Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Jewish cultural heritage preservation

Reply to Recommendation[1]: Recommendation 2165 (2019)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has taken due note of Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 2165 (2019) "The preservation of the Jewish cultural heritage" and brought it to the attention of the governments of member States. It has also communicated it to the bodies concerned[2] for information and possible comments.

2. The Committee of Ministers agrees with the Assembly's view that Jewish cultural heritage forms an integral part of the shared cultural heritage in Europe and that it is therefore a common responsibility to increase efforts to preserve it. The Committee is aware that Jewish heritage is frequently an "orphaned" heritage, without a community to use and preserve it, and hence particularly vulnerable – a fact which should be duly taken into account when devising heritage policies and actions.

3. The Assembly refers to a number of existing Council of Europe treaties and instruments, which the Committee of Ministers also sees as an appropriate means of helping to protect Jewish heritage. For instance, the aim of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (CETS No. 199, Faro Convention) is to involve local communities in the protection and management of their surrounding cultural heritage and trigger curiosity, engagement and "ownership". The European Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century (Strategy 21) provides an excellent tool – offering analysis of the challenges to cultural heritage in combination with policy recommendations and targeted good practice examples. Lastly, the Committee agrees with the Assembly that the Council of Europe Cultural Routes Programme and the European Heritage Days, with their hands-on, participatory approach, offer an interesting framework for the promotion of Jewish cultural heritage.

4. The Committee of Ministers considers that the Council of Europe's entire *acquis* in the area of cultural heritage protection (consisting of conventions and other standard setting tools, good practices, information tools and networks) can help to protect and promote Jewish cultural heritage in Europe.

5. With regard to education programmes on the value of Jewish heritage, the Committee of Ministers would like to begin by highlighting the longstanding work of the Education Department on history teaching and the efforts made to promote multiperspectivity in history teaching. A revitalised project on history education is part of the Education Department's programme for 2020-2021. One of the aims of this project will be to strengthen the links with the democratic mission of education, with a clear reference to the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture, which includes knowledge and critical understanding of history among the key competences.

6. The Committee of Ministers has instructed the Steering Committee for Education Policy and Practice (CDPPE) to prepare a draft Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on "Passing on remembrance of the Holocaust and preventing crimes against humanity". This new instrument should be completed in the months ahead and the Committee of Ministers will examine the draft prepared by the CDPPE, in the light of the Assembly's recommendation.

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1. Adopted at the 1373rd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (8 April 2020).
2. Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP), Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice (CDPPE) and Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (EPA).

7. Reference should also be made to the proposal to establish an Observatory on History teaching in the form of an enlarged partial agreement of the Council of Europe, whose work should focus on preparing ad hoc reports on the state of history teaching in Europe. Without wishing to prejudge the final outcome of the project, one could consider that promoting European cultural heritage as a whole, including Jewish cultural heritage, could, in due course, form part of this Observatory's remit.

8. In conclusion, the Committee of Ministers notes with interest the Assembly's proposal to co-operate with the European Union in all these endeavours, particularly in the context of its new European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage.