



Council of the
European Union

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

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Subject: Council conclusions on risk management in the area of cultural heritage

Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on risk management in the area of cultural heritage, adopted by the Council by written procedure on 25 May 2020, in accordance with the first subparagraph of Article 12(1) of the Council's Rules of Procedure and Article 1 of Council Decision 2020/556.

The Council conclusions will be forwarded for publication in the Official Journal of the EU, as decided by the Committee of Permanent Representatives on 14 May 2020.

Council Conclusions on risk management in the area of cultural heritage

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION:

1. the political background as set out in the Annex;

RECALLING THAT:

2. cultural heritage in all its diversity (whether tangible - including sites and landscapes, artefacts and monuments - or intangible, encompassing knowledge, skills and practices, oral traditions and performing arts) represents an important source of identity, innovation and creativity for individuals and society and, apart from its inestimable intrinsic value for the development and well-being of European society, it also makes an important contribution to economic growth, social inclusion and sustainable development;
3. the significance of cultural heritage, highlighted in the New EU Strategic Agenda 2019-2024 and prioritised in the Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022 and in the New European Agenda for Culture, should be taken into account both when pursuing the sustainable development goals and whilst devising development agendas at national level;
4. cultural heritage can be at risk in manifold ways, whether as a result of unintended or deliberate human activity, a natural hazard, a one-off occurrence or a recurring event, or as a result of slow decay, depopulation or a sudden disaster;

5. the achievements of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 should be used as a basis for affirmative action on identifying and managing risks in the area of cultural heritage;
6. the protection of cultural heritage against a variety of threats is the goal of a dedicated set of actions under the third pillar of the European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage, namely ‘Cultural heritage for a resilient Europe’.

ACKNOWLEDGING:

7. the internationally recognised normative instruments, standards and principles for conservation and restoration, and the contributions made by international organisations (such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe) as well as governmental, intergovernmental (such as ICCROM), non-governmental and professional organisations (such as ICOMOS and ICOM) to preserving cultural heritage;
8. the urgency of encouraging cooperation at all relevant levels and with relevant partners in order to recognise risk factors, and hence the importance of creating and implementing risk management plans in the area of cultural heritage;
9. that establishing long-term measures by implementing risk management plans in tandem with planned policies, protection measures and good practices is key for the efficient prevention and mitigation of damage in a people-centred approach to safeguarding cultural heritage.

RECOGNISING THAT:

10. climate change is a global phenomenon and a colossal challenge that has a major influence on cultural and natural heritage, and that it is necessary, as far as possible, to undertake measures to prevent, mitigate, adapt to and, where possible, reverse negative impacts;
11. in these times of growing uncertainty at an international level, including an increasing number of emergencies and disasters, the safeguarding and sustainable management of cultural heritage is an important source of societal resilience and an asset in climate action, and, in that regard, the EU and its Member States can play an important role as a global actor in the risk management of cultural heritage;
12. crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic have a paramount economic and social impact on the cultural and creative sectors. The critical loss of revenue, the disruption in the exchange of knowledge, the halt of maintenance and restoration work, the restriction of access and participation, among others, call for a stronger focus on sustainability and resilience as a key element of cultural heritage management;
13. spatial planning, construction of buildings and development of territories, both in cities and rural areas, require full commitment of the involved parties so that cultural heritage is seen as an asset and not threatened or neglected;
14. the inclusion of risk management in education, both in professional training and as part of life-long learning, is essential to ensuring that communities are risk-informed and engage more with safeguarding and conservation measures;
15. research plays an important role in understanding the nature and impact of threats, such as climate change, and in the development of innovative and efficient methodologies for risk management in the area of cultural heritage.

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE AND IN DUE COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY, TO:

16. identify innovative tools and approaches available at EU level for risk identification, prevention, preparedness and mitigation and actively use them in order to contribute to the process of sustainable preservation, monitoring and easier risk assessment;
17. share information on existing heritage expert networks, at national and other levels, to promote the identification, protection, conservation and/or restoration of Europe's cultural heritage;
18. develop, where appropriate, common mechanisms for risk management, promote cooperation at all levels and strengthen, across decision-making and heritage management levels, the adoption of collaborative approaches based on the principles of participatory governance and shared responsibility;
19. recognise and integrate cultural heritage into disaster risk policies and management plans at the local, regional, national and EU levels, and establish, where appropriate, cross-sectoral cooperation, in order to ensure adequate risk management in the area of cultural heritage, taking into account relevant provisions as defined by Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism;
20. pay special attention to the protection of cultural heritage in less populated areas, with a view to making relevant risk mitigation measures available at local and regional levels;
21. enhance the role of recording and documentation both in relation to the preservation of non-digital, digitalised and born-digital content, in respect of which interoperability, compatibility, accessibility and sustainability are principles which have to be taken into account;

22. encourage activities supporting the regular maintenance of built and movable cultural heritage as well as landscape management and the use of appropriate and high-quality methods, techniques and materials in the conservation process so as to promote sustainability;
23. promote the safeguarding and transfer of traditional skills and crafts, and devise, where appropriate, specific training activities to address risk management in all phases of professional development for heritage experts and other relevant professions;
24. increase awareness and make use of the emerging digital technology - especially advances in 3D technologies - which provides a basis for innovative research, documentation and interpretation of cultural heritage, as well as for the application of appropriate safeguarding methods;
25. utilise, as appropriate, available data provided by satellite programmes, such as Copernicus, and other sources, in order to monitor cultural heritage; products obtained from Earth observation technologies, such as risk assessment maps and climate change indicators, may be used in this respect;
26. enhance the significant role in risk management played by authorities, cultural institutions, such as museums, archives, libraries, galleries, depositaries and cultural property owners, as well as citizens and civil society, and emphasise the need for close cooperation between them.

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION TO:

27. raise awareness of and mobilise existing financial and logistical resources for matters related to the safeguarding of endangered heritage;

28. enhance opportunities for awareness raising, mobility and exchange of experiences between relevant stakeholders in order to better share good practices, especially on disaster recovery, and the latest advances in the field of risk management, and to support capacity building and knowledge transfer;
29. encourage Europe's young people to participate in various activities in the area of cultural heritage, including those which raise the importance attached to heritage safeguarding;
30. contribute, as appropriate, to the topics related to risk management within the framework of the Commission expert group on cultural heritage, with particular regard to methods for identification, prevention and reduction of loss, as well as analysis and prioritisation in risk follow-up action;
31. provide positive communication to the public about the value of cultural heritage by promoting responsible behaviour and participation in safeguarding activities.

INVITES THE COMMISSION TO:

32. consider producing an EU handbook on risk management in the area of cultural heritage, which could be based on: a) the results of the projects listed under the ninth cluster entitled '*Protecting cultural heritage against natural disasters and climate change*' of the European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage, b) the analysis of national summaries on disaster risk management to be submitted to the Commission by 31 December 2020, in line with the Reporting Guidelines on Disaster Risk Management according to Article 6(1)d of Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism and c) relevant elements from national climate change adaptation plans or strategies. Efforts made in relation to the setting up of a network of competence centres across the EU to safeguard knowledge of endangered cultural heritage through large-scale digitisation, announced in the New European Agenda for Culture, could also be used in this context;

33. continue the ongoing dialogue and cooperation with networks that have acquired valuable experience in the field of risk management in the area of cultural heritage;
 34. seek synergies with relevant international (governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental) organisations in order to sustainably preserve and protect cultural heritage for present and future generations.
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Relevant policy documents

European Council

- European Council Conclusions of 14 December 2017 (EUCO 19/1/17 REV 1)
- *A New Strategic Agenda 2019-2024* (adopted by the European Council on 20 June 2019)

Ministerial Declarations

- *The Davos Declaration - Towards a high-quality Baukultur for Europe*, 20-22 January 2018
- *Declaration of cooperation on advancing the digitisation of cultural heritage*, Brussels, Digital Day 2019, 8 April 2019
- *The Bucharest Declaration of the Ministers of Culture and their representatives on the role of culture in building Europe's future*, 16 April 2019
- *The Declaration adopted during the Informal Meeting of European Union Member State Ministers responsible for Cultural and European Affairs*, Paris, 3 May 2019

Council

Conclusions

- *Council conclusions on architecture: culture's contribution to sustainable development* (OJ C 319, 13.12.2008, p. 13)

- *Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on culture as a catalyst for creativity and innovation (8749/1/09 REV 1)*
- *Council conclusions on the contribution of culture to local and regional development (OJ C 135, 26.5.2010, p. 15)*
- *Council conclusions on cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe (OJ C 183, 14.6.2014, p. 36)*
- *Council conclusions on participatory governance of cultural heritage (OJ C 463, 23.12.2014, p. 1)*
- *Council conclusions on promoting access to culture via digital means with a focus on audience development (OJ C 425, 12.12.2017, p. 4)*
- *Council conclusions on the need to bring cultural heritage to the fore across policies in the EU (OJ C 196, 8.6.2018, p. 20)*
- *Council conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022 (OJ C 460, 21.12.2018, p. 12)*
- *Council conclusions on young creative generations (OJ C 189, 5.6.2019, p. 34)*
- *Council conclusions on an EU strategic approach to international cultural relations and a framework for action (OJ C 192, 7.6.2019, p. 6)*

Resolutions

- *Resolution of the Ministers with responsibility for Cultural Affairs, meeting within the Council of 13 November 1986 on the protection of Europe's architectural heritage (OJ C 320, 13.12.1986, p. 1)*
- *Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the Cultural Dimension of Sustainable Development (OJ C 410, 6.12.2019, p. 1)*

Commission

Communications

- *Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe (COM(2014) 477 final)*
- *Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture. The European Commission's contribution to the Leaders' meeting in Gothenburg, 17 November 2017 (COM(2017) 673 final)*
- *A New European Agenda for Culture (COM(2018) 267 final)*
- *The European Green Deal (COM(2019) 640 final)*

Joint Communications from the European Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

- *Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations (JOIN(2016) 29 final)*

Notices

- *Reporting Guidelines on Disaster Risk Management*, Art. 6(1)d of Decision No 1313/2013/EU (*OJ C 428, 20.12.2019, p. 8*)

Staff Working Documents

- *European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage* (SWD(2018) 491 final)

Reports

- *Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation, results and overall assessment of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018* (COM(2019) 548 final)

Studies

- *Safeguarding cultural heritage from natural and man-made disasters. A comparative analysis of risk management in the EU - Study* (April 2018)

United Nations

- Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

UNESCO

- *Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict* (Hague Convention, 1954)
- *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (1972)
- *Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage* (2001)
- *Charter on the Preservation of Digital Heritage* (2003)
- *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003)
- *Strategy for Risk Reduction at World Heritage Properties* (revised version, 2007)
- *Managing Disaster Risks for World Heritage* (manual, June 2010)
- *Budapest Declaration On World Heritage* (adopted by the World Heritage Committee in June 2002)

Council of Europe

- Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention, 2005)
- Recommendation CM/Rec (2017)1 to Member States on the “European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st century” (2017)
- Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property (2017)
- European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA)

Other studies

- First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis (ICCROM and the Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development, 2018)
 - European Quality Principles for EU-funded Interventions with Potential Impact upon Cultural Heritage (ICOMOS, 2019)
 - The Global Risks Report 2020 (World Economic Forum)
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