

Cultural heritage in EU policies

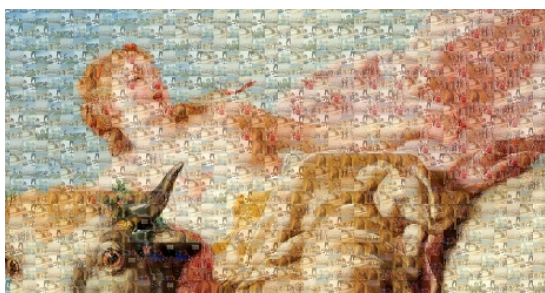
SUMMARY

2018 is devoted to the European Union's cultural heritage. This paper focuses on the evolution of the very notion of cultural heritage, its role and place in society, as well as the way it is perceived and interpreted in the context of related EU prerogatives. The European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 is a result of this evolution, and allows EU citizens to gain a broad understanding of their cultural heritage in all its aspects, democratically share responsibility for it, celebrate it and benefit from the creation it inspires.

Despite the fact that the EU has limited powers in respect of cultural heritage – the role of the European institutions is generally limited to financial support, coordination of joint projects and efforts, and sharing of knowledge – it has contributed to raising awareness about preservation, conservation and restoration issues, technological research (for example 3D reconstructions) and scientific progress in technological solutions. Furthermore, the EU has become an international expert in the field.

Cultural heritage has been taken into consideration in numerous EU funding programmes, which has allowed Member States to undertake action to revive their national or local heritage, keep their traditions and crafts, and thereby develop their cultural tourism.

The European Parliament has adopted resolutions highlighting, inter alia, the dangers from which cultural heritage is to be protected both in the EU and the world, and underlining the necessity to address trafficking and looting of cultural heritage artefacts, the protection of cultural heritage, including traditional crafts, and the role of cultural heritage in sustainable tourism.



High-level conference

**Cultural heritage in Europe:
linking past and future**

26 June 2018, 14:00 – 15:00 CET, plenary chamber of the European Parliament, Brussels

In this Briefing

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Cultural heritage – international definitions

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

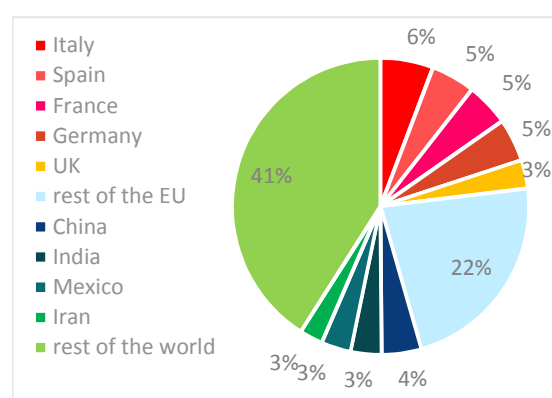
Unesco defines [cultural heritage](#) broadly as 'the legacy of physical artefacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations'. Its vision of cultural heritage has constantly evolved since the adoption of the 1972 [Convention](#) Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (the World Heritage Convention), which covers architectural works, sculptures, paintings, archaeological structures and inscriptions, cave dwellings, groups of buildings, and sites comprised of the works of humans, or of humans and nature, of outstanding universal artistic, historic, scientific, anthropological, ethnological or aesthetic value. In its 1980 Recommendation for the Safeguarding and [Preservation of Moving Images](#), it also recognised audiovisual heritage as part of cultural heritage.

The Unesco 2001 [Convention](#) on Underwater Heritage on the protection on such sites was followed by another, of October 2003, [for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage](#), where it added a new aspect pertaining to human traditions and ways of living. Recognising the threat posed by armed conflicts to cultural heritage, which is protected by the 1954 [Hague Convention](#) for the Protection of Cultural Property and its two protocols, the organisation sub-categorised cultural heritage into:

- *tangible* heritage, composed of:
 - movable heritage such as sculptures, paintings, coins and manuscripts;
 - immovable monuments, archaeological sites and others;
 - underwater cultural heritage: shipwrecks, underwater ruins and cities;
- *intangible* heritage such as oral traditions, performing arts, crafts and rituals;
- *natural heritage*: cultural landscapes, geological, biological and physical formations;
- cultural heritage endangered by destruction and looting in *armed conflicts*.

After adopting the 1972 Convention, Unesco drew up the World Heritage List including outstanding heritage in need of protection. [Nearly half](#) of the sites (453) are situated in Europe, mostly in the EU. Italy comes first, followed by France, Germany and Spain, which share second place. Due to urban development projects, the [historic centre of Vienna](#) and the historic centre and docklands of Liverpool have recently been put on the World Heritage in Danger List of sites threatened by human activities. Nearly [a quarter](#) of Unesco intangible cultural heritage is in the EU, one example being the 1 March tradition preserved in Bulgaria and Romania.

Unesco World Cultural Heritage sites



Source: [Unesco](#), World Heritage List 2017.

Council of Europe

The Council of Europe (CoE), with its 47 European member countries, focuses its action on human rights and the rule of law and democracy, with the latter including culture and cultural heritage as elements of democratic governance. Its 1985 [Granada Convention](#) for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe established the principles of European cooperation and coordination of architectural conservation policies, and its 1992 [Valetta Convention](#) on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage was adopted with the aim of protecting archaeological heritage from illegal excavations and major construction projects. The European Convention for the

Protection of the [Audiovisual Heritage](#), adopted in 2001, broadened the understanding of cultural heritage to audiovisual productions. It furthermore introduced the requirement for a compulsory legal deposit of moving image material, such as films and videos, and for the necessary conservation work on the deposited material.

The 2005 Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (the [Faro Convention](#)) highlighted the social and economic benefits of preserving cultural heritage as a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development. It broadly defined the common European heritage as covering all forms of cultural heritage put into the context of a shared source of remembrance, understanding and identity. It focused on the contribution of this heritage to creativity and social cohesion, and to the ideals, principles and values resulting from the experience of past conflicts and efforts to make progress. The convention highlighted the link between cultural heritage and the development of a peaceful and stable society, founded on respect for human rights, the rule of law and democracy.

On 7 March 2014, the CoE Parliamentary Assembly adopted Recommendation 2038, '[Europe's endangered heritage](#)', calling for activities to interlink culture, heritage and education as a way to connect heritage with the process of building democratic citizenship. It encouraged implementation of both integrated conservation of cultural heritage and community-led urban strategies in historic towns.

CoE and EU actions for the cultural heritage

Fourteen years after the CoE launched the [European Heritage Days](#), the European Commission joined the initiative in 1999. Since then, the two institutions have been co-organising the yearly event in September in 50 European countries, attracting over 20 million people and giving them the opportunity to enjoy free visits, including to monuments and sites that are usually closed to the public for the rest of the year.

The [Commission](#) also supports, through its joint programme with the CoE, the [Cultural routes](#) of the CoE. Examples of these are the Camino de Santiago, the El Legado Andalusi, the Huguenot routes and the Jewish heritage routes, which literally follow the traces of Europe's diverse culture, traditions, craftsmanship and religions.

Role and impact of cultural heritage

Cultural heritage can be an economic asset, a tourist attraction and an identity factor, and it can also contribute to social cohesion. Throughout 2018, declared European Year of Cultural Heritage (EYCH), all EU Member States and institutions have been organising events, conferences and meetings, and have been allocating funds to preserve and promote all forms of cultural heritage.

In 2015, a report on '[Getting cultural heritage to work for Europe](#)' stressed that cultural heritage does not entail, as is often claimed, solely costs, nor is it only limited to aspects related to identity, but that it has multiple positive effects:

- *economic* – cultural heritage can be an economic production model that has a positive economic impact on job creation, including in other sectors;
- *social* – where cultural heritage favours integration, inclusiveness, cohesion and participation;
- *environmental* – where cultural heritage enables the sustainable development of landscapes.

A study on 'Cultural heritage counts for Europe' lists the [beneficial effects](#) of cultural heritage, which:

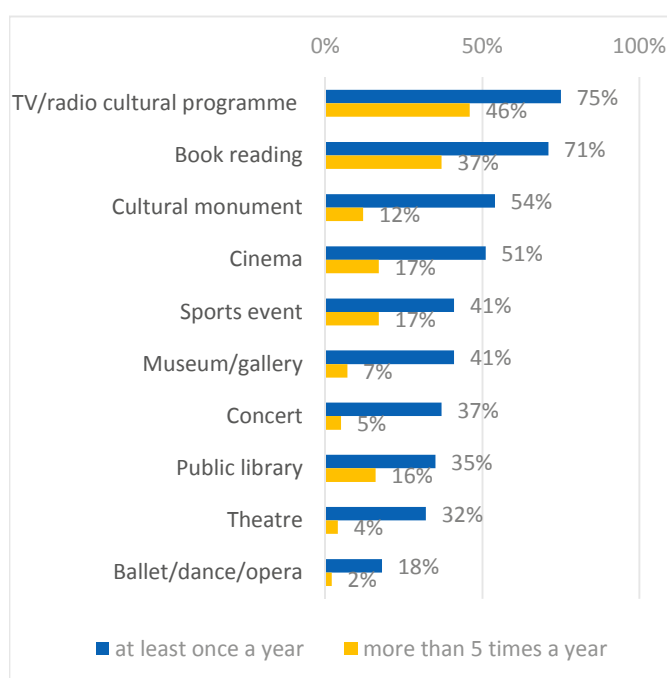
- raises the attractiveness of both urban and rural areas and contributes to their development;
- contributes to the quality of life of the inhabitants and to improving the atmosphere in neighbourhoods;
- enhances the uniqueness of such places and provides narratives for cultural tourism;

- contributes to job creation directly in the heritage institutions ([300 000](#)) and indirectly in related sectors ([7.8 million](#)), by a ratio of 1 to more than 26;
- boosts creativity and innovation through digitisation and its creative uses;
- generates revenues from ticket sales, tourist activities and increases in property value due to cultural heritage preservation and maintenance;
- is a key element in the sustainable regeneration of historic areas;
- stimulates education and learning, and the understanding of history;
- helps build social capital and the feeling of belonging, and contributes to social cohesion;
- preserves the environment by helping combat climate change: it often happens that renovated pre-1890 buildings have superior energy efficiency standards than modern buildings.

As an economic asset, cultural heritage can contribute to the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. However, it is endangered by various human-induced threats (such as urban development or excessive tourist interest) and threats resulting from natural disasters, climate conditions and change. The EYCH is an opportunity to look back at the EU's contribution to countering these threats.

The importance that EU citizens attach to cultural heritage (for instance, museums or historical sites) is reflected in a 2007 European Commission [survey](#) on cultural values. Between 40 % and 50 % of Europeans declare that they visit historical monuments and museums. However, other forms of cultural heritage, such as opera or ballet, have very low scores in the survey, pointing to the complexity of attitudes towards what cultural heritage is and how it is perceived.

Participation rates in cultural activities, EU-27



Source: [Special Eurobarometer 278](#), European Commission 2007.

Cultural heritage in the EU institutional context

Legal basis for the protection of cultural heritage in the EU

Although cultural policy and care for cultural heritage are the sole responsibility of the Member States, [Article 3\(3\)](#) of the Treaty on European Union states that the Union shall 'ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced'.

The importance of cultural heritage is clearly recognised in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). [Article 167](#) TFEU defines the EU's role in this domain as one of encouraging cooperation between Member States and supporting the improvement of the 'knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European peoples' and the 'conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance'. It also defines the role of the European Parliament in this context as one involving the adoption of incentive measures, together with the Council. The specific nature of cultural heritage is recognised in [Article 107](#) TFEU, which declares

that state aid for the promotion of cultural heritage conservation shall be compatible with internal market rules if it does not affect trading conditions and competition.

Council presidencies

Recently, successive EU presidencies have focused on various aspects of cultural heritage. For instance, it was identified as an asset in the December 2010 Declaration of Bruges under the [Belgian Presidency](#). In the final statement at the November 2013 conference on the 'Cultural heritage and the EU-2020 strategy – towards an integrated approach', the [Lithuanian Presidency](#) put forward the concept of local and civil society involvement in cultural heritage issues and the need to include the issue in all policy areas. In the first half of 2014, the [Greek Presidency](#) organised a conference linking cultural heritage to sustainable economic and social development in the EU. In the second half of 2015, the [Luxembourg Presidency](#) reacted to the destruction of world heritage sites in Iraq and Syria, including the destruction of cultural heritage and the trafficking of its artefacts as a means of financing terrorist activities. It called for better exchange of information, for setting up a database of such artefacts, for establishing rules to control and stop the import of such illegal goods, and for developing tools that would help to identify them at auction sales. The [Italian Presidency](#) highlighted the contribution of science and technology to preserving cultural heritage, the contribution of cultural heritage to achieving the EU's economic goals, and the role of various levels of governance in cultural heritage management. In March 2017, EU leaders and institutions adopted the [Rome Declaration](#), which identified the preservation of cultural heritage, together with the promotion of cultural diversity, as an element of a social Europe. The [Estonian Presidency](#), in the second half on 2017, focused on cultural heritage in the digital era, while the current [Bulgarian Presidency](#) is planning to have the Council adopt conclusions on cultural heritage related to the EYCH, in May 2018.

The European Parliament

Starting with its [1974 resolution](#) on European cultural heritage, the EP showed concern for the preservation of the cultural richness of Europe's heritage and the need for proper funding and education in this regard. It also pointed to legal and administrative barriers to the mobility of cultural heritage artefacts. A [September 1982 resolution](#) on the protection of European architectural and archaeological heritage was followed by an [October 1988 resolution](#) on the conservation of such sites, and by many other texts.

A [resolution](#) on the application of the World Heritage Convention in the EU Member States was adopted in January 2001. It called for action to stop trafficking in artefacts illegally removed from archaeological sites, and to approach natural, architectural, urban and rural heritage 'as an indivisible whole' that needs joint protective measures and sustainable development. It also focused on endangered crafts, the preservation of which would help conservation and could create new jobs in this area. It called for the protection of rural heritage, which consists of landscapes, sites, habitats and specific areas (wetlands, ancient forests, hedgerows).

In its October 2015 resolution on [new challenges and concepts](#) for the promotion of tourism in Europe, Parliament highlighted new opportunities for developing sustainable tourism independently of seasonal flows of tourists, basing it on cultural and industrial heritage sites and local traditions.

Destruction of cultural heritage

Concerned about the destruction of cultural heritage, in April 2015 the EP adopted a resolution on the [destruction of cultural heritage sites](#) by ISIL/Da'esh in Iraq and Syria. It called for international cooperation and inclusion of civil society in the area to gather, analyse and disseminate information to protect the sites. Its June 2015 resolution condemned the [destruction of the Palmyra Unesco site](#). Its July 2015 resolution drew attention to the risk faced by the [Yemeni cultural heritage sites](#) due to the escalation of the armed conflict in the area where the Old City of Sana'a and the Old Walled City of Shibam are located, both having been placed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018

2018, declared European Year of Cultural Heritage, brings Europe's [common cultural heritage](#) and its diversity to the fore. It aims to promote access to cultural heritage, particularly for those who are not usually involved in cultural activities. It also aims to encourage people's participation in events and in the management of, and decisions regarding, cultural heritage, and also in interpretative and creative activities related to this common treasure of the continent. Under the slogan 'Our heritage: where the past meets the future', the EYCH aims to contribute to a sustainable EU economy and to lively participation of citizens.

The EYCH was officially inaugurated in December 2017 at the [Culture Forum](#) in Milan. Among the key events in 2018 are a high-level [Innovation and cultural heritage conference](#) in March, and a European [cultural heritage summit](#), 'Sharing Heritage, Sharing Values', in Berlin in June, a [week of conferences](#) covering topics such as digital preservation and legal issues related to cultural heritage, the celebration of Roma cultural heritage at the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture, discussions on the future of heritage preservation, cultural heritage-related workshops, and a heritage excellence fair.

The EU [budget](#) of €8 million for cultural funding secured through the Creative Europe programme, together with contributions from other funds (Erasmus+; Europe for Citizens; funds for urban, regional or rural development; and Horizon 2020, offering [over €100 million](#) for research projects), supports over a hundred EU-level and [almost 8 000](#) national-level events, conferences, debates or local and regional projects on heritage.

Together with other partners, such as Unesco and the Council of Europe, the EU will carry out [10 long-term projects](#) under the following headings: engagement, sustainability, protection and innovation. Their overarching goal is to strengthen the connection between young people and cultural heritage, for example through initiatives in the domain of education and professional training, as well as through cultural heritage tourism. Other goals include the generation of new ideas about heritage and heritage sites, about heritage preservation and standards for intervention, and also about fighting against illicit trade in cultural goods and about risk management, together with a reflection on the contribution of research, innovation, science and technology to the preservation, conservation and restoration of heritage.

Cultural heritage as a common asset and responsibility

In its December 2014 conclusions, the Council adopted a [work plan for culture \(2015-2018\)](#). Cultural heritage, being one of the four priorities identified, was addressed in the context of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. The aim of the work plan was to serve as a good practices manual on participatory governance of cultural heritage involving all levels of the public sector, and also private stakeholders and civil society.

Following the December 2014 [Council conclusions](#) on participatory governance of cultural heritage and its call for a Commission proposal for a European year of cultural heritage, in September 2015 the Parliament adopted a [resolution](#), 'Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe', in support of the Council's call. It proposed dedicating 2018 to cultural heritage and called for an adequate budget, for funding from various programmes for a broad scope of cultural heritage sites, for heritage preservation actions and for civil society involvement.

An August 2016 [Commission proposal](#) on an EYCH focused on the diversity of EU cultural heritage. However, the Commission did not offer any specific funding apart from that available under the Creative Europe programme, which can be used for conferences, educational and awareness-raising campaigns, studies and research as well as experience-sharing events envisaged for the EYCH.

The Parliament reacted with a resolution calling for €15 million from the general budget and for synergies between various funding programmes. The trilogue negotiations among the Parliament, the Commission and the Council resulted in an additional budget of €5 million for the EYCH. The

[decision](#) signed in May 2017 stated that the objective was to encourage and support cooperation between the EU, Member States and regional and local authorities, on the one hand, and the cultural heritage sector and civil society, on the other, to protect, safeguard, enhance, as well as highlight the value of, and promote Europe's cultural heritage. National coordinator and stakeholder meetings ensure the coordination of the whole year of celebrations all over Europe.

Cultural heritage in EU policies

Initial support

The inclusion of cultural heritage in the EU Treaties resulted in the EU's first steps in [support of culture](#) and the launch in 1995 of a specific action programme devoted to [cultural heritage](#), [Raphaël](#). Between 1996 and 2000, this programme aimed to promote cultural heritage and access to it, to help establish networks and partnerships, as well as to encourage cooperation with third countries and international organisations such as Unesco and the CoE. It also focused on innovation, research and training, and professional mobility.

The [Culture 2000](#) framework programme, which ran from 2000 to 2006, focused on Europe's common movable, immovable and intangible cultural heritage, on its importance and on the dialogue among cultures that it inspires. The Commission communication on the programme brought to the fore the socio-economic aspects of cultural heritage as an asset, the need to integrate its conservation and preservation in cohesion funds, and its role for the tourism sector. It envisaged measures to provide scientific support to cultural heritage through the research and technological development framework programme and its thematic programmes on preserving the ecosystem. Other new measures involved promoting sustainable urban development as a precondition for preserving cultural heritage, and creating a user-friendly information society aimed at the introduction of information technologies in training and education focused on cultural heritage and its promotion.

Funding programmes for cultural heritage preservation

Various EU funds are available for cultural heritage with a view to achieving the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy.

The Creative Europe programme budget of €1.46 billion for the 2014-2020 period covers mostly cultural and media projects. Of this amount, nearly [€27 million](#) has been earmarked for cultural heritage-related projects. It is currently co-funding a project on [intangible cultural heritage](#) practices in museums, which analyses various approaches with the aim of providing professionals working with intangible cultural heritage with appropriate tools and methods to involve practitioners in passing their cultural heritage to future generations.

EU actions for promoting cultural heritage

Launched in 1985, the [European Capitals of Culture](#) have been selected from among European cities every year to celebrate culture and promote their cultural heritage in its European dimension. These cities can also benefit from €1.5 million worth of funding from the Creative Europe programme, the Melina Mercouri Prize as well as other sources of financial support for cultural projects, including cultural heritage.

Another cultural heritage initiative, the [European Heritage Label](#), has since 2013 been awarded to 38 sites in the EU for their value as symbols of European ideas, history and integration.

EU support for destroyed cultural heritage

The EU Solidarity Fund can provide [funding](#) to protect cultural heritage in the event of natural disasters, once the EP and the Council have approved specific Commission proposals. Over [€7 million](#) has been devoted to the reconstruction of Greek cultural heritage sites after the November 2015 [earthquake in the Ionian Islands](#).

The Cohesion Fund can also be used in such cases. It is to provide €5 million for the [reconstruction](#) of the Basilica of Benedict of Norcia (Italy), after an earthquake destroyed it in October 2016. The reconstruction effort has also benefited from the help of European Solidarity Corps volunteers since August 2017.

This is marginal compared to the funding from the structural funds: €1.2 billion for rural heritage, including landscapes, from the [European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development](#) and €3.2 billion from the European Regional Development Fund over the 2007-2013 period. The [European Maritime and Fisheries Fund](#) also offers funding for maritime heritage preservation and preservation of traditional wooden vessels for a land-based heritage function. It has helped maintain the Spanish [fishing heritage](#) 'almadraba' tradition in the Cadiz Straits. Similar projects related to cultural [heritage professional skills](#) can be funded from the European Social Fund.

Cultural heritage digitisation, digital preservation and access

Film heritage

Following the 2000 [Council resolution on the conservation](#) and enhancement of European film heritage, in their 2005 [Recommendation on film heritage](#) the Parliament and the Council stressed that action needed to be taken for the preservation of European film heritage. This included financial and technical aspects such as standardisation, cataloguing and database interoperability, preservation of cinema projection equipment, legal issues such as copyright, and the deposit of cinematographic works. It also highlighted the place of education as a source of training, media literacy and educational use of the digitised film heritage.

The [Media Plus](#) programme (the predecessor of the Media sub-programme of the current Creative Europe programme) co-funded [film archives](#) online, a multilingual free and searchable digitised archive of non-fiction film material from film archives.

In 2011 the [Commission recommended](#) the use of the structural funds for the digitisation and digital preservation of European film heritage, which would otherwise disappear or be unavailable in mostly digital cinemas. A 2016 European Audiovisual Observatory study for the Commission shows film heritage as a future [niche market](#) for arts cinemas. The most recent [implementation report](#) on film heritage digitisation, dating from 2014, claimed that less than [3 % of films](#) were digitised at the time when the data were being gathered, and that there were huge differences in this regard: [20 %](#) of films in Poland and Estonia were digitised compared to a mere 0.5 % in Germany; of these, not all were available to the public. Since then, no information has been provided on progress in what has proven to be a costly process ranging from [€500 to €2 000](#) per film hour for an estimated [1 million hours](#) of film heritage. Digital-born productions are also in danger if they are not preserved.

Digital libraries, archives and museums

The same logic led to the creation of a common European [digital library](#) – [Europeana](#) – which offers a multilingual access point to Europe's cultural heritage from different European libraries and their digitised content such as texts, photos, photographic negatives, films on reels or VHS cassettes, music on vinyl records and tapes. The Commission communication on [i2010: digital libraries](#) presented the technological approach to heritage preservation and online access to heritage. It also highlighted the role of financial and technical support for cultural heritage preservation in the context of international relations and the promotion of cultural diversity.

Data on digitisation of cultural heritage in public institutions

A June 2015 [survey on digitisation](#) in European cultural heritage institutions by Europeana/Enumerate, co-funded by the Commission, estimated that, on average, 23 % of collections were digitally reproduced, with 50 % still to undergo the process, while 27 % did not need to be digitally reproduced. The 2017 survey estimated a [4 % decline](#) in items digitally available on cultural heritage institutions' websites in favour of [social media platforms](#), Europeana or Wikipedia.

The European platform for cultural heritage counts over 51 million items provided to [Europeana](#) by thousands of libraries, archives, museums and galleries from across all the Member States. The EU has provided funding through the [Connecting Europe Facility](#) to create digital collections on World War One, migration, music and fashion, searchable in all EU official languages, and to create a Jewish heritage site [Judaica Europeana](#), co-funded through the [DM2E project](#). Currently, Europeana, whose

motto is 'We transform the world with culture', is implementing its [2015-2020 strategy](#) for usable, reliable and mutual cultural resources, with the objective of [democratising culture](#). The platform aims to reach [five stakeholder groups](#) on the 'heritage market' (audiences/users): cultural heritage institutions (about 50 % of the targeted market), European citizens (about 25 %), research as well as education institutions, and creative industries.

The Digital Agenda for Europe, one of the seven Europe 2020 strategy flagship initiatives, identified copyright issues, which are also a concern for modern cultural heritage artefacts in public institutions, as a key element of digital access in a [digital single market](#), currently under discussion.

Cultural heritage in education and research

An October 2017 opinion poll reflects the importance of cultural heritage for EU citizens. It measures EU citizens' interest in their cultural heritage and the role they believe it should assume in education as an element of teaching history and culture.

The poll results reinforced the recommendation on cultural awareness and expression made in the Recommendation on [key competences](#) for lifelong learning adopted by the Parliament and the Council back in 2006. The text defined the competence entitled 'cultural awareness and expression' as the awareness of local, national and European cultural heritage in the global context. It brought to the fore the importance of cultural heritage and of understanding it, in the context of education, perceiving it from a local, national and global perspective.

With its 2007 Agenda for Culture, the Council laid the basis for its work in the cultural domain and for the application of a new method, the [open method of coordination \(OMC\)](#), involving topical meetings among experts from every Member State. In 2015, they produced a [handbook on cultural awareness](#) and expression, promoting the need for basic knowledge of major cultural works, belonging to both classical and popular culture.

The [Creative Europe](#) programme (Media strand) co-funds projects on [film literacy](#), with some projects aimed at developing audiences for [European films](#) through school screenings and debates. It thus confirms the place of audiovisual cultural heritage and the impact of knowledge about this heritage on audiences and their cinematographic choices.

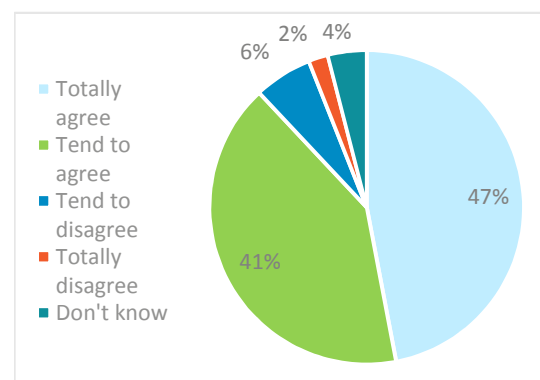
Erasmus+, Erasmus Mundus training, and the Lifelong Learning programme

Educational activities related to cultural heritage can also get support from the EU.

The Erasmus+ [vocational education and training](#) strand (VET) offers possibilities to learn new (digitisation, governance) and traditional skills or [disappearing professions](#), to exchange good practices on traineeships, work placements and work shadowing, and to engage in partnerships. Currently, one of the OMC expert groups is working on [traditional and emerging heritage professions](#).

The Erasmus Mundus Master's programme '[Dynamics of cultural landscapes and heritage management](#)' is a unique opportunity to follow a comprehensive two-year professional training programme applying a global approach, and to obtain a Master's diploma from one of five participating universities.

Europe's cultural heritage should be taught in schools – opinion poll



Source: [Public opinion survey 466 on cultural heritage](#), p. 68, 2017.

The Lifelong Learning programme supports the [Inherit](#) project on heritage interpretation, focusing on adults discovering a museum, a reserve, a historic or natural site, and placing such experiences in an emotional and cognitive context. It offers course materials and training for site managers.

Horizon 2020

With over [€100 million](#) in the 2016-2017 period, the current Horizon 2020 research programme can support cultural heritage-related projects in areas such as heritage science, industrial leadership and societal challenges. Its predecessor invested about [€180 million](#) in projects related to tangible, intangible and digital cultural heritage, ranging from protection, conservation and restoration, to [innovation](#), research infrastructure, models, devices, materials, and energy efficiency, to tools for underwater heritage preservation. [Current research projects](#) range from interpretation of the past and mutual understanding of troubled pasts, to heritage-led urban regeneration. Cultural heritage-related innovation ranges from a [3D model](#) of the Holy Sepulchre restoration in Jerusalem to [virtual museums](#).

Underwater cultural heritage project awarded the EU Cultural Heritage Prize

Since its launch by the Commission in 2002, the [European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage](#) has been awarded every year by Europa Nostra for conservation achievements and new uses of cultural heritage, research programmes, education, training and awareness-raising activities, and to individuals or organisations dedicated to working to the benefit of cultural heritage.

In 2016, it was [awarded](#) to the [SASMAP](#) EU-funded research project on tools and techniques to survey and preserve underwater cultural heritage using 3D reconstructions and [in situ preservation](#), which is cheaper than bringing shipwrecks to the surface. According to Unesco, [3 million shipwrecks](#), not to mention aircraft, ruins and underwater landscapes, are to be found beneath the surface, and can bring rich testimonies of human maritime history.

EU networks and stakeholders

The EU supports numerous networks related to cultural heritage. These are both professional, such as the Network of European Museum Organisations ([NEMO](#)), and association-based, such as the [European Route of Industrial Heritage](#) providing tourist information on industrial sites in the EU and beyond, and on the industrial history of Europe and its protagonists.

It also offers support to civil society organisations, such as [Europa Nostra](#), which is tasked with running the procedure for awarding the EU Prize for Cultural Heritage. The organisation also helps [networking projects](#), such as 'Mainstreaming Heritage' and 'Sharing heritage', and coordinates the [European Heritage Alliance 3.3](#), an international platform of over 40 organisations.

Together with the European Investment Bank Institute, the network contributes to the preservation of [seven most endangered](#) heritage sites such as the Constanta Casino, an Art Nouveau building on the Romanian Black Sea coast, and the Prinkipo Greek orphanage, the largest wooden building in Europe on the Princes' Island off the Istanbul coast, designed by French architect Alexandre Vallaury.

On the occasion of the EYCH, the Commission launched its special call '[Voices of Culture and Heritage](#)', which is an open dialogue with civil society and stakeholders on cultural heritage under the Voices of Culture programme.

Cultural heritage and cultural diplomacy

The destruction of cultural heritage sites in Syria and Iraq prompted the EU to take steps to address the situation in the 2016 joint communication of the Commission and European External Action Service, '[Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations](#)'. The text focused on the role of cultural heritage both for the economic development of third countries and for the financing of terrorism through the trafficking of artefacts. It stressed the EU's heritage expertise and the potential for cooperation on cultural heritage issues and support programmes.

The Parliament reacted by adopting a [resolution of July 2017](#), in which it called for urgent measures to safeguard endangered cultural heritage, including through the EU Copernicus satellite system, and for the extension of EU peace-keeping missions to cover the protection of cultural heritage.

Cultural heritage – from the past to the future

EU recommendations have shown the path to pursue with regard to archaeological and digital preservation. EU funds have co-financed conservation and restoration efforts for heritage sites and the digitisation of film heritage and museum collections. Furthermore, they have supported technical and technological research as well as studies on cultural heritage interpretation, on understanding its role, on urban development and on many other heritage-related issues. As a recent conference on cultural heritage highlighted, the current approach focuses on current creative uses and interpretations as well as on the democratic and social contribution of cultural heritage to our shared responsibilities with regard to the legacy of previous generations, our efforts to pass it onto the next generations, and our contribution to the future, including through technologies bridging the past and the future.

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