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From: European External Action Service (EEAS)  
To: Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM)  
Subject: 2022 Report on the progress in the implementation of the “Concept on Cultural Heritage in conflicts and crises. A component for peace and security in European Union’s external action” and the dedicated Council Conclusions

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Delegations will find attached document EEAS(2022) 804.

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## EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



Integrated Approach for Security and Peace (ISP)

### Working document of the European External Action Service

of 08/07/2022

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the adoption of the EU Concept on Cultural Heritage in conflicts and crises, on 19 April 2021, and the dedicated Council Conclusions, on 21 June 2021, the EU has worked on the implementation of the measures and main elements proposed in the two documents. As the present report shows, progress has been registered in all areas of EU engagement in this domain, which takes into account all phases of conflicts and crises: prevention, crisis response, stabilisation and longer-term peacebuilding. Illustrative examples in this regard come from the activity of EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions, the projects the EU has conducted together with partners in different geographical areas, and the initiatives developed in the HQ.

Starting with the preventive measures, the EU Advisory Mission (EUAM) Iraq has been advising Iraqi authorities on cultural heritage protection and supported building their capacity through international cooperation. The EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) Georgia has increased data collection activities with the aim of monitoring tangible and intangible cultural heritage in the conflict affected zones. Several projects developed *inter alia* in Eritrea, Iraq,

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South Sudan, Sri Lanka, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, have contributed to raising awareness and local capacity building.

Safeguarding measures have been undertaken most recently in Ukraine. In the context of the destruction and further risks to Ukraine's cultural heritage caused by the Russian unprovoked aggression, the EUDEL has provided Kyiv authorities with needed materials and equipment for urgent protection and evacuation of cultural property. This has been done through repurposing of the projects started before the Russian aggression in order to better respond to emergency needs; through a dedicated project developed under the Rapid Response pillar of Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe (NDICI-Global Europe); as well as through in-kind support from Member States (MS) and Participating States (PS) under the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM). The up-coming EU action plan on tackling the illicit trade in cultural goods is also part in the general framework of EU safeguarding measures.

The EU has contributed to reconstruction, restauration or revitalisation of cultural heritage affected by recent conflicts and crises *inter alia* in Libya, Iraq, Yemen, promoting at the same time social cohesion, job creation and reconciliation. Other examples of the important role played by cultural heritage in the post-conflict recovery processes are provided by projects *inter alia* in Cameroon, Somalia, Israel, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Kosovo\*<sup>1</sup> and Republic of Moldova, which illustrate how actions in support to cultural heritage protection can lead to improved inter-community trust and stronger social cohesion.

The EU's engagement in the support for the protection of cultural heritage in conflicts and crises has also been reflected in the main external financing instrument, NDICI-Global Europe, where this topic is present in all the three pillars of NDICI-Global Europe: geographic, thematic and rapid response.

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<sup>1</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

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## INTRODUCTION

Recognising the importance of ensuring synergies and coordination between the EU and its Member States for maximizing the impact of our actions in support for cultural heritage in conflicts and crises, and in line with the EU Integrated Approach to External Conflicts and Crises, the present report informs the Member States on the progress made in the implementation of the “Concept on cultural heritage in conflicts and crises. A component for peace and security in European Union’s external action” and the dedicated Council Conclusions.

On 29 April 2021, the Political and Security Committee (PSC) endorsed the EU “Concept on Cultural Heritage in conflicts and crises. A component for peace and security in European Union’s external action”<sup>2</sup>, which builds on the idea that the protection and the enhancement of cultural heritage in conflicts and crises contributes to the development of peace, reconciliation and mutual understanding, intercultural dialogue, international solidarity and inclusive and sustainable development. On 21 June 2021, the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) adopted the Conclusions on EU Approach to Cultural Heritage in conflicts and crises<sup>3</sup>, welcoming the Concept.

Since the adoption of these two documents, the EEAS and the EU Commission services have worked on their operationalisation. The coordination between different EU Services and the improvement of the flow of information has played an important role in this context. As such, a dedicated task force of EU experts on cultural heritage was established and regular coordination meetings have been organised. In the context of the unprovoked aggression of Ukraine by armed forces of the Russian Federation, the EEAS has also coordinated along with other relevant services the emergency response in support to the urgent protection of cultural heritage in Ukraine.

In order to improve the information flow with the European Council, the European Parliament and the Member States, the EEAS has contributed to the work of Cultural Affairs Committee, CULT Committee and to the informal group of friends of the protection of cultural heritage, established by Member States.

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<sup>2</sup> 9962/21

<sup>3</sup> 9678/21

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The 21 June 2021 Council Conclusions invited the EEAS and the European Commission to report to the PSC, within one year and on a regular basis, on the progress made in the implementation of the measures proposed and of the main elements set out in the Concept on cultural heritage in conflicts and crises. The present report aims to provide a comprehensive overview covering not only CSDP aspects, but also EU's broader approach to cultural heritage in contexts of conflicts and crises. The analysis is based on data collected from the EEAS and the European Commission Services, the Delegations of the EU and EU CSDP missions. It reflects the progress made by the EU on this thematic file in the period June 2021 – May 2022.

## 1. EU SUPPORT FOR THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN UKRAINE

The Russian aggression of Ukraine has caused thousands of deaths and major economic damages. It has brought destructions of civilian infrastructure and housing with considerable effects on the tangible cultural heritage. A number of cultural heritage landmarks, such as monuments, museums, art collections, libraries and archives have been destroyed or severely damaged.

Within this context, along with the civil protection, humanitarian and security contribution, the EU has mobilised support for the protection of cultural heritage in Ukraine. In the spirit of integrated approach to external conflicts and crises, the EU has engaged an immediate response to ensure physical protection of tangible cultural heritage and prevent its destruction.

In direct response to the request made by the Ukrainian government, the EU has provided support for the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage items and sites in Ukraine. EUDEL Kyiv repurposed the projects started before Russia' aggression in order to better respond to the emergency needs. Dedicated actions under the Rapid Response pillar of NDICI-Global Europe have also contributed to the documentation of assets and provided equipment for the protection, storage and, where needed, evacuation of cultural heritage goods. These measures have been part of an integrated approach, complementing other actions supported by the EU.

On 15 February 2022, the State Emergency Service of Ukraine activated the UCPM in view of the high risk for a large-scale emergency that has a significant impact on the civilian population. This request has been updated several times. Massive in-kind assistance was offered by all the Member and Participating States and delivered to the Ukrainian authorities under the coordination of the European Emergency Response Coordinate Centre (ERCC). In March 2022, a dedicated request for in-kind assistance for the protection of cultural heritage (fire security systems, fire extinguishers, alarm security systems, dehumidifiers, boxes, sandbags, wrapping material as well as vehicles to evacuate cultural heritage) was added<sup>4</sup>. This was the first time that a dedicated request for the protection of cultural heritage was

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<sup>4</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/europe/ukraine\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/europe/ukraine_en)

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made under the UCPM in the context of this war. As a response to this request, several countries (notably Italy, Germany and Norway) offered cultural heritage protection items such as kits for cultural asset protection, boxes, sandbags, special equipment.

Subsequently, the European Commission approved the initiative of the Competence Centre for the Conservation of Cultural Heritage (4CH), “Save the Ukraine Monuments (SUM)”, after Ukrainian cultural heritage institutions asked 4CH for help. The project is ongoing as of July 2022, and aims at saving Ukrainian cultural heritage data, to preserve its memory and support the future restoration of assets from the damages caused by the war. The project consists in creating copies of documentation, digital objects, metadata, catalogues, databases, images and digitised monuments as 3D models of Ukrainian heritage on safe servers placed in the EU with a secure procedure. The digital content will be returned intact to Ukrainian heritage institutions, professionals and companies after the war. Acknowledging the importance of awareness for the protection of cultural heritage in the context of violent conflict, the EEAS conducted a dedicated online communication campaign, #ARTvsWAR, drawing attention to the destructions made by Russian militaries and increasing alertness towards further possible risks for Ukrainian cultural heritage.

The EU has also provided support for Ukrainian artists, cultural professionals and culture organisations. The European Commission has extended a call for culture cooperation project proposals under the 2022 Creative Europe to allow more Ukrainian partners to participate. In addition, it has provided maximum flexibility for ongoing EU-funded projects with Ukrainian organisations. Also, part of the budget of the new mobility instrument (to be launched by the Creative Europe programme in 2022) will be reallocated to benefit Ukrainian artists.

At the same time, medium and long term actions are under preparation to reconstruct, restore or revitalise the state of tangible and intangible heritage and further support inventory and digitisation of Ukrainian cultural property. In permanent contact with local, regional and national cultural institutions and public administration through EUDEL Kyiv, the EU has directed its support in a multi-level manner in order to affectively address the specific needs. In 2023, the European Commission plans to launch a specific call to support the cultural and creative sectors in UA, help the integration of UA displaced people and refugees through culture and the arts and share expertise and boost dedicated action on sharing expertise and

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boosting capacity-building among Ukrainian professionals for the reconstruction of their cultural heritage.

The EU actions have been coordinated both among different institutions and with Member States and external partners. The coordinating EU experts' meetings have ensured the flow of information, generated ideas and helped to engage more effectively the EU support. The constant dialogue with Member States and external partners has contributed to avoiding overlaps and mutually reinforcing efforts to the benefit of the protection of cultural heritage in Ukraine.

## 2. CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE CONTEXT OF CSDP

The politicisation of cultural heritage can polarise societies and increase the risk of violent conflicts. The destruction of cultural heritage can be a weapon of war, and a warning sign for future atrocities, but as well a victim/target in violent conflict. Cultural heritage may be attached to the experience of an identity group that may be in conflict with another. As such, efforts to protect or preserve cultural heritage may be perceived as taking sides in the conflict, hence there is a need to ensure that EU support and awareness raising efforts are conflict sensitive.

Within this context, cultural heritage plays a role in EU's conflict analyses that serve the purpose of identifying risks of violent conflict and options for preventive actions. It is rarely a central topic of the analysis but it is a relevant conflict risk indicator. The protection of cultural heritage also helps the EU to achieve its commitments to atrocity prevention. The perpetration of "serious crimes" (e.g. deliberate destruction of cultural heritage, dehumanisation, forced displacement) without effective legal and non-legal remedies and reparations is a central consideration in the Structural Country Assessments in the context of the Early Warning System, to identify conflict risks related to human rights.

Following the adoption of the Concept on Cultural Heritage and the related Council Conclusions, the topic of cultural heritage in conflicts and crises has been integrated in the political framework of CSDP. The EU documents take this thematic area into account when addressing specific issues pertaining to CSDP. The EU Strategic Compass for Security and Defence reiterates EU's commitment to contribute to the protection of cultural heritage, including through the CSDP missions. The Concept for an Integrated Approach to Climate Change and Security<sup>5</sup> addresses the interlinkages between the effects of climate change and natural and cultural heritage in the EU's external engagement and proposes concrete engagement to safeguard and protect them.

The Council Conclusions on the civilian CSDP Compact (December 2021) highlighted the need to increase efforts including developing expertise where appropriate to preserve and protect cultural heritage. Further concrete steps have been taken in this regard to better integrate the protection of cultural heritage into civilian CSDP missions' mandates and tasks.

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<sup>5</sup> 12537/21

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To that effect, a dedicated mini-concept for civilian CSDP missions was presented to the CivCom/COSI-SG in April 2022, offering guidance to civilian missions on how to address the security challenges linked to the preservation and protection of cultural heritage.

On the ground, several civilian CSDP missions (e.g. EUAM Iraq, EUMM Georgia, EULEX Kosovo) have continued to help host States to strengthen their capacities to preserve and protect cultural heritage.

**EUAM Iraq's** mandate has fighting organised crime and tackling illicit trafficking and destruction of cultural goods among its tasks. As such, since its establishment, the mission has been advising Iraqi authorities on cultural heritage protection and building their capacity through international cooperation. The mission has promoted the development of inter-ministerial and inter-departmental cooperation, including through the strengthening of relationships between cultural and law-enforcement stakeholders. It has also proposed its support to the Parliamentary Commission in charge of the revision of the Cultural Heritage Legislation.

The mission has a dedicated Adviser for the protection of cultural heritage. The mission has enhanced its relationship with the most relevant actors in protecting cultural heritage, reaching out to the Minister of Culture, the UNESCO Director in Baghdad and other relevant institutions, e.g. ICMPD, IOM, INTERPOL and EUROPOL.

Workshops on anti-organised crime, counter-terrorism and border management have brought together experts from INTERPOL, the Italian Carabinieri (Cultural Heritage Protection Unit) and the International Council of Museums with senior Iraqi officials and experts from the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Culture. These events have covered a variety of aspects such as network building and information-exchange, cooperation between national and international agencies, and strengthening of collective efforts on prevention and investigations.

In coordination with UNESCO, the mission has supported the Minister of Culture to launch a cultural heritage protection awareness campaign for Iraqi students. Moreover, it has advised the Ministry of Interior (MoI), the Office of National Security Advisor (ONSA), the Ministry of Culture and other relevant counterparts on their capability development to counter illegal trafficking of cultural heritage goods.

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In May 2021, EUAM Iraq received German funding for identification of opportunities for the establishment of a National Database for Cultural Heritage Protection (CHP). The database is to be set up at the national level containing certified law enforcement information on stolen and missing objects of cultural heritage and artefacts. At the same time, the mission envisages to enhance cooperation and strengthen the relationship between different institutions (the Ministry of Interior Federal Intelligence and Investigation Agency (FIIA), its Directorate General of Countering Organised Crime – and its Counter Trafficking Artworks Crimes Unit; the Ministry of Culture; the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH) and its Artworks Recovery Department), encouraging them to collaborate in the same specific project.

Under the current mandate, which started on 1 May 2022, the mission will conduct a set of activities on Countering Organised Crime, Protection of Cultural Heritage and Effective Border Management.

**EUMM Georgia** has improved its organisational capacity and streamlined its work on monitoring tangible and intangible cultural heritage in the conflict affected zones on both sides of the Administrative Boundary Lines (ABL) with the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The mission has increased the use of satellite imagery and open sources of information; and strengthened its reporting capacity, *inter alia*, by appointing cultural heritage Focal Points in the three field offices of the mission operating in the vicinity of both breakaway regions. It has also extended the mission's Confidence Building Facility's funding to small scale projects aimed at promoting cooperation on aspects of cultural heritage between communities and civil society actors on both sides of the ABL.

**EULEX Kosovo\*** has supported the establishment and provided technical assistance to the Kosovo Police Religious and Cultural Heritage Unit. The mission also follows through the justice system cases falling under the category of hate crimes, which includes attacks on religious or cultural heritage sites based on ethnic or other bias. EULEX judges adjudicate on sensitive property claims, including the claims of Orthodox monasteries.

### 3. SUSTAINABLE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

The deliberate destruction of cultural heritage is widely recognised as a possible indicator or precursor of future mass violence, as it is used to eradicate the history and artefacts that are central to a population's culture and identity. When conducted systematically, and on a large scale, the deliberate destruction of cultural heritage is also defined in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) as a war crime. The destruction of cultural heritage has played a prominent role in the ongoing conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Mali. Illustrative examples were the 2012 attacks on the shrines and mausolea of Timbuktu by Islamists groups in the northern regions of Mali.

The protection and enhancement of cultural heritage therefore presents a tangible opportunity for the EU to realise its commitment to preventive action. Over the reported period, the EU together with implementing partners has continued, started and planned new projects aiming at protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage all around the world.

In sub-Saharan Africa, a series of projects have been developed in the following countries:

- Cameroon

*Bridging the gap: safeguarding peace and human rights by promoting intercultural dialogue in North West Cameroon* (2018 - 2021), budget: EUR 422,907, implementing partners: United Purpose, Mbororo Social and Cultural Development Association (MBOSCUDA), North West Farmers Organisation (NOWEFOR).

The objective of the project was to improve social cohesion and mutual understanding in the conflict-affected North West region of Cameroon through the promotion of dialogue platforms and communal environmental resource management. It supported local civil society actors, the national commission for multiculturalism and public outreach campaigns to promote cultural and minority rights through diverse means.

*Legends for Peace* (2021-2022) funded through the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF ACP-EU Culture Programme, budget: EUR 55,056, implemented by La Liberté Arts Group in conflict-affected North West region of Cameroon.

The project aims at preserving the heritage culture, supporting artists and promoting peace in Cameroon. The project will engage diverse local talents and support theatrical and musical

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production, drawing from local myths and legends of union and tolerance between the people of Cameroon. The artistic performances will be presented in the Grassfield region (West and North-West) and filmed as a docu-fiction.

- Eritrea

*Capacity building for safeguarding Asmara's historic urban environment (2016-2022)*, budget: EUR 297,722, implementing partners: Asmara Heritage Project, Politecnico di Milano (co-applicant).

The project focuses on enhancing local capacity building for the safeguarding of Asmara's Historic Urban Environment. The planned activities include finalisation of the Conservation Master Plan, stimulation of social and economic development, training and public awareness raising. Various training and public awareness events were held, however, COVID-19 delayed the implementation.

*Digital Technologies and Cultural Heritage Preservation in Eritrea: a Framework for an Improved Action (2019-2023)*, budget: EUR 300,000, implementing partner: Università di Pavia.

The project aims to foster and improve the quality of Digital Cultural Heritage Initiatives (DCHI) in Eritrea (training, mentoring, awareness raising and preparing the National Archive and Library Policy of Eritrea). A total of 388 books have been identified and registered, various workshops and training activities conducted and procurement for the digital library completed.

- Mali

*Rehabilitation of Cultural Heritage and Safeguarding of Ancient Manuscripts of Mali (Phase II) (2017-2021)*, budget EUR 500,000, implementing partner: UNESCO.

The phase II of the project, which aimed at contributing to stability and local development through the valorisation and protection of cultural heritage, was completed at the end of 2021. The project's achievements include: training of young people on rehabilitation techniques; rehabilitation of the monument Al Farouk in Timbuktu; rehabilitation of 10 monumental houses in Djenné and the house Heinrich Barth in Timbuktu; protection and rehabilitation works of four mosques in Timbuktu; emergency conservation works of ancient manuscripts

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that were transferred to Bamako during the conflict; strengthening capacities of police and customs officers on the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural goods; support to the preparation of a framework document on the protection and management of ancient Malian manuscripts; a study on the economic and social value of cultural heritage in the context of the management and resolution of conflicts.

- Somalia

*Leveraging Puntland's Cultural and Sports Heritage in Enhancing Community Resilience and State Building* (2020 –2024), budget: EUR 400,000, implementing partner: KAALO.

The overall objective of the project is to promote gender and youth inclusion in peace and state building in Puntland. Through culture, arts and sports. The project has created opportunities for strengthening Puntland's Culture, Art and Sports sector given its role in advocacy messaging and public communication on key issues affecting society. In support of sustainable talent management, 200 cultural artists and athletes have so far gained advocacy and human rights management skills.

*Berbera Cultural Centre* (2020 –2023), budget: EUR 400,000, implementing partner: Redsea Online Culture Foundation.

The overall objective is to support the development of a cohesive and inclusive society through culture and heritage. The construction of the Berbera Cultural centre is yet to start. However, trainings in theatrical production, art exhibitions, heritage preservation and poetry competitions have taken place.

*Laasgeel site: Supporting preservation of the historical heritage site* (2020 –2021), budget: EUR 199,969, implementing partner: Redsea Online Culture Foundation.

The aim of the project was to contribute to the preservation and promotion of Laasgeel Heritage site as a tourist attraction site and develop local economy as well as to support safe and inclusive spaces that promote democratic processes, accountability and social inclusion at community, regional and national levels. The project has produced an environmental best practice guide and more than 100-word list of terminologies for tourism in Somali language which are vital guidelines to enhance both environmental friendly tourism and effective communications with Somali tourists. Preservation, restoration and accessibility of the site

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has been ensured. Four public events have been organized to stimulate debate on key issues relating cultural heritage, citizenship and heritage preservation.

- Sudan

*Sudan and Europe-Creative Connections* (2019-2022), budget: EUR 350,000, implementing partner: EUNIC cluster through Goethe Institute.

The main objectives of the project are to reinforce the promotion and sustainable development of culture in Sudan and to strengthen the cultural relationship between Sudan and EU. It also aims to improve understanding of the value of Cultural Heritage of Sudan through creation of steering committee and executive team composed of international, local and students of archaeology. The project will identify suitable content for youth between the ages 18 – 25 to learn about the artefacts of National Museum of Sudan through audio guide technology.

- South Sudan

*Enhancing Civil Society Through Evidence-Based Analysis of Conflict Dynamics and Human Rights Challenges, Promoting Local Women Voices in Research Development and Heritage Preservation in South Sudan* (2020 - 2023), budget: EUR 1,224,295, implementing partner: Rift Valley Institute.

As regards cultural heritage, the project supports the preservation of the South Sudan National Archives as one of its components. A key partner for this work is the Ministry of Culture. The Greater Upper Nile and Greater Equatoria are well represented in the archival collection through previous work and the current project is now bringing documents from Greater Bahr El-Ghazal into the collection. There are also other known collections in the country that are to be assessed and archived.

In **the Middle East and North Africa region**, the implementation of ongoing projects continued and new projects were started in:

- Egypt

*Cultural Heritage for the living in the “City of the Dead”* (2017 - 2022), budget: EUR 1,049,520, out of which EU contribution is EUR 944,630, implementing partners: Ministry of Solidarity and UNDP.

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The project aims at the conservation of key Mamluk monuments as a driver for the socio-economic development of the local population. The EU has funded so far three main projects in the City of the Dead.

- Iraq

*Job creation in the rehabilitation of old cities of Mosul and Basra (2019-2024)*, budget: EUR 20 million, implementing partner: UNESCO.

Part of the projects “Reviving the Spirit of Mosul and Basra” promotes social cohesion, job creation and reconciliation through the restoration and reconstruction of historic urban landscapes.

*Job creation in the rehabilitation of old cities of Mosul and Basra / promotion of micro-enterprises (2021-2022)*, budget: EUR 13 million, implementing partners: UNESCO-IOM.

In addition to the above, this project will contribute to economic recovery as well as to social cohesion through creation of decent jobs in re-construction of historical urban centres of Mosul and Basra as well as support Small and Medium Enterprises active in various sectors and the cultural and creative industries.

*Support to livelihood through cultural heritage development in Kurdistan region (2019-2023)*, budget: EUR 4.5 million through EU Trust Fund MADAD, implementing partner: UNESCO.

The project has supported livelihoods through cultural heritage development, created jobs and promoted the sustainable development of heritage assets in the region. The project is contributing to the revitalization of Erbil Citadel and the Charsteen Cave in Dohuk, with the involvement of Syrian refugees, vulnerable host communities and displaced Iraqis working on the sites.

- Israel

*Safeguarding the Indigenous Heritage in public spaces (2020-2022)*, budget: EUR 307,497, implementing partners: Emek Shaveh (lead) and the Arab Culture Association (ACA).

The aim of the project is to combat discrimination against the Arab communities in the public space of Israel, demand the historical heritage rights and foster an Israeli historical landscape that fully represents its multifaceted heritage. The specific objectives are – *inter alia* - to raise awareness of the importance of preserving the cultural heritage of minority groups in Israel and to challenge discriminatory policies when it comes to heritage sites in the public space.

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- Jordan

*Support to livelihoods through cultural heritage development in Jordan (2019-2023)*, budget: EUR 6.5 million through EU Trust Fund MADAD, implementing partner: UNESCO.

The main objective is to create decent job opportunities through employment intensive methods applied to the safeguarding of cultural heritage in the northern districts of Jordan and Iraq. In Jordan, the programme targets almost 2,500 Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians, working on six heritage sites in Northern Jordan.

- Lebanon

*Recovery of Housing and Culture & Creative Industries for Beirut (2021-2025)*, budget: EUR 13 million, implementing partner: UN Habitat with support from UNHCR and UNESCO.

The EU is supporting cultural heritage in Lebanon within its contribution to the Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework, which was drafted by the EU together with the United Nations and the World Bank following the Beirut Port Blast (4/08/2021). Focusing on a people-centred approach, the project aims to bridge the immediate humanitarian response and the medium-term recovery and reconstruction efforts to put Lebanon on a path of sustainable development. EU contribution is channelled via the Multi-donor Trust Fund Lebanon Financial Facility. The main components are:

- a) Support the rehabilitation of cultural heritage residential buildings and access to sustainable housing solutions for vulnerable households directly affected by the Port of Beirut explosion.
- b) Culture and Creative Industries Recovery Support.

*Liban Cinema (2022-2024)*, budget: EUR 150,000, implementing partner: Liban Cinema.

The aim of the project is to support the Lebanese intangible cultural heritage of cinema producers as key actors of the film industry through access to funding and entrepreneurship skills to better cope with the current highly challenging context in Lebanon.

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- Libya

*Strengthening Local Capacity for Resilience and Recovery* (2020-2021), budget: EUR 18 million, implementing partner: UNDP.

The restoration of the non-historical and historical buildings (Service Offices and Entrances) of the Roman Theatre in Sabratha City was launched in 2020. The restoration and rehabilitation of the Roman Theatre, Service Offices and Entrance Gates have been concluded. The technical evaluation has been carried out for the Restoration of the Roman Theatre (Historical part). The draft of installing a Surveillance System in Subratha Archeological Sites has been also finalised.

- The Occupied Palestinian Territory

*Cultural rights for inclusive and equitable Palestinian development process* (2021-2024), budget: EUR 998,419, implementing partner: Rozana Association for the Development of Architectural Heritage.

The aim of the project is to place cultural rights at the heart of Palestinian development policies and to ensure an inclusive and equitable development process. The planned activities include enhancing the capacities of cultural and touristic civil society organisations to raise public awareness, documenting violations and impacting decision-making for inclusive cultural rights at local and national levels.

*Palestinian Cultural Radio* (2021-2024), budget: EUR 499,996, implementing partner: Goethe-Institute e.V.

The project aims to promote Palestinian cultural expression and national identity as well as to contribute to overcoming the geographical and social fragmentation of Palestinian civil society. Specifically, it will enhance the development of independent and critical cultural audio content and audio journalism in remote and marginalised communities in Palestine.

*Stories of Palestine - Palestinian communities promote their culture* (2020-2023), budget: EUR 500,000 implementing partner: Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V.

The aim of the project is to strengthen adult education centres in Palestinian rural areas in fostering cultural education and action. Specifically, eight community-based adult education centres will enhance their capacities in the provision of cultural actions that promote local cultural heritage. The focus will be on active civic engagement of local women, men and

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youth with special attention on values of tolerance and respect of cultural diversity. Moreover, the targeted communities will enhance their engagement in artistic expression through increased opportunities for quality cultural education and action.

*A community living museum for Palestinian youth (2020-2023)*, budget EUR 927,000, implementing partner: Associazione di Terra Santa.

The project will preserve and promote the archaeological and artistic heritage of Christianity. A comprehensive educational programme for Palestinian Jerusalemites youth and families will be developed and promoted to help them understand the value of the Palestinian history and culture. It will also increase the awareness of cultural heritage preservation and its importance for the socio-economic growth of local communities.

- Tunisia

*Patrimoine 3000 (2019-2024)*, budget: EUR 16.5 million, implementing partners Expertise France and French Ministry of Culture.

This project aims at supporting the development of cultural heritage and is part of the Tounes Wijhetouna (“Tunisia: Our Destination”) which supports the diversification of tourism, the development of handicrafts and the promotion of cultural heritage.

Tounes Wijhetouna aims to help diversify Tunisia’s tourism offer by creating synergies between the tourism, crafts, regional products and cultural heritage sectors. To be effective, these synergies need to be based on a qualitative strengthening of each of these sectors. The programme’s overall objective is to contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic development in Tunisia.

- Yemen

*Cash for Work: Promoting Livelihood Opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen (2018 - 2022)*, budget: EUR 10 million, implementing partner: UNESCO.

Aimed at increasing youth participation in cultural heritage protection and access to media and information as confidence-building measures for peace, the project has surveyed almost 16,000 historical buildings; stabilized and/or rehabilitated 169 historical buildings consisting mainly of private houses and public spaces; enrolled more than 2,000 young workers (almost 10% are young women) providing around 105,000 working days for urban rehabilitation

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works only; created small jobs opportunities for almost 400 youth under 35 (including 48% culture operators who are young women); organized capacity building for over 60 young culture operators in cultural management and communication; provided 18 grants to 14 cultural associations to boost viable business models and income-generation in the creative sector; and disbursed small grants for 18 projects involving cultural civil society organisations to improve youth access to arts training and activities. A second phase of the project was adopted in December 2021.

*Cash for Work Phase II: Supporting youth economic resilience in Yemen through job creation in heritage rehabilitation and creative industries (2022-2024)*, budget: EUR 20 million, implementing partner: UNESCO.

This project is a continuation of the above Cash for Work intervention, which builds upon existing resources and models (damage assessment reports, urban rehabilitation guidelines). With this new phase, the geographical scope of the project is expanded to two new governorates (Sa'ada and Socotra). The project will also reach approximately 8,500 low-income male and female youth and their household members, equipping them with skills, knowledge and tools to ensure their financial sustainability. The project will further support 80 young artists and eight civil society organisations through funding, capacity building, technical assistance and networking to help them sustain viable business models in the creative industries via an incubation programme.

In **Asia**, the EU has been implementing projects in:

- Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan

*Silk Roads Heritage Corridors in Afghanistan, Central Asia and Iran (2018 –2022)*, budget: EUR 4.4 million, implementing partner: UNESCO.

The aim is to promote the contribution of culture to sustainable development, notably through heritage-based tourism development. The activities aim to contribute to improving livelihoods of the communities in the region, including youth and women, through capacity-building and the creation of opportunities for income-generation and jobs; rehabilitation of historical sites and technical assistance to local communities.

In Afghanistan, the project conducted community-based inventorying and other safeguarding activities of intangible cultural heritage. Two workshops on community-based inventorying

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of intangible cultural heritage were organised in Bamiyan, gathering 100 participants, including practitioners involved in textiles; representatives from NGOs who are themselves traditional craft makers; representatives from the Bamiyan University; representatives from the Bamiyan Department of Information and Culture; representatives from the Ministry of Information and Culture (MoIC) from Herat and Nangarhar provinces; and one representative from the Department of People's Culture. At the moment, development support, including to cultural heritage, to Afghanistan remains frozen since the fall of the constitutionally elected Government in August 2021, in line with the EU's 5 benchmarks on Afghanistan.

In Uzbekistan a madrassa was rehabilitated and the Bogbonli Mosque in Khiva was conserved. In Kyrgyzstan the Second Buddhist temple in Krasnaya Rechka was restored and conserved. In Iran the restoration of four domes of Yengi Emam Caravansary was completed. In Kazakhstan conservation work of Citadel Shakhristan at Kulan site is planned to be launched. Seven Management Plans (MP) for the cultural sites on the World Heritage (WH) and Tentative Lists of Kyrgyzstan and four MPs for the sites of Tajikistan were finalized to be submitted to the relevant national authorities for their consideration and approval.

- Bangladesh

*Silent Heritage project* (2021), budget: EUR 10,000, implementing partners: EUNIC Bangladesh, EU Delegation to Bangladesh, Bengal Institute for Architecture, Landscapes and Settlements.

The project undertook the documentation and display of selected buildings and their societal/environmental context of a certain period within the perimeter of greater Dhaka city. It was showcased as a 'digital exhibition', with provisions for future physical exhibitions and publications.

- Sri Lanka

*Preservation of traditional creative handloom industry* (December 2021 – June 2022), budget: EUR 32,000, implementing partner: Cultural Relation Platform (led by Goethe Institute).

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The project aims at contributing to the preservation of one of Sri Lanka's traditional creative industries and intangible heritage, which has been fragilised during the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Education and awareness-raising on intangible cultural heritage* (2022 – July 2022), budget: EUR 10,000, implementing partner: Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art.

The project aims, through the medium of art, to sensitise audiences, in particular the young to contemporary political and social issues in Sri Lanka.

In **Europe**, projects aimed at protection of cultural heritage have been developed in the Western Balkans region and the Eastern Partnership countries, Ukraine included (in addition to the emergency actions for the protection of cultural heritage mentioned in Part I).

- Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus<sup>6</sup>, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine)

*EU4Culture* (2021-2024), budget: EUR 7,850,000 (European Neighbourhood Instrument), implementing partners: Goethe-Institute (lead), the Danish Culture Institute, Czech Centres and the Institut Français.

The EU4Culture project aims to contribute to making culture an engine for growth and social development across the six countries of Eastern Partnership (EaP) region: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. It supports the enhancement of the role of the cultural sector as driver of economic development. Through its interregional approach, the project promotes intercultural dialogue and knowledge exchange across the EaP partner countries. EU4Culture contributes to improving local governance in the culture sector through support for regulatory processes and participative policy dialogue. The project places culture, the creative industries and cultural heritage sites at its core. These all carry a huge potential for sustainable policies with a broad effect.

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<sup>6</sup> As of 28 June 2021, Belarus has suspended its participation in the Eastern Partnership.

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- Republic of Moldova

*EU Support to Confidence Building Measures*, Component 3 - Cultural Heritage (2019 - 2023), budget for Cultural Heritage component is about EUR 4 million, implementing partner: UNDP.

The project aims to support cultural heritage conservation/restoration on both banks of the Nistru river.

Achievements: restoration/rehabilitation of historical monuments of national importance: 1) Bender Fortress (works are ongoing) and 2) Chisinau National Circus (in procurement stage);

10 smaller scale restoration projects of cultural heritage items on both banks of the Nistru river: 1) Macri family tomb in Dubăsarii Vechi, 2) Water tower in Soldanesti, 3) Museum of Doroțcaia, 4) Wind Mill from Gaidar, 5) Moldova film cartoons restoration, 6) Synagogue ruins of Rașcov, 7) Bender higher art school (auditorium), 8) Wind tower of Stroienti, 9) Church ruins of Rașcov and 10) Beloci water mill.

- Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia)

*Fighting against the illicit trafficking of cultural property in the Western Balkans* (2020 - 2023), budget EUR 2,8 million, implementing partner: UNESCO.

The project aims to improve legal, technical and institutional frameworks in the Western Balkans for protecting moveable cultural heritage by reinforcing the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural goods. It enables the assessment of the state of play of the legal, institutional and policy frameworks in the Western Balkans, capacity-building and awareness-raising needs.

*Regional programme to support culture and creativity in the Western Balkans* (2022 - 2026), budget: EUR 8 million, implementing partners: UNESCO, Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo and British Council.

The objective is to foster reconciliation and good neighbourly relations in the Western Balkans through culture. The project promotes intercultural dialogue and enhances the socio-economic impact of the cultural and creative sector in the Western Balkans, through a multi-sectorial approach targeting public authorities, the private sector and civil society

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organisations in culture. Specific Objectives: (1) to improve the performance of the cultural and creative sector in the Western Balkans; (2) to strengthen cultural cooperation within and with the Western Balkans; and (3) to enhance inclusive cultural heritage for local development.

- Kosovo\*

*Cultural Heritage as a Driver for Intercommunity Social Cohesion*” (2020-2022), budget: EUR 2 million, implementing partner: UNDP.

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to improved inter-community trust through cultural heritage protection, ultimately leading to stronger social cohesion. This is achieved through rehabilitating select cultural and religious sites through a participatory and consultative process with local communities, municipalities, and religious institutions as well as through promoting intangible cultural heritage as a source of economic empowerment and inter-ethnic dialogue with a focus on women and young people.

- North Macedonia

*SMART-CUL-TOUR* (2019-2021), budget: EUR 704,590, out of which EU contribution is EUEUR 598,901 (85 %), implementing partner: Municipality of Bitola – Lead Partner.

The overall objective was to develop potential of tourism by promoting cultural heritage and values. It contributed to the protection and promotion of cultural heritage in Municipality of Pustec; initiated cooperation, understanding and respect of cultural heritage in the crossborder region; improved touristic offer and increased number of visitors in the region; increased public awareness on cultural heritage values.

- North Macedonia and Albania

*Discovering hidden attractions* (2019-2021), budget: EUR 455,633, out of which EU contribution is EUR 387,288 (85%), main implementing partners: Municipality of Demir Hisar (North Macedonia); Municipality of Klos (Albania).

The objective is to promote cultural and natural heritage of the cross-border target destination as a touristic attraction. This has included *inter alia*: infrastructural works for the reconstruction of the Cooperative into Cultural Center in the v.Sloestica in Demir Hisar

municipality, the museum in Klos Municipality, the upgrading of the natural attraction of “Valavici”, marking Gurra Kaculit, Gryke e Xhabes, Ura Vashes, and Petralba and Xibrit castles into touristic attraction and places for recreation.

#### **4. THE FIGHT AGAINST ILLICIT TRAFFICKING OF CULTURAL PROPERTY**

Looting of cultural heritage and illicit trafficking of cultural property represent a major security concern. Such actions can constitute a way to access funds for the financing of criminal or terrorist activities and are often linked with money laundering. Fighting against illicit trafficking of cultural property is thus a way to foster security and help the stabilisation process in conflicts and crises. Preventing looting and fighting against illicit trafficking of cultural heritage has been a priority for CSDP, some missions (e.g. EUAM Iraq), having these tasks included in their mandates.

In order to set out a comprehensive approach to fighting organised crime, the EU Security Union Strategy and the EU Strategy to tackle Organised Crime for 2021-2025 have identified the need for reinforced EU action on trafficking in cultural goods. In this context, the European Commission committed itself to adopt by the end of 2022 an action plan on tackling the illicit trade in cultural goods.

The main objective of the action plan is the creation of one framework bringing together different policy initiatives and reinforcing the implementation of existing EU and international rules, given that several Directorates-General and Services of the European Commission are engaged and responsible for the implementation of existing EU laws, initiatives or funding instruments related to the fight against trafficking of cultural goods.

The value added of the action plan will include identifying gaps and exploring new avenues as well as streamlining existing activities in order to avoid duplication of action on the one hand and on the other hand mutually reinforcing projects and initiatives from different actors. The scope of the action plan will be comprehensive, including actions from prevention to prosecution, and encompass both the EU internal and external dimensions.

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The action plan will address all relevant aspects of the fight against trafficking of cultural goods. This includes the following aspects:

- better intelligence picture, by enhancing the understanding of the money laundering and terrorist financing risks stemming from the trade in cultural goods;
- better law enforcement capabilities, by allowing for the access of law enforcement professionals to the expertise of art historians and archaeologists, improving use of data bases;
- better cooperation between relevant actors, such as law enforcement, customs, art market professionals, etc. (law enforcement, customs but also private sector: drawing on their expertise; and also in terms of cooperation with online platforms regarding illegal sales on the internet);
- heightened awareness for risks and methods associated with trafficking in cultural goods, for example with art market professionals, the financial sector, or the general public;
- enhanced transparency of the art and antiquities trade within the EU, for example through strengthening due diligence for professional art dealers;
- better use of EU tools of cooperation, for example strengthening of the EU CULTNET informal network of specialized Member States law enforcement services, which also includes further stakeholders such as non-EU countries;
- enhanced cooperation between relevant internal and external policy areas such as justice and home affairs and common security and defence policy cooperation;
- the action plan will also explore ways for stronger international cooperation with non-EU countries (such as those where cultural goods originate) as well as international organisations such as UNESCO, UNODC, WCO including standard setting bodies such as FATF (the Financial Action Task Force).

The action plan on tackling the illicit trade in cultural goods supports EU operational approach for cultural heritage in conflicts and crises and will further contribute to EU efforts to foster peace and security – illicit trafficking of cultural property representing a way to access to funds, including for the financing of criminal and terrorist activities.

## 5. INTEGRATION IN THE FINANCING INSTRUMENTS

In June 2021, the European Parliament adopted the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI-Global Europe). With an overall allocation of EUR 79.5 billion (2021-2027), the new financing instrument covers the EU cooperation with all third countries, except for the pre-accession beneficiaries and the overseas countries and territories.

As of May 2022, 84 country, 1 multi-country and 3 regional multi-indicative programmes (MIPs) were adopted (for Sub-Sahara Africa, Asia and the Pacific and the Americas and the Caribbean). For the Neighbourhood, 5 country and 2 regional MIPs have been adopted so far. A MIP for ERASMUS+, co-financed by NDICI-Global Europe and IPA III was also adopted in the summer 2021. All the country, multi-country and regional MIPs will be complemented by four thematic MIPs also adopted end 2021: on Human Rights and Democracy; Civil Society Organisations; Peace, Stability and Conflict prevention and Global Challenges.

In defining the priorities included in each MIP, active engagement took place in order to include adequate language to support the implementation of the EU Concept on cultural heritage in conflicts and crises, which enhances the EU's approach to peace, security and development. While the exact amounts to be engaged for the protection of cultural heritage cannot be determined in advance, NDICI-Global Europe provides a wide range of options to promote cultural heritage as a tool for supporting peace.

Cultural heritage can be addressed in all the three pillars of NDICI-Global Europe: geographic, thematic and rapid response (non-programmable), and actions can be implemented through partner governments, civil society organisations, local authorities, private sector, and/or international organisations (e.g. UNESCO).

Under the geographic pillar of NDICI-Global Europe through the country MIPs, “cultural heritage” is mentioned at various degrees:

- “Cultural heritage” is included as a priority / specific objective / result – and is part of the toolbox to support the creation of a culture for peace. Hence, when specifically mentioned, the promotion and preservation of cultural heritage is either linked to governance and intercultural dialogue as a vector for social cohesion and conflict prevention (e.g. Sri Lanka, Mozambique ), or to economic factors such as job creation, tourism, involving also youth (e.g. Benin, Botswana, Ghana, Kyrgyzstan,

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Laos, Tanzania, Togo). In most cases, the partner countries have included the preservation of cultural heritage as part of their National Development Strategies.

- “Cultural heritage” is also a priority for some EU Member States in their activities in partner countries, and e.g. in Vietnam and Pakistan, the topic is addressed as part of the Team Europe Initiatives.
- Promotion of “cultural heritage” indirectly through support to cultural actors or NGOs promoting a culture of peace under the MIPs support measures (part of every country MIP).
- Indirectly preservation of “cultural heritage – tangible and intangible” is also addressed either through a) support to local cultural actors or to activities supporting intercultural dialogue (e.g. Guatemala, Mauritania, Tanzania); b) through a governance lens (conflict prevention as priority - e.g. for Philippines, Iraq, Angola).

However, it is important to note that in several geographic MIPs it was not found opportune to mention this thematic area even if the country concerned has a rich recognised cultural heritage.

The Multiannual Indicative Regional Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa includes a Specific Objective on culture: “Enhance cultural co-creation and intercultural dialogue between the EU and Africa and among African countries, and facilitate greater cooperation to protect and promote cultural heritage” and an expected result on cultural heritage: “African cultural heritage is protected and promoted, becoming a vector for social cohesion, stability, cultural tourism, jobs and sustainable growth”.

The promotion of the culture for peace and the preservation of cultural heritage is one of the novelties included in the adopted MIP for Peace, Stability and Conflict Prevention under Global Europe thematic pillar. Hence, specific objective 4 of priority 2 focuses on promotion of peace values and a culture of non-violence – and in particular to increased engagement to protect and enhance the value of culture and cultural heritage, be it tangible or intangible, as a component for peace and reconciliation (result 1). Not least, the EU could also seek to curb the illicit exploitation and trade in tangible cultural heritage and its role in enabling and financing conflicts.

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The Rapid Response pillar of NDICI-Global Europe is non-programmable, and, as its name suggests, part of its budget can be used to quickly respond to urgent needs when a crisis erupts. If a country in conflict request support to safeguard, track or evacuate artefacts as a matter of urgency due to immediate danger of destruction, the rapid response pillar may provide the necessary support. Concretely, this funding was used during the Russian aggression of Ukraine, in support to national museums to safeguard their collections (see section 1 of the report).

### 6. COOPERATION WITH PARTNERS

The cooperation with partner organisations and civil society plays a very important role in promoting the protection of cultural heritage in conflicts and crises and is in line with EU Integrated Approach. All the projects described in the present report have been implemented in cooperation with partners, *inter alia*, UNESCO, Goethe Institute, ALIPH Foundation, the Arab Culture Association (ACA), as well as local institutes and museums.

Strengthening partnerships with international organisations is also at the core of the EU's external relations, notably with UNESCO.

In line with the objectives of the Joint Communication on strengthening the EU's contribution to rules-based multilateralism, the EU – UNESCO partnership is being developed in the framework of the “Working Better Together” initiative. Within this framework, the EU and UNESCO pursue common strategic priorities and the most adequate means to take these priorities forward together, in a coordinated manner. During the sectorial consultations of May 2021 the EU and UNESCO services agreed that protecting cultural heritage and building resilience is one of the three pillars of the EU - UNESCO cooperation in the field of culture. Under this pillar, EU and UNESCO cooperate in order to achieve their common objectives related to: the protection of cultural heritage in conflicts and crises; the promotion of environmental sustainability and resilience through culture; as well as the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural goods. These areas of strategic cooperation are pursued, at an operational level, through a set of substantial, visible initiatives, Team Europe included. These initiatives are intended to capitalize on all UNESCO's functions and the comparative advantages it can put forth, as a partner: Laboratory of ideas (anticipating and responding to emerging trends); Standard setter; Clearinghouse (promoting the development, implementation and dissemination of successful EU policies and practices); Capacity-builder (as implementing partner, developing capacities of third country EU partners); Catalyst for international cooperation.

The EU and its MS are the largest voluntary contributors to the UNESCO budget, during the 2020-2021 biennium providing almost 40% of the funds mobilized by UNESCO. As UNESCO still faces a difficult financial situation owing to the suspension in late 2011 of contributions of Israel and the US (22% of assessed contributions in 2012-2013), contributions by the EU and its Member States are even more vital.

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Advancing towards a more strategic cooperation, the EU and UNESCO currently benefit from a dynamic cooperation at the level of a number of both geographical flagship projects like:

- *“Rehabilitation of Cultural Heritage and Safeguarding of Ancient Manuscripts of Mali”*;
- *“Revive the Spirit of Mosul”, in Iraq*;
- *“Supporting youth economic resilience in Yemen through job creation in heritage rehabilitation and creative industries”*;
- *“Support to livelihoods through cultural heritage”* in Jordan and Iraq;

and thematic, like Fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property -1970 Convention projects:

- *Inter-regional and crosscutting action aiming to strengthen the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property: an EU-UNESCO joint initiative*;
- *Fighting illicit trafficking of cultural property in the Western Balkans* (see more details in Section 3 of the report)

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