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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

of 26.4.2010

**on the research joint programming initiative ‘Cultural Heritage and Global Change: a
new challenge for Europe’**

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 181 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Cultural heritage, in the meaning of the UNESCO Conventions concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the Safeguarding of the intangible Cultural Heritage¹, is a very fragile patrimony and is exposed to multiple risks due to ageing, adverse environmental conditions, and human pressure.
- (2) For most European citizens, cultural heritage assets are unique and irreplaceable in their tangible form of historic buildings, collections, sites and movable objects as well as in their intangible value, which includes history, collective memory and identity.
- (3) The combined effects of climate change, other environmental changes, human interventions and security risks threaten Europe's cultural heritage. In particular, climate change may lead to cultural heritage assets being irreversibly damaged or lost because of their fragility and age. In addition, disasters and security risks threaten the physical nature of cultural heritage assets as symbols and icons of European cities and sites.
- (4) In order to prevent that those combined risks to Europe's cultural heritage produce irreversible damage, concerted actions are needed.
- (5) At its meeting of 3 December 2009, the Competitiveness Council recognised ‘Cultural Heritage, Climate Change and Security’ (the title was later changed to ‘Cultural Heritage and Global Change: a new challenge for Europe’) as an area where joint programming would provide a major added value to the current, fragmented efforts of Member States in the field of research. It therefore adopted conclusions recognising the need to launch a joint programming initiative on the subject and inviting the Commission to contribute to its preparation. The Council also reaffirmed that joint programming is a process led by Member States, with the Commission acting as a facilitator.

¹ For the definition of "tangible and intangible cultural heritage", refer to: UNESCO, Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, Paris, 16 November 1972; UNESCO, Convention for the Safeguarding of the intangible Cultural Heritage, Paris, 17 October 2003.

- (6) Joint programming of research on cultural heritage and global change would provide for coordination of research in this area, contributing significantly to construction of a fully operational European Research Area on cultural heritage preservation and strengthening Europe's leadership and competitiveness of the research in this field.
- (7) In order to achieve the goals set by this Recommendation, Member States should cooperate with the Commission on exploring possible Commission initiatives to assist Member States with developing and implementing the strategic research agenda.
- (8) In order for the Commission to be able to report to the European Parliament and to the Council, Member States should report regularly to the Commission on the progress made on this joint programming initiative,

HAS ADOPTED THIS RECOMMENDATION:

- (1) Member States are encouraged to develop a common vision on how cooperation and coordination in the field of research at Union level can help to preserve cultural heritage in all its forms, ensuring its security and sustainable exploitation.
- (2) Member States are encouraged to develop a common strategic research agenda establishing medium to long-term research needs and objectives in the area of preservation and use of cultural heritage in the context of global change. The strategic research agenda should contain an implementation plan establishing priorities and timelines and specifying the action, instruments and resources required for its implementation.
- (3) Member States are encouraged to include the following actions, as part of the strategic research agenda and of the implementation plan:
 - (a) identifying and exchanging information on relevant national programmes and research activities;
 - (b) reinforcing joint foresight exercise and technology assessment capacities, especially regarding the impact of global change on cultural heritage assets and the preventive and conservation responses;
 - (c) exchanging information, resources, best practices, methodologies and guidelines;
 - (d) identifying areas or research activities that would benefit from coordination or joint calls for proposals or pooling of resources;
 - (e) defining the modalities for research to be undertaken jointly in the areas referred to in point (d);
 - (f) considering the changing needs of visitors and consumers when defining the objectives for cultural heritage research programmes.
 - (g) sharing, where appropriate, existing research infrastructures or developing new facilities such as coordinated databanks or the development of models for studying deterioration processes;

- (h) encouraging better collaboration between public and private sectors, as well as open innovation between different research activities and business sectors related to cultural heritage; including tourism, sustainable maintenance and construction or reconstruction of sites, buildings or landscapes and related business services.
 - (i) exporting and diffusing knowledge, innovation and interdisciplinary methodological approaches;
 - (j) creating networks between centres dedicated to cultural heritage research.
- (4) Member States are encouraged to set up a common management structure in the field of cultural heritage and global change, with a mandate to establish common conditions, rules and procedures for cooperation and coordination and to monitor the implementation of the strategic research agenda.
 - (5) Member States are encouraged to jointly implement the strategic research agenda including via their national research programmes or other national research activities.
 - (6) Member States are encouraged to cooperate with the Commission with a view to exploring possible Commission initiatives to assist Member States in developing and implementing the strategic research agenda, and to coordinating the joint programmes with other Union initiatives in this field.
 - (7) Member States are encouraged to report regularly to the Commission on the progress made on this joint programming initiative.

Done at Brussels, 26.4.2010

For the Commission
Maire GEOGHEGAN-QUINN
Member of the Commission

