



## REINFORCING COOPERATION ON CULTURAL HERITAGE - THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

### WHY? • OBJECTIVES

Cultural heritage helps us learn about each other and ourselves. At such, it can be a powerful tool to build bridges between people, communities and countries, reinforcing intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. Due to this potential, cooperation on cultural heritage is one of the three priority axes of the **EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations** (2016), proposing a framework for cultural cooperation between the EU and the rest of the world.

The European Year of Cultural Heritage aims to further contribute to the recognition of cultural heritage as a key element in the external relations of the EU, and has the potential to become a very concrete example of the implementation of the aforesaid Strategy. The Year is an opportunity to reinforce existent and develop new initiatives that place cultural heritage at the core of EU relations with partner countries, building on their interest and needs and on Europe's expertise in the field.

### FOR WHOM? • TARGET GROUPS

Local communities, heritage professionals and cultural organisations in partner countries, international networks working on the field of cultural heritage.

### WHAT?

International cooperation is a cross-cutting issue in many of the initiatives implemented for the Year<sup>1</sup>. Particularly, the international profile of the EYCH is being raised through 3 main components:

### COMPONENT I - CELEBRATING EUROPE'S CULTURAL HERITAGE AROUND THE WORLD

- The Year is going global thanks to the support of the **European Union Delegations** (EU Dels) abroad, developing different initiatives, activating local partnerships and bringing Europe's cultural heritage closer to local communities around the world. To quote some examples: the EU Del in Mexico, in partnership with the city government, will host a large-format EYCH photo exhibition in the main avenue of Mexico City, under the topic 'EU Mexico Cultural Heritage brings us together'; in the USA, the programme for the EYCH includes a public event on digital preservation of cultural heritage in May 2018, in collaboration with Europeana; in the Dominican Republic, the Year will see national competitions, cultural events, workshops and an European Gastronomic Festival; the EU Del in Turkey **launched the Year** in February 2018 in presence of thousands of visitors at the Ankara Book Fair, and the EU Del to FYROM launched a **call for proposals** to finance projects related to the EYCH.

- The EYCH has also partnered with non-EU countries for a wider reach. Although initially conceived for EU Member States, association to the Year by partner countries is now possible due to its increasing popularity<sup>2</sup>. The Western countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia), as well as Georgia, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland are associated and have appointed EYCH National Coordinators. Some associated countries have already launched the EYCH, developed specific programmes and activated communication efforts.

<sup>1</sup> See EI N.1 Shared Heritage through the European Heritage Days, taking place in the 50 signatory countries to the European Cultural Convention, or EI N.5 on Sustainable Cultural Tourism through the Cultural routes with the Council of Europe crossing over 60 countries.

<sup>2</sup> Association to the EYCH is open to countries participating to the Creative Europe Programme, the Western Balkans and EEA countries.

#### KEY DATES:

- **23 April: EYCH 2018**  
International Perspectives Forum, organised by the EU Cultural Diplomacy Platform in Brussels
- **Throughout May**  
Europe's day will see EYCH celebrations around the world
- **Throughout 2018**  
awareness raising actions, events and initiatives by EU Delegations, EU National Cultural Institutes abroad and associated countries.

### COMPONENT II - ENGAGING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH SUPPORTING CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR THE HERITAGE SECTOR WORLDWIDE

Three projects will support capacity-building for the heritage sector worldwide:

- In the Western Balkans, the '**Cultural heritage route**', will connect and highlight events organised by the EU Delegations and EU National Institutes for Culture, in close cooperation with local civil society, with the aim of creating a sustainable network of cultural heritage operators.
- The **Silk Road Heritage Corridors** around UNESCO sites in Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia will address key development objectives, such as job creation through local development strategies and sustainable tourism, skills development, social cohesion and knowledge exchange. The EU is devoting a total amount of EUR 3, 5 Mio for this initiative.
- A **joint project with UNESCO** will provide for rapid assessments and immediate safeguarding measures of cultural heritage in risk due conflict or disaster in Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen.

### COMPONENT III - VALORISING EU ACTIONS IN CULTURAL HERITAGE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- The EU funds cultural heritage support around the world through different instruments and programmes. For instance, through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), the EU offered financial assistance to candidate and potential candidate countries, with an estimated of €33 million dedicated to cultural heritage between 2007 and 2011. Cultural heritage is also funded by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) and the Development Co-operation Instrument (CDI). The Year is putting in the spotlight projects already supported through these instruments by promoting successful stories.
- On the occasion of the EYCH, the Commission (Directorate General for Development and Cooperation - DEVCO) is conducting a mapping on ongoing heritage-related projects in third countries to promote the sharing and dissemination of good practices. Examples include intangible cultural heritage projects for social reconciliation through memory in Rwanda, and job-creation through cultural heritage in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Tibet.

#### PARTNERS

- EU Delegations abroad and the European External Action Service
- EU National Cultural Institutes around the world and EUNIC
- Countries associated to the EYCH
- The UNESCO and UNESCO National Commissions operating in third countries



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