of the Convention, adopted by the Council of Europe Conferences on the Convention and the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP), is implemented by the Secretariat General of the Council of Europe, which transmits reports on the work carried out, and on the operation of the Convention to the Committee of Ministers.



**1. ábra/fig.:**  
Maguelonne  
Déjeant-Pons és  
Mócsényi Mihály /  
Maguelonne Déjeant-Pons  
and Mihály Mócsényi

Important work on sustainable development, highlighting the place of landscape in the lives of human beings and societies, has been carried out in the framework of the Work Programme of the Convention.

Since the adoption of the European Landscape Convention, major progress has been made towards the establishment of landscape policies at national, regional and local level. Drawing on shared objectives, these policies foster the quality of a common living environment. The notion of landscape has been progressively introduced into the political agenda of governments and landscape actors: an important international network of cooperation for the implementation of the Convention has developed: the concept of landscape as defined in the Convention is increasingly recognised by the public authorities and by the population; new forms of co-operation are emerging between different levels of authority – national, regional and local –; and between ministries or departments of a state or region; spe-

cific laws and regulations referring to the landscape are adopted and institutional structures are put in place; States or regions co-operate across borders for transfrontier landscapes; landscape prizes referring to the Council of Europe Landscape Award are organised; university programmes referring to the Convention are adopted, summer universities on landscape are organised, biennials, landscape festivals and exhibitions referring to the principles of the Convention are being set up, and people feel more and more concerned and active.

The landscape represents a mosaic of the four dimensions of sustainable development: natural, cultural, social and economic. Governments committed to implementing the principles of good governance must take into consideration the invaluable value of the landscape for the human being, and include the landscape dimension in their national, regional and local policies. It is also up to everyone to respect the landscape and to take care of it, both in appearance and substance, for present and future gen-

erations. The opening of the European Landscape Convention to non-European States will be an opportunity to reaffirm the universality of the landscape dimension of human rights and democracy. It represents a contribution by the Council of Europe to the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This represents a contribution by the Council of Europe to the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular with regard to Goals 3 (Good health and well-being), 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) and 15 (Life on land), in particular. ©