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## POLICY BRIEF WITH RECOMMENDATIONS ON ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR POLICY MAKERS

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Based on the underlying understanding of cultural heritage as a potential contributor and resource for sustainable development and considering the lack of shared standards for the holistic impact assessment, the Horizon 2020 project 'SoPHIA – Social Platform for Holistic Heritage Impact Assessment' has sought to open the debate on the holistic assessment of cultural heritage interventions, to build consensus on it, to support the European Commission in the definition of guidelines for the next generation of structural funds for cultural heritage and to support stakeholders in cultural heritage in assessing the impact of their interventions, in view of the sustainability and resilience of cultural heritage.

The SoPHIA policy briefs represent research work focused on specific policies and problems policymakers and implementers face within this framework. Their purpose is to convince policymakers to change the direction of a particular policy by changing their perception. For this to happen, the policy briefs aim to accurately present the problems that policy is facing as well as to propose a solution to these problems by providing clear recommendations to policymakers.

## Introduction

The SoPHIA model to assess the impact of cultural heritage (CH) interventions is based on three axes: Domains, People, Time. Sustainability and resilience are both linked to the multifaceted aspects of the concept of impact (domains), to the complex interactions and interdependencies between resources and stakeholders (people) and to the balance between current needs and the legacy to next generations (time). The Domains axis, concerning cultural, social, economic and environmental impacts, refers to six themes and 28 sub-themes.

This Brief focuses on the need to enrich the evidence available on cultural heritage policies, and specifically on the economic impact of interventions on cultural heritage.

“Reliable, comparable and up-to-date cultural statistics are the basis of the sound cultural policy-making and therefore statistics are a cross-sectorial priority [...] in order to ensure the regular production and dissemination of statistics on culture” (Council of the European Union, 2015).

The need for this Brief arises from a widely recognised scarcity of high-quality data needed to populate indicators and fill the various impact assessment and evaluation models developed over the recent decades. As a matter of fact, starting from the 90s, a considerable amount of economic data on cultural heritage has been produced (also thanks to sectoral and non-sectoral European projects). However, the overall picture is still incomplete. In fact, the necessary data is scarce or unattainable, and two major problems need to be addressed:

- at the EU-level, culture, and especially cultural heritage statistics, depend on data collections and administrative sources which are not tailored *ad-hoc* to culture but address the general economy, society, and the environment;
- Culture and cultural heritage data produced by the Member States, as they reflect different cultural policies, differ to a high degree, and are only partially comparable.

Often, the data we need for purposes of study, management and policymaking are not available. It is not easy for scholars, practitioners, and decision-makers to gather fine-grained data at the local level and then harmonise them with due accuracy, relevance, pertinence and timing. This makes it hard to design detailed plans and build effective models for accounting for the effects of interventions, and it nullifies

efforts at international comparisons. These problems are severe when it comes to assessing the economic impacts of interventions on culture and cultural heritage<sup>1</sup>.

While fine-grained and locally-based statistics stem from robust national policies, the EU defines the framework in which these policies flourish. EU-level policies have a relevant role in increasing the quantity and improving the quality of statistical information available on cultural heritage. In fact, this result can be achieved by prioritising culture statistics and supporting targeted harmonised data collections through specific technical assistance and training programmes.

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<sup>1</sup> An example of this information gap is represented by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), which funds over 80% of the total EU support to Culture. For 2014-2020, the European Regional Development Fund - ERDF alone allocated 4,773 M euros, of which 4,354 under category 094 - Protection, development and promotion of public cultural and heritage assets, and 435 M euros under category 095 - Development and promotion of public cultural and heritage services. However, data for assessing the impact of such investment, spread over six thematic objectives, are not easy to analyse, as Culture or Cultural heritage are not even mentioned among the possible keys for navigating the Cohesion data portal (<https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/>).

## Evidence and analysis

### The political and economic relevance of cultural heritage

At the EU level, the political and economic relevance of cultural heritage is steadily, if slowly, growing, especially since 2016, when the decision was made to celebrate all around the Union Cultural Heritage with a dedicated European Year, 2018. One of the key documents upon which the Year was grounded states the following roles and related areas of impact of the Cultural Heritage, and relative policies and measures to promote:

- **European cultural heritage as a strategic contributor to the economy and society through its direct and indirect economic potential.** This includes the capacity to underpin the cultural and creative industries, inspire creation and innovation, promote sustainable tourism, and generate long-term local employment.
- **European cultural heritage as a pivotal component of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue.** Policies must address its conservation and safeguarding and its enjoyment by a wider and more diversified public, including through audience development measures and heritage education, in full respect of the competencies of the Member States, thereby promoting social inclusion and integration.
- **European cultural heritage as an important element of the EU’s international dimension,** building on the interest in partner countries for Europe’s heritage and expertise. Heritage plays a major role in several programmes in external relations. The promotion of cultural heritage value is also a response to the deliberate destruction of cultural treasures in conflict zones (European Parliament, 2017).

The decision of dedicating 2018 to Cultural Heritage was based upon a large body of evidence, which was reinforced by a dedicated special Eurobarometer (European Union, 2017) investigating the perceptions of CH among the EU citizens in 2017<sup>2</sup>.

In its New Strategic Agenda for 2019-22 (Council of the European Union, 2019), the Council committed to “invest[ing] in culture and our cultural heritage, which are at the heart of our European identity”<sup>3</sup>. To pursue the strategic lines of both the 2015-2018 Action Plan and the New Strategic Agenda for Culture, the Commission makes clear reference to the need of improving the statistical coverage of the sector in general and

<sup>2</sup> See the section on Good practices for details.

<sup>3</sup> A new Strategic Agenda, 2019-2024, European Council.

of CH in particular, especially for what concerns evidence gathering about qualitative and quantitative impacts. Even though the production of reliable, comparable and up-to-date culture statistics is identified as a priority within both the Work Plans for Culture 2015-2018 and 2019-2022 (Eurostat, 2019), a recent Report by the European Court of Auditors (2020), underlines that:

*“The EU cultural framework is primarily defined by the Treaties. They set an overarching objective for the EU to respect its rich cultural diversity and ensure that Europe’s cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced. Culture is mainly a competence of the Member States. The Union can only encourage cooperation between Member States and support or supplement their actions.”*

### State of the art of EU cultural heritage statistics

The statistical perimeter of Culture embraces a highly fragmented matter that has intensively resented the digital revolution in its actors, processes, and products. This also applies to Cultural heritage statistics. Definitions and classifications, indispensable for harmonisation and comparison, have been last revised in 2009-2011 with the ESS-net Culture project. Shared definitions are also made difficult as a large part of the relevant phenomena are an expression of cultural diversity.

‘Cultural heritage’ is one of the fields covered by the European framework for cultural statistics (ESSnet-Culture, 2012).

As of today, the statistical information on culture economics available at the EU27 level only covers:

- Cultural employment.
- Characteristics and performance of enterprises engaged in cultural economic activities and sold production of cultural goods.
- International trade in cultural goods.
- International trade in cultural services.
- Cultural participation (practice and attendance) and culture in cities (such as satisfaction with cultural facilities of cities’ residents and ‘cultural infrastructure’).
- Private (household) expenditure on cultural goods and services.
- Price index of cultural goods and services.
- Public (government) expenditure on culture.

However, as clearly stated on Eurostat’s webpage dedicated to culture, “It is not easy to capture the cultural heritage in terms of data. Countries deal with their cultural heritage

in different ways. They have specific legislation and policies for the preservation of their cultural heritage, and different practices as regards collecting statistics”

Another source, Eurostat’s publication Culture statistics, 2019, presents some interesting, mainly qualitative, information on various economic aspects of the European cultural heritage that feature on UNESCO lists. It includes a list of sites with the European Heritage Label, a list of European Capitals of Culture, and data on the five most visited museums by country, collected by the European Group on Museum Statistics (EGMUS).

Eurostat’s page of Culture Statistics states: “At European level<sup>4</sup> several EU harmonised surveys and databases include data on topics to do with our cultural heritage. However, statistical classifications or variables often fail to distinguish cultural heritage-related items from other categories covered by broader codes (e.g., for occupations by ISCO, for public expenditure by COFOG). As regards the sector of economic activity, captured by the NACE Rev.2 classification, there is one main code relating to the cultural heritage: division 91 - ‘Libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities’. In the classification of individual consumption by purpose (COICOP), code CP09422 covers ‘Museums, libraries, zoological gardens’”.

Data about cultural heritage should therefore be found in a variety of non-targeted sources:

- The EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) provides data on employment in division 91 - ‘Libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities’.
- The Eurostat database on business demography (births and deaths of enterprises) includes annual data on NACE code 91 (but data are collected on a voluntary basis and are therefore not available for all countries).
- EU-SILC (EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions) ad hoc modules on cultural participation include the variable ‘visiting cultural sites’ (historical monuments, museums, art galleries, archaeological sites, etc.). The most recent ad hoc module on cultural participation was included in the EU-SILC in 2015; the next data set will be collected in 2022 (and after that at 6-year intervals). Currently, the following data tables are available:
  - Visiting cultural sites by sex, age, and educational attainment
  - Visiting cultural sites by income quintile, household type and degree of urbanisation
  - Reasons for non-visiting cultural sites by sex, age and educational attainment
  - Reasons for non-visiting cultural sites by income quintile, household type and degree of urbanisation.
- Statistics on private expenditure associated with the cultural heritage come from the household budget surveys (HBS) and are collected by Eurostat every five

<sup>4</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/culture/data>

years: the most recent published data refer to the 2015 wave. There is one COICOP code relating to the cultural heritage: ‘Museums, libraries, zoological gardens’.

- Statistics on prices, in terms of the harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP), provide information about the costs to consumers of services associated with the cultural heritage, e.g., index of prices for museums, libraries and zoos.

While this set of data may be useful for analysing the context of cultural heritage and some related phenomena susceptible to impact from interventions on CH, many key aspects remain not covered. Culture statistics remain de-prioritised due to conflicting perceptions about the value and role of culture and CH among the MSs and the EC and to the delicate balance of competencies between Community Authorities and MSs. Therefore, a shared EU policy on the economic dimension of CH has a very narrow field and little energy. In this framework, the commendable professional quality of the EUROSTAT team working on culture statistics and their commitment to making the very best of all available sources have probably reached their maximum capacity. No significant progress is likely to be made until culture statistics, especially those covering cultural heritage, gain political priority. **It is the political demand that sustains the production of statistics, data, and evidence, hardly the reverse.**

### Main problems in cultural statistics

- The “political” dimension of CH statistics

The crucial point of cultural heritage statistics, and culture statistics, in general, is not statistical but political and lies in the delicate balance between how individual member States conceive, define, and manage this matter and definitions and policies set at the **European Community level**. Therefore, the present brief is only partially technical, and it addresses the political dimension of the problem, taking full account of the delicate interplay between Community and National roles.

**In fact, the New European Agenda for Culture (European Commission, 2018) recognises the importance of having an adequate system of cultural statistics in place:** “The Agenda aims to add value to culture policy-making and actions at national/regional/local levels, by promoting collaboration among and within the Member States, and by informing and supporting policymaking, implementation and evaluation”. For this reason, the Agenda states that “EU should lead more on evidence-gathering: qualitative as well as quantitative impacts”. Thus, the need to “- improve evidence of impact – create a gold standard for cultural impact studies across Europe” remains among the top priorities put

forward by stakeholders<sup>5</sup>, **but are not adequately reflected in the actions taken on the EU or Member State (MS) level.**

Therefore, Eurostat only *compiles* statistics on culture from several different data collection exercises made available by the MS. Each MS in the EU collects official data on culture along different paths, by different agents, with different statistical capacity and, therefore, different process architectures and outputs. There are MSs with very limited availability of heritage statistics. In some instances, like expenditure statistics both for households (with COICOP classification) and government (COFOG classification<sup>6</sup>), data are so massively aggregated under the general label of “leisure time activities” that it is impossible to distinguish the part related to culture, the part related to sports and the part related to another kind of leisure time activities. Classifications are also difficult to share. For example, the political-operational definition of a museum changes from one state to another, directly affecting the resulting number of counted institutes. In the complete table set by EGMUS, the European Group on Museum Statistics in 2017, for instance, France recorded only 1,224 museums, because they only included those with the label “Musée de France”; Italy only 476 (while official statistics’ figures report about 4,900 museums) because only State museums were reported; Germany, following more inclusive criteria, over 6,800<sup>7</sup>. “Presently, culture statistics for the EU are not collected by a single stand-alone survey but come from different Eurostat data collections available from MSs<sup>8</sup>”. This means that no targeted data collection addresses any aspect of culture and cultural heritage, and statistics are sorted out from surveys or databases that have been conceived with an altogether different purpose in mind. Culture is not a priority for the EU statistical policy. This is what calls for a change. Culture and cultural heritage should be acknowledged as much statistical importance as they are acknowledged significant for identity; social inclusion, and social cohesion; economy and sustainable development; international relations. To sum up, there is still a wide gap between the political maturity that European institutions have achieved on cultural heritage and the availability of the necessary evidence, data and statistical information. The priority that culture and cultural heritage have gained in the overall political vision is struggling to be translated into *statistical* priorities.

<sup>5</sup> Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: A New European Agenda for Culture {COM (2018) 267 final}

<sup>6</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Culture\\_statistics\\_-\\_household\\_expenditure\\_on\\_culture](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Culture_statistics_-_household_expenditure_on_culture); [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Classification\\_of\\_the\\_functions\\_of\\_government\\_\(COFOG\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Classification_of_the_functions_of_government_(COFOG))

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.egmus.eu/nc/en/statistics/complete\\_data/](https://www.egmus.eu/nc/en/statistics/complete_data/). Accessed 7 September 2021.

<sup>8</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/culture>.

- **The data-driven approach**

So far, indicators have been constructed following a data-driven approach. This has the advantage of being practical. In that approach, measures are proposed solely based on the data already available and regularly collected by the official sources. This has been the case, for instance, of the OECD Better Life Index<sup>9</sup>. It is also, albeit partially, the approach of UNESCO's Culture 2030 Indicators (UNESCO, 2019): of the circa 22 indicators, a few were defined, despite data are not yet available. Their coverage was suggested as an important future development of culture statistics.

The weakness in the data-driven approach in this particular field is that the available data on culture are scarce and, as said, rarely collected considering the requirements of cultural policies. This is why we recommend that the data-driven approach be integrated with a demand-driven approach.

In a demand-driven approach, the starting point is a conceptual frame that disaggregates the relevant key components of a complex phenomenon into key building blocks, pillars, or domains; hence, each domain is further specified in key aspects and variables are associated with each aspect. Those variables are finally formalised as indicators, and they represent measurable phenomena with a strong logical or statistical link to the individual aspect for which they act as proxies.

The passage from a data-driven to a demand-driven approach implies that the consistency of the conceptual frame rules the subsequent passages. For the reasons we have discussed so far, a demand-driven approach requires a substantial investment in new, targeted data collections. This is the case of the SoPHIA model. One of the most evident reasons why a data-driven approach is not suitable to the perspective proposed by the SoPHIA model is the relevance of the "people's perception of the quality of an intervention", which can only be obtained through specific surveys aimed at gathering direct and indirect data on opinions, feelings, and subjective evaluations. In the next section, we propose a closer look at the SoPHIA model and, in particular, some crossovers involving sub-themes to show the nature of data that could best describe them.

### The SoPHIA model: the demand of data for economic and holistic impact assessment

The SoPHIA project has proposed a multi-domain assessment framework, structured into six themes (Social Capital and Governance, Identity of Place, Quality of Life, Education, Creativity and Innovation, Work and Prosperity and Protection), and 28 subthemes

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/>

(Inclusive Access, Participation/Engagement, Social Cohesion, Partnership, Good Governance, Identity and Memory, Visibility and Reputation, Cultural Landscape and Aesthetics, Heritage-led Regeneration and Adaptive Re-use, Living Conditions, Peace and Safety, Social Life, Environment, Regional and Local Development, Awareness Rising, Research, Digitization, Science & Technology, Arts and Creativity, Employment, Local Cultural Production, Tourism Economy, Economic Attractiveness, Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Safeguarding against environmental risks, Safeguarding against human-related risks, Green Management and Development, and Use of Resources).

Such a framework may generate a number of indicators for each subtheme and for their intersections to measure the economic, cultural, social and environmental impact of CH interventions (SoPHIA, 2021, pp.53-59). **Only a minority of them is currently likely to be filled with the data available at the EU level.** Possible examples of indicators currently not covered by regular data collection are:

Sub-themes: Cultural Landscape&Aesthetics/Quality of Life. Proposed indicators:

- *Percentage of local residents who declare themselves satisfied with the aesthetic quality of the cultural landscape;*
- *Percentage of local residents who think that the intervention has improved the aesthetic quality of the cultural landscape.*

Sub-themes: Social Life/Social Capital and Governance. Proposed indicators:

- *Regular presence of volunteers (friends of the museum, friends of the site) performing auxiliary functions for the management.*
- *Local, regional or national associations supporting the site.*

Sub-themes: Digitization, Science & Technology/Work & Prosperity. Proposed indicators:

- *Percentage of employees in the CH site with digital tasks in various fields (e.g., video clips, management, etc.);*
- *Percentage of investment in digital resources and activities out of the total investment of the CH intervention.*
- *Percentage of expenditure for digital workers, resources and activities on total current expenditure.*

Sub-themes: Employment /Social Capital and Governance+Identity of Place+Quality of Life. Proposed indicators:

- *Percentage of top positions on the CH site held by women.*
- *The gender pay gap on the site.*

Sub-themes: Local cultural production/Protection. Proposed indicators (Checklist):

*The site includes a Museum shop/ Cafeteria selling local products, such as:*

- *Local craft products*

- - Circular economy products
- - Zero km products.

Sub-themes: Safeguarding against human-related risks/Identity of Place. Proposed indicators:

- Percentage of local residents who feel proud of the CH site and its conservation/protection project; and
- Percentage of local residents who feel responsible for contributing to the protection of the site.

We are aware that a demand-driven approach is likely to increase the costs of impact assessment and evaluation. We are also aware that a better, more profound, tailored knowledge of cultural heritage and the impacts that interventions bring on society, the environment, the economy, and the culture will help improve the quality of interventions and ultimately reduce costs due to mismanagement and misinterpretation. The growing political relevance of a subject goes hand in hand with the evolution of the instruments for its analysis, assessment, and evaluation. The same has happened with the environmental statistics between the mid-1970s and the 1990s. Internationally, governments and organisations have gradually developed sophisticated sets of indicators. These are certainly not based on the limited storage of the data available in 1972, at the time of the first UN Conference on Development and Environment, but rather identified, defined and collected in ways that allow describing in detail the present state, the active pressures, the responses and the impacts over time. It is high time that the set of tools for describing the current state, the pressures, the responses, and the impacts of cultural heritage evolve to a similar extent.

### Good practice examples

The proposal at the core of this Brief is reinforced by recent examples of evidence-based policies in the field of CH and of the capacity to decide to invest resources in data collection since the necessary data were not produced through the available sources.

Vision and focus have characterised the decision to hold in 2017 a Special Eurobarometer (European Commission, 2017) on the relationships of citizens in the EU with the CH. “This survey assesses the attitudes and opinions of people in the EU on cultural heritage. It is the first EU-wide survey to be conducted on this topic. It investigates people’s personal involvement with cultural heritage and the perceived importance and values they attach to Europe’s cultural heritage. It also looks into the perceptions of the impact of cultural heritage on tourism and jobs, and responsibilities when it comes to protecting heritage in Europe”<sup>10</sup>. The initiative was taken in view of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 to address the right issues with the appropriate priorities.

<sup>10</sup> See [https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2150\\_88\\_1\\_466\\_eng?locale=en](https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2150_88_1_466_eng?locale=en) for datasets and reports.

EUROSTAT also carries out experimental CH statistics. A pilot project explores the potential of Big Data for official statistics. The results are based on an analysis of Wikipedia page views of World Heritage Sites. Wikipedia articles were selected for each of the 1 031 World Heritage Sites included on UNESCO's list in 2015. The initial selection was based on the categorisation feature in the English version of Wikipedia. The articles were linked to the corresponding heritage site based on the information from the infobox entitled 'World heritage site'. The results are available on the EUROSTAT website devoted to culture statistics.

Another remarkable example of innovative data systems is the 2019 Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor by the Joint Research Center<sup>11</sup>. Devised to measure and assess the performance of 190 'Cultural and Creative Cities' in Europe vis-à-vis their peers, the Monitor uses quantitative and qualitative data from official and non-official sources and, above all, successfully integrates information gathered from Big Data (TripAdvisor). The quantitative information is captured in 29 indicators relevant to nine dimensions and reflects three major facets of cities' cultural, social and economic vitality.

Outside Europe, in February 2021, the New York State Comptroller published a report on the cultural and recreational sector in New York City during the pandemic based on timely and fine-grained processing of administrative data<sup>12</sup>. Fresh evidence on the pandemic impact on enterprises and individual workers and the success of policy measures was useful to orient the future action.

<sup>11</sup> <https://composite-indicators.jrc.ec.europa.eu/cultural-creative-cities-monitor/docs-and-data>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.osc.state.ny.us/files/reports/osdc/pdf/report-12-2021.pdf>

## Policy implications and recommendations

Boosting the quality and quantity of comparable data on cultural heritage is essential for heritage policies to rely on sound and timely indicators for monitoring, assessment, and evaluation of their economic and holistic impact. The Driver- Pressure-State-Impact-Response framework, for instance, is based on a dashboard of indicators that are regularly fed into the system, starting from the late 1980s. The commendable effort made by UNESCO to devise a set of culture indicators for the SDGs will remain a beautiful, theoretical exercise if data are not available to populate the proposed measures.

The core proposal of a new policy action on data for cultural heritage impact analysis can be summarised in the following points.

- EUROSTAT should be encouraged to include Culture statistics among priority areas for targeted data collection.
- Cultural Heritage statistics at EUROSTAT should be oriented towards evidence gathering on social, environmental, cultural, and economic impacts of interventions, especially if funded by UE resources. To this end, the investigation of the potential contribution of surveys and databases currently handled by EUROSTAT (e.g., Labor Force Survey, Business Demographics, Household Budget Survey, ICT, etc.) and experimental statistics (e.g., Big Data) should be encouraged.
- Administrative data on EU-funded projects addressing cultural heritage through various programmes (Creative Europe, Structural Funds, Horizon 2020, etc.) should be collected and mainstreamed by a central Agency, possibly EUROSTAT.
- Over ten years after the conclusion of the first ESS-net (European Statistical Systems net) Culture 2009-2011 (ESSnet, 2012), the fundamental effort aimed at establishing a shared body of definitions and classifications for the statistical coverage of the cultural sector in its domains (heritage, libraries and archives, audio-visual, books and press, radio, tv, and cinema, the performing arts, the visual arts, arts crafts, advertising, and architecture) a second ESS-net focusing on Cultural Heritage should be funded, to establish the conceptual and methodological framework for investigating the social, cultural, environmental, and economic impacts of investments and projects addressing Cultural Heritage, including the intangible heritage.
- It appears necessary to draw up and progressively adopt guidelines for assessing social, cultural, environmental, and economic impact for all European programmes (EFRD, ESF, Creative Europe and in particular ECoC, Horizon 2020, etc.) that contribute directly to funding cultural heritage interventions. Quality

procedures should also be put in place to integrate administrative data from those programmes into cultural heritage statistics.

- A targeted harmonised survey on the impact of investments on Cultural Heritage assets as perceived by the EU resident, along the lines of the Special Eurobarometer 466/2017 (European Commission, 2017), should be held at least once every five years.
- Statistical cooperation in the field of cultural heritage among MSs should be encouraged and reinforced, in view of fuller exploitation of the potentialities of new sources, like administrative data and Big Data, also promoting meta-studies for the standardisation and generalisation of indicators.
- The Eurostat Statistical Training Program should offer courses in Cultural Heritage statistics, including impact assessment methods and techniques.
- Other educational cooperation programmes, like Erasmus Plus, should address Cultural Heritage statistics, including impact assessment methods and techniques, also in view of developing innovative approaches.

**Finally, the crucial point of cultural heritage statistics, and culture statistics in general, is not statistical, but political, and lies in the delicate balance between how individual member States conceive, define, and manage this matter and definitions and policies set at European Community level.**

In this vein, the first topic to be addressed for the action of Member States is *participatory governance of cultural heritage*, described as the identification of innovative approaches to the multilevel governance of tangible, intangible and digital heritage, which involve the public sector, private stakeholders, and the civil society. Open Method of Coordination (OMC) orients instruments and working methods for this topic: experts may compare public policies at the national and regional level to identify good practices in cooperation with existing heritage networks.

The second topic addresses traditional and emerging heritage professions' *skills, training, and knowledge transfer* and involves capacity building for heritage professionals. As above mentioned, the Open Method of Coordination may orient instruments and working methods to depict existing training schemes and identify emerging skills and training needs in the tangible, intangible and digital heritage field.

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## Project identity

**Project title:** `SoPHIA – Social Platform for Holistic Heritage Impact Assessment`

**Consortium coordinator:** Michela Marchiori, Università degli Studi Roma Tre (UNIROMA3), Italy, [michela.marchiori@uniroma3.it](mailto:michela.marchiori@uniroma3.it).

**Consortium members:** Interarts Foundation for International Cultural Cooperation (INTERARTS), Spain; Stichting European Museum Academy (EMA), the Netherlands; Institute of Cultural Policy and Cultural Management (EDUCULT), Austria; National Technical University of Athens (NTUA), Greece; Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology (IADT), Ireland; and the Institute for Development and International Relations (IRMO), Croatia.

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The Horizon 2020 project `SoPHIA – Social Platform for Holistic Heritage Impact Assessment` (2020-2021) is a research and innovation project that sought to open the debate on the holistic assessment of cultural heritage interventions, to build consensus on it, to support the European Commission in the definition of guidelines for the next generations of funds for cultural heritage and to support stakeholders in cultural heritage in assessing the impact of their interventions, in view of the sustainability and resilience of cultural heritage. During the two years of its activities, the consortium partners, together with a diverse community of stakeholders interested in interventions in cultural heritage sites in Europe, have worked together towards the definition of an effective holistic impact assessment model for cultural heritage interventions, quality standards and guidelines for future policies and programmes. The SoPHIA deliverables corresponding to these tasks are available at the project website, as well as on the H2020 portal.