

**Structural change in the rural areas of Europe:**

## **Decline or opportunity? Cultural Heritage amidst the tension of conflicting values.**

**The topic that will be discussed at the International Conference, on 4 June 2013, in Koblenz, Fortress Ehrenbreitstein, are the cross-sectoral strategies that safeguard the future of European cultural heritage.**

*Fortress Ehrenbreitstein in Koblenz. Architectural monuments, historical quarters in towns and rural areas, archaeological monuments and cultural landscapes have been shaping the cultural identity of European regions for generations. But more and more cultural heritage underlies the conditions of conflicting interests and values. For a long time, villages and small towns have feared that the demographic and structural changes might existentially affect the future of rural municipalities.*

*Cultural politics cannot be unmoved by the possibility that successful equalisation of living standards between cities and villages - which was once political credo - might collapse due to these changes. Many questions arise: Are the public finances still sufficient to preserve cultural heritage in the future? What are the reasons that could lead citizens prospectively to spend money and dedication on architectural monuments? Are the inheriting generation, whose long term plans are steered towards urban centres with a steady economic power, even interested in cultural assets in rural areas? Is this heritage still something they call "home" as with previous generations? Is cultural heritage a burden or is it something of distinctive value that gives a region its face and its character in the first place? And is it therefore the only thing that could provide its future? Are there examples on cultural heritage being the catalyst of a successful development?*



*Architectural monument 'Mathias Kapelle' and cultural landscape Mosel*

**Registrations for this event are to be sent to: Generaldirektion Kulturelles  
Erbe Rheinland-Pfalz, Erthaler Hof/Schillerstraße 44, 55116 Mainz. keyword:  
HISTCAPE (please name the title of the event you wish to attend to): or  
Natalie.Eimertenbrink@gdke.rlp.de, Tel.: 06131-2016 107**