

**Doc. 14962**  
12 September 2019

## The value of cultural heritage in a democratic society

**Reply to Recommendation<sup>1</sup>:** Recommendation 2149 (2019)  
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has considered with great attention Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 2149 \(2019\)](#) “The value of cultural heritage in a democratic society”. It has brought it to the attention of the governments of member States and has communicated it to the committees involved.<sup>2</sup>
2. The Committee of Ministers considers that culture and cultural heritage play an important role in defending democratic values and European unity and contribute to the democratic stability of Europe. Culture and heritage, encouraging dialogue and developing respect for identities and diversities, are valuable tools to counter current threats to democracy.
3. The Committee of Ministers shares the Assembly’s views that the Council of Europe instruments and programmes, including the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 018), the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (CETS No. 199, known as the “Faro Convention”), the European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Strategy 21), the Council of Europe Cultural Routes Programme, the European Heritage Days and the European Heritage Network (HEREIN) provide an excellent framework for promoting cultural heritage in member States and for contributing to their sustainable development strategies.
4. It takes good note, in any event, of the Assembly’s call for increased support for work programmes in the field of culture and cultural heritage, as well as of the recommendation to strengthen co-operation with the European Union based on the Memorandum of Understanding between the Council of Europe and the European Union to promote innovation in the areas in question.
5. In this context, the Committee of Ministers sees the European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage and the new European Agenda and Work Plan for Culture as optimal frameworks for stepping up the long-standing co-operation between the two organisations. It agrees with the Assembly that exchanges and projects with the Union could propose targeted assistance to member States, promote European cultural values and contribute to sustainable development in Europe and beyond, following the principles of the Faro Convention and the European Heritage Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
6. Given the challenges Europe is facing, the momentum created through the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 and the Council of Europe’s innovative and recognised standard-setting *acquis*, it seems that culture and heritage have the potential to become real drivers of change.

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1. Adopted at the 1352<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies (4 September 2019).

2. Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP), Steering Committee for Education Policy and Practice (CDPPE) and Governing Board of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes.

