

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A NEW EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE
FOR HERITAGE PROFESSIONSREPORT OF THE OMC (OPEN METHOD OF COORDINATION)
WORKING GROUP OF MEMBER STATES' EXPERTS

For the first time, the Council of the European Union has invited a group of national experts to investigate skills, training and knowledge transfer in the heritage professions in Europe ⁽¹⁾. The group was operational in 2017 and 2018 under the Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018, with the support of the European Commission ⁽²⁾.

This report is intended to be a resource for the European Union (EU) to ensure the long-term sustainability of Europe's cultural heritage. It aims to do this by contributing to the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 objective 'to support the development of specialised skills and improve knowledge management and knowledge transfer in the cultural heritage sector, taking into account the implications of the digital shift' ⁽³⁾. It will also contribute to the European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage ⁽⁴⁾, launched by the European Commission with the aim of leaving a policy imprint beyond 2018.

A new European landscape for heritage professions

In the space of just a few years, the European policy framework on cultural heritage has been completely overhauled, moving towards a people-centred and holistic approach, and eliminating the divisions between the tangible, intangible and digital dimensions. It sees cultural heritage as a shared resource, highlighting that all stakeholders share responsibility for its transmission to future generations. It stresses the need for a more integrated approach to conservation and management, across different policy areas, in order to maximise the benefits to economy, culture, environment and society as a whole. It acknowledges the opportunities that new technologies offer to preserve cultural heritage, and to enhance the visitor experience and public engagement at heritage sites and museums. This new framework changes the way in which cultural institutions manage, protect and provide access to their heritage. It changes the way in which citizens and communities engage with their cultural heritage and also naturally influences the way that professionals deal with it.

Why publish this report?

The most effective way to manage, protect, promote and enhance Europe's irreplaceable cultural heritage is to ensure that the people who do this work (and all stakeholders who make decisions

1 *Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on a Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018)* (2014/EC/436/02).

2 https://ec.europa.eu/culture/policy/strategic-framework_en

3 Decision (EU) 2017/864 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2017 on a European Year of Cultural Heritage (2018).

4 European Commission, Commission Staff Working Document, *European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage*, <https://ec.europa.eu/culture/sites/culture/files/library/documents/staff-working-document-european-agenda-culture-2018.pdf>



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affecting cultural heritage) have the traditional and emerging skills required to fulfil these complex, challenging and necessary roles.

What are the key messages?

While Europe is renowned for its expertise in this sector, the transmission of knowledge and skills is impacted by the combined effect of Europe's age pyramid, cuts to public budgets, the digital shift and the academisation of society. New skills and competences are needed to progress towards a more integrated and participatory management of cultural heritage, and better use of the opportunities offered by new technologies. Europe urgently needs to enhance, promote and protect the technical and professional skills of the people who ensure the long-term sustainability of its cultural heritage. People are central to the transfer of knowledge and skills, so it is important to invest in them in order to safeguard Europe's heritage.

Who is this report written for?

This report targets the main stakeholders: policymakers (at national and EU level); education and training institutions; cultural institutions; and professional associations.

How was the content created?

The experts discussed and developed the many issues affecting the current supply of, and demand for, cultural heritage training and employment. The group drew up national SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analyses and combined these to identify themes. They also widely consulted reports published by the European Commission and other sources. The group particularly benefited from study visits and the reflections of a group of heritage stakeholders working under the Voices of Culture initiative ⁽⁵⁾.

The analysis focused on the four development phases of potential heritage professionals: raising awareness; education and training; lifelong learning and knowledge transfer.



Tom and his family: They enjoy visiting museums, heritage sites and craft fairs during their holidays, but they have no idea what goes on behind the scenes. How can we help them discover the world of heritage work? Can we motivate Tom to start a career as a craftsperson or even inspire Tom's granddad to volunteer?



Miriam and her friends: Miriam studies architecture but the curriculum includes very little on the repair and conservation of buildings and monuments. Her boyfriend, Mo, who studies digital technology, has no idea that the heritage sector is desperately looking for his skills. How can we help these students to make the link with heritage work?



David and his colleagues: They care about cultural heritage and collections, and have been working in the field for several years now. They want to deepen their skills and innovate in their work, but they have no professional development plan and little time. How can we help these heritage workers to upskill and develop a new heritage practice?



Laura and her network: Laura is a conservator-restorer with a lot of experience and a high level of skills and knowledge. She is very well connected to other colleagues, experts and skilled craftspeople. This network would like to share their knowledge and skills, especially as many of them are nearing retirement age, but there are few opportunities to do so. Time and financial restraints limit the possibility of recruiting young professionals.

Wouldn't it be great if Laura and her network could share their passion with Tom and his family? If they could inspire Miriam and her friends to make the link with heritage work? And what if they could support David and his colleagues to deepen their skills and innovate? Wouldn't it be even better if this knowledge exchange was two-way? If Laura and her network could also learn a lot of new skills in the process?

Tom, Miriam, David and Laura represent the four phases in the development of people who could choose to further their interest in the knowledge and skills involved in cultural heritage. Each phase affects the others: people in Laura's phase could directly influence young children like Tom, and his family.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations in this report draw on practical examples, good-practice case studies and lessons learned. They aim to maximise the benefits and value that Europe could gain from improving the transfer of skills, training and knowledge in cultural heritage professions. They are summarised under the four pillars of the European Year of Cultural Heritage: engagement, sustainability, protection and innovation, as well as the transversal dimension of international relations ⁽⁶⁾.

Engagement

Cultural heritage professionals are best placed to communicate, to the whole community, the vital benefits that cultural heritage has for the economy, culture, environment and society.

Recommendations

- Devise innovative engagement and communications skills training for professionals, mediators and policymakers, to improve mutual understanding and holistic approaches to increase participation and access for all.
- Increase digital access through online information portals and networks to raise awareness, and to transmit knowledge and skills for the common purpose of safeguarding heritage, and for interpreting and implementing the Faro Convention ⁽⁷⁾.

Sustainability

The expertise of cultural heritage professionals is a unique public asset that is essential to achieving quality, value and sustainability in heritage protection and preservation.

Recommendations

- Promote increased mobility by enabling cultural heritage professionals to validate the full breadth of their formal and non-formal knowledge and skills.
- Support evidence-based assessment processes and specialist certification schemes to aid the recruitment of skilled and experienced professionals.

Protection

Cultural heritage professionals continuously maintain and enhance their core and transversal knowledge and skills in order to adapt to current and future skills demands, with the support of professional associations and public policymakers.

Recommendations

- Cultural heritage professionals and public policymakers should collaborate to identify and map cultural heritage professions (including skills at risk).
- Improve data collection and analysis in order to classify heritage occupations and assess current and future skills needs.

6 See Chapter 2 for general recommendations and Chapter 5 for specific recommendations relating to the four phases of development.

7 Council of Europe, *Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (Faro, 2005).

Innovation

Cultural heritage professionals work in interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral environments. They combine traditional, creative and innovative approaches to safeguarding Europe's irreplaceable heritage for future generations.

Recommendations

- Support and enhance education, training and centres of excellence to provide: entry-level and advanced cultural heritage training; post-graduate research programmes; lifelong learning opportunities; and structured knowledge-exchange for the cultural heritage workforce, policymakers, mediators and the public.
- Promote EU and national cultural heritage standards, where appropriate.
- Provide EU funding for innovative and integrated training and research, in association with sector representative bodies and through cross-sectoral cooperation.

International dimension

Europe is renowned for the quality of its training institutions, research centres and cultural heritage professionals. These professionals can help build bridges between people, communities and countries, reinforcing intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding, thereby contributing to an EU strategy for international cultural relations ⁽⁸⁾.

Recommendations

- Reinforce and promote EU cooperation with international organisations such as ICCROM ⁽⁹⁾ on training for heritage professionals.
- Create opportunities and provide funds for the education, training, knowledge-exchange and mobility of European cultural heritage professionals at global level.

8 <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/legislative-train/theme-europe-as-a-stronger-global-actor/file-eu-strategy-for-international-cultural-relations>

9 International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM): <https://www.iccrom.org/>

The full report is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/culture/library/index_en.htm

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