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European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 – Questions and Answers

I – Cultural heritage in the EU

What does cultural heritage mean?

Cultural heritage consists of cultural and creative resources of a tangible or intangible nature, with a value for society that has been publicly recognised in order to preserve it for future generations. It includes natural, built and archaeological sites, museums, monuments, artworks, historic cities, literary, musical, audiovisual and digital works, and the knowledge, practices and traditions of European citizens.

Not all the products of art, creativity, history and cultural expression can be considered as heritage. Heritage is a selection of those products, which is recognised as being of sufficient worth to pass on to future generations.

Every country has its own framework for designating cultural heritage, but the first step shared by all is the identification of its value for society and the public recognition of this status. This can be done in different ways, at the national, regional or local levels, inter alia through the inclusion on an official list, or in a national collection.

How rich is Europe's cultural heritage?

Europe is renowned worldwide for its rich and diverse cultural and creative expressions including natural, built and archaeological sites, museums, monuments, artworks, historic cities, literary, musical, and audio-visual works, including film heritage and the knowledge, practices and traditions of European citizens.

This heritage has been recognised notably by UNESCO. With 453 inscribed sites, Europe as a region accounts for almost half of [UNESCO's World Heritage List](#). The EU accounts for a quarter of [UNESCO's Representative](#)

[List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity](#) with 89 inscribed elements.

There are 31 certified Council of Europe [Cultural Routes](#), crossing over 50 countries in Europe and beyond. And the network of 27 000 protected [Natura 2000](#) sites, which comprises the EU's rich natural heritage, accounts for 18% of the EU's land and almost 6% of its marine territory.

What is the economic value of Europe's cultural heritage?

Over 300 000 people are employed in the EU cultural heritage sector. 7.8 million jobs in the EU are indirectly linked to heritage (e.g. tourism, interpretation and security)¹. This means that for each direct job, the heritage sector produces 26.7 indirect jobs. This compares with 6.3 indirect jobs created for each direct job in the car industry, for instance.

The ecosystem services (climate change mitigation, water purification, tourism and recreational benefits etc.) provided by the EU's natural heritage sites within the Natura 2000 Network are estimated to be worth around €200-300 billion per year².

According to a [new Eurobarometer](#) survey released today by the Commission, 68% of Europeans say the presence of cultural heritage can influence their decision on where to go on holiday.

What are the key findings of the new Eurobarometer survey on cultural heritage?

Some of the main findings of today's Eurobarometer are:

- Large majorities think cultural heritage is important to them personally, as well as to their community, region, country and the EU as a whole.
- Most respondents think public authorities should allocate more resources to cultural heritage, and that public authorities including the EU should do the most to protect cultural heritage.

¹ Source: Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe report 2015

² Source: [The Economic benefits of the Natura 2000 Network 2013](#)

- The majority of Europeans say they live close to historic monuments or sites, but only just over half have some personal involvement in cultural heritage.
- Respondents say they have accessed a wide range of cultural heritage in the last 12 months, yet lack of time is cited as the most common barrier to access cultural heritage sites or activities, followed by cost and lack of interest.
- Large majorities take pride in cultural heritage, and agree it can improve quality of life and a sense of belonging to Europe.

II – 2018, a unique thematic year

Why a European Year of Cultural Heritage?

The purpose of the Year – the only thematic year organised under the Juncker Commission - is to raise awareness of the social and economic importance of cultural heritage and to celebrate Europe's cultural richness and diversity.

Cultural heritage brings people together and contributes to more cohesive societies. It is a unique catalyst for exchanges between people of all ages, different social backgrounds, cultures and countries. At local level, it fosters social cohesion and integration through for instance the regeneration of neglected areas. Cultural heritage creates economic growth and jobs in cities and regions and is central to Europe's exchanges with the rest of the world. This is why, especially at a time when world cultural treasures are under threat and are being deliberately destroyed in conflict zones, the Commission considers that cultural heritage deserves a European Year in 2018.

The Year focuses in particular on children and young people, who will become guardians of our heritage in the future. Two out of the ten main European themes for the Year will focus on youth and schools. Actions will include awareness raising activities supported by a toolkit for schools on cultural heritage, opportunities for young people to help preserve or restore cultural heritage as volunteers and social media engagement through an Instagram photo competition. The Year will also promote innovative ways to preserve, manage and reuse Europe's heritage, including through participatory governance mechanisms involving local

communities.

Which countries are participating in the Year?

All 28 EU Member States are participating in the Year. They have all appointed national coordinators responsible for organising events and other activities. In addition, all non-EU countries participating in the Creative Europe programme³ will be invited to be associated with the European Year. Awareness raising activities will also take place all around the world, with the help of EU delegations. For instance, the EU Delegation in Japan is planning to release a calendar about the Year and the EU Delegation in Mexico is preparing an exhibition about Europe's cultural heritage.

What activities are planned throughout the Year?

The European Year of Cultural Heritage is implemented through a series of initiatives at European, national, regional and local levels. Thousands of events and celebrations are planned across Europe. The 2018 special edition of the [European Heritage Days](#) alone will involve over 70 000 events. Projects and initiatives implemented in EU Member States, municipalities and regions are complemented by transnational projects funded by the EU.

How can people find out about events close to them?

Information on the main events being organised in each Member State is available on the [website](#) for the Year. Further information will be made available through dedicated websites in Member States or through the national coordinators for the Year.

How will the Year reach out to people from disadvantaged backgrounds or people not normally involved in cultural activities?

The aim of the Year is to make cultural heritage accessible to all, including via digital means, by removing social, cultural and physical barriers, and

³ Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Republic of Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Norway, Iceland, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Tunisia

taking into account people with special needs. The activities organised throughout the Year will raise awareness of the importance of Europe's cultural heritage through education and lifelong learning, in particular by focusing on children and young people, local communities and people who are rarely in touch with culture. In particular, specific outreach activities are planned in the framework of the special European Year of Cultural Heritage edition of the European Heritage Days, which in early autumn bring millions of visitors closer to their local cultural heritage. In addition activities are planned in schools as part of the European Initiative "Heritage at school: children discovering Europe's most precious treasures and traditions" (see below).

What is the total budget for the Year?

A budget of €8 million has been allocated to the Year. It will be mainly used to finance transnational projects through a [dedicated call](#) under the [Creative Europe programme](#) which supports Europe's cultural and creative sectors through three different strands. With a total of €5 million, the call will fund up to 25 transnational projects promoting the Year's objectives.

Additionally, in 2018 cultural heritage projects will be supported through other EU policies and programmes. For instance:

- The [2018-2020 Horizon 2020 work programme](#) will offer funding for cultural heritage projects worth over €100 million.
- A series of initiatives and events on natural heritage will take place through the [Natura 2000 Network](#).
- Cultural tourism and cultural routes will be showcased and promoted.
- Grassroots projects contributing to citizens' understanding of the Union, its history and diversity will be funded through the [Europe for Citizens programme](#).
- Mobility and social inclusion actions will be supported by the [Erasmus + programme](#).
- Approximately €6 billion has been made available for culture and cultural heritage in the [Cohesion Funds](#) for the period 2014-2020.

How will the Commission ensure the legacy of the Year?

To make sure our efforts have an impact beyond 2018, the Commission, in collaboration with the Council of Europe, UNESCO, and other partners, will run long-term projects around **10 main themes**. These will include activities with schools, research on innovative solutions for reusing heritage buildings and the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural goods. The objective is to help trigger real change in the way we enjoy, protect and promote heritage, making sure that the European Year benefits citizens in the longer term.

The [10 European initiatives](#) correspond to four principles that define what European cultural heritage stands for: engagement, sustainability, protection and innovation.

III – EU actions on cultural heritage

What are examples of projects at EU level?

There are numerous pan-European projects and initiatives celebrating Europe's cultural heritage, notably:

- The [EU Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards](#), which was launched in 2002 by the European Commission and is organised by Europa Nostra. The Prize is the most prestigious in Europe in the heritage sector. It celebrates and promotes best practices related to heritage conservation, management, research, education and communication.
- The [European Capitals of Culture](#), launched in 1985, which have grown into one of the most ambitious and best known cultural projects in the European Union and provide opportunities for Europeans to meet and discover the great cultural diversity of our continent and to take a fresh look at our common history and values.
- The [European Heritage Label](#), which is awarded to selected sites that symbolise European ideals, values, history and integration.

In general, what funding is available at EU level for cultural heritage?

Under the current financial framework, a broad range of EU funding programmes offer support to cultural heritage. This support goes beyond the European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018.

Cultural heritage is one of the main sectors benefitting from the [Creative Europe](#) programme. Between 2014 and 2017, nearly €27 million were dedicated to heritage-related projects, financing a total of 67 actions. This complements the funding available for the cultural and creative sectors and cultural heritage through the Cohesion Fund and for cultural heritage-related research under the Horizon 2020 programme (see above).

From 2007 to 2013, the EU invested €4.4 billion in heritage projects for regional development and rural development, and around €100 million in heritage research

The European Commission has published [a Mapping of Cultural Heritage actions](#) in European Union policies, programmes and activities, which provides an overview of funding opportunities for cultural heritage in EU programmes.

What are the EU competences for cultural heritage?

Article 3.3 of the [Treaty on European Union](#) provides that *"The Union shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced"*. Article 167 of the [Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union](#) states that *"the Union shall contribute to the flowering of cultures in the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore"*.

The European Union's role is, therefore, to assist and complement the actions of the Member States in preserving and promoting Europe's cultural heritage. The Commission has developed a [number of policies and programmes](#) to support and promote policy collaboration between Member States and heritage stakeholders. With €1.46 billion for the period 2014-2020, the **Creative Europe Programme** supports the European cultural and creative sectors through three strands:

- **The Culture Programme** supports cross-border cooperation projects, cultural networks, European Capitals of Culture and a series of prizes.

- **The MEDIA Programme** supports the distribution of European films
- The **Guarantee Facility for cultural and creative sectors** — this financial mechanism acts as insurance to banks offering financing to cultural and creative sector industries.

For more information

[Website of the EYCH2018 campaign \(including list of events at EU and national levels\)](#)

[Special Eurobarometer report on Cultural Heritage](#)

[European Culture Forum 2017](#)

[Factsheet "culture as a driver for EU unity" - The Commission's Contribution to the Leaders' Working Lunch Gothenburg, 17 November 2017](#)

[Decision \(EU\) 2017/864 on a European Year of Cultural Heritage](#)