

heritage. In order to reach a wider audience, the Commission supports the creation of teaching material on the protection of cultural heritage,⁷⁰ and its EU-wide promotion via the School Education gateway. The EU also supports the involvement of youth. For example, the European Students' Association for Cultural Heritage, established on the occasion of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, is part of a network project supported by the Creative Europe Programme "European Cultural Heritage Agents: Empowering Europe's Civil Society Movement for Heritage".

Key actions

The Commission services, in cooperation with the EEAS where appropriate, will

- Provide financial support to the ICCM, to upgrade the ICCM Observatory, which centralises and disseminates various instruments and materials for international public understanding and policy orientation to protect cultural goods;
- Support UNESCO in creating a manual for journalists on reporting on cultural heritage related crimes;
- Support youth engagement initiatives, via the Creative Europe, the EU Solidarity Corps, and the Erasmus+;
- Engage in a dialogue with relevant youth organisations in order to promote awareness on the need to protect cultural heritage from destruction, theft and looting.

4. Conclusion

Cultural goods trafficking is not a victimless crime: it not only fuels activities that threaten the safety of EU citizens, but can also cause irreparable damage to our cultural heritage and therefore, our common identity. This is why fighting trafficking of cultural goods requires additional common and sustained efforts from a large range of stakeholders within and beyond the EU. This action plan provides a comprehensive framework for the EU and the Member States to advance prevention, detection and criminal justice response to cultural goods trafficking and related crimes. The Commission calls on the European Parliament and the Council to endorse this action plan and support its implementation.

⁷⁰ For example through PITCHER (Preventing Theft Trafficking of Cultural Heritage: Educational Resources), <https://www.pitcher-project.eu/>.