

Seven Recommendations to the European Union to strengthen the protection of cultural heritage in cases of armed conflict and disasters:

1. Extend capacity building and training

Provide EU-funded training and professional development for heritage professionals, policymakers, armed forces and community leaders to enhance their capacity to protect cultural heritage and strengthen community resilience in case of armed conflicts, climate impacts, and disinformation campaigns.

Consolidate and enhance education programmes, incorporating armed forces training in civil-military cooperation and strategies for protecting cultural assets in hazardous areas and in synergies with the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM).

Reinforce the UCPM's role to coordinate emergency response and support the definition of tools and procedures to ensure stronger protection of cultural heritage at risk.

Enhance risk management in cultural heritage education by consolidating crisis management training to equip stakeholders in safeguarding assets.

2. Enhanced cooperation and information sharing

Facilitate enhanced cooperation and information sharing mechanisms among EU member states regarding the protection of cultural property, including (military) CPP.

Allocate EU funding for interdisciplinary research exploring the links between cultural heritage protection and community resilience.

Develop comprehensive and secure data systems and establish an EU-wide database to safely store and distribute heritage related information.

Reinforce UCPM contact points to ensure coordination and avoid fragmentation.

3. Promote cultural heritage as key resource for peace and societal resilience

Launch public awareness campaigns and educational efforts to promote the importance of protecting cultural heritage among EU citizens for identity.

Encourage member states to implement participatory approaches involving local communities in planning, preservation, and managing cultural heritage.

Provide targeted EU funding and support to minority, rural, and marginalised communities to strengthen resilience through education, cultural engagement, and preserving traditional knowledge.

Recognise and promote cultural heritage as a vital resource for community resilience, integrating heritage conservation into broader resilience strategies to leverage cultural assets in supporting social cohesion and identity.

4. Strengthen enforcement mechanisms and regulations

Develop EU policies integrating cultural heritage protection into climate adaptation, conflict prevention, and countering disinformation, aligned with the Hague Convention and its Protocols. Prioritise CPP enforcement mechanisms and recognise the cultural sector as critical under the Critical Entities Resilience Directive (CER).

Facilitate collaboration between relevant sectors, including climate change, cultural heritage, conflict prevention, and cybersecurity, to create cohesive action plans across the EU and its member states.

Encourage cross-border initiatives and collaboration to protect and manage shared cultural heritage and address transnational threats.

5. Harmonise legislations

Ensure the harmonisation of national legislation across EU member states to align with the principles and obligations outlined in the Hague Convention and its protocols, incorporating lessons learned from past conflicts and disasters to improve the protection of cultural heritage.

Recognise cultural heritage as a vital resource for societies and set minimum standards for their protection.

6. Monitor and evaluate continuous improvement

Establish robust EU-wide systems to regularly assess the condition and protection of cultural heritage sites, enabling timely interventions and adaptive management practices to support local communities.

Continuously evaluate the impact of integrated protection policies on cultural heritage and communities across the EU. Make necessary adjustments based on findings and stakeholder feedback to ensure the effectiveness of preservation strategies

7. Integrate cultural heritage protection into EU external policies

Incorporate strategies for the protection of cultural property into the EU's external policies and partnerships, particularly in regions where cultural heritage is at risk due to armed conflict, natural disasters, or other threats.

Support sustainable practices in heritage protection, focusing on preservation, reuse, and adaptation of heritage sites and materials. Highlight successful examples of sustainable heritage management within the EU to promote best practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

JANUARY 2025

Who are we?

We are representatives from: Blue Shield Austria and Germany, German Society for Cultural Property Protection e.V., Swiss Society for Cultural Property Protection, Fraunhofer Society.

How did we formulate these recommendations?

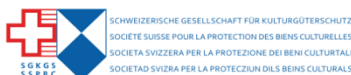
Our recommendations are the result of insights drawn from years of work in cultural heritage protection. During an expert symposium titled “**The Hague Convention: 70 Years Later: What Actions Can, Should, and Must the EU Take?**”, on 7 July 2024 held in Brussels to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the 1954 Hague Convention, we worked collaboratively with experts from the heritage community. Together, we reviewed, refined, and validated the recommendations focusing on the current status of cultural heritage protection, existing frameworks, and gaps that need to be addressed.

Who supports these recommendations?

This set of recommendations is endorsed by all consortium members, supported by the participating stakeholders of the symposium, and is aligned with the objectives of the **1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict**.

Who are the supporting organisations?

- ALIPH - International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage
- Austrian Society for the Protection of Cultural Property
- Blue Shield Austria, Belgium, France, Germany & International
- Cultural Emergency Response
- Fraunhofer Society
- German Society for Cultural Property Protection e.V.
- HER-UKR Project “Challenges and Opportunities for EU Heritage Diplomacy in Ukraine”
- KulturGutRetter
- OBMIN (Ukraine)
- ProCultHer
- Rathgen Research Laboratory
- Royal Institution for Cultural Heritage
- SiLK – Security Guidelines for Cultural Property
- Swiss Society for Cultural Property Protection (SGKGS)
- Ukrainian Museum Association



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Fraunhofer

