



**Recommendation 1942 (2010)<sup>1</sup>**

Final version

## **A balanced approach to the rescuing of archaeological finds from development projects**

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The archaeological heritage throughout Europe is under increasing pressure from development projects. This presents considerable challenges for heritage management, but can also provide important opportunities to improve our understanding of the past.
2. Recent examples of large-scale operations where development has come up against the need to preserve cultural heritage are mining projects in Roşia Montană (Romania), dam construction projects in Allianoi (Turkey), the works on the M3 motorway adjacent to the historic Hill of Tara (Ireland) and the installations for the Olympic Games in sites such as Marathon and Markopoulo (Greece). There are also many industrial projects on agricultural land throughout Europe.
3. The difficulty of assessing in advance the importance of the archaeological heritage in a particular situation and of modifying development plans in consequence is both an economic and a cultural problem. It can also be a political question. A balance between cultural value and economic gain must be sought and viable methods of funding archaeological projects found. Where preservation *in situ* is not possible or appropriate, alternative means are available to offset this loss of archaeological remains and to contribute to our knowledge of the past. These include scientific excavation, recording, analysis, interpretation and publication. Sometimes, reconstruction of recovered remains is possible on another site.
4. Local interests may be more vulnerable to pressure and may need to be balanced and protected in a wider perspective. This is where the national authorities and the international community, including the non-governmental organisations active in this area, have a role to play.
5. In contrast to these threats to the existence of archaeological heritage, the public at large is becoming increasingly aware of the need to preserve local, national and global heritage. In parallel with this there are rising concerns over the preservation of the environment and the need to “save our planet” for future generations. The ideas that economic development should be responsible and non-intrusive and that progress cannot be achieved without accountability are becoming widespread. It is important for international actors to build on this favourable social climate and encourage interest and investment in archaeology, and to emphasise the inescapable fact that, like the environment, the archaeological heritage is a finite and non-renewable resource.
6. The Council of Europe has always recognised the value of the cultural heritage of all member states: Article 1 of the 1954 European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 18) states that: “Each Contracting Party shall take appropriate measures to safeguard and to encourage the development of its national contribution to the common cultural heritage of Europe.”

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1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 12 November 2010 (see [Doc. 12285](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, rapporteur: Mr O'Hara).*



7. The 1992 European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (revised) (Valletta Convention, ETS No. 143) is the European reference in the field: it makes the conservation and enhancement of archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. It is concerned in particular with arrangements for co-operation among archaeologists and town and regional planners to ensure optimum conservation of archaeological heritage.
8. The 1985 Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada Convention, ETS No. 121) establishes the principles of European co-ordination of conservation policies and outlines the need for an integrated approach in reconciling the protection of architectural heritage with the needs of contemporary cultural, social and economic activities.
9. The 2005 Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention, CETS No. 199) is based on the idea that knowledge and use of heritage form part of the citizen's right to participate in cultural life as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
10. The Council of Europe's activities in the area of cultural heritage are guided by several of its general policy orientations, as defined, in particular, at the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Warsaw, 2005) and by the Faro Convention. Emphasis is consequently placed on the opportunities provided by heritage projects for intercultural dialogue and promoting the recognition of the value of cultural heritage for society. The links between cultural heritage and natural heritage have been more closely established and regional co-operation is encouraged.
11. The Parliamentary Assembly has made an important contribution to the Council of Europe's work in the area. In 1978, for example, its [Recommendation 848 \(1978\)](#) on the underwater cultural heritage proposed a legally binding instrument on the protection of underwater cultural heritage; although this was not fully approved by the Committee of Ministers, elements were nevertheless included in the Valletta Convention.
12. More recently, the Assembly has adopted several important texts, including [Resolution 1285 \(2002\)](#) on tapping Europe's tourism potential, [Recommendation 1634 \(2003\)](#) and [Resolution 1355 \(2003\)](#) on tax incentives for cultural heritage conservation, [Recommendation 1730 \(2005\)](#) on the private management of cultural property, and [Recommendation 1851](#) and [Resolution 1638 \(2008\)](#) on crafts and cultural heritage conservation skills.
13. In the light of the above, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers encourage member states to:
  - 13.1. sign and ratify, if they have not already done so, the Valetta Convention, the Faro Convention and the Granada Convention;
  - 13.2. integrate the provisions of these conventions into their legislation, in particular the Valetta Convention, which contains a detailed description of all the necessary steps for successful heritage preservation;
  - 13.3. exercise extreme vigilance over development projects, as set out in the Valletta Convention, and involve private developers in the financing of all stages of research and preservation;
  - 13.4. share practices and experience of their procedures regarding preventive archaeology;
  - 13.5. form networks not only with a view to sharing knowledge and experience, but also in order to promote exchanges between multidisciplinary actors in the conservation of cultural heritage;
  - 13.6. provide sufficient opportunities for training, including training for archaeologists and also for the teaching of traditional crafts in order for the preservation, restoration and reconstitution of cultural heritage to be conducted sustainably;
  - 13.7. take practical measures to raise public awareness of the value of archaeological heritage, by publishing documents, using modern technologies to present findings (virtual visits on the Internet, etc.) and by organising, wherever possible, public access to sites of particular interest.
14. The Assembly also calls on the Committee of Ministers to further examine the issue of rescue and preventive archaeology on the basis of case studies and with the involvement of archaeologists, art historians and other relevant specialists, developers, local and national government authorities and non-governmental organisations.

15. Finally, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
  - 15.1. encourage an integrated approach to cultural heritage in its activities, taking into account the interaction between cultural and natural heritage (including landscape), as well as environmental questions;
  - 15.2. consider how the follow-up to the Valletta Convention could be enhanced, in particular with a view to fostering preventive archaeology in those member states where the destruction of heritage continues unhindered and thus contributing to the preservation of Europe's heritage for future generations;
  - 15.3. ensure that appropriate means are devoted to the follow-up activities of the Valletta Convention, in particular the unique European Heritage Network (HEREIN) database, which enables joint activities to be organised and good practices to be shared;
  - 15.4. encourage further co-operation with the European Union and UNESCO in the field of archaeological research and specific archaeological projects in member states;
  - 15.5. with respect to the European Union in particular, encourage the pursuit of joint initiatives designed to enhance the protection of archaeological heritage and facilitate work carried out in the field.